



Exploring the post-apartheid workplace barriers to career progression among black women employees in South Africa's banking sector.

Siphenathi Khunyana / KHNSIP005

Supervisor: Bianca Tame

A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfilment* of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Theories of Justice and Inequality

Faculty of the Humanities

University of Cape Town

2023

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____

Signed by candidate

Date: _____ 13/02/2023

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

Abstract

This study explores workplace barriers that black women encounter in the post-apartheid banking sector in relation to their career progression from junior and mid-management levels to senior leadership roles in the banking sector. The study used a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews to understand the lived experiences of black women in the banking sector. Data was analysed thematically, drawing on intersectionality and post-colonial theory to understand the challenges that impede career growth and transitional experiences of black women. The key findings are that the perception of intergroup racism in the Western Cape maintains racial divisions among black women and further blocks black African women from easily moving up the career ladder. African women are less privy to internal information about career progression and earning potential, with intergroup racism adding to this racial, often gendered wage-gap divide. The study revealed that many black women lack strong mentorship and coaching guidance to prepare them for senior and leadership roles. This is contrary to whites and their male colleagues who rely on old forms of networking that keep them ahead of women in advancing their careers in the bank because the banking culture remains male oriented. In relation to the male-oriented organisational culture, work-life balance stood out as a key barrier for black women's career progression because many struggled to balance work pressures with household commitments. For example, black women felt that they had to choose to first grow their families and later take on demanding work commitments. However, their white and male colleagues had access to departments such as investment banking that allowed them to juggle family and work remotely, which points to the intersection of gender, race and class in limiting black women's opportunities in the banking sector. As such, this study argues that race and gender, in the context of a historically white male dominated sector, remained central as barriers to advancement to mid-managerial and senior positions in the banking sector. This study therefore advocates for black women's experiences to be central to any intervention that seeks to deracialise and invest in black women's career progression in the banking sector.

Acknowledgements

To God be the glory and honour for giving me the strength to continue until the end of this academic journey.

My special thanks to the following people who played a key role to the success of this study: my supervisor at the University of Cape Town, Bianca Tame, for her tremendous support, guidance, and encouragement. Your efforts and contribution to my dissertation, my academic and personal growth is deeply appreciated.

To my study participants: thank you for your time, your willingness to assist me particularly in recruiting more participants, and for sharing your respective insights on the research topic.

I would like to send words of gratitude to my parents, Thobeka Khunyana and Khonzekile Mangaliso, for ever being supportive throughout my academic journey.

Special thanks to Mr Tankiso Moletsane for ever being available, supportive, always willing to listen when I felt I could not continue anymore, and ever believing in and encouraging me to continue in this academic journey.

Lastly to my friends both on and off campus, thank you so much for all the support you have shown to me and your prayers during this trying and testing time, and I am grateful to be surrounded by such loving people.

Contents

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
1 Contents.....	4
Acronyms and abbreviations	8
Chapter 1: Introduction	9
1.1 Background.....	9
1.2 The rationale of the study	12
1.3 Research question	15
1.3.1 Sub-questions.....	15
1.4 Dissertation Structure.....	16
2 Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
2.1 Introduction	17
2.2 Categories of social divisions	17
2.3 Intersection of race, class, and gender in the field of professions	19
2.4 Education as a form of capital	22
2.5 Skills development.....	23
2.6 Organisational culture	24
2.6.1 Division of labour	26
2.7 Networking.....	27
2.7.1 Boys’ club.....	27
2.7.2 Mentorship.....	28
2.8 Fronting and window dressing.....	29
2.9 Queen bee syndrome	30
2.10 Conclusion.....	32

3	Chapter 3: Methodology	33
3.1	Introduction	33
3.2	Research design	33
3.3	Profile of Western Cape banking sector.....	34
3.4	Sample.....	36
3.5	Data collection	38
3.6	Data analysis.....	39
3.6.1	Software	39
3.1	Trustworthiness.....	40
3.6.2	Thematic analysis	40
3.7	Limitations of the study.....	41
3.8	Reflexivity	41
3.9	Fieldwork challenges.....	42
3.10	Ethical considerations	42
3.10.1	Informed consent	42
3.10.2	Confidentiality	42
3.11	Conclusion.....	44
4	Chapter 4: Theoretical framework.....	45
4.1	Introduction	45
4.2	Conclusion.....	48
5	Chapter 5: Findings	50
5.1	Introduction	50
5.2	Intergroup barriers to career advancement	50
5.2.1	Intergroup racism in the Western Cape.....	50
5.2.2	Queen bee syndrome.....	51
5.3	Black women in the banking sector	52

5.3.1	Work life balance.....	52
5.3.2	Impact of white women on black women in the banking sector	54
5.4	Coaching and networking.....	55
5.4.1	Mentorship and coaching	55
5.4.2	Informal networks.....	56
5.4.3	Skills development programs	58
5.5	Education as cultural capital.....	60
5.5.1	Education.....	60
5.5.2	Income wage gap	60
5.6	Organisational culture	62
5.6.1	Raced and gendered institutions	62
5.6.2	Asserting authority.....	64
5.6.3	Patriarchy.....	65
5.6.4	Fronting and window dressing.....	67
5.7	Conclusion.....	68
6	Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion	70
6.1	Introduction	70
6.2	Intergroup barriers to career advancement	70
6.3	Black women in the banking sector	72
6.4	Coaching and networking.....	74
6.5	Education as a capital.....	75
6.6	Organisational culture	75
6.7	Fronting and window dressing.....	77
6.8	Conclusion.....	79
6.9	Future research.....	80
7	References	81
6.10	Appendices	93

6.10.1	Appendix 1: Thematic analysis	93
6.10.2	Appendix 2: Coding sample	95
6.10.3	Appendix 3: Identifying themesFigure 2	96

Acronyms and abbreviations

BBBEE	Broad-based black economic empowerment
BEE	Black economic empowerment
CEO	Chief executive officer
EEA	Employment Equity Act
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
POPI Act	Protection of Personal Information Act

Chapter 1: Introduction

This first section of the dissertation focuses on the research background and problem statement, the rationale of the problem, the central research question, and the sub-questions.

1.1 Background

It has been twenty-three years since the introduction of the Employment Equity Act of 1998 to create an inclusive workplace, eliminate apartheid inequalities and improve the representation of previously excluded groups such as black women workers in the financial service sector, and specifically in the banking sector (Fisher et al., 2021). However, the banking sector remains a white and male dominated industry, especially at the senior management level in the Western Cape province, where black women's representation deteriorates with seniority (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

Van der Schyff (2017) defines the banking sector as a financial institution and a financial intermediary that accepts deposits and channels those deposits into lending activities, either directly or indirectly through loans or capital markets respectively. While there are many types of banks which offer and render different services, this study focuses on the retail banking which renders banking services to individuals' consumers and businesses at a smaller scale compared to other categories of the banking sector (Van der Schyff, 2017).

Such claims are reflected in the Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) report (2021) on race and gender representation statistics for the companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in 2019. Bonnin and Ruggunan (2013) state that, in post-apartheid South Africa, examining professional occupations becomes salient to the process of post-apartheid social inclusion and de-racialisation of the labour market. This is because of the social closure process that was imposed on black South Africans, where Coloureds, Africans and Indians in South Africa were marginalised in the labour market based on race, gender, and class. The term black for this study will be understood and used as the generic term which to refer to Coloureds, Indians and Africans which was re-introduced after the demise of apartheid to monitor progress for the employment of the previously marginalized groups after apartheid (Christopher, 2002).

The PWC (2021) report revealed that 95% of all the chief executive officers (CEOs) in the JSE listed companies were men, as well as 87.2% of the chief financial officers and 91% of executive directors, which sums up the most senior executive roles in the JSE listed companies in 2021. Furthermore,

out of all the companies listed in the JSE, women had only 19 executive positions, and such figures, after so many years of democracy, reflect the legacy of the systemic exclusion by occupation of the apartheid system that needs to be transformed in post-apartheid South Africa(PWC, 2021)

Barnard and Martin (2013) state that women who defy the conventional norms and standards by venturing into career occupations such as banking, which are known for being male dominated, face different forms of barriers that inhibit their career retention, progression, and success in banking professions. These barriers have been associated with long hours of work that come with

rising through the corporate ranks in sectors such as banking, which are also said to be inflexible and disadvantageous to women, especially those with families and children to take care of (Dhanpat et al., 2021). These barriers to women's involvement in leadership structures include women's obligations to their households, which cause them to have less time for work than men do. More often, men have been preferred over women for leadership succession by organisations based on gender bias, shortage of education and skills development programs to enhance women's leadership capabilities, and failure to implement affirmative action policies.

Weeto (2019) states that among many challenges faced by the finance and banking sectors is the slow implementation of the employment equity act, which has meant that many black working majorities, specifically women, dominate in the junior roles in the banking sector while the top management remains white, and male dominated. Selective implementation of affirmative action has also led to what has become more common, specifically in the financial sector, where the institutions have institutionalised prejudice based on race, gender and English language proficiency (Dlamini, 2013).

Dlamini (2013) researched the impact of the intersection of race, gender and class on women CEOs lived experiences in the workplace. Her study focused on how women CEOs navigate the workplace in their different professions as CEOs, and her study revealed that, in the financial service sector at large, there was a long-existing institutionalised culture of discrimination based on race, gender and social class which women, specifically, who aspire to be CEOs in the sector fall victim to (Dlamini, 2013). In the findings, the research participants cite the recruitment process of women CEOs as one example where this culture manifested clearly in practice, where it has been normalised for black women, too often have their applications for senior management roles overlooked in preference for white male candidates, even in instances where they are better qualified than their white male colleagues (Dlamini, 2013). Lack of strict monitoring and enforcement of the Employment Equity

Act (EEA) in the workplace has remained a key challenge for women because, while the government forces the companies to integrate black women, they have remained less represented in decision making and influential leadership positions and instead are more represented in administrative, junior, and middle levels in the private sector (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021). The 2017-2018 commission for employment equity transformation shows that the sector's transformation declines with seniority, and more than 63% of white males still hold executive positions in the financial service sector (Weeto, 2019). Therefore, black women in South Africa remain discriminated against based on race, class, and gender in the workplace.

3.1.1 Legislative policies

Affirmative action refers to a measure that seeks to increase the number of underrepresented groups, but this research will focus on the race and gender representation of black women in the previously white-dominated occupations in post-apartheid South Africa (Szelewicki & Tyrowicz 2009). In South Africa, the EEA was implemented to eliminate unfair discrimination based on wages and employment, and to ensure that individuals from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are recruited and retained in the previously white-dominated occupations and positions (Burger et al., 2016). In South Africa, labour market disparities such as the income wage gap remain among the barriers for women to compete at an equal level with their male counterparts, especially in the previously dominant racial groups (Fisher).

Discrimination will be understood in this research as referring to any form of distinction, exclusion, or preference of one person over the other based on race, sex or religion, as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Parashar, 2008). April and Govender (2022) state that, despite commitments in legislation such as the constitution, the EEA and Broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE), unequal treatment of black women in the workplace persists and there has been little practical implementation of the policies in practice. Matotoka and Odeku (2021) argue that the lack of quotas for integrating black women in the financial service sector contributes to the overrepresentation of men compared to the under-representation of black women. The current fines or penalties for non-compliant companies have been too low for big corporations, such that they create budgets for such penalties in advance and hence fines do not hit them hard enough for them to start seeing investing in the skills and development of black women beyond what has been understood as the window-dressing fronting processes.

Particularly in the banking sector, positions of power such as CEOs, heads of departments and board members have been dominated somewhat by black men and to a more significant extent by white men (Canham, 2018). The slow progression in women's careers to senior positions in areas such as investment banking and accounting have been referred to as barriers or an obstacle embedded in the country's banking history of exclusion of black workers in different fields based on race and gender, which have very little to do with the capability of women carrying out their work in these fields (Crafford & Rowe, 2003). Previous studies pointed out the lack of mentorship programmes and role models, the male oriented organisational culture and workspaces not being environmentally friendly for pregnant women and women with children as being among the most significant challenges and barriers facing women in the workplace (Booyzen & Nkomo, 2010; Govender, 2019).

Within this context and against this background, this research seeks to investigate the challenges faced by black women in post-apartheid South African banking and financial institutions, focusing on race and gender inequalities. The purpose of this study was to explore the persistent workplace challenges that are still faced by black women in the banking sector after 1994 that hinder and form barriers to their career progression.

1.2 The rationale of the study

In the 21st century, black people navigating the workplace, and specifically climbing up the management ladder to positions previously dominated by white men with white women serving as the second class behind their white men, have not received much attention in academia (Ncube, 2018). As a result, there has been minimal literature on these phenomena, specifically the field of professions in South Africa. This study will contribute to this slowly growing body of literature, specifically to the qualitative literature in the South African context. A few studies that have explored experiences of women in professions have indicated the need to study this field further because the field is still male dominated (Meyer, 2021; Mlambo, 2022).

Studies reveal a massive obsession around the globe that tends to be biased towards presenting mostly numerical data about the presence of previously excluded groups such as black men and women in white-dominated fields such as banking (Christiansen et al., 2016). This form of presentation limited knowledge of the exposure to challenges that these groups endure in the financial service sector and how their lived experiences continue to shape their slow career

progression and climb to the leadership echelon of the financial service sector.

This study focused on closing this gap by contributing to the qualitative body of literature that seeks to go beyond reducing transformation to a numbers game (Dhanpat et al., 2021). This objective was achieved by identifying the barriers that trample the gains of affirmative action policies in the banking and accounting sector. Studying these lived experiences helped women in the banking sector who mostly face the same challenges but have no voice and are silenced by the dominant system to resist being locked into low positions and normalisation of gendered labour norms by finding new alternatives to fighting these barriers to their career progression. Some of the themes explored in this research helped us in unpacking the inequalities that exist in the workplace at different levels from the organisational side, with the literature being reviewed from institutional culture, and further recognizing the role and that individual social identities and their interactions in the workplace have in creating a more equitable and inclusive workplace.

There have been minimal studies that have centered on examining the impact of the intersection of critical identities such as race, gender, and class, but most of these have been limited in studying the representation of women in the position of CEO (Dhanpat et al., 2021). In South Africa, there have been few studies from fields such as sociology, gender studies and psychology that have pursued an intersectionality approach to understanding women's experiences of workplace inequalities, specifically in post-apartheid South Africa, as reflected in the later section on literature on intersectionality (Dlamini, 2013; Moolman, 2013; Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012; Ncube, 2018).

Globally, it has become common that when the experiences of women in the workplace have been studied, more literature is centred around Western women's experiences in the workplace in professions such as banking, which are known for being male dominated. The private sector must

identify barriers that inhibit the career progression of previously disadvantaged groups (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021).

Since the advent of democracy in South Africa, transformation has been essential for many years now, yet previously disadvantaged groups are still on the margins of the country's economy. Those who venture into these fields that were once preserved for white men are reported to be unable to retain their jobs for long before they are returned to junior and middle management roles (McCallum, 2005). This study will benefit both the government and the Financial Services Charter by revealing some of the barriers that have made progress very slow in transforming the sector and achieving the goals set for changing these subsectors, and even allow reviewing some of the policies in place to improve them for better results (Matlabe, 2008). There is a need for the South African workplace to mirror the demographics of the country, specifically the integration of black women into the economy. This study is crucial in post-apartheid South Africa because many studies have revealed that women continue to be subjected to gender discrimination in the workplace despite all the current policies. In South Africa, black women suffer multiple discrimination based on gender and race, but few studies have paid attention to these practices in South Africa (Burger & Jafta, 2010; Bhorat & Goga, 2013).

The need to address and treat the matter with urgency is exacerbated by the fact that the unequal representation of women in fields dominated by men has often contributed to the widening wage gap between men and women globally and specifically in South Africa (Blau & Kahn, 2016). Studies have shown that the slight improvement in the wage gap between men and women and between blacks and whites cannot be attributed to a reduction of discrimination but to the improved black women's access to education. Still, they remain restricted in how far they can progress in their careers by the racial and gender barriers (Goga, 2008). There is a need for the playground to be levelled so that both women and men can compete based on their skills and expertise as the traditional professions in South Africa such as banking are still primarily white, male dominated (Bonnin & Ruggnan, 2013). This study explored some of these barriers for the benefit of the banking sector so that the incoming generation of black women bankers do not suffer the same

injustices. The slow progress of women taking senior management and executive positions worldwide and locally makes this research significant in contributing to the growing body of literature that seeks to challenge the status quo of the male-dominated banking and finance industry in pursuit of change (Mavin, 2006).

Mollah and Uddin (2018) state that most of the literature that seeks to understand workplace inequalities and the prejudice suffered by women does not get to the little details about how women are discriminated against at different levels. In an organisational system, inequality will be defined as a systematic disparity among different participants in their power over the control of goals, resources, outcomes, workplace decisions, opportunities for promotion and access to work that is appealing to varying interests of participants (Acker, 2006). These are loosely interrelated practices, actions and processes that maintain class, gender, and racial differences in an organisation.

Therefore, once published, this research will contribute to the limited literature on the phenomenon that it seeks to explore, which is not only a South Africa post-apartheid challenge but a global challenge. It will also present some of the organisational features that lead to a fundamental transformation of the workplace and, if well implemented, these changes may propel a gradual increase in the number of women executives (Bosch & Palmer, 2017). Specifically, for the Department of Labour and related government departments such as Social Development, this research and its findings can be considered in drafting a new policy to create a more inclusive workplace.

1.3 Research question

What are the key challenges faced by black women workers in advancing their careers in the post-apartheid banking sector in South Africa, focusing on race, gender, and class?

1.3.1 Sub-questions

- In what ways do the intersection of gender, race and class have an impact on black women's experiences of career progression in the workplace?

- How do black women’s educational levels and backgrounds shape their experiences in advancing their careers in the banking sector?
- What are the opportunities available in the banking sector to support the career progression of black women in the workplace, such as mentorship, support groups, and so on?
- In what ways does organisational culture affect black women’s work experience in the banking sector and their ability to climb up the corporate ladder?

1.4 Dissertation Structure

Chapter 1 comprises the introduction to this study. It includes the core research problem, the rationale for conducting this research, the context in which this research takes place, the specific research questions that were proposed and consequently addressed within this study, an outline of the methodology, and, lastly, the organisation of dissertation.

Chapter 2 is comprised of a literature review that focuses on key themes such as literature on the intersectionality of class, gender, and race in the field of professions, followed by the key themes, which are organisational culture of the workplace, education, “queen bee syndrome” and the glass ceiling phenomenon.

Chapter 3 discusses the core theoretical framework used throughout this study, the intersectionality approach.

Chapter 4 is comprised of an explanation of the specific research methods used throughout the research process. It also addresses all relevant ethical considerations regarding how this research study was conducted.

Chapter 5 is comprised of the results of this study, in which the key findings are presented.

Chapter 6 is comprised of an engagement with the key findings and relevant literature in relation to the results. The implications and limitations of this study are also deliberated, as well as my recommendations for future research in this space. This chapter also serves as the conclusion to this dissertation.

1 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to unpack the challenges faced by black women in the banking sector in relation to career progression and the intersection of race, gender, and class in the Western Cape. The first part of this chapter introduces categories of social division, namely social class, race, and gender. These concepts are important for this study in understanding social stratification in the banking sector workplace, and the intersectionality of race, gender and class helps us unpack some of the reasons that black women face multiple challenges in career advancement in the banking sector. Furthermore, the following themes will be introduced in this chapter: literature on the intersectionality of class, gender, and race in the field of professions is followed by key themes, which are the organisational culture of the workplace, education, queen bee syndrome and the glass ceiling phenomenon. The dominance of both black and white men in senior executive roles and the two concepts of the glass ceiling and queen bee syndrome in the banking sector have been described to be still mirroring white hegemony specifically, because it is among the factors that directly contribute to sustained male dominance in the banking sector.

2.2 Categories of social divisions

Social class will be understood to be encompassing a broad group of people in a society with similar economic, political and cultural statuses which serve as the markers of difference for social divisions that exist in a society (Wright, 2015) Marx's class analysis based social stratification of society on the means of production and property ownership, which are controlled by the bourgeoisie, and the right of ownership of the labour power of the proletariat. The proletarians survive by working for the bourgeois class, which makes up the exploitative relationship of the two classes in which the proletariat is the victim, according to Marx (Seekings, 2003). However, Marxist class analysis has been criticised by many scholars for its limitation to the European context and its white analysis, which becomes too difficult to apply in countries such as South Africa where there are no real owners of the means of production specifically among the previously disadvantaged communities (Crankshaw, 1997).

There is a need to recognise the difference between the South African context and the Global North countries, in which these class theories have been conceptualized because of the different social structures and their class consequences (Seekings, 2003). For this study, the middle class will be understood based on wealth and social orientation in society. Middle class black people in South Africa are associated with affordability – the ability to own their homes and place a high premium on their children’s education, which gives them access to high proficiency in English from the private educational system (Soudien, 2013).

Modisha (2007) reveals, in his study conducted in Soweto, that African managers, despite their status and access to resources which come with access to the previously white-dominated occupation and being in management, still find themselves in ambiguous and contradictory positions regarding their class identity (Mapadimeng, 2013). This is exacerbated by the racial cleavages, so that, despite being considered “middle class” because of their occupations, they share lived experiences that are embedded in their racialised identities and are different to those of their white colleagues of the same class (Mapadimeng, 2013). Most banking sector women interviewed in the study fall within this category of middle class, because of the status of their jobs and the positions they occupy in their workplaces as managers and team leaders, varying by their different capacities.

Race is defined by Hall (1992) as a socially constructed organising category of different ways of speaking, systems of representation and social practices which deploy an unspecified set of differences in physical characteristics such as skin colour, hair texture, and physical and bodily features to differentiate between different groups in society. Magubane (2004) state that blackness has always been associated with inferiority and marginalisation, by showing how poor people were compared to African savages and how white workers gained their self-worth through comparison with blacks’ workers that they considered inferior to themselves. Blackness or the term “black” will be understood as deriving from the history of racism, colonialism, and enslavement, representing sub-humanity and inferiority, a condition that was imposed on people of African origin based on their skin colour and physical appearances (Steyn & Mpofo, 2021, drawing from Mbembe, 2017).

Gender has been defined as a socially constructed structure which allocates to both men and women different and unequal opportunities and positions in society, based on different.

expectations that are socially constructed and associated with allocated gender roles that the society expects both men and women to play (Acker, 2006). These include but are not limited to division of labour and access to power and resources, and thereby shape how both categories are experienced and understood. The gender structure functions as a social category like both race and class in establishing life chances, opportunities, social relations, and interactions with the entire society (Acker, 2006).

While understanding gender relations, gender identities and inequalities is significant, such understanding is limited without knowing the specificities of gender inequality, such as masculinities and femininities, and such understanding cannot be fully exhausted (Benya, 2016). Masculinities form part of the larger social relations and structures in society and therefore they are neither subjective nor universal in how they are performed, and they can be viewed in relation to femininity. At the most basic level, femininity has been understood as the gender category associated with and practised by females who identify themselves as women, and it has been most often equated to softness, emotional labour, an eye for detail and both paid and unpaid caring labour (Benya, 2016)

2.3 Intersection of race, class, and gender in the field of professions

For this research, class, gender, and race are viewed as interwoven and embedded in each other; therefore, from the three categories, no one category can be explored in isolation when unpacking the lived experiences of women in the banking sector. This research further supports the argument brought forth by Huppatz (2009) that one cannot study class in isolation from gender, as class is always gendered in the field of professions and specifically in the banking sector. This is despite the sector being female dominated in number; the upper-class positions, such as the management, are still dominated by males.

There have been few studies conducted in a South African context to research the intersection of race, class, and gender in the workplace (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010; Hunter & Hachimi, 2012; Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012; Dlamini, 2013; Meyer, 2021). However, most of these studies have studied a maximum of two social divisions, such as studying race and gender or gender and class. Reviewing this literature across different occupations in South Africa is relevant to this research because it reveals, across the different studies, the consistency of race, gender and class

as key barriers to black women's career progression in the banking sector. This further shows that the three concepts cannot be studied in isolation from each other; although they are not the only categories that shape black women's struggles with career advancement in the banking sector, they have been prioritised in this study.

Ndinda and Uzodike (2012) studied the intersection of race and gender regarding the appointment and promotion of women to key decision-making positions from both the private and public sectors in South Africa. Their research revealed that, among women, while gender has become less of a problem, race still plays a huge role in the career advancement of black women in the workplace, with the research showing that white women climb the corporate ladder at a very young age compared to their black colleagues. Ndinda and Uzodike (2012) credit such disparity to the salience of race, stating that white women manage to get promoted even with junior degrees. This is in contrast to the struggle that black women face, firstly to enter the banking sector and secondly to move up the career ladder within the banking sector; even with multiple degrees they still suffer racial prejudice and find it hard to move past junior and middle management. More recently, Meyer's (2021) study depicts this disparity when she states that, in studying social and cultural capital, one gets to understand that, in professions that have a history of white male domination, possessing social and cultural capital is the main source of dominance for whites. While white people possess such capital, what is even more valuable is who possesses that form of capital, which in the context of this study refers to education. Hence the social and cultural capital of whites still puts them ahead of black women with the same qualifications and experience. More recently, research conducted by Meyer (2021) in the legal profession revealed that black women are still lagging their male colleagues in being recognised equally as fully competitive lawyers' attorneys, with many of the women struggling to balance long working hours with their household and family duties.

Ndinda and Uzodike (2012) found that white women formed the majority in decision-making positions in South Africa, both in the private and in the public sectors, and hence they easily moved up the ladder because they were well positioned for promotions compared to their black female colleagues. From the research, it is evident that, despite being the same gender, their white skin colour still maintains and reproduces a position of privilege and advantage over black women, what McIntosh (1987) refers to as white privilege, which is defined as access to unearned

advantages over black women. McIntosh (1987) describes this concept as having the capacity to intimidate and open doors for white people without even being conscious of their oppressive nature towards the opposite race. White privilege automatically makes black employees find themselves having to work a little harder than their white colleagues to access what their white colleagues achieve as a matter of principle without working for it.

Dlamini (2013) used the intersection of race, class, and gender to understand the experiences of women occupying the position of CEO in their workplace. The research revealed that class mobility gives upper class women an upper hand in career advancement. However, it is further posited that only a few black women enter the workplace with these class backgrounds because of the intersection of race and class, specifically in the South African context of apartheid where an individual's racial status constituted their class status, with most blacks forming a lower class compared to whites (Dlamini, 2013).

In post-apartheid South Africa, social class becomes tricky to separate from race because of the history of South Africa, in which one's race was able to determine which class category they were most likely to belong to, except for the small black elite class that existed during the apartheid era (Crankshaw, 1997). One of the immediate examples in the South African context was the use of apartheid policies which separated the educational systems of the country according to the four racial categories to cement the inferiority of black Africans compared to South Africa's white population through access only to inferior Bantu education, which therefore positioned them to qualify only for low class jobs. Seekings (2003) reminds us that most whites in post-apartheid South Africa still clung to their class statuses. Among the privileges that the apartheid regime bestowed upon whites was the mainstreaming of whiteness as the position of advantage, even in post-apartheid South Africa. Class background still has a huge impact in determining access to opportunities: this is evident in most of the senior managers coming from families with parents who have a professional background or are middle class families (Alexander et al., 2013). This observation is important because, in the banking industry specifically, literature reveals that educational background and accent tend to influence the selection process even in the early stages of getting the job, during recruitment.

Hunter and Hachini (2012) conducted research in the call centre industry, studying how race, class and language intersect in the South African call centre workplace, and focusing on the inequalities perpetuated by race and class differences. Among the findings revealed by the research was that, despite the industry being female-dominated, class and race still had huge effects on access to high-paying call centre jobs, which are still mostly held by white women. Hunter and Hachini (2012) further agree with Dlamini (2013) about the important role of access to Model C or upper-class education, which come with fluency in English.

In summary, this section emphasised the importance of studying the three categories together as interwoven categories of social difference that cannot be separated from each other, which is key for this study's theoretical framework and lens. The past studies that were reviewed by the researcher showed the relevance of studying the three categories at once because of the dearth of research of this nature; the studies further showed the embeddedness of these categories from each other. Lastly, the section revealed that meritocracy reaches its limitation at the presence of whiteness and white privilege, even in the post-apartheid state, as these two concepts have replaced direct discrimination to institutionalise white and male dominance in the banking sector.

2.4 Education as a form of capital

Bourdieu (1986) uses the concept of capital to explain societal stratification. He defines capital as being constituted by cultural, social, and economic capital. From an academic perspective, women in South Africa have benefitted from the drive to academic-capital relevance in the field of the profession, even if the numbers are still not satisfactory. The main aim of the drive was to move away from using the social status of the individual as the entry requirement to the field of professions such as the financial service industry (Chitapi, 2014).

Fuller and Hirsh (2019) argue that, even among women alone, differences in social class and educational attainment have direct impact on the kinds of jobs that black women have access to and which positions and careers they are blocked from pursuing, specifically those that come with a lot of flexibility which are mainly senior management positions in the sector. However, access to social capital plays a very important role in setting up black women with middle-class home backgrounds for roles in the banking sector (Hernandez & Stone, 2013). Education in the banking sector serves as both a driver of women's empowerment and a form of exclusion, specifically for

the older generation of banking personnel coming from working-class backgrounds.

The subject of skills development and lack of qualifications in the sector reflects one of the bitter legacies of the apartheid system in South Africa. Apartheid's "separate development" divided the education system according to four racial groups created by that system (black Africans, coloureds, Indians and whites), which was meant to preserve high-skill jobs and the best education for white.

Weeto (2019) states that all the disparities that exist across all sectors in the financial industry date back to the legacy of inferior Bantu education for black people to keep them underkilled.

Many private sector corporations blamed the small pool of well-qualified and experienced black women financial service sector practitioners, such as bankers and accountants, for low levels of women leadership in their ranks (Matotoka, 2021). These challenges can be traced back to the South African education system, for which there is no quick fix. Instead, it requires a strong commitment to affirmative action policies which encourage the companies to develop and invest in their own black women employees by preparing and educating them to be fully skilled, starting with those who are already inside the banks instead of demoting them or blocking their career progress in the name of not meeting the selection criteria.

In 2016, statistics revealed that 48.8% of employed whites had the necessary tertiary qualifications compared to only 15.7% of black people employed who had less than Grade 12 certificates (Statistics South Africa, 2017). However, this does not come as a surprise because of the large pool of white women who, despite being well educated, served as assistants or at lower levels than their white male colleagues until the introduction of gender transformation post-apartheid. Research Focus (2009) reminds us of the importance of not considering the issue of appointment of women in highly skilled and top position jobs in isolation from the supply of skills in white-collar sectors such as the financial sectors.

2.5 Skills development

Matlabe (2008) states that while it is easier to shift the blame to lack of skills and advocate for the employment of more suitable competent black candidates for the industry into the labour market, it is worth noting that financial sector institutions such as banks are expected to implement the EEA and the Skills Development Act. These regulations commit the private sector to invest in training their junior workers to be ready to take up influential and leading roles. Webster and Francis (2019)

state that the Skills Development Act of 1998 aimed to improve the skills of the South African workforce by improving investment in training and development of new and already existing skills. This aims to enhance the post-apartheid labour policies that government introduced to integrate previously disadvantaged groups and curb workplace inequalities that disadvantage them based on race and gender. However, the slow progress shows that the companies are not investing enough in training their black women at the junior level to provide them with the skills necessary to climb the corporate ladder (Magubane, 2019).

Research Focus (2009) states that leadership does not develop or exist in a vacuum, but leaders are created from the base. Despite the current challenges in the education system, other industries are showing promise of transformation, which shows that the financial service sector can also learn to invest internally in their black women workers through skills development programs (Dhanpat et al., 2021).

Men, in comparison to women, have always stood a better chance of securing employment and rising through the ranks of the management hierarchy because they have more incentive than women to invest in their human capital (Parashar, 2008). This is due to different levels of commitment and anticipated career disruptions due to commitments such as marriage, childbearing and unpaid household labour while their male counterparts grow their careers as their main goal with fewer interruptions (Parashar, 2008).

2.6 Organisational culture

Schein (2015) opines that employees perpetuate organisational culture through their relationships and work ethic within an organisation. The external environment also plays a significant role in creating a happy and inclusive working environment that will improve women's lives while making them feel comfortable and part of an organisation that promotes inclusivity. The organisational culture forms part of the invisible understanding which is neither discussed nor negotiated yet marginalises women and impacts on their lived experiences of the edifice of masculine power in the workplace (Schein, 2015). This study aligned itself with the goal of feminist scholarship to expose unstated yet highly gendered and racist practices in the workplace by revealing the key strategic role that they play in the reproduction and preservation of an androcentric workplace (Cahusac & Kanji, 2014). Organisational culture holds little when it comes to understanding women's experiences in the workplace, specifically those with children to take

care of, because of how the concept has evolved over the years to be understood as gender neutral (Cahusac & Kanji, 2014).

In any organisation, the core values descend from the leader and get transmitted to the employees or members to create a healthy organisational culture (Govender, 2019). Organisational culture can be understood as resistance of the old system to giving in to transformation and integration of black women in the previously male-dominated occupations and formerly white industries such as the financial sectors and institutions (Schein, 2015). In South Africa, barriers to women's advancement to a leadership position in the general private sector are historical, structural, and contextual. Laberge (1995) states that, in the field of professions where men maintain dominance in executive leadership positions and high-status roles, gendered dispositions pertain to the physical and mental dispositions that have been cultivated and acquired over a long period of time through socialisation. Such dispositions carry the same weight as the state of cultural capital which works as a source of power that can be cashed in in different forms, such as educational credentials, to secure certain positions in a social space (Hernandez & Stone, 2013).

Cahusac and Kanji (2014) opine that fatherhood continues to elevate men's status in the workplace; it financially compensates their heterosexual potency, contrary to the motherhood experience, which brings negative expectations and is associated with fewer working hours and inferior work because attention is divided between work and family. This happens through even simple things such as corporate policies, where women are expected to take maternity leave after giving birth as a priority, compared to not-so-enforced paternity leave (Research Focus, 2009). This brings to light the issue of maternity leave, which in hindsight can be viewed as being natural and tied to the organisational culture and nature, which command sympathy for women in such spaces. However, this pays little attention to the huge impact that maternity leave has on the career progression of women and the advantage the current professional laws give to men in a male-oriented industry such as financial services (Hernandez & Stone, 2013).

Fields such as investment banking, which require banking officials to be on standby beyond office hours for further assistance of the clientele, have been characterised as a man's field, while it has remained an unexplained culture that women are only dominant in less-demanding and lower-status roles such as customer service. Hernandez and Stone (2013) describe how male managers cement their roles in management positions by adhering to these norms, workplace cultures and informal sanctions to ensure they stay within their office mandates.

2.6.1 Division of labour

Canham (2018) argues that the South African banking industry is tied to an old system of black exclusion, patriarchy, and white accumulation. Patriarchy has been described as a system of power that excludes and disadvantages women while giving exclusive access and privileges to men (Benya, 2016). In highly pressured institutions such as banking, women, because of their reproductive labour and caregiving responsibilities in their households, are seen as less able than men to meet the demands and male-oriented professional expectations of their professional jobs. In the short term, for women, the pressure to work long hours creates time binds, especially for those who are married with families to take care of (Tessendorf & Smit 2021). Cloete (2014) states that the marginalisation of black women in the workplace, despite the progressive constitutional proclamations, is rooted in the patriarchal value system which allows women's statuses and roles to be determined by their reproductive and domestic labour functions.

The absence of black women in top leadership structures, especially in financial institutions, places women as men's subordinates. These attitudes and behaviour have extended to the corporate world and are embedded in our history of apartheid (Ndinda & Uzodike, 2012). Women who make it to executive positions or positions of influence feel pressured to adopt male leadership styles to be integrated into such posts and have little influence in changing the culture of the profession (Klassen & Minasyan, 2017). In the financial sector, there is a strong association of a leader with male prototypes that exhibit masculine characteristics of management, such as being aggressive and self-directed, as opposed to feminine traits such as empathy, caring and interpersonal sensitivity, among other features (Martin, 2015).

These stereotypes manifest through lack of support for women in these spaces and lack of sympathy for and confidence in female leadership skills. Jaga et al. (2018) argue that, in South Africa, it is not that black women are not trying to enter these male-dominated occupations, but that their efforts are met with solid resistance and challenges from the legacy of apartheid, such as patriarchy and racism.

It is further stated that behind the social systems that look sympathetic to women lies a more effective form of male domination that produces a narrative that women, more than men, are expected to commit more to their families than work (Schwanke, 2013). Studies reveal that women often struggle to bounce back in their careers after maternity leave and having children because of

the pressure in the industry. Studies using different methodologies reveal that maternity leave and pregnancy generally delay the career progression of many women because of the lack of women-friendly work environments in the banking sector (Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Lyonette, 2015; Govender, 2019).

Over the years, there have been calls for improving the corporate world to install facilities that accommodate women with little children and pregnant women in the workplace, to reduce the gender disparity in the performance of men and women at times when women are expecting or have delivered a child, as these are stages which affect women's competence in the workplace and their progress (Schwanke, 2013). Research shows that unless the male-oriented culture is dismantled, it will continue to dictate the nature of female leadership in the financial sector and determine what is supported and what is regarded as going against the organisational culture and norms (Martin & Bannard, 2013). It is for this reason that it becomes imperative to understand how women exist in and adjust to this corporate culture that seems to be holding onto old conservative social norms. These norms keep black women in the Western Cape in junior ranks and positions that are seen as resembling femininity and dexterity, such as human resources, secretarial officers and other clerical positions (Govender, 2019).

Boyzeen and Nkomo (2010) use the term “think-manager, think-male”, which refers to the stereotype commonly held by many men in the private sector who tend to associate leadership characteristics with men and view certain gendered qualities as being necessary for success. In transforming the financial service sector and making it more black-women friendly, there is a need to destroy such cultures and behavioural patterns in these institutions, because they are so powerful that even women are reported to prefer recruiting and hiring men to protect their positions as a way of stamping their authority (Mavin, 2006). They do this to be more acceptable to their male colleagues instead of using their positions of influence to transform such institutions from the inside and make them more inclusive and gender diverse, including dismantling what has been referred to as the boy's club (Parashar, 2008).

2.7 Networking

2.7.1 Boys' club

The “old boys' club” culture is described as the culture that used to dominate many corporate institutions in the South African private sector, such as banks and mining houses, where male

leadership structures were dominated by strong and powerful men whose ties and bonds formed outside boardrooms and formal working spaces (Padayachee, 2013). These were networks where men met over sporting activities which traditionally excluded women and in secret societies to close deals and share information that had the potential of putting male colleagues ahead of their female colleagues, because of their relations and common understanding based on gender and sex (Dlamini, 2013).

McDonald (2011) states that informal networks have a long history of reproducing racial and gender inequalities in the labour market, specifically by directly affecting people's career mobility and advancement. Network-based social closure has been described as the process by which minority groups such as black women continue to suffer marginalisation at the hands of both the black and white male gender (Padayachee, 2013). Race and class tend to indirectly shape the nature of how these networks function and how resources are made available, at the expense of excluding those who are regarded as outsiders (Lalanne & Seabright, 2011).

Women tend to occupy lower-status jobs in the banking sector; hence, even forming networks to counter male domination encounters limitations in access to certain information and quality and quantity of resources available in their networks (Washington, 2010). Men in the top echelons of executive management, specifically in the financial service sector, sit together at round tables to make critical decisions that affect the future of such institutions, even on matters of career progression and programs that seek to transform the sector, despite being the primary preserves of the old system that needs transformation. Phadke and Dasgupta (2003) state that, because of the influences that these unofficial networks have over members, white men are most often likely to support appointments of colleagues who they regard as being part of their closed groupings or circles, which continues to impede career progressions for the minority groups.

2.7.2 Mentorship

Previous studies have shown that skilling and training of black African women in managerial areas creates readiness and enhances their capabilities to assume executive positions in the South African private sector (Matotoka, 2021). Mentoring and skilling rookies in these institutions plays a huge role in their successful integration into their work environment and makes them readier to be promoted with enough skill and experience for the job. However, skill development and mentorship in professional workplaces such as the financial service sector is due to privileged information distributed to selected groups of individuals while other groups are kept ignorant about the information (Blass & Ferris, 2007).

Washington (2010) states that, generally, despite the benefits that mentorship offers both to the new employees and to the organisations which they are employed in, women, more often than men, find it difficult to get a mentor who can help them develop their skills, reach their goals and constantly provide them with feedback for their work. Women in the private sector, specifically in a field such as financial services, are still behind in developing and having networks that connect them with decision makers which lead to career advancement (Washington, 2010). However, despite all the challenges they face to advancing and being seen as valuable assets in organisations, they need to outshine their male colleagues by being more intelligent and stronger, which requires a certain form of guidance, whether formal or informal. However, the setback has been argued to be the preference given to white people in recruitment, promotion and giving leadership, and management skills development training over most black workers in the financial sector, which still reflects race bias (Matotoka, 2021).

2.8 Fronting and window dressing

Matotoka (2021) reveals that among many challenges in the way of career progression in the sector is what has been understood as a fronting process that has become prevalent in the banking and financial service sector. The main purpose of fronting is to ensure that the accounting and banking firms meet EEA targets without effective transformation in the workplace. Among many manifestations of this process is the distortion of the value of change, by making its beneficiaries elitist through drawing recipients from the middle and elite classes (Webster & Francis, 2019).

One contradiction that has been identified in black economic empowerment (BEE) and its sister policies is the enhancement of opportunities for individuals who possess certain forms of political connection and network, instead of redistribution to qualifying candidates. Consequently, such affirmative action policies in South Africa have mirrored an upgrading of social statuses and transfer of directorship with little or no authority and power to influence change for the beneficiaries. This is more common in corporate institutions, especially in sub-sectors such as banking, finance, and engineering, where white and male dominance is a norm (Booyesen, 2007). However, this is inconsistent with the post-apartheid commitment to equity which identified using education to reward qualifying candidates, specifically previously excluded women.

McDonald (2011) states that most black executives are often hired to fill non-central positions within corporations, which has played a huge role in their marginalisation from corporate decision-making, inhibited their career advancement and made them vulnerable to being laid off.

2.9 Queen bee syndrome

The term “queen bee syndrome” has been used to describe women, especially in dominant positions or top management, who treat their female juniors unfairly and even detach themselves from female subordinates to level up with their male counterparts (Mavin, 2008). Such practices have been described as maintaining and validating the already existing male-dominant gender hierarchies in the workplace (Dhanpat et al., 2021). Ezzedeen et al. (2015) state that, while men enjoy the “camaraderie” and comfortably monopolise the financial service industry, women face challenges in climbing up the executive ladder in these workplaces – not only with men: they have also found it difficult to relate to women leaders in sectors such as banking, who are referred to as “aggressive” or “catty”.

These are women who are willing to stop at nothing to break into leadership positions in male-dominated industries and to ensure that they are integrated into such spaces. They go as far as ripping each other down, instead of empowering more women to follow in their footsteps and maintain and the boys’ “club culture” (Ezzedeen et al., 2015). It is further argued that these women view male characteristics as mainstream in the field of professions such as the banking sector; hence displaying male characteristics has become one of their coping mechanisms in the industry,

at the expense of transformation (Mollah & Uddin, 2018). In the 1970s, queen bee was used to refer to the type of women who used their access to leadership and executive posts to keep other female workers down in male-dominated sectors, especially in the white-collar industry.

Hooks (2015) introduces the concept of sisterhood, which she describes as being sacrificed along racial lines, which serves to further sustain male power and dominance over women. She posits that women's liberation has been equated to gaining privileges within the white, male power structure, which has resulted in the male figure dictating the terms by which women are allowed into these institutional structures and the system at large. There is a call for sisterhood which transcends the trenches of race and class to unite women in these sub-sectors because the danger of falling into the systematic patriarchal trap of dividing along racial identities creates competition for recognition between the groups of women and whites at the cost of exploitation and oppression of the other group (hooks, 2015).

Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1983) emphasised the need to contextualise the notion of sisterhood in its application, arguing that it can be misleading if it is taken out of context because it presupposes that there is a commonality of interest among all women which ignores other aspects such as ethnicity and race. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1983) further describe how such assumptions of common interest have led the feminist movement to reduce forms of representations and women struggles to only to white women while ignoring the different ethnic, class and racial dynamics that exist among women.

Vachon (2014) further posits that these women flourished in their leadership positions and fell on the internalisation of gender discrimination and a low-status view of women to make themselves feel special for the feat they had achieved in such industries by associating themselves with men. However, while this concept has not received much scholarly attention, it has become very relevant in the 21st century, where some of the challenges faced by women when they want to climb the corporate ladder include a lack of role models and mentors, especially role models for black women who share and understand the struggle (Mavin, 2006). Studies have revealed the importance of women's solidarity and mentorship programmes aiming to form solidarity behaviours, making it easier for the transitioning young women to get acquainted with the

workplace and challenge the dominant patriarchal and systematic gendered labour that exists in these institutions (Mavin, 2006).

2.10 Conclusion

The chapter highlighted several key themes relating to what blocks career progression of black women in the banking sector. Firstly, there is a huge gap in the literature about South African experiences of black women in the banking sector. The key perspectives from the literature on what prevents women from progressing in their respective careers is insufficient mentorship and lack of strong coaching mechanisms that prepare women for leadership roles, which includes limited black women's role models in the bank. The intersectional approach adopted in this study views using women as fronts as not just a problem for women, but one that is also racial, as the literature reveals that black women specifically suffer from being used as fronts for the benefit of the banking institutions with little valuable skill and knowledge being invested in them to facilitate excelling in their field of interests. Hence when they are given high positions, power is withheld by such institutions. Lastly, the literature reveals that banking institutions over the years have shown less commitment to skills development projects that invest in the career progression of black women. The sector remains highly masculine, and a division of labour based on race and gender lines still applies in the banking sector which makes black women subordinates who automatically adopt roles assisting their male colleagues instead of pursuing senior and leadership roles in the bank.

2 Chapter 3: Methodology

3.2 Introduction

This methodological chapter gives the rationale for choosing qualitative research as a suitable approach for understanding career progression challenges faced by black women in the banking sector. It breaks down the different qualitative methods used for collecting the data and the paradigms employed as the ways of knowing and thinking throughout the research, including the sampling strategies that were used by the researcher to select the participants. The last section of the chapter focuses on data analysis and the ethical measures that were used by the researcher in conducting the study.

3.3 Research design

This study adopted a qualitative research design with interpretive thinking being employed in the study. The research design gave direction on how to conduct the research, covering all the critical aspects of the research that were used to maximise the validity of the findings (Mason, 2017). Qualitative and interpretive thinking emphasized the importance of understanding and exploring people's lived experiences to unearth connections among social, cultural, and historical aspects of people's lives and the different contexts in which such actions take place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Qualitative study shifts from identifying the cause of the research phenomenon to seeking the participants' understanding and interpretation of the phenomena. The lived experiences of the research participants are viewed in relation to the dominant ways of knowing and understanding the research phenomena in a qualitative study (Punch, 2014). The objective of using the lived experiences of the participants is to reveal blind spots in the dominant ways of knowing in the banking sector and even to reveal nuances that are not given attention in this study. The purpose of this research was to explore the experiences of black women with career progression in the banking sector and how they interpret and make sense of their own experiences in relation to the phenomenon.

The experiences of black women are still shaped by the unequal nature of the sector and the dominance of whites and men at the expense of incoming black women managers. Their lived experiences in the sector shape how they viewed and understood career progression in the banking sector. In this qualitative study, the researcher spent most of the time studying the participants and using encounters with their social world as the primary source of data to gain understanding from an insider's point of view (Punch, 2014).

An interpretive research paradigm framed this research. The paradigm is based on the belief that social reality is not objective but subjective, because it is shaped by our realities and personal lived experiences. De Vos et al (2002) states that while we start a study employing different theories and approaches, when we commence with the research project the full focus shifts to the participants, as interpretation and analysis of the research project must be strongly generated from the ground by participants and be fully supported by the data to add value. The researcher constructed meanings and interpretations based on those of the research participants. Using the interpretive paradigm helped the researcher to generate and produce knowledge by exploring and understanding the social world of the participants, specifically focusing on interpreting their meanings (Lewis & Ritchie, 2013).

In this research, an interpretive research paradigm was used to research the subjective lived experiences of black workers in the financial service sector with the hope of getting new understanding of how those experiences and the challenges they go through limit the number of black workers who climb the sector's leadership echelons (Lewis & Ritchie, 2013). This research paradigm echoes the claim that black workers in the banking sector cannot disengage themselves from their lived, socially constructed, socioeconomic experiences and the meanings that they attach in analysing the social world (De Vos, 2002). The interpretive research paradigm is context-specific and open to multiple perspectives for understanding the research phenomena being studied.

3.4 Profile of Western Cape banking sector

This section gives a brief overview of the racial and gender profile of the Western Cape banking sector, including the leadership, rankings of their members, mapping its profile and its demographic representation in general. The banking sector in general has at least three levels: the

branch, provincial and national head offices (Weeto, 2019). Briefly the study was conducted across the five national banks in South Africa. All the banks fall under the category of retail banking in terms of the services they provide to their clientele. The names and identifying descriptions for the banks were purposefully concealed for the purpose of maintaining confidentiality of the research participants and their respective banking institutions.

The branch level was described by many participants as the junior level of the banking sector, with provincial and national, which have different departments, being the most senior. Black women dominate numerically at the branch level, but even at the branch level, in the most junior levels of the banking sector, with white men at the top followed by coloureds and, still at the lowest level, black African women (Govender, 2019).

From the field work, what was important to note is the setup of the Western Cape banking sector in general, where banks in urban areas are dominated by white and male managers in general see appendix 5. Regardless of the difference in racial representation, all the banks had similar numerical size in terms of banking staff with the smallest branch visited having no less than a minimum of ten to twenty staff members. The management staff still resemble both the apartheid group areas seating arrangements where white staff dominated, and in upper-class urban areas there is a staff complement of white staff in management positions or more senior roles at the branch level. This was interesting because at the core of transformation is multi-racialism which does give indication that employees can excel in areas beyond their racial classifications and their race, gender and class is not a limitation. What was also common in these observations was that there were no white women in the junior and mid-management levels across the four banks that participants came from, and this steered the question: Where are all the white women at the branch level of the banking sector?

Participant observation helps us to observe what people are doing and compare it to what they are saying. Part of this process involves the researcher taking notes of what they see during the field work, being directly involved, and being accepted by the participants as an insider (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013). However, it is worth stating that this method was not the main method of data collection for this research, and this was a partial observation from the researcher about the limited representation of white women at the lower levels of the bank (Bernard, 2011).

3.5 Sample

The researcher used non-probability sampling methods, including purposive sampling, and snowballing (De Vos 2002). In purposive sampling, the sample is selected using the researcher's judgment to ensure that only participants meeting the required characteristics are selected (De Vos 2002). For this study, the researcher understood the category of black women to include coloured, black South African and Indian women because of the racial history of exclusion these groups shared during apartheid and their subsequent categorisation under affirmative action policies as designated groups hence the participants were recruited across these three groups (Erasmus, 2000). The researcher focused only on banking officials currently occupying management positions in their different banking institutions. The participants were expected to be at least junior or medium management and have at least three years working in the sector to be considered for the study. The team leader role in the banking sector has been defined as different and junior to a management role. In short, while both team leaders and managers are responsible for leading a team of people, team leaders are more technically oriented, helping their subordinates develop more profound hard skills. Managers are those involved in negotiating with stakeholders regarding high-level business goals and strategy.

The job tenure of the participants was important because it plays a huge role in their understanding of the research phenomena and their exposure to the lived experiences the study was seeking to explore. Nine black women from the banking sector were selected for the study from different banks around the Western Cape which are represented by their pseudonyms in Table 1 as Bank 1, 2, 4 and 6. Four participants came from Bank 1, two each from Bank 2 and Bank 6 and one from Bank 4. Six of the nine participants were married, one was divorced and two were single. Workers with at least a minimum of three years of work experience in the financial service industry were selected for the research, with the lowest rank being junior manager.

Table 1 below shows similarities in the number of years that the black women participants had worked in the banking sector, with all but one having more than ten years of working experience. On top of the wealth of work experience of the participants, depicted below, is accompanied by their academic qualifications, with all the participants having completed their diploma and topped by academic certificates and qualification from their respective banks, as all the participants confirmed during the interviews. However, despite all these qualifications and certificates of merit which prove these participants to be well qualified to move up the career ladder, the table shows that none of the participants have been able to take their career growth beyond the branch level.

Table 1: Characteristics of participants

Name of bank	Level of education	Employment category/ position	Marital status	Years in management	Years in banking	Participant number	Number of children	Race
Bank 1	NQF 7	Distribution manager	Married	15	21	1	1	Coloured
Bank 1	NQF 8	Team leader	Married	1 year and 3 months	18	3	2	Coloured
Bank 4	NQF 6	Team leader	Married	8	14	4	2	Coloured

Bank 1	NQF 6	Branch manager	Married	8	17	5	2	Black African
Bank 6	NQF 8	Branch manager	Divorced	10	18	6	3	Coloured
Bank 6	Level 8	Distribution manager	Married	10	18	7	4	Coloured
Bank 2	Level 7	Team leader	Married	5	12	8	3	Black African
Bank 2	Level 7	Team leader	Single	1	9	9	2	Black African
Bank 1	Level 8	Team leader	Single	5	15	10	1	Black African

3.6 Data collection

This study collected data using qualitative interviewing, which assisted the researcher in exploring the understanding of the challenges faced by black women in career progression in the banking sector. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) describe knowledge as being buried in the participants, and the researcher has the duty to unearth this wealth through the interview process. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were employed in this study to create interaction and provide deeper access to the knowledge of the participants, making the interviews more open, collaborative, and open-ended. To start the process of data collection, the researcher first tested the research questions in a pilot study conducted with one banking sector official see appendix 4. Conducting a pilot study helped the researcher to understand areas which needed to be strengthened in the interview schedule for the official interviews with the research participants (Wong et al. 2022). A pilot study helps the researcher to pre-determine future fallout and challenges that a particular research technique and method might give to the researcher. While pilot studies are never accurate, they help the researcher to test the feasibility of their study and make changes where necessary to reduce future mistakes while conducting the research (Wong et al. 2022). After getting feedback and completing the pilot study, research questions were revised and restructured to suit the study objectives to produce the final interview schedule see appendix 8.

In-depth interviews have been described as the best data collection technique for qualitative studies which seek to understand people's lived experiences. Specifically, for this research, the researcher was interested in generating new knowledge, meanings, and concepts from the perspective of the participants about their experiences and feelings in relation to the research phenomena (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The researcher used face-to-face interviews because these allowed the researcher to make empirical observations and interact with the participants as they engaged with the participants. The participants were offered various online interview options such as WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams and Zoom, considering the pandemic and state regulations at the time the interview was conducted. All the participants chose to be interviewed face-to-face. The researcher adhered to revised Covid-19 regulations such as 1.5 meters physical distance between the interviewee and the researcher, wearing face masks during the interviews and avoiding congestion by interviewing one participant at a time in a sterilized interview room. All interviews were conducted around Cape Town from different banks. The average length of the interview was 45 minutes, with field notes being taken after each interview see appendix 5. All the interviews were conducted and transcribed by the researcher under the supervision of Ms Bianca Tame.

3.7 Data analysis

3.7.1 Software

The researcher used popular software widely used by qualitative researchers, the Nvivo software, for analysing the data. Despite its popularity in qualitative research, concerns about the software have been raised relating to the software creating barriers and distance between researcher and the data, which some referred to as causing the researcher to be out of touch with and distanced from the experiences of the participants (Flick, 2013). However, the latest versions of Nvivo, such as Nvivo 12, which the researcher used, mitigate these concerns because it does not replace the manual labour of thinking, analysing and coding the data. Instead, it arranges and organises the data electronically for easy analysis, but the thinking remains with the researcher, which maintains its relevance. The Nvivo app was specifically used for long interview transcripts which would have taken longer for the researcher to analyse manually (Dewet & Erasmus, 2005). The software assisted the researcher in identifying key themes, breaking them down to sub- themes while more work was left manually to be done by the researcher to ensure that meanings and context is not lost in this process.

3.7.2 Trustworthiness

To obtain validity for the data, the researcher employed different credibility and validity methods which included member checking of the study participants before the data was fully analyzed and released for the final report. The participants were given the opportunity to reflect on the data script if they were well recorded and transcribed to their satisfaction and allowed to be clarified where they felt misquoted or misunderstood by the researcher. Abdul Hadi & Closs (2016) describe the member checking method as one of the key methods in ensuring data validity. However, they highlight the following limitation, if given too much attention, the participants may re-define the responses and the data might lose context and become too descriptive. Despite this, they still recommend it as one of the tools to eliminate researcher bias in a study. When the data was collected, the researcher ensured that more than one method of collecting data, snowballing and random sampling were used to reduce researcher bias too (Hadi & Closs, 2016)

3.7.3 Thematic analysis

The researcher chose thematic analysis as the most suitable method for analysing the data that was collected in the in-depth interviews to explore the experiences and understanding of career progression challenges faced by black women in the banking sector. Thematic analysis was used because it focuses on generating meanings and concepts from the data (Spencer et al., 2014). This form of analysis helped the researcher to identify patterns emerging from the data, so they could be analysed and allocated to various themes raised in the literature while allowing new themes to emerge from the data to reflect the experiences of the participants. While thematic analysis does not provide any one-way measure for identifying themes in the study, the research question was used here as a frame for identifying key themes as they arose from the data, because frequency does not necessarily indicate the importance of a theme (Clarke & Braun, 2013).

To achieve the objective of data analysis, the researcher familiarised themselves with the data by reviewing the transcripts of the recorded interviews and organised the data into smaller codes and more condensed elements. This was followed by assigning descriptive codes to different units of the data, which helped the researcher to be thoroughly engaged with the data. The codes were grouped into different types of themes to ensure that they answered the various aspects of the research question (Spencer et al., 2014). Different codes were assigned to different themes to help the researcher to manage the data and ensure that all the themes were grouped together and to

allow the development of sub-themes. Some themes were broken into sub-themes without losing the meanings and direct context of the data (Spencer et al., 2014). Six thematic analysis steps were followed in analysing this data: familiarization with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes and writing up a report (Appendix 1) (Clarke & Braun 2013).

3.8 Limitations of the study

This study was exploratory in nature and qualitative, based on in-depth interviews about lived experiences of banking sector employees, which poses some limitations: it is not generalisable. While the study reveals the challenges that are faced by black women employees in the sector, the sample was limited to allow thorough analysis of the rich data and information, and therefore the conditions and experiences that the participants shared were diverse, personal and cannot be assumed to apply to all the workers (Mason, 2017). However, this does not reduce the richness of the knowledge that was gained from the study. Qualitative study still gives a detailed insight into how meanings are constructed and how banking sector employees experience and understand career progression post-apartheid in the sector, which gives the researcher a broader knowledge of the post-apartheid banking sector in relation to the career progression of black women employees (Mason, 2017).

3.9 Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to self-introspection by the researcher and understanding our personal, political and intellectual biases and prejudices as researchers, clearly stating our own standpoint (Doucet & Mauthner, 2006). The researcher recognises the need for an objective and neutral position to conduct a study that is not dominated by the beliefs and biases of the researcher. However, I understand that my race and class background in the study poses a certain level of bias and the existence of certain perceived positions about the research phenomena.

However, since this is a qualitative study, most of the analysis was based on the research findings from the participants; throughout the study, chances for heavy reliance to be placed on the values and beliefs of the researcher were minimised through constant introspection (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). To ensure that the study was objective, the researcher engaged with different students in our department to get their perspectives on objectivity of the study and data representation of the

opinions of the participants. However, the researcher is aware of the importance of paying attention to one's own personal biases, which also affect how the researcher approaches the study, and of reflecting on their personal involvement to limit personal prejudice, bias or imposing their own beliefs and values as far as possible (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

3.10 Fieldwork challenges

One challenge that I never anticipated became a huge challenge from the first day was the hesitance of the potential participants to participate in the study or speak about their workplace challenges with career progression. An assistant manager in one of the banking institutions cited the POPI Act, which prohibits employees from sharing information that could have a negative impact on their banks as they are dealing with markets, and any information that goes public has an impact on the share price of their institution. However, when I produced the consent form and assured the participants that the research was independent, and that their identities would be anonymised to protect them, they were more receptive and engaging (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013).

3.11 Ethical considerations

3.11.1 Informed consent

Informed consent refers to the distribution of the necessary information about the study to the participants, including its objectives, risks and benefits so that they make a well-informed choice about whether to voluntarily participate in the study. For this study, informed consent was obtained from all the participants who were part of the study after they had been briefed thoroughly about the study. Creswell (2012) states that making the participants sign a no-fee voluntary participation consent form has become a norm, formalising a no-harm agreement between the participants and the researcher. The participants were made aware of all the risks and the details of the research before they fully committed to participating in the research, after having received a full detailed explanation about the research objectives and expectations between the researcher and the participants; however, at no point was their commitment binding to them to stay in the research against their own will (Babbie, 2014).

3.11.2 Confidentiality

In a qualitative interview, total anonymity is a complicated guarantee that one cannot offer any

research participant, because interviews are conducted in a manner that exposes the research participant's identity to the researcher, but one can guarantee confidentiality instead (Creswell, 2012). Participants were assured in this research that all their responses about their lived experiences were going to be used only for the research, and the information was treated with high levels of confidentiality. Only people who were directly involved in the research, whether assisting or part of data collection, could access it. Important identifying information such as names, home addresses and the banking institutions were anonymised to ensure that participants' privacy and confidentiality is respected (Babbie, 2014).

In conducting this research, the researcher fully adhered to the University of Cape Town POPI Act policy; at the core of the act is ensuring that when personal identifiers are collected in a research

study, they are stored in secure and access-controlled locations to prevent the data being harvested and used by third parties. POPI states that when data is stored on hard drives or any onsite storage during research, it should strictly be accessed only by the designated individuals to protect the privacy of the research participants (Botha, et al. 2015). The data was stored on a USB at a safe place where only the researcher could access it for the duration of the transcription period.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter detailed various methods that were used to conduct the study. The study used qualitative research methodology to interview ten research participants. Semi-structured face to face interviews were used to collect the data. The researcher further used thematic analysis to analyse the collected data in six stages. The researcher directly collected and analysed the data, which gave the researcher an opportunity to engage with the data intensively and ensure that meanings and key concepts from the participants were not distorted during the process of data analysis.

3 Chapter 4: Theoretical framework

4.1 Introduction

This study used intersectionality theory to explore how different categories of social division intersect to produce diverse lived experiences of black women in the banking sector. This approach allowed the researcher to explore how various categories of difference such as race, gender and class meet at the point of intersection to structure the marginalisation of black women based on their race, gender, and class in the banking sector (Atewologun, 2018). In this section, existing debates around intersectionality and some of the strong views from post-colonial feminist scholarship are entertained, discussed, and linked to intersectional work. Intersectionality is a framework or approach that provides ways of knowing and language to examine the co-constitution and interdependencies among social categories and systems of domination (Dhamoon, 2011).

The concept of intersectionality was first coined by Kimberle Crenshaw, initially in the American legal field to study the marginalisation of black women based on race, class, gender and ethnicity but over the years it has been expanded to study experiences of marginalised women globally (Luiz & Terziev, 2022). Over the years, intersectionality theory has increasingly developed to become a major tool of analysis for exploring the experiences of marginalised groups and has influenced a large body of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences which now self-identifies as being intersectional (Collins, 2019). Intersectionality cannot be limited to understanding the parallels between different types of oppression but is also about comprehending how interwoven the different types of oppression are (Misra, 2018).

Carrim and Nkomo (2018) state that there has been a shift from the initial study of intersectionality which first aimed to study how the intersection of race and gender placed women in marginalised positions of society. This shift has seen intersectionality theory being key in studying how race, gender and class categories are socially constructed and reproduced through different social practices and processes that position different groups unequally in organisations (Mishra, 2013). However, the theory argues that understanding the socially constructed nature of the categories of difference gives the opportunity to challenge and unlearn them because power is embedded in how

these categories are produced, organised, and maintained, specifically in the workplace, where people's experiences come second to capital accumulation in order of importance (Mishra, 2013).

Employing intersectionality helped the researcher to pay careful attention to the impact that social positioning of black women in society plays in how they navigate their way up the corporate ladder in the banking sector. This brings to the centre and makes visible how the multiple positioning, whether based on one or two or all combined categories of difference, constitutes the everyday workplace experience of the black women in the workplace. Carrim (2019) states that the intersectional approach helps to interrogate how black women in the workplace work and rework their social identities to fit the organisational culture. Such organisational cultures should not be understood out of the historical context of how these organisational cultures were produced. For instance, given South African history, the meaning, and identities of black women in general are associated with and influenced by their cultural and historical apartheid positioning in relation to men and the white race as the superior racial category, which placed them on the margins of the social ladder (Corlett & Mavin, 2014).

Carrim (2019) recognises the key role that context plays in the study of intersectionality and in identity scholarship, which acknowledges the fluid interactions within and between identity categories and how social as well as self-identities evolve over time. Carrim (2019) to further propose that the intersectional approach should be fully exhausted in its capacity to interrogate subordinate identities. Hence, this study pays attention to how different forms of oppression on the basis on gender, class and race are studied together and analysed in the South African context to interrogate how they combine to shape the living experiences of women in the banking sector paying particular attention to how these experiences affect their career prospects in the bank.

The theory has been used to study the experiences of women in leadership roles in South African public administration by Ross (2020). In South Africa, an intersectional approach has been used to study the experiences of Indian women entering post-apartheid management structures to show how race, class and gender identities of the past still shape the present lived experiences of black women in the private sector. Carrim and Nkomo (2016) draw on a case study of the first group of Indian women to enter managerial positions in post-apartheid corporate South Africa. Carrim and Nkomo (2016) use the theory to show that the lived experiences and narratives in the workplace

reveal that black women continue to engage in racio-ethnic and gender identity struggles to navigate and create workable managerial identities.

Idahosa and Mkhize (2021) believe that such experiences of black women are contextual in South Africa, and hence, in understanding their process of challenging power dynamics around them, one must first revisit the institutional structure of apartheid and its power and privilege distribution structure, which, even among black women as defined earlier, created more division and categories which divided them into Indians, coloureds and black Africans (Idahosa & Mkhize, 2021). It was this hierarchical order that characterised black African women as minors of the then apartheid regime; hence any process that seeks to disrupt the matrix of power distributions and denaturalise hegemonic normative whiteness must first deal with racial and gender stereotypes that these categories have been firmly built on and maintained by.

Sasinsky (2020) demonstrates the need for intersectional understanding in studying the experiences of women in corporate South Africa by drawing on a study of black female attorneys in South Africa. In the study, Sasinsky (2020) states that black women in the legal field shape their lives through gendered, race and classist experiences with their intersectional existence being compounded by patriarchal and gendered structures. Citing one common example of being a black woman in the corporate industry, and specifically in the legal field, Sasinsky (2020) states that the legal firms make it harder for black women to enter the legal field of attorneys, before having to struggle to rise through the leadership hierarchies. In the study, women indicate that, being a woman, one is required to work extra hard to show that you are as competent as your average male counterpart. Sasinsky (2020) further opines that it is even worse when you are employed under a BBBEE policy, because women must prove that they deserve to be in the post they are employed in, which is often an average performance level for normal male or white women employees.

These studies are relevant and key to the context of this research because they address issues faced by black professional women in the white-collar professions in South Africa. Both the legal and financial fields have long histories of white male dominance; hence these studies are relevant in the sociology of professions research because they help us to see the consistencies and similar experiences that are faced by black women in these fields in post-apartheid South Africa.

Among many links that can be drawn between the two theories, intersectionality and postcolonial theory are calls for theorising from the Global South and allowing the marginalised to tell their own stories using their own methods. Collins (2019), in her book *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory*, re-imagines how different understandings of critical social theory would have turned out to be for the Global North had other narratives and tools of analysis taken off from the Global South. Therefore, to interrogate the challenges faced by black women in the South African banking sector, this research, while drawing from different literatures of intersectionality globally, recognises the limitations and dangers of universalising the experiences of black women that are being explored. The consequence of this is distorting the very nuances it seeks to bring to the fore. Hence recognising the uniqueness of the experiences black women faced based on their country's context and histories is very important (Atewologun, 2018). Considering the issue of context, it further helps one to understand why being a black woman in the South African post-apartheid corporate context is different from experiences of women from other parts of the world.

The theory of intersectionality has been met with calls for a more radical and activist approach that considers the colonialist's impact in understanding the experiences of black women in the Global South. Most feminists advocate for what has been referred to as a post-colonial feminist approach (Mohanty, 1984). The two theories, intersectionality, and post-colonial theory need not be understood outside of each other or as alienating one another but rather as complementing each other in this study. Post-colonial feminist theory offers a complementary opportunity to intersectionality theory to view the experiences of black women in the banking sector. Using a historical and transitional lens which helps us explore the different intersections and impacts of patriarchy, colonialism and other systems of domination that continue to marginalise black women (Keahey, 2018).

4.2 Conclusion

In summary, this section explained the use of intersectionality theory in studying black women's experiences in the banking sector. The theory was employed in this study because of its capacity to help us explore more than one of the forms of oppression faced by black women bankers, which are based on race, class and gender. The theory is further complimented by post-colonial theory which helps the study balance studying the marginalisation of women based on different forms of

social division with the cultural and historical context of the black women being studied, to avoid generalisation and universalisation of the experiences of black women in the study. Post-colonial theory achieves this objective by moving to the center the historical legacy of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa in exploring the current experiences of black women in the banking sector.

4 Chapter 5: Findings

5.1 Introduction

This section seeks to answer the following research question: What are the key challenges faced by black women workers in the banking sector in advancing their careers in the post-apartheid banking sector in South Africa? In answering this question, the intersection of race, gender and class was also explored in the study to identify patterns that still tie down the banking sector to the legacy of apartheid. The findings of the research are presented below using key themes emerging from the research. In post-apartheid South Africa, while the policies have been put in place to ensure that the field is inclusive, the findings here reveal very slow progress in integrating black women in more effective roles; questions have been raised and the participants revealed that racism in the banking sector is both internal and external.

5.2 Intergroup barriers to career advancement

This section reveals that one of the challenges faced by black women in the Western Cape banking sector is the existence of internal intergroup racism among women in general and black women as a group. The findings below are presented under two different subthemes: intergroup racism and queen bee syndrome respectively.

5.2.1 Intergroup racism in the Western Cape

The participant below reveals that intergroup racism in the Western Cape plays a major role in the banking sector in determining black women's transition to different roles of management:

Yes, I think the challenge of the skin colour in the Western Cape becomes very critical compared to other provinces in providing positions of privilege in general. For instance, while we are all black, coloured women and men have the advantage of falling just below white males in terms of being positioned for privilege in the Western Cape and they also subject black women under their own prejudice where they dominate. (Participant 4: Bank 1)

Participant 4 cited the existence of intergroup racism in the Western Cape that further marginalised black African women and posited that the issue of skin colour in the Western Cape labour market and banking sector is highly contested. All the black African women in the study voiced their

concern about the peculiarity and complexity of racism in the Western Cape in relation to career progression of black women. Participant 4 (Bank 1) stated that it was different to other provinces where there was no second group below whites that was dominant in provinces such as Gauteng, which many participants viewed as having better workplace conditions. What most of the participants agreed on is that, in the Western Cape, the colour of skin matters more than the general classifications of government and BEE of affirmative action and blackness.

There was someone whom we got employed at the same time and are serving in the same position but because he is a coloured, he got a better package compared to mine. For instance, what was nice about the black lady that resigned, she was very open and transparent, she used to tell me that, I really want you to get a good package and even you yourself can see that I am trying. I could see that she was trying her best and even writing motivations for us to be treated equally but they were failing without success but the issue of colour here is very critical and determines where you will be included and excluded. (Participant 8: Bank 2)

Participant 8 (Bank 2), as can be seen above, paints a picture of the racialised, unequal distribution of opportunities for black women in the bank. Participant 9 (Bank 2) shows that in the fight against white hegemony, the competition is even tougher for black women as they still have to wrestle for equality among the already divided category of black women. Other black African participants alluded to various forms in which intergroup racism manifested in the Western Cape banking sector and delayed their career growth, painting a picture of the province which shows that the apartheid racialised Group Areas Act, which separated people into different racial groups with black Africans at the bottom of the racial hierarchy, is systematically reproduced in how opportunities are shared in the banking sector.

5.2.2 Queen bee syndrome

The research showed that women sabotaging each other is one of the challenges that black women still face in the banking sector because of their own inferiority complexes, which have seen more women still preferring male leadership styles of management. Many participants stated that they have personally been victims of either direct or indirect attacks from fellow black women in the banking sector and women in general in the bank. Other participants attested to the existence of queen bee syndrome in the bank, stating that other women felt threatened and uncomfortable when they were led by other black women in the banking sector instead of creating women's solidarity.

Then you will find that among women themselves, instead of celebrating one another they would rather bring each other down and sabotage each other's characters and that can be challenging. (Participant. 1: Bank 1)

Participant 1 (Bank 1) reflected on many occasions where she was a victim of queen bee syndrome and stated that in her own bank she had to deal with experiences where she was made to feel less and not good enough by her female colleagues. However, the expectation that they were bestowing on her was based on the male leaders who had occupied the seat of the bank manager before her, and hence they expected similar performance.

So, when we sat down, the team was complaining that I do not motivate them, and they do not trust me and were not being inspired by me as their leader. Only to discover that in the team, there were two individual women forming that group that were fuelling and influencing the rest of the team, I felt like it was a personal attack, and I literally broke down because of the hurtful things that were said. (Participant 1: Bank 1)

Participants in three out of the four banks from which the interviewees came shared similar experiences of being sabotaged by other women.

So, for me personally I have seen that if there is a women that is going all out to progress in her career, there is going to be not only women but men as well who will question her and call her b**** (using vulgar language referring to a wild women or aggressive lady) which refers to aggressive ladies because you are going for everything, you want the cake and there is nothing wrong with it. (Participant 6: Bank 6)

Participant 6 (Bank 6) described the female sabotage as no surprise because, as the women leaders start to climb the corporate ladder, not only will they attract criticism among women but even among men. Participant 6 (Bank 6) stated they would be either seen too strict or wanting to shine alone at the expense of other women, while men, on the other side, because they fear for the neutralisation of their masculine authority, will view the women as being too bossy, and the participant described this as a very lonely stage for a career women where, if she decides to “bake her cake and eat it alone”, she must go for it.

5.3 Black women in the banking sector

5.3.1 Work life balance

One of the challenges for most of the women working in the banking sector is the struggle to balance their business life and family time because of the pressure that comes with working in the

banking sector, specifically for black women mothers with children and family. Almost all the participants in the study indicated how impersonal and anti-social the banking sector is for women with families, and it becomes even worse for women pursuing leadership positions. Limited time to spend with family and be a visible mother and wife has been identified as one of the key barriers for women who are eager to pursue their career development in the banking sector.

So, the demanding part is 24/7, you must give it your all 100%. Managing family time is difficult, just this morning kids were alone at home and my dog escaped. They did not know what to do and I could not care, because business expects that of you. When you are here in this role, you need a strong support system. I will leave at 6pm and I will take my device and go home and when I am at home, I am expected to open it and work. (Participant 2: Bank 1)

Participant 2 (Bank1) referred to her work laptop as the “*monster that she no longer wakes up at home*” because it reminds her of the first fifteen years of marriage when she prioritised the bank over her marriage until she could not do it anymore. This was because even when she was off duty, at home after office hours, as the distribution manager, she constantly had to keep her cell phone on to respond to emails and calls about her duties in the bank. Almost all the participants in the study that it was very hard to strike balance between work and family in the banking sector.

In all the banks that I visited when I was conducting the interviews, there were similar patterns that I could easily draw: the predominance of black female workers at the bottom of the hierarchy of the banking institutions, being led by one or two men with skin colour being consistent with the specific setting and location of the bank, which further maintains a highly racialised society in the Western Cape.

Participant 1 (Bank 1) indicated that, as a female participant, you had to make a conscious decision where you first planned whether you wanted to be a career woman or a family woman. Once your mind was made up, the next challenge in channelling your career progression in the right direction was that if you were married, you had to navigate the process of taking breaks in your career for periods where you would be raising your children, which alone presents multiple disadvantages if you are black women.

So as the women, contrary to men, you cannot just think I need to Go! Go! Go! Because you have a responsibility at home to care for the kids and therefore for me it must also be a conscious choice to say that for now my kids are still at school. So, once my children are

finished high school and are in university that frees me to pursue my career as well.
(Participant 6: Bank 6)

Participant 6 (Bank 6) above showed that for women, career progression and mobility in the banking sector is threatened and delayed by internal factors while banks easily escape from assisting them in dealing with such challenges because they are viewed as natural obligations of women, which include pregnancy and child rearing. Most of the participants shared similar experiences about the two stages of pregnancy and childbirth, and described the time of maternity as a time where you must just make peace with it straining your career prospects and that it will cause you delays compared to your male colleagues, whether you are married or not.

5.3.2 Impact of white women on black women in the banking sector

One of the interesting field-work observations across the Western Cape banking sector was the limited representation of white women at the branch level, even at the branch management level. When participants were asked why there is limited representation of white women in the banking sector, Participant 8 (Bank 2) explained below why there is a perception that black women are part of the peripheral workforce, whereas white women are given flexible work hours and occupy positions in elite departments:

You know if I can tell you, based on my observation, that white women do not like working hard. So that is why if you go to the elite and more sophisticated divisions such as business banking, that is where you will find them dominating because these are departments that offer flexible working opportunities, and you can even work remotely which helps you balance work and family. (Participant 8: Bank 2)

Participant 8 (Bank2) from the study stated one of the reasons that black women are excluded from entering these elite departments of the banking sector and their careers reach a limit when they become team leaders in the banking sector. The participant indicated that most elite departments, such as business banking, wealth and investments, are normally the departments dominated by white women. Many participants indicated how these departments were strategically arranged based on gender, skin colour and class in the Western Cape because of their high profile in banking.

I remember applying for a post in the business banking department. After a year they called me for an interview and after some time they re-advertised the same post that I had applied for in the past and they never even gave feedback. I took some time to investigate the profiles of the people who made the cut and were working there and that was when I could

make the patterns and understood that mostly it is white people who are working there in those departments. (Participant 10: Bank 1)

Participant 10 (Bank1) described how her application for a particular position in the business banking department was declined without explanation at Bank 1, only for the position to be re-advertised and later given to a white colleague again, despite her having honours in economics and more than 17 years of working in the bank and meeting the qualifications for the post she was applying for. One participant linked some of the factors mentioned by other participants in the research by describing her personal encounter with what she referred to as “career blocking” in the banking sector. The participant showed that there is an invisible gatekeeping process that takes place in the banking sector to decide who is included in and excluded from specific career growth and mobility opportunities, despite having the right qualifications and many years of work experience.

5.4 Coaching and networking

This section introduces three sub-themes: mentorship, informal networks and skills development. The section discusses the role that lack of mentorship plays in delaying black women’s career progression in the banking sector. The section further outlines how the existence of informal networks continues to marginalise women in the banking sector while privileging white and male bank workers.

5.4.1 Mentorship and coaching

Most of the participants in the study indicated that, in the banking sector, there is a need for strong coaching and mentorship to assist black women with career progression and career mobility. One participant described the experience of being a team leader as reaching a ceiling in the banking sector, specifically in her bank (Bank 1). She argued that there was no strong mechanism to channel them and guide the women to move beyond the position of being a team leader:

I would say that most banks are the same since I have worked in three banks in the past. They do not provide clear guidelines that assist you to get to your specific career goals and targets on your targeted specific times by giving a strong coaching and mentoring that will expose you to the level of career growth you expect as an individual. (Participant 10: Bank 2)

Participant 10 (Bank 2) shared from her own personal experience that at the branch level, instead of having mentors, branch managers, who are mostly men, lead a large group of female subordinate employees. They played a critical role in the career advancement of black women specifically when it comes to climbing the career ladder. Many participants argued that there was no diversity of departments at the branch level of the banking sector, compared to provincial and head offices where white women and men dominated. Some of the participants further stated that, among many reasons black women remain a majority at the lowest levels of the bank. was the lack of exposure and guidance that they received from their respective banks about how to crack and enter the white-dominated fields in the sector, such as business banking, investment, and even more senior leadership roles.

Almost all the participants agreed that in the bank, the only investment in mentorship was assisting one to get acquainted with their work. This was being done through working closely with their senior managers and team leaders working in the roles they are being introduced in. However, once they were familiar with their duties no one cared about how they progressed from there, except to expect the results and let them swim on their own.

So, the mentor is usually the person who has been in your new role for a while. What is mostly needed and would be more relevant now specifically for us black females are long term mentorship programs that not only focuses on your starting in the management and leave you to navigate it yourself once you are familiar, but more intimate programs by other female seniors that help you navigate [the] management journey as whole and grow with you. (Participant 6: Bank 6)

What Participant 6 (Bank 6) suggests above that would benefit women's career growth in the banking sector was having someone who would be willing to work with the new female manager in a more intimate mentorship, sharing knowledge of not only how to survive but to excel as the banking manager in a world that is not yet yours. In this section, all the participants indicated the urgent need for strong mentorship programs, which were lacking in the banking sector, as an immediate solution that they thought they needed for their struggles to be effective and progress in their careers as black managers and team leaders respectively in the banking sector.

5.4.2 Informal networks

From the interviews, participants indicated that informal networks were tools and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of black women specifically, gatekeeping access to career growth and the

sector. The participants described these networks as channels of information and opportunities; for instance, most participants indicated that it was difficult for them to be informed about their own income brackets when the posts for senior positions were released, compared to their colleagues who have a different skin colour, in the Western Cape.

One black African woman described scenarios where a male-coloured manager would call their fellow-coloured colleagues to brief them about a job post that had been advertised internally and the income category which they would belong in should they apply for the post. However, the participant further stated, neither white or coloured managers would ever tell black women banking officials about their income bracket for such posts, as they only encouraged them to apply and let the income to be negotiated once they had been selected for the post.

For example, when the post comes up, the manager literally calls his own-coloured people to the staff room and asks them, do you want to apply for the post? If the person says yes, they literally tell you that just so you know this will be the amount in which your salary will be increased. Remember these are the people who handle your application for the promotion, unlike us black women, which you do not even get the chance to negotiate. You can see even when you ask them what my salary bracket is at least, just to figure out how much will you be earning; they will never tell you and you just must apply blindfolded. (Participant 8: Bank 1)

Participant 8 (Bank 1) above described the existence of informal networks as one of the delays in just transformation and counter-progress in the banking sector because most of those officials that were at the top, who drafted such policies, were not directly affected by them. Participant 8 (Bank 1) stated that the people working at the head offices, who were mainly white men, did not know the challenges faced by black women, and hence getting more black women into leadership and influential positions was influenced by true transformation of the sector. When most of the participants were asked about post-apartheid inclusiveness in the banking sector, Participant 8 (Bank 1) reflected on her time of working at the head office and described how the bank was constantly using a bottom-up approach to attend to the issues facing black women in the bank. However, at the most senior and executive levels of the bank, the sector remained white and dominated by men, for whom she used the term “big guys” to refer to the dominant leadership network of Bank 1 in the Western Cape.

However, it is important to note that, while engaging with the participants, some black women bankers were reported to be taking it upon themselves to create their own supportive structural social network to offer support and mentor each other. However, the challenge they face is that their network might not carry the same social capital as their counterparts' because such capital is embedded in the skin colour or race, gender, and class, which gives it value and positions it in a state of advantage. As it can be seen from the comment below, Participant 8 introduced us to black women's informal networks that they created to counter the "white boys' club" or Western Cape "big guys", as they referred to the ruling elites in the Western Cape banks.

Sorry I had to take that call, it is one of my younger circle members, because in the region there are five of us black Africans from two branch managers but there is only one and these two kids are from the other departments, and one guy who is also in my circle. Yes, we are one united group because we have no choice. (Participant 8: Bank 2)

The quote above from Participant 8 (Bank 2) shows that not only black women are faced with the challenge of informal networks that exclude them from access to information about career progression and advancement opportunities in the bank, and that they are also creating their own networks to support each other. However, the challenge that keeps most black women on the periphery is the value attached to individual capital: social networks of black women are most likely not assisting them with career progression nor helping them gain competitive advantage. Black women themselves remain on the periphery and they can only pass what they have access to, compared to privileged white and male networks, which have direct access to decision making. Black African women in the study further indicated that, most often, interviews were conducted as formalities, as the circles and informal networks had the power to influence and sway the selection towards their preferred candidate. This is because of their influence and the access they have to the decision making by the selection panel in the board rooms.

5.4.3 Skills development programs

When asked about the existence of skills development programs in the banking sector or courses that help them make their career progression easy, most of the participants stated that programs to enhance career mobility of black women existed in most of the banks where the interviewees were employed. However it was how the programs were governed and the output they produced over the past few years that made their effectiveness questionable.

Participant 9 (Bank 1) alluded to the argument by stating that, considering the racism and gendered discrimination that was occurring in the Western Cape banking sector, whether you collected all the certificates, the program's meritocracy did not override the need for the employee to win the favour of their own managers to get promoted. Even among other participants, a strong emphasis was placed on the huge role that the banking managers play in the career mobility and promotion of workers, even beyond the merits, which had retarded the careers of most black women despite their continued growth in experience and qualifications.

I think there is a need for more learnerships across banks, not like what they are normally doing now where they only offer them to people that already have qualifications. I think there must be more learnerships to assist employees that are in the lower ranks and at the bottom of the banking ladder to gain more knowledge about the banking sector. (Participant 3: Bank 1)

Participant 3 (Bank 1) stated that there was a need for the programs to reflect the current and historical contexts of the country and women's challenges and struggles with racial, class and gender barriers in the banking sector. While most of the participants agreed on the existence of the skills development programs and other leadership programs, they shared sentiments similar Participant 3's above.

So, such things require attention first and managers to start speaking about them and even on leadership trainings, that kind of support that is based on the current and historical context of the country is needed to help build women leaders that can lead effectively. (Participant 6: Bank 6)

Participant 6 (Bank 6) further added that there was a need for the banks to have programs, even once a month where platforms would be created for black women in management to share their lived experiences and have open talks aiming to share knowledge about how others had dealt and continued to deal with racial stereotypes from customers and their colleagues. Most of the participants in this section argued that such open talks could assist incoming managers to gain knowledge and experience about some of the challenges they would face and how to tackle them, and, lastly, these would denaturalise the stereotypes that had been normalised in the banking sector.

5.5 Education as cultural capital

This section introduces the concept of education as a social capital in the banking sector and interrogates the different roles educational levels and experience play in the participant's career advancement. The researcher introduces the concept of education as a capital and access to it varies for people based on race, class, and gender.

5.5.1 Education

Experience in the banking sector proved to be far more important than the educational level itself, although the background still carried a certain weight of social capital among banking sector women. Most of the participants stated the lack of meritocracy in the banking sector, specifically in relation to career mobility and promotion. Almost all the black women indicated that they continued to be overlooked as a black woman, despite having the qualifications advertised for the post and experience, in favour of a less qualified white candidate, followed by coloureds, for management positions.

For instance, what happens now, not only with career progression, but with getting employed, whether you have qualification or not, if the manager says they want you on board, whether you qualified or not, you will get in based on your skin colour, but now it is more systematic than during apartheid (Participant 9: Bank 2).

Participant 9 (Bank 2) suggested that race and gender in the Western Cape went beyond academic qualifications and merits when prospects for the positions were being selected. Most participants raised similar concerns that one of the challenges they faced with race and gender prejudices as that even with their qualifications they found it hard to progress in the sector because most of the powers were vested in white and male managers.

5.5.2 Income wage gap

Participant 9 (Bank 1) further elaborated that, in the banking sector, if meritocracy were to be fully implemented, a lot would change for the better in levelling the playing field for black women working in the sector. Most of the participants argued that, compared to the past, a lot of skilled black women had graduated with degrees in scarce skills such as accounting and finance and were entering the banking sector, but they were not progressing because of the internal politics and the use of race and gender in selection processes and promotion of workers inside the elite banking

institutions. Two participants from one bank unpacked how Bank 1 had maintained racialised categorisation of bank regions, which maintained a huge income gap between the bank managers working in branches in townships, and Urban areas surrounding Cape Town.

Even when it comes to wages, a person who is doing the same thing that I am doing in Johannesburg is earning a totally different amount despite doing the same job in the same bank. Their motivation would be because other branches fall under a certain category such as classic or flagship compared to others which basically divide branches into poor black and urban and white areas in the Western Cape. (Participant 8: Bank 2)

What Participant 8 (Bank 2) unpacked here is very important, because it explains the income gap and inequality based on race dating back to apartheid days, where wage inequality was justified by the types of jobs black people were allocated to which were inferior to those of their white colleagues during apartheid. Participant 8 (Bank 2) showed that there is a strong racialized categorization and classification of regional banks, where the banks with high revenue and turnover, which are typically closer to towns in urban areas, are grouped in one category and those from townships are grouped in another. However, the complaints of the participants arise from the fact that these groupings mirror both racialism and income inequality, because the banks in townships are the only banks that you will find being led by black Africans. However, their income bracket, even for similar roles, is very different to that of managers from other regions which are more often led by whites, followed by coloured managers, based on their income brackets.

Okay. So, in this region I am the only black African in the whole region but when you go to regions such as the Greater Cape Flats then you might find few other black African leaders. (Participant 8: Bank 2)

What makes it clear that the income wage gap has very little to do with demographic representation is the proposition by the participant from Bank 6 which had its branch in the heart of one of the predominantly white areas in Cape Town. The participant, as seen below, argued that there was a need to investigate why there is no white representation at ground level of the banking sector. However, a logical explanation is very simple, as posited by many participants: there is a correlation between the placement of black women managers and the income wage gap and the classification of bank regions according to different racial backgrounds. The racial categorisation of banks impacts black women when they finally get promoted to management as they are most likely placed on the peripheries of the province or in townships. Black women's careers are

retarded into are into lower positions of the banking sector where black women are subjected lower wages.

Look I have only been in this bank for the last five years as the manager, but I think what we need to investigate is the issue of whites. For instance, here on the ground we do not have whites at all which is what I think we would have to look at in the future. (Participant 7: Bank 6)

Participant 7 (Bank 6) raised the issue of absence of white women for the second time, but in a different context this time: she presupposed that one of the reasons white women are not present in the lower ranks of the banking sector is because of lower income at the branch level, being the most junior rank of the banking sector. The general view of the participants is that whites, both male and female, followed by men in general, occupy the highest paying positions in the banking sector and further use race, gender and, to a similar extent in the Western Cape, class to prevent black women from entering these positions through different mechanisms stated in this chapter. This further widens the gender and race income gap of banking sector workers and further maintains the racial representation of blacks at the lowest ranks of the bank and whites in more elite levels that offer high income, which is directly linked with racialized career mobility.

5.6 Organisational culture

This section discusses the participants' perceptions of what constitutes the organisational culture and some of the key standing foundations that maintain and reproduce the organisational culture of the banks. The participants described the banking sector culture as raced, gendered and patriarchal against black women, and women struggle to assert their own leadership authority in their banks. In sum, all these themes discussed below combine to shape black women's transitional experiences and struggles for career mobility in the bank.

5.6.1 Raced and gendered institutions

The participants described the Western Cape banking culture as being embedded in the historical legacy of racism with the province being the locus of racial discrimination in the country, as well as the generally male-oriented nature of the banking sector, with the white middle class being key among the sector's old guard. From the participants' view, the culture of the banking sector in the Western Cape had very little to do with the performance, potential and capability of women in

their roles when they are given opportunities to serve in executive roles. In fact, most of the participants agreed that most of the female leaders outperformed some of their male colleagues in the banking sector.

Participant 2 from Bank 4 described how their bank went down to curatorship under a long history of white male executive CEOs, and years later, when they introduced a black man followed by a black woman CEO, things started shaping up for better. Participant 2 (Bank 3) further argued that, despite evidence of the key role that women play in the banks, it is still very difficult even for their bank to have more female area managers because of the historic legacy and culture of the banking sector being white male dominated.

So, like I said before to you, before curatorship when we were led by this white CEO, there were not many of these opportunities. In fact, programs that we had were less related to career progression in the banking sector but more to do with the bank. But now after curatorship when we had a stint of being led by a black female CEO, a lot has changed, and they are starting to introduce courses that are helping us to develop not only with banking knowledge but also with leadership skills. However, the culture remains difficult to break it and make it more gender neutral in terms of the time orientation of the bank and the even fastening equilibrium between male and female bank leaders in terms of authority and respect. (Participant 2: Bank 3)

Participant 2 (Bank3) painted a picture of a highly gendered and racialised Western Cape banking sector, where the results and performance held very little weight in front of white hegemony for black women to justify their career progression and mobility against their male counterparts. Participant 2 (Bank 3) above unpacked a very common challenge that most participants identified in the banking sector, where neither their qualifications nor many years of high performance justified their career mobility in the sector in the context of the lack of confidence in female leadership replacing them.

Some of the participants argued that they believed that, if they were to relocate in other provinces such as Johannesburg, they would not face the impediments they were facing in the Western Cape because in other provinces, gender and to a lesser extent class are the huge barriers, but not these categories of social division employed in the Western Cape to determine exclusion and inclusion of members.

5.6.2 Asserting authority

Negative attitudes towards black women leadership are one of the challenges faced by black women in the financial service sector. Almost all the participants indicated having a challenge with asserting their authority in their branches, specifically over male colleagues and clientele in the Western Cape. The women in the study indicated that one of the main challenges for leadership retention when you are already in those leadership structures was the ability to cope with colleagues in asserting their authority as many would look down on the female leaders.

Yes, that is so true, for example for me, I think being a woman of colour alone puts you on a disadvantage, then on top of that with me being a practicing Muslim who is always seen wearing a scarf in the workplace, that alone does create an assumption from being submissive and your authority is already being weakened even among colleagues. Plus, for me I look younger and short, which is a further disadvantage in the eyes of colleagues. (Participant 6: Bank 6)

It can be very tricky, for me the three different things that I have experienced was when I worked with male colleague that is a leader, but I had higher authority over him. I had an experience where he would rebel against me, and he would not take orders from me because I am a female “how can I think I would lead him?” – he is a man; he is older than me and he just had that ego. (Participant 2: Bank 1)

Participant 6 (Bank 6) outlined the issue of age and how general phenotypical appearance for younger women is viewed in society and culturally as being among the challenges which have made women vulnerable to their authority being undermined by colleagues. They expect them to be subservient and submissive to older and male colleagues. More than one participant indicated that age differences can become another barrier in an already racist and gendered organisation such as the bank. Participant 2 (Bank1) added to the bad experiences and challenges with asserting one’s authority in the bank by stating that when ageism is married with gender in the bank, it was even more difficult for younger black women managers who were already seen as lesser managers by virtue of their skin colours.

Specifically in the Western Cape, participants stated that, aside from being black, gender and accent opened doors not only for discrimination but also for harassment from the customers when they asserted their authority as senior leaders of their branches, which links to race, gender, and class background if one could not speak English or Afrikaans fluently. Fluency in English and a more Westernised accent related to middle class status in the Western Cape and Model C

educational exposure, which is a social capital that positively impact one's career progression in the bank.

This was still at Southern Suburbs, and I had a customer coming in and it was an elderly Afrikaner man. He would not speak with me because I was the wrong colour, and I was a female, and he does not do business with females and that was “double worming”, and I could feel the prejudice coming through. Other than that, like you say, I am short, so people would naturally think I am younger than what I am. (Participant 6: Bank 2)

At least three of the participants in this research shared similar sentiments in relation to gender and racism in Western Cape banking institutions, with some further stating that specifically in branches in areas which are white, or Afrikaner dominated, black women were mostly likely going to face hard times in navigating their leadership roles. Even now in the post-apartheid era, banks have not made it a norm for customers to get used to diversified leadership in the more senior and executive roles; hence in most elite suburbs and towns in the Western Cape, black women managers suffer racial and gendered discrimination (Weeto, 2019).

5.6.3 Patriarchy

Most participants attributed the phenomenon of the division of labour in the banking sector to not only the banking itself, but also contextual and cultural norms where black women specifically have been integrated into patriarchal norms and raised in patriarchal homes where men are the centres of power. One participant described how, in families and society at large, women have become used to focusing on and attending to what are described as feminine duties of care, and they carry some of these stereotypes with themselves even into the banking sector; hence women are more often predominant in roles such as customer service, clerical, and other administrative work.

Sometimes these are the things that makes women feel inferior to men and they are influenced by the way you are at home with your partner, and it affects how you view yourself at work. So, when I became the manager there was a feeling that I am not good enough or feeling that these men are strong and they are more suitable in these management positions, will I ever survive. (Participant 1: Bank 1)

Overall, participants shared a similar sentiment to Participant 1 (Bank1), highlighting the issue of gendered and raced stereotypes of managers which further exacerbated and maintained the male oriented organisational culture which subjected women to adopt masculine standards if they

wanted to be recognised as dedicated. Many participants referred to this as the “think manager think male” stereotype, where the culture of being the first one to come in and last one to leave and still be flexible to respond to calls of duty is very common in the banking sector. These were some of the norms that defined the privileges that men enjoy in the banking sector compared to women colleagues, and women were finding it hard to define their own leadership styles outside the typical masculine style of leadership.

Look society might change in the future, for instance now you have a lot of stay-at-home dads and in the homes, women are ... climbing the ladder, but I do not think it has become a commonplace yet in the bank, it is still an exception. (Participant 6: Bank 6)

However, when one participant was asked whether, with the current initiatives, it would be possible to see women being more accepted in the banking sector to perform comfortably and get more support in areas that are typically seen as men’s territories in leadership, the participant reflected on the cultural and societal orientation to argue that, despite a growing number of stay-at-home dads or men being more involved in domestic roles, this had little impact in the banking sector as men remained seen as the bread winners, and therefore it was normative for them to earn more than their subordinate colleagues, who were not only women but black women.

For instance, for me, when my children were younger, I needed a better paying job, so I was pushing up and I realized that in the banking sector because it is more male oriented, the more you progress up the more you travel and spend very little time at home with your family because you start working odd hours (Participant 6: Bank 6)

So I have been fortunate that the teams that I have been part of, there always been more women leaders, but there have been more male senior leaders, which have always been the case in almost all the teams that I have been involved in to put it in a nutshell, I started my role working under male supervision and up until now most of my leaders have always been males. (Participant 1: Bank 1)

Participant 6 (Bank 6) further attributed the culture of the banking sector to the history of the bank being formed by exclusively white males and coming together under a new name. Racial and gender experiences of exclusion and discrimination cannot be erased in one day, as the culture takes years of direct and indirect learning and is passed on to the new members as they come into the bank. Participant 1 (Bank 1) emphasised the male-centricity of the banking sector by stating that just being a male in the bank already positioned one in a position of advantage in terms of

work performance because men, even those who are married and had children, did not have the same challenges that women faced regarding family commitments.

5.6.4 Fronting and window dressing

In this section, most of the participants argued that, at more practical level, there was still very little commitment by their banks to ensure that there was value attached to the initiative to empower women in the banking sector. Other participants argued even further that the banks only brought very few women above the branch level into effective leadership positions, and more often used them as fronts for the banks while their power and decision making was limited; it was more common that one woman would be surrounded by a group of whites or men to limit their influence.

What is more common now in the bank is that they would make the CEO to be a black person or black women, but the rest of the executive remains white and even the initiatives that you would like to champion and come with change, you will always lose on the vote if they threaten longstanding privileges of the dominant groups in the senior and executive roles. (Participant 10: Bank 1)

Participant 10 (Bank1) above unpacked the lack of genuine investment in black women in the banking sector by stating that introducing one woman into an executive full of old white men did very little to change the status quo, but it does change the BEE score for the business.

Many participants raised the issue of the lack of commitment at government level to follow up on how the banks are implementing the policies that advocate career progression for women in the sector. One participant even argued that it might be the case that the penalties imposed by government for non-compliance were too low, hence the lack of commitment from many old banks to rope more women into their leadership structures to mirror the demographics of the country.

I am not certain about the main reason, but one thing that is evident from my opinion would be that the penalties set by the government for not meeting the BEE standards are too low to pressure the government to put value on the BEE policies. (Participant 3:Bank 1)

One interesting pattern that participants from different banks also saw was the role of team leaders in the banking sector, which seems to be very common across the banking sector. This is an interesting observation because there is a correlation between the role being seen as assistant manager and it being predominantly female: it supports the argument that women in the banking

sector are viewed as assistants to their male and white or coloured colleagues in the Western Cape specifically. Most of the participants in the research indicated how this role had been feminised and was seen as trapping women from branching out to effective leadership positions and other departments in the banking sector. However, most of the women in the research stated that to be in these team leader roles for more than five years felt less of a preparation for senior management roles but full-time jobs instead with huge expectations and less investment on their career developments.

Nooo, it is the same thing still they are just overloading you with work and their time where even the income bracket for the role is always negotiated and not fixed for being a team leader, but even in such cases, they still expect work to be done which is equivalent to that of being a branch. (Participant 9: Bank 2)

Participant 9 (Bank 2) touched on the existence of the team leader role in their bank as being, she suggested, a peripheral role that was both gendered and raced itself. The participant described the role as being a forever waiting room for black women who qualify to be in management and even more senior roles in the banking sector.

Overall, this section revealed that government still has a huge role to play for the ground between men and women to be levelled in the banking sector, beyond just introducing BEE policies but also tightening regulation. What stood out from most of the participants as challenges towards their career mobility was the existence of what they referred to as fronting or window dressing, where black women are introduced not to add value in the banking sector but to help the business to meet the government-required BEE score. Government regulations and penalties were also identified as being too low to pressure the banks to invest in forms that improve career progression of black women.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter revealed that among key elements that retard black women's career progression in the Western Cape are the lack of unity among women in general and black women, which further manifests in the form of intergroup racism, resulting in the exclusion of black women by the mainly white and coloured management from opportunities to advance their careers. This chapter further revealed that there still exist apartheid systems of networking and passing information such as

boys' clubs, which weaken more inclusive methods that promote equality and transformation in the banking sector such as mentorship and coaching in the bank. Across the banks, the study revealed that nothing has changed in the middle-class, male-oriented culture of the banking industry, and this culture systematically favours whites and male banking officials over black women, who are struggling to balance long working hours with their household responsibilities. The banking sector has been exposed to be lacking well-structured preparatory coaching and mentorship programmes that can help black women break gendered and racialised career blockage and mobility that is taking place in the banking sector.

5 Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This dissertation explored the challenges faced by black women in the banking sector with career progression in post-apartheid South Africa, focusing on Western Cape banking institutions. The findings reveal, and I argue, that race and gender remain central to blocking career advancement and mobility of black women in climbing the career ladder and accessing opportunities to enhance their careers in the banking sector. This chapter discusses the findings of the research, according to key themes such as intergroup racism, black women in the banking sector, coaching and networking and organisational culture, as presented in the sections below. All the different themes are covered in this chapter, with concluding remarks and recommendations for further areas of research in the last section of this chapter.

6.2 Intergroup barriers to career advancement

The existence of historical racial conflict between black Africans and coloureds, dominant specifically in the Western Cape, is evident in the findings of this study, and this reflects the historical context of the Western Cape, being the locus of the apartheid system in South Africa.

Coloured people experienced differential privilege during the apartheid regime which led them to be placed above black Africans yet below whites in the national racial hierarchy which made their identity to be ambiguous even in the post-apartheid South Africa with many of them not seeing themselves as black enough to be called black Africans (Erasmus, 2000; Keahey, 2018). It is on the back of this historical context that coloured women are perceived by black African participants as enjoying more privileges in the banking sector than black African women in their career progression and advancement. Intergroup racism was observed during the field work in all four banks that interviews came from, which were in Cape Town CBD or surrounding areas. Most often in the Western Cape, coloured male managers were more visible as a second dominant group to white male figures who were absent at the branch management level, and black African women were the least visible in the urban area bank branches specifically, as depicted in Appendix 4 and 5.

Findings reveal that women face many challenges and hardships in relation to their career progression and mobility when they decide to pursue senior positions in the banking sector, both externally from white and male colleagues and internally among black women. This finding therefore suggests that women themselves play a huge role in stagnation of other women's progress in the banking sector in various forms, which agrees with the literature on queen bee syndrome (Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Mavin, 2006). For instance, subordinate women feel threatened by women who overturn the gender hierarchal norms and possess positions that are predominantly held by men (Rowe & Crafford, 2003; Mavin, 2006). The conflict among women themselves is a symptom of a larger problem, which is lack of equitable change in the banking sector, where black women's career progression and mobility are only based on merit despite their class, gender, and racial categorization. This results in black women fight over a few seats of power and leadership roles that are available to them, which further maintains male dominance in more senior management roles. However, looking at the historical legacy of the South African banking sector, which is inextricably tied to the system of black exclusion and white accumulation to uphold white male privilege in the bank, black women have never had a chance of sharing spaces in the corridors of power like their male colleagues (Canham, 2018).

The research findings therefore suggest that the existence of queen bee syndrome among black women, which results in squabbles and sabotage against each other to block career progress, can be resolved by opening many opportunities that prepare black women for career advancement. What became evident from the findings was that, when women pursue leadership positions that were normally dominated by males, their female colleagues become threatened and start sabotaging them instead of supporting them. Yuval-Davis (2006) acknowledges the concern about a lack of solidarity among women of the same group, arguing that sisterhood is exaggerated and there are many internal differences that exist among women, which are overlooked by the sisterhood assumption that they are all supporting each other.

However, other participants indicated that pursuing management was a very lonely journey; hence women who are ready to pursue it are not only challenged by other women but also by men. The participants stated that being a normal woman in the banking sector was associated with femininity, which was seen as being too soft for leadership, while being aggressive and adopting

male stereotypes of leadership distanced women, as such women managers were seen as being too aggressive by other women and intimidating them.

Mavin (2006) postulates that women tend to obey and acknowledge male leadership and authority rather than female leadership. This pattern has been attributed to, firstly, the long history of institutionalised male leadership, which has caused women to be unused to bosses of their own gender, which is even worse for black women because of the long history of occupying a societal status inferior to whites and men. Secondly, critiques of Western feminists have disputed both the sisterhood understanding and the naturalisation of female experiences by arguing that women go through unique experiences. Hence even the differences that exists among women are based on their unique experiences of the social world (Yuval-Davis, 2006). For women it is much easier, and institutionalised, to recognise and respect the authority of a male boss because it falls under the general norms and institutional culture of gendered organisations such as banks. However, when it comes to women who occupy the same leadership roles, women still struggle to offer the same respect and recognition to each other (Derks et al., 2016). For many women, balancing work pressure and household responsibilities under a highly masculine culture proved to be a major barrier; this will be discussed next.

6.3 Black women in the banking sector

Work-life balance is the ability for women to adequately manage both paid and unpaid labour at home (Lyonette, 2015; Fuller & Hirsh, 2019). The study findings revealed that, for many black women mothers with families, work-life balance is perceived to be a huge challenge and a barrier for their career mobility and advancement because of the pressure that comes with managing and juggling household duties and work, specifically in a sector such banking. The study argues that in the South African context, black women's struggles in the banking sector cannot be universalised, because all these forms of oppression are combined: they form an even larger barrier than for women of other races whose struggle is only based on gender, with race and class being their position of privilege (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

The majority of the participants singled out two stages that are critical for career women: pregnancy, where they must take maternity leave and be away from their work duties and raising children. Rowe and Crafford's (2003) study in the South African banking sector indicated the

stigma that women carry with pregnancy and maternity, which suggested that many banks systemically exclude women who go on maternity leave or have long term plans of having families because of their perceived divided commitments. Such discriminations were prevalent in management and specific departments such as investment banking, which already had a stigma of racially excluding black women based on their skin colour and working-class identities; black women work extra hard to gain credibility from their private customers, and hence it becomes a huge barrier to regain credibility after being away (Rowe & Crawford, 2003).

The second work-life balance barrier that black women mentioned is the stage of childbirth and raising their kids, which requires them to be more involved in their kids' lives. All the participants indicated these stages as challenging stages that have a negative impact on the career growth and performance of a career woman in the banking sector, specifically women with ambitions of being in management or who are managers. Uddin et al. (2020) opine that African countries such as South Africa are still far from offering work-life balance facilities which help women to be productive at work with less pressure around their household issues which still pose a great gender imbalance in the banking sector. These include facilities such as childcare centres and financial and non-financial support systems which invest in workers' social needs to ensure that they are productive at work and their social needs are taken care to limit divided attention (Lyonette, 2015).

The findings reveal that that, in the South African banking sector, work-life balance challenges for women are combined with already existing experiences of marginalisation which cannot be understood outside of race, gender and class. A common example in the findings is the reservation for white women of certain positions and access to departments that are seen as more elite and sophisticated, such as business banking and general regional management, despite women facing work-life balance challenges. However, depending on race and class, women do not experience flexible life-balance challenges at the same level, nor are they equally oppressed in the banking sector (Casale, 2004; Espi, 2019). This has been clearly depicted by the observation that the most junior levels of the bank had no representation of white women. Instead, it was all black women filling positions such as customer services and tellers in large numbers, as presented in Appendix 7, which shows that white women dominate the more elite and sophisticated departments of the banking sector.

Furthermore, gender-biased views of work-life balance expect men to intensify and maximise their work sensitivity through flexible work which allows them not only to take their work home but to be compensated for it. By contrast, for women, flexible work aims to relieve them and help them to balance their gendered home expectations while being flexible with their work commitments, such as working remotely (Chung & Van der Lippe 2020). However, one key challenge for black women is that they do not have many role models or mentors in front of them in the bank whom they can look up to as black women, in contrast to their male leaders whose mentors are accessible in various forms.

6.4 Coaching and networking

The findings revealed that the banking sector still struggles to get rid of the old systems of informal networks such as boys' clubs which invalidate women's social and cultural capital in the banking sector. Therefore, this finding clearly suggests that the continued existence of these networks in post-apartheid South Africa helps middle-class people, whites, and men in general to stay on top of the banking sector at the expense of black women, whose career advancements are blocked. Dhanpat et al. (2021) confirm this by stating that, in the modern banking sector, informal circles and networks still play a major role in defining insiders and outsiders, even influencing who gets recruited at the entry levels of junior management.

Networks have a long history in the field of professions in general, dating from the days of apartheid. Specifically in institutions such as banks and the financial sector in general, networks give access for their internal circles, make them privy to decisive information in the bank, and improve social statuses and social capital of the members (McDonald, 2011). However, such access has been explained to be not based on one's educational qualifications but on which schools they attended or their fathers' social clubs and status, which automatically excludes most black women workers (and even many male managers, who are, however, not the focus of this study). This explains the differences in social capital, as observed in the findings, where participants indicated having started their own informal circles in the bank to counter networks, specifically team leaders at Bank 2. However, the challenge that is anticipated is the implications that comes with race, gender and classism regarding social resources and the value of capital possessed by white and black women. Literature reveals that middle-class men tend to provide the best access

to social capital, and hence countering their networks by creating similar female networks does not dismantle the negative impact these networks continue to have in the banking sector in excluding black women (McDonald, 2011; Meyer, 2021).

The findings reveal that one of the challenges to the career progression of women is the lack of black female mentors to guide them to become better leaders in the sector. One participant described it as the dearth of female role models to look up to and who could coach them as they navigate management roles dominated by whites and men. Dhanpat et al. (2021), who studied career progression experiences of South African women in the banking sector, revealed that one of the challenges that women often face in these spaces, specifically black women who have everything against them, is the lack of well-structured channels to groom women to be better leaders in the bank. This challenge is not unique to the banking sector but applies across male-dominated sectors in the field of professions, such as the legal profession where black women face similar exclusion because they do not move in the same circles of networking nor possess what is seen as the legal social capital of their male colleagues (Meyer, 2021).

6.5 Education as a capital

Espi et al (2019) states that promotion to executive and more senior positions in South Africa is racially and gender stratified. Hence it is even harder for black women to get into fields such as the banking sector because their race and gender automatically push them to the margins of the sector despite their educational qualifications. The findings reveal this clearly, with almost three out of four black African participants complaining about their exclusion from opportunities and being career-blocked despite having the correct qualifications and educational background, with many of them being overlooked in favor of white women colleagues. However, the study revealed that women of other races, compared coloured and black African women, are finding it easy to move up their career ladder not because of their academic qualifications and work experiences but based on racial preference in the Western Cape banking sector.

6.6 Organisational culture

Like previous research in the legal profession, which revealed that patriarchy in the workplace eliminates black women as competition for senior positions, the findings from this study show that

a gendered division of labour in the banking sector blocks black women, who are viewed as feminine and assistive to their male colleagues, from pursuing positions (Meyer, 2021). Rowe and Crafford (2003) recognise the existence of patriarchy in the banking sector and argue that many male colleagues in the banking sector still view women in the same way they view their wives at home; hence it is still very easy for black women to be relegated to roles of assistants to their male colleagues or assigned to roles that are seen as more feminine, such as customer care or tellers. From the findings, the existence of patriarchal norms becomes apparent, and they intersect with both gender and class in the banking sector to relegate women to work in more junior management and as assistants to male roles.

Meyer (2021) states that an intersectional approach helps us to expose not only the gendered organisational culture, but also the other side of the professional culture, that is racial and based on class domination, with the white middle-class dominating the cultural practices and norms of the field of profession. Banking sector organisational culture has been described by the participants as highly masculine, elitist, and still holding on to the racist elements of apartheid in the Western Cape, which limited how far black women can go in their career progress as workers in the bank (Canham & Mahier, 2018). Unlike Meyer (2021), who identified class as central in the marginalisation of black women in the legal profession, together with race and gender, in this study race and gender were identified as the key basis facilitating career blocking of black women, with class being identified as the third element limited to education and accent and not as dominant as race and gender in the study.

However, this is not to say that intersectionality theory's validity as a theoretical paradigm is beyond scrutiny from its critics. The theory has been criticised many times by constructivists who argue that its focus on structures of domination ignores the individual will to resist. Phoenix (2006) argues that there is a shared belief among intersectional theorists that systems of oppression impose identity categories on different individuals but, contrary to this claim, the constructivists argue, people can always self-identify, regardless of the identities that are imposed by the systems of oppression. However, this study argues that it becomes important to use intersectional theory in context when applying a systems approach because, while it is very important to protect individuals' agency in any form of marginalisation and to understand their different forms of resistance, when exploring a group of people in the workplace or any setup, it is also important to

understand which system/ or systems of dominance are dominating in order to fight any form of oppression. Hence the theory was found relevant for this study (Dhamoon, 2011).

Male-oriented long working hours are highlighted among the key barriers for black women with families who nevertheless retain ambitions for climbing up the career ladder in the banking sector. In the bank, kids and family commitments are perceived to be causing those entrusted with management duties to have divided loyalty and time commitments in demanding roles such as management and leadership in the bank. Rowe and Crawford (2003) confirm this claim by arguing that, unlike female managers, male managers in the banking sector tend to possess a very obsessive element over one area of specialisation which resonates with the banking sector's time orientation, which values total availability of managers beyond office hours. The findings further suggest that the banking sector remains male oriented for many women, specifically as you go up the banking hierarchy, with branch managers and distribution managers expected to be on standby even after office hours. Male-oriented timing in the banking sector has long been described by scholars as exclusionary to not only black women, but women in general who have families and children to look after office hours. Govender (2019) asserts that the banking sector time- maintains orientation not only white men but men in general as the ideal candidates in the banking sector because they are seen as more loyal and committed because of their long hours of availability even after working hours for departments such as private and investment banking for private customers.

Most of the participants revealed that clients and customers in the banking sector play a very huge role in shaping the institutional culture of the profession, which remains white and masculine in the senior ranks. The dominant group of Western Cape clientele has been white men, specifically the customers that are most vocal in the urban and city centers of the Western Cape, and these are customers whom many participants described as being very racist and patriarchal. Rowe and Crawford (2003) state that the banking sector is still at the mercy of its clients and with them being predominantly male and white, their traditional gender zone bias remains male as they see them to be performing at their own level.

6.7 Fronting and window dressing

The findings from the research confirm that government has failed to provide strong mechanisms to force the banking sector to commit to investing in its employees and increase the number of

black women in the banking sector as part of affirmative action policies (Rowe & Crafford, 2003). This finding is supported by recent studies which show that policies aiming to ensure that black women in the banks are protected from systematic exclusions embedded in the norms of the banking sector are yet to produce results. These are policies such as employment equity and BEE, which aimed to integrate groups previously excluded from the white colour fields (Meyer, 2021; Matotoka & Odeku, 2021). This lack of accountability from the government further leaves a door open for the private sector to stagnate black women for their own gains and subject them to practices that block their career progression, such as fronting and window dressing, which create a good image for the banks at the expense of black women who remain in junior ranks. Rowe and Crafford (2003) take the matter of fronting further, stating that private companies in general, because of the resources they have, even go as far as hiring women who are less qualified to attend client meetings just to show a good face.

The findings from the participants pointed to two key things that the post-apartheid government and the sector in general is struggling to achieve, going beyond statistics, and adding numbers in the banking sector to adding value and investing in the lives of black women who are in management to fully prepare them for leadership posts. Many participants referred to fronting to which black women in the banking sector are subjected. Almost all the participants from the four banks stated that it is a common norm in the banking sector where black women are used as fronts in the banking sector. There is no real investment in their career growth, and they are placed in positions of power with no real authority because they are still surrounded by white executives; all they must do is to present good image of the bank (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021).

Most of the participants also blamed the government for not pressuring the sector enough to keep its end of the bargain. Most black women argued that the penalties that government imposed on the private sector for not meeting BEE scores might be too low for the companies to even feel the pressure to fast-track transformation by making the sector racially and gender diverse. Matotoka and Odeku, (2021) argue that the South African government lacks strong regulations and implementation mechanisms to hold the banking sector accountable to its commitments on the introduction of black women in the post-apartheid banking sector. This results in black women's careers stagnating, while other black women being victims of fronting and window dressing in the banking sector, because there are not sufficiently strong measures in place keep the banks in check

on their commitments to investing in the careers of their black women employees (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021).

6.8 Conclusion

The evidence presented revealed various challenges and barriers to black women's career growth in the banking sector. Black women in the Western Cape are still being blocked from progressing in their careers because of racial and gender prejudice, while class further exacerbates the challenge to cracking white, male dominated positions in the banking sector. Specifically in the Western Cape, black African women are further disadvantaged by the historical legacy of apartheid which relegated them to the bottom level of a societal hierarchy, below coloureds, and hence they still suffer these challenges in the intergroup racism between black African and coloured women that takes place specifically in the Western Cape. The banking workplace remains white male oriented above junior levels, with a very limited number of black women managing to break this old banking culture despite the introduction of many policies. These findings further confirm arguments in the sociology of professions about the urgent need to deracialise the labour market if post-apartheid policies such as employment equity are to yield positive results in integrating black women into these spaces that they are both directly and indirectly excluded from (Bonnin & Ruggunan, 2013).

The central argument of this dissertation is that black women in the banking sector continue to suffer career blocking and face the challenge of being delayed from ascending to positions of power, privilege, seniority and management because of their gender, class, and race in the Western Cape, indirectly compared to the direct discrimination under apartheid. This is because in post-apartheid South Africa, race and gender discrimination in the workplace are not direct but are continually maintained and reproduced systematically and are embedded in the practices and norms of the bank, which make it hard for black women to challenge them because such norms are explained as customer and employee friendly.

Thorough exposure and understanding of the structures that are perpetuating and reproducing these inequalities, such as lack of thorough coaching and mentorship of black women and dismantling of the old white male middle-class culture of long hours, is needed. It is only when such

experiences and challenges of black women are understood that the black women themselves can be at the centre of proposing a way forward.

At the theoretical level, intersectionality helps us to unearth the systems of domination perpetuating the inequalities that are identified in the study, such as unequal access to workplace privileges and who is directly affected, going beyond generalisation. Using both post-colonial and intersectional theory helped the researcher to locate the exclusion of women and stagnation of their career progress in different moments in the history of the country, such as colonialism and apartheid, and to understand how such historical legacies still shape the present.

6.9 Future research

There are many gaps that this research could not cover because of its limited scope. One such area of interest is the role and position of the South African Society of Banking Officials and the role it is playing in being the voice of workers and representing their grievances. Considering these challenges that are facing black women, it would be very crucial to explore what the union offers and what changes the union has undergone to integrate black workers, with a focus on black women, since its establishment as the union for white bankers pre-1994.

6 References

- Acker, J. 2006. Inequality Regimes Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations. *Gender & society*. 20 (4):441–464.
DOI: 10.1177/0891243206289499?
- Kentoff, M. M. 2006. Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self: By Linda Martín Alcoff. New York: Oxford, 2006. 55(7-8): 583–584.
DOI 10.1007/s11199-006-9111-2
- Alexander, P., Ceruti, C., Motseke, K., Phadi, M. and Wale, K., 2013. *Class in Soweto*. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.2979/africatoday.60.1.134
- Anthias, F. & Yuval-Davis, N. 1983. Contextualizing feminism - gender, ethnic and class divisions. *Feminist review*. 15(1): 62–75.
Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.2307/1394792
- April, R. A. & Govender, C. M. 2022. Understanding affirmative action leadership in the South African financial context. *African journal of business management*. 16(5): 90–103.
DOI: 10.5897/AJBM2020.9174
- Atewologun, D., 2018. Intersectionality theory and practice. In *Oxford research encyclopaedia of business and management*. 1-20.
Doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.48
- Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. South African Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Babbie, E. 2014. *The basics of social research*. 6th edition. Chapman University.
- Benya, A. 2017 Going underground in South African platinum mines to explore women miners' experiences. *Gender and development*. 25(3):509–522.
DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2017.1379775
- Bernard, H.R., 2017. *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bhorat, H. and Goga, S., 2013. The gender wage gap in post-apartheid South Africa: A re-examination. *Journal of African Economies*, 22(5):827-848.
Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1093/jae/ejt008
- Blass, F.R. and Ferris, G.R., 2007. Leader reputation: The role of mentoring, political skill, contextual learning, and adaptation. *Human Resource Management*, 46(1):5-19.
DOI: 10.1002/hrm.20142
- Blau, F. D. & Kahn, L. M. 2017. The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations. *Journal of*

economic literature. 55(3): 789–865.
[Doi/10.1257/jel.20160995](https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.20160995)

Bonnin, D and Ruggunan, S. 2013. Towards a South African Sociology of Professions, *South African Review of Sociology*, 44(2): 1-6

Booyesen, L. A. E. & Nkomo, S. M. 2010. Gender role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics: The case of South Africa. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 25(4): 285-300
DOI: 10.1108/17542411011048164

Booyesen, L., 2007. Societal power shifts and changing social identities in South Africa: Workplace implications. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 10(1):1-20.
<https://hdl-handle-net.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10520/EJC21806>

Palmer, A. & Bosch, A. 2017. What makes representation of executive women in business happen? *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion*. 36(4):306–320.
DOI: 10.1108/EDI-09-2016-0071

Botha, J. G. Mariki, M. Eloff, and Swart, I. 2015. The effects of PoPi Act on small and medium enterprises in South Africa. In 2015 information Security for South Africa (ISSA).1-8.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10204/8689>

Bourdieu, P. 1986. The forms of capital. In J. G. E. Rischardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* New York: Greenwood.

Braun, V., Clarke, V. and Weate, P., 2016. Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise*. Routledge. 213-227.

Brookes, M. and Hinks, T. 2004. The racial employment gap in South Africa. *The South African Journal of economics*. 72(3):573–580.
Doi.org/10.1111/j.1813-6982. 2004.tb00126.x.

Burger, R. and Jafta, R., 2010. Affirmative action in South Africa: an empirical assessment of the impact on labour market outcomes. *Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity Working Paper*, 76:09-36.

Burger, R., Jafta, R and Fintel, D. 2016. Affirmative action policies and the evolution of post-apartheid South Africa's racial wage gap. United Nations, *World Institute for Development Economics Research*. 2016(66): 1-36.

Butcher, S. 2020. Black bankers on the real problems in the industry. *Financial careers*.
<https://www.efinancialcareers.co.uk/news/2020/06/black-in-banking>

Cahusac, E. and Kanji, S. 2014. Giving Up: How Gendered Organizational Cultures Push Mothers Out. *Gender, work, and organization*. 21(1):57–70.

Canham, H. and Maier, C. 2018. Women bankers in black and white: exploring raced, classed, and

gendered coalitions. *Social dynamics*. 44(2):322-340

Canham, H. 2018. Tea girl and garden boy "bankers: exploring substantive equality in bankers' narratives. Department of psychology. The University of the Witwatersrand. South Africa. 38(4): 402–416.

[Doi.org/10.1108/EDI-07-2017-0148](https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-07-2017-0148).

Carastathis, A. 2014. The concept of intersectionality in feminist theory. California State University. Los Angeles. 9(5).

<https://doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1111/phc3.12129>

Carrim, H. M. N and Nkomo, M. S. 2016. Wedding Intersectionality Theory and Identity Work in Organizations: South African Indian Women negotiating Managerial Identity. *Gender, Work and Organization*. 23. (3):261-277

DOI:10.1111/gwao.12121

Carrim, H. M. N. 2019. The in- Betweeners Identity work of Indian Male managers in South African private sector. *Journal of Men's studies*. 27(1), 3-23..

[Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/1060826518778239](https://doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/1060826518778239)

Chitapi, R. R. 2015. Women in the legal profession in South Africa: traversing the tensions from the bar to the bench. University of Cape Town.

Christiansen, L.E., Lin, H., Pereira, M.J., Topalova, P. and Turk, R. 2016. Gender diversity in senior positions and firm performance: Evidence from Europe. *International Monetary Fund*. 16 (50):1.

[Doi.org/10.5089/9781513553283.001](https://doi.org/10.5089/9781513553283.001)

Chung, H. and Van der Lippe, T., 2020. Flexible working, work–life balance, and gender equality: Introduction. *Social Indicators Research*. 151(2):365-381.

[Doi.org/10.1007/s11205-018-2025-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-018-2025-x).

Clark, L. N. 2014. Structured Inequality: Historical realities post-Apartheid economy. *Fahamu: A journal of African Studies*. 38(1).

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7wb1g2wp>

Clarke, V. and Braun, V., 2013. Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The psychologist*, 26(2).

Cloete, M. 2014. Neville Alexander: towards overcoming the legacy of racial capitalism in post-apartheid South Africa.

Collins, H. P. 2019. Intersectionality. As a Critical Social Theory. Duke University Press. Durham and London.

Crankshaw, O. 1997. Race, Class, and the changing division of labour under apartheid. Routledge.

Crenshaw, K. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique

of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.

Creswell, J. 2012. Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. Fourth edition. University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

Creswell, J.W. 2013. Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among the five approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Da Silva, D. M. G. 2010. Re-Making Race, Class, and Nation: Black professionals in Brazil and South Africa. The committee of Higher Degrees in Sociology. In Partial fulfilment of the partial requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the subject. UMI Dissertation.

Dasgupta, P. and Phadke, S., 2003. Women in management: A developing presence. *Ushus Journal of Business Management*, 2(2): 21-28.

Davey, K.M. 2008. Women's accounts of organizational politics as a gendering process. *Gender, Work and Organisation*, 15(6): 650–671.

Davis, K. (2008) Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist theory*. 9(1): 67–85.
Doi.org/10.1177/1464700108086364.

De Vos, A. S. (ed). 2002 (2nd ed) *Research at Grass Roots: For the Social Sciences and Human Service Professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

De Wet, J. and Erasmus, Z. 2005. Towards rigour in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Research Journal*. 5(1).

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 2011. *The sage handbook of qualitative research*, 4th edition. London: Sage.

Derks, B., Van Laar, C and Ellemers, N. 2016. The queen bee phenomenon. Why women leaders distance themselves from junior women. *The leadership quarterly*. 456-69.
Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.12.007.

Dhamoon, K. R. 2011. Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality. *Political Research Quarterly*. 64(1):230-243
Doi.org/10.1177/1065912910379227

Dhanpat, N., Olawale, J. K and Schachtebeck, C. 2021. Investigating career progression experiences of women into top management at South African bank. *Eureka, Social and Humanities*. (3):28–40.
DOI: 10.21303/2504-5571.2021.001778

Dlamini, N.J., 2013. The impact of the intersection of race, gender and class on women CEOs' lived experiences and career progression: Strategies for gender transformation at leadership level in corporate South Africa.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10500/13828>

Doucet, A. and Mauthner, N.S., 2006. Feminist methodologies and epistemology. *Handbook of 21st century sociology*. 2:36-43.

Du Plessis, Y., and Barkhuizen, N. 2012. Career path barriers experienced by women engineers. Paper presented at the 12th European Academy of Management Conference, Rotterdam, Netherlands. *South African journal of labour relations*. 39(1):38–57.

Erasmus, Z. 2000. Recognition through pleasure, recognition through violence: Gendered coloured subjectivities in South Africa. *Current Sociology*. 48(3):71–85
[Doi.org/10.1177/0011392100048003006](https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392100048003006).

Espi, G., Francis, D. and Valodia, I., 2019. Gender inequality in the South African labour market: Insights from the Employment Equity Act data. *Agenda*, 33(4):.44-61.
[Doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2019.1674675](https://doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2019.1674675)

Ferreira, N., Snyman, A., and Deas, A. 2015. The psychological contract concerning employment equity legislation and intention to leave in an open distance higher education institution. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*.39(1):72–92.
<https://hdl-handle-net.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10520/EJC170747>

Fisher, Biyase, M., Kirsten, F., and Rooderick, S. 2021. Gender wage discrimination in south Africa within the affirmative action framework. *The Journal of Developing Areas*. 55(2):337–352
[Doi.org/10.1353/jda.2021.0048](https://doi.org/10.1353/jda.2021.0048).

Flanders Investment and trade market survey. 2021. *The Financial Sector and the Fintech in South Africa*.

Flick, U. (2013) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.

Froese, F. J. Hitotsuyanagi, A and Stoermer, S. 2019. Racial Harassment and Job satisfaction in South Africa: the moderating effects of the career orientations and managerial rank. *The International Journal of Human resource management*. 30(3):385-404.
[Doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1278254](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1278254).

Fuller, S. and Hirsh, C.E. 2019. “Family-friendly” jobs and motherhood pay penalties: The impact of flexible work arrangements across the educational spectrum. *Work and Occupations*, 46(1):3-44.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888418771116>.

Garuba, H. 2012. Closing reflections on revisiting “Apartheid’s race categories”. *Critical perspective on Southern Africa*. No. 79. *Transformation (Durban, South Africa)*. 79(1), 173–77.
[Doi.org/10.1353/trn.2012.0040](https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.2012.0040).

Goga, S. 2008. Understanding the gender earnings gap in the post-apartheid South African labour market. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of master’s in economics. Faculty of Management Studies. The University of KwaZulu Natal.

Govender, O. 2019. *Gender Parity: The Challenges facing women in the banking sector in South*

Africa. Institute for Technology Management. South Africa.

Gradin, C. 2019. Occupational segregation by race in South Africa after apartheid. *Review of development economics*. 23(2): 553–576.
Doi.org/10.1111/rode.12551.

Gradin, C. 2021. Occupational Gender Segregation in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Feminist Economics*. 27(3):102–133
Doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2021.1906439

Hall, S. 1992. "The Question of Cultural Identity" from *Modernity and its futures* Cambridge: Polity Press in association with the Open University. 274–316.

Mathur-Helm, B. (2006) Women and the glass ceiling in South African banks: an illusion or reality? *Women in management review* (Bradford, West Yorkshire, England: 1992). 21(4): 311–326.
Doi.org/10.1108/09649420610667028.

Hoffman, E. A. 2008. A wolf in sheep's clothing: discrimination against the majority undermines equality while continuing to benefit few under the guise of Black Economic Empowerment. *Syracuse Journal of International Law and commerce*. 36(78):11-31.

Hooks, B., 2015. Black women: shaping feminist theory. *Revista Brasileira de Ciência Política*. 193-210.

Huppatz, K. 2009. Reworking Bourdieu's 'Capital': Feminine and Female Capitals in the Field of Paid Caring Work. *Sociology*. 43 (1):45–66.
Doi.org/10.1177/0038038508099097

Idahosa, G. E. & Mkhize, Z. 2021. Intersectional Experiences of Black South African Female Doctoral Students in STEM: Participation, Success, and Retention. *Agenda (Durban)*. 35 (2):110–122.
Doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2021.1919533.

Jaga, A., Arabandi, B., Bagraim, J. and Mdlongwa, S. 2018. Doing the "gender dance": Black women professionals negotiating gender, race, work, and family in post-apartheid South Africa. C Johnson, Z and

Mathur- Helm. 2011. Experiences of queen bees: A South African study exploring the reluctance of women executives to promote other women in the workplace. *University of Stellenbosch Business School. South African journal of business management*. 42(4):47–55.
Doi.org/10.4102/sajbm.v42i4.504.

Keahey, J. 2018. Gendered livelihoods and social change in post-apartheid South Africa. *Gender, place, and culture: a journal of feminist geography*. 25(4):525–546.

Kerner, I. 2017. Relations of difference: Power and inequality in intersectional and post-colonial feminist theories. *Current Sociology*. *Current Sociology*. 65(6):846–866.

Doi.org/10.1177/0011392116665152

Klassen, S. and Minasyan, A. 2017. The impact of Affirmative action on the gendered occupation segregation in South Africa. University of Goettingen, Platz Goettinger Sieben. Germany.

Kuhlmann, E. 2013. Sociology of Professions: Towards International Context-Sensitive Approaches. South African review of sociology. 44(2):7–17.
Doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2013.802534.

Kvale, S. and Brinkman, S. 2009. Interviews. Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing. London. 5(2).

Laberge, S. 1995. Toward an Integration of Gender into Bourdieu's Concept of Cultural Capital. Sociology of sport journal. 12 (2):132–146.
[Doi.org/10.1123/ssj.12.2.132](https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.12.2.132).

Lalanne, M. and Seabright, P., 2011. The old boy network: Gender differences in the impact of social networks on remuneration in top executive jobs. Journal of institutional economics. 18 (5): 725–744.
[Doi.org/10.1017/S1744137421000953](https://doi.org/10.1017/S1744137421000953)

Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., Ritchie, J and Ormston, R. 2014. Qualitative research practice. A guide for Social Science students and researchers. Sage publication. 5 (6).

Liyd, S., Roodt, G and Odendal, A. 2011. Critical elements in defining work-based identity in a community, Work & Family, 21(4):429–444.

Lombard, M, R., Matlala, K.T. and Mulder, B.S. 2021. Investigating the drivers of trust perceptions of black young adult banking customers. Journal of Contemporary Management. 18 (1): 385–406
Doi.org/10.35683/jcm20145.110

Louw, A.M. 2015. The employment equity act, 1998 (And other myths about the pursuit of “equality”, “equity”, and “dignity” in post-apartheid South Africa). 18(3): 594-667.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/reli.v18i3.05>

Luiz, J.M. and Terziev, V.2022. Axes and fluidity of oppression in the workplace: Intersectionality of race, gender, and sexuality. Organization. London. England. 1-21.
Doi.org/10.1177/13505084221098252

Lyonette, C. 2015. Part-time work, work-life balance, and gender equality. Journal of social welfare & family law. 37(3):321–333.

Magubane, N. 2019. The experiences of being black in the South African workplace. A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, partially fulfils the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Social and Psychological research. Johannesburg. South Africa.

Magubane, Z. 2004. Race, class and gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa. The metaphors of race matter(s): The figurative uses and abuses of blackness. The University of Chicago press.

Mapadimeng, M. S. 2013. Sociology and inequalities in post-apartheid South Africa: A critical review. *Current sociology*. 61(1):40–56.

Martin, J. 2015. Transformational and transactional leadership: An exploration of gender, experience, and institution type. *portal: Libraries and the Academy*.15(2):331-351.

Martin, P. and Barnard, A. 2013. The experience of women in male-dominated occupations: A constructivist grounded theory inquiry. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*. 39(2):1-12

Mason, J. 2017. Qualitative researching. *Qualitative researching*.1-288.

Mathur-Helm, B. 2005. Equal opportunity and affirmative action for South African women: a benefit or barrier? *Women in Management Review*.20(1):56–71.

Matlabe, A. 2008. Progress on the financial sector charter scorecards in the South African Banking Sector. Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister in commerce in Business Management. The University of Johannesburg.

Matotoka, D. M. and Odeku, K. O. 2021. Understanding discrimination in the private sector workplace in South Africa: Paving the way for Black African women progress to managerial positions. *International journal of discrimination and the Law*. Sage publication.

Matotoka, M. 2021. Mainstreaming black African women into managerial positions in the South African private sector. A critical analysis of transformative legislative interventions, challenges, and prospects. Doctor of Laws in the Faculty of Management and law School of at the University of Limpopo.

Mavin, S. 2006. Venus's envy: problematizing solidarity behaviour and Queen Bees. *Women in Management Review*. 21(4):264-276.

Mbembe, A. 2017. Critique of black reason. Duke University Press.

McCall, L. 2005. Beyond Equality and Difference: Empowerment of Black Professional Women in Post-Apartheid South Africa. Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Literature and Philosophy.

McDonald, S. 2011. What's in the 'old boys' network? Accessing social capital in gendered and racialized networks. *Social networks*. 33(4):317–330.

McEwan, C. 2001. Postcolonial, feminism and development: Intersections and dilemmas. School of Geography and environmental Sciences, *Progress in development studies*, 1(2):93-111.

McIntosh, P. 1988. White privilege and Male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondence through work in women's studies. Working paper. N. 189.

Mestry, R. and Schmidt, M. 2012. A feminist postcolonial examination of female principals' experiences in South African secondary schools. *Gender and Education*. 24(5):535- 551.

Meyer, T. 2021. Reaching for partnership: An intersectional study of occupational closure among women attorneys in South Africa. *Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology at Stellenbosch University.*

Mishra, R.K. 2013. Postcolonial feminism: Looking into within-beyond-to-difference. *International Journal of English and Literature*. 4(4):129-134.

Misra, J. 2018. Categories, structures, and Intersectionality Theory. In Messerschmidt, J. W., Martin, P. Y. Messner, M. A. and Connell, R. (Eds). 2018. *Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research*. New York University Press.

Modisha, G. 2007. A contradictory class location? The African cooperate middle class and the burden of race in South Africa. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 65(1):120-145.

[Doi.org/10.1353/trn.2008.0011](https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.2008.0011)

Mohanty, C. T. 1984. Under the Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial discourse. *Boundary*. 2, 12(3):33-358.

Mollah, M.R.A. and Uddin, M.A. 2018. Factors preventing women to climb up corporate echelon in banking sector: An empirical study of glass ceiling effect. *BUP Journal*, 6:69-83.

Moolman, B. 2013. Rethinking 'masculinities in transition' in South Africa considering the 'intersectionality' of race, class, and sexuality with gender, *African Identities*, 11(1):93-105.

Morrell, G., Spencer, L., Ritchie, J. and Ormston, R. 2014. *Analysis in practice*.

Mpemba, N. 2018. *Glass ceilings - A study into the barriers the aspiring professional black women face in the Southern African Built Environment*. University of Cape Town.

Ncube, L. 2018. *The intersectionality of gender, race, and class: Implications for women leaders' career progression in Southern Africa*. The University of South Africa.

Ndinda, C. and Okeke-Uzodike, U. 2012. Present but absent: Women in business leadership in South Africa. *Journal of international women's studies*, 13(1):127-145.

Statistics South Africa. 2017. *Women in power. What do the statistics say.*
<https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=10325>

Nzukuma, K.C.C. and Bussin, M. 2011. Job hopping amongst African black senior management in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human resource management*. 9(1):1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v9i1.360>.

Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M. and Snape, D., 2014. *The foundations of qualitative research. Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, 2(7):52-55.

Padayachee, V., 2013. *Corporate governance in South Africa: from 'Old Boys Club 'to' Ubuntu'?*

Transformation: critical perspectives on southern Africa, 81(1):260-290.

Parashar, S. 2008. Marginalized by race and place: Occupational sex segregation in post-apartheid South Africa Department of Sociology.

Phoenix, A. 2006. Editorial: Intersectionality. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3):187-192.

Punch, K. 2014. *Introduction to Social Research. Quantitative & qualitative approaches.* Sage publications.

Research focus. 2009. *Women in Management in the Financial Services Sector in South Africa: A Review of the Literature.* Report Prepared for Fasset.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M. and Ormston, R. eds., 2013. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers.* sage.

Ross, T. 2020. *An exploration of leadership identity and intersectionality through selected life stories of black women in the South African public service.* University of Pretoria.

Rowe, T. and Crafford, A. 2003. A study of barriers to career advancement for professional women in investment banking. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1(2):21-27.

Sasinsky, M. S. 2020. *Understanding the phenomena of intersectionality and its effect on inclusion and transformation in the South African legal profession.* Gordon Institute of Business Science. University of Pretoria.

Schachtebeck, C & Diniso, C. 2019. *Barriers to the career progression of black African middle managers: The South African perspective.*

Schensul, J. and Le Compte. L. 2013. *Essential Ethnographic Methods: A Mixed Methods Approach.*

Schwanke, D.A., 2013. *Barriers for women to positions of power: How societal and corporate structures, perceptions of leadership and discrimination restrict women's advancement to authority.* Earth Common Journal. 3(2).

Seekings, J. 2003. *Social stratification and inequality in South Africa at the end of Apartheid.* University of Cape Town.
DOI: 10.12987/9780300128758-010

Smidt, O., De Beer L. T., Brink, L. & Leiter., M.P. 2016. *The validation of a workplace invincibility scale within the South Africa Banking Industry.* *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*. 42(1):1-12.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v42i1.1316>

Hadi, M. & Closs, S. 2016. *Ensuring rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research in clinical pharmacy.*
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11096-015-0237-6>

Smit, D. & Tessendorf, E. 2021. Patriarchy and Unpaid Work as Barriers to Top-Level Female Appointments: Are South Africa's Labour Laws Enough not to Keep a Good Woman Down? 46 (1):111–144.

Tydskrif vir regs wetenskap.

Soudien, C. 2010. The Reconstitution of Privilege: Integration in Former White Schools in South Africa: The Reconstitution of Privilege. *Journal of social issues*. 66(2):352–366.

Steyn, M and Mpofo, W. 2021. Decolonizing the human. Reflections from Africa on difference and oppression. Wits University press.

<http://doi.org/10.18772/22021036512>

Stone, P. and Hernandez, L.A., 2013. The all-or-nothing workplace: Flexibility stigma and “opting out” among professional-managerial women. *Journal of Social Issues*, 69(2):235- 256.

Sure, S. 2010. Transformation: African people in the western cape overview. Development Policy Research Unit.

Szelewicki, M and Tyrowicz, J. 2009. Labour Market Racial Discrimination in South Africa revisited. Faculty of Economic Sciences. The University of Warsaw. Working paper No. 08/2009 (18).

Thomas, A. 2002. Employment Equity in South Africa: Lessons from the international school. Graduate School of Business Administration. The University of South Africa.

Uddin, M., Ali, K. B., and Khan, M. A. 2020. Perceived social support (PSS) and work life balance (WLB) in a developing country. The moderating impact of work-life policy. *Iranian Journal of Management Studies*. 13(4)733-761

DOI: 10.22059/ijms.2020.282543.673663

Vachon, C.J. 2014. Tiaras, queen bees, impostors, and the board room: Lean in & women in corporate governance. 279.

Van der Schyff, S. 2017. Challenges facing Female Executives in the Banking Sector in South Africa in the post-apartheid period. The school of governance and finance. University of the Western Cape.

Washington, C. E. 2010. Mentoring, organizational rank, and women's perceptions of advancement opportunities in the workplace. *Forum on public policy*.

Webster, E. and Francis, D. 2019 The paradox of Inequality in South Africa: A challenge from the workplace. *Transformation (Durban, South Africa)*. 101(1):11–35.

[Doi.org/10.1353/trn.2019.0035](https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.2019.0035)

Webster, E. and Omar, R. 2003 Work Restructuring in Post-Apartheid South Africa. *Work and occupations*. 30(2):194–21

[Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/0730888403251681](https://doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/0730888403251681)

Weeto, N. 2019. Barriers to transformation within the South African banking sector. A research project submitted to the Gordon institute of business science, university of Pretoria in preliminary fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Business Administration. Johannesburg. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/71670>

Wittenberg, M. 2017 Wages and Wage Inequality in South Africa 1994–2011: Part 1 – Wage Measurement and Trends. *The South African Journal of economics*. 85 (2):279–297. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1111/saje.12148>

Wong, F. K. Y., Wong, M. C. S., Chow, K. K. S., Kwan, D. K. S., & Lau, D. Y. S. (2022). A community-based health-social partnership program for community-dwelling older adults: a hybrid effectiveness-implementation pilot study. *22(1) :1–789*.
[Doi.org/10.1186/s12877-022-03463-](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12877-022-03463-)

Wright, E. O. 2005. ‘Foundations of a neo-Marxist class analysis’, in *Approaches to Class Analysis*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 4–30.
[Doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511488900.002](https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511488900.002)

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *The European journal of women’s studies*. 13 (3):193–209.
[Doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/1350506806065752](https://doi-org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1177/1350506806065752)

6.10 Appendices

6.10.1 Appendix 1: Thematic analysis

Stage 1	Familiarising myself with the research phenomena	This included all the earlier stages of my data collection process. This stage involved me directly conducting the interviews, recording the data, safely saving it to my hard drive and transcribing it. Through manual transcriptions and rereading of the transcripts I became familiar with each single transcript.
Stage 2	Generating the codes	In this stage I identified the initial codes using different colours and features as depicted in Figure 1. I highlighted each quotation or meaningful data extract with the same colour coding of the code that it was allocated to. Braun and Clark (2016) state that coding is the process by which the data is organised into smaller meaningful segments.
Stage 3	Searching for themes	In this stage, after combining all the identified codes in the study, I collated them into broader themes. I used tables to group the different codes into different categories, some of which developed into themes and sub themes. This can be seen in Figure 2.
Stage 4	Reviewing the identified themes	At this stage I refined all the candidate themes and started identifying the themes that did not have enough data to support them as themes. This stage also included evaluation of the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set and the

		accurate representation of the data evident from the data by the themes.
Stage 5	Defining and naming the themes	At this stage I identified the key findings represented by each theme and also, how these findings help us answer the general research question and relate to the rest of the research and other themes. Lastly, at this stage, the researcher identified sub-themes to give structure and order to how the data was presented.
Stage 6	Writing the report	The last phase of the analysis was writing the report based on the findings from the data.

6.10.2 Appendix 2: Coding sample

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Data extracts</i>
Women stereotype	“Because stereotypically the women need to make sure that the child is sorted, the food is sorted and now you totally have the 8 to 9pm job and when you get home, the next shift starts, neh” (Participant 1, B1).
White male dominance	Because if you look at the history of our bank, they are very white and when they came together with other white banks, they were not only whites, but they were very male dominated hence these changes are important in a post-apartheid institution (Participant 6, B6).
Need for mentorship	“But what is mostly needed and would be more relevant now specifically for us black females are long term mentorship programmes that not only focuses on your starting in the management and then leave you to navigate it yourself once you are familiar but more intimate mentorship programmes by other female seniors that help you navigate management journey as whole and grow with you” (Participant 6, B6).
Intergroup racism	“For instance, what was nice with the black lady that resigned, she was very open and transparent, she used to tell me that, I really want you to get a good package and even you yourself you can see that I am trying. And I could see that she was trying her best and even writing motivations for us to be paid and treated equally but they were failing without success but the issue of colour here is very critical and determine where you will be included and excluded.” Participant 8

6.10.3 Appendix 3: Identifying themes Figure 2

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Sub-themes</i>	<i>Categories</i>
Black women in the banking sector	Flexible work Womanhood	Women stereotype
Networking and coaching	Informal networks Skills development programs	Need for mentorship. Boys' club
Education as social capital	Income wage gap Education	
Organisational culture	Raced gendered institutions. Asserting authority Patriarchy Fronting and glass ceiling	Male oriented time
Intergroup career progression challenges	Queen bee syndrome In-group racism in the Western Cape	Women vs women Aggressive women Career women

6.10.4 Pilot Study Field Notes

Interview duration: 40 Minutes

Pilot study was conducted at Cape Town with the participant from bank 6. I will not lie, before conducting the interview, I had mixed emotions about it and even about conducting the interviews in general, specifically after I realised that getting participants was not as easy because of the POPI Act policy.

However immediate response of the participant which I was conducting the pilot with on the questions gave me back the confidence. The participant was a young black woman and a mother of a one-year-old boy. She described her experience with the Western Cape banking sector not as good as the banking sector professionals are perceived by the general outside community. She described the banking sector as a highly pressured environment with many targets to be met with very limited time for social issues such as that of complaining about the organisational culture when I asked about the organisational culture.

However, as the interview continued, she became comfortable and started opening up about the existence of racism and intergroup racism in the Western Cape banking sector, highlighting that whites are at the top of management. At the branch level in most of the suburban areas and banks situated around the city centre, second to white dominance in management are coloureds and they intentionally share information about career advancement and growth first among themselves, which more often if you are a black person in these branches systemic exclusions is more common.

Doing the pilot study also helped me to strengthen my research questions and know exactly which questions did not cover the themes of interest for the study. This first interview also served as practice because one of the things that I think going forward I will try to not try to do is to squeeze

all the questions but as I noticed that forty minutes to an hour is not enough to cover everything specifically if I do not try to always draw the participant back softly to the questions and research focus.

6.10.5 Field Work Notes Sample

25 July 2022

Bank 2. Participants 8 & 9.

Cape Town Interview duration:

52 Minutes

Last week I met with two black participants one on Monday and the 2nd on Friday. They were from the same bank although from different regions and areas of the bank. Both interviews were very brilliant and interesting from the start to the end, and they opened so much about their personal experiences of both race and gender in the sector. The first participant painted a very clear and interesting picture of how the division of the bank by regions mirrors racial differences and marginalisation of black people in the bank and even among blacks it further creates a hierarchy between black Africans, coloureds, and whites with few visibilities of Indians. She demonstrated this by stating that in the region where she is currently the team leader now she had to fight tooth and nail for the junior post she is currently occupying with the help of her previous line manager who in the process of fighting racism and gender marginalisation decided to resign from her post as a manager in a region where there only two Black female leaders in a region that has more than fourteen branches with a total of three bank leaders when you include one male that has been recently appointed to takeover a post that she initially applied for only to be occupied by her junior as branch manager while she was moved to a different post for the same position she is occupying as a team leader.

While many interesting were raised in the interview, I was intrigued by her response when I asked about the positionality of white women in her bank and in the sector at large and she replied by stating that in the post-apartheid banking sector specifically in her bank white woman dominate in the business banking fields and senior executives and regional levels. She further stated that white women do not like working hard therefore despite their degrees and experience white women get preference in those departments because of the nature of the duties and responsibilities such as the option of working from home and flexible working hours. She used a very interesting Xhosa phrase “*Thina basiyeka sitshiswe ngamalanga nazingqele zihamba nge shirts bona babe benxibe i-gown*

bathi I am working from home” Which directly translate as the bosses leave them at the branches to be shivering with cold while the whites are wearing gowns at and boast of working from home in the elites’ departments which are dominated by whites based on race and gender.

She also reflected on her different encounters with Sasbo where she stated that in her experience as the team leader, SASBO first have debriefings with bank managers and executive before engaging on disputes or disciplinary actions against workers and in most cases where she had to brief them when the bank is dealing with issues relating to discipline or issues faced by workers, they always reached an agreement. She stated that this might make it hard for the union to take independent stand on issues of workers which will be contrary from that of workers and also because of the nature of the banking sector the union do not usually hold gatherings more often where experiences and issues faced by workers are discussed with them but more often, they send representatives to the banks when issues such as retrenchment of workers or disciplinary hearings need to be conducted. I found these points very interesting because the previous one or two participants who also stated that they were members in good standing of the union also mentioned some of the points about the union only attending issues arising from the bank.

Participant 9

Participant 9 which I interviewed on Friday from the same bank as Monday participant was the 1st participant that I interviewed that was not married. She is a mother of two children, and she is not married but cautioned me that the experiences are quite similar for both married and unmarried women when it comes to career progression in the banking sector. She stated that one of the things that she has been considering was to relocate to Johannesburg. She further asserted that as black women and black person in general it is very hard in the western cape to have a steady career progression because of how the banking sector hierarchy is set up in the province. She described the experiences of her close colleagues who despite having University degree such as BCom from University of Cape Town are still stuck in one role that is even junior from hers despite their huge work experience and education. She stated that one of the challenges is that for things like promotion or even salary raise, it must be signed off and approved by your line managers to be successful and most of them are white males or females who still feel threatened by other race's career progression.

She further stated that in her bank career progression is not only the issue but even getting inside the bank or being employed you must be in possession of the right colour and if you happen to be a male in branch where females dominate customer service and tellers, males are still favourite for leadership roles. However, what was interesting was when she mentioned that some of the posts of being a team leader even the salary is not fixed but more often you must fight for it while they load you with huge amount of work and responsibilities that are like that of being a manager. Ms Thandeka which is her pseudo name have been in the bank for more than 8 years and she stated that in the more elite areas or regions of the bank that are still dominated by whites and general middle and upper class, more often of the white managers rely on them as assistant managers to get the job done and some of them are ill equipped for their tasks but rather possess the right colour and gender for their clientele they serve. She further stated that some of the horrible acts of discrimination also come from the society that is still living in the past, for instance white males to be specific are very hard to deal with if you are a black female in the bank specifically the old ones when they call for a manager and you are the only available.

While we touched on most of the questions, she believed that some of the policies in place are not producing fruits for black women being there is a heavy reliance on the top-down approach in the banking sector which keeps those with power and resources already at the top there and does little to the black women at the bottom.

6.10.6 Consent form

University of Cape Town



Department of Sociology

Researcher: Khunyana Siphenathi

Research participant invitation

I would like to invite you to voluntarily participate in this research as a banking sector official which I believe you will be in a better position to share about the challenges the black women officials face specifically those who are occupying leadership position with career progression in their banking institutions.

This research seeks to explore challenges and lived experiences faced by black women workers occupying junior and mid-management levels in the banking sector. The study is for a master's Minor Dissertation in the Department of Sociology, under the supervision of Bianca Tame from the University of Cape Town.

Procedure

- You will be asked to take part in a one-on-one interview with the researcher, in which you will describe your experiences.
- The interview will take about approximately 60 minutes.
- Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You don't have to take part in this study if you don't want to.
- You can also withdraw from the study at any point in time should you feel the need to do so.

Privacy and anonymity.

- Should you decide to participate in this study, your identity will be kept anonymous by changing your name. Any information that may reveal your identity will be disguised.

- All your personal information will be kept private and secured. Only I and my research supervisor, Bianca Tame, will have access to your personal information, interview transcripts and recordings.
- Please be aware that the information you provide during the interviews will be quoted and used in my Master's dissertation paper to be submitted for examination at the University of Cape Town. It will also be used in future publications by myself and my research supervisor Bianca Tame. Your identity will still be kept anonymous in these publications.

Benefits of your participation in this study

- Participating in this study will give you a space to share your experiences, speak about the challenges you faced and what you value about having access to this form of work
- Sharing your lived experiences of working in the banking sector will further help us in providing a different narrative and understanding of the black women experiences and challenges that they are faced with in navigating the workplace.

Privacy and anonymity

- Should you decide to participate in this study, your identity will be kept anonymous by changing your name. Any information that may reveal your identity will be disguised.
- All your personal information will be kept private and secured. Only I and my research supervisor, Bianca Tame, will have access to your personal information, interview transcripts and recordings.
- Please be aware that the information you provide during the interviews will be quoted and used in my master's dissertation paper to be submitted for examination at the University of Cape Town. It will also be used in future publications by myself, and my research supervisor Bianca Tame. Your identity will still be kept anonymous in these publications.

Contact details.

- If you have any further questions or concerns in relation to this research project, please do not hesitate to contact myself, the researcher, Khunyana Siphemathi at khnsip005@myuct.ac.za or Bianca Tame, my academic supervisor, at bianca.tame@uct.ac.za.

Informed Consent Form

I, the participant, agree to take part and be interviewed for this study.

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understand the nature of the interview and what the contents of my interview will be used for.

I understand that the interview is voluntary and there is no obligation for me to participate.

I understand that the interview is confidential, and that my identity in the responses will be kept confidential.

I understand that I can withdraw from the interview at any point.

I consent to being recorded during the interview and for the recording to be transcribed and used by the author for his dissertation.

I understand there is no financial or any other kind of compensation for taking part in the interview.

Name of Participant:

Signature of Participant:

Name of person who sought
consent.....

Signature of person who sought
consent.....

Date.....



Department of Sociology

Room 4.35 •

Fourth Floor Leslie Social Sciences

Building Private Bag • Rondebosch

7701 Telephone: +27 21 650 3501

Fax: +27 21 689 7576

Email: Soc-Sociology@uct.ac.za

6.10.7 Letter of Approval of Ethics clearance

03 May 2022

Confirmation of Research Ethics Approval Siphenathi Khunyana [SOC2022/05]

This is to confirm that Siphenathi Khunyana's research proposal, "Exploring Black women's challenges with career progression in the South African banking sector", under the supervision of Ms Bianca Tame, has been reviewed by the Sociology Department.

The Department and supervisor is satisfied that the research carries no significant risk or harm to human subjects. We are further satisfied that appropriate informed consent and confidentiality/anonymity/data protection mechanisms are in place.

It is a condition for the acceptance of Mr Khunyana's proposal that he complies consistently with strict ethical standards. This will entail proceeding only on the basis of the consistently informed consent of interviewees and will require regular monitoring of ethical issues which may emerge as the project develops.

Please contact the Department should you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards,

Zintle Mlindi

"OUR MISSION is to be an outstanding teaching and research university,
educating for life and addressing the challenges facing our society"

6.10.8 Research interview schedule

1. Are you married?
2. Do you have children?
3. Also, for people with children like you, was there any support that the company provided when you were pregnant and raising children, how did it affect your work performance?
4. How would you describe your job just briefly?
5. Did your upbringing have any influence in your current career choices if it did can you share how?
6. How would you describe your life experiences growing up, where did you grow up?
7. How would you describe your family class structure growing up and do you have any siblings?
8. Which race or ethnic group do you belong to?
9. What is your highest educational qualification?
10. Reflecting to your management experiences in the banking sector what is your current employment category or position now?

Intersection of gender, race, and class

1. Are there any challenges that you have experienced in the workplace that affected your career advancement and were purely based on any, some or all the three categories above (race, class and gender)?
2. How do you think your race, ethnicity, gender, and class influenced and continue to influence how you exercise your authority as a leader?
3. Can you share your thoughts on the experiences of the journey to management levels of the banking sector for young black female banking officials, is the playing ground level for all to climb?
4. What are your thoughts about the industry being seen as still white male dominated at the more senior executive structures?
5. How is the experience of juggling between household needs and work demands that comes with the position you currently occupying?

Educational level

1. What is your understanding of the term class and its categories?
2. Did you attend public or private schools, how did your schooling background impact your career prospects in the banking sector (English proficiency at recruitment)?
3. How does the educational level and background impact on career mobility in the banking sector?
4. Based on your years of experience in the sector, how does class background shape one's career progression in the banking sector?

5. How has your educational background affected your work experiences and performance in the sector?

Opportunities

1. Are there any specific programs or opportunities available to assist with career progression currently at your organization, if yes can you share more about them?
2. How was your experience with the program in terms of in making easy for you to navigate the banking sector and climb their career ladder?
3. How did you get to the current position that you are serving on now and how long did it take for you to be promoted?
4. To what extent do you feel supported by your employer organisation in your role as leader?
5. Why do you think personally despite all the policies that have been put in place post-apartheid in the sector white males and males in general continue to dominate the banking sector?
6. Do you have any suggestion that you would have liked the financial service sector to assist the black female employees with to make their career advancement easier?
7. What are your thoughts on the literature that shows that race, gender and class play an important role in one's smooth career progression success in the sector?

Organizational culture

1. What is your understanding of the organizational culture and its importance in the workplace?
2. Can you share some of the shared common stereotypes if there are any you have witnessed, heard, or even subjected to about females occupying executive leadership?
3. How was it to form close working relationships with your colleagues within and across opposite gender, class, and racial lines?
4. How important is it to have functional working relationship with colleagues across gender, class, and racial divisions in the banking sector for your personal career development?
5. What are your thoughts around the issue of women sabotaging each other in the workplace?
6. Have you personally experienced any form of sabotage from a fellow female colleague?
7. Based on your experience in the sector do you think the employers are doing enough to ensure inclusivity and integration of black women in the sector?
8. What are some of the things that you think if were implemented would make career progression easier for black women in the sector?

