



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

**Developing an intersectionality framework for exploring gender dynamics at
management level within a state-owned organisation in South Africa**

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Gender oppression and inequality has gained momentum among academics as an emerging feminist concern. However, there are not many literary works about Black South African women who work for state-owned companies (SOC) and encounter bias. Black women still experience subtle racial and gender discrimination, even though women are susceptible to bias more frequently than men. These discriminatory actions give rise to the idea of intersectionality, which highlights social stratification along racial, gender, and ethnic lines. Therefore, this study investigates the marginalization of women and develops an intersectionality framework for exploring gender dynamics at management level within a state-owned organisation in South Africa.

Although all concepts of citizenship and employment are gendered, women cannot rely on liberal social policy and programs to reduce inequities (Coulter et al., 2014). Black women in South Africa were seen as "full citizens" when the country embraced democracy, but inequality persists since these women's lived experiences are only hazily acknowledged. Even though a workplace is merely a small part of a society within of a network of mutually reinforcing social and political interactions, the ongoing under-presentation of Black women in society is brought into question. To explore how political and organisational engagement interacts, we draw on ideas of intersectionality, systems thinking, and leadership theory. While Black women are credited with creating the concept of intersectionality is ascribed to African women, early writing on European, Asian, and American women focused on family-related issues and to a lesser extent on the effects of prejudice and pervasive socio-economic inequalities and their manifestation in the workplace. Studies on intersectionality are no longer exclusively coming from the United States, Europe, or Asia, but they still have a lot to do with South Africa.

So, the study points to a contextual gap regarding the African perspective, particularly when considering the experiences of Black women in management in post-apartheid South Africa. *What are the mechanisms that obstruct the advancement of Black women at a managerial level in Eskom?* is a concern that must be acknowledged and handled in a setting with a complicated, compliance-focused legal framework. Constructivist grounded theory methods was used to research this subject. The study aim was to strengthen the validity of the study by utilizing the 20 Black female employees who served as a representative sample of Eskom's business divisions and their subjective lived experiences. As a result, the study acknowledges the under-presentation of Black women in management positions, but it also conflates issues of threats to business sustainability and emphasizes the importance of leadership stature and protection

against political influence as crucial to resolving the research problem. The study also emphasizes the necessity of understanding the systemic and reciprocal effects of human, organisational, and environmental concerns in order to overcome the research paradox (Miyen & April, 2022).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii
List of Tables	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Context	3
1.3 Research Problem	4
1.3.1 Background of Eskom	7
1.3.2 Purpose of the research study	8
1.3.3 Research questions	8
1.3.4 Statement of Research Problem	9
1.4 Conceptual Framework	9
1.4.1 Creation of my Conceptual Framework	11
1.4.2 Explanation of my Conceptual Framework	12
1.5 Researchers' Positionality	15
1.6 Philosophical Assumptions	16
1.6.1 Ontology	16
1.6.2 Epistemology	18
1.6.3 Methodology	19
1.6.4 Philosophical Conclusions	20
1.7 Justification for the Research	22
1.8 Research Goals of the Study	22
1.9 Outline of Thesis	23
1.10 Conclusion	24
CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
2.1 Introduction	25
2.2 Motivation for a Qualitative Approach	25
2.3 Research Design	26
2.4 Research Methodology	28
2.4.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory as a Suitable Methodology for my Study	29

2.4.2 Grounded Theory Process for my Study	30
2.5 Qualitative Research Methods	32
2.6 Data Collection	33
2.6.1 Primary Data Sources	35
2.6.2 Secondary Source of Data	37
2.6.3 Questionnaire (online survey) – a “method of saturation”	38
2.7 Purposive Sampling Technique	38
2.8 Data Analysis	40
2.8.1 Codes and Category Development	40
2.8.2 Grounded Theory Strategies	42
2.9 Development of Patterns	43
2.10 Addressing Validity and Ethical Issues	44
2.10.1 Qualitative Data	44
2.10.2 Ethical Considerations	46
2.10.3 Ethical Implications of the Research Goals	47
2.10.4 Data Collections and Consent	47
2.10.5 Confidentiality	47
2.11 Conclusion	47
CHAPTER 3: EXPLORATION OF RESEARCH DATA AND KEY FINDINGS	49
3.1 Introduction	49
3.2 Descriptive Data of Research Participants for the Semi Structured Interview	49
3.3 Data Collection, Coding, and Conceptualization Process	50
3.4 Initial Coding Phase	53
3.4.1 Making Sense of Data Collection Cycle 1	53
3.4.2 Making Sense of Data Collection Cycle 2	56
3.5 Focused Coding	57
3.5.1 Making Sense of the Third Data Collection Cycle (3)	58
3.5.2 Data Collection Cycle 4	59
3.6 Conceptualisation of Categories	64
3.6.1 Developing Concepts to have Theoretical Sufficiency	65
3.7 Conceptualising Qualitative Variables in the Real World	66
3.7.1 Category: Threat/s to Business Sustainability	67
3.7.2 Category: Impact of Organisational Culture: Barriers for Advancement of Black Women	68

3.7.3 Category: Effectiveness of Policy Implementation	70
3.7.4 Category: Self-efficacy	72
3.7.5 Category: Influence of Leadership Stature	73
3.7.6 Category: Political Influences	74
3.7.7 Category: Inclusivity	75
3.8 Conclusion	76
CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW	79
4.1 Purpose of the Literature Review	79
4.2 Approach to Literature Review	79
4.3 Organisational Justice - Gender Equity	80
4.3.1 Types and Principles of Organisational Justice	81
4.3.2 Perceptions of Fairness in Organisations is Structured along Gender and Racio-ethnic Lines	83
4.3.3 SOC Leadership's Function in Relation to Race and Gender Transformation	84
4.4 Influence of South Africa Culture on Leadership Practices	86
4.4.1 Democracy	91
4.4.2 The Problem of Representation	92
4.4.3 Transforming Gender Relations within Economic Sectors	93
4.4.4 Leadership Behaviour within SOC's	94
4.5 Core Categories	96
4.5.1 Business Sustainability	96
4.5.2 Impact of Organisational Culture as a Barrier to Advancement of Women	97
4.5.3 Effectiveness of Policy Implementation	99
4.5.4 Self-efficacy	100
4.5.5 Influence of Leadership Stature	101
4.5.6 Political Influence	102
4.5.7 Inclusivity	104
4.6 Conclusion	105
CHAPTER 5: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEORY	106
5.1 Introduction to the Theory Building Process	106
5.2 The Theory Building Process	107
5.2.1 Descriptive Stage	108
5.2.2 Systems Archetypes to Transition from the Descriptive to Normative Stage.	109
5.2.3 Normative Stage	110

5.3 Explanation of Theoretical Perspectives	111
5.3.1 Systems Thinking	114
5.3.2 Intersectionality Theory	116
5.3.3 Leadership Theory	119
5.4 Summary of my Theoretical Perspectives	121
5.5 Determining Causal Relationships	123
5.5.1 Limits to Growth – Systems Archetype	124
5.5.2 How the Limits to Growth System Archetype resonate with my Study	125
5.6 Abbreviated Answer to the Research Question	128
5.6.1 SOC's Promise of a Just Culture Fade for Black Women	129
5.6.2 The State-Owned Companies - a Social Microcosm of the State.	131
5.7 Evaluating Grounded Theory	134
5.8 Conclusion	136
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION, AND IMPLICATIONS	138
6.1 Introduction	138
6.2 Summary of Chapters	138
6.3 Research Findings	141
6.3.1 Findings from Primary Data	141
6.3.2 Findings from Secondary Data	146
6.4 Conclusions about the Research Question and its Research Contributions	149
6.5 Contribution of the Research Study	154
6.5.1 Identifying Gaps in the Literature	154
6.5.2 Validity of the theory and its limitations	156
6.6 Limitations of the study	159
6.7 Implications for Future Research	159
6.7.1 Implications for Gender Disparity	159
6.7.2 Implications for Policy and Practice	160
6.8 Recommendations	162
6.9 Conclusion	164
7. References	166
8. Appendices	184
Appendix A: The Action Research Process	184
Appendix B: Proposition log	188
Appendix C: Interview Schedule	189

Appendix D: Letter of Consent	190
Appendix E: Semi structure interview questions	192
Appendix F: Online Questionnaire/Survey	194
Appendix G: Memo to GE HR Requesting and Granting Permission to conduct study	201
Appendix H: Concept Analysis	205
Appendix I: Report from Google Forms	207
Appendix J: Concept Maps	212
Appendix K: Transformation paradigms in Eskom	213

List of Figures

Figure 1 Eskom Senior Management Equity Trends between Nov 2019 and 2022	5
Figure 2 Action Research Cycles	12
Figure 3 Research Conceptual Framework	13
Figure 4 Interrelationship between the Building Blocks of Research.....	25
Figure 5 An Interactive Model of Research Design.....	26
Figure 6 Data Cycles for Coding.....	31
Figure 7 Cross Cutting Dimensions	38
Figure 8 The Grounded Theory Coding Process.....	41
Figure 9 Roadmap to Finalise Concept Development	44
Figure 10 Breakdown of Respondents per Category	50
Figure 11 Dimensions for Semi-Structure of Interviews	52
Figure 12 Screenshot Depicting the Number of Interviews Conducted, and Transcripts Uploaded	53
Figure 13 Screenshot Extract NVIVO to illustrate code for “Attitude of Employees”	55
Figure 14: Data Alignment between Interview Questions and Questionnaire to Achieve Saturation	60
Figure 15 Question 10 A - Extracted from Online Questionnaire	61
Figure 16 Question 10 B: Extracted from Online Questionnaire.....	61
Figure 17 Question 10 C - Extract from Online Questionnaire	62
Figure 18 Concept Development.....	65
Figure 19 Approach to Literature Review.....	80
Figure 20 Typologies of Organisational Justice.....	82
Figure 21 The Transition from Descriptive Theory to Normative Theory	108
Figure 22 Theoretical Perspective.....	114
Figure 23 Visual Representation of my Research Dynamic and Relationships to Illustrate the Complexity and Multiplicity of Issues from a Systems Perspective.....	115
Figure 24 Visual Matrix of Domination.....	118
Figure 25 Leadership Brand Pillars.....	121
Figure 26 A Framework for illustrating Gender Dynamics for Women in Leadership	122
Figure 27 Limits to Growth/ Success B.O.T Graph.....	124
Figure 28 Causal Relationship between Variables within the Reinforcing Loop (R1).....	125
Figure 29 Causal Relationships between Variables within the Balancing Loop (B1)	126

Figure 30 SOC's Promise of a Just Culture Fade for Black Women.....	129
Figure 31 Link between Emergent Categories of Grounded Theory and Research Goals	140
Figure 32 Percentage Women across Eskom occupational categories since 2022	143
Figure 33: Women Representation per Occupational Level in 2022	147
Figure 34 An Action Research Spiral (Dick & February 2002)	184
Figure 35 An Alternative Way of Thinking about the Action Research Spiral (Dick & February 2002)	185
Figure 36 Integration of Grounded theory and Critical Realism	187

List of Tables

Table 1 Females at Senior Management Level by Race Group.....	6
Table 2 Three Domains of Knowledge	17
Table 3 Components to Establish Credibility	46
Table 4 Summary of Data Cycles for the Study.....	51
Table 5 Summary of Categories Rephrased as a Variable	67
Table 6 Rephrased Variables.....	110
Table 7 Definitions of Variables Identified.....	112
Table 8 Three kinds of human interest and knowledge as identified by Habermas.....	185

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADP	Accelerated Development Programme
BBBEE	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
BWA	Businesswomen's Association
CAS	Complex Adaptive Systems
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
CLD	Casual Loop diagram
EAP	Economic Active Population
EWAP	Eskom Women Advancement Programme
EWSETA	Energy Water Sector Education and Training Authority
GLOBE	Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness
GRPBMEAF	Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluating, and Auditing
HRD	Human Resources Development
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual
LTO	Long-Term Orientation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NDP	National Development Plan
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NVIVO	NVIVO Software
SDF	Skills Development Facilitator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SHC	Shareholders Compact
SMME	Small Medium Micro Enterprises
SOC	State-owned Company (also used interchangeably for SOE)
SOE	State-owned Entity
SOP	Standard operating procedures
TFL	Transformational Leadership
TSL	Transactional Leadership
UCT	University of Cape Town
UN	United Nations

WEF	World Economic Forum
WEGE	Women Empowerment & Gender Equality
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution

Glossary

Black women	African, a Coloured, or an Indian woman.
Black people	Is a generic term which means Africans, Coloureds and Indians.
Equality	The act of giving each individual or group of people the same resources or opportunities.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Deconstructing socioeconomic injustices and inequities caused by the exclusion of Black people and women under colonialism and apartheid rule is a key aspect of the new democratic South Africa (Montesh, 2007). The workplace has occasionally been described as an unwelcome environment for women due to the various forms of gender discrimination that occur. Workplace discrimination has a detrimental impact on women's incomes and opportunities in several ways, including the gender wage gap, the lack of women in leadership roles, the imbalanced work-life balance, and longer time needed for women (vs. men) to advance in their careers (Acker, 2012; Blau et al., 2007).

As a result, women's socioeconomic status generally declines, with Black women suffering from additional racial and gender discrimination. The concept of intersectionality, a phrase coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), refers to how Black people (and more specifically Black women) continue to exist at the crossroads of oppression. It is a result of the intertwining of several social identities. Black women's intersectional experiences continue to stifle their voices and restrict their employment chances in the modern workplace. These limitations, which are often both overt and covert, are referred to as the "glass ceiling" metaphorically (Shafritz, 2018, p. 171).

The South African Constitution places a strong emphasis on the right to equality and providing protection from unfair discrimination. Essentially, the Constitution prohibits the state from unfairly discriminating against anyone based on their race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, color, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, or belief, as well as their culture, language, or place of birth. In so far as the Constitution guarantees that everyone will be treated equally under the law and intends to foster gender equality, as well as the defence of human rights at all societal levels, together with Section 187 and the Bill of Rights, there cannot be gender equity until organisations make firm commitments to address issues pertaining to representivity, as well as improving the socioeconomic situation of women, particularly Black women.

Black people are categorized as either Africans, Coloured, or Indians in accordance with the Constitution of South Africa (1996) and the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act 53 of 2003 respectively. If a designated group is not represented at all occupational levels in the workplace, it is claimed that their right to equality has been

infringed. More than 20 years later, Black women continue to experience different and unequal outcomes based on their race and gender (Wingfield, 2020). As a result, Black women experience bias more frequently than Black men, hence they are the targets of both racial and gender discrimination. Black women continue to face discrimination in both the workplace and society because of interactions between and mutual reinforcement of these two stereotypes.

A study of the concept of cohesion, Anzaldua (1999) asserts that in coexisting civilizations, members of all sexes, races, social classes, and other groups become so embedded in one another's lives that it is difficult to distinguish between insiders and outsiders. Anzaldua also raises the idea of intersectionality, implying that we should consider the interdependence of people's lived experiences. This occurs when a social attribute such as gender, race, class, ability, religion, or sexual orientation "overlaps" with another. Therefore, with the help of this "structure," it is possible to comprehend the different ways that systemic injustices and social inequality manifest. Intersectionality holds that traditional notions of oppression such as racism, sexism, and homophobia are interconnected (Anzaldua, 1999, p. 72).

Even though the proportion of women in politics has increased, there is still a lack of discussion about women's conflicts, raising the question of how much actual decision-making power women possess (Yuval-Davis, 2006). When women are treated as full members of society but have limited rights, this can be referred to as "conditioned belonging" (Segalo, 2015, p. 75).

This study is therefore a critical reflection on the ways in which the dynamics of dual oppression race and gender advance our knowledge of the social production of inequality. The research will additionally consider how new knowledge can be generated by examining the interrelated factors that sustain the gender disparity in state-owned establishments, viewed as catalysts for societal transformation. Stated differently, understanding the interconnectedness of the various forms of oppression and discrimination is essential to achieving redress.

In accordance with existing theory and evidence on intersectional topics in organisational research, my study will investigate the underlying mechanisms that create the phenomenon of study and examine issues of inequality relating to Black women along gender and racio-ethnic lines within the context of the South African public sector.

The following section, where I begin to place the issue of gender inequality, focuses primarily on the effect of Black women in management roles within a research context governed by a convoluted, inclusive, and compliance-driven legal framework.

1.2 Research Context

The constitutional and legislative framework of South Africa is progressive in that it relies on social and institutional agency for implementation and emphasizes the relevance of gender equality. The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act 53 of 2013 also promotes "increasing the percentage of Black women who own and manage both current and future enterprises, expanding their access to economic activities, infrastructure, and skill training" (p. 17). To meet with the constitution's need for equality, the Act also specifies that "a code of good practice and standards therein stated may distinguish between Black Men and Black Women" (p. 146).

The inclusion of Black women in managerial positions within state-owned organisations has been a major priority in South Africa since the country's transition to democracy in 1994. This was due to South Africa's historical post-apartheid division along racial, gender, and class lines. As a result of the division, Black women were disproportionately impacted (Currie & De Waal, 2013).

The corporate sector in South Africa appears to be uninterested in the need to address historical imbalances and injustices. This is evidence by it upholding male domination, particularly through the employment of white men at executive levels to the detriment of Black women. Even though South Africa and the rest of the globe are getting ready for the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), there are still more men than women working in the corporate sector. Lee et al. (2018, as cited in Matotoka & Odeku, 2021) refer to a "revolutionary change that will occur when IT proliferates in all industries" (p. 2). According to Matotoka and Odeku (2021), the idea of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" symbolizes the dissolution of boundaries between the physical, digital, and biological domains. By consequence, the 4IR will further entrench male dominance in managerial roles and to exclude Black women from economic involvement.

James (2006) posits that there is still a gender imbalance in South African SOCs, where majority of men hold managerial and supervisory posts. As a result, there is a risk that South Africa's business sector may not achieve fair representation at managerial levels, which would be detrimental to Black women.

As I explain in more detail, my study was conducted inside a SOC in South Africa, where SOCs are tools for generating public value. The regulatory, compliance, and policy-driven environment in which SOCs usually operate is complicated, with numerous mandates and competing policy goals. To portray this complexity Figure 22 is a visual representation of the dynamic nature and relationships that exists within the multilayered and multifaceted structure of the research phenomenon.

As a result of this complexity and competing interest SOCs are constantly attracting publicity, which in my opinion erodes the focus on achieving of transformation imperatives such as gender equality. In the section that follows, I put emphasis on how the research problem is contextualized.

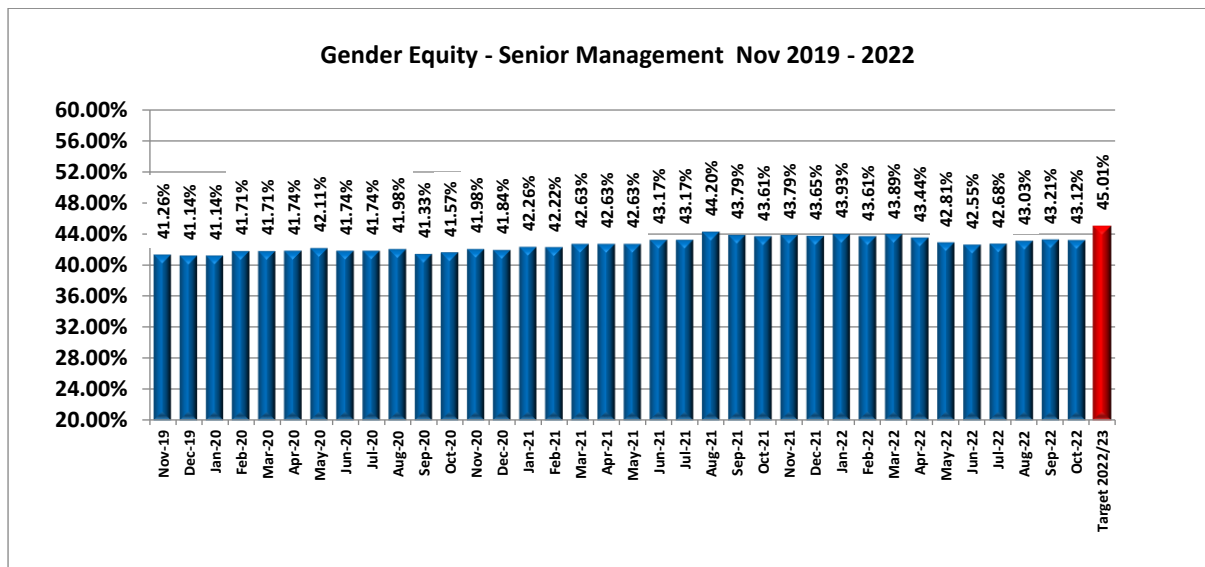
1.3 Research Problem

The under-representation of Black women in senior management is the focus of the study, notwithstanding that management within the Eskom constitutes three levels namely top management, senior and middle management. However, for this study I will refer to senior management, as the point of reference. This occupational level is classified as an executive level, also called an E-band level.

Despite significant advancements in South Africa's efforts to combat gender inequality, the rise of Black women into leadership positions has languished due to the lack of an intersectionality framework for examining gender dynamics at the management level of a state-owned company.

Using data from Eskom, Figure 1 below graphically illustrates the gradual change in gender equity over time. It shows trends for senior management from November 2019 to October 2022. The impact on perceptions of a fair and reasonable process in relation to perceptions of justice and fairness for employees is a result of this steady movement.

Figure 1 Eskom Senior Management Equity Trends between Nov 2019 and 2022



Source: SAP, data FY2019-FY2022

According to the graph above, gender equity performance increased gradually between November 2019 and October 2022. Even though it was anticipated that the senior management level would rise from 34 to 45.2% by 2013. In contrast, it remained constant at 41.99% in 2021. Based on this steady improvement, I argue that Black women still experience racial and gender discrimination, which perpetuate the fact that women still have a lower social and economic status than men. Although our goal is to achieve 50:50 representation by 2030, the gender ratio at Eskom has generally improved, standing at 66% for men and 34% for women. Although the Eskom Integrated Report (FY2021/22) notes that " Gender equity at senior management and at middle management/ professionally qualified levels have shown some improvement since the prior year, although targets had not been achieved" (Eskom, 2022, p. 111). This is a clear sign that a deliberate strategy will be required if Eskom intends to reach its goal of reaching 50:50 representation by 2030.

I also refer to the Global Gender Report of 2021 (World Economic Forum, 2021), which connects the following ideas and establishes a link between gender equality and sustainable development. These include ideas on equitable representation of men and women on boards, leadership teams, as well as equal access to opportunities for training and career advancement, the abolition of gender-based discrimination in pay rates and how they are set. In conjunction with the CEE's findings that white males and females enjoy and are afforded preferential treatment in terms of recruitment, promotion and training opportunities for managerial levels in the corporate sector, it is argued that promotion and training opportunities are

disproportionately afforded to Black women (Department of Labour, 2022). To corroborate this statement the following table is a breakdown of women at senior management level in relation to race groups.

Table 1 Females at Senior Management Level by Race Group

Females at Senior Management Level			
Category by Race	FY2019	FY2022	
Black Females	40.00%	42.00%	
African	24.00%	26.20%	
Asian	6.90%	7.10%	
Coloured	2.48%	2.70%	
White Females	6.68%	6.20%	

Source: SAP data, FY2019 and FY2022

The information is based on Eskom’s personnel data for the period between FY2019 – FY2022 and suggests that the average growth for Black women in Eskom at senior management level is approximately 2% over a period of three years.

The Global Gender Report of 2021 (WEF, 2021) also discusses further actions that could be taken to lessen the social burden of family life on women in general. Furthermore, it acknowledges the potential effects this may have on a country's power and influence as well as its potential effects

Considering this, the case for equal representation of men and women on boards, leadership teams, and stakeholder forums will only get stronger over time. To increase the representation of Black women in managerial positions, quotas have been criticized making it impossible for the CGE to enforce them (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021).

Studies on the gender pay gap occasionally investigated whether the public and private sectors had different pay structures. According to Fogel and Lewin (1974, as cited in Miller, 2009), "Government employers frequently pay more than necessary to attract a work force in the low

and middle skill ranges and generally pay less than necessary to attract employees of average quality at the upper managerial and professorial levels” (p. 430).

Given that pay comparability practices are a factor in this practice among low and middle skilled workers, it would make sense to assume that the gender effect in the public sector would be closely related to the gender effect in the private sector.

In contrast, the gender wage effect in the public sector's upper part of the wage distribution may differ from that in the private sector's upper part of the wage distribution because the public sector reportedly has a compressed upper part of the wage distribution because it does not compete with the private sector for top executive talent.

Due to this, Arulampalam et al. (2007) have demonstrated how the size of the gender wage gap in the public and private sectors differs significantly in several European countries. Finding out more about the elements that contribute to the pay disparities between men and women may be possible by looking at the gender pay gap across wage distributions for both the private and public sectors.

According to Miller (2009), the existence of a "glass ceiling" would suggest that women earn less than men at the top of the pay scale as opposed to the middle or lower rungs. It can therefore be argued that the gender pay gap needs to be closed to guarantee legitimacy and fairness in the workplace (Miller, 2009). The report also asserts that gaps persist despite an increase in the number of women entering the corporate pipeline at all levels, showing that promotions from entry-level jobs up to manager positions are still not completely balanced.

I start to frame the research problem in relation to Eskom, a state-owned corporation, in the following section.

1.3.1 Background of Eskom

About 96% of the installed generating capacity in South Africa is owned by the state-owned company, Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd. Eskom's mandate aims to produce power to encourage economic growth and boost South Africa's GDP (Eskom, 2023). It is possible to follow this contribution's direct spending in relation to its operating and capital expenditures, as well as its geographic reach. Unfortunately, the growing financial instability of Eskom, which is purportedly linked to allegations of corruption and state control, as well as the organization's considerable operational challenges and unexpected loadshedding situations, present a negative economic outlook for the company. Nevertheless, Eskom remains committed to this objective as a partner with the government and a facilitator of democratic development.

Affirmative Action policies and employment equity laws implemented after 1994 have contributed to greater Black inclusion, but white privilege and male dominance continue to exist (Matotoka & Odeku, 2021).

The CEO Women's Program was founded in 2001 to address the lack of technical expertise needed to prepare and improve Black female graduates for career or deployment opportunities. The 2013 launch of the Eskom Women Advancement Programme (EWAP) aimed to contribute to the goal of 50% gender parity by 2026. The programme embodies a holistic approach aimed at "breaking the mould," a metaphor is based on perceptions of and about women that perpetuate misrepresentation of women in leadership and technical roles.

EWAP is also premised on the need to create an inclusive, flexible environment that advocates for gender-balanced leadership, where the contributions of men and women are equally valued.

The under-representation of Black women in senior management and higher positions is therefore concerning, particularly because skills development, employment equity, talent management, succession planning, and employment equity are all focused on advancing women, and on the surface, it appears that Black women's advancement is still behind. I formulate the purpose of this research study against this background in the following section.

1.3.2 Purpose of the research study

The aim of the study is to provide an intersectionality framework to help SOCs recognize barriers to the inclusion of Black women by identifying mechanisms, methods, and practices that will address the inequity and lack of inclusion. SOCs are crucial enablers for facilitating intersectionality, and its fundamental concepts of social context, complexity, relationality, power, and social justice will undoubtedly serve as a useful point of reference (López et al., 2018).

1.3.3 Research questions

The research questions to be answered for this research are:

- What are the mechanisms that obstruct the advancement of Black women at a managerial level in Eskom?
- What are the intersectional issues and organisational injustices that are experienced and perceived by Black women at managerial level in a state-owned organisation in South Africa?

1.3.4 Statement of Research Problem

The following extract from the EWAP report for 2015, is captured as the statement of the research problem for this study:

Despite advancements in employment equity targets, it is crucial to recognize that over the last ten years, women's advancement in leadership has remained stagnant, with men predominating in all leadership roles (Eskom, 2015).

The report further states:

that the appointment of women in key leadership and technical roles still lags, as there is an assumption that women are not able to handle stress as well as their male counterparts and that the boardroom is a male domain with no place for women, they earn less than their male counterparts holding the same positions and women are prone to being sexually harassed by their male counterparts (Eskom, 2015, p. 15).

Eskom accepts that there are still disparities in the distribution of power and decision-making between males and women due to the under-presentation of Black women in middle and senior management. Due to access to data and existing constraints brought on by fewer participants, my research criteria for this study will focus on the senior management level and above. I describe the creation and justification of my contextual framework in the part that follows.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

According to Maxwell (2005), a conceptual framework is a group of theories, expectations, presumptions, and beliefs that serve to guide and support research. Edmonds (2012) suggests that the definition of a situational context can be achieved by considering historical factors, the individuals involved, their degree of expertise, and any other relevant factors. Therefore, this statement suggests that individual values salient have varied effects on different workers, depending on how closely an employee first aligned themselves with the organization (Guadalupe et al., 2020). I therefore argue that as a result, insufficient attention is paid to the challenges faced by Black women in management positions. Evaluating the relationship between identity and organizational engagement is an essential first step in determining the culture and values of an organization. Examples include opinions regarding intergroup relations, role conflict, and organizational socialization. Additionally, they link identity precursors, which are generally associated with social identification behavior and group formation. Chapter 3 goes into more detail about these connections.

However, I have concluded that, to accurately depict the realities of Black women's organizational life, I will be using aspects of systems thinking, intersectionality, and leadership theory as my theoretical lens.

- **Systems Thinking**

The political economy in which SOCs operate is extremely complicated, operationally focused, and compliance driven. Additionally, they must balance a dual mandate that is inherently at odds with one another in terms of profitability and the need to support government goals for developmental transformation.

This conflict has a confusing effect on state-owned organisations that are pursuing numerous interests, which may have a detrimental influence on company performance and financial objectives. Understanding how numerous, concurrent systems of inequity are prevalent requires a system thinking approach including systems archetypes to bridge the gap between the stages in the theory building phase which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

- **Intersectionality**

While our current conception of inequality takes institutionalized bias, connections, and discriminatory behaviours into account in relation to social identities and perspectives, intersectionality argues that traditional concepts of oppression like race and gender are not independent and emphasizes privilege as a special benefit that is not typical (Maake et al., 2021). This point of view places particular emphasis on the connections among social categories like race, gender, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation as well as the power relationships that develop within systems because of interactions between these social dimensions across the boundaries of the individual, institutional, cultural, and societal spheres of influence. There is a dearth of literature on leadership and management studies that uses intersectionality as a lens, despite the importance of intersectionality being seen in the fields of feminist studies, public policy formulation, and the social sciences (Ncube, 2018). Thus, this study will focus on two intersectional factors i.e., race and gender that are especially important in the energy industry.

- **Leadership Theory**

Institutional management depends on effective leadership, thus leadership scholars across the world are aware of the importance of leadership in organisations and the link between it and organisational success. The SOC's ability to fulfil its institutional purpose and achieve their

economic goals is unquestionably much influenced by the quality of their leadership as described by Conradie and Messerschmidt (2000) in their monumental book for Eskom leadership. Thus, agency theory suggests that having strong leadership is crucial for accomplishing institutional goals, along with an organisational culture that is focused on high performance and is ethical in its behaviour.

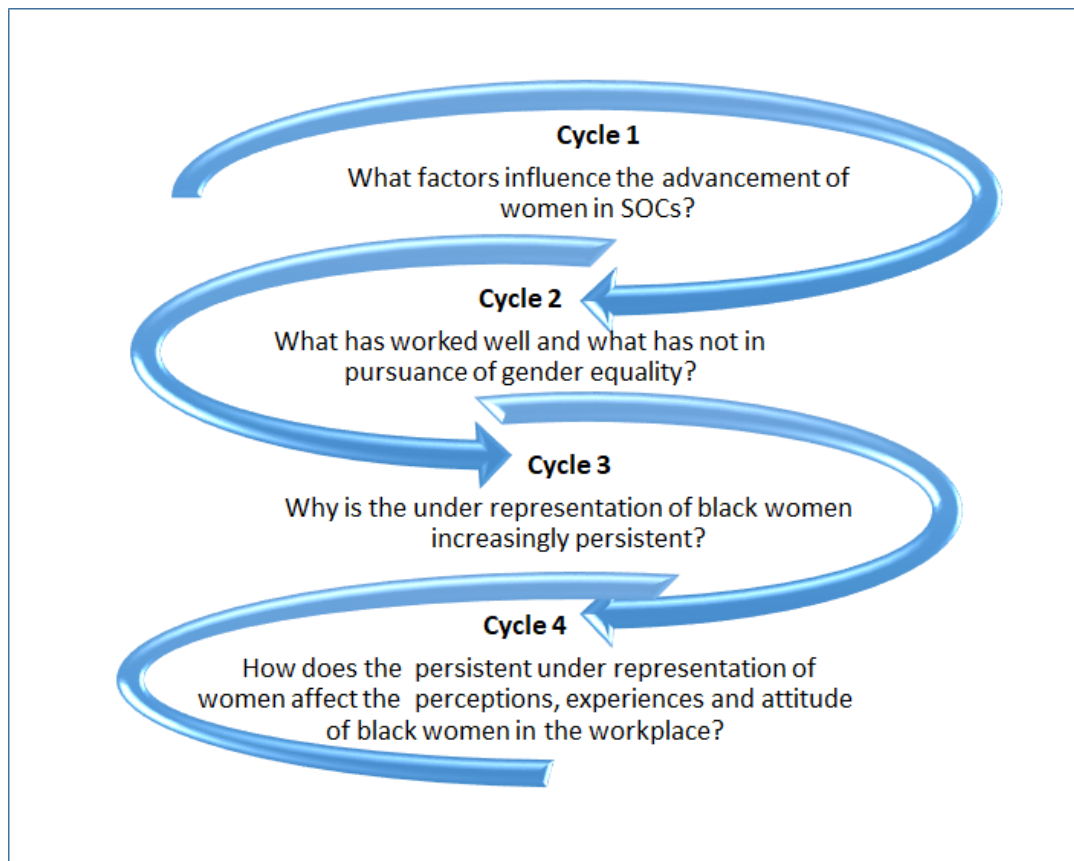
While an existing body of knowledge has greatly benefitted from the use of current leadership theories and models, these nevertheless centre on the cruel and exclusionary bedrock of masculinity, which is founded in racial and gender inequities. The combination of these perspectives as stated previously will provide a broader understanding of the integrated, complex, and multidimensional nature of gender equality.

In the following section, I employ an action research methodology as a pilot study to create a conceptual framework for formulating, conceptualizing, and comprehending the context and research problem.

1.4.1 Creation of my Conceptual Framework

Action research is constructivist and claims that ideas are built on prior experience and knowledge, in contrast to traditional research, which takes a top-down approach. Action research is characterized as a methodical, introspective investigation, that may be applied to a situation based on reflective thinking. Figure 2 below, represents my action research process based on four iterations of an action research cycle, steered by four broad questions relevant to the topic under study.

Figure 2 Action Research Cycles



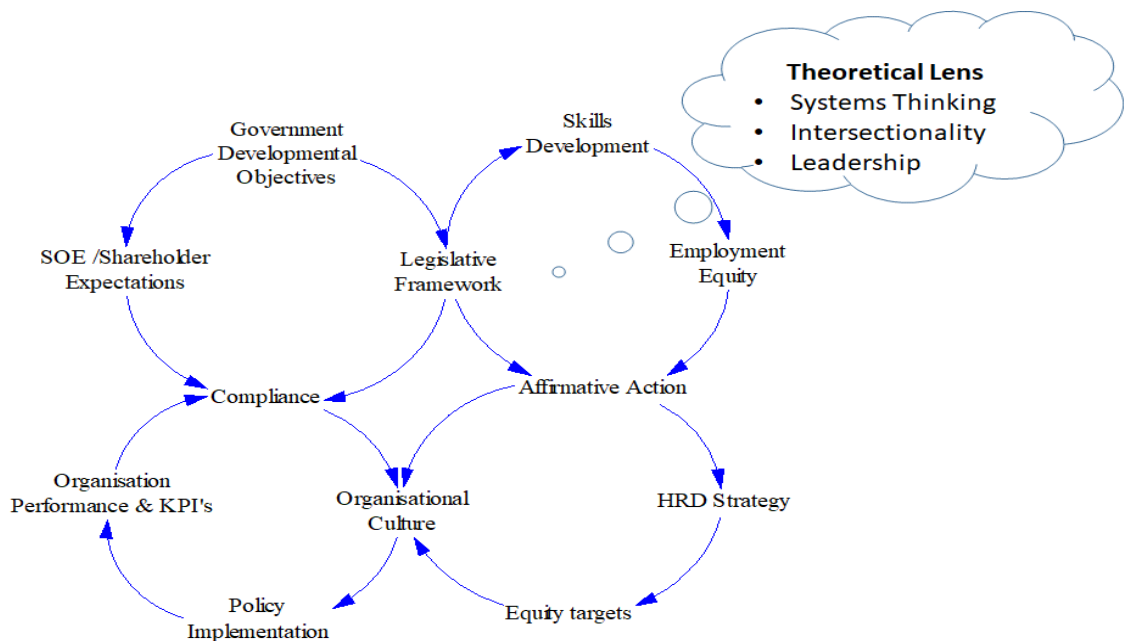
Source: Adapted from action research cycles depicted by Shelley (2014, p. 32).

In summary, the first research cycle was based on an enquiry relating to factors affecting Black women's advancement in state owned organisations. As a result, the second research question was formulated, to establish what worked well and what did not in terms of achieving gender equity goals. The third and fourth inquiry, dealt with the social discourse surrounding the under-presentation of women in senior or technical roles. Based on this, I explain the conceptual framework in the next section.

1.4.2 Explanation of my Conceptual Framework

Contextual factors affect views and trusting relationships with key decision makers, according to Ashford et al., (2016). In South Africa, SOCs are significant because they increase the country's socio-economic, legal, and political relevance. Therefore, as shown in Figure 3, the resulting theories must take into consideration the contextual realities that impact the studied phenomenon.

Figure 3 Research Conceptual Framework



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study.

Socio-economic, Legislative, and Political Context

Given that SOCs function in a highly complicated, legally restricted, and compliance-driven environment, we examine how contextual and situational factors interact with one another within this conceptual framework in addition to examining how discriminatory social practices manifest. Even though they are autonomous entities, SOCs are either fully or partially owned by the government. Apart from their explicit mandate to cater to the public interest, SOCs are also accountable for upholding their operational and financial sustainability. SOCs have economic and social goals in addition to a clearly defined mandate, which puts them politically at risk because of conflicting stakeholder interests. As a result, multiple factors may affect SOC performance, and no single theory can fully account for all the various dynamics.

According to South African legislation, SOCs must advance workplace equality and the abolition of discriminatory workplace practices through affirmative action policy measures in order to correct historical inequalities and provide opportunities to certain groups (Zuiderveld, 2014).

My conceptual framework, therefore, illustrates the interconnectedness of the factors that either directly or indirectly affect SOC's. In relation to my study, these components represent individual systems and subsystems that range in complexity and degree of integration.

According to Leslie and Gelfand (2008), organisations that try to address discrimination in only one area of organisational structure, procedure, or practice while ignoring others will be ineffective because of conflicting messages.

To some extent, the complexity of economic, social, and ecological systems can be understood through the theoretical lens of systems thinking. Additionally, analysis cannot be used to comprehend systems because only the greater context of the whole can be used to comprehend the qualities of the parts (Merali & Allen, 2011).

The next section examines how culture, policy, and practice relate to the organisational and individual setting.

Organisational and Individual Context

In terms of shareholder expectations and comprehensive actions, state-owned companies stand alone and are dynamic. These evaluations, which can be qualitative or quantitative, provide information about how well policies are developed and put into practice. While businesses rely on HR policies and practices to encourage workplace diversity, these policies and procedures also affect social cohesiveness and organisational decision-making. However, they are short-term and have a limited scope. HR targets, interventions, processes, and systems strive to alter the workforce composition. Short-sighted criteria are those that only consider the present, such as increasing the proportion of women in the workforce. Additionally, it contends that women are unlikely to have a long-lasting impact on skills development, and that their actions may harm the intended audience (Heilman et al., 1997).

A comprehensive approach to organisational structure, governance, process, and practices which include strategy, leadership, culture, and climate is required if we are to comprehend the difficulties posed by the under-representation of women.

For any appraisal system to be successful, employee perceptions of the fairness of performance reviews are essential. To begin with, researchers have determined a variety of metrics to evaluate how well appraisal systems work. Perceptions of the system's fairness are one of these numerous indicators and filing discrimination complaints is a specific behavioral result of those perceptions (Rubin & Edwards, 2020).

Consequently, it becomes crucial to consider important bias indicators like appraisal discrimination complaints to comprehend the relationship between the discrimination-causing factors and the appraisal structure. Even though there is a wealth of research on how rater bias

skews ratings based on an employee's age, gender, race/ethnicity, and other characteristics (Rubin & Edwards, 2020).

In addition to the pressure of achieving operational goals, SOCs are also under pressure to meet equity targets to establish workplace democracy through the abolition of discriminatory practices. The risk of competing goals makes it necessary to balance stakeholder management in terms of SOC performance and shareholder expectations to reconcile profitability, business sustainability, and transformation imperatives.

Despite the need for managing people in terms of hiring, retaining, developing, and growing employees, an HRD strategy must be consistent with developing organisational capability that is inclusive and representative of society. I now present my status as an insider, which I will elaborate on as part of the next section.

1.5 Researchers' Positionality

I am up front to say that I work for Eskom as a middle manager and am a Black woman with an activist persona. As a result, I have a lot invested in this setting, which I will consider and mitigate as part of the planning and implementation of the research methodology which I discuss in Chapter 2.

I therefore assert my insider credentials, having worked for Eskom for 30 years in various positions. I am a former trade unionist and the inaugural chairperson of the National Women Structure of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). My leadership ability has been significantly influenced through my involvement as an employee and participation in tripartite alliance structures as a political and community activist. I am currently the Middle Manager Commercial, for Eskom Distribution Cape Coastal Cluster responsible for the management of the procurement, materials management, and warehousing environment, which gives my role a fair amount of prominence as a leader within the cluster.

I advocate for active citizenship, and pride myself for having a long history of activism, hence I take great delight in my lengthy history of social awareness and community involvement. My personal experience has shown me that advocacy alone is insufficient to fully understand the problems faced by South Africa's vulnerable communities and designated groups, with Black women.

The choice to start this academic endeavour is an effort to further the conversation about gender equity by including the organisational dynamics of women as contributors to this conversation. In many ways, state-owned businesses serve as institutions within our society

which mirrors the reality of society itself. As a burgeoning scholar, I am particularly interested in the degree to which power imbalances (related to gender) are reified within the African and South African context. Therefore, I will be open to the possibility of my own bias and incorporate research techniques to make sure my study is valid, and that the data are not my own interpretation. I am aware of the positional risk that may be interpreted as having the ability to exert undue bias because of my role as manager within the organisation. However, to prevent researcher bias, I will use the research strategies outlined in chapters two and three, to address the risk of positional advantage.

This personal account thus starts to have an impact on my philosophical presumptions, which I explore in the following section.

1.6 Philosophical Assumptions

The beliefs that direct my research work are philosophical presumptions. My ontology refers to presumptions about the nature of reality, whereas epistemology deals with the justification of knowledge claims and methodology is the mechanism or procedures we employ to formulate these claims of knowing.

I will go over each of these in more detail in the following section, beginning with the ontological presumptions that underlie my project.

1.6.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to the process through which we try to provide answers to queries regarding the structure, character, and origins of reality. I tend to adopt a layered, emergent, process-focused critical realist viewpoint that emphasizes entities, relations, and transformation. I have used both my own and the participants' perceptions to interpret issues for this study. Additionally, it started to highlight how very important each person's unique experiences, viewpoints, and interactions with the researcher are in determining what is the case. According to Ponterotto (2005), reality is co-constructed by the researcher and the study subject. Tuli (2011) also purports that using close-proximity data collection techniques is preferable, and cites the significance of first-hand experiences.

From a critical realism standpoint, it shows that using interviews as a research method is advantageous for detail even when there are few participants. On a metaphysical level, critical realism acknowledges that there is a reality that is independent of human knowledge, that reality is socially constructed, and that this reality can be generated through various structures and procedures. In a similar vein Danermark et al., (1997) contend that reality exists

regardless of what we know about it, but that this reality is not constant or easily verifiable by empirical means. In other words, because of access restrictions and levels of stratification in the real world, our knowledge is constrained.

Stratification is the idea that there are different types of reality, such as the "empirical," "actual," and "real," where events must take place irrespective of the experiences in which they are perceived. Thus, just as events are real and separate from experiences, structures and mechanisms are real and distinct from the patterns of occurrences that they produce. Thus, the real, the actual, and the empirical, as illustrated in Table 2 below, are three overlapping areas of reality that are made up of mechanisms, events, and experiences.

Table 2 Three Domains of Knowledge

	<i>Domain of Real</i>	<i>Domain of Actual</i>	<i>Domain of Empirical</i>
<i>Mechanism</i>	✓		
<i>Events</i>	✓	✓	
<i>Experiences</i>	✓	✓	✓

Source: (Archer et al., 2013 p.47)

Since various causes can be identified at higher levels and beyond direct observation, this tiered model of causation starts to advance our knowledge of the material and social powers as they interact. In a similar vein, critical realism not only acknowledges the difference between the empirical and the real, but also takes the risk of establishing deeper, unobservable causal mechanisms. This is helpful to the planned study, which aims to pinpoint the mechanisms impeding the growth of Black women in management positions at Eskom. The ontological depth and actual stratification of nature and society serve as the foundation for abstraction, according to a critical realism viewpoint.

These are not subjective classifications of a homogeneous empirical reality as a result. If we can only give our opinions about reality, then what makes up the truth? The claim made by constructivists, who embrace Piaget's position that "the mind creates the world by organizing itself," is that there is no one absolute, universally accepted truth. According to Von Glasersfeld (1995), the cognitive organism organizes and molds its experiences, thereby converting the world into a structured one (p.67).

Stated differently, interpretive researchers may take an inter-subjective stance because they consider reality to be composed of people's subjective perceptions of the outside world

(Putnam & Banghart, 2017). a stance that is consistent with Charmaz's (2006) assertion that study participants, implicit meanings, and experiential viewpoints all have an impact on researchers' conclusions (grounded theories).

Critical realists contend that knowledge advances our understanding of reality and that theories are capable of being true. The fundamental causes of social phenomena, activities, or phenomena under study can also be ascertained with the help of these theories. As we discuss how knowledge production is generated in the next section, this sets the scene.

1.6.2 Epistemology

Ontology discusses the nature of reality, whereas epistemology focuses on the exchange between the participant and the researcher. Constructivism may therefore serve as the basis for an epistemological viewpoint.

Constructivism is defined by Von Glasersfeld (1994) as a method of thought. Von Glasersfeld also distinguished between conceptual and physical levels of knowledge (1995). He also refers to Piaget's constructivist theory of knowledge when he asserts that "knowledge is not passively acquired but built up by the cognizing subject" (p. 51).

Constructivists believe that since reality is socially constructed, the researcher-participant relationship is essential to understanding the participant's experience. As a result, Tuli (2011) asserts that trustworthiness is a critical criterion for qualitative reports and that credibility and trustworthiness are essential components. Thus, examining, comprehending, and characterizing social reality are elements of qualitative research methodologies. Epistemological assumptions also address what constitutes acceptable truth, since they establish the criteria, characteristics, and assessment of truth claims (Chua, 2005).

As a result, these assumptions govern how to gather and produce knowledge claims, how to assess their veracity or legitimacy, and how to compare them to a body of existing knowledge (Wynn & Williams, 2012).

It is assumed that knowledge, no matter how it is defined, is something that exists in people's minds when discussing how knowledge is socially formed. Because of this, the thinking of that individual is based on their own experience, which is the only universe we are cognizant of existing in. Since this experience is largely subjective, even if I were to find evidence to suggest that it might not be dissimilar from yours, I would still be unable to confirm that it is. Thus, language is no exception in terms of experience and interpretation, showing that the

speaker's mind determines the meaning of words more so than the actual words they speak (Von Glasersfeld, 1995).

Using the words of Von Glasersfeld (1995), who claims that "study of social phenomena can be successful if it does not fully consider that the mind that creates workable concepts and designs is under all circumstances an individual mind" (p. 121). The critical realism view of knowledge as socially created holds that no one person can create knowledge without the help of others. According to him, this information accumulates because of consistent experiences and somewhat secure connections between them (Von Glasersfeld, 1984).

The notion that knowledge is created by people, for people, and is about people and their social and physical environments is furthered by Chua (2005). Therefore, the interaction between people, their wants, and their environment is what mediates the effect of context on the nature of knowledge. Constructivists advocate for qualitative researchers to be aware of the context of their studies because they think that social phenomena emerge from social situations. Naidoo (2011) also mentions the significance of context and asserts that just as important as the context itself are the justifications behind it. We have spoken about my ontological and epistemological viewpoints, and now we will briefly go through the methodology I employ to back up my philosophical ideas to further knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Wynn & Williams, 2012).

1.6.3 Methodology

An interpretative, sensitive to context, and practical qualitative research method is grounded theory. I have decided to adopt that grounded theory as a suitable research methodology considering the character and dynamic of my research context. According Glaser and Strauss (1967, as cited in Suddaby, 2006), grounded theory is a useful approach to conducting research that focuses on the interpretations that social actors provide to meanings and concepts. In addition to emphasizing ongoing comparison or theoretical sensitivity, grounded theory as a process also recognizes the value of a sound design, which I go into further detail in Chapter 2.

Constructivist grounded theory is the approach I have specifically chosen to use because of its inductive methodology and integrated simultaneous data collection and analysis process. Instead of using pre-existing categories and theoretical frameworks, the main objective of constructivist grounded theory is to develop a theory or explanation that is based on and

emerges from the data. Grounded theory's reasoning was summed up by Charmaz (2014a) as follows:

Stated simply, grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible, guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories from the data themselves (...) Grounded theory begins with inductive data, invokes iterative strategies of going back and forth between data and analysis, uses comparative methods and keeps you interacting and involved with your data and emerging analysis (p. 1).

Since knowledge "rests on social constructs," constructivist grounded theory, a more contemporary kind of grounded theory, makes this assumption. Because the world under study is not objective but rather a social construction, the notion of an impartial observer is intrinsically incorrect. According to Charmaz (2006),

Unlike [Glaser and Strauss'] position, I assume that neither data nor theories are discovered either as given in the data or the analysis. Rather, we are part of the world we study, the data we collect and the analyses we produce (p. 10).

This epistemological perspective has ramifications for how research is conducted because both the researchers and the study subjects "create research processes and products," regardless of how rigorous the procedures are. This change in how the researched reality is seen necessitates a new method of investigation. Constructivist grounded theory focuses more emphasis on "different local environments [and] many realities" and pays considerably less attention to the design" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 4).

Although we focus on the opinions, presumptions, and beliefs of the participants as well as the subjectivity of the researchers' interpretations we also acknowledge that social systems are not fully dependent on interpretation only. Grounded theory's previous iterations strongly advocated strictly inductive research methods, which do not offer a good opportunity to successfully study this complicated world.

1.6.4 Philosophical Conclusions

My philosophical foundations, beliefs, and common-sense propositions in many ways are historically grounded and represent complex features of the world that individuals and organisations assume, in ordinary life. Critical realism, through its commitment to stratification and emergence critical realism is entirely capable of incorporating epistemological insights and it is methodologically pluralist and inclusive. Notwithstanding that critical realism is not without its difficulties. First, as we have shown, it does not (and

cannot) generate any specific *domain* level theorizing, other than by ensuring that studies commit to a stratified, emergent account of the social world.

In many respects, my philosophical tenets, convictions, and common-sense assertions have historical roots and represent intricate aspects of the universe that people and organisations typically take for granted. Critical realism is completely capable of embracing epistemological findings and is methodologically pluralist and inclusive due to its commitment to stratification and emergence. Even though it has its challenges, critical realism is not without them. In the first place, as we have seen, it cannot (and does not) produce any distinctive domain-level theorizing, other than by assuring that investigations firmly subscribe to a stratified, emergent account of the social world.

Second, it does not specify which techniques are appropriate for looking into specific issues. Again, the researcher's experience and intuition will play a role in this. Thirdly, because of its commitment to the truth, erroneous ideologies and beliefs can be identified as such; yet, to truly emancipate, we must go beyond this.

According to Archer et al. (1998):

When only a particular set of false ideas is the cause of one's enslavement, liberation results from their replacement with real beliefs. However, most of the human servitude, misery, and repression do not work that way. False belief is not the only thing that ties us together, as demonstrated by the emancipatory critique's expansion from cognitive error to unmet needs. For example, tortured prisoners, homeless families, bullied wives, and unemployed workers all know exactly what would set them free but lack the power to achieve it. Therefore, although it is not sufficient for their freedom, cognitive enlightenment is an essential requirement (p. 461).

Finally, even though critical realism is a challenge to operationalize, it has been the subject of numerous sociological and organisational studies works that are compatible with it but do not ultimately describe a consistent collection of entities, attributes, causal mechanisms, triggers, etc. Despite being a relatively recent viewpoint, critical realism is continually evolving, forging new connections, reinterpreting opposing viewpoints, and meeting problems. For instance, Bhaskar's (2008) work on dialectical critical realism presents prospects for unique study that have not yet been included in the mainstream of social science. From this angle, I think that critical realism will provide me the chance to make a relevant contribution to the discourse surrounding my research project.

1.7 Justification for the Research

Even though there is a sizable body of interdisciplinary research on factors that prevent women from advancing, few of these studies have focused on the specific context of social, economic, political, and cultural environmental influences on the management of organisations in South Africa. Because these characteristics are frequently intricate and multifaceted, dealing with issues of social bias and discrimination requires contextual sensitivity.

As a result, it is crucial to understand which social factors in any setting interact most strongly to establish the conditions for their existence, this includes how changing one's gender affects these forces. An intersectional analysis of gender enables a thorough investigation of subjectivity, focusing on two key areas: first, the complex sense of "self" that allows for interaction with the outside world, and second, the examination of political movements and actions that are frequently coordinated in relation to alliances formed in the name of shared "class," "race," and/or, "gender" interests. Though the concept of intersectionality has expanded to encompass pedagogical approaches, LGBT organisations, religious concerns, and literacy issues in the United States, Europe, and Asia, it remains restricted to these three areas in South Africa (Jackson & Witenstein, 2021).

To pinpoint a contextual and/or knowledge gap, the study approach considers political and organisational factors along with the needs of various social groups. This analysis aims to elucidate the ways in which Black women's experiences, behaviors, perceptions, and managerial performance are influenced by gender and race. It will highlight how crucial it is to consider context when discussing gender equality and the rate at which society elevates Black women's social and economic standing generally. Furthermore, as part of this study, a theory to systemically comprehend the complexity associated with intersectional behaviors in state-owned businesses will be co-created. However, the main objective of the study is to examine or assess the underlying factors that hinder Black women from advancing to a senior management or beyond level at Eskom.

In the next section I will now discuss the research goals for the study.

1.8 Research Goals of the Study

According to Maxwell (2008), goals serve two main functions for your research: they guide your design, and they justify your study. In addition to this setting these goals improve my

understanding of what the study hopes to achieve. In this respect the goals for this study are as follows:

- Goal 1: To investigate and identify the mechanisms that obstruct or prevent Black women in South Africa from advancing to managerial positions in SOC's.
- Goal 2: To evaluate the intersectional difficulties that Black women at management levels in a South African SOC encounter and perceive.
- Goal 3: To evaluate organisational inequities that Black women at leadership levels in a South African SOC experience and perceive.
- Goal 4: To develop an intersectionality framework for exploring gender dynamics at management level within a state-owned organisation in South Africa.

Maxwell (2013) also distinguishes between three different types of research goals of which the above captures my intellectual and practical goals as this will increase my knowledge and potentially offer a practical solution to the research problem. Lastly, my personal goal for this study is to appreciate my personal growth and experience in this area of interest, as well as complete this thesis.

1.9 Outline of Thesis

This thesis comprises of six chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Research Methodology, (3) Exploration of Research Data and Key Findings, (4) Literature Review, (5) Theory building, (6) Conclusions, Contributions, and Implications.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter thesis is the introduction and aims to provide an overview of the research problem and contextual information.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

This chapter of the thesis discusses the theoretical framework and research methodology which details the ontological, epistemological, and methodological implications towards the research process.

Chapter 3: Exploration of Research Data and Key Findings

This chapter of the thesis will focus on providing the empirical findings resulting from the grounded theory process, detailing the insights gained as the process unfolds.

Chapter 4: Literature Review

This chapter is aimed at moving the research results from the empirical to the theoretical through a review of the relevant body of knowledge and thereby positioning the research results within the relevant body of knowledge.

Chapter 5: Development of a Framework

This chapter is the point at which the theoretical concepts identified in this study will be advanced towards a theory of learning.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter aims at concretizing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study from the secondary and primary data.

1.10 Conclusion

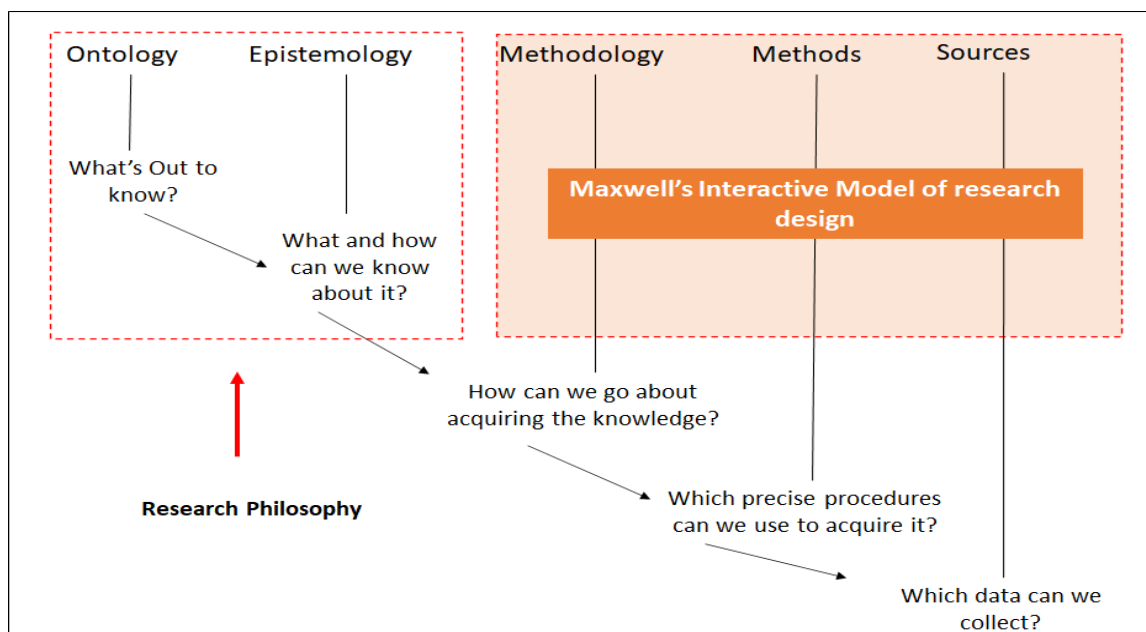
In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the study problem and environment. Here, I have concentrated on clarifying the research background to put the difficulty of the research problem into context and on elucidating my worldview utilizing philosophical stances connected to critical realism and constructivism. In my ontological perspective, reality as an interpretation of reality rather than reality itself is more important. My view on epistemology is based on the notion that knowledge is produced socially. I tried to explain the development of my conceptual framework using action research as a preliminary study to formulate and conceptualise how the research problem was constructed. Following this, I concluded that using grounded theory was a good way to build my theory. The next chapter will deal with the research methodology.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that the basic beliefs that inform a research framework are founded on three fundamental questions relating to ontology (the form and nature of the study), epistemology (the basic belief about knowledge) and methodology (the research process). These represent the first building blocks of the research framework as depicted in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 Interrelationship between the Building Blocks of Research



Source: (Adapted from Grix, 2002, p. 180 & Hay, 2002, p. 65).

I described my ontological and epistemological perspectives in the previous chapter as it represents my worldview regarding how reality and knowledge are created. I have already briefly described my research approach, but this chapter will go over a qualitative research design in greater depth. But first, allow me to explain why I chose a qualitative strategy.

2.2 Motivation for a Qualitative Approach

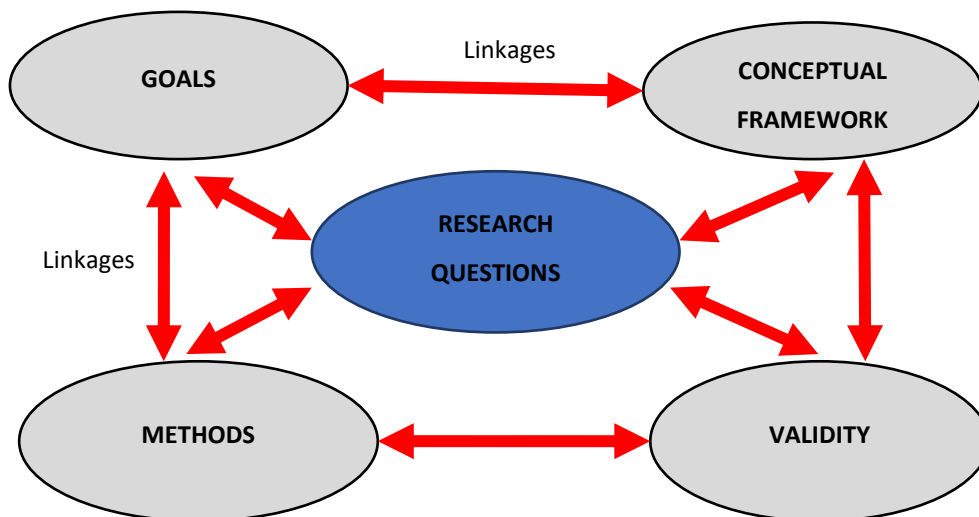
Qualitative research lends itself nicely to developing new theories using the inductive technique that can then be tested with more research because its emphasis is on everyday life and people's lived experiences. I chose a qualitative research approach because it typically enables the researcher to explore the meanings people attach to their actions, interactions, experiences, and behavior. Then I started by outlining the approach, methods, procedures, and

resources to initiate my process. These components are incorporated into Maxwell's (2013) interactive model of research design, a framework for research that propagates fabricated connections between methodological approaches. How Maxwell's interactive model relates to my study will be discussed in the next section.

2.3 Research Design

In Chapter 1, I provided an overview of the research problem and its context to introduce the thesis. My philosophical stances, study goals, and conceptual framework were also explained as these are depicted in Figure 5 below, which is a graphic representation of Maxwell's (2013) "An Interactive Model of Research Design".

Figure 5 An Interactive Model of Research Design



Source: (Adapted from Maxwell, 2013, p.217)

This model is helpful in illustrating how the objectives, conceptual framework, research question, and methodological and validity difficulties are interconnected. It places the research question at the centre of this academic endeavor and recognizes the fabricated connection between the research question(s) and conceptual framework, of which the specifics were covered in chapter 1.

The importance of components cooperating well with one another as a requirement for a good design is also emphasized by Maxwell's interactive model of research design. Maxwell (2013) asserts that while a defective design results in subpar performance or failure, this encourages effective and successful functioning.

According to Maxwell (2008, p. 214) critique of the standard qualitative research design, "qualitative research lacks an elaborate typology into which studies may be pigeonholed." With this, he draws attention to the drawbacks of linear research models and designs for structuring and conducting a study. As a result, Maxwell suggests a straightforward, practical approach to help the researcher make design judgments and to support those decisions.

There are five components to the Interactive Model of Research design, and each one addresses a distinct set of issues that are essential to a study's coherence.

- **Goals:** What makes your studies worthwhile? What questions do you want it to answer? What behaviours and laws do you want it to change? Why do you wish to carry out this research, and why should we be interested in the findings?
- **Conceptual framework:** What do you believe the problems, environments, or subjects of your planned research are about? What scholarly works, exploratory research, and personal experiences will you draw on to comprehend the subjects or situations you are researching? What theories, views, and earlier research findings will direct or inform your study?
- **Research Question:** What particularly do you hope to learn or comprehend from conducting this study? What are you interested in learning but do not know about the subjects you are studying? What questions, and how are they related to one another, will your research aim to answer?
- **Methods:** How will you carry out this investigation? What methods and tools will you employ to gather and analyse your data, and how do these methods and tools make up an integrated strategy?
- **Validity:** What are the potential flaws in your findings and conclusions? What are the potential counterarguments and threats to their veracity, and how will you respond to them? How does the information you have or could possibly get support or contradict your theories?

There are additional links as well; I've indicated some of them with connecting lines. For example, the researcher's methods will change if the goal of the study is to provide participants with the resources, they need to conduct independent research on subjects that are important to them. Conversely, the objectives will be constrained by the methods that are effective for the study. The concepts and intellectual traditions that the researcher draws upon for the study will also influence which validity risks should be prioritized, and vice versa.

This model's upper triangle ought to function as a single, tightly coupled unit. The study objectives should be clearly reflected in the research questions, which should also consider what is already known about the phenomena being examined as well as the theoretical frameworks and models that can be used to explain these phenomena. Furthermore, the goals of the study should be informed by current theory and knowledge, and the questions and objectives of the study will dictate to the researcher which theories and knowledge are relevant.

Like the top triangle, the bottom triangle of the model needs to be tightly integrated. The techniques one employs must give the ability to respond to credible validity risks to the conclusions as well as to the research questions. In turn, the questions must be designed to consider the viability of the methods and the gravity of validity threats, while the plausibility and significance of validity threats, as well as the ways in which they might be addressed, depend on the questions and methods used. The research questions are the center of the model; they link all the other elements of the design and should be responsive to and inform these elements.

I discuss the methodological element of Figure 4 in greater detail in the ensuing section, 2.4. Selecting an appropriate technique is part of the research design process, which I will address next.

2.4 Research Methodology

The foundation of a research's philosophical perspective makes it a crucial factor to consider when choosing an acceptable research approach. It serves as the foundation for the researcher's philosophical stance and adds coherence as a requirement for doing scientific inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Naidoo, 2011; Tuli, 2011). My preference for a methodology is consistent with my ontological and epistemological worldview and is based on pragmatism, simplicity, and coherence principles. While Corbin and Strauss (2019) assert that every methodology hinges on the nature of knowledge and of knowing, Guba and Lincoln (1994) and others who favor the latter do so by demonstrating how these fundamental beliefs and one's methodological preference are mutually supportive.

A viewpoint that is consistent with the constructivist idea that knowledge is "actively constructed" by the knower; knowledge, in this view, is more of a process than a final product, as per Von Glasersfeld (1995). Shelley (2014) adduces that the knower must construct this knowledge based on what he or she has seen about the "actual" world in accordance with this

line of reasoning. This is consistent with the critical realist ontology, which I begin to understand as I delve deeper into the topic that holds that reality exists but on a variety of levels.

Grounded theory is a good methodology that will allow me to find and analyze the causal mechanisms that cause the observed occurrence considering the study context and my philosophical viewpoints. Grounded theory seeks to increase the legitimacy of the theory, but it also provides a rigorous coding and category formation process that entails the creation of emergent conceptualization and integrated patterns, which indicate categories and their features.

As it crosses important domains of formal theory, according to Charmaz (2006), it is especially helpful in describing social psychological and social structural situations. This suggests producing abstract ideas and being able to describe how they relate to one another. The technique differs from others in that it engages the researcher in the collection and analysis of data (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Grounded theory, which has come to be recognised as a research methodology in the fields of management, business, marketing, and leadership study, stimulates inquiry and facilitates a reflexive position known as self-consciousness (Goulding, 2002). In general, grounded theories provide practical methods for gathering, setting up, and examining qualitative data. Inductive logic perspectives are the foundation of grounded theory as a methodology, which involves rigorous iterative and comparative analysis of facts to raise the level of abstraction for theory building (Charmaz, 2014a, p. 14). I give a quick outline of the grounded theory methodology I wanted to use in the next section.

2.4.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory as a Suitable Methodology for my Study

Given the previous talks on the general ideas and methods of constructivism, I chose Charmaz's (2006) constructivism approach as the best technique for my research. By developing an inductive analysis from the data and establishing linkages between analytical categories that are based on the facts, it will enable me to do qualitative research that focuses on developing conceptual frameworks or theory (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). It is feasible to orient oneself inside factual realities and pay close attention to both their individual and collective representations since grounded theory places a strong emphasis on subjective experience (Charmaz, 2016). This demonstrates that the grounded theory approach's proper positioning inside the interpretative paradigm may make it more successful. Constructivist

theory emphasizes the significance of social context, interaction, shared viewpoints, and interpretative understanding as essential elements of the study since it views knowledge and learning as essential to social existence (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Schreiber & Stern, 2001). This leads to the process's evolution, which I discuss in more detail in the following section.

2.4.2 Grounded Theory Process for my Study

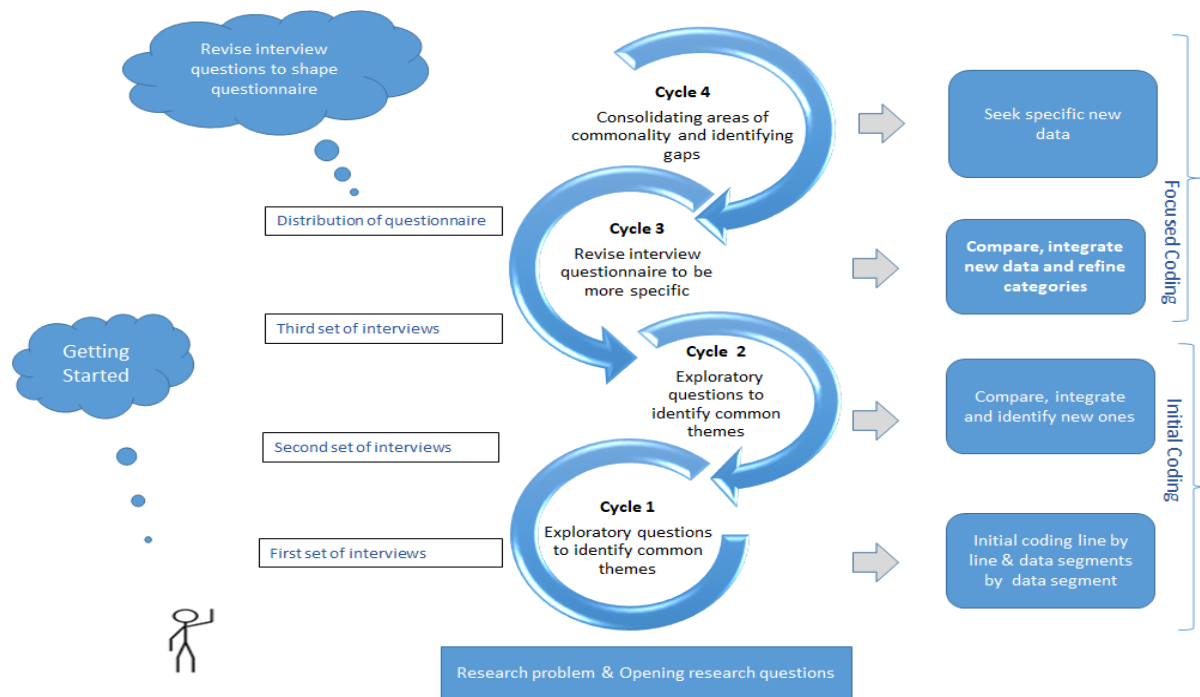
The process of developing a grounded theory comprises multiple research cycles of data collection, analysis, coding, and categorization to develop a theory. Charmaz (2006) recommends the use of complete, rich, and detailed data to begin with since it makes it possible to understand and make sense of research participants' experiences. This is accomplished by processing the data systematically in the form of a coding structure. Initial and focused codes make up the two basic types of coding in grounded theory. Initial coding is the process of breaking up data into smaller pieces, such as words, lines, segments, or incidents. This tactic encourages one to carefully examine the facts and start getting a firm analytical grasp of it. Initial codes are provisional, comparative, and grounded in the data. There are also codes of participants known as *in vivo* codes that also help us preserve participants' meanings related to certain actions.

On the other hand, focused coding, which is more conceptual and directed, enables us to choose the initial codes that appear to be the most effective and test them against substantial data, i.e., it helps us separate, sort, and synthesize large volumes of data (Charmaz, 2006). One of its main objectives is to assess the sufficiency of the codes found, which also aids in challenging researcher prejudices regarding the subject of study.

In addition, a researcher can move between interviews, observations, and practical focused coding to compare various interpretations of participant behaviors and experiences. The researcher can build degrees of abstraction straight from the data, then check and revise emerging analytic categories, allowing them to gain an analytical grip as they work toward developing the analytic categories (Charmaz, 2006).

Summarily, as shown by the data gathering cycles in the picture below, coding will assist me in systematically filtering, sorting, and comparing data with other data sets.

Figure 6 Data Cycles for Coding



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

The above Figure shows that semi-structured interviews made up the initial round of data collection, with participants that I believe were well-suited to contribute to the phenomenon under study. These participants served as a representation of Black women in management who could be reached for in-person interviews. It must also be noted that these individuals are managers but have no direct reporting relationship to me as the researcher, therefore I have no control over them that many be construed as undue bias. The transcripts of the interview recordings were used to code the raw data after which the initial coding procedure will be explained below.

A new group of participants were interviewed during the second data cycle, after which the raw data were coded, integrated, and new codes found. This procedure was used to identify both the preliminary codes identified during the first cycle as well as new codes. I reviewed the questionnaire before the third data cycle. Then, in accordance with my comparison and integration of these, I was better able to guide and concentrate my attention on the construction of a questionnaire with a theoretical saturation goal. In other words, when there are no new problems or insights that could be drawn from the data.

I used the Otter Ai program to turn the audio recordings into text. Once the transcripts were drafted, the NVIVO programme was used to generate codes and arrange data based on the interview tapes and transcripts.

Additionally, Charmaz (2006) emphasizes that constructivist grounded theory methods are helpful for gaining new insights for social phenomenon investigations because they (1) reject claims of objectivity, (2) locate researcher generalizations, (3) take participants' and researchers' relative positions and standpoints into consideration, (4) emphasize reflexivity, (5) adopt concepts such as power, privilege, equity, and oppression, and (6) remain aware of variation and difference (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Therefore, grounded theory draws on the fundamental ideas of Glaser and Strauss (1967), as cited in Charmaz, (2008) regarding analytic rules that allow researchers to concentrate their data collection and theory creation. These flexible criteria for qualitative data collection and analysis are systemic in nature (Charmaz, 2008). By design, grounded theory encourages continuous interaction between researchers and the data until the development of concepts results in the generation of theory, a non-static phenomenon that can vary as circumstances do (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

On that point, I will go on to the next section, where I will talk about how I gathered and analyzed data for the qualitative research.

2.5 Qualitative Research Methods

The aim of qualitative research is to investigate, comprehend, and characterize what individuals do in daily life and the meaning they attribute to these actions (Tuli, 2011). However, Yin (2003) asserts that every sort of empirical research has an implicit, if not explicit, research design, which suggests that the study's effectiveness is dependent upon its design (Maxwell, 2013).

Critical realist research methodologies also place a strong emphasis on comprehending social reality rather than merely describing it to achieve this goal. Therefore, according to Tuli (2011), qualitative research approaches focus on personal interaction to comprehend the world and illuminate phenomena via the experiences of the participants. As a result, the researcher can understand the context of the study in more depth, enriching the data (Charmaz, 2014). Nevertheless, it is possible to undermine the entire objective of the qualitative study by doing it, grouping the participants, and then attempting to comprehend how their actions affect groups.

For instance, a researcher conducting a qualitative study won't need hypotheses; on the other hand, a researcher conducting a quantitative study might. Consequently, the responses of the group can now be compared to a predetermined set of ideas or hypotheses when conducting an analysis of them. As a result, the process of producing a theoretical output becomes straightforward since one is guided by an underlying presumption. This is the standard by which social identity factors are measured and assessed in relation to group behaviour. However, if a researcher does a qualitative study without making any assumptions about the participants, the researcher may end up debating in a way that perpetuates preconceived notions about the participants.

According to Ackroyd and Karlsson (2014), the choice of research design for critical realists relies on where their research goal falls along two dimensions, from intensive research to extensive research. Whereas the mechanism is unknown, and the setting is known, extensive research prioritizes qualitative research designs in this situation. On the other hand, intensive research looks at how a mechanism responds to many settings (Vincent & Mahoney, 2016).

At this point, I also consider my philosophical viewpoints, research strategy, and the characteristics of my interpretative paradigm. Maintaining reflexivity becomes essential in this study as an activist and manager, given my researcher positionality as alluded to in Chapter 1. Although it is anticipated that the logic of the grounded theory methodology will help to prevent the imposition of preconceived ideas through a robust coding process and the delay of the literature review, I remain conscious of my insider position as the research investigator. Therefore, to maintain researcher objectivity, I take into consideration the following tactics at critical points throughout the research process. This begins with the process of obtaining consent and selecting interview subjects who are capable of freely expressing their opinions., with feeling as if they are being coerced into participating in the study.

Using an online survey as a saturation method and conducting member checks as a triangulation strategy, I anticipate reducing the risk of my opinions being privileged over the voice of the participants.

2.6 Data Collection

The way the research question and topic are framed begins to influence the approach prior to initiating the data collection process. However, one of my primary objectives for this study is to manage the risk of researcher bias from an insider's perspective. While methods increase

and broaden our understanding of the phenomenon examined, it also needs to be used appropriately.

Nevertheless, Chenail (2011) also points out that when employing data generation techniques in their research, qualitative researchers face substantial challenges in preserving instrumentation rigor and controlling bias. Consequently, he proposes the concept of a pilot study, which is essentially a technique a researcher uses to measure possible researcher biases to evaluate the effectiveness of an interview protocol. Put another way, this method helps to locate or eliminate a potential source of research bias. Subsequently, I describe in chapters two and three how I use specific strategies to lessen the imposing of preconceived notions. For instance, I have chosen interviewees who do not report to me because I have no influence over them in terms of personal growth or professional advancement. This suggests that there is less of a perceived positional risk of undue bias resulting from the researcher's position within the company.

Furthermore, Chenail's (2011) concept of affinity is supported by my previous experience as a shop steward and activist supporting women's rights. This idea comes in handy when the researcher is closely associated with the study participants or is a member of the population under investigation.

Data gathering using the grounded theory approach aims to synthesize and streamline data through the establishment of methodical comparisons between data and code, data and category, and code and data (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2014a) compares this to a puzzle (Charmaz, 2006, 2014a; Wasserman & Clair, 2011), building on the claim made by Wasserman and Clair (2011) that researchers can add new pieces to follow leads that emerge or create a new puzzle. Grounded theory's hallmarks of simultaneous data collection and analysis support the fragmentation of data that occurs during this process, also begins to undermine the possibility of imposing preconceived notions.

While applying different coding schemes or comparison techniques, most qualitative researchers typically gather data concurrently with their analysis. Stated differently, if employed skillfully, the analytical comparisons we make in the initial phase of the study can impact our actions in the subsequent phase. Inductive data collection is therefore a technique employed by grounded theorists to engage in abductive reasoning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 361). Along with developing an online survey, observations, interviews, and other

secondary data sources, I have also created a proposition log (Appendix B) to collect rich data for this study.

To facilitate the idea of "rich data" and aid in the coding and categorization process, the proposition log is a general framework that aims to summarize, combine, classify, and identify cross-cutting issues (Denzin & Strauss, 1988). To acquire rich data, one had to search for "thick" descriptions, such as observations, field notes, and narratives from interview transcripts etc.; (Taherdoost, 2021). Observations within this context covers people's intentions, behaviors, and thoughts in addition to their surroundings and social networks. Setting the data in context is just as important as evaluating its suitability and authenticity, as rich data is especially necessary for the creation of new concepts and categories (Charmaz, 2014a, 2016; Mills et al., 2006). According to my epistemological stance, using interviews as a source of data made sense because it emphasized the importance of the researcher's participation and engagement. The open-ended and participant-centered nature of interviews, according to Charmaz (2014), shifts the conversation toward creating theoretical categories for the researcher to further explore and aids in elucidating participants' implicit meaning and actions. This tactic is especially beneficial for studying social phenomena since it enables researchers to look beyond the obvious (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) but more so shaping of rich data is a technique to guard against the imposition of researcher bias.

Researchers witness events in the actual world, thus using this logic enabled me to create explicit interpretations of "what is happening to define implicit meanings and behaviors to theorize tentative but plausible descriptions of them" (Charmaz, 2006, 2014).

The semi-structured interviewing approach is likely to allow interviewees some leeway during the process, resulting in responses that are neither systematic nor standardized. For example, this aligns with constructivist grounded theory, which emphasizes language, form, and meanings. This allows the researcher to document their thoughts without deciding ahead of time or expecting a particular answer, according to Charmaz (2014a, p. 95). In other words, grounded theory adopts a more comprehensive perspective of the facts being studied while progressively narrowing its attention to the collection and analysis of data.

The primary data sources used for this study are described in the following section.

2.6.1 Primary Data Sources

As was already mentioned, the primary source of data for this study was interviews. According to Charmaz (2014), interviews provide more flexibility when it comes to data

generation and theoretical plausibility standards than accuracy. However, to do so, researchers must possess a highly developed understanding of the nuances of the meaning and language used by research participants (Charmaz, 2014a). This understanding primarily depends on the researcher's interviewing proficiency.

Interviews are a crucial means of gathering data because they force the researcher to concentrate on the real world, claims Ponterotto (2005). Additionally, when conducted well, the researcher introduces less bias and plays a less active role in directing the conversation than when conducting individual interviews (Doyle, 2004).

Occasionally I reaffirmed the interviewees' main points, which I believed to be crucial and sometimes to emphasize the importance of the point made, the interviewees would also highlight aspects which I may have overlooked. It is therefore important that an interview process consists of standard operating procedures designed to significantly lower the likelihood that the results will be impacted by researcher bias (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

In qualitative research, the researcher as an instrument may pose the greatest threat to trustworthiness if sufficient time is not spent on field preparation, reflexivity, humility, and teamwork. These standard operating procedures are intended to greatly reduce the possibility that researcher bias will affect the results and enable triangulation and peer evaluation (Qu & Dumay, 2011).

Chenail (2011) also proposes the idea of testing the quality of an interview protocol and for identifying potential researcher biases as it is best to try out a proposed method to see if the planned procedures perform as envisioned by the researcher. Chenail (2011), also cites Poggenpoel and Myburg (2003), who identified three potential reasons for bias: (a) the researcher's physical and mental discomfort may have compromised the validity of the data gathered and insights gained from data analyses; (b) the researcher was not well-prepared for the field research; and (c) the researcher conducted inappropriate interviews (pp. 419–420).

Researchers' affinities with the population they are studying can also increase the bias of a study, particularly if the researchers are members of the group being studied (Mehra, 2015). Because of this affinity, these "insider" investigators might be able to limit their curiosity, learning only what they consider to be unknown rather than expanding their searches to include unknown information.

Given my positionality and activist persona, the research strategy I used was to identify potential candidates who had a good working relationship with me as a manager or peer. This

is consistent with the idea of the researcher's degree of affinity with the population under study, as defined by Chenail (2007). Using this approach, suggested protocols are tested to see if they live up to researcher expectations. The "interviewing the investigator" method can be a useful first step in developing interview protocols that enable the gathering of requested information and disclose any potential researcher biases in cases where this approach proves to be unproductive or impracticable. This is particularly true if the researcher is a member of the population being studied or has a close relationship with study participants. This is also applicable in situations where the researcher's position or authority may raise questions.

Furthermore, the interviews are conducted, recorded, and transcribed to mitigate the impact of imposing preconceived notions. Part of the research bias is reduced by the transcription that was done by a third party after interviews were concluded for each data cycle.

2.6.2 Secondary Source of Data

I used secondary data to support this process, including reports from progress reports, EWAP presentations, books published, and other documentary data sources. In addition, I jotted down in my field journal, or memo form, my own questions, ideas, and emerging themes, which I address in Chapter 3 as part of the data analysis.

Grounded theory and in-depth qualitative interviews are complementary, as suggested by Charmaz (2014) who draws parallels between "being open ended yet guided, molded yet emergent, and paced yet unfettered" (p. 85). In memoing my thoughts and ideas I was able to do follow ups with SME's whom I regarded as knowledgeable or experienced in the field of employment equity and skills development within Eskom to interpret or confirm my understanding of the data. Charmaz adds, "In keeping with constructivism, interviews help the researcher focus and provide an engaging environment where participants' viewpoints, interpretations, and insights can surface in order to generate conceptual categories" (Charmaz, 2014a; Gubrium et al., 2012; Ponterotto, 2005).

For a thorough analysis, Charmaz and Wertz (2011) advise sample sizes of 30–40 interviews, however they could be smaller if saturation is achieved (Edwards & Holland, 2013, p. 65). Additionally, according to Charmaz (2014), the structure and substance of the interview must consider four theoretical issues: theoretical plausibility, direction, centrality, and appropriateness. It is also dependent on the researcher's experience, interpersonal abilities, and understanding of the relevant field. The information extracted from the interview process

was compiled, followed by grounded theory process, which I discuss in more detail as part of my data analysis.

2.6.3 Questionnaire (online survey) – a “method of saturation”

As previously indicated, my fourth cycle of data collection will aim to approach saturation; consequently, the study will employ qualitative methods to analyze primary and secondary data sources. According to Shelley (2014), the saturation technique can be used to establish a sense of "truth" and thus show the validity, rigor, and reliability of the study. For that reason, I designed an online triangulation survey using the same set of criteria as the questions used in the semi-structured interview. This was done by comparing the dimensions and themes from the interview questionnaire with those of the questions formulated for the online survey.

The graphic below (Figure 7) shows the recurring dimensions for both instruments i.e., the questionnaire for the semi structured interviews and the online survey.

Figure 7 Cross Cutting Dimensions



Source: Developed by the researcher for the study

Subsequently, online surveys were distributed through Google Forms, aimed at approximately two thousand Black women in management positions throughout all Eskom business units. A report that is automatically generated by Google forms is something I discuss in Chapter 3.

2.7 Purposive Sampling Technique

Given the risk that Chenail (2011) explains about affinity researchers, my first set of interview candidates was chosen with caution, because the study was conducted during COVID-19. This meant that interview candidates had to be chosen based on proximity and those who would be “fit for purpose”, that is, people who would feel comfortable answering my questions. Using purposeful sampling allowed me to select knowledgeable respondents who

also represented demographic and regional representation, which is consistent with Cunningham and Carmichael's (2017) claim that qualitative researchers actively seek out competent respondents.

I identified Black women in senior management positions or in the pipeline and created an interview schedule (Appendix C) to kick off the interview process. One of the main objectives was to gather a representative sample of women from different Eskom divisions and business units in both technical and non-technical settings. Having a sample that accurately reflects the diversity of Black women within and outside of the organisation was also crucial to me. Knowing that face to face interviews with Black women in management positions would come at the cost of time and travel, I chose these women in proximity for the first data cycle. These candidates are my peers; hence they were familiar with me and would feel safe and comfortable to participate in the interview with no undue pressure. In fact, respondents benefit from a therapeutic effect because they are heard, according to Poggenpoel and Myburg (2003, p. 418).

At this stage the line of inquiry was still exploratory and aimed at gathering sufficient to construct initial data categories. The same criteria to select participants for cycle two was used. The process of selecting participants for cycles three and four, however required a more specialized and focused approach, in anticipation of achieving saturation and producing core categories.

The line of investigation was still exploratory at this point, with the goal of obtaining enough data to create preliminary data categories. The choices made about who to interview next were influenced by the insights discovered, which begs the question of how to handle newly discovered data. Chenail (2011) states that when used as a discovery-oriented research tool, open-ended, study-specific sets of questions are typically created by qualitative researchers to elicit more expansive responses.

The idea of an exploratory approach served as the foundation for choosing participants for the second cycle. To reach saturation and generate core categories, the participant selection procedure for cycles three and four would become more targeted and specialized. In so far, as validating and supporting the category development process, I will use secondary data sources as mentioned in section 2.6.2 to confirm these insights.

Saturation is typically used as a guide by researchers when collecting data for qualitative studies, as we concluded in the previous section (Charmaz & Wertz, 2011; Cunningham & Carmichael, 2015). I discuss my approach to data analysis in the section that follows.

2.8 Data Analysis

To move beyond concrete claims, the data analysis for this study began with the coding procedure. By doing this, the researcher begins to analyze the data that has been gathered (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Tweed & Charmaz, 2011).

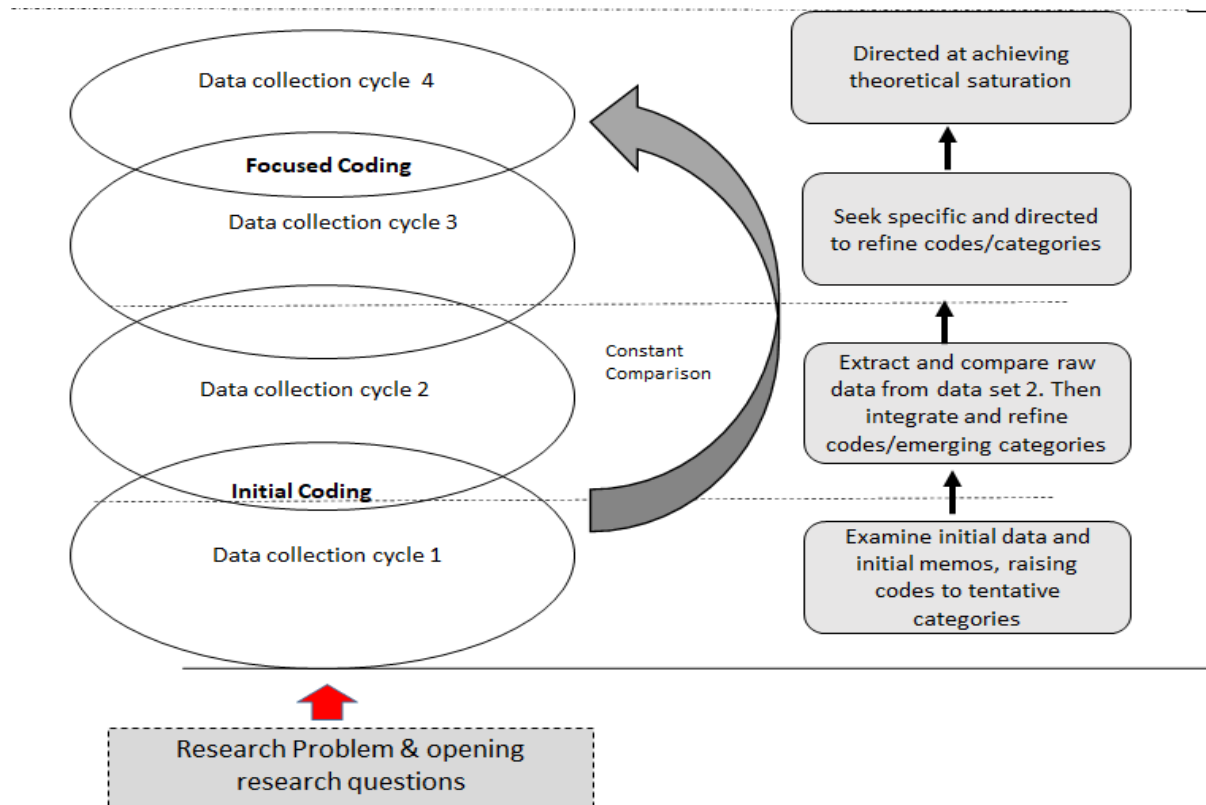
Charmaz (2006, 2014) describes coding as "segments of data with a label that simultaneously categorizes, summarizes, and accounts for each item of data." Furthermore, Charmaz states that by giving the analytical structure for developing the analysis form, it aids in defining what is occurring in the data (Charmaz, 2014b; Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

In this study the NVIVO software system was used to create the codes, categories, and segments to draw propositions, interpretations, meanings, and findings.

2.8.1 Codes and Category Development

Concepts are abstract of time, location, and people, according to Glaser (2002). The researcher can concentrate on the concepts' fit and relevance without having to worry about the data thanks to abstraction. My coding method was developed based on initial coding and focused coding, as depicted below, as part of my grounded theory process for this project, as previously described in section 2.4.2.

Figure 8 The Grounded Theory Coding Process



Source: Adapted from Charmaz (2006, p. 11)

Fundamentally, the coding procedure involves examining the raw data, determining the initial codes to be created, and, most importantly, encouraging the researcher to consider the data. The objective is to maintain an open mind to all potential theoretical paths suggested by your interpretations of the data because nothing is concrete at this point (Charmaz, 2014, p. 114). As a result, Charmaz characterizes initial codes as preliminary, comparative, and data based (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63).

This procedure entails Charmaz-defined data segmentation and labeling (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). In a similar vein, Holton (2010) defines coding as the process of breaking down data into codes (Hull, 2018). In other words, dividing the information into lines or words, as well as taking cognizance of the “in vivo” codes to capture meanings of participant’s views and actions, in so doing paying attention to the use of language throughout the coding process (Charmaz, 2006, 2014).

An ongoing process of comparing the ideas with the data is required to guarantee fit, relevance, and workability when identifying a pattern or category in grounded theory to ensure that the concept is both valid and grounded. This calls for the researcher to be

theoretically sensitive while maximizing the richness and depth gleaned from the data, laying a solid theoretical groundwork (Cunningham & Carmichael, 2015).

2.8.2 Grounded Theory Strategies

2.8.2.1 Constant Comparison

The importance of *continuous comparison procedures*, is emphasized by Charmaz (2006), referencing Glaser and Strauss (1967), to create comparisons at each level of analytical activity. I utilized the technique of constant comparison to compare codes to data, codes to codes, and categories to categories to stay current with the data (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), while employing the memo-writing technique to jot down important insights and concepts.

2.8.2.2 Theoretical Memoing

Codes, concepts, and constructs found throughout the research process can be used to write theoretical memos. These memos offer your comparisons, observations, and discoveries that serve as the theoretical foundation for the growing body of knowledge (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). As the researcher progresses from data gathering to theorizing, they frequently change and become more sophisticated (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

2.8.2.3 Theoretical Sampling

Grounded theory differs from other qualitative investigation in that it involves the search and collection of important data to elaborate and improve categories in the evolving theory (Charmaz, 2014, p. 192). It might happen after diligent coding and memo writing have determined the main theoretical categories. Therefore, theoretical sampling increases the precision, density, and complexity of the developing theoretical statements while maintaining their data-based foundation (Charmaz, 2001).

In theoretical sampling, qualities of categories are developed through sample until new properties appear. This enables the researcher to fill categories with more data and sort or draw them later to incorporate in developing a theory (Charmaz, 2006).

In general, theoretical sampling supports study by defining the pertinent qualities and gives substance to proceed from description to analysis, increasing the parsimony of one's theoretical claims (Charmaz, 2006).

Additionally, Charmaz (2014) reminds us that a study's legitimacy and quality depend on its data. To put it in another way, good data informs the process of interpretation during data analysis and increases trust in the validity of the data examined. Charmaz (2006) reiterates

the significance of studying the data by focusing on the nuanced language and meanings of your research participants, i.e., paying special attention to the respondents' feelings and viewpoints (Charmaz, 2006). Through a process of clarification and inquiry during interviews, these elements aid in bridging their experiences. It provides context and crystalizes the respondent's reality from a critical realist standpoint, enabling the researcher to make insightful interpretations and join the social world of the participant. Applying these strategies therefore in this study, raises the conceptual level of the analysis, through comparative analysis and relevance to the theoretical category.

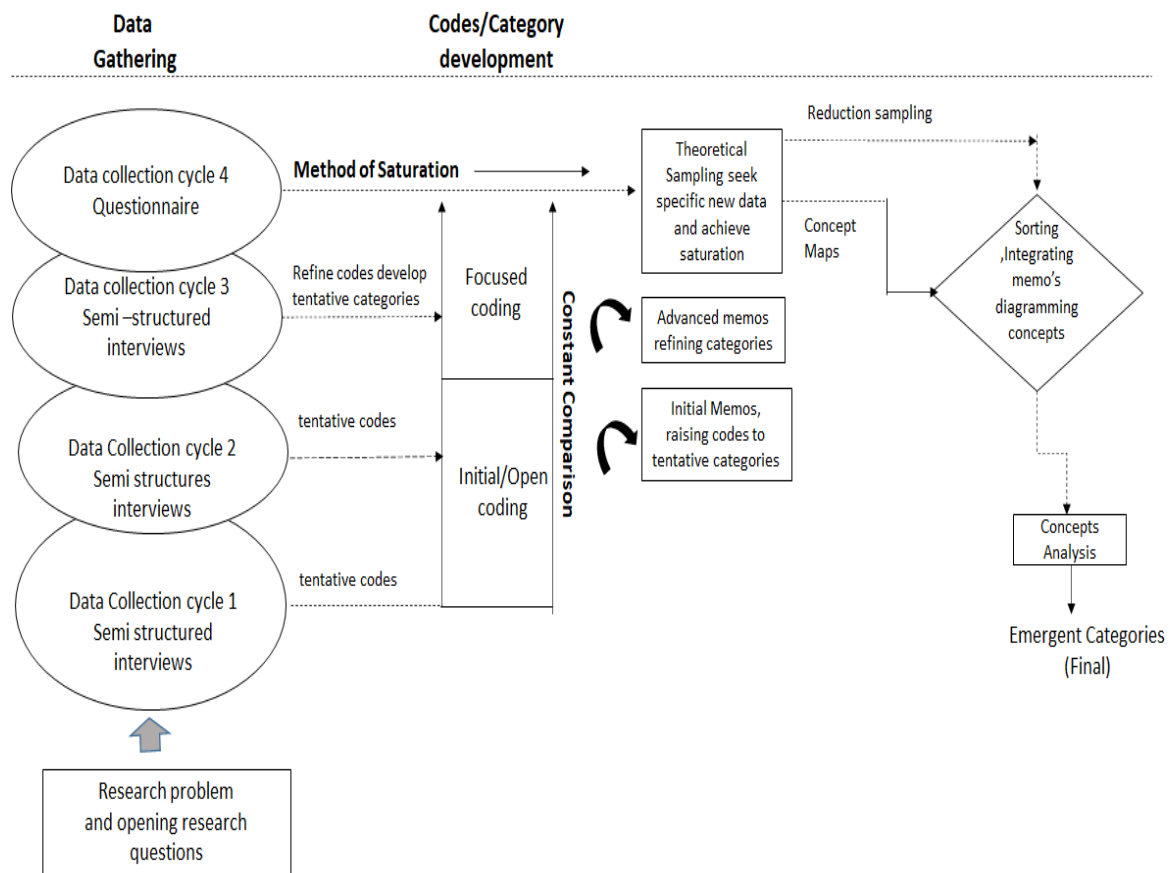
Although the process of grounded theory aids in identifying emergent categories that speak to observed patterns or phenomena, it does not actually aid in the development of the whole theory, thus I will go into more detail on this in chapter 5.

2.9 Development of Patterns

According to constructivist grounded theory, as ideas start to arise from interactions with respondents, the process should be enhanced by a review of pertinent literature. Further interactions with respondents will help build the theory by identifying emerging information patterns and examining whether patterns showed causation or sequencing between categories (Charmaz, 2008). However, creating these connections during the codification and recodification processes might be difficult.

Data collection, data analysis, and literature reviews, according to Knobel et al. (2020), must attempt to develop sound and convincing knowledge claims. In other words, Maxwell's interactive approach or study design requires that there be a consistent line of reasoning running through the entire process. I've drawn a road map in Figure 9 which helped me make this assessment and to help me maintain some feeling of coherence throughout the grounded theory procedure.

Figure 9 Roadmap to Finalise Concept Development



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

The example from above also ensures that my theory is logical and tenable. To draw connections between important categories, concept maps (Appendix J) were used, while at the same time to spot trends at each stage of the process. As a result, the final categories' precision, and conceptual depth of the tentative categories both emerged.

I consider questions of validity to bolster the development in the following section.

2.10 Addressing Validity and Ethical Issues

2.10.1 Qualitative Data

Validity and dependability are frequently regarded as an acceptable benchmark in quantitative research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). According to Maxwell (2013), validity relates to the accuracy, reliability, or plausibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other type of account.

To balance researcher impact, Maxwell (2013) additionally finds two significant validity concerns in the context of this study related to researcher bias and reactivity. The impact of

the researcher cannot be eliminated, according to Hammersly and Atkinson (2007), but one should be conscious of this fact and develop ways to prevent it. Lincoln and Guba (1985) established four components to establish credibility to boost validity to address the risk of study bias. These components include the following:

Table 3 Components to Establish Credibility

Element of trustworthiness	Description
Credibility	is the how confident the qualitative researcher is in the truth of the research study's findings. This boils down to the question of "How do you know that your findings are true and accurate?" Qualitative researchers can use triangulation to show the research study's findings are credible.
Dependability	is the extent that the study could be repeated by other researchers and that the findings would be consistent. In other words, if a person wanted to replicate your study, they should have enough information from your research report to do so and obtain similar findings as your study did. A qualitative researcher can use inquiry audit to establish dependability, which requires an outside person to review and examine the research process and the data analysis to ensure that the findings are consistent and could be repeated.
Transferability	is how the qualitative researcher demonstrating that the research study's findings are applicable to other contexts. In this case, "other contexts" can mean similar situations, similar populations, and similar phenomena. Qualitative researchers can use thick description to show that the research study's findings can be applicable to other contexts, circumstances, and situations.

Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

The next section looks at the ethical issues, I had to consider in respect of the pre and post data collection processes.

2.10.2 Ethical Considerations

I had to get ethical clearance before starting the suggested research because the University of Cape Town places a strong focus on research ethics. Additionally, the organisation has its own protocols that control requests for research studies. This entailed a written request for

approval to conduct the study within the organisation within a specific timeframe to the Human Resource Executive Director for the Eskom group (Appendix G). The proposal further denotes adherence to the guidelines set forth in Eskom's information security policy and that the study is for academic purposes.

The research also falls within the category of social science, which also has an ethical and moral component. In other words, I had to make sure I took the proper steps to sustain ethical behaviour. Obtaining participant consent and outlining their rights to secrecy and privacy are part of this. Prior to the start of the interviews, each respondent had to fill out a standard consent form that I had created. Therefore, I would also request verbal consent during each telephone interview, as recorded and subsequently transcribed.

2.10.3 Ethical Implications of the Research Goals

Regarding the study's objectives, there were no unethical implications. Understanding various viewpoints and suitable reactions within an organisational framework is the practical and intellectual goal, and it will contribute to the body of knowledge already in existence.

2.10.4 Data Collections and Consent

Given that interviews were used as the main method of data collection, the question of gaining consent is crucial to upholding the ethical conduct guidelines.

2.10.5 Confidentiality

Due to the nature of the study, preserving the level of confidentiality and protecting the participants and their provided information was the key concern regarding confidentiality. In an organisational context, trust between the researcher and the participants is essential. Therefore, protecting the privacy of who disclosed what could have a big impact on the research participant's rights. However, in accordance with institutional procedures, I received ethical clearance.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter covered the study methodology, the advantages of using grounded theory, how to collect and evaluate primary and secondary data sources, and more. I went into further detail about research methods and helpful hints for using grounded theory. These comprised theoretical sampling, constant comparison, and the iterative nature of grounded theory. They also emphasized the importance of staying true to the data and developing well-developed theoretical categories. The methodology also mentioned how important it was to adhere to

validity principles, uphold ethical standards, and align the goals of the study. This paradigmatic framing of the researcher's research activities and their philosophical stance provide the external consistency required for scientific inquiry (Naidoo, 2011). The examination of the primary and secondary data, along with the major conclusions drawn from the data analysis, will be covered in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 3: EXPLORATION OF RESEARCH DATA AND KEY FINDINGS

3.1 Introduction

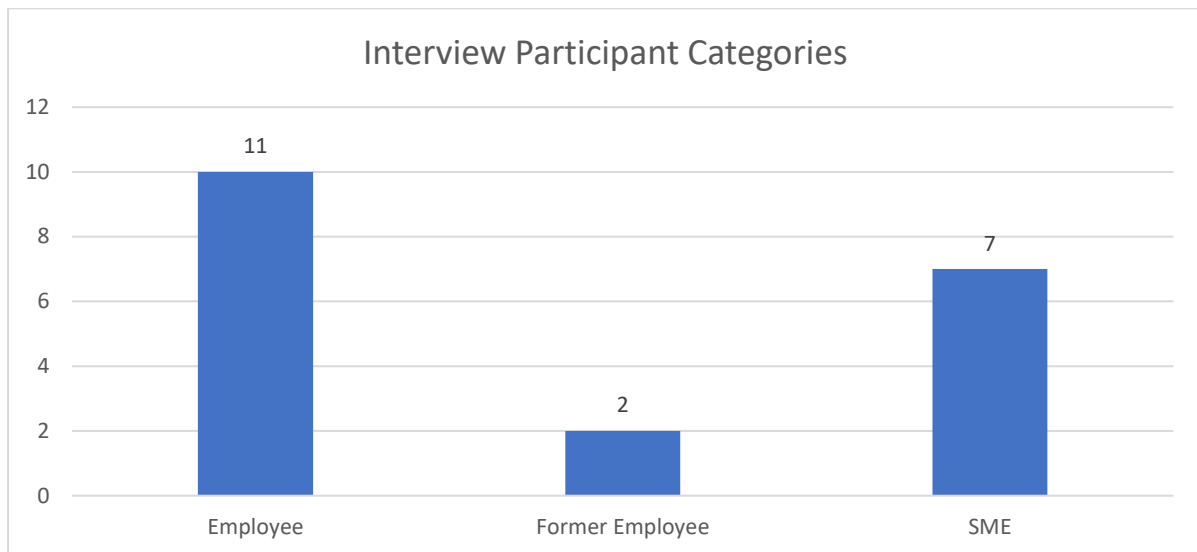
My philosophical stances, comprising of a critical realist ontology and a constructivist epistemology, was discussed in the chapter 2. In the same chapter, I described why grounded theory was a suitable methodology. With this understanding, I proceed to present the results of the analysis by summarizing the descriptive data from the research participants to demonstrate the level of engagement and progress towards establishing theoretical sufficiency. Thereafter I explain how I applied the grounded theory coding process using the constructivist method as advocated by Charmaz (2006), then proceeded to explain how the online survey was used to augment the primary and secondary data to triangulate and achieve theoretical saturation. A detailed synopsis of the research participants is presented in the following section.

3.2 Descriptive Data of Research Participants for the Semi Structured Interview

Even though the social boundary for this study was set on the experiences of Black women who work at Eskom occupying managerial or leadership positions, the purpose of including corporate specialists and former employees as subject matter experts (SME) was to gather different viewpoints on the phenomenon under investigation.

This, in my opinion, provided a more comprehensive and in-depth perspective for examining the relevant themes. It was acknowledged in the context of my researcher positionality, as it helped to lessen the possibility of researcher bias. To illustrate the different categories, Figure 10 provides a detailed broken down.

Figure 10 Breakdown of Respondents per Category



The total number of interviews conducted were twenty (20). Each interview session lasted one hour or more. To facilitate the interview session, a semi-structured interview questionnaire was used to guide the process and promote consistency and reliability of the data presented.

Despite the small size of the interview sample, the data's theoretical adequacy has increased. According to Charmaz (2014), considering the intensity of the interviews conducted, an in-depth interview study of lasting value can be produced with a relatively small sample. She clarifies this by pointing out that it relies on how the investigation was carried out and the analysis was assembled (Charmaz, 2014, p. 108). Since the goal of grounded theory methods is to create conceptual categories, data collection is concentrated on revealing features of a category and the connections among categories; thus, constraints imposed by small sample sizes and sparse data are not a problem (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, it improves theoretical sufficiency when combined with the use of an online survey and other documentary evidence.

In the following section, I go into more detail about the data collection and analysis procedures that were used during the coding and conceptualization phases. Stated differently, the debate will include allusions to the cycles of data collection, data analysis, and theoretical sampling.

3.3 Data Collection, Coding, and Conceptualization Process

While chapter 2 described how the process of gathering and analysing data were penned out, chapter 3 gives more detail in terms of the actual process and outcomes for both primary and secondary data gathered. The data gathering process involved four cycles, with initial and focused coding as the two primary coding phases (Charmaz, 2006). Data is first broken up

into codes and given names, then a targeted, selected phase that uses the most important codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organize massive amounts of data.

Even though I brought up the challenge with regards to the availability of some interview candidates' who were mostly in more senior roles, I was able to circumvent this issue by setting up telephone interviews. This worked for most of the candidates, as I found some of the candidates to be more at ease and engaging.

The first set of data was important because its goal was to gather sufficient data for analysis and to establish a baseline for identifying preliminary or initial codes. This basically meant that I had to select interview subjects who felt at ease to articulate, and share information, no matter how sensitive.

Additionally, it was crucial that I use purposive sampling to select candidate's representative of different business units from both a technical and non-technical environment. Table 4 is therefore a summary of the data cycles and the composition thereof in terms of the number of participants per data cycle, the stakeholder grouping, and the mode of interview conducted.

Table 4 Summary of Data Cycles for the Study

Summary of Data Collection Cycles							
Data Cycle	Data Collection	No. Participants	Stakeholder Grouping			Mode of interview	
	Method		E	SME	TU Reps	F2F	Telcon
1	Interview	10	5	3	0	7	3
2	Interview	7	3	3	1	3	6
3	Interview	3	3	0	0		9
		No. Questionnaires deployed					No. of responses
4	Questionnaire	2000	0	0	0	200	

Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

Each interview was guided by a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix E) to promote consistency and reliability within the interview process. In accordance with the ethical guidelines, I presented each interview candidate with the letter of consent (Appendix D) prior or during the actual interview, which each candidate had to complete and sign. This procedure was an assurance that information would not be misinterpreted and subject to confidentiality.

As previously highlighted in chapter 2, the semi structured questionnaire was constructed in a way that each question could be linked to a particular dimension or overarching theme to be analysed and synthesized (see Figure 11).

Figure 11 Dimensions for Semi-Structure of Interviews



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

There were ten (10) face-to-face interviews conducted as part of the first cycle, with 7 conducted face to face and three were conducted telephonically. With seven interviews conducted in the second data cycle and three for the third data cycle.

Each interview participant was informed about the ethical standards and guidelines. This included information about the recording and conditions for publication. During each session field notes, or memoing was used to record my research observations and ideas in anticipation of the coding process.

Following each interview, the audio recording was converted to text using the "Otter Ai" program. However, I found many mistakes in the transcripts before I uploaded this data onto the Nvivo system, so I hired a third party to edit the transcripts and rerun the audios to make them more accurate (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 Screenshot Depicting the Number of Interviews Conducted, and Transcripts Uploaded

Name	Codes	References	Modified On	Modified By	Classification
Respondent 1		22	6/11/2019 12:36	TB	
Respondent 2		3	8/24/2019 13:44	TB	
Respondent 3		35	9/14/2019 10:55	TB	
Respondent 4		49	7/27/2019 12:35	TB	
Respondent 5		36	7/27/2019 12:45	TB	
Respondent 6		30	8/24/2019 15:19	TB	
Respondent 7		34	7/27/2019 14:57	TB	
Respondent 8		1	7/27/2019 14:57	TB	
Respondent 9		39	7/29/2019 09:47	TB	
Respondent 10		27	8/25/2019 14:12	TB	

Source: NVIVO system

Figure 12 displays a screen shot of the process by which the interviews were uploaded to the Nvivo database. The next section goes over the initial coding phase, as part of the first data cycle.

3.4 Initial Coding Phase

According to Charmaz (2006), the initial coding process is the first step of substantive coding, although Glaser and Strauss (1967) refer to this as open coding. For their analytical value, words, lines, segments, incidents, and data fragments are meticulously examined during the first coding stage (Charmaz, 2006). These are also known as hypothesis or insights driven by data. The following section retraces the steps taken to gather data for the first data cycle and provides a methodical explanation of how I interpreted the initial set of data.

3.4.1 Making Sense of Data Collection Cycle 1

My first cycle of data collection was based on the ten interviews that I had completed and transcribed. After conducting each interview and transcribing it, Nvivo was used to code the data right away. Even though the exercise started out pragmatic, it eventually pulled me into a conceptual world, starting with assigning names or labels to each draft code. A pattern, category, or attribute present in the data is fictionally described by the tentative code. To

improve the coding and data collection processes, I looked for additional information and used secondary data sources to verify each cycle. Stated differently, the optimal nomenclature results from this reliable fit, which was enabled using secondary data to refine the preliminary codes. As a result, the researcher becomes more involved with the data; Charmaz recognizes this when she asserts that the use of "in vivo" codes made it possible to ascertain the true significance of the happening or event as understood by the respondent (Charmaz, 2006).

Charmaz (2006) quotes Glaser (1978), who defines this as an idea of figuring out "what is actually happening in the data" and uses comparison to help with data naming and classification. These conceptual labels represent the idea, concept, activity, or subject and provide the framework for determining which of our main conceptual categories to use (Charmaz, 2006, 2014; Bryant & Charmaz, 2012).

Emergent social patterns in the data led to a preliminary coding of the conceptualization process, which I modified as I proceeded with each interview (Shelley, 2014). This meant going over each interview, thinking about each bit of information, and making assumptions about any underlying themes that might exist. Holton (2010) refers to this as cycling through multiple processes, and he concurs that coding removes the researcher from the empirical level. It also suggests that the investigator is crucial in establishing the relationship between data and theory (Holton, 2010).

As I elaborate later, concepts should therefore be abstract of place, time, and people. This is a vital aspect of grounded theory conceptualization and development of codes. Instead of requiring the description of time, place, and people as in qualitative data analysis (QDA), a concept in grounded theory refers to a pattern that emerges through continuous comparison of theoretically sampled data until conceptual saturation of interchangeable indices (Glaser, 2002).

According to Glaser (2002), a code name must be an abstraction from the data and convey the same concept to be considered grounded in theory. Thus, coding involves data interpretation and ought to provide a conceptual explanation of what the researcher believes the data is projecting. Glaser (2002) also states that a code name must be an abstraction from the data and convey the same concept to be considered grounded in theory. Thus, coding involves data interpretation and ought to provide a conceptual explanation of what the researcher believes the data are attempting to say, according to Shelley.

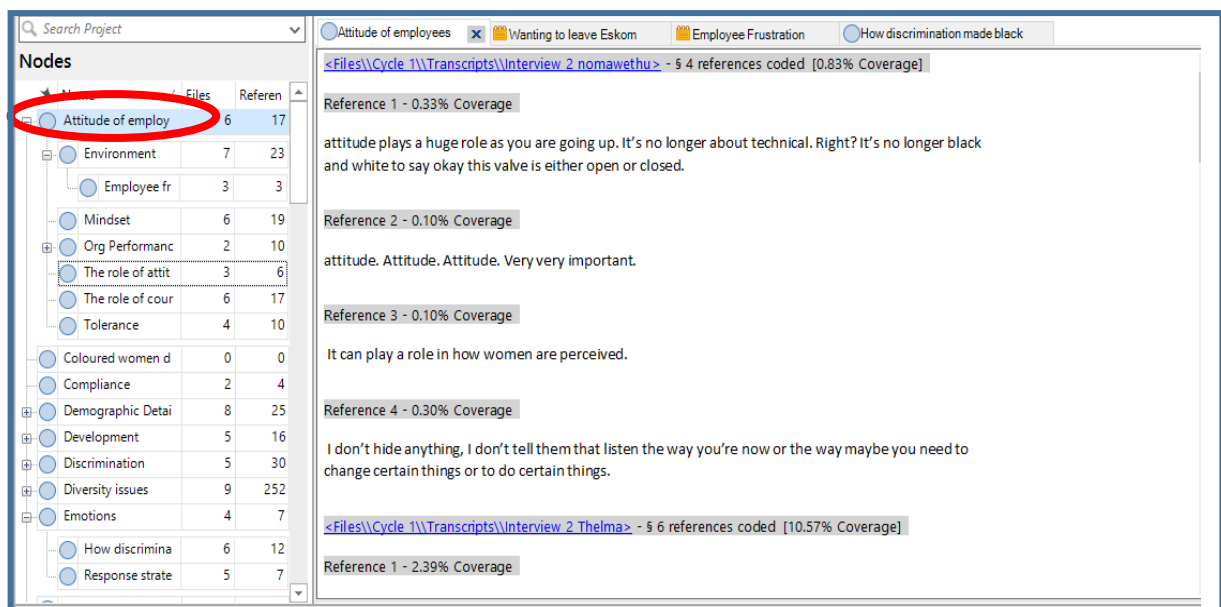
I will use the case below as an example, starting with the initial interview question, the answers, and how the initial coding process develops.

Example of Interview question: “Please describe some of your personal experiences in dealing with race and gender issues in the workplace?”

Participants’ Responses: Although responses varied based on incidents, all participants narrated their experiences and referred to aspects of emotions, behaviour, and coping mechanisms.

The diagram that follows shows how this data from the initial batch of data was coded and how it led to the initial code "attitude of the employee" on the NVIVO system.

Figure 13 Screenshot Extract NVIVO to Illustrate Code for “Attitude of Employees”



Source: NVIVO system

Currently, the data is descriptive, which is reflected in the code's nomenclature. In some instances, a single data fragment was connected to multiple codes, as described by Charmaz (2006), encouraging adaptability and openness to different analytic paths. The conceptual latitude given by grounded theory, secondary data sources, my own experiences, and speaking with subject matter experts to validate my comprehension of the data, however, allowed me to analyze and assess the raw facts with a certain amount of insight. The significance of addressing discriminatory behavior was demonstrated by the participants' references to their personal experiences in the workplace.

Inadvertently, this caused a culture of tolerance to grow. When these subjective points of view were combined, the codes showed a new social process or trend. This elevates the data's conceptual level by one level and demonstrates that grounded theory need only represent a crucial process within a unit rather than the unit (Glaser, 2002).

3.4.2 Making Sense of Data Collection Cycle 2

Using the same methodology as the first data collection cycle, I conducted seven interviews for the second data collection cycle, which I will refer to as data collection cycle 2. Once more, the audio recordings were transcribed and uploaded to Nvivo for coding. The first part of the coding process involved the breakdown of raw data into provisional codes, which was necessary for both data collection cycles (1) and (2). The following elements prompted the implementation of this tactic: Controlling the amount of data is important to: (1) keep it under control; and (2) avoid importing new data into the original codes that the first set of data displayed. (3) To avoid trying to group data too quickly.

For the second round of data collection, initial coding identified recurring codes and similarities. There are some codes that, as you write more memos, stick out and take on the shape of theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006).

This encouraged me to compare and check the data repeatedly utilizing a technique of persistent comparison and inquiries like, "What's going on here?" as well as "how do these instances compare to one another?" (Hull, 2018, p. 11). This indicates that the pattern is named by attempting to fit words that best express its imagery meaning; validity is reached, in Glaser's opinion, when the chosen word best characterizes the pattern (Glaser, 2002).

But Charmaz (2006), who asserts that initial codes are provisional and comparative, supports the understanding of the reiterative and evolutionary character of coding. She also emphasizes the significance of remaining open to further analytical alternatives (Charmaz, 2006).

Approximately 1195 initial codes were recorded after the initial coding phase was completed; these codes serve as the foundation for the formation of more complex codes or categories by raising conceptual levels. In the context of the research, this process of honing the codes and limiting the data fosters conceptual involvement that goes beyond time, place, and people (Holton, 2010). In the following section, I start to illustrate how conceptual interaction with, and refinement of preliminary codes might reveal gaps and necessitate the use of tactics to promote saturation or theoretical sufficiency. This step ushers in the concentrated (selected) coding phase that will follow.

3.5 Focused Coding

Following the initial coding phase, the focused or selected coding phase attempts to theoretically saturate categories by concentrating on refining the most significant codes and minimizing data collection (Bryant & Charmaz, 2012). This is the beginning of theoretical integration, which is carried out in all subsequent analytical steps (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2014) defines focused coding as the process of enriching codes relevant to the phenomena under investigation.

Hull (2018) defines selective coding as the process of deciding on a core category and identifying other categories that require more work and improvement. Furthermore, he asserts that theoretical sampling and selective coding lead to theoretical saturation, which occurs when no new features or dimensions emerge from the data.

An area of interest within my research was to establish whether views expressed by women operating in a technical environment were equal to the views of women working in a non-technical environment. This would have a significant effect on the study in terms of the representation, proportionality, and relevance to the sector.

Therefore, to proceed I had to adjust the interview questions and examine additional information or data. Reducing the number of codes inadvertently meant assessing which codes best represent what was observed in the data, e.g., a category may subsume common themes and patterns in several codes. Thus, the focused coding phase requires making decisions about which codes needed to be augmented into categories by determining their relationship and relevance to the area of study. In other words, reducing the number of descriptive codes, collapsing similar and repetitive codes which were formed in data cycle 1 and 2.

Finding out whether the views of women employed in technical settings and those of women in non-technical settings were similar piqued my curiosity during my research. This would greatly affect the study in terms of representation, proportionality, and industry relevance. Consequently, to proceed, it will be necessary to change the interview questions and gather more information. This unintentionally required reducing the number of codes and figuring out the best way to represent the observations made from the data; for instance, a category may include common themes and patterns found in several codes. Evaluating their connections and subject matter relevance is another requirement for focused coding.

Note that this does not imply the saturation starting point because my categories were not completed at this time. I had to go back and review the data, memos, and field notes to make

sure the codes match and accurately reflect what is happening with the data. In the process, we give them conceptual definition and elevate them to conceptual categories. To put it another way, analyzing a memo written in narrative form entails more than just using a code as a descriptive tool; it involves making the code into a working category.

The following section provides a brief explanation of focused coding's application during the third cycle of data collection.

3.5.1 Making Sense of the Third Data Collection Cycle (3)

The main goal of the third data collection cycle, which continues the theme of increasingly focused data requirements, is to close data gaps. Charmaz (2006) provides support for this claim, stating that "initial coding can alert you to discover regions in which you lack crucial data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 48). This stage was more focused and directed, synthesizing, and merging the most significant codes. At this point, I needed to find out if women's viewpoints on working in an operational setting differ significantly from those of women employed in a support services setting. I knew that doing this was essential, so I deliberately searched for interview prospects for managerial technical positions.

Third data collecting cycle 3, which carries on the theme of increasingly concentrated data requirements, is primarily intended to fill in data gaps. The statement made by Charmaz (2006) that "initial coding can alert you to discover regions in which you lack crucial data" supports this (Charmaz, 2006, p. 48). The most important codes were synthesized and merged during this stage, which was more directed and focused. I needed to know at this point whether women's perspectives on working in an operational environment differ greatly from those of women who work in a support services context. It was crucial for me to do this; therefore, I made a conscious effort to find interview candidates in technical jobs at the managerial level. The three interview candidates during this cycle enabled the process to distinguish between substantive and theoretical coding, while focused coding was employed to contextualize the content and lay the groundwork for the analysis.

Using the constant comparative method in grounded data analysis, researchers can develop and produce emergent theories (Glaser 2002). Therefore, theoretical sampling as well as ongoing comparison are essential to moving the research towards increasingly abstract levels of analysis (Holton, 2010). In the next section, I begin to explain focused coding's contribution to process rationalization.

3.5.2 Data Collection Cycle 4

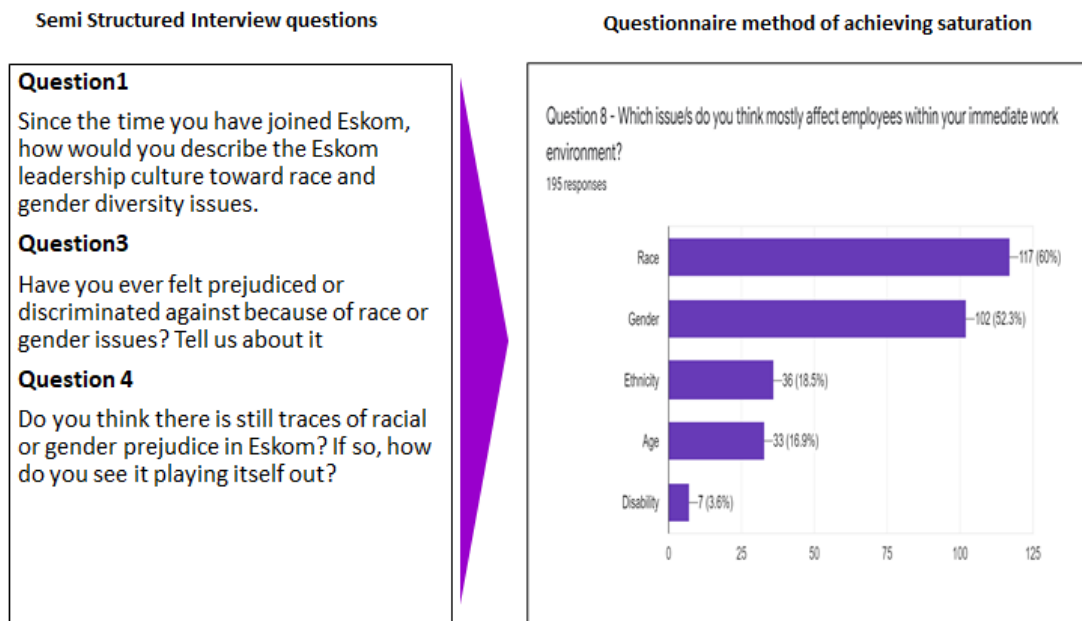
Focused coding aids in the rationalization of large amounts of data by raising codes to conceptual categories; however, the online survey that was used as a form of theoretical sampling. As a result, theoretical sampling is a technique for acquiring data to enhance and expand the categories in your developing theory (Charmaz, 2006).

The characteristics of your categories are constructed through theoretical sampling in constructivist grounded theory, up until the appearance of new characteristics. By doing this, you saturate your categories to the point where no more attributes can be created. Saturation is conceptualized as the comparison of episodes that result in distinct pattern properties, according to Charmaz (2006). Thus, when assessing whether you have saturated your categories, think about posing queries such as these:

- Which comparisons do you make between data within and between categories?
- What sense do you make of these comparisons?
- Where do they lead you?
- How do your comparisons illuminate your theoretical categories?

I used Google Forms to distribute an online survey to 2026 Black women in managerial positions based on the November 2019 manpower statistics. About 9.9% of the targeted population, or 200 people, answered the survey. The online questionnaire/survey (Appendix F) is divided into five sections, each with a unique set of questions. These questions were like those asked in the semi-structured interview (see Figure 14)

Figure 14: Data Alignment between Interview Questions and Questionnaire to Achieve Saturation



Source: Developed by researcher for this study

Data alignment between semi structured interview questions and online questionnaire (Appendix F) to achieve saturation

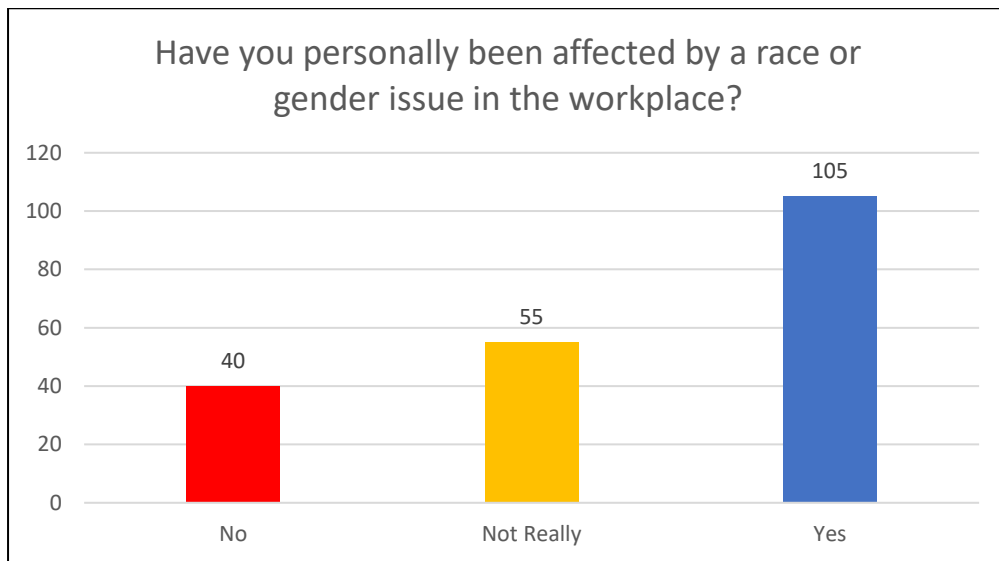
The goal of using theoretical sampling as a grounded theory technique was to first supply additional data, saturate and improve the tentative codes and categories. While grounded theory researchers believe that a theory will emerge, qualitative researchers sometimes equate saturation with repetition of described events, actions, and/or words (Charmaz, 2006).

To verify the results from the semi-structured interviews, I used the report from the online survey as part of this data analysis.

By asking questions that fill in the gaps and broaden the data, I was able to use this information to check consistency in the responses and substantively transition from descriptive to analytical mode. This enables the researcher to explore potential categories, considering their attributes and dimensions (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

For instance, question 10 of the online survey, which is shown in Figure 15 below, asked respondents to confirm their own experiences of employment discrimination.

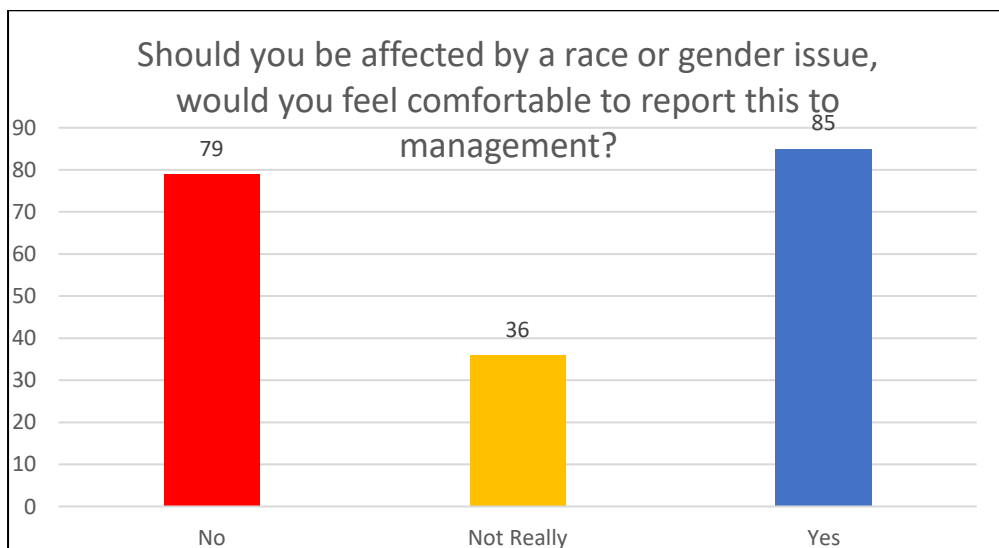
Figure 15 Question 10 A - Extracted from Online Questionnaire



Source: Extract from google online questionnaire report (Appendix I)

The graph above shows that, of the 200 responses, 105 (or around 52% of the sample size) acknowledged being impacted by racial or gender difficulties at work. This supports the idea that we must deal with workplace discrimination and the changing social trends surrounding a workplace culture that is more tolerant. The findings of my second example, which uses the leadership culture as a starting point, show how serious this issue is.

Figure 16 Question 10 B: Extracted from Online Questionnaire

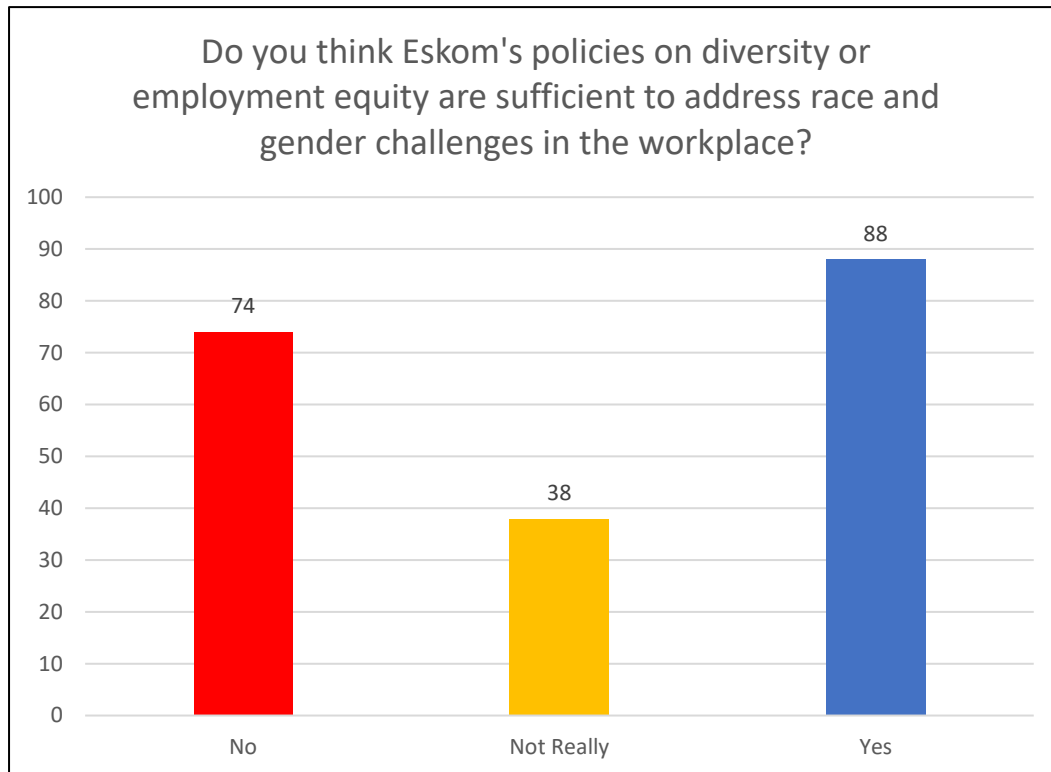


Source: Extract from google online questionnaire report (Appendix I)

Figure 16 shows a relatively narrow gap between the proportion of respondents who would report an event and those who would not for one involving gender or race. This starts to cast

doubt on how much respect workers have for their managers. However, a question about whether Eskom's policies on diversity or employment equity adequately address the issues of race and gender in the workplace starts to reflect a positive indication of the organization's management thereof as seen in Figure 17 below.

Figure 17 Question 10 C - Extract from Online Questionnaire



Source: Extract from google online questionnaire report (Appendix I)

According to the graph above, 88 respondents (44%) think that the current employment equity regulations are enough to address racial and gender inequalities, while 74 respondents (37%) think that they are insufficient.

The researcher's theoretical sensitivity and capacity to spot trends among instances and create codes start to be sustained through this procedure (Holton et al., 2010). Thus, to provide theoretical understanding of the research, theoretical sensitivity becomes essential. Even though theoretical sensitivity necessitates an analytical mindset and skill (Bryant et al., 2012). Here are some examples of how I created tentative codes or categories by applying theoretical sensitivity.

Data fragment: "I had to work double, you know, to show that I want to do this. As women, we need to always prove ourselves and work much harder than men counterparts."

Tentative code: Burden of proof in gender equality

This example illustrates the social process that relates to the additional weight placed on women to demonstrate their value or valuable contributions in the workplace. One was able to determine which direction to proceed in theoretical sampling to construct categories after confirming the facts in terms of relevancy and strengthening the conceptual nature of the code or category (Bryant & Charmaz, 2012). This verification procedure included member checks and data comparisons. In the area of my research, member checks will entail speaking with SMEs or reviewing memos and field notes. The following tentative categories, which I refer to as my emerging categories, are the result of the focused coding phase.

- Business Sustainability a threat to gender equity and transformation
- Organisational culture a barrier to advancement for women in leadership
- Institutionalization of pro gender policy framework, controls, and processes
- Self-efficacy
- Leadership stature or credibility
- Influence of internal group political agendas
- Building a culture of inclusiveness

The development of categories is followed by theoretical coding, which brings the data analysis process to a sophisticated level by identifying the links between categories and concretizing the categories. I provide a brief explanation of the conception and formulation of categories in the next section.

Explanation of Emergent Core Categories

In this section, I elaborate on Glaser's (2002) claim that the conceptual flexibility offered by grounded theory is exemplified by the conceptualization of the seven (7) recognized basic categories. An emergent social pattern anchored in research data is annotated with a concept in grounded theory. This pattern evolves by continual comparison of theoretically collected data until conceptual saturation of interchangeable indices (Glaser 2002).

Inductive reasoning was used to derive the conceptualization of the emerging categories. This required integrating the various interpretations of the same events seen in interviews and other documentary sources. All this information served as actual observations from which abstract ideas were derived. As a result, the emerging categories' conceptual level unintentionally

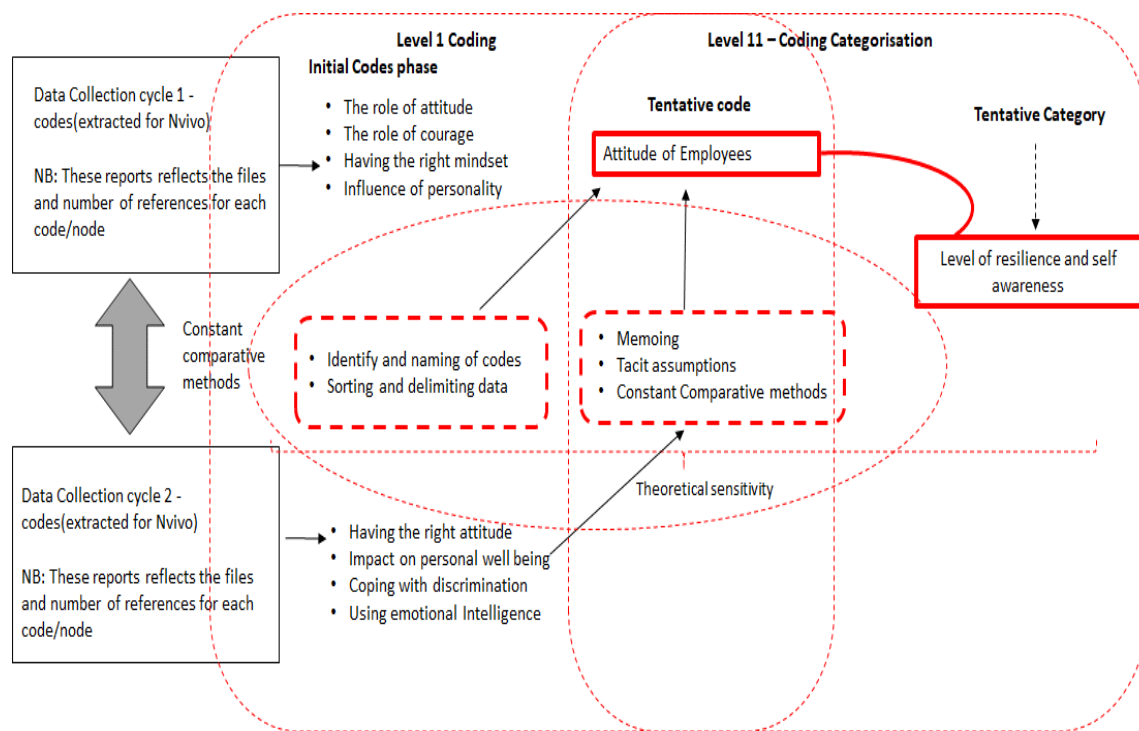
increases, and after considering all the different data sets and degrees of analysis, I finally reach the point where the following emergent categories have developed.

3.6 Conceptualisation of Categories

As the coding process progressed through several stages, the conceptualization of categories changed, formalizing, and moldings them as a foundation for theory development. However, concepts in grounded theory must be abstract of time, place, and people, and they must also have an enduring grab. These are two key characteristics for conceptualization. Accordingly, a theory built on conceptual, speculative relationships cannot exist without abstraction from time, location, and people. The concept of "enduring grab" assumes that the final categories are sufficiently formed and accurately reflect the observed facts (Shelley, 2014). These immediately highlight patterns in a situation or occurrence, showing that ideas are supported by the data to confirm their applicability, relevance, and viability (Glaser, 2002).

Using grounded theory techniques like constant comparison, memoing, and theoretical sampling, the conceptual leap from code to category is clarified. These techniques are crucial for finalizing the concept formation process and improving tentative categories.

Figure 18 Concept Development



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

Concept Development

In retrospect, the coding process was difficult, but to inspire confidence, I urged constant comparison and the use of member checks to assess the validity at various points in the process to complete the concept development process.

According to Holton (2010), a notion must be (1) central, (2) link to as many other categories and their attributes as possible, and (3) account for a significant amount of variation in a pattern of behaviour before it can be considered grounded.

The role of language in illuminating the strength of concepts and emphasizing theoretical sensitivity to pinpoint systemic and causal linkages are both highlighted by conceptualization. This was used to give the potential categories names in a way that would not diminish the concept's intended meaning. I outline the procedure for establishing theoretical sufficiency in the following section.

3.6.1 Developing Concepts to have Theoretical Sufficiency

I gave a high-level summary of how the construction of ideas, or the "building blocks" of a theory, is based on the preliminary categories in the preceding section. Since my categories were not specified in terms of their attributes, the discovery of tentative codes or categories

does not suggest that they were. If sufficiency and necessity are met, the development of final categories can be claimed, but more work needs to be done to progress analytical thinking.

Due to this, I used the concept analysis literature (Walker & Avant, 1995) to inform my concept generation process. I did this by identifying each category's antecedents, consequences, features, and qualities using a concept analysis (Appendix H). The comparison and confirmation of the process of hypothesizing linkages between them would next be aided by the identification of antecedents and consequences. It improves comprehension of the context by highlighting the concept's underlying assumptions (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Even though Walker and Avant (1995) claim that a literature study is essential to concept analysis and that it offers a chance to reconsider the content of the codes or categories employed and see if they adhere to the principle of fit, work and grab.

Concept maps (Appendix J) were employed as a technique to pinpoint connections and represent the conceptual shift toward the creation of well-articulated high-level categories. In other words, concept mapping assisted in identifying categories that should be subcategories of already-identified higher-level categories as well as categories that could go under a new, broader category as subcategories of that new idea. As a result, it was possible to define or place a major social process that led to an increase or decrease in the number of high-level categories already recognized (Appendix H). Thus, concept mapping confirmed the selection of fundamental categories for advancement to the theory-building process and helped to illustrate links.

3.7 Conceptualising Qualitative Variables in the Real World

While the information acquired comes directly from the affected employees, the sample is representative of different business units, locations, as well as spatial and generational dynamics. The inductive derivation of the cross-cutting concerns was nevertheless subject to the following in accordance with (Holton, 2010):

1. Validating the codes in terms of my understanding of them.
2. Verifying alignment in terms of the initial codes and tentative categories, as well as
3. Pursuing theoretical saturation through continuous comparison.

The conceptualization and concept generation process resulted in the following seven basic categories, which are summarized in table 3.2.

Table 5 Summary of Categories Rephrased as a Variable

	Category	Re-phrased as a” variable”
1	Threat to business sustainability	Threat to business sustainability
2	Organisational culture a barrier to advancement for women in leadership	Impact of organisational culture as a barrier to advancement for women in leadership
3	Institutionalization of pro gender policy framework, controls, and processes	Effectiveness of policy implementation
4	Self-efficacy	Level of self-efficacy
5	Leadership stature	Impact of leadership stature
6	Influence of internal group political agendas	Political influence
7	Building a culture of inclusiveness	Inclusivity

3.7.1 Category: Threat/s to Business Sustainability

Eskom's significant role in growth and development as a state-owned company (SOC) gives it the identity it has as a tool for institutionalized social justice and economic transformation. State-owned companies (SOC) aim to achieve social equity by benefiting the population, while private companies prioritize rewards for a select few. But as respondents indicated and corroborated by extra codes or categories generated during the grounded theory procedure, this dual mandate comprises conflicting ideas that are inharmonious with each other and susceptible to intrinsic weaknesses (Ssamula, 2009). The following have something to do with these codes' or categories' themes:

- Impact of socio-political legislative pressures
- Impact of economic, financial and leadership crisis in terms of. organisational performance
- Persistent electricity crisis, corruption, and defective business models
- Misconceptions with respect to socio-political and economic transformation
- Repositioning of transformation as a social return on investment

- Business survival takes precedence over transformation objectives
- Effectiveness of talent and skills management strategies
- Transformation imperatives are compliance driven and takes precedence over authentic change
- Influence of spatial, inter-generational, and geographical dynamics on business continuity.

To corroborate this perspective, I draw on the following data extracts to illustrate linkages between impending business challenges in relation to limited advancement opportunities as expressed by the respondents.

- “Eskom is just pushing numbers to, you know, to put people in positions. And I think the world view is that people are not competent.”
- “In the current context, because I think we trying to downsize the organisation.”
- “Yeah, opportunity for growth is very slim.

The phenomenon shown starts to show the growing conflict between the dual mandate, or business effectiveness and socio-economic obligations. despite the constant socio-economic political pressure, erratic leadership, inadequate skill development, and anomalous resource management, there are several myths about the ecosystem of change that need to be addressed. The statistics reveal repeating societal tendencies that seem to raise the likelihood of business sustainability difficulties, according to observations and insights. The way this category is conceptualized is important in the context of my research because it starts to show how the state-owned entity's intended mission and the public's trust are compromised by the failure to balance operational and developmental requirements. The evidence also shows that these factors significantly affect how employees perceive and behave toward organizationally driven policies, practices, and programs.

The relationship between the components and their impact on the organisational culture about racial and gender transition is thus first illustrated in the following category.

3.7.2 Category: Impact of Organisational Culture: Barriers to the Advancement of Black Women

Given that these state-owned organisations are referred to be institutionalized agents for socio-economic change, organisational culture, and design ought to be geared toward democratization and social justice. The common values, customs, and beliefs of the company must be reflected in organisational culture even when the goal of any legislation is to control

employee behaviour and attitudes. Interviewees expressed gratitude to Eskom for helping the company meet its obligations under the shareholders compact (SHC), employment equality objectives, and other legal criteria. But they both concur that compliance is essential to changing Eskom's organisational culture.

The conceptualization approach started by internalizing the experiences and views of the women questioned, while also considering the intergenerational dynamics of the Eskom transformation path (Appendix L). This refers to a business culture that depends on the growth of democracy in a broader South African context. According to their amount of interaction with Eskom, respondents' impressions of corporate culture also differed. Women who joined Eskom after 1994, for example, expressed sensitive viewpoints, as opposed to others who entered the company earlier, who shared traumatic stories of their individual experiences as Black women inside a racist and macho corporate structure. The data extracts that follow demonstrate how these views are blended by capturing different viewpoints at different points in time across the company.

- Data extract: “Segregated, based on preferential treatment and not self-worth.”
- Data extract: “Resistance to change evidenced by the use of Afrikaans and refusing sports membership.”
- Data extract: “People were driven by individual prejudice and perceptions.”
- Data extract: “Preferential treatment of white women over women of colour.”

As shown in Appendix K, these extracts also demonstrate the many organisational alterations that have occurred throughout time. Despite the significant shift in awareness and diversity management that took place after 1994, there are still too few women in leadership positions, and there are still efforts to delay or prevent transformation. This hypothesis is supported by the data analysis, which considers the experiences of individuals polled about socio-economic (e.g., salary discrepancies, promotion chances) and socio-emotional (e.g., self-concept, self-confidence, and resilience) outcomes. Stigmatisation and stereotyping are widespread even though they are linked to racial, ethnic, and gender-based issues in the workplace.

The following level of conceptualization uses the intersection of generational and geographical dynamics to build underlying social patterns that show changes in:

- Level of dedication and attention to transformation
- Work ethics and organisational culture
- Business sustainability and development possibilities

I also tried to maintain a balanced viewpoint while considering factors like age, personality, organisational level, and length of interaction with Eskom. In addition, between 2006 and 2013, I worked as an Eskom skills development facilitator, a shop steward, and a former member of the employment equity committee (SDF). The prevalence of workplace discrimination has decreased, but the systematic repercussions or impacts of racial and gender discrimination still indicate to social injustice and gender-based abuse in larger society.

Keeping outdated patriarchal traditions that have their roots in the heritage of apartheid, in other words, is harmful and useless for elevating the status of Black people and Black women. The following category I came up with had a substantial effect from the prior one, which was particularly significant in the context of the phenomenon of interest since it established the standards for context, organisational participation, and behaviour.

3.7.3 Category: Effectiveness of Policy Implementation

Through the development and execution of various policies, initiatives, and programs, the institutionalization of a pro-gender policy framework as a catalyst for socio-economic transformation aims to promote women's standing and eliminate workplace discrimination. However, the study found a disconnect between institutional regulations and the real-world experiences of Black women in executive roles at Eskom (Maake et al., 2021).

Eskom's policies are institutionalized through management and labour partner engagement processes because, despite the shifting nature of the South African legislative landscape, they uphold democratic values. But the data is starting to indicate the dynamic of this connection, and it has been demonstrated that monitoring and reporting of these policies' weak reprioritization and lack of policy alignment are insufficient. The data extracts that follow show how I started thinking conceptually and how I developed this category to support this claim.

- Data extract: “Inconsistent application of policy.”
- Data extract: “Lack of justifiable and equitable implementation of policy.”
- Data extract: “Lack of fairness and transparency.”
- Data extract: “Measuring success or impact of these, policies, controls and processes”.

The data analysis's findings begin to suggest that there may be a mismatch between the policy's stated purposes, its actual implementation, and its objectives when considered. This implies that the goal of the policy, as expressed in the quotation that follows, was never completely achieved. "The established rules and procedures genuinely look at things from a

human interaction and behaviour position rather than from a compliance viewpoint, from a legislative need." The remark also suggests that the mismatch between policy purpose and actual execution is more pronounced when biological variances in the workplace are not addressed.

Considering, the data analysis's findings begin to suggest that the policy's declared purpose, its real interpretation, and its objectives may be at odds. This indicates that the policy's declared purpose, as mentioned in the following sentence, was never fully realized.

The statements that follow provide support for this assertion by covering several subjects that were important in conceptualizing this group.

- Due to the design's intrinsic insensitivity to women's biology, including menstrual cycles and pain sensitivity, the sick leave policy lacks consistency un terms of gender policy objectives.
- The maternity leave policy varies depending on the business environment, is inconsistently enforced across the organisation, and is ambiguous regarding transitions.
- The usage of antiquated and ineffective infrastructure and technologies adds to the strain.
- The lack of a reasonable and fair implementation of addressing the reality of safety and security concerns for women to decrease risk exposure disadvantages women in a working environment. Due to these circumstances, women are forced to forgo the chance to get standby payments, which reduces their chances of being promoted and, as a result, deepens the gender pay gap, a crucial sign of injustice in larger society.

The data analysis also reveals that current hiring procedures are vulnerable to "manager's discretion" and undermine the concepts of transparency, justice, and equity as expressed in the following codes:

- "Recruitment process inefficiencies lead themselves to allegations of being a paper exercise or persons are hand-picked on the basis of favouritism."
- "White women are treated preferentially over Black women."
- "Race and gender are difficult to distinguish."
- "Women could rise only if they had strong characteristics."
- "Coloured people receive less consideration in terms of representation."

In addition, failing to accept the fact that single women are the only breadwinners in homes with children, elderly relatives, and unemployed relatives is a charge of socio-economic injustice that connects with other forms of inequality.

Lack of political will and strategic awareness of gender, structural inequality, and discriminatory behaviours are implied by the limited consideration for internal talent and the lack of childcare facilities or any other kind of gender-based assistance. Mainstream misconceptions about female empowerment and development are at odds with the patriarchal attitude that arises from neglecting to address the gender gap. Having said that, an organization's latent policy goals also serve as a gauge of its maturity and begin to affect how the public and its shareholders perceive and interact with the business. To modify how we see and embrace racial and gender diversity in the workplace, policy formulation via design should be able to do so without prejudice. This begins to demonstrate the significance of leadership in creating a successful workplace culture. The next category makes the relationship between the phenomena being studied and its effects on people's socio-emotional outcomes clear. While the previous category provided a legal and organisational framework for racial and gender transformation through policy imperatives.

3.7.4 Category: Self-efficacy

One of the respondents said, "It was honestly my emotions or my sentiments I've had at the time, it was via racial discrimination that I left," in support of my assertion that three respondents left the firm out of annoyance. Because it is based on a qualitative methodology, using subjective viewpoints of individuals cannot be generalized or enlarged to a group level. As part of self-efficacy women in leadership need to demonstrate resilience, self-motivation, tenacity, high self-esteem, and self-confidence.

Considering these themes, the data analysis begins to demonstrate how environmental effects begin to degrade the psychological and emotional well-being of the affected employees. This strategy is also consistent with other theories that propose connections between behavioural attributes, emotional intelligence, personality, and the affirmation of successful performance as a gauge of productivity and employee wellbeing. Therefore, concrete experiences and perceptions were used to inform the analysis and conceptualization of this category as respondents elaborated on the effects of racial prejudice and gender inequality relating to socio-economic (e.g., salary discrepancies, promotion opportunities) and socio-emotional (e.g., self-concept, self-confidence, and resilience) outcomes. People who believe in their

capacity to perform at pre-set levels and exercise control over external factors that affect their lives are said to be self-efficacious (Bandura, 1994).

Beliefs have an impact on people's emotions, thoughts, motivations, and behaviours. It is crucial to underline how their thoughts revealed the qualities and features that gave them the ability to handle the difficult circumstances. The propositions that follow helped to conceptualize and establish this category and show how a tolerance-promoting society is evolving.

- Women are seen differently depending on their attitude and abilities
- The ability to endure prejudice-based behaviours is aided by emotional maturity and a positive outlook
- Self-management, determination, and personal drive are crucial traits to assist cope with biased behaviours
- Continuous learning and self-empowerment boost self-confidence
- Self-Awareness, resilience, and coping methods
- Personality, emotional intelligence, and characteristics

The most important power for a leader to enter a particular atmosphere is their mind.

These recurrent patterns in the data led to the conceptualization of the category "self-efficacy," which is an integral component of the phenomenon of interest and thus depends on the following category to advocate for the necessary change.

3.7.5 Category: Influence of Leadership Stature

The ideal levels of admiration and respect that a leader should accrue through time are referred to as leadership stature. It represents an unachievable degree of deference and power that everyone ought to strive to. Being a leader of stature comes from upholding ideals that work to improve the welfare of everybody. Above all else, such a leader must have three characteristics: selflessness, service, and sacrifice. For instance, for a business to prosper, each of us must multiply by voluntarily teaching others to uphold the company's core values, norms, and objectives (top management). The initial codes listed below were used to find and conceptualize the category.

- Leadership has been very active in advancing women
- Leadership culture was more about meeting KPI's and pleasing the shareholder
- My view of the leadership is to meet those targets at all costs

- Leadership support has been one of the theoretical fronts
- Leadership emphasis is on maintaining good reputation
- Lack of ethical leadership and structural support
- Good men and women are marginalized because they are not linked, which shows that there is a connection between leadership and those on the ground
- Using one's position of authority to organize or manipulate women to denigrate or undermine one another
- Committed leadership is necessary for driving successful transformation.

Although opinions on Eskom's achievement in terms of racial and gender transformation vary, leadership culture is still important and influences organisational ethics, norms, and values. I use the following quote, which was taken from an interview with a former employee and corporate employment equity practitioner, to support this claim.

“So, here’s the thing at Eskom, the people you want to use to deliver the message to the employees are contaminated themselves. Firstly, how to get into the positions is questionable and secondly, ethically these are not leaders that you can vouch and say they can stand the moral question, they themselves are questionable characters.”

It also draws attention to the link between leadership behaviour and how it affects the organisational culture. This also demonstrates the interaction or trade-off between a game of numbers and actions that could imperil a social capital objective. The following category will now examine political influences on the phenomenon of study.

3.7.6 Category: Political Influences

In a previous part, I talked about the inherent conflict or defect in the state-owned entity business model. However, the decision-making process and power dynamics may be affected unexpectedly by the historical context, ownership structure, stakeholder expectations, networks, and expression of socio-cultural factors. The conception of this category was built on the following early or tentative codes and classifications.

The pace of advancement depends on the group you belong to

- Cultural factors affect group affiliation
- The pace of advancement is based on the group you belong to
- You place yourself with a group that will benefit you
- The role of race, gender, and ethnicity in the formation of monolithic groups

- Influence of political connections
- Political connections have an impact, as well as socio-economic, political, and interest group pressures that have an impact on the workplace
- Groups have evolved into harmful entities (cliques, cabals, or inner circles), and internal women politics have a bad impact.

The respondents' definition of group dynamics is unique because it offers a range of group dynamics, complexity, and spill over tendencies that might alter corporate culture, even though individuals naturally gather based on shared interests. These patterns are greatly influenced by political or demographic considerations, which I have opted to refer to as political effects. Particularly, the significance of race, gender, and ethnicity in the purposeful formation of homogeneous groups has expanded throughout time. The subsequent quotations or data snippets support this association, which inevitably contributed to the creation of this tentative or newly forming category.

- "Cliques play a highly detrimental role since everyone is out for themselves in a clique. And that person is gazing at us while supporting the clique and ethnicity."
- "As a result, that clique starts with the government, with who gets hired and what is available for the person to deliver to us."
- "Effects of socio-economic, political, and interest group pressures on the workplace."

This category eventually begins to permeate a mix of intersectionality, social identity, and Faultline Theory as I try to deepen my theoretical viewpoint. Another unexpected finding is how internal women's politics have changed to become a part of the wider corporate group dynamics. The statistical analysis leads to the conclusion that these groups have frequently devolved into harmful entities that use cronyism, cabals, and an inner-circle mentality to further their own interests. A set of beliefs that, by their very nature, constitute a form of internalized oppression that limits individual expression and is based on indoctrination. Considering this dynamic, the next category looks at how the setting is designed to promote inclusion as well as personal growth and development.

3.7.7 Category: Inclusivity

Developing an inclusive culture is a crucial aspect of the environment for racial and gender development. It entails adopting and letting go of behaviours intended to celebrate diversity and foster workplace camaraderie. After the data was analysed, it became obvious how important it is to foster an environment that, first, promotes workplace diversity and, second,

supports a learning culture about the development of skills and traits that indicate organisational maturity.

- Inclusiveness promotes mutual learning
- Acclimatization to the workplace (How effective are induction or management programs?)
- Promotion of equality and elimination of unfair workplace practices
- Creation of a safe space without being judged based on race and gender
- Recognition of good performance to affirm Black competence
- External appointments as opposed to internal advancement
- Advanced technology as a pro-gender measure to build an inclusive decision-making culture

According to my interpretation and understanding of the codes and categories, my analysis of the category assumes that there are underlying social processes linked to personal transformation because of a learning process as well as a patterning outcome of the organisational culture that continue to embody traces of masculine design. The quote that follows, which was taken from an interview transcript, seeks to support this claim, for example. Given contextual restrictions like dubious leadership ethics, inherent masculine design, and internal group political aspirations, I start to question if it is a legitimate objective to pursue. The key research question will be addressed in the next part by comparing the findings to the data analysis results, which will be summarized.

3.8 Conclusion

The categories depict the patterns that developed as abstract notions based on actual information gathered through interviews, other documentary sources, the distribution of a questionnaire as a technique of validation, as well as my own personal observations within the examined setting. The research issue centers on the rate and degree of gender equity advancement, particularly in the technical context, therefore the findings are pertinent to the phenomenon being examined.

The inherent tension positioned inside the creation of a dual business model for state owned companies resonates with threats to the long-term viability of businesses as a basic category. This suggests that tension exists when corporate cost-benefit models conflict with the intended SOC philosophy's goal of serving the common good.

In other words, it can be difficult to reconcile business models that are efficient and intended for profitability with a model that is supported by a social capital agenda and founded on

collectivist values. Even though SOC's frequently function as monopolies, increasing exposure to operational, economic, financial, and reputational risks. The level of corporate efficiency, the fundamentals of good governance, environmental, stakeholder, financial, and risk management are all factors that have significantly influenced the growth of this category. The variables serve as a yardstick to measure business success, growth, and sustainability of the SOC as well as important performance measures as outlined in the shareholders compact (SHC).

The conclusions relate gender equality, economic fairness, fair representation, and access to rights to diverse political, economic, social, technical, and environmental components of gender and racial justice. According to these findings, women in this industry are still subject to biological restrictions that affect their personal safety and ability to hold subordinate home roles, just as women in the rest of South Africa are. This demonstrates that males continue to shoulder disproportionate burdens for unpaid domestic and care duties.

The pervasive culture of hegemonic masculinity, which justifies men's dominant role in society, provides evidence for the formation and understanding of these basic categories, including organisational culture, the influence of political agendas, and leadership stature. Hegemonic masculinity is a theory that aims to explain how and why males continue to hold roles in society that are traditionally held by women. Given the reality of hegemonic masculinity in an environment where political leadership is a major component and maintains the marginalization of women and their capacity for speaking up, women also face an unfair disadvantage in a male-dominated workplace. Participants' opinions, for instance, that suggest they are not given an equal opportunity for promotion, raise questions about gender equality in organisations. The equity gap widens if men are unfairly given preferential treatment over women. Therefore, the question of promotion involves not just a change in title but also one of pay equity, which indicates unfair advancement. These are frequently made possible by regulations that seem to uphold hegemonic masculinity.

To put it another way, how can we start a conversation on women's advancement and development, specifically in relation to personal safety and security, and how reasonable is it to expect women to achieve their full potential under such circumstances? What I also discovered is that interviewees' reflections mirror the organization's normative behaviours and the difficulties these norms engender. Some individuals came across as resentful even though opinions on how much the organisation supports gender equality were divided. Eskom has a history of vigorously adopting programs that support gender equality, however some

research participants did not fairly benefit from these chances. A moral justification for affirmative action contends that it ought to serve as restitution for past wrongs.

In the next chapter, based on triangulation, I hold up these categories to the literature to help explain or make meaning of the themes or categories identified in relation to the research.

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter, I presented my research findings in accordance with the grounded theory methodology and guidelines outlined in Chapter 2. The concurrent data collection and processing procedure employed was characterized by a highly interactive approach as opposed to a linear one. Payne (2007, as cited in Dunne, 2011) asserts "[There is a] ...dynamic interplay between data gathering and processing" (p. 68).

The study results revealed a distinct interplay between society and SOC organisational culture within Eskom as an example. This was validated by both individual and organisational perspectives inclusive of the socio-political dynamics. This Chapter links critical concepts emergent in the literature to the research question and fundamental categories identified through grounded theory.

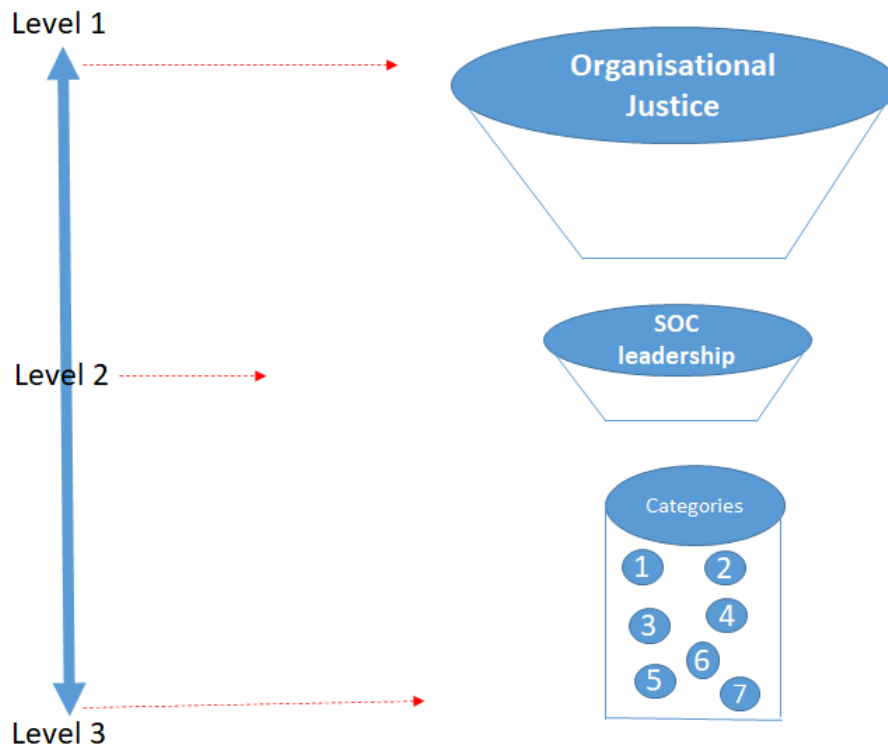
4.1 Purpose of the Literature Review

The aim of the literary investigation in this study is to explicitly delineate the lacunae and re-contextualize the qualitative information from interviews, surveys, and other documentary sources. Although utilizing pre-existing literature in grounded theory research remains a topic of debate, Dunne (2011) contends that most research methodologies necessitate engagement with existing literature prior to collecting primary data. Conversely, Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocate for deferring the literary inquiry to forestall prejudgment of concepts (Dunne, 2011). From a constructivist perspective, I have aligned this study with the approach of Glaser, Strauss and Dunne which is in congruence with that of Charmaz (2014).

4.2 Approach to Literature Review

The analysis of each key category was subjected to a comprehensive literature review, facilitating the synthesis and re-contextualization of the emerging categories as discovered through a process of coding and categorisation. By utilizing this approach, I conceptualized, identified hierarchies, and situated the research topic within its 'parent' discipline as demonstrated in Figure 19 below.

Figure 19 Approach to Literature Review



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

As depicted above the study augmented the emergent categories with level 3 and established a common outcome that pointed towards various leadership aspects. Therefore, in congruence with the research question and problem previously defined this outcome directs the study towards the aspect of social and organisational justice. A social and organisational justice that gets reinforced by organisational culture, leadership style and conduct, policy implementation, and business sustainability (Rupp et al., 2014). The literature review delves into both individual and organisational perspectives on the matter at hand to better comprehend relevance and interconnections. Thus, it assists in advancing fundamental category theory while also enabling me to specify my intended contribution through this study which identifies with organisation justice as the parent discipline for discussion in the next section.

4.3 Organisational Justice - Gender Equity

According to the literature, organizational justice refers to how fairly an organization is perceived by its employees (Abekah-Nkrumah & Atinga, 2013). It evaluates how equitably a company handles its employees, claims Aktürk (2020). This suggests, indirectly, that

managers have an obligation to treat workers fairly, just as referees have an obligation to guarantee that each competitor has an equal opportunity to compete (Bhakarya, 2014).

The significance of organizational justice stems from its correlation with a range of work-related behaviors, stress markers, and attitudes. According to Rupp, Shao, Jones, and Liao (2014), there is a moderate correlation between job satisfaction and organizational commitment and perceptions of justice in the workplace. Thus, when decisions are made or policies and procedures are applied in a way that is inconsistent, unfair, discriminatory, or inequitable, poor organizational justice may result (Worksafe, 2023).

According to several studies, cooperative behavior is exhibited by employees who perceive justice favorably. When appropriately managed, they uphold human decency and humanity, enhance output, and motivate commitment. Both positive and negative influences can affect attitudes and behavior of employees (Anderson, 2003; Baldwin, 2006; Daya, 2010b; Rupp et al., 2014). Though the following discussion takes a broad view of organisational justice, the underlying principles have been connected to those of racial and gender justice. Therefore, I move to address different types of justice and principles that unpin how employees view fairness.

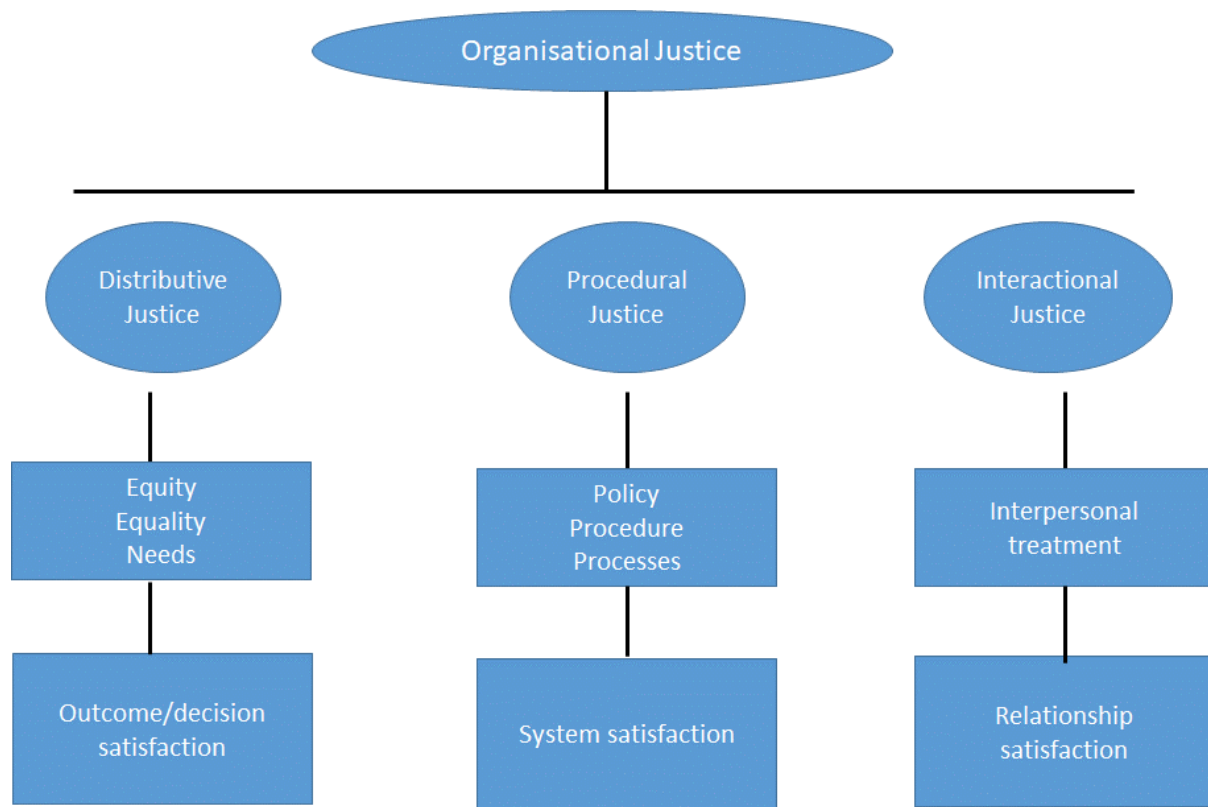
4.3.1 Types and Principles of Organisational Justice

Organizational justice trends indicate that there have been two significant changes in the prevalence of reactive and content theories. The first was moving from reactive to proactive theories, and the second was switching from content to process theories (Bhattacharya, 2014).

When deciding whether a decision or course of action is just, distributive, and procedural fairness should be considered (Abekah-Nkrumah & Atinga, 2013; Baldwin, 2006; Bhattacharya, 2014; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1990). To distinguish distributive justice from procedural justice, scholars look at conceptualizations of justice that emphasize the equity of the methods and procedures used to reach the decision or outcome as opposed to those that emphasize the equity of the decision or outcome's content.

With the expansion of research, interactional justice a third category of justice was identified, where the treatment of individuals in their interpersonal relationships served as the focal point. Distributive, procedural, and interactional justice are all included in organizational justice because they influence an individual's perception of treatment equity, as Figure 20 below illustrates.

Figure 20 Typologies of Organisational Justice



Source: Adapted from Greenberg (1990)

The purpose, relationships, and different forms of justice are depicted in the above diagram. It became more apparent throughout the conversation how employees' perceptions of different types of justice relate to fairness principles. Greenberg (1993) posits that interactional fairness is predicated on the idea that decisions pertaining to resource distribution were made with thoughtfulness and courtesy towards the pertinent parties. Consequently, the degree to which employees believe they have been treated with dignity and respect is correlated with their views of impartiality and fairness (Aktürk, 2020). From a social and personal standpoint, this is how the idea of racial and gender justice advances equality for men and women in all spheres of life. Interactional fairness is therefore the cornerstone of this study, as it impacts organizational structure, procedures, and decision-making (Bhattacharya, 2014; Schminke et al., 2002).

The objective, reliable, and consistent outcomes of organizational behaviors, practices, and cultures make concepts of justice and fairness crucial. But because they exercise their authority and make decisions based on what is just and reasonable, SOC leadership is widely recognized for being a force for change (interactional justice). This construct can offer valuable insights into gender inequality issues that are prevalent in state-owned enterprises,

as evidenced by the study's focus on leadership behaviors and conduct (Baldwin, 2006; Bhattacharya, 2014; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1990).

For example, characteristics associated with leadership are often included in leadership assessments, even though they have little effect on effectiveness. Despite this, metrics for evaluating a leader's efficacy often favor characteristics associated with men, like being tall and white. Thus, the framework of masculinized norms and expectations about what a leader should look like introduces bias towards women and leaders who belong to racial or ethnic minorities (Chin, 2011).

With the help of numerous empirical studies, the critical diversity literature has expanded to include alternative interpretations of diversity. Studies have indicated that individuals' perceptions of equity and discrimination in organizations are often shaped by their racial and ethnic backgrounds (Zanoni et al., 2010). Because my research was based on these studies, the literature also highlights how perceptions of justice impact organizational and individual agency, including the intersections between racial and gender relations which I further discuss in the next section.

4.3.2 Perceptions of Fairness in Organisations is Structured along Gender and Racio-ethnic Lines

Instruments used to advance gender and racial/ethnic diversity are affirmative action and employment equity laws. Previous studies, as documented by Klasen and Minasyan (2021), demonstrate that gender-based board quotas by themselves do not raise the proportion of women in senior management roles. Beyond boards, they examined the impact of South Africa's affirmative action policy, which sets group-based goals for senior management positions and emphasizes the representation of intersectional identities, sex, and race.

According to their findings, Black women's employment probability in top positions increased significantly because of these policies compared to the counterfactual scenario in which there was no policy. Their analysis covers intersectionality issues as well as policy spillovers in the areas of wages, education, and self-employment. Prior to this, Tsui and Gutek (1999) asserted that historically under-represented groups now have more access to employment opportunities as compared to previously when these groups were denied access to key positions.

The pursuit of leveraging individual differences to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency has replaced the pursuit of affirmative action programs as a means of achieving demographic diversity in organizations because these programs are subject to legal constraints

(Wise & Tschirhart, 2000). This essentially means that the main assertions regarding the relationships among diversity management, job satisfaction, organizational justice, and performance are supported by this kind of research.

Bhattacharya (2014) and Choi and Rainey (2014) claim that this benefits women and other racial and ethnic minorities of color inadvertently. This suggests that perceptions of discrimination involving feelings of fairness, particularly against female employees, may have a detrimental effect on the general well-being of those who experience it (Steyn and Jackson (2015). According to Chabaya et al. (2009), women's status is further jeopardized by the burden of additional household and family responsibilities. Among the psychological effects of perceived discrimination on wellbeing are high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Choi & Rainey, 2014).

The evidence also shows a negative relationship, particularly for socially disadvantaged groups in different societies, between perceptions of discrimination and a range of mental health outcomes (Williams et al., 2003). Theories of relative deprivation, particularly fraternal relative deprivation, provided an explanation for the effect of perceived discrimination on wellbeing. These theories also highlighted how perceived discrimination or feelings of unjust treatment directly affects the workplace, where job-specific consequences include higher absenteeism and lower productivity (Schmitt et al. 2010). In the following section I therefore examine the behavior and styles of SOC leaders in response to the studied phenomenon

4.3.3 SOC Leadership's Function in Relation to Race and Gender Transformation

There is a lot of literature on SOC leadership behaviors and styles, but most of it focuses on the social environment. Organisational gender and racial justice are not well-represented in research on transformative leadership, much less research that develops metrics to measure its effectiveness (Begeny et al., 2021).

As stated by Gold et al. (2010, p. 10), there are three fundamental characteristics of successful leaders: (1) a deep comprehension of the internal and external factors that influence an organization's capabilities, successes, and stakeholders' points of view; (2) vision, which helps leaders see the "bigger picture" and know how to translate their ideas into actions that are actionable; and (3) inspiration, which creates strong bonds with followers and wins their full support. As per Lok and Crawford (2004), an effective and ethical organizational culture, driven by strong leadership, is a crucial determinant of the success of an organization.

Cultivating leadership attributes, such as moral integrity, interpersonal relations, good governance practices, as well as innovation, are imperative for preserving a competitive advantage (Jokinen, 2005; Lupton & Beamish, 2014). Effective leadership requires "a sense of direction and the ability to sway others," according to Gold et al. (2010). These competencies are essential for SOC leaders to maintain organisational justice and equity in terms of race, gender, and ethnicity while navigating a complex environment subject to public scrutiny as an organ of state (Jokinen, 2005).

For instance, the government is the sole owner of state-owned companies (SOCs), and the board of directors of these businesses makes decisions primarily with the goal of increasing the company's value and performance. However, according to Adebayo (2020), SOCs are socially conscious businesses with objectives linked to socioeconomic transformation in addition to their dual mandate of profitability. They thus support government development agendas that promote equity and lower rates of unemployment and poverty. Because it supports expectations and perceptions of justice and equity, Adebayo's definition is essential to my research project. This raises the question of how boards work as cohesive teams and represent special interests to achieve the main objective (Burnes, 2009).

Booyesen (2007) argues that strengthening and enhancing the quality of these organizations' boards is one of the most crucial ways to demonstrate the efficacy of these organizations' governance, leadership, and success in the face of widespread concerns that many SOCs are ineffective, vulnerable to financial risks, and channels for corruption (Clayton, 1997; Mbo, 2017; Sithomola, 2019; *The Influence of Competence*, 2021).

Global reports suggest that in certain countries, SOC boards may be ineffective and burdensome, indicating that SOC leadership lacks the legitimacy and authority required to oversee administrative responsibilities, set strategic direction, and control public exposure (IMF, 2020). Adebayo (2020) asserts, in support of this claim, that political interference competing agendas, incompetence, free-riding, unstable financial constraints, and other agency problems beset state-owned organizations (SOCs). SOC is vital to the welfare of the country because of their crucial roles in economic production and the delivery of basic public services like electricity, water, and healthcare (Heo, 2018).

Scholars have examined the relationship between politicians and SOCs with concern; highlighting the political influence wielded by SOCs over management decisions (Adebayo, 2020; Chauke & Motubatse, 2020; Donkor & Zhou, 2019; Mbo & Adjasi, 2017). Adebayo

(2020) and other academics have pointed out that there are nuances to the consequences of political interactions in relation to SOC leadership. According to Christiansen and Crane-Charef (2021), SOC boards may find it challenging to carry out their mandates due to state ownership and senior management, therefore, it is politically naive to think that the individuals in charge of the most prominent SOCs in the country are immune to government influence.

Recently, governments have attempted to professionalize and strengthen the authority and independence of boards of directors in response to the growing commercialization of SOCs. For example, the OECD Guidelines for Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises (aka "SOE Guidelines") provide an overview of the areas where "good practice" is increasingly common. Measurement of the ways governments convey their risk expectations through different channels was one method by which they accomplished this (Christiansen & Crane-Charef, 2021). The importance of leading and managing SOCs is highlighted by the talks on cultural diversity and the transition to gender equality, though, so I address how national cultural issues start to influence the research phenomenon in the following section.

4.4 Influence of South African Culture on Leadership Practices

The literature review in the preceding section concentrated on the role and behaviour of SOC leadership; the subsequent discussion, however, is primarily concerned with the factors that shaped the fundamental viewpoint of South Africa as a country. Since my primary area of interest is organisational, I started by looking at the long-standing cultural foundations of human resource management (HRM) practices. Stone et al. (2006), referenced by Đorđević (2016), suggested that HRM preferences within a county's organisations are influenced by national culture. Noting that there were viewpoints that endorsed Tayeb's (2001) evaluation of the condition of cross-cultural theory. This evaluation identified several methodological errors and research biases, particularly those that have been extensively documented in management research. Bolden and Philip (2005) also cite Hofstede's (1994) work to address concerns regarding the conflation of non-cultural elements with cultural ones as well as the lack of cultural parity in the definition of terms and constructs like "human resource management" and "leadership" (Bolden & Kirk Philip, 2005, p. 3).

National culture has been found to have influenced leadership behaviour and leadership styles by defining the meanings that leaders and their followers attribute to the world. The decision between participative and authoritarian leadership styles has been found to be significantly

influenced by assertiveness, power distance, individualism collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance. The choice between task orientation and people orientation is influenced by several factors. These include gender equality in relation to "femininity" and "masculinity" dimensions of the national culture, performance orientation, people orientation, future orientation and in certain circumstances, it can also be impacted by high levels of uncertainty avoidance (Janićijević, 2019).

Dorđević (2016) citing Leung et al., 2005 claims that national culture, is a system of deeply founded values, attitudes and behaviours of the members of a society. As a result, the cultural backgrounds of the African and Western people behave similarly, and the results (effectiveness) were similar. The outcome also supports the idea that organisations and leaders should put aside stereotypes based on culture when dealing with leadership issues because there is little cultural difference in South Africa when it comes to leadership styles and effectiveness.

However, leadership becomes more challenging when diversity-related factors like race, gender, ethnicity, ability status, and sexual orientation are considered (Chin, 2007). Furthermore, Chin and Sanchez-Hucles (2007) contend that rather than focusing only on one or two identity dimensions, we should investigate multiple and intersecting identities to develop a more thorough theory of how diversity influences phenomena like leadership. Even though they are ineffective, characteristics associated with leaders and leadership are frequently included in assessments of leadership. For example, because white men have historically held leadership positions, assessments of a leader's efficacy frequently give preference to masculine traits like height, whiteness, and masculinity. Bias against women and leaders of racial or ethnic minorities is thus brought about by the framework of masculinized norms and expectations about what constitutes a leader and brings up issues that white Anglo males do not experience.

Since the theories of African leadership serve as the foundation for this study, the literature review, which examines the relationship between leadership and culture in state-owned enterprises, includes a high-level summary of the factors influencing South African leadership culture.

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research project, which involved more than a hundred researchers studying the relationship between

organizational form and culture in 61 different countries, served as the foundation for this discussion (Janićijević, 2019).

The project's objective was to address the situations in which leaders are important for both social and economic results. The GLOBE cultural dimensions of Hofstede's framework (1980) include power distance, masculinity/femininity, individualism/collectivism, and long-term orientation (LTO), which was added as the final dimension (Minkov & Hofstede, 2012).

- The idea of power distance refers to how much inequality is tolerated in a community. People who live in high power distance countries are more likely to accept and expect power differences within their own group, whereas people who live in low power distance countries expect power differences to be minimized.
- The degree to which a society's members attempt to avoid situations that are unclear is measured by the avoidance of uncertainty.
- The masculinity-femininity dimension reflects the distribution of gender-based roles in society.
- The degree to which people in a society are either encouraged to be independent or integrated into groups is characterized by the individualism-collectivism dimension.
- The extent to which a community or society chooses to make futuristic, long-term commitments over potentially short-term ones.

One of the two perspectives this research offers the definition or perception of what makes an exceptional leader, along with an understanding of how cultures differ or are similar in their expectations and perceptions of the effectiveness of leadership remains true despite several challenges to Hofstede's framework. While some of the scales used by the GLOBE to measure cross-cultural differences (individualism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance) reflect the Hofstede dimensions, six of the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions were developed based on research conducted by Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004). Six dimensions were added to the nine that the GLOBE originally offered to illustrate how leadership is viewed or expected in diverse cultural contexts (House et al., 2014). House et al. (2014) identified six dimensions of leadership: autonomy, self-protectiveness, participativeness, charisma or values-based leadership, teamwork, and humane orientation.

The GLOBE study found that cultural differences increase with cluster distance and that cultural similarity between societies within a cluster peaked at a distance from one another (Center for Creative Leadership, 2012). For example, more cultural similarities would be

observed in the societies of the sub-Saharan African nations (Nigeria, Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa 1) since they formed a cluster. For example, the leadership styles of the nations in this African cluster would differ from those of the nations in the Global North, like Eastern Europe (e.g., Russia, Poland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Albania, Slovenia).

The Center for Creative Leadership (2012) reports that due to cultural upbringing and expectations about what constitutes good leadership, it was also found that different cultures have different ideas about what makes an exceptional leader. In light of this, it is acknowledged that background information about the context and culture in which leadership occurs is crucial for understanding leadership discourse (Eyong, 2017). Due to its uniqueness and dynamic nature, Africa has attracted interest in leadership research (Lerutla & Steyn, 2017). African values and customs are unique to the continent and should be crucial in defining and enacting leadership across it, according to academic discourse (Bolden & Kirk, 2009; Chasi & Levy, 2016; Chatbury, Beaty, & Kriek, 2011; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Africa has drawn attention in leadership research due to its uniqueness and dynamic character (Lerutla & Steyn, 2017). Scholars (Bolden & Kirk, 2009; Chasi & Levy, 2016; Chatbury, Beaty, & Kriek, 2011; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005) assert that African values and customs are unique to the continent and ought to be central to the definition and practice of leadership on the continent.

According to Bolden and Kirk (2009), Africans, for example, aspire to leadership based on humanity, which is inclusive, values individual differences, and is driven by a desire to serve others. They contend that no other continent possesses a particular pattern than Africa. This design is linked to the ideas and philosophy of Ubuntu, an African humanist phrase that means "I am because we are." Ubuntu is a fundamental ideology that guides everyday activities and interpersonal relationships in sub-Saharan Africa (Mangaliso, 2001; Mbigi, 2000; Wanasika et al., 2011). It is based on the understanding of people's intrinsic worth and the need for reciprocity in interpersonal relationships, as well as the desire for forgiveness and tolerance. Reciprocity is an essential ethical element of networking and research, even in non-African communities and modern society (Green, 2023).

In previous research, Gumede (2017) adopted the stance that Afrocentric histories, philosophies, epistemologies, and other pan-Africanist ideologies within the burgeoning African cultures serve as the foundation for African leadership. Afro-communal ethic leadership, which is specific to Africa and is predicated on the idea that "one should relate

communally and enable others to commune," was another subject that Metz (2018) discussed. Servant leadership is linked to afro-communal leadership, though not in the same way as it is understood in the West (p. 42). Leaders that practice servant leadership pay attention to interpersonal relationships and show concern for the needs of others. In a speech to a group of leaders, Khoza (2012) made the connection between African leadership and humanness, stressing that African humanism promotes a human style of leadership that puts people first. On the other hand, Mbigi (2000) used his research to identify five core values that African leaders share: respect for others' dignity, group solidarity, teamwork, service to others, and the spirit of harmony and interdependence. These values have been verified by the outcomes of further investigation. For example, servant leadership affects organizational behavior in the African and South African context, according to Flotman and Grobler's (2020) research. The research conducted by Muller, Smith, and Lillah (2019) indicates that the Ubuntu values of servant leadership and solidarity have a positive and significant impact on employee engagement and organizational performance.

Molose, Goldman, and Thomas (2018) assert that the Ubuntu collective values of compassion, respect, group solidarity, and dignity for all have a positive effect on workplace commitment and performance. According to their findings, integrating Ubuntu into management techniques can enhance worker commitment and team performance. The fundamental tenet of the theory of transactional leadership (TSL) is that interactions between leaders and subordinates form the foundation of relationships between leaders and followers (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). The three primary pillars of this leadership style are input, output, and rewarding staff members when they reach objectives.

According to Bass's (1999) multifactor leadership theory and full range leadership theory, managers should quickly abandon their antiquated management practices and embrace modern leadership styles, which can be transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire (Donkor & Zhou, 2019).

Transactional leadership sets clear expectations and provides acknowledgement for achieving objectives, this implies that individuals and groups should perform at expected levels (Bass, 1985). In this situation, the leader defines the parameters for compliance and what constitutes ineffective performance also, known as active management by exception. Under this leadership style, deviations, errors, and mistakes are closely monitored for, and corrective action is promptly taken when necessary.

A more passive style of leadership would be called *laissez-faire* or *passive avoidant* because the person waits for problems to happen before acting or doesn't take any action at all. According to Bass et al. (2003), these passive leaders avoid defining agreements, standards, and goals, as well as placing expectations on their followers.

Transformational leadership (TFL), on the other hand is to help followers make positive changes so they protect one another's interests and act in the best interests of the group. While many authors concur that transactional and transformational leadership differ conceptually and practically, many also hold that transformational leadership greatly enhances transactional leadership, leading to improved levels of performance for individuals, groups, and organizations (James, 2013). Transformational leadership is therefore predicated on the notion that a leader has the capacity to inspire, committed, and cohesive culture (Bass et al., 2003).

Transformational leadership has been the subject of the most research in the past 20 years, and as such, it is now considered a fundamental component of contemporary leadership studies. When compared to alternative leadership philosophies, the TFL style is generally associated with higher employee effectiveness and perceptions of justice and fairness among employees (Khumalo, 2019). We conclude, therefore, that organizational justice has an impact on the effectiveness of leadership and that the literature review is the only source that provides a clear understanding of the relationships between these concepts.

Even though scholars define culture as the shared values and beliefs, which unite members of a society or group to form a homogenous entity, more factors influencing the culture of well-known SOC leadership will be covered in the section that follows.

4.4.1 Democracy

According to (Carlsson-Kanyama et al., 2010), the idea of greater involvement in decision-making is based on the realization of democratic principles or ideals. It has also been acknowledged that no society has fully attained democracy because some groups most notably women and their right to vote continue to face political discrimination (Matotoka & Odeku, 2018). Even though most modern societies do not have formal exclusions, there are still many barriers that prevent full participation.

Democracy, as defined by Tommasoli et al. (2013), is a form of government that respects liberty, objectivity, and the rule of law. It was discovered that democracy does not grow linearly with GDP per capita, but rather rapidly once it crosses a threshold. Stated differently,

if GDP per capita remains below a certain threshold, economic growth will not result in democratization.

Therefore, it is unclear how democracy and economic development are related, since historically democratic countries have also experienced democratic declines. In this regard, everyone agrees that good governance encourages participation from the public and broad representation of societal interests such as minorities and women.

Furthermore, five guiding principles have been established to ensure societal well-being include equal voting rights, equal involvement from all affected parties, equal freedom to select the subjects and items on the agenda, and an environment where participants can appreciate competing interests are all necessary.

Although no country has fulfilled all five of these prerequisites, numerous organisations, many groups, including women, were excluded from the most basic democratic freedom, the right to vote. It has been noted that obtaining the right to vote has not always been easy, as different groups within a country have received it at different points in its history. For instance, female European citizens were granted suffrage in Kenya as early as 1919, whereas their African counterparts had to meet certain requirements before achieving the same right in 1956 (Long & Gibson, 2015).

In this section, I demonstrate how the pursuit of democratic principle influences how employees are impacted by the expectation of democratic outcomes, hence in the next section I make the link to how decision-making as a crucial element of a democratization influenced issues of representation.

4.4.2 The Problem of Representation

Increased female involvement in decision-making is a crucial element of the democratization process' empowerment agenda. It is imperative to clarify the concept in terms of both its implications and limitations for women. For instance, the under-representation of Black women in the public and private sector arguably denies them of full economic participation (Matotoka & Odeku, 2018). Additionally, most countries' socioeconomic circumstances hinder equitable representation or proportional representation due to factors such as illiteracy, poverty, and limited free time preventing women from participating in elections. In this respect, financial constraints remain a significant barrier for women who aspire to run for political office (Yaw et al., 2014).

South Africa's electoral system is based on a proportional list system, which means the percentage of votes each party receives during an election determines how many seats each party gets in parliament under this system. The African National Congress (ANC), which used a 50 percent quota in the 2006 local government election, is the only party with a 30 percent quota for women on its party lists. In other words, women make up at least 30% of the candidates on ANC lists. With voter accountability being identified as a problem for the South African electoral system, along with other challenges associated with the overall proportional representation system, women can only benefit from proportional list representation when their names are close to the top of the list (Gouws, 2008).

A study by Yaw et al. (2014) claims that men's dominance over women, a lack of funding, and inadequate leadership roles are additional obstacles preventing women from participating in local governance. Gouws (2008) also draws attention to the pervasiveness of stereotypes that shape opinions about women's ability to succeed in leadership roles. As a result, I went into further detail in the following section about how these issues affect the ongoing change in gender relations in important economic sectors.

4.4.3 Transforming Gender Relations within Economic Sectors

A thorough investigation that goes beyond simply listing instances of discrimination in domestic work, agriculture, and other formal or informal occupations is necessary to address gender disparities in diverse economic sectors. Analyzing the ways in which those processes produce gender relations that deny women the ability to own, control, and manage the resources necessary for economic output is crucial to democratically changing these activities and laying the groundwork for female participation in other spheres. In Lesotho, any important managerial decisions must be reviewed with the husband's family or with migrant husbands who work away from home. Local government officials have the authority to reclaim the property at any moment by citing the "traditional" rule against female land ownership, even in situations when women are successful in purchasing land through unofficial land markets. It is evident that, notwithstanding the law, women's interests may still be suppressed if they are not given an equal voice in all decision-making processes related to land reform. Except for a few countries like South Africa, Botswana, Nigeria, Egypt, and Algeria, the formal sector in Africa is limited and frequently only employs less than 30% of the labour force.

Despite the high representation of women in the professional and administrative sectors, most women in South Africa have worked in just four professions: teaching, secretarial work, sales, nursing and paramedicine (Adeyemi et al., 2006).

Some academics and professionals are beginning to recognize that economic sectors like energy and agriculture are integral to the way societies and their institutions operate. Since both industries are technical in nature and hence more complex, technological advancements and innovations will not enhance the industry's results. Social relations start to affect the positions, attitudes, and opportunities of people in these sectors, such as women and men, the wealthy and the poor, landowners, and outcome, because they cut across people, space, and time.

This section summarizes the difficulties associated with the male-dominated economic sectors. Continued ignorance of these sectors may have unforeseen consequences, such as harm to program participants' welfare or a failure to adopt new technologies (Chikulo, 2014).

4.4.4 Leadership Behaviour within SOC's

The two most prominent leadership styles in the literature are:

Bureaucratic Leadership Style in SOC's

By virtue of the Weberian model (Trondal, 2014), a bureaucratic organization is characterized by a hierarchical structure, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, rules-driven coordination, a functionally departmentalized, impersonal system, and respect for merit. Put differently, this kind of organization's formalization and centralization are essential characteristics, and its three primary categories are executive, organizational, and production functions. Furthermore, centralization in the bureaucratic setting is said to be dependent on issues of power and decision-making. According to Donkor and Zhou (2019), a smaller decision-making group will result in a more centralized organization. Formal structure in the modern knowledge-based era implies the existence of impersonal relationships, which is why the administration of SOC's is structured according to the traditional bureaucratic leadership paradigm.

Because of the framework's rigidity, communication becomes merely formal and impersonal, which has a defensive attitude toward appropriate behavior and negatively impacts the performance of the organization. Affective commitment and organizational trust were more strongly correlated in an organization with a less bureaucratic (controlling) structure,

according to Gellatly et al.(2012). However, evidence also suggests that bureaucracy has paradoxical effects that simultaneously make it enable and disabling.

This management style is instructive, and the manager is more like a judge who will not accept any excuses for not carrying out his duties (Weber, 1946). There is no room for maneuvering in this way because it does not satisfy the demands of women. Since it restricts freedom and flexibility, this leadership style is in opposition to some leadership values (Javidan et al., 2006). Donkor & Zhou (2019), citing Wright (2008) and others, assert that a system that can restrict individual discretion and enhance consistency in members' perceptions and responses to the organizational environment and job demands is necessary for the bureaucratic environment to be stable, predictable, and equitable. The rigidity of bureaucratic organizations is posing challenges for leadership.

The following section examines how to comprehend the structure's dynamic character and relationships.

Complexity Leadership in SOC's

To accomplish organizational goals, management strategies in a typical bureaucratic structure have focused on persuading staff members to follow standard operating procedures (SOP). Fulfilling legal or other statutory requirements was imperative in addition to attaining business objectives. The consensus is that leaders are the only ones who can have a systemic impact. The idea that social factors obstruct cognitive processes was first put forth by Frederick Taylor. The struggle between illogical and opposing forces to achieve organizational goals is therefore defined within this context. As a result, bureaucratic organizations have both formal and informal systems. According to Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009), the formal (bureaucratic) function represents the declared, desired goals of administrative leadership, while the informal (CAS) function represents the spontaneous, adaptable actions of interacting individuals and groups. Dzeletovi and Vu (2016) contend that the informal system acknowledges the official (administrative) leaders' role in that capacity, which is why they operate in it.

In complex organizations, the Lewin's model mediates leadership and implementation initiatives for change. Marion and Uhl-Bien (2009). An evaluation revealed that elites are using their positions of power to oppress workers in the informal structure. Using complexity thinking, Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009) critically analyze the informal (adaptive) structure in a way that goes beyond the conventional bureaucratic structure. They go on to say that

dynamic structure is a crucial tool in any organization where complexity leadership theory is applicable and that formal and informal bureaucratic structures are connected. Administrative leadership, adaptive leadership, and enabling leadership techniques are the three tasks that combine to form complexity leadership, as stated by Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009), Donkor & Zhou, (2019).

Building a case for state-owned organizations' performance in this post-industrial period depends more on their human capital and organisational members' cognitive aptitude than it does on their physical capabilities (Fidan & Oztürk, 2015). The existing economic structure, which is chaotic and competitive, makes it difficult to create an environment that lowers costs, increases productivity, and fosters knowledge (Nonaka & Nishiguchi, 2001). To flourish, organisations must therefore increase the ecosystem's capacity for adaptation rather than preserving their present structure (Ashby, 2013; Esade & McKelvey, 2010). As a result, formal leaders who are knowledgeable about current leadership philosophies are required for complex organisations characterized by socio-economic and political interests. An organization's performance and efficiency can be improved by adopting leadership philosophies that are consistent with its intellectually curious, imaginative, creative, and technologically savvy people. This calls for an awareness of the transformation imperatives such as skills development, localization, diversity management which includes Black women as the focus of this study.

4.5 Core Categories

4.5.1 Business Sustainability

Corporate or business sustainability is a complicated system with operational and strategic processes that generate long-term benefits for the firm and society. However, there is no single conceptual definition for it since they are frequently incompatible (Boros & Fogarassy, 2019). The heuristic method states that for a company to be sustainable, it must overcome five interconnected difficulties, including those relating to economic efficiency, social effectiveness, and social efficiency and integration (Singh et al., 2022). Corporate sustainability goes beyond simply advancing commercial interests to include a company's commitment to governmental national sustainability goals. Therefore, state-owned businesses also shoulder the burden of a social capital goal.

According to Sharma et al. (2019), the sustainability-driven trait is generally strengthened by three generalizations. First, he makes the argument that profit-making, or self-interest do not

advance sustainability, in contrast to state-owned companies. His second point is that competency-driven companies and the requisite practical expertise are essential. Additionally, we examined this in relation to state-owned enterprises and discovered that this system property does not work in their favor. In his third point, Gibbs (2015) discusses the application of generational norms, emphasizing that the main concerns are the implementation of intergenerational norms and their sustainable interpretation. The easiest processes for state-owned enterprises are those that are easily differentiated (environmental, social, and economic), can be defined as corporate objectives in a separate package, and can be implemented

Since these sustainability initiatives frequently do not form a rational and consistent part of corporate governance, they are vulnerable to being shelved in the event of economic difficulties. Consequently, state-owned enterprises' main sustainability risk is a lack of earnings and profitability. Rondinelli's (2007) claim is corroborated, for instance, by an evaluation of SOCs in South Africa that revealed, among other things, that they are susceptible to debt loads, underinvestment, asset depreciation, problems with corporate governance, and corruption (Kanyane & Sausi, 2015).

This study showed that a company's size greatly increased the risk of business operational sustainability in the current business environment. The amount of outside support resources integrated into the enterprise's operational system exacerbated the situation, making it harder for the business to maintain sustainable operations. pointing out that the need for businesses to comply with increasingly complex and segmented systems has complicated the situation somewhat (Barnes et al., 2019; Sharma et al., 2019).

4.5.2 Impact of Organisational Culture as a Barrier to Advancement of Women

Organisational culture is generally a multidimensional concept which is historically and socially constructed (Jaghargh et al., 2012), as it aims to provide a sense of identity for members. Organisational culture represents the norms, values and beliefs held by individuals within an organisation. Robbins et al., (2007) on the other hand defines organisational culture, as a system of shared meaning and perceptions held by members of the organisation, while Hofstede (1994) sees culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 5).

To further support this Hofstede (1980, p. 13) also identified five universal values patterns as follows:

1. Power distance is the measurement on which a society accepts unequal distribution of power of people within organisations.
2. Individualism/collectivism refer to the degree of responsibility held by for individuals or groups.
3. Masculinity/femininity refer to the historical stereotypes as it relates to gender. For example, within my study context, more inferior roles are assigned to women as opposed to more significant role that are assigned to men.
4. Uncertainty avoidance: the level of acceptance given by the threat of uncertainty and ambiguity and as consequence avoidance in such situations.
5. Long-versus short-term orientation: the size of social, material, and emotional need from a society to program its members to accept delayed satisfaction (Odor, 2018).

There are many different classifications for organisational culture based on the literature, some of which combine different categories, for instance, Robbins et al. (2007) identified five typical organisational culture features that relate to member identification, group emphasis, dependency, survival, and power. While Odor (2018) cites Muthoni (2013, p. 204) and states that "organisational culture may be characterized in terms of adaptability, bureaucracy, mission, and entrepreneurial." Onyango (2014) on the other hand contends that "adaptability culture is more flexible in approach unlike a bureaucratic culture that is founded on the rituals of leaders in the organisation that leads to sustainable transformation process" (p. 207).

Narratives supporting racial and gender equality in organisations support Black women's access to and promotion within those organisations, i.e., "there's room at the top" (Cockburn, 1991, p. 46). This involves "breaking down the barriers that prohibit the horizontal mobility by women into non-traditional jobs, removing those barriers that limit women to the meanest employment and prevent their vertical progress to other levels and positions in the hierarchy". However, domestic, and international research revealed a number of issues that continue to hinder the advancement of women to executive leadership positions, including education, stereotypes, societal perceptions, the glass ceiling, the queen bee syndrome, and issues relating to work-life balance (BWASA, 2021; Choi & Park, 2014; Forum, 2021; World Economic Forum, 2015).

Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) cited Horwitz et al. (2005) and argued that the EE policy and practice issue is particularly relevant in the South African historical context, taking into consideration the need to redress past and present unjust discrimination. The challenge to organisations is to create working environments in which employees experience job

satisfaction, particularly through fair employment practices, while also optimally achieving company objectives. Hence, the notion of redress, is critical within the context of my study and its objective to determine the impact of race and gender perceptions on the advancement of women leadership. This is especially true for state-owned entities. They purport that the difficulty for organisations is the development work of environments where employees enjoy job satisfaction through fair employment practices while simultaneously attaining business goals. Thus, the idea of redress is crucial in the context of my study, which aims to ascertain the influence of racial and gender attitudes on the progress of women in leadership in organisations, particularly state-owned companies.

Zanoni (2010), cites several sources that exposed the "inconvenient truth" of injustice and prejudice that hinders the advancement of women known as the glass ceiling (Crompton, 1997; Foley et al., 2002; Hultin, 2003; Morrison et al., 1987; Powell & Butterfield, 1994). Yet, the dominance of social psychology techniques has also led to a limited comprehension of the factors that contribute to inequality, especially, one that mostly ignores structural, context-specific factors.

4.5.3 Effectiveness of Policy Implementation

Researchers have found that perceptions about justice are consistent predictors of employee behaviour and attitudes. The importance of justice as a core requirement for both the effective functioning of an organisation and the personal satisfaction of those associated with the organisation has been long recognized by researchers (Greenberg, 1990). In the revised edition of John Rawls book "A theory of Justice" he re-states that "justice is the first virtue of social institutions" (Rawls, 2020, p. 3). This theory resonates with the idea of distributive justice¹ as a characteristic of social institutions. Distributive justice is fostered when outcomes are consistent with norms of allocation such as equity and equality and has increasingly become a visible construct (Colquitt, 2001).

Given the nature of SOC and their role as agents of a broader governance, policy and legislative framework, research work continues to take on a generic approach and discounts the uniqueness of SOC's in South Africa, having to operate under conflicting and complex conditions which include policy, governance and human factors (Mbo & Adjasi, 2017). While the term institutional framework refers to a set of formal organisational structures, rules, and norms, it is also shaping the kind of organisational culture that emerges. Therefore,

perceptions allocation of resources by the organisation through emphasized outputs (e.g., increased salaries, incentive legislation, assessment scores etc.) has a significant impact on how fairness and justice are perceived. While more recent work focused on the justice of processes that lead to these outcomes, termed procedural justice. Therefore, perceptions about organisational procedures and processes can impact confidence level in the organisation.

4.5.4 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy ²is one of the factors of progress in today societies, as the efforts of human resources have a deep connection with their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is closely related to factors such as skills and abilities of the person and the person's self-esteem, The resultant effect is that the more individual abilities and skills increase, personality becomes easier and better to understand. Self-efficacy strengthens self-esteem and therefore directly affects selection, motivation, perseverance, and mental patterns and vulnerability against stress (Bandura, 1993).

Albert Bandura, who first proposed the concept of self-efficacy, believes that self-efficacy is the most important psychological mechanism to influence the environment, and without getting self-efficacy and creating favourable effects and preventing adverse effects, people have little incentive to act. It means that belief into action is more important than the act itself. The foundation of every change in a person is their faith in their ability to bring about desired results. According to Hosseinkhani & Giyaove (2015), who quote Gholipour (2007), "In the psychological literatures, self-efficacy has also been translated as a self-efficacy and self-sufficiency that indicates its capacities for effective execution of the tasks and obligations." (Hosseinkhani & Giyaove, 2015, p. 247).

Researchers distinguish between specific and general self-efficacy where general self-efficacy refers to beliefs of people about successful performance of tasks in different situations. But specific self-efficacy refers to the belief of successful performance in the specialized tasks. Bandura (1997) believed that self-efficacy implies on the specific task in a specific position, and is a context-based feature (Cervone, 1997). According to Edan and Zuk (1995) the general self-efficacy is constant over time and in different situations and is like a

² One of the main aspects of the personality of individual is self-efficacy that provides a significant impact on the development of human personality. Acceptance and understanding of its features and relying on them mean as the self-efficacy. Achieving self-efficacy is the sign of accepting all the aspects of its existence, whether good or bad, and accepting the power and forces that a person needs to do the work, to reach the goal or whatever else.

personality trait (Edan & Zuk, 1995). In this study, the general self-efficacy is based on interviews conducted where participants have made references to psych-emotive issues.

More recently scholars have integrated multiple theories to derive predictions about relationships among justice and other variables like trustworthiness and trust (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011), and meta-analysis have investigated employee justice across cultures (Shao et al., 2013). While justice has received attention from various scholars, most notably in the political science and organisational behaviour areas, scholars have recently identified a gap in investigating these variables in instructional settings (Chory, 2023).

The potential to negatively influence the clinical performance and satisfaction individual's perceptions of whether they have been treated fairly in the workplace and how these perceptions influence other work-related variables. Distributive justice and procedural justice as two sources of organisational justice describes distributive justice as the fairness of outcomes an individual receives, and procedural justice describes the fairness of the procedures used to determine those outcomes. Distributive justice, however, appears to be a more important predictor of personal outcomes (e.g., satisfaction with pay level or grades) than procedural justice (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). Just as instructional researchers have examined traditionally organisational concepts (e.g., Chen 2000; Chory-Assad, 2002; Chory & McCrosky, 1999; Richmond & McCrosky, 1993), the present study draws from organisational justice literature in examining justice perceptions and consequences in an instructional setting.

4.5.5 Influence of Leadership Stature

Since leaders are responsible for the organization's vision and mission, their values and beliefs are likely to mirror that organization's leadership orientation (Jaghargh et al., 2012). Despite the wealth of literature and research on many leadership theories and techniques, there are some fundamental aspects of leadership that are universal and pertinent to my study. Leadership scholars from all around the world recognize the value of leadership in organisations and the connections between leadership and organisational effectiveness (Gains et al., 2009). The caliber and effectiveness of those in senior leadership roles played a significant role in how well SOC's achieve their institutional goals (Sithomola, 2019). These leaders were also viewed as stewards of ethical behaviour and guardians of the interests of shareholders and other important parties such as investors, academia, employees etc. Therefore, the agency theory predicts that having strong boards and strong leadership will

help an organisation function well and in line with its strategic goals (Mbo & Adjasi, 2017). Therefore, effective leadership is essential to institutional management, the provision of efficient services, and the advancement of a culture of ethical behaviour and sound corporate governance (Sithomola, 2019). The state and quality of leadership across SOC's, started to reflect through public claims of poor service delivery, bad administration, lack of accountability, inefficient productivity, state capture, wrongdoing, and disrespect for the rule of law. These claims point towards incompetence, inept and poor leadership qualities (Sithomola, 2019).

This school of thought contends that a leader's technical competence is determined by their moral and ethical conduct at work. This assumes that organisational success is linked to human needs and ambitions, since organisations, in accordance with organisational theory, are rational entities made to satisfy human goals. This is a difficult endeavour, though, because companies operate as open systems that are affected by a variety of stakeholder preferences, resource availability, and associated cultural norms and values. Because of this, dependence on resources, people and groups are exposed to the whims and viewpoints of those in positions of authority (Hardy, 1996). Yet, it's possible that the existing study had a narrow view of how leadership impacts the racial and gender change goals of organisations and operational transformation. Many approaches have been taken to address issues with organisational performance and leadership, but they have not led to the intended improvements in governance and institutional transformation.

4.5.6 Political Influence

Since gaining its independence in 1994, South Africa has endured ongoing identity crises and racial unrest. According to Seekings (2007), apartheid and colonialism have left behind a legacy of systemic racial hierarchy and discrimination that has not been properly addressed. As a result, racial discrimination in the workplace frequently reflects a severely racially divided society on both a cultural and social level.

Nkomo and Stewart (2006), has contributed significantly to the documentation of ongoing discrimination based on gender and racial/ethnic identity in the workplace and has begun to shed light on the factors that influence group membership (Nkomo & Stewart, 2006). Lau (1998) emphasizes the advantages of teams or groups in terms of decision-making and production, whilst also acknowledging the drawbacks, such as communication issues and misunderstandings, increased complexity, and unpredictability of team or organisational

performance. This contrasts with research promotes social justice principles and the inclusion of women and racial minorities through a legal framework (Jehn, 2017).

Even though my study only paid limited attention to diversity research, it makes a distinction between demographic and non-demographic attributes. This understanding is crucial because social identity theory, which holds that an individual's self-concept is derived from perceived membership in a particular social group. The Faultline Theory, in contrast emphasized the effects of group member characteristics, which takes a limited view of intragroup processes such as communication, trust, conflict resolution etc (Lau & Murnighan, 2005; Thatcher et al., 2003; Working & No, 2007).

In many ways the organisational culture, system and process have influence on these social groups which later became unavoidable. For instance, navigating the influence of political interference, conflict of interest, cultural and social preferences become critical factors that defined group affiliation. Emanating from the grounded theory process common themes related to group culture are more pronounced regarding the following:

- The destructive nature of cliques, cabals, or inner circles
- The influence of race, gender, and ethnicity
- Influence of political connections
- The influence of shareholder involvement in terms of operational issues
- Women being used as agents of patriarchy to discredit each other.
- Confronting perceptions to entitlement

In the larger body of literature (Adler & Adler, 2021; Marion et al., 2016; Wedel, 1996), research on the nature of cliques primarily focuses on children's friendship groups and the ways in which kids group together into racial, class-, gender-, and other types of groups (Adler & Adler, 2021; Marion et al., 2016; Wedel, 1996). Nonetheless, it demonstrates that cliques are dynamic and are maintained by membership screening. Individual membership changes because people left groups or were kicked out. In other words, cliques are created to promote the inclusion of some people while excluding others. They are circles of power wherein leaders attain and wield influence over their followers, by cyclically building them up and cutting them down, first drawing them into the elite inner circle, and allowing them to bask in the glow of popularity and acceptance, and then reducing them to positions of dependence and subjugation by turning the group against them. I concluded by reflecting on the generic

features of these inclusionary and exclusionary dynamics, the characteristics of this cyclical pattern, the implications of this socializing experience for the broader societal dynamics of power and manipulation, and the kind of in-group/out-group differentiation that can lead to prejudice and discrimination (Adler & Adler, 2021).

A second body of literature, Corsaro, (2005) examines the features of inter and intragroup relations, where groups are viewed as social systems. A third group of studies examines the behavioural dynamics associated with cliques, where Corsaro (2005) explored the origins of cliques in a preschool, noting that among the children he observed, conflicts developed between others' attempts to be included in their play space and these children's resistance to those intrusions. Joint play thus formed the basis for friendship groups that included some children and excluded other. Researchers have therefore articulated the presence of behavioural cycles engendered by cliques.

4.5.7 Inclusivity

Literature on cultural inclusiveness has become widespread and diverse in focus, given changes in the labour market demographics with regards to increased participation of women and minority groupings (Pless & Maak, 2014). This subject is increasingly gaining momentum within organisations both in the private and public sector. According to the, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) inclusive work cultures generally supports laws and policies that promote cultural participation, access and the right to express and interpret culture (UNESCO, 2022).

However, forging an inclusive work culture in many organisations have been very challenging because of its narrow focus on policies, systems, and processes in relation to diversity issues, according to Cox (2001). He further claims that less thought has been given in terms of cultural norms and values as key proponents of diversity and therefore appropriate reflection should become a fundamental task to create an inclusive work environment built on solid moral grounds where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected and recognized (Pless & Maak, 2014). It is on this basis that further claims of inclusion be based on a moral theory of recognition and introduce the founding principles of reciprocal understanding, standpoint plurality and mutual enabling, trust, and integrity.

Although my definition of “diversity” was limited to race and gender, the process of grounded theory aided in contextualising participant perspectives in relation to their challenges with favouritism, cliques, preference, white supremacy, male dominance, stereotypes, and

exclusion of racial minority groupings. These features are rooted, along with other sources of domination and power which are encouraged through group membership according to the (Adler & Adler, 2021). For example, individuals elevate their own and others' status by maneuvering into more central and more powerful positions and/or recruiting others into such positions.

Moreover, literature on political exclusion and conflict in terms of inter and intra-group dynamics posits that groups facing active, intentional, and targeted discrimination are significantly more likely to feel explicit form of discrimination. These groups that experience economic inequalities are less likely to engage in conflict, whilst an increased presence of elites within discriminated groups can precipitate the chances of conflict. In particular, discriminated groups who are poorer relative to the group(s) in power are less likely to engage in conflict, whilst discriminated groups that have a larger share of elites are more likely to be engaged in conflict (Alcorta et al., 2020).

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined my approach to the literature review, privileging historical reality, to re-contextualize aspects of the research problem as situated within the research context. A literature review on the categories identified further assisted to conceptualise and embed key variables.

The study clearly, demonstrates the complexity and unevenness in the way inequality regimes are produced, reproduced, and rationalized. Thus, utilising what Crenshaw calls an 'intersectional sensibility' helps reveal the persistence of intersectional inequalities in organisations explicitly committed to challenging inequality regimes. For this reason developing leaders for social or organisational justice requires a deep-seeded commitment (Brown, 2004) and should be driven by norms and values that promotes moral and ethical leadership conduct, anti-discriminatory behaviour and fosters a culture of inclusion.

The next chapter will deal with the development of the theory.

CHAPTER 5: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEORY

In the previous chapter, the literature review was approached on three levels which help narrow the focus of the study. The scope of the literature review was set against the principles of organisational justice with specific focus on gender and racial justice as a critical aspect for building an inclusive workplace culture. The research problem examines race and gender intersections, in relation to the under-representation of Black women at a senior management level in Eskom. The next level of the literature review aimed to assess the impact of contextual factors in terms of the organisational setting and related environmental factors associated with being a state-owned entity. Consequently, the data analysis highlights the complexity of ownership structures, conflicting legislative requirements, operational objectives, and unavoidable political influence state capture, corruption, conflict of interest, further complicating the research phenomenon.

The fourth goal of this study is to develop an intersectionality framework for exploring gender dynamics at management level within a state-owned organisation in South Africa.

Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to define theory and then outline procedure for theory development to answer the main research,

“What are the mechanisms that obstruct the advancement of women at a managerial level in Eskom?”. I will use the data from interviews, emerging patterns, and insights from the literature study as key building blocks.

5.1 Introduction to the Theory Building Process

Despite different views on the definition of “theory” in social science, these do not consider the epistemological position of the researcher. Charmaz (2006), addresses the definition in a statement that, “Each theory bears the imprint of its author’s interest and ideas and reflects its historical context as well as the historical development of ideas” (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). This argument correlates with Marx’s perspective of the historical development of women to the research phenomenon (Brown, 2012).

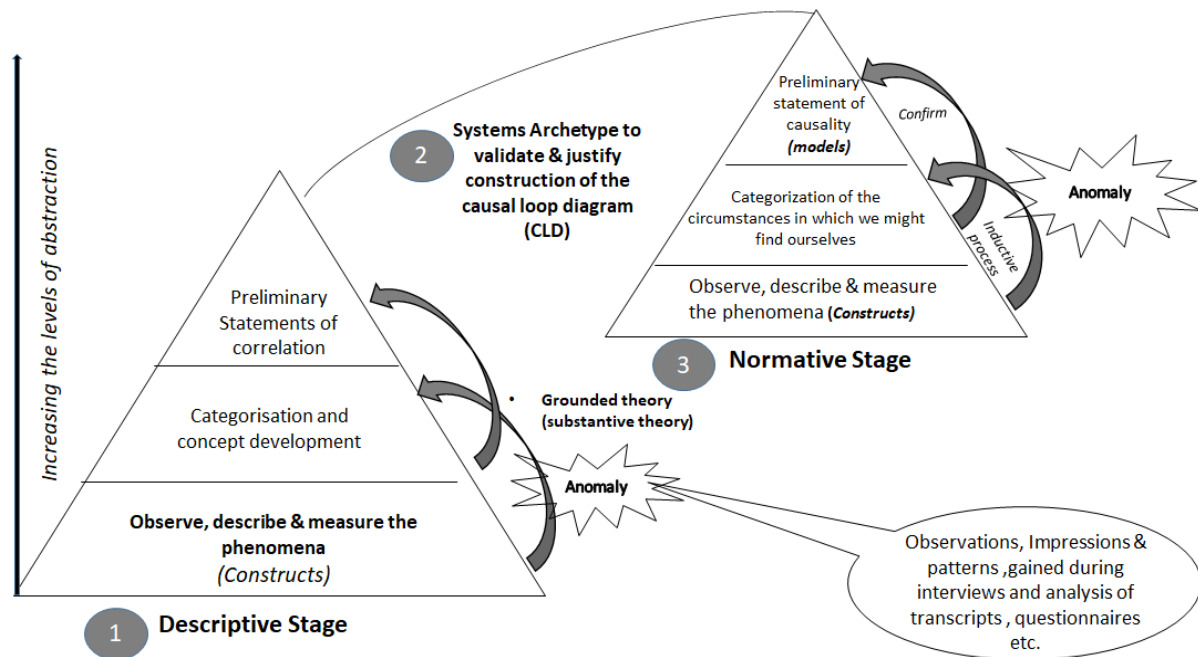
While the following definitions of theory are consistent with my ontological position, it further embeds the idea of emerging concepts (Bhaskar, 2008; Fletcher, 2017; Lawani, 2020). According to Gioia and Pitre (1990, p. 587), a theory is "a cohesive description, explanation, and representation of observed or experienced events,". While Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 22) defines theory as "a group of well-developed concepts that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship” The empirical evidence as a source of justification

becomes an important consideration to address the gap between empirical research and theorizing (Danermark et al., 2002). The inductive leap to make predictions, rests on the transition from the visible to the unseen, where knowledge is built up from isolated facts to a consensus view of what causes them (Bendassolli, 2018).

5.2 The Theory Building Process

According to literature Charmaz (2014b), building of theory happens in two major stages, the descriptive stage, and the normative stage. The descriptive stage comprises of three steps namely observation, categorization, and association, this is a prerequisite for developing normative theory. However, to bridge the transition from the descriptive stage to the Normative stage as depicted in Figure 21 below, I drew on the methodology for systems archetypes. Also noting, that the diagram below is the result of a synthesis of models that have been developed by a range of social science scholars such as Kuhn (1962), Campbell and Stanley (1963), Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Yin (1984) as cited by (Carlile & Christensen, 2004).

Figure 21 The Transition from Descriptive Theory to Normative Theory



Source: Adapted the Cycles of Theory Building in Management Research

5.2.1 Descriptive Stage

The descriptive stage fundamentally conceptualises the empirical data from interviews, the questionnaire, and insights drawn from the literature review. According to Charmaz (2008b) this is the basis for developing theory and correlates with Glaser and Strauss's (1967) notion of substantive theory which is easy to observe and measure. A concept which is easy to observe and measure. Although the research centres the under-presentation of Black women at management, the contextual realities confounded the results and produced impressions that changed my course of thought. The dynamic nature of South African based SOC's became key consideration to understand the research problem. A closer examination of these issues presented potential threats to the state-owned company's operational or business sustainability, which are likely to impact a transformational imperative which includes addressing gender inequality and not limited to issues of representation only. Researchers have created abstractions that we view as constructs that help us grasp and envision what the phenomena are and how well they operate within the dynamic settings and underlying mechanisms. Therefore, in the next section I explain the use of a system archetypes as a subset of systems thinking, to explain the various parts of the problem.

5.2.2 Systems Archetypes to Transition from the Descriptive to Normative Stage.

While systems thinking is about understanding the parts of a system within the larger context of the whole, my research interest resonates with underlying causal mechanisms that perpetuate the under-presentation of Black women at management level with a South African based SOC. Systems archetypes is a diagnostic tool to uncover underlying casual mechanisms and helps organisation to implement a system perspective (Senge, 1990), predicated on the notion that preliminary theory is founded on recurrent, current and persistent themes (Braun, 2002).

Sayer (2000) emphasizes that causation cannot be interpreted as a predictable sequence of events or by the quantity of data. He argues that it is about ontological depth, where occurrences are based on the operations of mechanisms drawn from the structures of objects, and where they occur within geo-historical settings (Sayer, 2000, p. 15)

Despite the rising interest in social sciences, there is little agreement about what are causal processes, compared to variables, which are observable qualities of the units of analysis (Falleti & Lynch, 2009). Similarly, O'Mahoney (2001) also contends that mechanisms cannot be attributes of the units of analysis. While critical realists, emphasize the significance of context as a component of causal explanations. As far as achieving theoretical adequacy to advance categories to theoretical concepts, for constructivist, theoretical ideas function as interpretive frameworks and provide an abstract grasp of establishing relationships (Charmaz, 2014).

As we recall, seven categories emerged as part of the concept development process and stated as variables. Each variable was evaluated against literature sources and verified through member checks to confirm relevance to increase validity.

Table 6 Rephrased Variables

	Category	Re-phrased as a” variable”
1	Business sustainability	Business sustainability
2	Organisational culture a barrier to advancement for women in leadership	Impact of organisational culture as a barrier to advancement for women in leadership
3	Institutionalization of pro gender policy framework, controls, and processes	Effectiveness of policy implementation
4	Self-efficacy	Level of self-efficacy
5	Leadership stature	Impact on leadership stature
6	Influence of internal group political agendas	Political influence
7	Building a culture of inclusiveness	Inclusivity

The variables identified were used to construct a causal loop diagram, (CLD) and the connections reflects the complexity and dynamicity of systems behaviours (Giordano et al., 2007; Haraldsson, 2018). Systems archetypes are generic in nature and provides a basic structure to identify the concerned behaviour, as well as observe patterns of behaviour between variables (Braun, 2002). Hence, I used a systems archetype methodology to validate and justify the construction of a causal loop diagram (CLD), as well as bridge the transition from the descriptive to the normative stage, which I explain later in this chapter.

5.2.3 Normative Stage

Like the descriptive stage, the normative stage follows the same three steps and aligns with the concept of formal theory, to identify categories of circumstances. Normative theory is described as a collection of instances or circumstance-based categorization to assist researchers in formulating contingent claims of causality. The aim is to increase the predictability that comes with the switch from descriptive theory's attribute-based

categorization to normative theory's circumstance-based classification. Hence, to increase conceptual potency one must know when and how to engage in distinct categories of concept creation. Thomas Kuhn (1962) also points out an initial time of uncertainty as a characteristic of descriptive theory, as well as methods of finding anomalies to enhance theory's categorization structure to improve a theory predictable outcome (Carlile & Christensen, 2004). At this point I will briefly divert to explain of my theoretical perspectives for this research.

5.3 Explanation of Theoretical Perspectives

According to Cabrera (2006) research context, applicability, research methods, organisational structure and levels of complexity are factors that increase the explanatory power of a theory (Cabrera, 2006). However, Glaser (2002) also emphasises the importance of concepts being grounded in the data, to ensure fit, relevance and workability. Such criterion helps one to intellectually transition from a basic description of a phenomenon observed to generalising about various aspects of the phenomenon. The variables identified in my study therefore represent key issues and broad concepts with diverse conceptualizations which enable a particular bias towards certain elements within a theory. For clarity I provide the following list of definitions for the variables as they relate to my study context.

Table 7 Definitions of Variables Identified

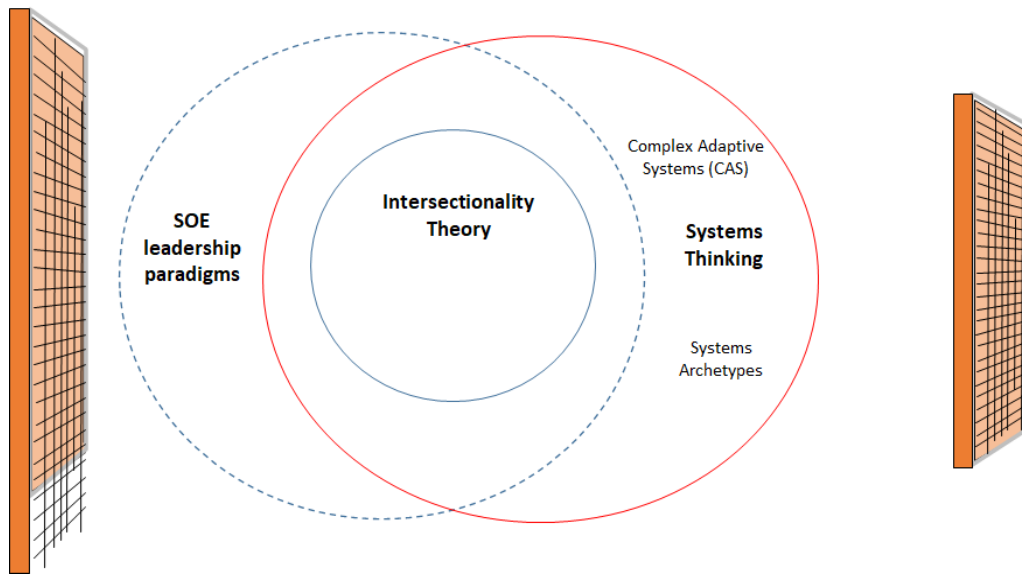
Construct	Definition
Business sustainability (threats)	Threats to business sustainability within my research context is a phenomenon that seeks to draw attention to the risks associated with the inability to reconcile the dual mandate of profitability and socio-economic transformation objectives, underpinned by misconceptions about the transformation ecosystem, persistent socio-economic political pressure, capricious leadership, skills deficiencies, and resource constraints within the existing business model.
Political influence	Occurs when political leaders use their power to interfere with decision making in public administration matters such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting as well as public procurement interest.
Effective policy implementation	Effective policy implementation promotes fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits, power, resources and responsibilities between women and men. Further such policies should support an inclusive organisational culture that promotes growth, learning and high performance.
Organisational culture	Refers to issues of member identity, group dynamics, way of doing things, power, inclusivity, leadership, bureaucratic culture, and adaptability.
Self-efficacy	Influence of environmental factors on the emotional and psychological well-being of affected employees

Construct	Definition
Inclusivity	Refers to the increased focus on diversity and participation of women and minority groupings, given changes in the labour market demographics
Influence of leadership stature	Leadership stature involves establishing a leadership ethos that is based on high levels of earned respect or esteem to which one is regarded. In other words, being a leader who has developed stature over time is an achievement that represents an elusive level of respect and influence.

The variables are intrinsically connected by cause-effects links. To visually illustrate to the complexity and dynamicity of systems behaviours, I have constructed a causal loop diagram (CLD) as a modelling device to structure causal relationships that forge the interactions between variables (Giordano et al., 2007).

The nature of these interactions was then interpreted and compared to an existing systems archetype which I explain as part of answering the research question. Preceding this discussion, I briefly describe my theoretical lens which combines three perspectives, as the basis for my theoretical framework as depicted in Figure 22.

Figure 22 Theoretical Perspective



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

The above conceptual model depicts the interlocking nature of my theoretical perspectives derived from insights obtained from the empirical data and literature review. This endeavor assisted in magnifying the contextual gap in theory where African perspectives are different from the west. According to Checkland (2000), the use of conceptual models depicts purposeful human activity systems that represents a particular viewpoint of an identified stakeholder. Hence, in the next section I explain each of these theoretical perspectives.

5.3.1 Systems Thinking

While systems thinking helps understand the complexities of economic, social, and ecological systems, it is useful to consider some of the following definitions provided in the academic literature that puts emphasis on how properties of the parts can only be understood within the larger context of the whole (Merali & Allen, 2011). Ackoff (1974, p.13) defines a system as: *“a set of two interrelated elements of any kind; and recognizes that the system is not indivisible but must be seen that can be divided into parts.”*

Ackoff (1974) also states that the elements of the set and the set of elements have the following three properties:

1.” The properties or behaviour of each element of the set influences the properties or behaviour of the set taken as a whole. For example, every organ in an animal’s body affects its overall performance.” In this study, the state affects the SOC’s and vice versa.

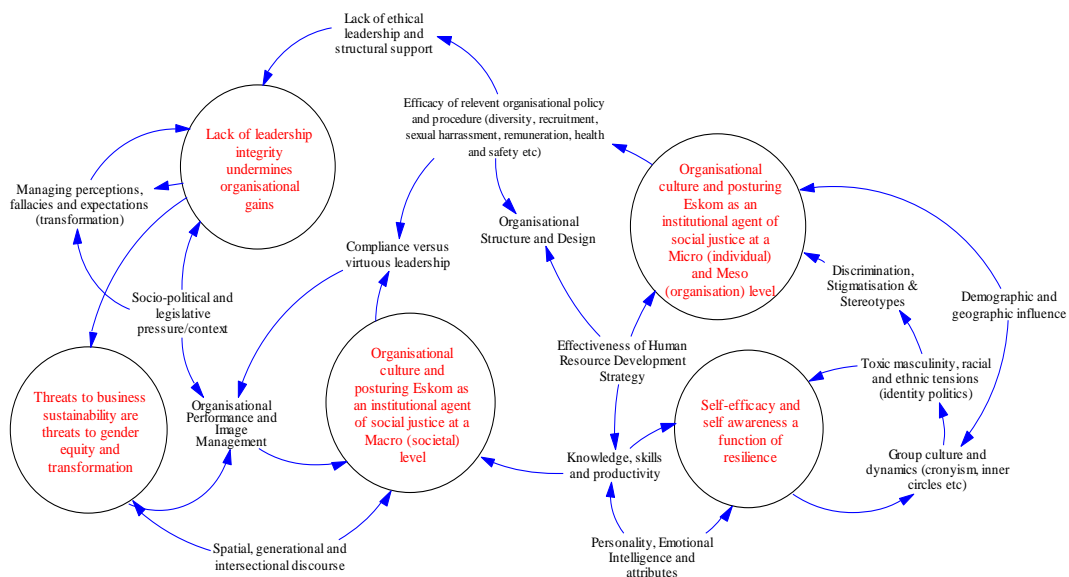
2. “The properties and behaviour of each element and the way they affect the whole, depend on the properties and behaviour of at least one other element in the set. Therefore, no part has an independent effect overall, and each is affected by at least one other part. For example, the behaviour of the heart and the effect it has on the body depends on the lungs.” For example, the behaviour of a group of women in leadership in both technical and non-technical areas within Eskom have direct effect on how women issues are dealt with.

3. Every subgroup of elements in the set has the first two properties; each has a non-independent effect overall. Therefore, the whole cannot be decomposed into independent subsets. A system cannot be subdivided into independent subsystems (p. 13). Like man, women aspire to contribute to leadership, technical and nontechnical areas in their lifetime.

Although discriminatory laws have been abolished in South Africa, systemic injustice in terms of gender and race, as well as social inequalities, occur on multifaceted levels while interacting within a complex and multidimensional organisational system.

To illustrate these complexities Figure 23 below is a visual representation of the interactions and dynamic relationships emanating from the data analysis.

Figure 23 Visual Representation of my Research Dynamic and Relationships to Illustrate the Complexity and Multiplicity of Issues from a Systems Perspective



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

The circles represent the sum of the emerging themes as identified by the respondents related to the phenomenon of interest, while the arrows show the interrelated nature of some of the

key themes as extracted from the data. The following quote is intended to explain and justify this theoretical perspective.

In a world that is increasingly connected and complex we must set our focus on the right level of detail; therefore, we need to differentiate between questions whose answers we can control in a deterministic way from those we are unable to control but whose outcomes we wish to influence or shape. It is the latter to which we must bring our knowledge of “the predictability of general form”

Part of our knowledge of general forms comes from the emerging field of complex adaptive systems. Complexity encompasses several disciplines but two among them seem to be more relevant to my research context that highlights the tension within SOC duality of its business model (Rebovich, 2014).

SOC’s operate within a highly complex, operational and compliance driven political economy, while at the same time having to contend with traditional notions of oppression such as racism and gender discrimination are not independent of each other and may occur simultaneously interconnected (Maake et al., 2021).

In addition, research studies indicate a linearity between SOC performance, the role of the political ideology of the government, and its interactions with political institutions (Aguilera et al., 2021).

These factors have a confounding impact on state-owned entities in pursuance of multiple interest and conflict, which may negatively impact business performance and financial goals. Thus, adopting a narrow neoliberal view of the current challenges facing both Eskom and the country at large is short sighted and will not address issues of profitability, cost benefit, transformation, and social justice in a sustainable way.

Therefore, to understand the pervasiveness of racial and gender discrimination, state owned organisations can be hypothesized as systems, made up of interrelated sub-systems, these are inextricably linked to systems of inequality. Hence, the next section begins to conceptualize and explain the relevance and interlocking nature of system thinking with an that of intersectionality as it relates the research problem.

5.3.2 Intersectionality Theory

While our contemporary understanding of inequalities considers institutionalized prejudice, links, and discriminatory behaviours in relation to social identities and perspectives,

intersectionality contends that the traditional notions of oppression such as race and gender are not independent and underscores privilege as a unique advantage that is not normal (Maake et al., 2021). The term intersectionality was initially conceived by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) when examining at issues around Black women's employment in the (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Here she, highlights the interconnectedness of social constructs like race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, as well as the systemic power dynamics that arise as these social dimensions interact across individual, institutional, cultural, and societal spheres of influence (Rodriguez et al., 2016, p. 201).

Crenshaw's (1989) definition of intersectionality begins to link the studied phenomenon to oppression, through three dimensions namely structural, political, and representational. With Black women at the center of my research focus, this definition becomes appropriate for several reasons which include structural features of capitalism, as a systematic critique of patriarchy. Marx's overall theory suggests that society is underdeveloped in its weakness to an account for gender inequality (Brown, 2012).

This viewpoint is situated within the repressive characteristics of a capitalist market economy and how they present themselves in discriminatory policies and behaviour towards women as individuals, as employees within firms, and as members of society at large. Because they are intricately linked and difficult to comprehend, it has to do with linkages that determine how systemic racism and sexism interact synergistically within state-owned organisations. These relationships are too complex to be easily broken down into smaller subsystems (Juan et al., 2016).

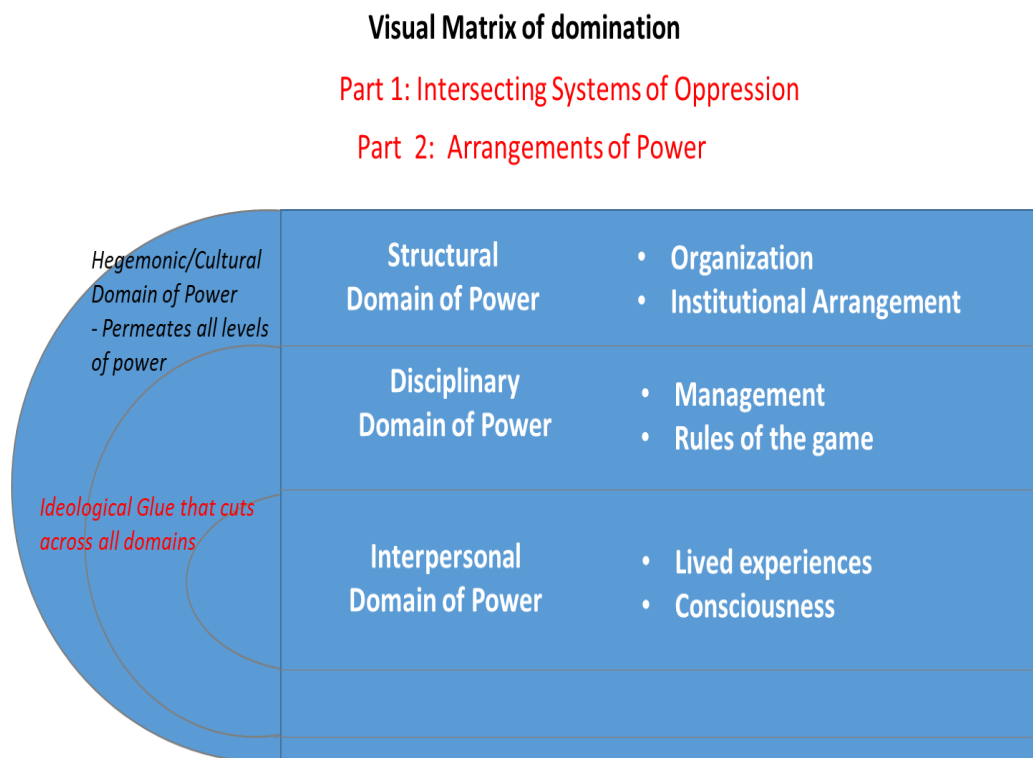
Even though many intersectional theorists are critical of Marx's view of class as a significant axis of oppression in the modern world, few have gravitated towards understanding this perspective to comprehend theories of dominance. Therefore, understanding the structural relationship between a Marxist perspective and intersectionality is necessary to start developing a modern paradigm for understanding identity issues (Bohrer, 2018). Women's experiences with racial and gender issues cannot be disregarded because they form an important part in the study of systematic oppression and injustice. This line of reasoning is supported by Crenshaw (1989), who contends that legal definitions of discrimination need to be updated if they are to address systemic and historical oppression (Carastathis, 2014).

The six key themes of inequality, relationality, power, social context, complexity, and social justice are also discussed by Collins and Bilge (2016) while using intersectionality as

analytical tools. Patricia Hill Collins (2019) points out that intersectionality is important to research micro, meso, and macro level social phenomena and goes with four primary analytic benefits as theoretical framework, namely simultaneity, complexity, irreducibility, and inclusiveness. By doing so, she conceptualizes how intersectionality, my theoretical lens, and system thinking are compatible.

Collins (2019) also makes a distinction between the words "interlocking," which refers to linkages across systems of oppression like race, class, and gender at the macro level, and "intersectional," which defines processes at the micro level. To understand how power operates across structural, hegemonic, and other systems, Patricia Hill Collins' (1990) matrix of dominance serves as a lens depicted in Figure 24.

Figure 24 Visual Matrix of Domination



Source: Visualising the matrix of domination

There are several interconnected systems of oppression, including colonialism, racial/structural racism, gender/patriarchy, class/capitalism, sexual orientation/heterosexism, age/ageism, ethnicity/ethnocentrism, ethnicity/ableism, and other systemic oppressions. The empirical results of my study, which highlight white privilege and male domination as enduring systems of oppression, clearly show the oppression and vulnerability of Black women post-apartheid.

The second feature of the matrix's shows the hierarchical power relationships that may be seen at many levels, including the macro/structural domain, the meso/institutional practices or disciplinary domain, and the micro/individual or interpersonal domain.

The perspectives and experiences of Black women within the context of my research therefore begin to highlight the dynamic character and effect of leadership across multiple organisational levels, which unintentionally is a factor of the socio-political reality. Collins refers to the hegemonic (ideological) sphere of power as the "glue" that holds together all other levels of power.

For this study, intersectionality stands by the ontological argument that it can theorize the convergence, co-constitution, imbrication, or interwovenness of oppression systems, as well as capture experiential and structural complexity. According to Miyen & April, 2022 they refer to this phenomenon as simultaneous systems of disadvantage. Notwithstanding that organisational structure of SOC's weighs heavily on ideation and models of transformation (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008, p. 6) and therefore the role of leadership becomes critical as a yardstick for social progress.

5.3.3 Leadership Theory

The experiences and perceptions of Black women in the workplace is increasingly being influenced by the prevailing leadership culture as shown by the data, as well as the association with political paradigms. Even though leadership theories are general, the research challenge in my study demands a targeted investigation of the function of leaders as change agents.

The following are quotes from interviews that contributed towards the conceptualization of my perspective on the category phrased as, "Influence of Leadership Stature."

Quote 1: "To drive successful transformation, you need leadership commitment to transform i.e., walk the talk but make sure people being appointed are competent for a particular role."

Quote 2: "Disconnect between leadership and people on the ground influences employee uptake of transformation programmes."

Quote 3: "lack of ethical leadership and structural support compromises the transformation ethos."

In terms of its emphasis on people and operational management, leadership is a well-established phenomenon. What is less investigated, however, is how this institutional shape may influence the style of leadership and the impact on organisational performance and policy

outcomes (Gains et al., 2009). Claiming such theories neglect the peculiarities between these organisations, researchers have come under fire for applying general organisation and management ideas to public sector organisations (Hoouberg & Choi, 2001).

This study's is premised on two types of relationships i.e. leaders and followers on the one hand, and "human agency," the purposeful activity of individual leaders, and political structure, including the opportunities and constraints that inform such action, on the other, is informed by the emphasis on contextual and situational interpretations (Barker et al., 2001). Adeyemi-Bello (2001) uses the State-owned Enterprises in South Africa as a case study to support her claim that organisational and contextual factors influence the leadership style (Mabasa & Eresia-Eke, 2018).

Researchers have been criticized for applying generic organisation and management theories to public sector organisations on the basis that such theories ignore the differences between these organisations (Hoouberg & Choi, 2001).

Given the institutional structure of a state-owned company, it can be difficult to identify the principals or their representatives. For this reason, this study defines leadership as including senior executives, top management, the board of directors of Eskom, government shareholders, government officials, ministers, and relevant politicians to reflect categories of leadership influence (Torfing & Sørensen, 2019). SOC's require voter approval and public ownership because they are public interest organisations.

Numerous studies have shown the undeniable link between SOC's, and political participation associated to state capture, leadership improperness, conflict of interest, fraud, malfeasance, maladministration, and corruption (Koppell, 2007; Sheard, 2011). To prevent leaders from acting in their own interests and to enable them to work for the benefit of the group, it is essential to understand leadership within the ideological framework and its own goal. As a result of the dysfunctional leadership that has forced them to lose sight of their mandatory objectives, many SOC's have become entangled in undesired complexity (Sithomola, 2019).

The conclusions, which were drawn from the empirical data, reinforces the importance of an integrative moral and ethical leadership framework to increase public accountability, good governance, and discipline execution, as a vital element of SOC's in the process (Chauke, 2020) . A leadership philosophy as embodied within the existing four leadership brand pillars as reflected in the picture below:

Figure 25 Leadership Brand Pillars



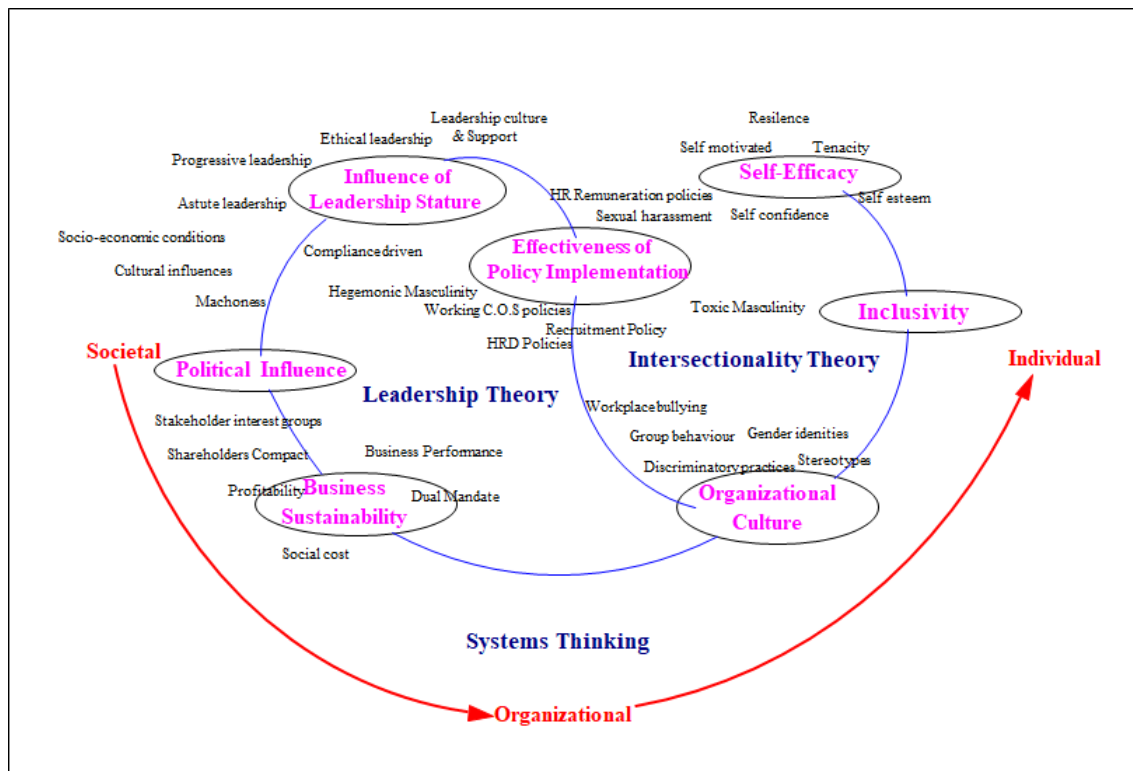
Source: Leadership Brand Pillars (Eskom)

Each pillar has been associated with a prominent African leader who epitomizes the characteristics listed under each pillar as a framework for leadership behaviour within Eskom. This study, however, questions, how this existing leadership philosophy has contributed or continues to transform or envision of an engendered organisation, under the current circumstances. To clarify my conceptual process, I briefly discuss my theoretical perspective as part of the next section.

5.4 Summary of My Theoretical Perspectives

While a strong theoretical structure is said to give the research direction, it also allows for persuasive interpretation, explanation, and generalization of the findings (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Therefore, multiple theories can give varying perspectives on the same issue. However, the logic that informs these theoretical perspectives must produce a coherent set of statements to justify the transition from simply describing the phenomenon to generalising aspects thereof. For this study, the theoretical perspectives allowed me to zero in on aspects which were not explicitly stated within existing literature. As a reflective exercise Figure 26 represent a collage of the contextual and situational interpretations as they systemically interact within my research context.

Figure 26 A Framework for illustrating Gender Dynamics for Women in Leadership



Systems thinking is a well-known theory that bring a holistic viewpoint to the complexity, multi-layered and multi-faceted in nature of SOC's. Deconstructing how systemic racism and sexism interact synergistically within state-owned organisations also involves understanding how different fault lines are entrenched in the workplace. Race and gender as social constructs are closely linked and therefore complicate the nature of oppression. For example, there is no measure for certain aspects of self-efficacy such as self-motivation, resilience, tenacity, self-esteem, and self-confidence for which some women are mistaken to be ambitious, aggressive, and threatening and therefore not considered for leadership positions in some cases.

This point of view is situated within the repressive, post-apartheid and patriarchy-biased structure of the organisation. Consequently, the manifestations of discriminatory practices and behaviours as people and as employees inside organisations have an impact on the attitudes, experiences, and behaviours of Black women in managerial roles at Eskom. These interactions between decision-makers, lawmakers, political parties, interest groups, workers, and organisational leadership, in addition to historical formulations, have led to these experiences and behaviours. Organisational culture, which is a result of the leadership culture, is intertwined with organisational principles, rules, and procedures. Considering this, I draw

synergy between the prevailing leadership philosophy in relation to the current operational, financial, social, and recent contextual concerns raised about South African based SOC's. To further motivate my point, I draw on the following statement as it resonates with my study, "Leadership involves two types of relationships, namely leaders and followers on the one hand and "human agency," the purposeful activity of individual leaders, and political structure, including opportunities and constraints, which informs such action (Barker et al., 2001).

A leadership's viewpoint on the under representation of Black women at senior management level primarily questions whether the existing leadership philosophy, built on a binary and masculine frame of reference, can address underlying mechanism that originate within the deep roots of a patriarchal bias market economic system. This inability shows the need for different lenses such as the framework developed in this study.

While an existing body of knowledge has greatly benefitted from the use of current leadership theories and models, these theories and models continue to rest on an inhumane and exclusive bedrock of masculinity that is rooted on racial and gender injustice.

In the next section I will systematically explain how I constructed my causal loop diagram (CLD) and establish causal relationships between the variables identified.

5.5 Determining Causal Relationships

A CLD helps one to structure and determine patterns of behaviour for analysing causal relationships within complex problems. The links between variables also help to determine and understand the nature and causal effects of these relationships. For this research seven (7) variables were identified as listed in chapter 3.

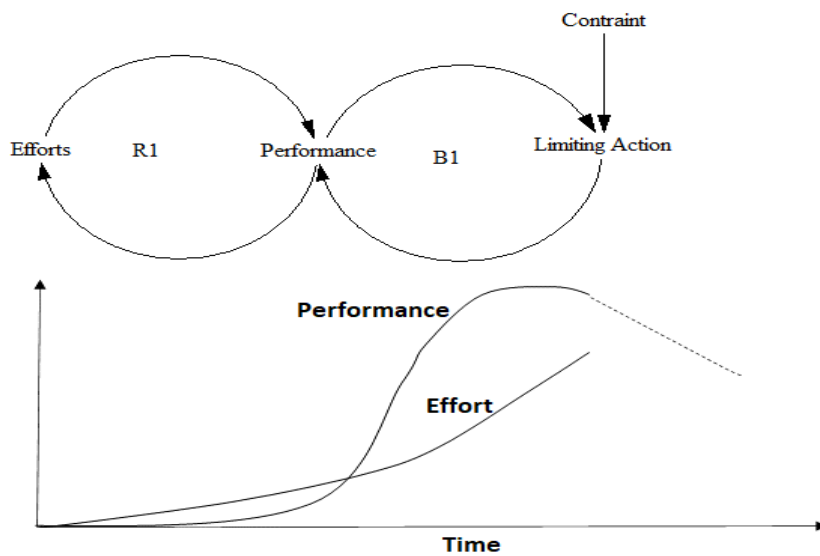
To establish causal relationships, I used the following five criteria, where the first three are considered as requirements for identifying causal effects. Criteria (1) empirical association, (2) temporal priority of the independent variable, (3) nonspuriousness, (4) identifying a causal mechanism, and (5) specifying the context in which the effect occur can considerably strengthen causal explanations (Chambliss & Schutt, 2013). As indicated, I also draw on a systems archetype methodology as a diagnostic tool to better understand the dynamic of specific system behaviours. This assumes that a specific phenomenon occurs repeatedly in diverse settings. The use of system archetypes within my research context is primarily to validate and justify the construction of a causal loop diagram (CLD) as well as bridge the transition from the descriptive to the normative stage. The system archetype best suited for

my research context was the Limits to Growth systems archetype which I explain in the next section.

5.5.1 Limits to Growth – Systems Archetype

The Limit to growth systems archetype describes a reinforcing process of accelerating growth that will encounter a balancing process when a limit factor begins to kick in. It hypothesizes that a systems performance will continually improve because of certain efforts.

Figure 27 Limits to Growth/ Success B.O.T Graph



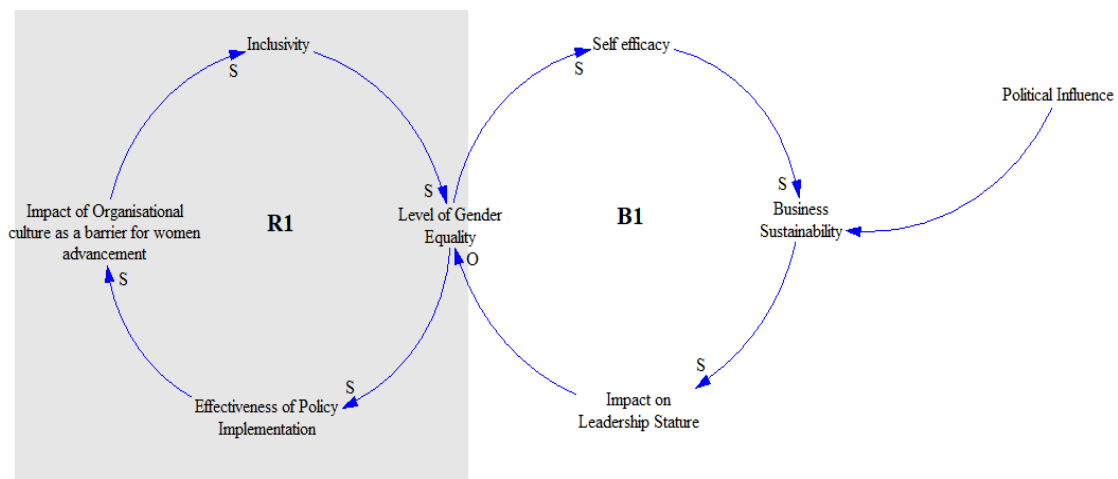
Source: System Archetypes I: Diagnosing Systemic Issues and Designing High-Leverage Interventions Kim (1992)

The graph also suggests that when performance increases, efforts increase as well, spurring on more advancement. As a result, even when initial efforts are made to produce positive outcomes, they will soon be limited. According to this, efforts and investments made by organisations to improve gender equity and representation show that much more needs to be done. In other words, there are concerns about diminishing returns if Black women continue to be under-represented at the leadership level at Eskom. Nonetheless, the data analysis shows that the phenomenon under research and the impact of external factors are consistent. Environmental factors that produce potential boundaries could result in system limitations that slow down or delay the process. Therefore, systems archetypes can be described as a mechanism for problem simplification to observe and identify patterns to address underlying issues.

5.5.2 How the Limits to Growth System Archetype Resonate with My Study

At the start of South Africa's democracy, affirmative action measures, along with group-based quotas and targets, came into sharp focus. The main objective of gender-based targets was to speed the process of attaining a proportionate representation of women in positions of decision-making across society and right previous wrongs. Affirmative action and employment equity targets in the organisation were initially driven by compliance and achieved through organisationally coordinated initiatives. To promote and upskill Black people, including women, Eskom has engaged in several accelerated development initiatives and coalitions. With the goal of changing the way we think about and embed race and ethnicity, policy and procedure became the underpinning for establishing possibilities for success for Black people, including women.

Figure 28 Causal Relationship between Variables within the Reinforcing Loop (R1)



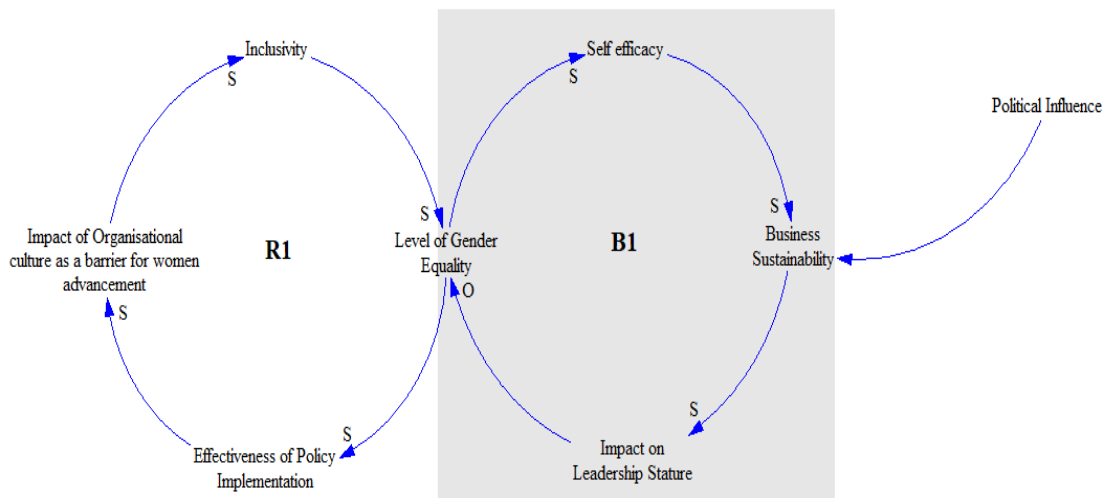
Source: Adapted from System Archetypes I: Kim (1992)

Notably, improved policy execution has had a positive impact on organisational culture, which includes elements of unjust gender discrimination. As a result, such policies and practices increased diversity tolerance levels, providing a solid foundation for the development of inclusive cultures. Despite literature suggesting a potential disconnect between institutional anti-discrimination policies and the realities of Black women, a culture that embraces positive change for organisational fairness and justice is necessary (Maake et al., 2021).

The research's findings show that the organisation has put in a lot of work to align itself with goals set by legislation, policies, and other regulations. Even though women continue to be

underrepresented in senior management and other important roles, the research reveals a good movement in gender equality and representation. An institutional policy framework acts as a facilitator to promote development, learning, and growth to boost performance. As a result, as performance improves, efforts likewise do so, which leads to progress. The shaded areas in Figure 29 show that the reinforcing loop (R1) is represented by this positive increase in the causal link between these variables.

Figure 29 Causal Relationships between Variables within the Balancing Loop (B1)



Source: Adapted from System Archetypes I - Kim (1992)

However, when the system's performance starts to plateau or reaches a certain point where future improvement is inhibited, this may indicate that there is/are a limit factor(s) that may be impeding further advancement, as shown in Figure 29. Since this is a balancing loop (B1), the system eventually runs into a limit that slows down performance. When a system reaches its limit, performance staggers despite greater effort (Kim, 1992).

The study takes a turn to conflate the issue of risk or threat to business sustainability and emphasizes the role of leadership stature as crucial to resolving the research challenge for this causal model of the data. This illustrates how a balanced loop spread.

A divergence brought about by potential risk or risks to the viability of the firm, connected to leadership stature, sustaining political power, and consequently causing unintended effects for the concern variable. Consequences that permeate context-related problems related to disputes in the ownership structure, stakeholder expectations, expressions of socio-ethnic and cultural influences, power dynamics, and decision-making. To support the grounded nature

of this variable, I have cited statements made by interviewees that shaped its conceptualization.

“Government gets itself too involved too much in the running of the business.”

“My take is Eskom has got good men and women who have been sidelined because they are not connected.”

“Pace of advancement is based on the group you belong too.”

“The current crop of EXCO has done injustice to Eskom so it is not gonna happen. You will just see a continuation of this cliques.”

“You align yourself to a group that will benefit you, groups provide a sense of belonging.”

These remarks imply that organisational and leadership capacity to uphold operational autonomy in terms of command and decision-making, such as the selection of important roles, is limited.

Political influence, according to the literature, is when political leaders use their power to thwart decision-making in areas of public administration like planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting, and public procurement. Political appointees experience agency issues in this instance, making it difficult for them to distinguish between ownership and control. According to Cuervo-Cazurra & Dau, 2009, this unintentionally has a negative effect on the performance of state-owned businesses.

Business sustainability, according to my research, is a phenomenon that seeks to strike a balance between the competing demands of profitability and socio-economic reform objectives. However, research also shows that misconceptions about the transformation ecosystem, inconsistent leadership, inadequate skills, and resource constraints can have an impact on corporate sustainability; as a result, a causal link has been established. This suggests that a rise in the danger to corporate viability affects leadership stature and has political influence. This causal model's limit factor is any danger or threat to the viability of the company. a way of thinking that reevaluates the duties and responsibilities of political or organisational leadership considering success, integrity, and competency (Mfuru et al., 2018).

During Eskom's current operational and financial upheaval, empirical and secondary data sources have highlighted the significance of leadership stature as a crucial component in establishing credibility with the public and employees. The conducted interviews conveyed a definite recognition of this reality, which I support with the following quotations.

"Political influence is not wrong; what is wrong is when leaders are unable to separate politics from how they conduct business."

Leadership crises undermine organisational confidence because they are tied to fundamental corruption issues rather than racial or gender issues.

"Some bosses abuse their position of authority to harass female co-workers".

These excerpts from interview transcripts support the idea that the factors identified are causally linked. Based on this, I also contend that when company performance suffers, it unintentionally narrows the focus on gender transition and causes people to automatically turn to masculine lenses when looking for answers. This suggests that persistent hegemonic masculinity will continue to guide decision-making, particularly in situations where a culture has not fully developed. Political and organisational leaders share a world where patriarchy and views dominated by men coexist. The focus on the progress and empowerment of women in society and the workplace will be constrained or harmed in the absence of organisational leadership that reaches developed engendered cultures.

I cite the following statement from one of the respondents as evidence for this claim within the context of my research: "Decision makers are still caught up in machoness, power play, and floating egos." Women in technical roles are more likely to come across these kinds of behaviours because men continue to dominate these fields. Even though women are frequently the victims of sexual harassment and bullying at work. In this regard, the participant referred to the significance of a coping and survival mindset attributed to workplace discrimination, which unintentionally led to an unintended culture of tolerance. Although the organisation has made it obvious that it has a zero-tolerance policy toward the discriminatory activities, it should nevertheless demand that offenders be dealt with quickly.

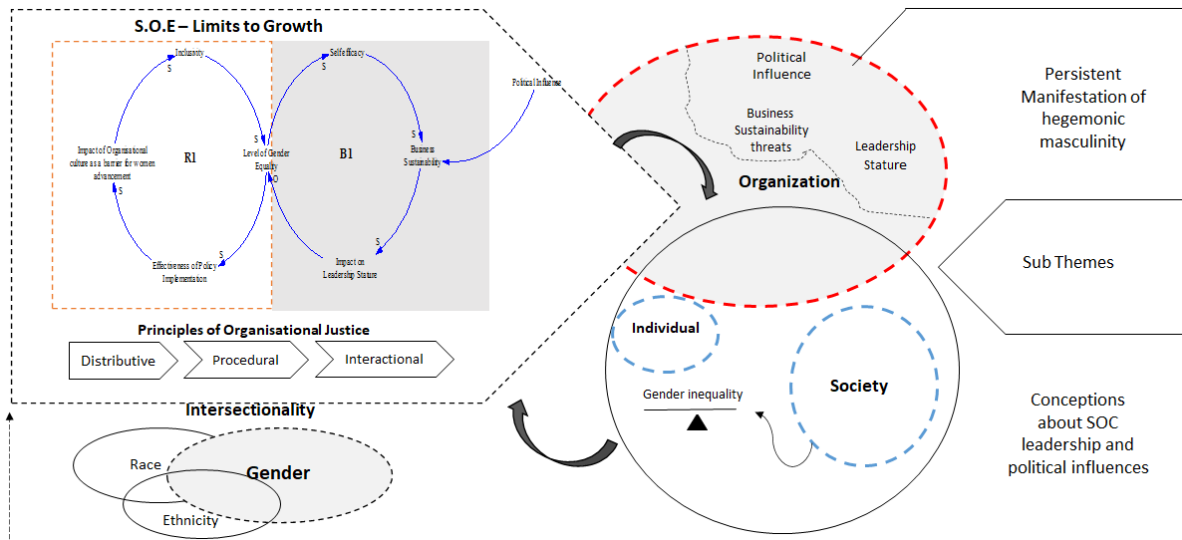
The study also demonstrated how seriously the organisation takes gender equality, how employee attitudes are impacted, and how individual self-efficacy is affected. Which takes me back to the issue at hand, the continuing under-presentation of Black women in senior management positions and the perception that achieving gender equality is a way to achieve organisational justice. I will thus give a condensed description of my final idea and the resolution to the research topic in the next part.

5.6 Abbreviated Answer to the Research Question

The framework below will be used to illustrate my theory, display an interpretation of the research findings, and respond to the study's major research question, which is mentioned

below. In the preceding part, the causal linkages between key variables were established. What are the barriers preventing Black women from advancing to senior positions at Eskom? *“What are the mechanisms that obstructs the advancement of Black women at a managerial level in Eskom?”*

Figure 30 SOC's Promise of a Just Culture Fade for Black Women



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study

In Figure 30, I employed a systems archetype’s methodology to validate and justify the construction of a causal loop diagram (CLD), resembling the “Limits to growth/success” systems archetype. The causal loop diagram was firstly to establish the causal effect between variables identified but more significantly to answer the main research question as it underpins the research problem which not only captures the concern around the under representation of Black women at senior management level in Eskom but also enriches our understanding of how employees perceive the level of organisational fairness. My final theory therefore encapsulates the following two themes.

5.6.1 State Owned Companies Promise of a Just Culture Fade for Black Women

As previously explained the “Limits to growth” systems archetype describes a reinforcing process of growth until a limit factor sets to balance the process.

Even though a legislative and policy framework has prompted several initiatives aimed at promoting justice in society, defending people's rights, and punishing those who violate them, these initiatives are primarily not intended to address issues of dignity violations and intrinsically toxic organisational cultures. The empirical and secondary data used in this study,

suggests that Eskom's commitment to employment equity laws and affirmative action has had a positive impact on fostering gender sensitivity and creating a gender-sensitive workplace. The journey towards gender equality in Eskom started in the early nineties (90's), one of the participants, late Nerina Begg former Senior Manager Talent & Skills recalled the appointment of Professor Truida Prekel from UP to mentor women in Eskom. This was during an era linked to racial prejudice where Black women were appointed. However, the long-term implications of discriminatory practices were not anticipated, particularly with respect to Black women social identification, levels of confidence, and self-perception. An era where career aspirations and success for women in general were potentially linked to positional power and not personal power (tokenism).

Driven by policy and target setting methodologies, several coalitions and flagship programmes were initiated to address the lack of technical skills to develop, pipeline, and position Black women graduates for employment or deployment opportunities. These included the CEO's women programme of 2001 and later the establishment of the Eskom Women Advancement Programme (EWAP) in 2013. EWAP represents a significant milestone as a dedicated intervention to address barriers to women advancement into critical leadership and technical positions. One of the programmes objectives at the time was to grow from 34% to 45.2% female representation across all occupational levels, over 5 years. It is a deliberate attempt to influence Eskom's culture in terms of leadership support by encouraging stakeholder involvement, which include male employees to change stereotypes (EWAP Annual Report, 2022). The programme is results orientated and has placed Eskom at the forefront of becoming the leader in gender equity with the simultaneous promotion of 39 women to senior management during the month of March 2017. Out of the 30 appointments, 24 were technical specialists in various key components of the business. This was an unprecedented equity injection from 29% to 36%, at senior management level.

The data also show how institutional policies have positively contributed towards cultivating an organisational culture ready to embrace inclusivity. However, a narrative that presupposes the eradication of discriminatory practice and efforts directed at harvesting a fair and just organisational culture. While equity legislation and policy intend to advance organisational justice by legalising positive discrimination to address past imbalances, data also indicates that we have not fully realized this expectation as both an organisational and societal goal. In support of this notion, mixed views on the state of gender and racial justice were expressed by the interviewed participants. Though many of the interview participants have also indicated

that the under representation of Black women at senior management level echoes the absence of a just culture. Based on the data analysis responses to the questionnaire confirms that most women at management level are still affected by race and gender issues in the workplace and feel that remuneration and benefits are unfairly applied. Therefore, despite all organisational efforts to address gender disparity and the positive results it has yielded thus far, we may have underestimated the transmission or cultural heritage of a toxic masculine culture and feminist oppression which contrasts a principled design that underpins egalitarianism and utilitarianism.

While policy distinguishes between equality and equity these terms are not synonymous and subject of misinterpretation. The conceptualisation of codes for variables such as inclusivity, organisational culture and policy implementation echoes the expectation of fair play and historical redress versus the reality of inadequate redress and unfair play. This may also suggest that the policy landscape is not intended to sustain an unjust culture and subject to the vulnerability of interrelated subsystems within the socio-economic and political ecosystem. In the next section I zoom into the casual relationship as identified between the Eskom as my research setting and the state.

5.6.2 The State-Owned Companies - a Social Microcosm of the State.

The timing of the data collection was during the incumbency of President Jacob Zuma, and SOC's as political institutions were in the forefront of public debate. Particularly, where the idea of SOC's as conduits for which state capture and looting of the public resources continue to gain momentum. In many ways, the conceptualisation of codes began to draw attention to the inter relationship between SOC's and the state as the shareholder. Declarations of intention to use SOC's as transformational hubs, underscores an assumption that South Africa has a hybrid socio-economic and political landscape.

By implication politics begin to infiltrate state-owned entities through various forms of human and institutional "agency" and begin to intensify the tensions that exist in a business model that is inherently at odds with its mandate. According to Cuervo-Cazurra & Dau, 2009, state-owned businesses face major agency problems related to the separation of ownership and control because politicians or political appointees operate these businesses and likely have a negative impact on performance. As a result, institutionalised business intentions of policy, process, and structural design to enable transformation and gender empowerment becomes eroded by limiting opportunity to pipeline Black women into core positions. Threats to

business sustainability, in my research context relates to conflicting business interests, financial and operational challenges, often perpetuated by misconceptions of political pressure and incompetent leadership, sometimes results in women employees feeling ostracized and side-lined.

Most of the women who participated in the interviews alluded to the fact that they felt excluded from opportunities to further their career purely based on not being seen as part of a particular political clique. Inadvertently, perceived fragmentation of networks, group dynamics and cultural influence support structures through organisational and structural politics. According to Lau and Murnighan (1998) the advancement and entry of women and racial minorities may have diversified the workforce on the one hand but also increased misunderstandings (Jehn, 1995). The study has therefore established that these demographic diversity and fault-lines have been entrenched and as a result leaves some women feeling isolated.

While political agendas within any organisation will always be present, the intention should however be to drive positive influence and to have key individuals as theme custodians. Therefore, political agendas should move away from individual power and gain and focus on collective achievement. The causal relationship between business sustainability and political influence as variables begin to indicate, how an increase in political power is most likely to negatively impact the viability of enterprises. Considering the above, a new paradigm is required to redefine the duties and obligations of political and organisational leadership within the parameters of business sustainability, transformation, good governance, ethics, and morality (Mfuru et al., 2018). A leadership framework that inspires trust through good leadership stature and frequent engagement with women at all levels with the intention to listen rather than download information. The conceptualisation of this variable also resonates with some of the following data extracts.

“There is nothing wrong with political influence but there is everything wrong when leaders are unable to dissociate politics from running a business”.

“Role Models should be women of integrity first; they should be ethical leaders first”.

As SOC's are increasingly linked operational inefficiency, financial instability, ineffective leadership, corruption, conflicts of interest, these acts of moral bankruptcy appear to have benefitted the male political or organisational elite. In some cases, we have also observed patterns of long-standing tradition in SOC's where female executives will defend their male

co-workers to preserve their own reputation and future. A similar pattern of behaviour observed when the ANC Women's League took a public stance in support of Jacob Zuma. This is quite an unfortunate observation because of the dominant or hegemonic rhetoric, as those who have excelled at change begin to embrace a more traditional viewpoint.

In summary my theory propagates that any threat to business sustainability, influences leadership stature and in most cases may be activated by political influence. The effect of this causal relationship in some way or another can have a negatively or positive effect on the advancement of women. Therefore, to provide a clear and concise answer to the research question about mechanism that obstruct the advancement of Black women at senior management level I have captured in the following sub-themes as it relates to the study:

5.6.2.1 Persistent Manifestations of Hegemonic Masculinity

The study has elevated perceptions of organisational fairness and economic justice as an underlying mechanism that obstructs the under representation of Black women at managerial level in Eskom. As the study acknowledges the significant strides made by the organisation post 1994, Black women still find themselves having to contend with historical practices and cultural heritage of hegemonic masculinity in the workplace. Over years Black women have learned the art of coping and acquired a survival mindset ascribed to discriminatory behaviour.

This has inadvertently resulted in an unintended culture of tolerance, which does not resonate with an authentic gender bias discourse. Despite considerable investment in the growth and development of women the featured reality of economic discriminatory still exists, whether intentional or unintentional. As an example, the belief that technical/engineering is a male dominated field may be refuted in policy but, there are many male employees that still hold on to this belief. Evidently, unequal pay rates for Black women, does not consider the reality of inter-generational inequality. Thus, an intersectionality study that is conducted in a South African SOC without considering the local context makes Black women's financial situation worse and reinforces social injustice.

5.6.2.2 Perceptions about SOC Leadership and Political Influences

As mentioned before SOC's are increasingly linked to issues of operational inefficiency, financial instability, ineffective leadership, and corruption etc. These issues are also intrinsically linked to threats around business sustainability and as a result Black women have begun to feel left out and disillusioned. However, most of the women interviewed pointed out the risks associated with downsizing, restructuring and financial instability as a risk to further development. While leadership is intended to coordinate the organisational structure to foster relationships between individuals and groups, resource allocation is fundamentally for the organisation to carry out business objectives.

At this point I argue that an increase in teamwork to achieve certain business objectives is tantamount to increasing demographic diversity. This introduces the concept of group fault lines which describes the compositional dynamics of multiple demographic attributes which could potentially sub divide a group (Lau & Murnighan, 2005). Hence, the study also points out a causal relationship between a leadership stature that is linked to cultural group conceptions or misconception that support organisational and structural politics.

As a result, the empirical data, literature, and insights from the study indicate how fault-lines have been entrenched and leaves some Black women feeling isolated and unmotivated. In the next section I will be evaluating how I applied ground theory.

5.7 Evaluating Grounded Theory

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 233), there are four requisites to assess validity of grounded theory. The first is to ensure that the theory is a good fit for area of study and next the theory must be understandable, general and allow for partial control over structure and process. This criterion therefore served as my guide to assess validity of my theory.

5.7.1 Fitness

A substantive theory for the field must first be induced with its own general ideas since fitness in this situation relates to how well the theory fits the substantive topic of research (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). To put it another way, the data must accurately match the real-world information that was acquired through a thorough coding and conceptualization process.

My theory is positioned in the research environment by my personal positionality and everyday experience in this region, as well as my main data that was acquired through interviews with research participants who are directly involved in the phenomenon under

investigation. Additionally, the theoretical coding procedure decides how well the final categories resonated with the research subjects, which boosts my conviction that the theory suits the substantive domain. I will evaluate my theory's clarity in the part after this.

5.7.2 Understandability

For theory to make sense and be understandable it needs to be close to the realities of the areas of the people working in it. This enables them to apply and engender a readiness to use it as opposed to a layperson who may grapple with the abstractness and presumed applicability, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 239).

Though my study is intentioned to establish causes related to the persistent gender imbalance across management levels within Eskom, the variables as part of the theory also explains how they interact to create this phenomenon. This notion of causality helps to enhance our understanding in the process which I also tested with two of the research participants to check that theory was understandable to other parties as well as whether it sufficiently explains the studied phenomenon. In the next section, I will test my theory for its generality.

5.7.3 Generality

When deciding upon the conceptual level of the categories, this must be guided by a criterion that balances the level of abstract. Meaning categories must be sufficiently abstract to allow for flexibility in the theory in terms of situational or everyday realities, without becoming too abstract to lose fit with the study setting. The ability of a theory to be used in various contexts, or "the full picture," is another aspect of its generality (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 242). This variety makes it easier to create a theory with enough concepts and logical connections between categories to explain common behaviors. Its generalizability is also increased by the similarities between the conceptual level of my theory and the conceptual level of important ideas in other theories. I shall evaluate the controllability of my theory in the section that follows.

5.7.4 Control

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 245) a substantive theory must enable the person who uses it to have enough control in everyday situations when applying the theory. This control indicates that to create and foresee change, a person must be able to comprehend and assess current situational realities (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 245). As a result, my theory's causal links between the variables show multiple causality. The practitioner can grasp situational controls if they have enough general notions and their realistic interrelations.

Through "controllable" variables and "access" variables, change is produced and controlled, and this is the essence of controllability. In other words, being aware of these factors could help someone to concentrate attention on the important, under their direct control, factors that influence the degree of gender equality in the business. This theory's identified variables have been given explicit definitions in terms of their causes, characteristics, and effects. As a result, it is feasible for a person to discover the aspects of each variable that apply to his or her circumstance the most and that might enable the best control.

5.7.5 Concluding Remarks on the Theory's Value

Given the above assessment of my grounded theory against Glaser and Strauss' criteria, I believe that the grounded theory process has contributed towards the evolution of my study. From a critical realist perspective, although my theory is based on a replicative study it does in fact demonstrate a contextual gap based on institutional form, which have also been pointed out by many other studies specific to leadership (Eresia-Eke & Mabasa, 2018; Sithomola, 2019). While my study focus was aimed at exploring the gender dynamic in Eskom, the study took a turn and conflated the issue of leadership and business sustainability as critical to solving the research problem. I have therefore concluded that these accurately reflects the causal mechanism in the real world that generated the phenomenon that I observed. In the next section, I will provide a conclusion to this chapter.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined my theory building process and a utilised systems archetype to validate and justify the construction of a causal loop diagram to better represent the complexity and dynamicity of systems behaviours (Giordano et al., 2007; Haraldsson, 2018).

My theoretical perspectives therefore allow me to focus on elements with less literature-based attention. I was able to identify relevant gaps and draw certain conclusions by fusing various systems thinking, intersectionality, and leadership theory concepts. I was able to draw the conclusion that Gender identity is not merely a social construct but a special fusion of these social categories that can affect the success or failure of an organisation. The causal model was the result of my grounded theory method, and while we acknowledged that it is only one interpretation of the real world, the choice is based on its fit, understandability, generality, and control. The formulation of my theoretical contribution of this study will be presented in the chapter that follows, as well as the concluding remarks on the research technique, question, and problem that will be used to evaluate the study's findings.

The next chapter will deal with the conclusions and implications for further research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION, AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous chapter, I explained how I used a synthesis theoretical approach based on intersectionality, systems thinking, and leadership theory to develop my theory and arrive at the conclusions. In addition to offering the chance to critically examine the EWAP targets considering attaining gender parity in ESKOM, the goal was to comprehend why Black women were consistently underrepresented in SOCs. I also had the opportunity to consider how these issues might impact the company's culture considering performance and business sustainability in the pursuit of the dual mandate of the organisation.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will review the steps involved in the research study and look at the outcomes for each chapter. These outcomes will then be used to support the goals of the study, the conclusions, implications for further research and other recommendations.

6.2 Summary of Chapters

6.2.1. Chapter 1: Introduction

It will be recalled that at the beginning of the study, I outlined the research context, research problem, conceptual framework, philosophical assumptions, and research goals. We are now reminded that our research phenomena relate to the persistent under-presentation of Black women in managerial positions in a state-owned company. The workforce of this business is predominately male and reflects national demographics, which offer an intriguing lens for the study of how race and gender are evolving and how they can be better understood through intersectionality theory. The following research question served to guide the study:

“What are the underlying mechanisms that obstruct the advancement of Black women at a managerial level in Eskom?”

Before moving on to summarize chapter 2, I will briefly recap the goals of the research for the sake of cohesiveness of the study.

Goal (1): To investigate and identify the mechanisms that obstruct or prevent South African Black women from advancing to managerial positions in a South African SOC.

Goal (2): To evaluate the intersectional difficulties that SA Black women at management levels in a South African SOC encounter and perceive.

Goal (3): To evaluate organisational inequities that Black women at leadership levels in a South African SOC experience and perceive.

Goal (4): To develop an intersectionality framework for exploring gender dynamics at management level within a state-owned organisation in South Africa.

6.2.2 Chapter 2: Research Methodology

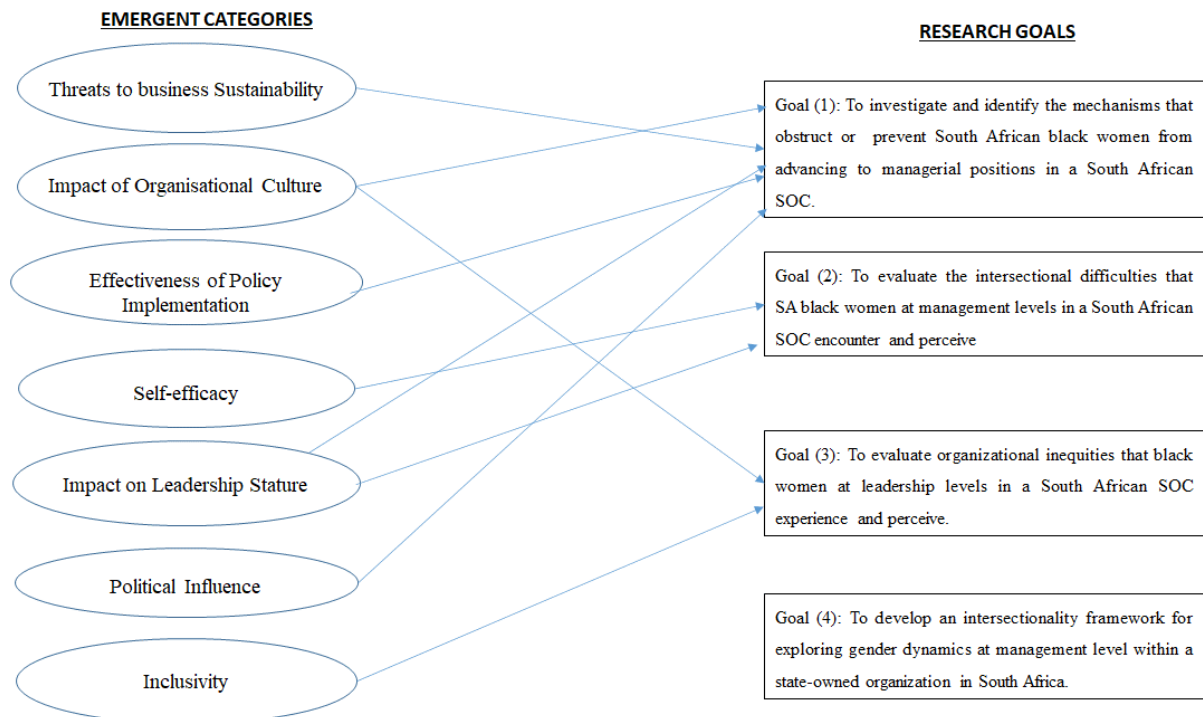
The nature of the study lends itself well to a qualitative examination, therefore constructivist grounded theory was employed to find patterns of behavior between the actors and their surroundings. According to grounded theory, the researcher is allowed to use personal opinions when gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. A perspective that is consistent with the presentation of my philosophical assumptions in chapter one. The study's design, which placed the research question at its center and was based on Maxwell's interactive model, emphasized the significance of interaction between the key elements of the research (research aims, conceptual framework, methodology, and validity).

6.2.3 Chapter 3: Exploration of Research Data and Key Findings

Chapter 3 explains my data collection, data analysis and concept development process. The use of an online survey to help reach a point of saturation and triangulation, to enhance data validity was employed.

The following diagram in Figure 31, represents the linkage between the grounded theory emergent categories with the research goals of the study as presented in chapter 1, to illustrate the relationship and confirmation that the categories have been inductively derived.

Figure 31 Link between Emergent Categories of Grounded Theory and Research Goals



Source: Developed by the researcher for this study.

6.2.4 Chapter 4: Literature Review

In chapter 4, the empirical data was re-contextualized and synthesized for theoretical advancement through a three-level literature review that was conducted after the categories emerged. The methodology assisted in the review and syndicating of the study results and context for each category.

6.2.5 Chapter 5: The Development of Theory

The two crucial stages of theory development i.e., descriptive, and normative were the emphasis of Chapter 5's examination of the theory-building process. Using a systems archetype methodology, I created a causal loop diagram to illustrate the causal relationships as they relate to the concern variable to help the transition from the descriptive to normative stage. The CLD reflected the Limit to Growth Systems archetype, which shows an accelerating growth process that is reinforcing and will eventually run into a balancing process when a divergence is created.

The research therefore indicates possible threats to the long-term viability of a company that are linked to leadership influence and backed by political power and have the capacity to impede or change the under-presentation of women problem impacting the lives of South

African, Black women. This study's findings also highlight the importance that Black women place on perceptions about organisational justice and fairness to increase their self-assurance in their capacity to lead and advance within the organisation. The finding also highlight how crucial leadership skills are in creating an environment that supports women's advancement. In the section that follows, I'll present the findings from my primary and secondary research.

6.3 Research Findings

By means of a semi-structured interview process involving twenty candidates who were current or former employees, and after deploying an online survey as a saturation method, I was able to leverage their collective life experiences to draw the subsequent research study conclusions.

6.3.1 Findings from Primary Data

The results of this study are consistent with the theory that any research on gender equity carried out within a South African SOC without considering the local context exacerbates social injustice and worsens the financial circumstances of Black women. To demonstrate that the results were consistent with multiple prior studies carried out in various contexts, the integration of the theoretical elements for systems thinking, intersectionality, and leadership was particularly useful.

Considering the risks related to business sustainability, complexity, multilayer dynamics, unique product and context, the study is novel and original, despite Eskom being one of several state-owned companies in South Africa.

Though there are studies with some transferability, these have either examined gender barriers or empowerment alone or public administration alone or equity and redress alone but not in the nexus of this study. The exposition of intersectionality and the multiple methods provided within the process and between triangulation for trustworthiness and rigor has therefore amplified its novelty.

I provide a succinct analysis of the results in the following section.

6.3.1.1 Finding - Theme 1: Obstructions (Risks) - Threats to Business Sustainability

The initial goal of the study was to look at and pinpoint the mechanisms that hinder or prohibit Black South African women from moving up to senior executive roles inside a South African SOC.

The factors that affected the advancement of women were covert as well overt., which I refer to as invisible. These invisible barriers are not stated explicitly but are nonetheless present, and often influenced by the political, economic, social, technological, and environmental aspects of gender transition in relation to gender stereotypes, injustice, the under-representation of women, lack of access to rights, and lack of social and economic empowerment. Even though racial discriminatory laws have been abolished, the data seems to suggest that inequality persists in South Africa. As a result, this study focused on substantive equality rather than formal equality, which calls for an examination of black women's social and economic circumstances in order to ascertain whether or not the equality requirement of the Constitution is actually met. Formal equality only stipulates that all people must be equal bearers of rights. Therefore, conducting this kind of research would increase the likelihood of unjust discrimination, either directly or indirectly, by the state (Muntingh, 2013).

Furthermore, as underlying factors impede levels of advancement, the study starts to draw connections not only between the studied phenomenon, but also concerns about business sustainability, leadership stature, and political influence.

In support of this claim, the Peterson Institute for International Economics' 2016 report, "Is gender diversity profitable?" makes the business case for women's representation in corporate leadership roles because it boosts productivity. The report also notes that having 30% of women on the board, as opposed to none, is associated with a 15% increase in profitability.

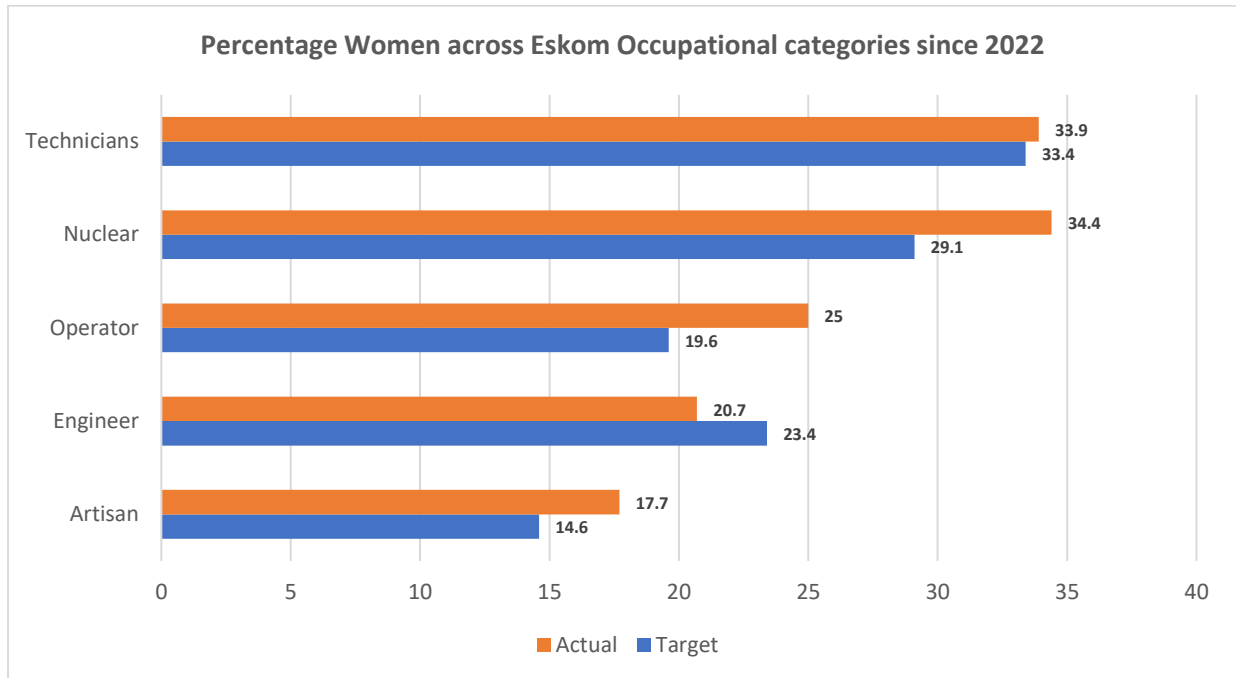
Therefore, the results suggest that increasing the number of women in corporate leadership positions may improve business performance. The advantages of nondiscrimination or women's enhanced skill sets within an organization could be the cause of this correlation (PIIE, 2016).

Women made up 43% of South Africa's working population in 2021, but they only accounted for 29% of board positions at the nation's top 100 listed businesses. Studies reveal that when a board comprises three or more women, there is a critical mass of women who can participate in group decision-making more fairly. Gender diversity in this conversation is crucial. (BWASA, 2021).

Similarly, having more women in an organization can be beneficial. The study's results indicate that while there has been advancement in several occupational categories over time, engineering has declined by 2% over the period depicted in the graph below (Figure 32). This

reflects a decline in the representation of engineers but is indicative of engineers that have been promoted to management roles.

Figure 32 Percentage Women across Eskom Occupational Categories since 2022



Source Developed by the researcher for this study

Having said that, Eskom's business case for inclusion and diversity has a significant impact on gender equality and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) mentioned in the Sustainable Development Agenda. Thus, the EWAP program embodies Eskom's shared commitment to pushing gender equality to the top of the multilateral agenda. Eskom is one of the organizations that has demonstrated a strong commitment to gender empowerment as a signatory to the Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs), which offer businesses guidance on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

Even with Eskom's best efforts, certain business realities may seem less achievable less attainable in terms of gender equity, considering the research conclusions in relation to the contextual dynamics of SOCs. Qualified by a statement extract from the Eskom Integrated Report (2021) that states, “ The achievement of transformation targets are hindered by our ongoing financial challenges.” (Eskom Intergrated Report, 2021, p. 111).

These realities include decisions made in terms of investment on gender-neutral technology, safety and security protocols in the workplace, and the financial ramifications related to work-

life balance measures. Even though EWAP has made great strides toward advancing gender diversity and awareness, the organization lacks the pertinent business measures necessary to articulate its vision of gender parity clearly and confidently.

EWAP is also vague when it comes to addressing intergenerational inequality and the complex gender dynamics of the LGBTQ+ community, which are closely related to organizational justice concerns. The correction of historical injustices, which mainly impacted African and Colored women who were members of the organization prior to 1994, is at the heart of these concerns. To address income disparities, advancement, and accelerated development opportunities, it is also necessary to manage expectations. The study also uncovered beliefs that opportunities are contingent on one's ethnicity and membership in a group, and that interactions between one's race, gender, and ethnicity have sustained prejudiced beliefs.

While the research findings are affirmative in the context of my investigation, the subsequent theme emphasize the inadvertent outcome of women's persistent struggle for advancement within an organization.

6.3.1.2 Finding – Theme 2: Promise of a Just Culture Fades for Black Women

The study's objectives included understanding the barriers to black women's advancement in management positions as well as assessing the intersectional challenges that Black women in South Africa face and perceive in SOCs due to their gender and race. As a result, the study's findings start to suggest that the ability of SOCs to carry out their operational mandate and their transformational commitments is waning. Stated differently, SOCs are grappling to live up to the legal and constitutionally guaranteed promise of a fair culture that South African Black women and society deserve. The efficacy of South Africa's reform effort is clearly diminishing in the absence of organizational justice, as contextual factors compound ineffective leadership, as discussed in Chapter 5. According to Osituyo (2018), women are under-represented in senior decision-making roles, in the public sector and more prevalent in lower management positions of the organization. The results of the study also demonstrate that the organization has worked hard to comply with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements in South Africa, including target setting.

Still, sixty percent of the Black female interviewees seemed to have a moderate outlook on the future and expressed skepticism about growth prospects. The study's findings also demonstrated how important workplace justice and equality are to Black women in SA's

managerial ranks, particularly when it comes to equal pay, equitable opportunities for career advancement, and promotion opportunities. However, public perceptions of poor moral and ethical leadership in SOCs, which are influenced by views of inept leadership, maladministration, and state capture, undermine the leaders' confidence and hope. These findings support the hypothesis that women's advancement into important leadership roles may be hampered by a decline in business performance. As a result, this phenomenon begins to suggest that organizations' capacity to establish goals and fund initiatives that support Black women pursuing or occupying management positions in SOCs are gradually declining. I examine the interaction among the SOCs, the state, and society in the sections that follow.

6.3.3 Finding – Theme 3: SOC's as a Social Microcosm of the State

The third objective of the study is to assess the perceptions or lived experiences of organisational injustices by Black women in leadership positions within a South African SOC.

Consequently, the study found, which was also reinforced by the conceptualization of codes, that SOCs and the state, as the shareholder, have a symbiotic relationship. Proclamations of willingness to use SOCs as transformational centers lend credence to the idea that South Africa has a heterogeneous socioeconomic and political environment. This relationship between the political influence as a variable and the risks to business sustainability begins to demonstrate how a rise in political power is most likely to have a negative impact on the viability of the organisation (Mfuru et al., 2018; Sithomola, 2019a). So, politics starts to seep into state-owned businesses through different forms of institutional and human agency, maintaining tensions within an intrinsically conflicted corporate model that starts to hinder the growth of Black women in South Africa.

The study's findings corroborate Osituyo's (2018) claim that women's career advancement in the South African public service is hampered by certain barriers at the highest management level. For example, the data in the Businesswomen's Association of SA (2021) report demonstrates that women are not well represented in the most important positions within organisations that involve making decisions. Despite the fact that women make up 50.7% of the total population in South Africa, they only make up 45.5% of the employed workforce (BWASA, 2021).

Women are also typically found at lower employment levels within these occupational categories. Gender diversity in boardrooms drives economic growth and ought to be a top concern for all organisations. According to the BWASA women in leadership consensus

report (2021), there were only 29.4% of executive managers and 27.7% of directors who were female across all participating entities. Women made up only 17.3% of chief executive officers (CEOs) and chairpersons at the highest levels of organisational leadership. Despite the low numbers, there have been slight improvements in the last ten years, when the percentage of women chairpersons and CEOs was only 9.7%.

The aforementioned report also affirms that according to the UN Women organisation, efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic are threatened by the exclusion of women from key decision-making roles. Consequently, it is critical to highlight the contributions made by women in a range of industries, including governmental agencies, state-owned companies, JSE-listed companies, women in higher education, professional services companies, and multinational corporations (BWASA, 2021).

The use of secondary data to validate, corroborate, and triangulate the study's findings will be covered in more detail in the following section.

6.3.2 Findings from Secondary Data

To validate and support the category development process, I used secondary data to conceptualize and advance theoretical sufficiency. Secondary data sources included published books, other documentary data sources, and presentations and progress reports from the EWAP. Because of Eskom's commitment to employment equity laws and affirmative action, a high-level review of the secondary data shows that gender sensitivity has been promoted and a gender-sensitive workplace has been established.

In the section that follows, I assess whether the research study's goals were met and offer an overview of some of the most important findings in relation to assessing the EWAP targets and effectiveness.

Analysis of EWAP Effectiveness and Targets Attained

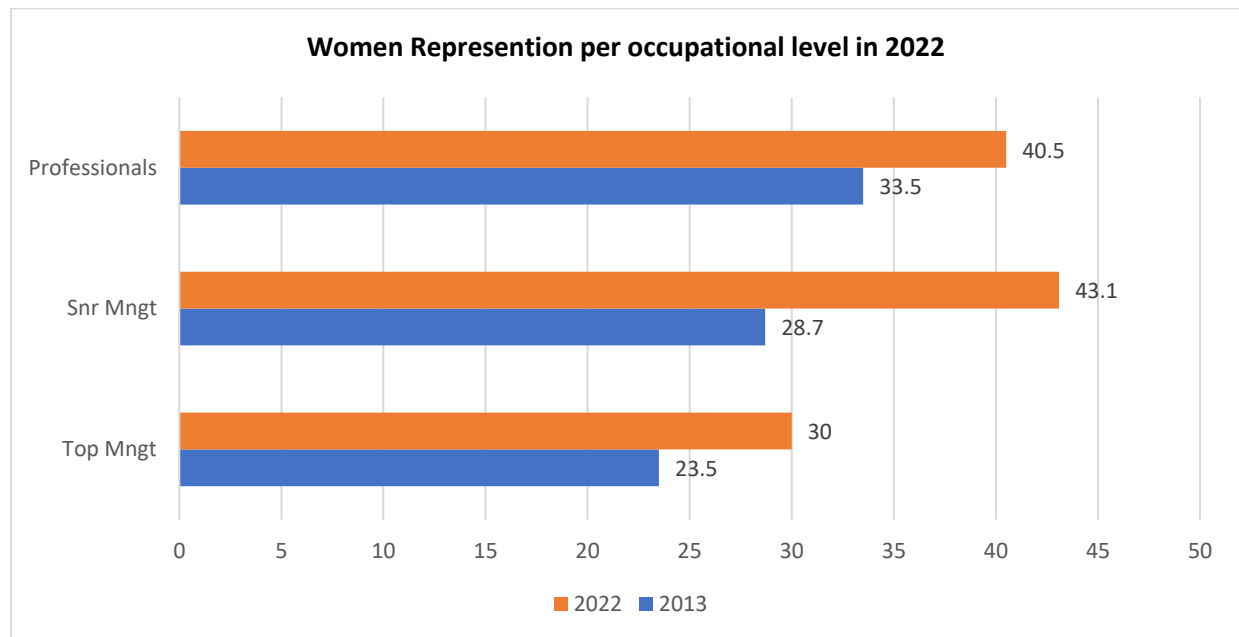
We are reminded that the Eskom Women Advanced program's (EWAP) objective was to address issues of gender equity and equality through the increased representation of women by identifying obstacles that prevent women from advancing in their careers and assuming leadership roles and by dispelling gender-related stereotypes.

The EWAP program is a conscious effort to change Eskom culture in a way that promotes inclusivity, eliminates gender stereotypes, and supports women in leadership roles. The program's goal was to increase the percentage of female participants from 34% to 45.2% over

a five-year period beginning in 2013. After that, the goal was changed to reach 50% of all occupational levels by 2026 (EWAP Annual Report, 2022).

The research findings have therefore affirmed that EWAP has facilitated an increase in the increased percentage of women represented in each organisational occupation level, as shown in Figure 33 below.

Figure 33: Women Representation per Occupational Level in 2022



Source Eskom Women Advancement Programme Annual Report (2022)

As of 2013, top management consist of 30% women for the first time, 42.7% of senior management and increased female representation at professional to 41.01%. Despite having an institutionalized, well-funded, and resourced program, it took the organization about nine years to achieve this notable improvement, which raises the question of why women's progress and development averages around 2-3% over 9 years.

Although EWAP has been recognized and shown to be effective, its effects on employee perceptions and organizational impact have not been thoroughly measured. Nor have we measured the impact of leadership change and support for women development within the organisation given the complexity, multi-layered and multi-faceted in nature of SOC's.

Reducing the gender pay gap from 41% to less than 6% is another achievement that EWAP is proud of EWAP is also contingent on compliance with the agreements outlined in subregional, regional, and international gender instruments, to which South Africa is a party.

Notwithstanding that the gender pay gap is an important concept that captures the current situation on inequalities in a workplace, monitoring and evaluation of progress by sector, occupation, educational level, and similar factors. Women are entitled to equal pay, benefits, and treatment for work of equal value, according to the parties to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted on December 19, 1979. East and Southern African women earn 21% less than men, according to the UN Women (2023) report, which adds to the higher rates of poverty in the region. They also have an obligation to cease discriminating against women in the workplace to guarantee that men and women have equal rights (Chen, 2023).

Miller (2009) cites the work of Arulampalam et al. (2007) and Kee (2006), respectively, while describing how this line of investigation was expanded by looking at the gender pay gap in the public and private sectors. According to Miller (2009), the public sector's lower level of competition in the market for top executive talent makes it appear as though the upper wage distribution is compressed. Arulampalam et al. (2007) have empirically shown that the gender wage gap differs significantly between the public and private sector wage distributions in several European countries, and Kee (2006) has provided comparable data for Australia.

Considering the above assertion about the distinctions between the public and private sectors Miller (2009) recommends that it might be possible to discover more about the disparities in pay between men and women by looking at the gender pay gap for both the public and private sectors across wage distributions. This pattern as well as the analyses for European countries conducted by Arulampalam et al. (2007), show that institutions can affect the size of the gender pay.

Having established this phenomenon, the World Economic Forum's (WEF) most recent Global Gender Gap Report states that South African women are paid between 23% and 35% less than men for doing the same job (World Economic Forum, 2021). Furthermore, the WEF estimates that the country's overall gender wage gap is 30%. In 2023, South Africa received an overall score of 0.79, placing it 20th out of 146 countries (World Economic Forum, 2021)

Another one of the EWAP documented successes is the increase in funding for Black women-owned businesses to over R16 billion in 2022 from R6 billion in 2013 as well as the allocation of funding for higher education for fifty-five percent of the female workforce (EWAP Annual Report, 2022).

In the next chapter, I proceed to discuss the research question and its contribution.

6.4 Conclusions about the Research Question and its Research Contributions

After examining the results of the primary and secondary data, I concluded that the conventional notions of a gendered division of labor are flawed and continue to perpetuate the situation of South African Black women in managerial roles. To provide clarity, I refer to Karl Marx's ideas regarding the historical and transitory nature of social interactions. These are dynamic in the context of gender relations and provides some explanation on the slow progress of Black women into senior management roles (Brown, 2012).

This assertion also supports the view that doing away with the concept of patriarchy is necessary to do away with the vestiges of unhealthy gender relations in the workplace. Since Walby contends that patriarchy still permeates modern society, she introduces the idea in her critique of the concept of patriarchy that patriarchy is ill-equipped to address various manifestations of gender inequality in various contexts, including the varied experiences of Black women (Walby, 2019).

This helps to explain, conceptually, why the foundation of productive domains is the degree of women's oppression and hegemonic masculinity. This demonstrates how women are unfairly disadvantaged in a male-dominated workplace where women's opinions, autonomy, and decision-making are marginalized in the name of fair gender mainstreaming and economic inclusion. This starts to clarify why Black women in management roles no longer feel the same way about organizational justice and fairness.

I summarize my research findings in relation to the study's primary research themes and findings in the following section:

6.4.1 SOC's are a Function of a Political Discourse

The current political system affects how we conceptualize an SOC's dynamic character and interactions. Research studies show a linear relationship between SOC performance, the function of the government's political ideology, and its interactions with political institutions for the political economy in which SOC's operate (Aguilera et al., 2021).

As a result, state-owned organisations are compelled to pursue a range of antagonistic interests, which are an essential component of a business model that supports a variety of objectives. In essence, SOC's are different from businesses in the private sector in that they must answer to the public and are inexorably impacted by political changes.

Put another way, this will seriously impair the state's ability to make decisions, forcing managers of SOC's or the public sector to constantly search for other options. Instead of trying

to adjust to their own circumstances, they now aim to appease the public, and in doing so, they are impacted. People naturally have a propensity to look outside of themselves for guidance, expertise, and answers.

The apartheid regime, in contrast, gave greater weight to organic development, which mitigates the effects of a shift in political leadership. People were therefore trained to manage resources and the workforce during periods of transition. Threats to business sustainability in concert with leadership stature and political influence create vulnerability and are likely to erode the prospect of gender mainstreaming and equality. Unless, the appropriate principles are woven into current theories and philosophy of business sustainability to mitigate conflicting performance objectives, without negating transformation imperatives and resource constraints.

South Africa's Gender Equality Strategy requires businesses to offer development facilities, work life, career prospects, and centers for economic participation aimed at improving the socio-economic status of Black women (CGE, 2022). Developing business models with clear objectives is crucial to tackling operational inefficiencies, profitability, cost-benefit analysis, transformation, and social justice issues in the long run, especially considering the challenges that SOC's are currently facing.

In the next section I discuss the paradox of leadership in relation to the challenges that confront SOC leadership.

6.4.2 Paradox of SOC Leadership

In this section I offer a thought-provoking perspective on the relationship between the under-representation of black women in state-owned companies and leadership pacing within political systems. As a result, it is crucial that each and every one of us understands what makes us unique as citizens, what our responsibilities are, and what kind of authority we have in order for us to critically examine the fundamental elements of our societies such as social and economic inequalities (Langlais, 2014).

The state, is a political entity that gives rise to SOC's, but also shapes the culture and behaviour of current leaders (Barnes et al.; 2019; Ovens; 2013; Ssamula, 2009). Ultimately, the organisational ideology, policies, and tactics will be in alignment with the leadership behaviour (Mfuru et al., 2018). My observations indicate that the state's administration is a government that executes a political agenda in line with the requirements of the existing political system.

This projects a bureaucratic and administrative leadership approach that adapts to the situation (Philip Onyango, 2014; Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2009). As a result, the political establishment is the main source used to identify leadership style's characteristics. This implies that government employees or SOC officials adapt or align their viewpoints in response to the political debate.

For instance, the Ramaphosa administration's more corporatized and anti-corruption stance contrasts with the Zuma administration's strong development focus. Consequently, I contend that changes in the political paradigm dominate the public sector's leadership culture and subsequently permeate SOCs. In contrast, the private sector's shareholder composition cautions against the leadership style to preserve stability. Because of this, we err on the side of caution when discussing gender issues with SOC leadership to ascertain the status of gender equality and empowerment in SOCs both now and in the future.

The paradox of leadership in SOCs thus reinforces a corporate culture that is predominantly male and fundamentally contradictory. Feminist theories emphasize how patriarchy and capitalism intersect to produce gender inequality in the workplace, and the realities of organizations operating in a political economy based on a capitalist market system are restrictive in this regard (Alvesson & Due Billing, 2009).

As a result, it becomes extremely challenging to promote gender inclusion within state-owned organisations, which begin to explain the slow pace of gender transformation in SOCs. From this vantage point, intersectionality theories also assist in exposing the shortcomings of capitalism and its assumptions that have been based on a binary identity, i.e., male and female, where a female is set up as a feeder system to work for and support a masculine figure for the system to continue (Walby 2019).

Furthermore, several socio-economic shifts are beginning to emerge, which in many respects point to a challenge to or alteration of the core ideas that support patriarchal systems. A leadership philosophy that confronts the repressive systems that uphold women's vulnerability in the workplace will be necessary to implement these changes. There are both external and internal career barriers, according to Watts et al. (2015); external barriers are found in the environment, while internal barriers are primarily psychological in nature. Issues regarding oppressive systems and women's vulnerability I explain in more detail in the following section.

6.4.3 Oppression and Women's Vulnerability

Marxist feminists, according to Alvesson and Due Billing (2009), research society to fundamentally alter gender relations. Class is associated with forces of power and subjugation, just like gender. The dynamics of varying degrees of resistance that women face in the workplace are also a result of the way social interactions are structured. Consequently, women still earn less than men, even though they put in more hours at work and bear the brunt of unpaid labor. This notion of unpaid labour is becoming more and more relevant in policymaking and has been successfully pushed for inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations in the hopes of achieving greater recognition of women's economic contributions (Beier, 2018).

The study's conclusions indicate that there are still pay disparities between men and women at Eskom and that there is still uncertainty surrounding the concept of paying unpaid labor in terms of effective implementation strategies to alter the organization's gender equity ecosystem (EWAP Annual Report, 2022). Examples of this phenomenon include inadequate or under considered policy regarding childcare, work-life balance, and the biological and social support systems for women who are experiencing menstruation and menopause-related issues.

Even though the world has made significant progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of gender equality and women's empowerment, Matotoka & Odeku (2018) cite Mlambo-Ngcuka (2017), who states that women's earnings worldwide have consistently lagged men's by an average of 23%. This suggests that the practice of unfairly discriminating against women in the workplace has deprived generations of women of income, security for the future, and just reward.

Furthermore, since physical attributes are no longer required, the shift from labor-intensive to knowledge-intensive production systems suggests that men are experiencing an existential crisis. Women are participants regardless of inclusion as they begin to gain access to knowledge spaces as an essential part of the production space and business. which implies that people have access to reproductive domains that are essential for economic advancement but unrelated to gender.

As a result, a man's physical attributes are no longer his primary means of competitive advantage, which means male privilege is rendered superfluous, putting women in danger in several ways. Under economic stress, gender norms, complex power structures, and

interpersonal interactions may all become more dynamic. Safety and vulnerability must be balanced to achieve equality, as there is evidence that physiological differences increase workplace vulnerability. Equal goals must be achieved even though SOCs must fulfill their operational purpose and protect workplace democracy by ending discriminatory practices.

The topic of workplace bullying, and, to a lesser extent, sexual harassment are interrelated issues that serve as the foundation for the previous discussion of women's abuse and vulnerabilities. The empirical evidence confirms that enough interventions are conducted through workshops, awareness campaigns, and roundtable discussions to address these pressing issues and difficult conversations about diversity and inclusion (Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd, 2022; EWAP, 2015).

But some of these observed patterns of behavior raise questions about the dynamics between women, which adds to the complexity of relationships between men and women. The phrase "bring her down syndrome," coined by American feminist Gloria Steinem, draws attention to the frequency with which women make derogatory remarks about other women (Coulter et al., 2014; Daya, 2010).

6.4.4 Gender and Race Equality a Compliance Driven Effort

Despite some progress in representation, research to date indicates that Black women remain underrepresented in management (Adeyemi et al., 2006; Matotoka & Odeku, 2021). The idea that having an equal or greater proportion of women participate in a forum or activity is a good approximation for equality arises from the pursuit of gender equality through a focus on women. However, this assumption suggests that increased female empowerment is directly related to increased female involvement and as such has become a numbers game (L. Booysen, 2007; Colgan & Ledwith, 2000; Daya, 2010; Ncube, 2018).

While sentiments by an interview participant (#p2)³ suggest that the gender equity drive is merely a compliance driven effort to meet Employment Equity targets, the empirical data suggests that the inception of EWAP is a compelling event for gender equity in Eskom. It was a demonstration and pledge Eskom's commitment and resources through its coalitions, priority actions, strategies, and tactics (EWAP, Annual Report 2022).

³ #P2, "... leadership focus is primarily about satisfying the shareholder by reaching racial and gender targets".

One limitation of the study is the claim that gender equality is not statistically represented sufficiently, in relation to minority group representation and equal pay practices for men and women. Because Black women do not form a homogenous group, it is likely that this limitation serves to mask the problem of equitable representation. Put differently, the efficacy of the measures employed to ascertain the degree to which Black women in management enjoy equitable access to educational, training, and career-advancing opportunities. It will also be difficult to determine whether this has a major impact on Black women individually and as a group because this viewpoint supports ideas of organizational justice and fairness, along with subtleties pertaining to leadership stature within SOCs. A pervasive leadership culture characterized by of operational inefficiency, financial instability, leadership incompetence, and corruption (Sithomola, 2019)

For my study, the key research conclusions and insights are represented by the findings listed above. I will therefore go over the study's high-level contributions to a larger research community in the next section.

6.5 Contribution of the Research Study

The key issue that piques my interest in this field of study is the continued under-presentation of Black women in management roles, which has significant implications for both men and women who want to navigate the workplace. This research problem, the nature of related challenges, the EWAP, and the requirement for an intersectional and interprofessional approach to problem solving are all highlighted by my study.

In respect to the government's function as the primary shareholder and the degree of autonomy given to SOCs to operate effectively, the research contribution is also noteworthy. Based on this, I claim that this study contributes to closing a contextual and knowledge gap, which I further discuss in the section that follows using the literature.

6.5.1 Identifying Gaps in the Literature

Numerous attempts to explain the differences in Black, White male, and female participation in management roles have dominated previous research on gender representation at the management level (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). A sizable corpus of academic research has also addressed the primary obstacles that impede women's advancement to senior management roles and higher (Adeyemi et al., 2006; J.G., 2000; Matotoka & Odeku, 2021; Trauth et al., 2004, Ncube., 2018).

Most of research studies have focused on gender discrimination and stereotypes in the workplace, but it has not fully addressed the intersectional relationship between organizational and contextual factors that affect this phenomenon. Black women place a high value on their opinions of organizational justice and fairness in relation to both internal and external factors, so I combined intersectionality, systems thinking, and leadership theories to shed light on the realities of organizational life for Black women in management positions. In relation to the phenomenon of interest, this includes the impact of deeply rooted fault lines as a workplace deterrent.

Though much research has been done on organizational justice, not much is known about how it influences women's views of justice and fairness (Baldwin, 2006; Bhattacharya, 2014; Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1990). According to the research, this seems to be a critical indicator in pursuit of gender equity in state-owned organisations.

Additionally, the study has demonstrated the risks related to the sustainability of businesses, the impact of external factors on SOCs' dual mandate, and the level of political involvement (Mfuru et al., 2018). However, this association in congruence with transformation objectives, is not sufficiently brought to light in literary work.

To improve SOC efficiency, numerous academics, mostly from South Africa have conducted research in this field (Chauke, 2020; Christiansen & Crane-Charef, 2021; Mbo, 2017; Ovens, 2013). Corporate governance, management techniques, political influence, and environmental factors have been their main areas of interest. The importance of SOC leadership imperatives is, nevertheless, not given enough attention. Thus, this study closes the knowledge gap by emphasizing the need for SOC leaders to enhance their moral and ethical character, as well as their understanding of the SOC landscape, to facilitate credible transformation. It also argues that this should come before structural reform.

Numerous studies and a variety of leadership theories have been developed to better understand leadership practice. Even though Western academics developed most leadership theories, the idea of Ubuntu has gained popularity in connection to various organizational leadership behaviors and styles (Bolden & Kirk; 2009; Mbigi; 1997; Myeza & April; 2021; Swartz & Davies, 1997). These theories are still ambiguous when it comes to gender inclusion as a critical transformation necessity. This research fills in this knowledge gap by acknowledging Western theories, providing the rationale, and then adapting them to better fit South African SOC circumstances.

Finally, there are scholars who have already come to understanding the advantages of integrating Western theories with South African wisdom. Regardless of this, there is not enough data to support gender conscientization or the strategies and tactics used to force SOC leadership to measure and expedite gender inclusion for SOCs. The study closes this gap by emphasizing the risk to gender transformation and the necessity of strict enforcement.

The steps taken to ensure the study's validity and its limitations will be described in the following section.

6.5.2 Validity of the theory and its limitations

What constitutes a legitimate qualitative study is subject to many diverse interpretations, and some claim that there still is no universally accepted definition of what that means. As a result, I drew on the works of three authors to create the metrics I would use to evaluate the applicability of my trustworthiness. Following is a list of these authors:

- Lincoln and Guba (1985) outlined four standards of trustworthiness for a qualitative study: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability.
- Maxwell talks about five different kinds of validity: "descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, generalizability, and evaluative validity." (Maxwell, 1992, pp. 284–285)
- Fit, understanding, generality, and control, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), are the requirements for a grounded theory.

The judgment of my research, however, will be based on the criterion in accordance with Guba and Lincoln's (1994) criteria for a qualitative study.

6.5.2.1 Credibility of the Theory

The likelihood that credible research findings will be generated is referred to as credibility, and it may be established through either sustained interaction with the study setting.

In this regard, I have a high degree of trust that my sustained involvement with the study context has given me the ability to comprehend the context and research participants with great clarity. I was able to relate to and comprehend the research settings and the perspectives of the research participants because I had worked as an employee in this setting for approximately 29 years.

The fact that the theoretical sampling approach was intended to assess how well the major categories "ring true" with research participants is another aspect that supports my theory. Triangulation is another tactic that was used to gain credibility. I used triangulation while choosing the approaches, particularly when I launched the online questionnaire and employed a second strategy to achieve saturation. I also derived data from observations while taking part in women's meetings and round table talks within the organisation. As a result, I think the study has a respectable level of believability. According to Maxwell (2005), this sort of validity is the main criterion for validity and is dependent upon all other criteria

6.5.2.2 Confirmability of the Theory

The concept of confirmability emphasizes the requirement that a different researcher must be able to use the same study protocol and produce the same outcomes. It emphasizes the research methodology. The goal is to clearly illustrate the evidence for the approach and concepts that helped shape the theory.

Confirmability thus emphasizes the extent to which the researcher can demonstrate the objectivity of the research and the conclusions drawn. There is a similar validity criterion, which Maxwell (2005) refers to as evaluative validity. The researcher applies evaluative validity value judgments made while analysing the data

6.5.2.3 Dependability of the Theory

Guba and Lincoln (1994) contend that credibility must first be established before one can create dependability. Dependability focuses on the research findings and asks whether the same research procedure applied with the same participants in a comparable setting would provide the same outcomes. This study's dependability is mostly based on the meticulous recording of the research procedure and findings. In-depth documentation and application of

the grounded theory process were made. A good amount of dependability in the theory, in my opinion, has been achieved through the rigorous application of a recognized methodology, procedures, and data sources, given the level of credibility that was created in the previous section. The confirmability requirement, as stated by Guba and Lincoln, is directly related to this characteristic.

6.5.2.4 Transferability of the Theory

Maxwell's (2005) generalizability criteria evaluates a theory's ability to explain similar conditions in other contexts, much to Guba and Lincoln's (1994) transferability criteria. The applicability of my theory will thus be determined by how closely the new context to which it is applied, and the original study setting are similar.

The following key contextual parallels would be necessary for the theory to be transferable:

- The primary actors must be directed at Black women; the organisational environment must be a state-owned entity.
- Intersectionality, leadership, and systems thinking theories must be incorporated into the theoretical framework.

As a result, only a few components of the specific research environment would need to be incorporated to produce a generalizable grounded theory. The last criterion for validity proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1994) was transferability. Glaser and Strauss (1967) referred to this requirement as generalizability.

6.5.2.5 Analysis of the Following could be used to Determine the Study's Veracity

As part of the data gathering procedure for confirmability, interview recordings, transcripts, EWAP presentations and reports, spreadsheets, and data logs, as well as a book describing the gender journey at Eskom, were all loaded onto the NVIVO system, as well as general publications issued by Eskom, the organisation.

6.5.2.6 Concluding Remarks about the Validity of the Theory

The evaluation of the theory's validity reveals that data and process validity received adequate consideration. There were methods employed to make the theory more accurate as often as possible. However, I believe that this theory is merely my perception of reality because of my ontological perspective, and that other scholars may come up with a different explanation to explain this phenomenon that I saw.

However, I do believe that the theory provides a helpful framework that will enable organisations to align gender equality initiatives, policies, and practices to address difficulties that face Black women at management levels in a way that delivers true empowerment.

Furthermore, this theory starts to point out the need to think about a framework or leadership philosophy to overcome the paradoxes present in SOC's. Denial of the extent of political activity is one example of this.

6.6 Limitations of the study

The study's limitations included its focus on gender-specific issues and its limited consideration for the intersection of race and ethnicity. Because of my interest on the perceptions and lived experiences of Black women, white women and men were excluded from the study. The results of the study cannot be generalised across the population. One more drawback of the study was that it only included one-on-one interviews. In terms of triangulation, the use of an online survey was added, but more layers of data could have been revealed, more info than was done in this case due to the absence of statistical data on race and ethnicity in relation to group dynamics.

In the next section, I will look at the implications of this theory for policy and practice.

6.7 Implications for Future Research

Based on my assumptions and the study's limitations, the following areas have been recommended for further investigation.

- a) The intersection of race, ethnicity and gender in the workplace and its manifestation on to inter and intragroup dynamics
- b) The influences of patriarchy on women leadership behaviour and styles
- c) Exploration of policy instruments to support the idea of unpaid care work to accelerate the socio-economic status of women both employed and unemployed.
- d) Investigate the negative impact of pay-setting techniques have on women's advancement in the short- and long-term, on the social and economic fronts
- e) Gender dynamics that hinder recognition of LGBTQIA+ community
- f) Strategies to bridge intergenerational inequality to make up for past injustices for women.

6.7.1 Implications for Gender Disparity

Our understanding of how gender differences are formed and perpetuated has significantly improved, however there is also disagreement on how to define gender disparity. Gender

theory has become even more complex due to the idea of "intersectionality," which maintains that gendered processes are influenced by and interact with processes of race and class as well as other forms of inequality and exclusion. The study finds that there is insufficient theory to account for how gender identification impacts SOC. Persistent binarism of male-female, nature-culture, structure-agency, materiality, and speech generates hierarchical relations of value in addition to neglecting the gendered meanings of both assets and agency as relational and dynamic.

Crenshaw also exhibited the limits of sex and race discrimination by "demarginalizing the junction" of race and sex when depicting the experiences of Black men and White women. During this research study, I have observed a similar phenomenon, where Black women's experiences are made even more difficult when they pose a threat to white men, leading them to form convenient alliances with Black men.

Ethnic culture and group dynamics influence gender interactions and raise the risk of drawing incorrect boundaries based on racial, ethnic, and cultural affinity by promoting ideas of exclusion. This method of considering oppressive regimes in the context of SOCs as systems within political institutions further highlights the intersections of race, ethnicity, and gender regarding the mutual construction of inequality and supremacy.

Concerning gender-based repression and vulnerability, women are thought to be inherently weaker than men. In addition, there are still prejudices that objectify women and portray them as threats to public safety. These prejudices influence recruitment and funding investment decisions around gender-neutral technologies, which implies that more research in this area is required.

Interviewees have expressed apprehensions regarding clandestine methods that impede their ability to progress, including marital status, which impacts women employed in technical or shift jobs. They believe that these actions uphold organizational injustice and are unfair. A woman's success in a company shouldn't be determined by how she handles the systemic discrimination these companies have fostered. This leads us to the following section on policy and practice implications.

6.7.2 Implications for Policy and Practice

Drawing on this contextual interpretation, the implications for policy and practice will be concentrated on an organisational level as inferred from the experiences of the women

interviewed. These conclusions are drawn from the evaluation of the theory's applicability based on the primary results or themes noted.

Women were initially met with some resistance because they were perceived as infringing upon the organization's policies when they joined the organisation. This was primarily due to the perception that public policy is a top-down process rather than an organic one. As a result, this approach compromises organisational ownership and gets seen as an act of compliance.

Even in the face of a more democratic political system and a legal framework intended to correct historical injustices, black women continue to be marginalized. Men continue to dominate positions of leadership in organizations, while under-representation of black women persists. Thus, indicating the need for further policy interventions to expedite career advancement of Black women.

The study has also shown a need to capacitate policy makers and SOC leadership so that they would be able comprehend the challenges faced by black women in management to manage principal-agent difficulties. Therefore, a policy imperative to institutionalizes programmes that promote gender awareness may be necessary.

Despite South Africa's notable progress toward racial and gender advancement, men are represented to a lesser extent in gender dialogues, educational initiatives, and awareness events, which results in unequal conscientization. It is therefore encouraged that policy also amplifies the importance of gender conscientization as an integral part of the education system. This will also promote careers that have been regarded as male dominated.

While certain policy considerations must enable certain empowerment effects for both men and women gender relations that purport women's disproportionate share of reproductive activities as an obstacle to women's economic empowerment must be discouraged. Therefore, one of the practical implications for this study is to interrogate the gap between transformation as a strategic objective. Moreover, organisations must be encouraged and supported to move the organisation beyond compliance and numerical targets.

It therefore requires that companies educate and continuously re-enforce the importance and benefits of gender diversity. The study continues to demonstrate the value add of women, the importance of accommodation policies for in relation to work life balance, wellness, mentorship, and coaching support.

In addition to providing an answer to the research question in this chapter, I offer additional recommendations with respect to the research study.

6.8 Recommendations

Although there is a growing corpus of scholarly research on the obstacles Black women face in their pursuit of management roles in SOCs, the study does not explain why some discriminatory behaviors are accepted as the normal way of coping. Accordingly, I have noticed that a culture of tolerance has set in as explained by most of the interview participants.

In my mind having to cope with this situation does not imply a sincere effort to change discriminatory conduct. Nonetheless tolerance is thought to be essential for maintaining societal cohesiveness and reflects Black women's ability to endure oppressive conditions.

The following are high level recommendations that require a more focused approach to improve Black women representation and gender relations in the workplace.

6.8.1 SOCs to develop a focused approach to Gender Equality.

To that end, the Eskom Women Advancement Programme (EWAP), through its holistic approach aimed at “breaking the mould “has indeed yielded much success and has become a blueprint for improve gender representation across occupational categories at leadership levels, that is top management, senior management and professional (EWAP Annual Report, 2022).

It is recommended that SOCs are intentional about achieving targets and programmes directed a dispelling the notion of job reservations based on biological and sociological factors. Awareness programme must be directed at all gender types including men to alter perceptions that perpetuate gender stereotypes and workplace discrimination.

It is also important to acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional obstacles to the development of prosperous and inclusive societies and economies. Consequently, even though women have been crucial workers in the front lines of managing the crisis, pre-existing gender disparities have widened. The industries where women are employed more frequently are the ones that are most severely impacted by lockdowns and rapid digitalization. The crisis slowed down the advancement of gender parity in several economies and industries, especially when combined with the extra demands of caring for elderly family members at home. To avoid long-term harm in the job market, gender-sensitive recovery strategies will be essential in regaining ground lost in 2020 (Ariana, 2016).

It is against this backdrop that EWAP continues to re-enforce its commitment and intensity initiatives to avoid further setbacks, given the volatility of the SOC landscape as expressed in the public domain(Donkor & Zhou, 2019; Kabinga, 2010; OECD, 2018).

6.8.2 Strengthening Gender Governance, Policy, and Assurance

The study reveals that even though gender governance is defined as the incorporation of a gender equality viewpoint throughout all governmental activities supported by a progressive legislative framework, we still fall short in important areas like equal pay, equal representation, and access to training and career-building opportunities.

Equal pay for equal work is required by South African law (the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Employment Equity Act). However, due to South Africa's corporate culture, salaries are rarely or never disclosed, discussing salary with colleagues is often against company policy and can even result in termination. Women who actively pursue promotions and higher salaries are more likely than men to be labeled as intimidating or even aggressive (Sweeney, 2019).

With this said, the study also discovered that risks to corporate sustainability may severely impede advancement of black women in management positions. The research thus urges stricter adherence to the following:

- Increased leadership accountability and capacity for gender equality, which include cultural and leadership development empowerment programmes for Black women.
- An increase in the representation of women in top management, technical fields, and board positions.
- Level the playing field for men and women to enable equality of opportunity via fairness and transparency.

The following recommendation emphasises the importance of monitoring and evaluation of gender strategies and frameworks to ensure effectiveness.

6.8.3 Increased Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit of Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting Frameworks for SOC's

USAID has facilitated increased female participation and gender parity in the utility industry since 2015 with its Engendering Utilities program (USAID, 2019). In South Africa the Commission for Gender Equality's (CGE) has a constitutional and legislative mandate to hold the government accountable for programs aimed at promoting gender equality and

transformation. As part of this formation the Framework for Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluating, and Auditing (GRPBMEAF), was established to and prioritizes gender policy issues in resource allocation. This framework also embodies a reporting and monitoring system (CGE, 2022).

The GRPBMEAF sought to mainstream gender in government, planning, and processes through gender-responsive systems for budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and auditing. Although there has been significant progress and strength in the GRPBMEAF implementation, more work needs to be done to close the institutionalization gap and guarantee that government departments and related entities fully implement the framework (PMG, 2021).

This is partially due to outdated gender policies as outlined in the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (WEGE), as well as poor monitoring and evaluation of gender strategies and frameworks., non-implementation and consequence management; lack of institutional capacity building (Africa, 2013).

In so far as the report recognizes the above gaps effective monitoring and evaluating will remain a key enabler for gender transformation in both the workplace and society, as well as affords the opportunity to leverage best practice across state-owned organisations.

6.9 Conclusion

Gender inequality is a widespread problem that is defined by complex and dynamic interactions, practices, and norms. Achieving long-term, sustainable change requires several critical steps, that include setting clear goals and objectives, identifying and combating gender stereotypes, promoting effective awareness and support initiatives, as well as monitoring and evaluation systems.

It is therefore essential to implement policies and procedures that use tactics potent enough to combat the binary thinking and masculine posture that uphold and perpetuate unequal gender relations. Graham (2002) offered two strategies to subvert the dominant discourse. The first strategy makes use of deconstruction tools, a theoretical method that has shown to be very effective in severing inflexible identities that obstruct political and cognitive processes. The other is a collection of physical interventions called subjectivation strategies, which aim to question and alter our lives and behaviors.

The current barriers to achieving workplace equality are being gradually removed by the growth of decent work and employment opportunities, targeted government initiatives to support women's participation in the economy, and the involvement of women in problem solving with the support of significant stakeholders like trade unions.

As a comprehensive strategy, the Eskom Women Advancement Programme has demonstrated that women can occupy legitimate leadership positions within the company and foster an environment that will enable them to contribute to the goals of the organization.

Even though women's subjugation is progressive, no matter how patriarchy is defined, men's competitive advantage is linked to male privilege and hegemonic masculinity as the cornerstones within productive areas. Therefore, it could be argued that black women's under-representation in the public sector can be seen as preventing them from participating fully in the economy at this point. This being said, if feminist theory is to have a bright future, the intellectual history of intersectionality needs to be handled with seriousness, integrity, and consideration for the political and theoretical objectives that formed its foundation.

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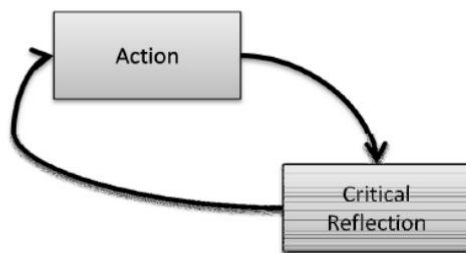
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8. Appendices

Appendix A: The Action Research Process

According to Dick & February (2002) action research is a process that is action orientated, participative, cyclic, and reflective. Hence, the process is dependent on the level of collaboration and integration because of its cyclical nature (Dick & Kemmis, 1988). Therefore, participants who are affected by the change, are usually part of the action research process and therefore it improves insight and create buy-in for the required change. My interest is rooted in my reality as an activist, an employee, woman of colour and reflective practitioner, therefore a statement that suggest practitioners carry out action, the analyse what worked and what didn't work (Dick & February 2002) resonates with my perspective. This infers that critical reflection can be about the data and the interpretations that the researcher is making from it as depicted by Dick & February (2002) in Figure 35 below illustrating an action research spiral.

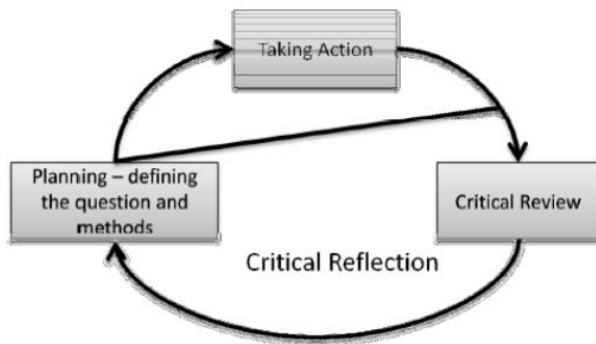
Figure 34 An Action Research Spiral (Dick & February 2002)



Each action research ‘spiral’ depicted, gradually increases the researcher’s knowledge of the original research question. Hence, action research can therefore be both flexible and rigorous at the same time. This is achieved by commencing the process with a fairly “loose” design, that because enriched as the researchers understanding of the situation begins to develop. This means the research questions for each cycle becomes more precis (Dick & February 2002).

This approach is reflected in the alternative diagram that reflects the action research spiral as depicted in Figure 36.

Figure 35 An Alternative Way of Thinking about the Action Research Spiral (Dick & February 2002)



Rigour in action research is derived from the involvement of all relevant parties, as well as critical reflection in each cycle (Dick, 2002). Action research is essentially a series of cycles of reflection, planning and action. Carr and Kemmis (1986, p.136) also highlight Habermas⁴ conception of knowledge-constitutive interests as reflected in table I that is used as the starting point to justify action research (Garth Benson, 1989).

Table 8 Three Kinds of Human Interest and Knowledge as Identified by Habermas

Interest	Knowledge	Medium	Science
Technical	Instrumental (causal explanation)	Work	Empirical, analytical, or natural science
Practical	practical (Understanding)	Language	Hermeneutic or "interpretive" science
Emancipatory	Emancipatory (reflection)	Power	Critical Science

Source: From Carr and Kemmis (1986, p.136)

As indicated in Table 9 above, knowledge is understood in a critical theoretical context as taking forms of causal explanation, of practical understanding and of critical reflection which

⁴ Habermas' main claim was that the knowledge of scientific progress is guided by three types of knowledge constitutive interests-technical, practical, and emancipatory.

in turn corresponds to human interests that are technical, practical, and emancipatory (Friesen, 2017).

My application of action research in the development of my conceptual framework is motivated by the need to improve my knowledge base and deepen understanding of the mechanisms that impact the phenomenon of interest. This will not only represent my knowledge contribution but also serve to enrich my positionality as a social activist, and development professional in line with claims made by Herr and Anderson's (2005) continuum of positionality. Action research as a methodology for developing my conceptual framework is also compatible with research philosophical perspectives as previously discussed and will elaborate on in the next section.

Action Research and Critical Realism

Action research and critical realism essentially postulates to understand the social world is not enough and that change is important, to further human well-being (Coghlan & Brydin-Miller, 2014). The pursuit of change requires reflection and therefore action research is described as a self-reflective practice which involves individuals or practitioners reflecting on their own work. This self-reflection is a key element within action research and allows researchers to plan what changes can be made, implement these changes, and then reflect once again. McNiff (2002, p. 26) points out that, "action researchers are real people in real situations" who ask the question how can I improve or change what I am doing? (Vaccarino et al., 2007).

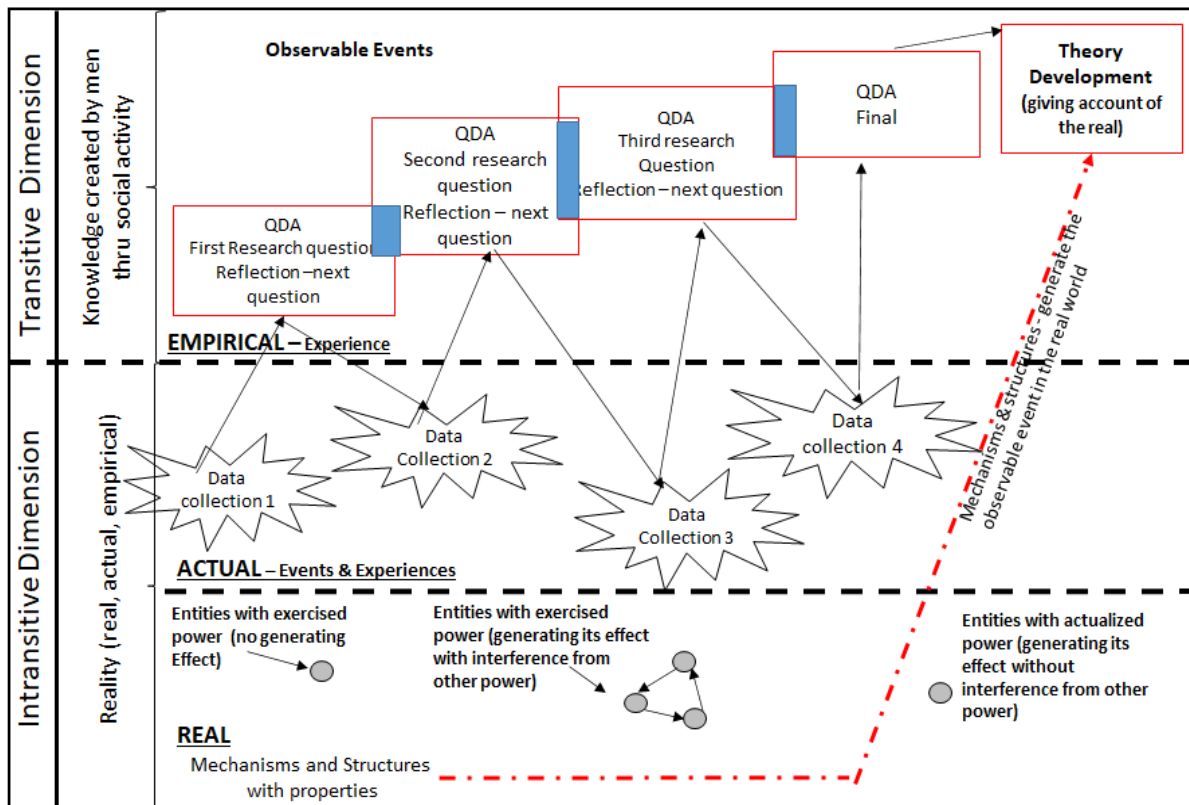
Action research being closely linked to practice suggests that theory should be contextually relevant which presupposes interpretation of the "real" which resonates with my ontological position. McNiff stated that action researchers "try to find ways of accommodating multiple values perspectives." (McNiff, 2002). This is consistent with the critical realist view that there are multiple interpretations of reality and that there is no single truth.

Action research is constructivist and recognizes that individuals develop their ideas based on previous experience and knowledge (Dick & Kemmis, 1988). Carr and Kemmis (1986) also highlight Habermas⁵ conception of knowledge-constitutive interests as the starting point to justify action research (Garth Benson, 1989). Based on the above aspects highlighted, action

⁵ Habermas' main claim was that the knowledge of scientific progress is guided by three types of knowledge constitutive interests-technical, practical, and emancipatory.

research is a suitable methodology for developing my conceptual framework for this study and therefore the following diagram in Figure 37, is an illustration of how action research can integrate with critical realism.

Figure 36 Integration of Grounded theory and Critical Realism



Source: Integration of Grounded theory and Critical Realism as adapted from (Shelley, 2014)

In Figure 36 above, the stratified nature of science is depicted through the identification of the real, actual, and empirical. The cyclical nature of action research is illustrated through the consecutive cycles of data gathering in the actual, followed by analysis in the empirical.

These are concluded with the identification of the final categories and theory development. An Action Research Theory thus aims to give an account of the ‘real’ as a depiction of the causal mechanism that generates the observed phenomena.

Appendix B: Proposition Log

Business Sustainability a threat to gender equity and transformation	Organisational culture a barrier to advancement for women in leadership	Institutionalisation of pro gender policy framework, controls, and processes	Self-efficacy	Leadership credibility	Influence of internal group political agendas	Promoting a culture of inclusiveness and learning
No ablution facilities due to financial constraints	Segregated, based on preferential treatment and not self-worth	Victimisation based on qualification and experience	The right attitude and capability shape the way women are perceived.	Leadership culture defines the environment	Internal women politics and the negative influence of this clique mentality	for me, it was more learning from me from my peers.
Shift from being productive space to a racial place	Resistance to change evidenced using Afrikaans, refusing Eskom sports membership etc	Inconsistent application of policy	Emotional maturity and the right mindset help to tolerate prejudice behaviours	Leadership focus is on maintaining good reputation	There is power beyond the individual who belongs to a group	there are also a lot of women who are in management positions because of accelerated development initiatives.
Transformation requires organisational commitment and resources	People driven by individual prejudice and perceptions	Discriminatory implementation of the Eskom policy framework	Embracing universal values promotes tolerates	Decision makers still too caught up in machoness, power play and floating egos	Cultural factors influence group affiliation	they don't get to look at building talent effectively or addressing skills shortages
Socio-political and legislative pressure/context	Coping with direct and indirect discrimination	Lack of justifiable and equitable implementation of policy	Self-management, determination and personal drive are key attributes to help cope with prejudice behaviours	Issues not racism or sexism, but deeper issues of corruption compromises credibility	You align yourself to a group that will benefit you, groups provide a sense of belonging	Programmes not well informed by business requirements
Eskom an institutional agent for social justice	Organisation mainly white male dominated	Policy designed primarily focus on a legislative perspective as opposed to human interaction or behavioural perspective	Your mind is your biggest tool	Abusing the position of power by some leaders to bully female colleagues	Pace of advancement is based on the group you belong to	The good intention to have these initiatives are good but only as far as achieving these numbers, the casing point is RPL and the way this programme was implemented
Managing perceptions, fallacies, and expectations (transformation)	Whites' preferential treatment	Inefficiencies within the recruitment process lends itself to criticism of being a paper exercise or people are handpicked based on favouritism	Muster courage to confront discriminatory behaviour	Professional jealousy among leaders	Often those who feel overpowered join groups to listen to them	Managers not sufficiently capacitated to deal with diversity issues and moreover no consequence management

Appendix C: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule (Cycle 1,2,3)									
		Year appointed	Business Unit	Province	Gender	Tech/Non Tech Roles	Race	Stakeholder Group	Date of Interview conducted
1	Interviewee 1	2003	Distribution	Western Cape	Female	Technical	Black Coloured	Employee	2018/03/22
2	Interviewee 2	2001	Generation	Western Cape	Female	Technical	Black African	Employee	2018/06/11
3	Interviewee 3	1981	Generation	Western Cape	Female	Non Technical	Black Coloured	Former Employee	2018/03/21
4	Interviewee 4	1983	Distribution	Western Cape	Female	Non Technical	Black Coloured	Employee	2018/10/19
5	Interviewee 5	1995	Corporate Affairs	Gauteng (MWP)	Female	Non Technical	Black Coloured	Employee	2018/03/21
6	Interviewee 6	1997	HR Division	Gauteng (EAL)	Female	Non Technical	Black Coloured	Former Employee	2018/03/21
7	Interviewee 7	1994	Commercial	Gauteng (MWP)	Female	Non Technical	Black African	Employee	2018/08/20
8	Interviewee 8	2013	Distribution	Western Cape	Female	Non Technical	Black Indian	Employee	2019/07/31
9	Interviewee 9	1997	Commercial	Gauteng (MWP)	Female	Non Technical	Black African	Employee	2019/08/06
10	Interviewee 10	2006	Assurance & For	Gauteng (MWP)	Female	Technical	Black African	Employee	2019/09/07
11	Interviewee 11	1991	Distribution	Western Cape	Female	Non Technical	Black Coloured	Employee	2019/09/16
12	Interviewee 12	2000	Commercial	Limpopo (Medupi)	Female	Non Technical	Black African	Employee	2019/09/17
13	Interviewee 13	2017	Distribution	Northern Cape	Female	Technical	Black African	Employee	2019/10/08
14	Interviewee 14	n/a	HR Division	MWP	Male	Non Technical	White	SME	2018/08/21
15	Interviewee 15	n/a	HR Division	MWP	Male	Non Technical	White	SME	29/8/2019
16	Interviewee 16	n/a	HR Division	MWP	Male	Non Technical	Black African	SME	12/9/2019
17	Interviewee 17	n/a	NUM	Gauteng	Female	Non Technical	Black African	SME	24/9/2019
18	Interviewee 18	n/a	Corporate Affairs	Gauteng	Female	Non Technical	Black African	SME	2019/09/07
19	Interviewee 19	n/a	HR Division/NUM	MWP	Male	Non Technical	Black African	SME	19/9/2019
20	Interviewee 20	n/a	HR Division	Gauteng	Female	Non Technical	White	SME	2018/08/20

Appendix D: Letter of Consent



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
Igniting Knowledge and Opportunity



INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS

Name of Project:

PhD Research Study: The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa

I, _____, agree to be interviewed for the project entitled:

The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa which is being produced by Tania Bowers of University of Cape Town.

I certify that I have been told of the confidentiality of information collected for this project and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in one or more electronically recorded interviews for this project. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous, and that the results of this study may be published in an academic journal or book.

I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for this study.

Signature of Interviewee Date _____

If you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions or have comments or complaints about your treatment in this study, contact:

*University of Cape Town
Ethics department*

Cc: signed copy to interview.



Final Consent Form

PhD Research Topic: The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa

Dear Participant:

This form gives us final authorization to use material from your interview in "The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa"

A draft of these materials should have been presented to you for your review, correction, or modification. You may grant use rights for this draft "as is," or with the modifications you specify, if any. See "Conditions" at the bottom of the form

I, _____, hereby grant the right to use information from recordings and or notes taken in interviews of me, to Tania Bowers, and as presented to me as a draft copy. I understand that the interview records will be kept by the interviewer and the project, and that the information contained in the interviews may be used in materials to be made available to the general public.

_____ *By initialing here, I also agree to be identified by name in the project and related materials.*

_____ *By initialing here, I also agree to be identified by photograph in the project and related materials.*

_____ Date: _____
 Signature of Interviewee

_____ Date: _____
 Signature of Interviewer

The following conditions limit the release of information, as agreed between the interviewer and the interviewee:

Final Consent Form

Appendix E: Semi structured interview questions

Interview Questionnaire

- 1 Please tell me about yourself:
 - a. When did you join Eskom
 - b. Which business unit (dept./group) are you currently with
 - c. Which province are you currently based in?
 - d. What role or position do you hold in Eskom?
- 2 Since the time you have joined Eskom, how would you describe the Eskom leadership culture toward race and gender diversity issues.
- 3 Have you ever felt prejudiced or discriminated against because of race or gender issues? Tell us about it>>>>>
- 4 Do you think there is still traces of racial or gender prejudice in Eskom? If so, how do you see it playing itself out?
- 5 Can you identify with different groupings in Eskom, what are they and do you think there are still tensions among these.
- 6 Do you think these tensions can influence you personally and how? (Direct and indirect)
- 7 The diversity policies and related procedures that existed within the organisation, do you think they provided an adequate framework to manage the differences and to promote social coherence.
- 8 When thinking about race and gender issues, how would you describe the organisational culture terms of:
 - *Remuneration and Benefits,*
 - *Relationships, camaraderie*
 - *Working conditions*
 - *Safety & Health protection*
 - *Work content, responsibility*
 - *Sexual harassment*
 - *Abuse issues on the job*
 - *Work/home balance*
 - *Opportunity, achievement, growth*
 - *Advancement, further education, responsibility*
 - *Management and supervision*
 - *Leadership support*

- *Enabling environment*
- *Respect/recognition from management or others*

- 9 How do you think the world views or perceives diversity in Eskom, and do you think it is a true reflection?
- 10 Do you recall some of the diversity initiatives/interventions that were put in place?
- 11 Do you think these programmes were or are still effective? Please let us discuss.
- 12 How is Eskom faring about gender equity across different levels: general employees, lower management, middle management, senior management, and board level?
- 13 Do you have any statistics that show the progress over the past few years?
- 14 Are their targets that need to be reached and how has Eskom fared with reaching those targets?
- 15 If they have not reached their targets, what are the reasons they put forward? If they have reached their targets, to what do they attribute this?
- 16 What still needs to be done to promote gender equity at Eskom?

Appendix F: Online Questionnaire/Survey

Questionnaire

Dear Colleague,

This questionnaire serves to solicit your views on how perceptions about race and gender issues affect the advancement of black women in Eskom at management level.

Completion of this questionnaire is by informed consent and therefore we would welcome your participation requesting 5 minutes of your time to complete this survey.

Thank You!

[†] Required

Demographic details

Question 1 - What is your Gender? *

Male

Female

Other: _____

Question 2 - How long have you been employed with Eskom? *

- 0-5 yrs
- 6-10 yrs
- 11-15 yrs
- 16-20 yrs
- 20 yrs+

Question 3 - Which business unit do you work in? *

- Distribution
- Transmission
- Generation Human
- Resources Finance
- Commercial
- Audit and Forensics
- Information Technology
- Legal & Compliance
- Corporate Affairs Group
- Technology Group
- Capital
- Other: _____

Question 4 - What is your racial identity? *

- African
- Coloured
- Indian
- White
- Other

Question 5 - Age Group *

- <20
- 20-29
- 30-49
- 50-59
- 60+

Question 6 - In which Province do you reside? *

- WC
- NC
- EC
- MP
- LP
- GP
- KZN
- FS
- NW
-

Question 7 - What is your highest qualification? *

- Matric
- Diploma/Degree
- Honours
- Masters
- Phd

Diversity Management

Question 8 - Which issue/s do you think mostly affect employees within your immediate work environment?

- Race
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Disability

Question 9 *

Leadership Culture	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
How would you rate leadership diversity in terms of race and gender representation at management level (MPS bands)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How would you rate leadership diversity in terms of race and gender representation at executive level (E bands)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How would you rate the leadership culture and support towards race and gender issues in Eskom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Question 10*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Yes	No	Not Really
Have you personally been affected by a race or gender issue in the workplace?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should you be affected by a race or gender issue, would you feel comfortable to report this to management?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think Eskom's policies on diversity or employment equity are sufficient to address race and gender challenges in the workplace?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think these policies and procedures on diversity or employment equity promotes an inclusive culture?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think these policies and procedures on employment equity are fairly and consistently applied fairly throughout the business?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Organisational Culture

Question 11 - How would describe the organisational culture from a race and gender perspective wrt: *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Fair	Good	Unfair	Bad	Very Bad
Remuneration and Benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe working conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevention and management of Sexual Harassment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevention and management of workplace bullying	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equal opportunity for growth, promotion, and exposure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work life Balance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job content and support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advancement, further education, responsibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect/recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Diversity Awareness and Development Initiatives

Question 12 - Have you ever been exposed to diversity awareness and training since you joined Eskom? *

Yes

No

Question 13 -Do you think these awareness programmes are effective? *

Yes

No

Google Forms

Appendix G: Memo to Group Executive Human Resources Requesting Permission to conduct study and the Affirmative Response Thereto



MEMORANDUM

To: Ms Elsie Pule, Group Executive, HR Reference

From: Ms Tania Bowers, Middle Manager-Commercial Version: 01
Group Commercial

Date: 10 September 2019

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION AND SECURITY CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY
AS PART OF FURTHER STUDIES**

PURPOSE

1. This memorandum serves as ethical clearance, confirmation of Eskom's rights and security clearance for the Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration study undertaken by Tania Bowers under research topic: "The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa".

BACKGROUND

2. It must be noted that this general clearance is for a limited period only, which will be for the period September 2019 to February 2020.
3. This permission in no way waives Eskom's rights in terms of Intellectual Property, Publication and Copyright as reflected in the agreement reached between Eskom and the University of Cape Town, Graduate School of Business of which said agreement is recorded and incorporated into the *Ethical Clearance: Permission And Security Clearance Letter To Conduct The Study For, "The influence of social identity conflicts on gender imbalances within a state owned company in South Africa"*, as attached to this memo for approval by the Group Executive Human Resources.

Head Office
Tel +27 11 500 2111
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd Reg No 380291522308

PERMISSION AND SECURITY CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AS PART OF FURTHER STUDIES

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

4. Tania Bowers has followed due internal processes in terms of gaining permission for this research.

DISCUSSION

5. Not applicable

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. Eskom approval received for tuition only.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

7. Indicate any budget implications for Eskom. (*Not paid for by Eskom, was this part of the approved budget?*)

RECOMMENDATION


8. We humbly request your approval to give the employee permission to conduct the research topic within the Eskom environment.

Compiled by:

Tania Bowers
MIDDLE MANAGER - COMMERCIAL
05 September 2019

PERMISSION AND SECURITY CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AS PART OF FURTHER STUDIES


Recommended/Not recommended


Gusman Abinpahe
SENIOR MANAGER (ACTING)
SDL & I
Date: 18/09/19


Recommended/Not recommended


Mochegoro Sals
HUMAN RESOURCE BUSINESS
PARTNER
Date:

Recommended/Not recommended


Doretha Molo
CORP SPECIALIST HUMAN RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE GE HR
Date: 26/09/2019

Recommended/Not recommended


Ms. Shifengano
Sally Tshibangano
DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVE
Date: 4/10/2019

Approved/Not approved


M. Pula
GROUP EXECUTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES
Date: 7/10/2019

Dorcas Moloi
**SENIOR MANAGER:
OFFICE OF GE:HR**

Dear Dorcas

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

In terms of the powers vested in me by the Group Chief Executive, I hereby appoint you to stand in as Group Executive: Human Resources with full delegation of authority effective from the 7th of October to the 11th of October 2019 both days inclusive.

For more enquiries please contact Elsie Pule on 011 516 7017 email puleem@eskom.co.za

Please acknowledge ^{received} ~~acceptance~~ hereof. 



Jabu Mabusa
ACTING GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Date:

Noted By:



Elsie Pule
GROUP EXECUTIVE: HR
Date: 4/10/2019.

Accepted / Decline



Dorcas Moloi
SENIOR MANAGER: HR
Date: 7/10/2019

Group Human Resources
Mogwatt Park, Maxwell Drive, Sunninghill Sandton
P O Box 1091, Johannesburg 2000 SA
Tel +27 11 516 7017 www.eskom.co.za

Eskom Holdings SOC Limited Reg No 2002015827/09

Appendix H: Concept Analysis

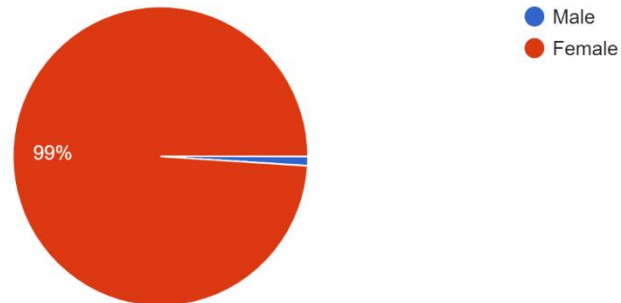
Concept Analysis -1 Walker & Avant		
1	Concept Name:	Business sustainability a threat to gender equity and transformation
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept	To create awareness and encourage a balanced approach towards reconciling financial, operational and transformation objectives in a manner that is responsible, inclusive, ethical, and profitable. Being sustainable allows businesses to be competitive in the global marketplace and financial, social, and environmental concerns should be considered. Financial concerns include taking a long-term view of profitability and avoiding decisions that increase profits but have bigger costs down the road.
3	Identify of the uses of the concept	To inform and drive a sustainability of business in all aspects of its financial, operational, and transformational goals
4	Determine the defining attributes	Credible leadership, balance business and social objectives, standardisation of policy and procedure, promotion of inclusiveness and learning
5	Construct a model case	
6	Construct borderline, related, contrary, invented, and legitimate cases	
7	Identify antecedents	financial challenges, unethical leadership, inconsistent application of policy and practice etc; discriminatory practices
8	Identify consequences	Noncompliance to transformation legislative framework, internal conflict and tensions, financial constraints, poor organisational performance
9	Define empirical referents	
Concept 2		
1	Concept Name:	Organisational Culture a barrier to advancement of women in leadership
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept	To identify organisational policy and practice that impacts the growth and advancement of women in organisations. This includes the impact of discriminatory practices
3	Identify of the uses of the concept	To create awareness and identify practices that has a negative impact or maybe discriminatory towards the advancement of women
4	Determine the defining attributes	Inter-Intra group dynamics, segregation, preferential treatment, direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, resistance to change, racial tension, stigmatisation and stereotypes, inefficiencies
5	Construct a model case	
6	Construct borderline, related, contrary, invented, and legitimate cases	
7	Identify antecedents	Racial prejudice, sexism, discriminatory behaviour and practices preferential treatment, compliance vs authentic change, persistent inequality, exclusiveness
8	Identify consequences	Noncompliance; gender imbalance, gender regression, anti-gender practices, no social change
9	Define empirical referents	
Concept Analysis 3		
1	Concept Name:	Institutionalisation of pro gender policy framework, controls and processes
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept	To promote institutionalisation of pro gender policies and procedures
3	Identify of the uses of the concept	To promote and advance workplace economic and social justice
4	Determine the defining attributes	Persistent victimisation and discrimination of women ,inconsistent application of employment equity practices e.g inefficiencies within the recruitment process, poor performance mangement and poor skills development or human resource development practices
5	Construct a model case	
6	Construct borderline , related , contrary, invented, and legitimate cases	
7	Identify antecedents	EE&SD Awareness, effective leadership/ management support, competent HR practitioners and leaders, realistic target setting
8	Identify consequences	Incompetent staff and non compliance in terms of governments developmental objectives, backlash from unions
9	Define empirical referents	

Concept 4	
1	Concept Name: Self efficacy
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept To describe how individuals had to exert control and adapt their behaviour in an effort to cope within an environment charged with discrimination.
3	Identify of the uses of the concept The concept illuminates the importance of women having the right attitude, mindset and beliefs to adapt under different circumstances
4	Determine the defining attributes Emotional maturity, tolerance, self magement, determination, motivation, courage, focus, knowledge and skills
5	Construct a model case
6	Construct borderline , related , contrary, invented, and legitimate cases
7	Identify antecedents Victimisation, discrimination, criticism, lack of fairness and transparency, inconsistent application of policy, preference, favouritism etc
8	Identify consequences Demotivation, low self esteem, incompetence, poor performance, job dissatisfaction or bordon
9	Define empirical referents
Concept 5	
1	Concept Name: Leadership Credibility
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept "The quality or power of inspiring belief or being accepted as trustworthy, real, or honest". Establishing Leadership credibility must start first with Personal Credibility, which is about trust, respect, and being believable and this is especially important for managers.
3	Identify of the uses of the concept To emphasize quality leadership and the impact of their trustworthiness, integrity and ability to influence .
4	Determine the defining attributes Integrity, ethics, honesty, respect and power of influence.
5	Construct a model case
6	Construct borderline , related , contrary, invented, and legitimate cases
7	Identify antecedents For a leader to have credibility they first need to have personal credibility, which is about trust, respect, and being believable.
8	Identify consequences level of credibility will determine the leaderships level of influence and character as viewed by others
9	Define empirical referents
Concept 6	
1	Concept Name: Influence of internal group political agendas
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept The influence political agendas refers to the influence of issues or programmes that favors certain groups or people
3	Identify of the uses of the concept To describe the influence or expectations of individuals or cultural groups to benefit a individual or members of a group
4	Determine the defining attributes political connections, political camps, factions, interest groups, cliques, cronyism, inner circles, social identity groups based on race, gender and ethnicity
5	Construct a model case
6	Construct borderline , related , contrary, invented, and legitimate cases
7	Identify antecedents Masculinity, gender, racial or ethnic tension
8	Identify consequences increased workplace tensions, grievances, victimisation, sidelining, favouritism etc
9	Define empirical referents
Concept 7	
1	Concept Name: Buiding a culture of inclusiveness
2	Aim or Purpose of Concept An inclusive culture indicates a climate in which respect, equity, and positive recognition of differences are all cultivated, and the social and institutional response to disability poses no barrier to a positive employment experience.
3	Identify of the uses of the concept An Inclusive culture enables a Diverse Workplace to Thrive
4	Determine the defining attributes respect, equity, and positive recognition of differences are all cultivated, and the social and institutional response to disability poses no barrier to a positive employment experience.
5	Construct a model case
6	Construct borderline , related , contrary, invented, and legitimate cases
7	Identify antecedents Mutual respect, policy framework, awareness programmes
8	Identify consequences Non inclusiveness can create reputatonal risks
9	Define empirical referents

Appendix I: Report from Google Forms

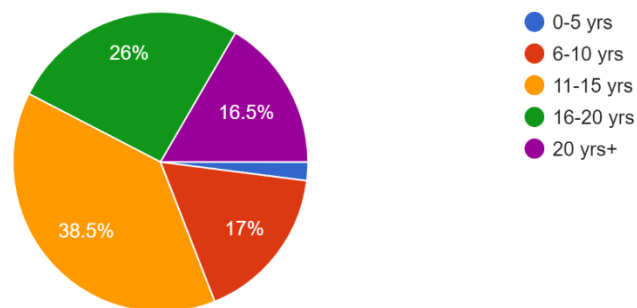
Question 1 - What is your Gender?

200 responses



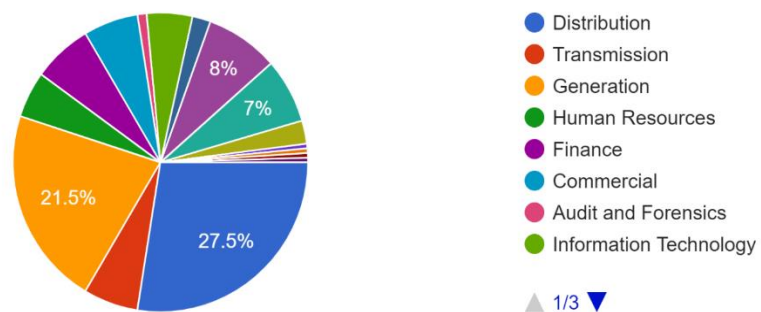
Question 2 - How long have you been employed with Eskom?

200 responses



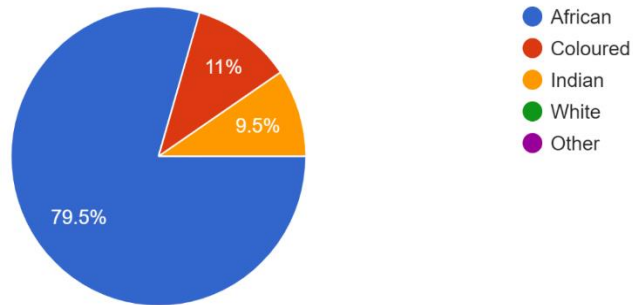
Question 3 - Which business unit do you work in?

200 responses



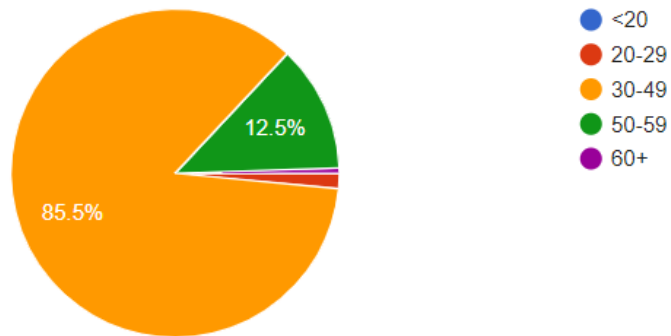
Question 4 - What is your racial identity ?

200 responses



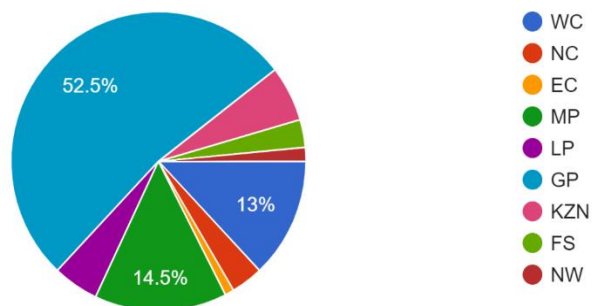
Question 5 - Age Group

200 responses



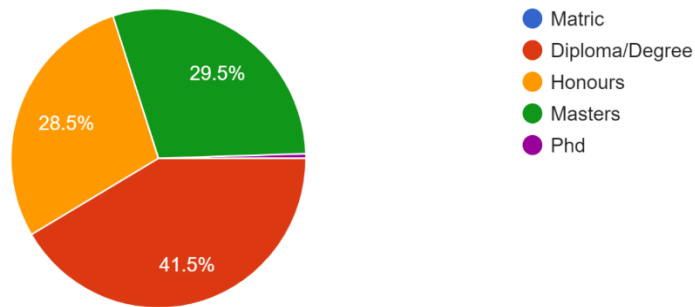
Question 6 - In which Province do you reside?

200 responses



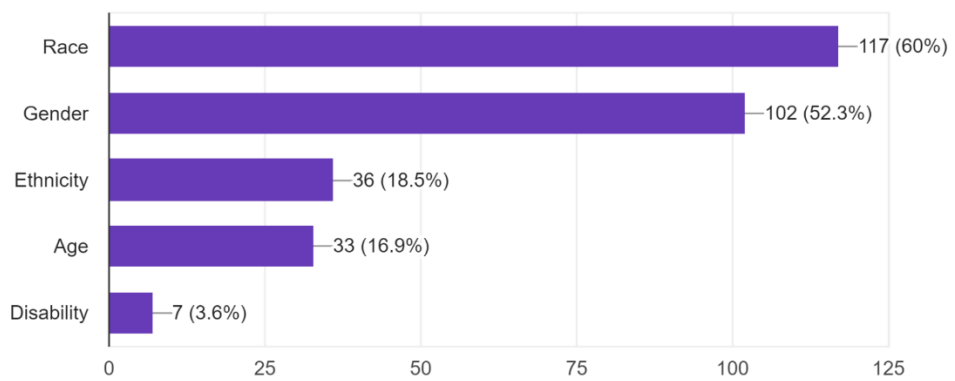
Question 7 - What is your highest qualification?

200 responses

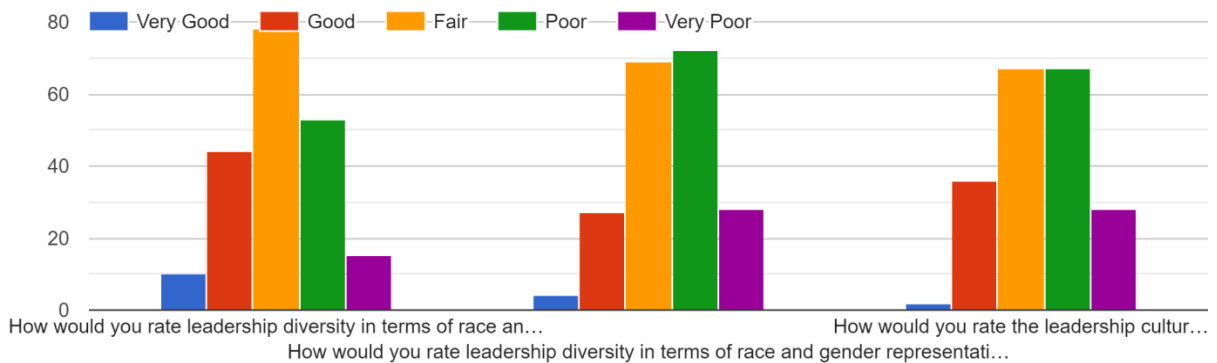


Question 8 - Which issue/s do you think mostly affect employees within your immediate work environment?

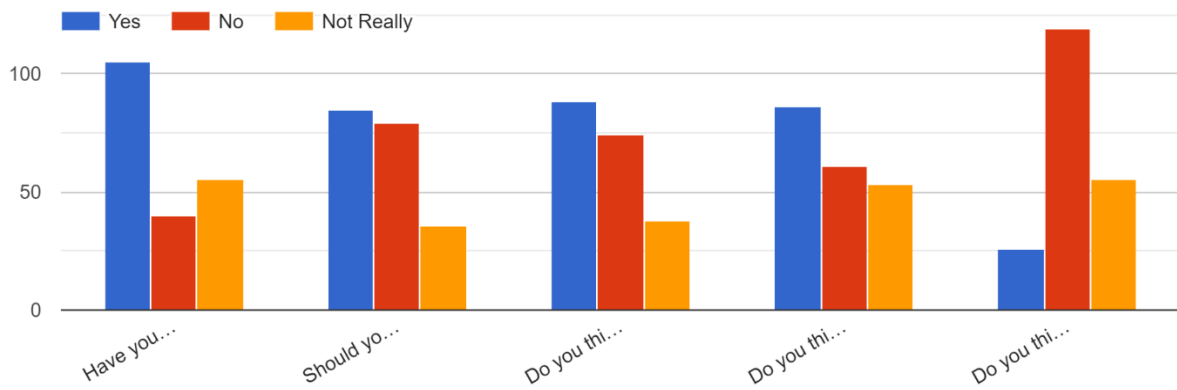
195 responses



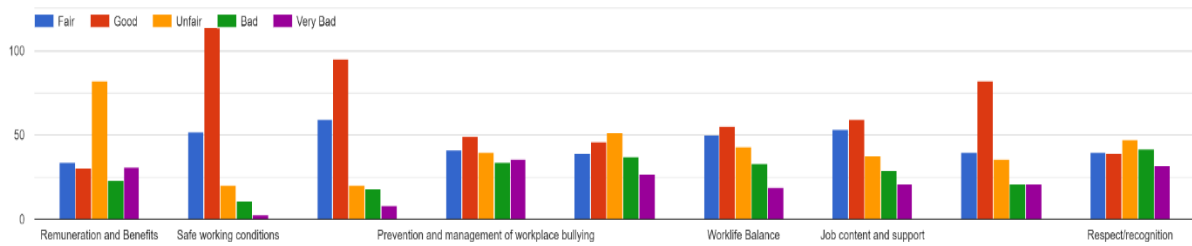
Question 9



Question 10

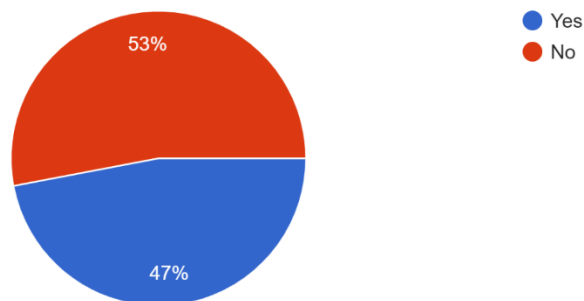


Question 11 - How would describe the organisational culture from a race and gender perspective wrt:

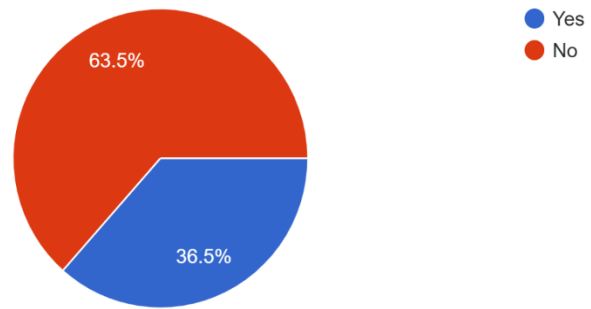


Question 12 - Have you ever been exposed to diversity awareness and training since you joined Eskom?

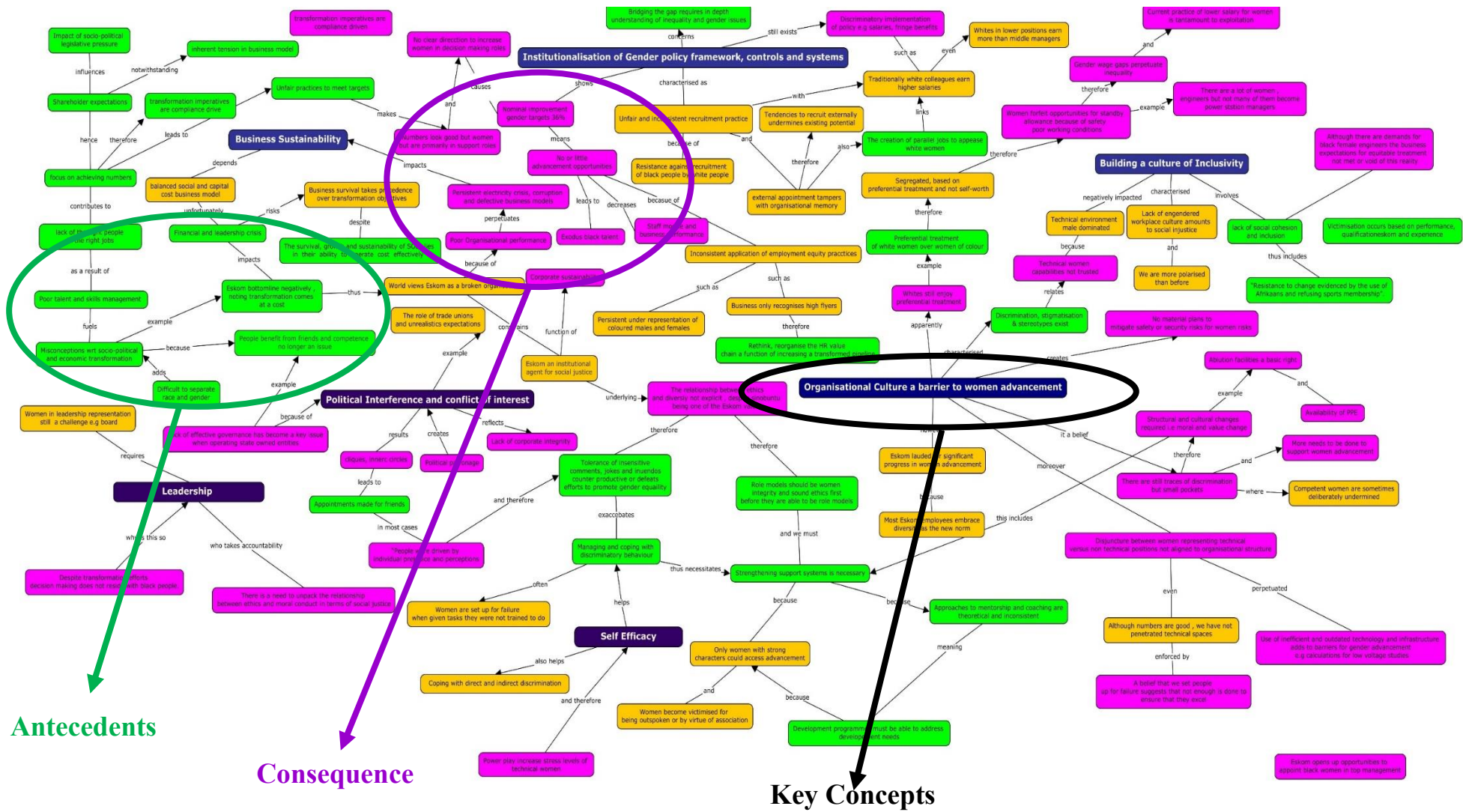
200 responses



Question 13 -Do you think these awareness programmes are effective?
200 responses



Appendix J: Concept Maps



Appendix K: Transformation Paradigms in Eskom

