



**Exploring the inclusion of women in  
work-life policy- and practice-making and  
its influence on career-advancement  
decisions at a State-Owned Entity**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
BU	Bargaining Unit
CEE	Commission for Employment Equity
EAP	Economically Active Population
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EEC	Employment Equity Committee
LRA	Labour Relations Act
NBU	Non-Bargaining Unit
SOE	State-Owned Entity
TPT	Transnet Port Terminals

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## **ABSTRACT - RESTRICTED**

This study explored the experiences and perceptions of women employees' work-life integration, inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making, and its influence on their career-advancement choices at Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), an operating division of Transnet Ltd, a State-Owned Entity in South Africa. The main research question was: “What role does inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making and subsequent work-life integration practices play for women employees when making career-advancement choices?” Vast literature is available on women in the workplace and work-life perceptions. However, there is little exploration of this topic within a State-Owned Entity setting, where women are affiliated to two distinctive groups, namely, the Bargaining Unit (trade unions with collective bargaining power) and Non-Bargaining Unit (management employees without collective bargaining power). The research was conducted using a multi-method qualitative approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with women employees and managers of women employees to identify the discourses that construct their perceptions of women's inclusion in work-life policy- and practice- making, work-life experiences, and their influence on career-advancement choices. Also, selected policies were analysed to understand how these policies shaped work life and employment equity at the organisation. Some of the key findings of the study include:

- Due to collective bargaining and resultant employee related policies, women in the Non-Bargaining Unit did not receive some of the same work-life benefits that their Bargaining Unit colleagues enjoyed. This indicates a ‘union or collective bargaining gap’ – where women in the same organisation who have the same needs receive different benefits due to their collective bargaining status.
- Participants expressed their desire to be present and meet their responsibilities in both the work and life spheres. This suggests a new construct of perhaps “work-life satisfaction”.
- Family-supportive managers was found to be a key positive influence in participants work-life satisfaction.

The study concludes with a praxis model, identifying positive elements that are in place at the organisation and suggesting initiatives to build on these to create an inclusive environment where women employees can influence work-life policy- and practice-making and make positive career-advancement choices at the organisation.

Keywords: work-life satisfaction, policies, inclusion, career, Transnet

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Introduction and background**

South Africa has a long history of injustice, characterised by the apartheid era. Since establishing democracy in 1994, focused efforts have been made in addressing the unfair discrimination of the apartheid government against disadvantaged groups in South Africa and promoting equality for all citizens. Stemming from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), a vast array of legislation, committees, and plans, like the Employment Equity Act, the Commission for Employment Equity and the National Development Plan 2030 have been put in place to address the discrimination and inequality that prevailed in the country. Of the designated groups – defined in the Employment Equity Act as black people, women and people with disabilities; black people are defined as Africans, Coloureds and Indians – women make up 45.4% of the economically active population (EAP) (DEL, 2020). This includes people between 15–64 years old who are either employed or unemployed, and who are seeking employment. Despite the large portion of the EAP made up of women, women are still underrepresented in South African organisations (this is analysed further in Chapter Four). However, progress in employing women has been made, particularly in the government and State-Owned Entities (SOEs).

This is not surprising, as the government and SOEs are mandated with achieving the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030. As leaders in transformation, it is logical to assume that the government and SOEs are also leaders in forward-thinking human resource practices that are needed to attain transformation in a meaningful way. Practices ought to be inclusive and ensure that achievement of the transformation targets is not merely based on numbers, but on holistic approaches, that consider many aspects of the women employees' wellbeing, thereby ensuring that the needs of women employees are met.

#### ***1.1.1 Inclusive innovation addressing the challenge***

According to George et al. (2019, p. 2), “inclusion implies that a concerted effort is required to bring in the ‘excluded’, marginalised or disenfranchised. Inclusion implies that there are structural and systemic barriers that reinforce this exclusion, making it challenging to be inclusive”. Furthermore, George et al. (2012, p. 3) define inclusive innovation as “the development and implementation of new ideas which

aspire to create opportunities that enhance social and economic wellbeing for disenfranchised members of society".

Although progress has been made in the representation of women (one of the designated marginalised groups) in the workforce, the Commission for Employment Equity Report (DEL, 2020) reveals that women are not fairly represented in the top management, senior management, semi-skilled and unskilled employment levels. While inclusive innovation addresses the socio-economic circumstances of disenfranchised members of society, and this research focuses on working women who have improved their socio-economic standing, this research questions the extent to which this socio-economic standing is achieved holistically and inclusively for women (considering the challenge of work-family integration and career choices). This research study questions and explores whether the organisation under review – Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) – is making the systemic organisational changes to address the aspect of inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and work-family challenges faced by women in the workplace. The findings of this study serve to assist the organisation to develop new policy directives to achieve the transformation of including women, as it helps to address the possible blind spot of the inclusion of women.

Traditionally, challenges pertaining to women in the workplace, have been addressed through an organisational management approach. However, inclusive innovation can be used to approach this issue through a different lens and can provide a robust contribution to the paradigm of women in the workplace. The innovation impacts on women in the workplace and assists in both achieving transformation targets and ensuring the wellbeing of women employees.

### ***1.1.2 Knowledge context***

The research is explorative in nature and was used to study the inclusion of women in the organisation's work-life policy-making, and its influence on women's career choices. It is not expected that the research will provide conclusive results but rather contribute to a better understanding of the problem. The research adds to existing knowledge, as the SOE sector is seldom researched in terms of the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on women's career-advancement choices. For purposes of this study, career-advancement choices refer to deciding to join the organisation or seeking promotion at the organisation. The study informs innovative forms of praxis through new organisational practices for women's inclusion.

## 1.2 Research aims and objectives

While the research area concentrates on women in the workplace, the focus is on work-life policies at the organisation, the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making, work-life practices for these women and the environment this creates for women to make career-advancement choices. Although much research has been done on these topics, there is the need to understand how work-life integration practices supporting women in the workplace create a climate where women employees at all levels of employment feel included and empowered to make career-advancement choices in the context of a South African State-Owned Entity. For purposes of this thesis, inclusion of women in the workplace is defined as the ability of a woman to use her voice confidently and effectively, without the fear of discrimination, to achieve her desired results towards gender equality.

This study was guided by the following research objectives:

- determining the progress made in increasing the number of women employed within organisations in South Africa and abroad and the societal and personal outcomes of such;
- understanding work-life conflict and what ‘work-life integration’ practices mean;
- understanding the relationship between work-life integration practices and the employment of women and exploring other factors that support work-life integration;
- discovering whether women are included in work-life policy-making and the role that work-life integration practices play in creating a climate where women employees at all levels of employment feel empowered to make career choices;

The research question was:

What role does inclusion in work-life policy-making and subsequent work-life integration practices play for women employees when making career advancement decisions?

To best understand this complex phenomenon, the main research question was deconstructed into the following sub-questions:

- How do women employees and managers define and experience work-life integration?
- What is the experience of women employees concerning inclusion in work-life policy-making?
- How does/would inclusion in work-life policy-making influence their career choices?

This study aimed to assist the organisation under review – Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) – to better understand women employees’ experience of inclusion and work-life integration and its influence on their career decisions. The chapter presenting the recommendations incorporates a praxis model to assist the organisation to create an environment that includes women in work-life policy- and practice-making and possibly achieve its transformation targets with regards to women in a more holistic way.

This study area was researchable as there was sufficient literature available on women in the workplace, work-life integration practices and experiences, and career choices and experiences for women employees. The research was conducted as a multi-method qualitative study. Participants were accessed in-person or virtually over a reasonable length of time and at a minimal cost. The research was constrained in scope to the extent that the case was limited to one division of Transnet Ltd, namely Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), and research data was gathered qualitatively through semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence.

### **1.3 Conclusion**

Despite the extensive research conducted on women in the workplace, women representation in the workplace remains below required levels. Thus, this qualitative research aims to help address this gap by exploring women employees’ experience of inclusion and work-life integration and its influence on their career decisions. This chapter has provided a brief summary of the thesis.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Globally there has been the traditional view of women as homemakers and caregivers. Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world began to recognise the need for women's empowerment and the many positive contributions that women make to the workplace. The literature review that follows provides an in-depth analysis of studies done on women in the workplace, centring around the various constructs which shape the phenomenon of inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on their career-advancement choices.

#### **2.2 Need for employment of women**

Many organisations have a larger male than female workforce, despite the research advising that organisations which upskill and promote contributions of female employees are most successful (Hewelt & Luce, 2005). According to Esping-Andersen (1999, 2002, as cited in Crompton & Lyonette, 2006) increasing the number of women employees contributes to higher earnings for families and decreased poverty. This view is supported by Gornick and Meyers (2003, as cited in Crompton & Lyonette, 2006) who found that poverty rates were low in Scandinavian families while women's employment rates were high. According to HIRS – a South African organisation that focuses on women's empowerment in the workplace – women managers approach their tasks differently to men, which leads to more consultative decision-making, collaboration, increased focus on personal values and shared workplaces (Garrun, 2004, as cited in Lewis-Enright et al., 2009).

#### **2.3 Global and South African statistics**

In South Africa, the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998) Section 15 (1) requires designated employers to implement policies to increase the representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in their workforce. Section 15 (2)(d), further states that designated groups should be represented at all levels and categories in the organisation. However, it is still rare for women to reach the highest management levels in South Africa (Mathur-Helm, 2005). Mathur-Helm (2005) further argues that the Act itself faces many obstructions, as South African organisations are not welcoming to women. This is evidenced by the results of the Commission for Employment Equity Report (DEL, 2020), which

demonstrates that men constitute 75.6% of top management, 64.7% of senior management, 53.1% of professionally qualified, and 52.3% of technically skilled labour of all employers.

Managa (2013, citing the Council for Higher Education, 2009) found in her study on South African women in academic and research institutions, that only 24% of academics in higher education are women who are professors or associate professors. Higher education is male-dominated and struggles with the retention and promotion of women at top positions globally. According to Higher Education of South Africa (HESA, 2011, as cited in Managa, 2013) women are employed more at lower levels or in administrative roles in higher education institutions.

The prevalence of poor representation of women in the workplace in Africa was demonstrated by the African Human Development Report 2016 – Accelerating Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Africa, when in 2013 only 65% of females over 15 years of age were part of the labour market compared to 77% of men (UNDP, 2016). This gap is further intensified by the gender wage gap between men and women. The gender wage gap, a long-standing discriminator, arises from two factors. One is direct discrimination, where women with the same skills, education and work experience are treated differently due to their sex; the other is indirect discrimination, where women are employed in areas that are closely linked to women’s primary responsibility for home-care work. This is also called the “selection factor”; these “feminised” jobs, like teachers and nurses, are poorly remunerated (UNDP, 2016). Gender stereotypes also lead to women avoiding traditional male-dominated careers, although women can perform just as well as their male counterparts in these professions. These stereotypes hinder women’s career advancement (Napasri & Yukongdi, 2015, and Shrestha, 2016, as cited in (Takawira, 2018).

According to Rampell (2010, as cited in Ones et al., 2018) South Korea has the largest gender wage gap variation, where men earn 30% more than women. Budig and England (2001, as cited in (Ones S. Deniz, Anderson, Neil, Viswesvaran, Chockalingam, Sinangil Kepir, 2018) found that another wage gap exists between women with children and those without, which is worse than the gap between men’s and women’s wages.

In the United States (US), although the labour force participation rate for women increased from 1990 to 2010, it remains behind that for men (Blau & Kahn, 2016). In Europe, Nordic countries lead as Europe’s highest representation of women in the workplace (Darcy et al., 2012). Finland and Norway report employment rates of women at 67.3% and 73.8% respectively (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006).

According to Grant (2000, as cited in Naidoo & Jano, 2012), in Britain, Australia and the US, when compared to their male colleagues, women managers earn less, are single, divorced or are childless or with few children.

In South Africa, female representation at State-Owned Entities (SOEs) has progressed significantly when compared to the private sector. For purposes of this research, the researcher compared female representation at an SOE to the private sector, as SOEs operate most closely to the private sector i.e., SOEs are required to make a profit and operate within established business practices. SOEs have also been compared to private companies in prior research (albeit the research was focused on company financial performance) (Dewenter & Malatesta, 2016; Kabaciński et al., 2020).

**Table 1: Female representation in State-Owned Entities compared to private sector**

<b>Occupational level</b>	<b>State-Owned Entities – Female representation</b>	<b>Private sector – Female representation</b>
Top management	38.1%	23.2%
Senior management	39.1%	33.8%
Professionally qualified	40.3%	41.1%
Skilled	42.2%	40.9%
Semi-skilled	37.5%	42%
Unskilled	49.3%	40%

Source: Department of Employment and Labour (DEL, 2020)

Female representation in SOEs outperformed the private sector in four of the six employment categories – as reported in the Commission for Employment Equity Report (DEL, 2020) – namely, top management, senior management, skilled and unskilled (see Table 1).

**2.4 Work-life conflict, role salience and societal views**

In South Africa, women have been marginalised historically both by government and through socio-cultural doctrines. This multi-faceted discrimination led to women not having equal access to resources

and earnings (Mathur-Helm, 2005). In 2002 the South African government created The Gender Policy Framework to provide a structure and guideline to ensure that women have equal rights and opportunities when laws, policies and procedures are created. Twenty-three years after the introduction of the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998), as more women enter the workforce, many find themselves having to strike a balance between having a partner and raising children, and the demands of their careers. Grady and McCarthy (2008) report in their study of 18 women aged between 37 and 55, that women are still primary caregivers and hold the burden of domestic responsibilities while trying to establish their careers. The number of women employed has increased; however, women shoulder the majority of household and childcare work (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). In a race for economic progression, work demands on employees are increasing as organisations face growing competition. As women have work, domestic and childcare roles, it is challenging for them to meet the increase in work demands (Hochschild, 1997, as cited in Grady & McCarthy, 2008). In their study, White et al., (1992, as cited in Naidoo & Jano, 2012) found that successful women still shouldered domestic responsibility. Even though the majority employed help, women still took the responsibility of supervising the employed help.

Changing economic and social situations have considerably influenced customary family structures, gender-role stereotypes and the separation of home responsibilities (Naidoo, 2002, as cited in Van Aarde & Mostert, 2008, p. 1). Many working women who also have family responsibilities experience increased pressure at work and home, and often daily challenges arise from job commitments that are not in harmony with home responsibilities (Janssen et al., 2004). A study done by Carlson et al., (1998, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) which developed and validated a multi-dimensional measure of work-family conflict, highlighted that their participants' work demands adversely affected family responsibilities more often than family demands adversely affected work responsibilities. This results in women increasingly experiencing work-family/work-life conflict. Work-family conflict can be defined as inter-role conflict where complying with the demands of one of the roles creates difficulty in complying with the demands of the other (Fu & Shaffer, 2002). Another definition for work-family conflict is provided by Roehling et al., (2003, as cited in Crompton & Lyonette, 2006, p. 5), who define it as "the direct result of incompatible pressures from an individual's work and family roles". Burke (2001, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) states that women struggle more than men with work and family conflict. Carlson et al. (1998, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003,) claim that the conflict most experienced is work-parent conflict. (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) found that participants with the youngest children experienced the most conflict. This is supported by findings by Bedeian et al., (1988, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003, p. 79).

Constant interaction and interference between family and work may affect a woman's focus on the job, decrease her satisfaction with work, increase time spent away from work and ultimately hinder her career progression (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 1997, as cited in Van Aarde & Mostert, 2008). Furthermore, a women's ability to balance the demands of work and home affects her physical and mental health as well as her career performance and success (R. Burke, 2001; R. J. Burke & McKeen, 1996; Facione, 1994; Sharma, 1999). In addition, Whitehead and Kotze (2003) state that women's health and wellbeing suffer when life balance practices are lacking or insufficient. These findings however, have been contradicted where some women were energised from having many roles while others thought it was stressful and overwhelming. Further, there are inconsistent trends in the effect of multiple roles on the health and wellbeing of women, as found by (Doress-Worters, 1994) and Hughes and Glinsky (1994, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003, p. 79).

According to (Sandberg, 2013), women experience difficulty in balancing work and home and this is why in middle- to higher income categories, women do not reach the highest job levels in organisations as fast as men do. In South Africa, as evidenced by the Commission for Employment Equity Report 2019-2020 (DEL, 2020), women represent a mere 24.4% of top management positions.

Given the many roles that women have, beliefs and attitudes of society considerably influence how women view the importance of their roles as spouse, mother, caregiver and household chore holder. The basis for a shared understanding of gendered beliefs is role theory, which is concerned with how an individual's behaviour is linked to their social setting. Women consider their meaningfulness in work and home as role salience. According to Naidoo and Jano (2012, p.70), "role salience is the relative importance and commitment that individuals attribute to a particular role in their life".

Naidoo and Jano (2012) conducted their study on South African women with dual careers, to understand their commitment to the different roles and the value that they expect to invest in dealing with work and family roles. Their research traced trends in studies in this area i.e., the positives and negatives of balancing work and home, and the adaptive strategies for men and women to manage family life, incorporating the complexities of dual careers. Mackinnon (1983, as cited in Naidoo & Jano, 2012), defined dual careers as a family where both spouses in the household have a career, which requires significant commitment and follows a continuous development/constant growth path. From the work of Naidoo and Jano (2012) we see that many studies have been focused on this area and revealed the stress and decreased advancement in the workplace for women because of it, while other studies highlight the

benefits to a woman's wellbeing. The woman does not pursue a career due to economic requirements but rather as part of her self-fulfilment. Contradictory to this, in a study by (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) of 24 South African professional women, across private, public, non-government organisations and entrepreneurs, participants said that they worked to be independent of husbands, secure a good standard of living and offer an improved future for their children.

Expectations of women to carry out domestic, social and childcare responsibilities due to their gender, means that marriage puts added pressure on women managers who work excessive hours in challenging occupations (Grant, 2000). Therefore, dual-career women experience role conflict and role overload, Puckrin (1990, as cited in Naidoo & Jano, 2012). O'Leary (1977, as cited in Naidoo & Jano, 2012) describes role overload as times when an individual understands the validity of the demands of all roles; however, they simply cannot meet all role expectations in the given time. This results in compromising one or more roles, which impacts work or family life.

Role salience can be evaluated in terms of three aspects, namely: (a) commitment – how emotionally connected an individual is to the role; (b) participation – how much time is spent and energy invested in that role; and (c) knowledge – how much learning has been gained through experience in the role, either directly or indirectly. Cook's (1994) study on South African women with dual careers, found that respondents were fairly evenly split on whether childcaring hindered their career advancement. The majority of respondents said their spouses supported their careers but a minority indicated that there was a formal agreement with their partner on sharing the domestic chores. With regards to career aspirations, 7% felt that their jobs did not meet their career aspirations, while 24% stated that they experienced barriers in the progression of their careers in the company. The majority stated that they experienced conflict between their work role and family role. Dual-career professional women participants in this study tended to partake in their work roles more than their home roles; however, participants reported being more committed to their home roles than their work roles and had greater value expectations of their home and family roles rather than their work roles.

Often women identified differently with their many roles. While women expressed their attachment to motherhood, affirming that family and children are a number one priority, they also expressed that their work and careers are highly significant (Grady & McCarthy, 2008). Tenbrunsel et al. (1995) report that women's work-family relationships are one-directional; family tends to take priority, while men have a more give-and-take attitude with regards to the dynamic between work and family and often re-prioritise.

Greenhaus and Kossek (2014) found that the competing demands of work and home meant that participating in one role makes it challenging to participate effectively in the other.

An American study by (Hunter et al., 2019) investigated whether blurring the lines between work and family had benefits. This study questioned boundary theory. Boundary theory is defined as the conceptualisation of work-family conflict as a build-up of daily activity, called boundary violation (Ashforth et al., 2000). (Hunter et al., 2019) used affective events theory to analyse the cognitive and affective reactions to violations. Participants used a daily diary to record the conflict between work and home, boundary violations, and appraised what that meant to them in a positive or negative way. The researchers found that whether boundary violations had a positive or negative effect, depended on the individual's goals and their cognitive appraisal of whether the violation obstructs or facilitates goals. These appraisals can be categorised as either primary or secondary, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996, as cited in Hunter et al., 2019). Sometimes the violation of one domain could simultaneously have both a positive and a negative effect on goals; this is referred to as primary appraisal. Secondary appraisal is when one assesses the impact of the event on one's personal wellbeing. Often when the boundary violation is appraised as supporting a personal goal, a positive effect will flow, and vice versa. Although work-family conflict is often connected to increased depression, stress and health problems on an individual (Amstad et al., 2011), there could however be benefits to interacting between work and home/family. An individual may have more opportunities and resources that contribute to growth and increased competence in other areas of life (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). (Mostert, 2006) found that employees who had constructive interaction between work and home/family were more content, dedicated and focused workers. The modern view was that work and home were not distinct but inter-related.

Women also experience societal pressure, as (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015) determined in their study on the resocialisation of new mothers into the workplace, reporting that society says, "moms must stay at home". However (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003), in contrast, found that society has conflicting views on women's careers and family roles. Cultural beliefs that women must prioritise family ahead of their careers, diminished career aspirations for women (Chou et al., 2005) Napasri & Yukongdi, 2015, as cited in Takawira, 2018, p. 46). This may lead women to not value/pursue successful careers as much as men. Gender stereotypes also lead to women avoiding traditional male-dominated careers, although women can perform just as well as their male counterparts in these professions. These stereotypes hinder women's

career advancement (Napasri & Yukongdi, 2015, Schwanke, 2013, and Shrestha, 2016, as cited in Takawira, 2018 p. 47).

Schwanke (2013, as cited in Takawira, 2018) maintains that as maternity leave is prioritised over paternity leave and often women are encouraged to work part-time following the birth of a child, while men are not allowed to do so, it perpetuated the social notion that it is more suitable for women to satisfy the commitment to family responsibilities than men. In addition, (Mehdizadeh, 2011) found that maternity leave policies adversely affect employers' attitudes toward hiring women to participate in their workforce.

## **2.5 Legislative framework vs societal framework**

There exists an interesting dynamic between the impact of the legislative framework and the societal framework on women in the workplace. (Peus & Traut-Mattausch, 2008) conducted a qualitative study on women in the workplace in the US and Germany. The study compared the impact of social context (values and norms) and legislation on a woman's ability to balance work and family. Germany has a wide number of laws that support families, which include financial benefits, maternity protection and rights for working parents. Financial benefits are allocated in addition to the family's income. Tax benefits, consultancy and placement services are also offered to families with children and parents who want to go back to work after child-related career breaks. Maternity protection benefits protect women from dismissal from the beginning of her pregnancy to four months afterwards and regulate her working time (e.g., not on a Sunday, holidays or at night). Women are also not allowed to work within six weeks before their due date or eight weeks after birth. Mothers are entitled to an average of their salary earned during full employment. The employer is responsible for providing the bulk of this compensation. Fathers and mothers also have the right to take up to three years of parental leave. This leave can be taken continuously, split between parents or part-time work. During the three-year parental leave, parents are also protected from dismissal. Mothers and fathers can take up to five days per child if a physician advises that the child is sick and depending on the employment contract, this can be paid or not paid. Couples can take up to 10 days' leave per child per person per year with a maximum of 25 days if they have several children.

By contrast, in the US, legislation is restricted to tax benefits and maternity benefits; there are no child benefits. Mothers are entitled to 12 weeks' maternity leave per year, provided they have worked for the employer for at least 12 months and there are at least 50 employees employed at the same location as the mother within a 75-mile radius. Legislation only provides for unpaid maternity leave and no paternity leave for the father or leave for when children are sick.

Although Germany has far more extensive laws to support women with work and home life, only 32% of all female managers in the study had families, while in the US study, 65% of all female managers had families. During the study, it was apparent that although German law supported women, societal views of women and by women did not support having both a career and a family. German managers responded with the following, “It is only possible to have either a family or a career” (German manager 1); “Most of my female colleagues here who hold managerial positions don’t have children. It would not be possible” (German manager 2); and “A bit of career, a bit of children, that is not possible, one has to decide as a woman – either-or” (German manager 3) ((Peus & Traut-Mattausch, 2008).

Many similarities can be drawn between the German Legislative Framework for parents as described above and the South African Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) (RSA, 1997) – established maternity, paternity, and family responsibility leave, protection of employees before and after the birth of a child. However, (Peus & Traut-Mattausch, 2008) conclude that overriding values in a particular society affected women’s ability to balance work and life more than the legal framework. The legal framework, although aimed at assisting women, could hinder them. This may prove to be the case in South Africa, where legislation is aimed at assisting women in the workplace; however, women's representation is not yet at the desired level.

## **2.6 Work-life integration and work-life balance**

(Morris & Madsen, 2007) define work-life integration as “a solution representing a holistic strategy including effective and efficient coordination of efforts and energies among all stakeholders sharing interest and benefits from workers being able to fulfil their personal, work, family and community obligations”. Work-life integration involves healthy structures that allow flexibility between the work and home spheres, non-restrictive, porous boundaries that allow for employees to devote equal attention to the work, family and community domains. On the other hand, work-life balance is defined by (Lockwood, 2003) as “a state of equilibrium in which demands of both a person’s job and personal life are equal”. This is further broadened into, “not enough time and/or support to do, to handle, to manage... work commitments or personal responsibilities” Lockwood (2003, p. 2). Over the years of research, the term work-life balance has had many different, yet often similar definitions and applications. In (Gatrell et al., 2013) study on work-life balance and parenthood, the research paper discusses the plethora of definitions of work-life balance and the overlaps between work-life balance and work-life integration, work-family

conflict, work and family practices, work-family balance and work-life interface. This highlights the grey waters of defining work-life balance.

The organisation under review is Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), more information on the organisation can be found at [www.transnet.net](http://www.transnet.net) and [www.transnetportterminals.net](http://www.transnetportterminals.net) including the Annual Financial Statements and Integrated Reports. TPT has had the following practices in place:

- Laptops that employees can take home
- Work-assigned cell phones
- Flexible working hours
- Well established maternity leave and family responsibility leave days
- Paternity leave days
- Employee Wellness Days
- Family Days
- Staff competitions where the organisation donates the prize money to the employee's charity of choice

Although aspects like flexi-time and family responsibility leave may be seen as work-life balance practices, the incorporation of Wellness Days, Family Days, donations to employee-nominated charities, and the provision of information technology tools (laptops and cell phones) that can be used for work outside of work hours or the physical work environment, lends itself to a more holistic system addressing the employees' work, family and community commitments. The literature reviewed uses both 'work-life balance' and 'work-life integration' interchangeably, as both apply to women's experiences, both remain valid, and this study does not seek to delineate the differences between the terms but rather to explore the inclusiveness of women in this discussion and its influences on their career-advancement choices.

As the global push to increase the number of women employees gains momentum, work-life integration practices are needed to support women in organisations. Many organisations are increasingly recognising that the demands of family and work prevent the optimisation of women in the workplace, hence, work-life practices have been designed in an effort to address this issue (Grady & McCarthy, 2008). (Grady & McCarthy, 2008) define work-life integration as a method to bring together work and personal pressures on the individuals' time, while George et al. (2002, as cited in Grady & McCarthy 2008, p. 601) argue that although work is important, it is essential to achieve enjoyment in all aspects of an individual's life. Work-life integration practices exist through statutory mechanisms like maternity and paternity leave, the

Basic Conditions of Employment Act in South Africa (RSA, 1997), organisational practices like flexi-time, job sharing and working from home and could also incorporate idiosyncratic agreements between employees and their managers. In Europe, Nordic countries that lead work-life integration practices in the world, have the highest representation of women in the workplace (Darcy et al., 2012).

Work-life balance arrangements at organisations are beneficial to both employees and organisations. When employees have more balance in their lives through the support of organisational practices, they feel more fulfilled, which could have positive effects on the employee and the employer. Flexibility at work encourages commitment, increased productivity and the achievement of work-life balance. Flexibility is ultimately beneficial both-ways – by being supportive to the employee as well as to the employer (Grady & McCarthy, 2008).

## **2.7 Work-life balance – organisational culture and climate**

Work-life balance experiences are varied. One of the variables identified that influenced the experience of work-life balance, is organisational culture and work dynamics. Burke (1999, 2001) and Stover (1994, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) established that when work-life balance was supported by organisational values there were positive work and personal wellbeing results. (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) reported in their study that all participants who were full-time employed stated they had no support or understanding from their organisations. This is supported by (R. J. Burke & McKeen, 1996) who found the same phenomenon in their studies on 792 US professional women business graduates. Thompson (2015, as cited in Takawira, 2018) analysed statistics from the Engineering Council of South Africa and found that a staggering 70% of female engineering graduates left the profession after starting their careers because they felt isolated in their jobs.

It is important to differentiate between organisational climate and organisational culture. Organisational climate is determined by the organisation's structures, policies, practices and procedures, and the influence that this has on individuals. Hence it is more "top-down", temporary and easily changed (Phua, 2018). Schneider and Reichers (1983, as cited in Phua, 2018, p. 411) define organisational climate as a "set of shared perceptions regarding the policies, practices, and procedures that an organisation rewards, supports and expects". On the other hand, Denison (1996, as cited in Phua, 2018, p. 411) explains that organisational culture "is concerned with the historical evolution of social systems and the importance of understanding the underlying values and assumptions held by individuals, whereas the climate construct is not so much about the evolution but the impact that organisational systems have on organisational

members”. Organisational culture is, therefore, more ‘bottom-up’, determined over many years through the development of social systems and the fundamental values and beliefs held by individuals. Organisational culture has both sociological and anthropological origins and is, therefore, more permanent and difficult to change directly.

Studies show that organisational climate is influential in moulding individuals’ attitudes and conduct. The noticeable features of a work environment, such as policies, practices and organisational structure impact on organisational groups and individuals (James & Jones, 1974, Joyce & Slocum 1984, and Schneider 1990, as cited in Phua, 2018). Schneider (1990, as cited in Phua, 2018) compellingly found that organisational climate can be used to explain worker behaviour in organisational contexts. The power of organisational climate is determined by the degree to which employees hold a common and lasting perception of the significant aspects of the work environment. Organisational climate provides the environment for employees to respond appropriately and consequently develop a shared sense of what is valued and expected by the organisation (Phua, 2018).

When employees view the organisational climate as strong, it links to areas that are psychologically meaningful to employees and these areas tend to be both collective and resistant to change (Ashforth, 1985). This research study includes a review of the organisational policies at Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) – an operating division of Transnet Ltd, a South African State-Owned Entity – which relate to work-life integration to help better understand the climate that the organisation is creating.

(Managa, 2013) found in her study on women academics in South African academic and research institutions, that women publish less because they struggle with their dual roles and encounter cultural challenges that prescribe their roles and duties as women; thus, men dominate academia, resulting in women’s careers being disadvantaged.

Singh (2002, as cited in Managa, 2013) found that institutions’ structural aspects deterred women from climbing the corporate ladder. This finding is supported by White (2001, as cited in Managa, 2013) who determined that organisational culture makes it difficult for women to attain the highest positions. (Managa, 2013) suggests that organisational structures encourage a culture that promotes the crossing point between work, family and personal life. This further contributes to the organisation’s success and employee wellness (Kossek et al., 2010). Societal perspectives, on the other hand, influence how men interact and engage with women. Male-dominated workplaces, through managerial styles, language, etc. generally exclude women. This ‘old boys club’ informal culture maintains views of women as being less

productive. (Panofsky, n.d.) in her memoir, recounts her experiences as a professor and mother, and argues that flexibility at work is key to allowing women the opportunity to balance work, family and research.

(R. Burke, 2001) conducted a study to determine the relationship of professional and managerial women's perceptions of organisational support for work-life balance and their work experiences and satisfaction, coupled with levels of psychological and physical wellbeing. Burke found that organisations did not take work-life integration issues seriously, few had flexible working hours, most participants worked fixed hours and in numerous instances, employees were expected to work after normal working hours. According to Morrison et al., (1997, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) women have more difficulty balancing their roles when they have to attend after-hour work meetings and work overtime. Further research showed that for organisations to successfully address the work-life balance concern, values and beliefs need to be questioned and a culture of work-life balance must be encouraged. According to (Hyman et al., 2005), the question of work-life balance is more complicated than just working hours. (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015) found in their study, that organisations did not support new mothers, e.g., mothers were not provided with an opportunity to express and store breast milk. (Halpert & Burg, 1997; J. Williams, 2000) found that women who returned to work after having a child, received varied messages from their organisations on the meaning of motherhood and how to resolve their maternal and professional identities. The organisation (its social structure and norms, interactions with co-workers and supervisors) plays a key role in the resocialisation process. Structured organisational work-life balance policies, like maternity leave benefits, flexible working times and childcare support positively influence a woman's identity and efficacy during resocialisation (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015).

(Hamilton et al., 2006) found that organisations depended more on employees who did not have children and childless women spent more time on their work. (O'Neil et al., 2008) found that where organisations encouraged a work-family culture, specifically through management support, more employees took advantage of work-family practices, compared to organisations where work-family culture was not encouraged.

## **2.8 “Think manager, think male”**

Another variable that affects work-life experience is that the workplace is generally based on a 'male-model', defined by male definitions. (R. Burke, 1999) established that work is still structured from the male perspective, i.e., being available at all times. Until the last few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the work-life balance was not a problem because most employees were men who were available full-time and

women were traditionally responsible for unpaid domestic and childcare work (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). Even when organisations changed structures and systems, organisational culture and people's attitudes did not change quickly – the “think manager, think male” attitude continued (O'Neil et al., 2008). These variables in turn affected women's careers. Poole and Langan Fox (1997, as cited in Whitehead & Kotze, 2003, p. 80) define a career as the shaping and developing of self-identity. This is supported by the findings of (Woodd, 2000) who determined that women rated the essential value of their work higher than their male colleagues did, as women believed that their careers were a part of their identity.

Burke (1999) maintains that since women still hold the majority of domestic responsibilities, their career growth is most in jeopardy. (Coetzee et al., 2019) determined in their study of 200 academic and administrative staff at a South African higher education institution, that increased amounts of work-life adjustment anxieties are seen as a challenge to the employment relationship. (Grady & McCarthy, 2008) found the following in their study of women and careers: 20% attained the highest managerial positions; 10% did not aspire to reach the highest ranks, experienced contentment with where they were; the remaining 70% had career aspirations (and achieved some) but also made choices not to pursue promotions, for several reasons, including the increased demands on their family life.

## **2.9 Race and gender perspectives on women's empowerment in the workplace**

Many studies have been aimed at the “think manager, think male” phenomenon; however, little research has been done on the role of race and gender on the stereotypical requisite management characteristics. (Bell & Nkomo, 2001) found in their study on the effects of race and gender on the careers and lives of black women and white women, that black women and white women had severely different work experiences and held different views of the obstacles to their career advancement. While white women had achieved more success in their careers, they still experienced severe challenges due to their gender; black women reported that both racism and sexism affected their workplace experiences. White women were privileged because of their race, while disadvantaged because of their gender, while black women were disadvantaged because of both race and gender.

Black women use the strategy of developing optimistic self-evaluations in their visions of requisite management characteristics. According to (Mazama, 2007), many black African communities still hold a patriarchal view on the role of women, while legislation and traditional law oppose each other, which may affect the power dynamic between men and women, as traditional law still favours men.

(L. A. E. Booysen & Nkomo, 2010) conducted a study on 592 participants, comprised of black men, white men, black women and white women in South Africa, who were part-time MBA students and full-time managers. The researchers argue that recognising the interlocking nature of race and gender, gives rise to two theoretical concepts: social location and standpoint. Social location is the position an individual assumes in society in relation to their gender, race, etc. Depending on one's social location, an individual may be oppressed or privileged. Being oppressed or privileged in turn depends on an individual's ability to access power within certain categories and how the categories intersected. For groups, this could influence behaviours and perceptions.

Feminist theory defines a standpoint as a critical viewpoint that oppressed groups may have about how power associations function in society (Hill Collins, 1998). Standpoints are informed by groups' social locations rather than an individual's social locations (Hill Collins, 1998). (L. A. E. Booysen & Nkomo, 2010) found that while black men and white men believed that men possessed the skills and characteristics for successful managers, black men believed this more. Black women, on the other hand, more strongly associated the characteristics of women in general and successful managers rather than men in general and successful managers. The results indicate that the finding that black men are more attuned to the "think manager, think male" ideology, show that as more black males reach higher levels of management, this could negatively impact the career progression of black females. These findings are supported by (Menon & Kotze, 2007) who found in their study on human resource integration in the South African military, that "traditional black men who are used to being respected at home by their wives, find it difficult to work under women".

## **2.10 Benefits of work-life policies to organisations**

Employees' commitment to their organisation is enhanced when the organisation's retention practices address work-life balance and flexible work schedules (Dockel et al., 2006). (Coetzee et al., 2019) agree that an employee's job and career satisfaction is enhanced when organisations consider work-life balance. (Martins, Luis L, Eddleston Kimberly A, 2002), in their study of professionals in 26 industries and various functions in the US, determined that women's career contentment is negatively affected by work-family conflict.

## **2.11 Need for family support**

The above was contradicted by (Grady & McCarthy, 2008), who state that working mothers need support not only from the workplace but from the spouse and family. Further, in the study by (Whitehead & Kotze,

2003), 20 of the 24 participants carried the childcare and domestic responsibilities. Women said their husbands supported their careers; however, the majority did not experience actual support from their husbands with childcare and household chores. Those who did get help from their husbands experienced low levels of role conflict. This is supported by (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006) who found that Nordic states offered the best work-life support for the dual-earner family model. The support structure encouraged husbands to share in domestic duties. When husbands shared domestic duties with their wives, this significantly contributed to reduced work-life conflict in employees (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006).

In (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) study, it was also documented that a woman's ability to achieve life balance is driven by two things – internal/influential factors and external/supporting factors. However, the achievement of the internal factors, determines her choices on career performance and other roles, thereby enabling the ability to find life balance. Internal/influential factors include the level of self-awareness and the ability to reflect. This ties in with (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015), who found that women who adopted adjustment tactics to decrease identity and efficacy uncertainty at work, had extravagant visions of their future work selves which, according to (Strauss et al., 2012) led to positive career behaviour. (Ladge & Greenberg, 2015) conclude that when women see their future work selves extravagantly and desirably, they are more engaged and dedicated to work.

## **2.12 Defining 'career' for women**

There is the need to question the concept of 'career'. What does career mean? (McDonald et al., 2005) found that career routes are still traditional, linked to extent of service, geographics and moving up the corporate ladder. Career models like protean (Hall, 2004), kaleidoscope (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005) and boundaryless (Sullivan & Arthur, 2006) have been cited as future career patterns.

The boundaryless career model focuses on positive experiences which cause individuals to broaden their mindsets on how they view their careers. Individuals consider the possibilities that the career offers and take advantage of the opportunities that can lead to career satisfaction (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). Protean careers emphasise individuals taking control of their career, driven by their own values and priorities. (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). (Hall, 2004) defines a protean career attitude as driven by the needs of the individual rather than the organisation. Although boundaryless careers are somewhat new, they have been adopted by women for a prolonged time out of necessity. (Segers et al., 2008) found that, in a boundaryless career perspective, women experienced freedom to engage in psychological mobility since they were less obligated to conform to traditional work roles compared to their male counterparts. Protean careers

therefore increase perceptions of personal career accomplishments such as work-life balance rather than objective accomplishments such as remuneration. (Böhmer & Schinnenburg, 2016; Valcour & Ladge, 2008).

Although many women follow the traditional ladder path, (Gersick & Kram, 2002) established that women's career paths are more 'zig-zagged'. However, the male perspective of career models (corpocratic career model) i.e., tournaments, winners and losers remain popular as opposed to the female perspective of career models (life stream) i.e., the interplay between work, relationships, organisational factors and life stages. Organisations with 'corpocratic' career models, disadvantage women who prefer a 'life stream' career. O'Leary (1997, as cited in O'Neil et al., 2008, p. 732) and (Mattis, 2004) found that more women become entrepreneurs because of this.

(White, 1995) stated in her study of 48 highly successful women in the UK, that most women remained childless or, as supported by (Hewlett, 2002), accommodated family duties in their work lives in order to succeed in their careers. White concluded that the notion of career success based on constant career engagement remained prevalent in organisations, and this disadvantaged women. Women were also relational when making career choices (Grady & McCarthy, 2008) – they made choices considering their life stage and families. According to (O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2005), women's work and life duties aligned to their life stage concerns and those must be incorporated into organisational models for successful careers. Women valued relationships and considered the needs of children, spouses, ageing parents, etc. when making career decisions. Women may forgo personal career needs and opt for flexible work arrangements in order to meet other significant needs like that of family (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

In (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) study, participants expressed that they were measured on a 'male base of performance'. This is supported by the assessments of (R. Burke, 2001; R. J. Burke & McKeen, 1996) and (Mavin, 2001). In addition, maternity leave policies without an equal paternity leave policy mean that women experience more breaks in their careers which negatively affect their careers, compared to men. If men were to have the same paternity leave benefits as women had maternity leave benefits, it would help to even the playing field in career advancement (Takawira, 2018). (Melamed, 1995) found that women required human capital (education and experience) in order to advance in their careers, while men did not. (Tharenou, 2001) established that males were favoured by being associated with other males and displaying masculinity over and above the need for human capital.

Studies used organisational development as a synonym for career development; but what is career development for women? (O'Neil et al., 2008) asked: if women have a zig-zag career path, leaving an organisation, to start their own business, etc. is this considered as part of career development? If we continue to think of career development purely as moving up the corporate ladder, we are excluding an entire sector of women in the workforce.

### **2.13 Inclusion**

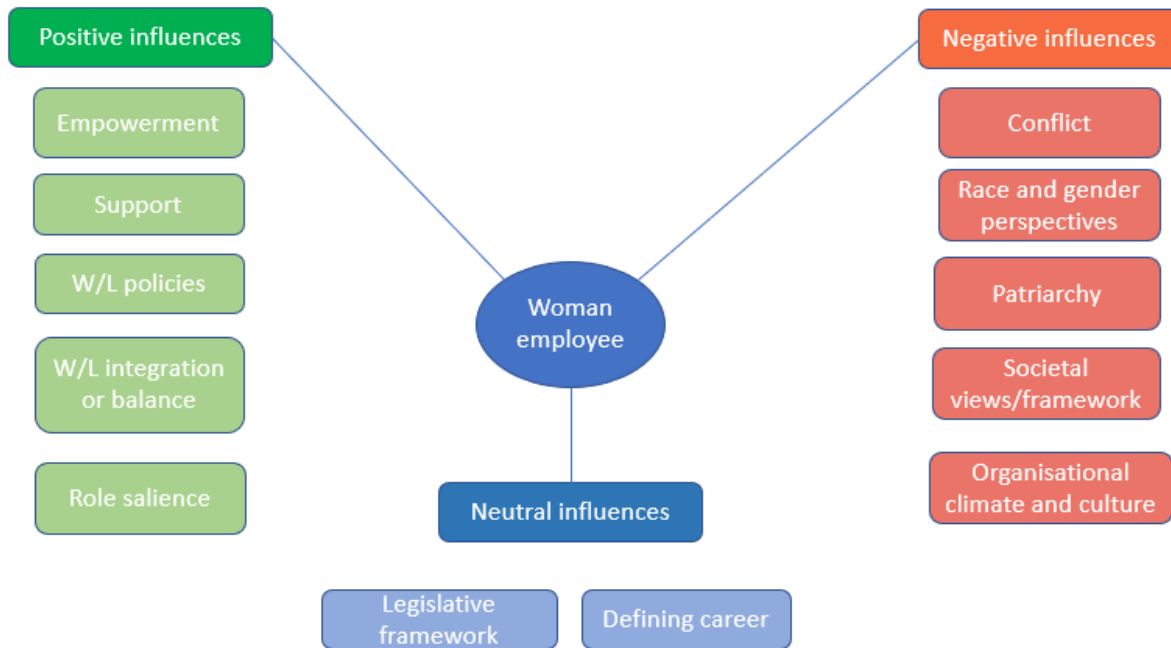
Inclusion within work environments has been built on the concept of diversity i.e. the representation of all groups within an organisation, with those groups including but not limited to differences in gender, race/ethnicity, physical disability and sexual preference (Derven, 2014). Diversity in turn stemmed from the 1960s civil rights movement in America and affirmative action laws subsequently put in place (Mousa et al., 2020). Inclusion in the work environment started in the 2000s as a way to define managements ways to ensure employees felt integrated, equal and involved in the organisation (Mor Barak, 2000; Roberson, 2006; Nishii and Mayer, 2009) as cited in (Mousa et al., 2020). (Mor Barak and Cherin (1998, as cited in (Roberson, 2006, p.215), defined inclusion “as the extent to which individuals can access information and resources, are involved in work groups, and have the ability to influence decision-making processes.” (Derven, 2014) went on further to define inclusion as “environment in which all employees are respected, valued and able to fully contribute’, p.84. However, despite women and other groups becoming more represented in organizations, they have lacked the opportunity to influence decision making, contribute in a meaningful way and benefit from such contribution (Mor Barak, 2013).

### **2.14 Gap in the literature**

In South Africa, efforts and policies pertaining to the employment of women, have been proven to be most effective in government and State-Owned Entities. However, there is little research on the inclusion of women in work-life practices to support the implementation of these employment policies and its link to the empowerment of women when they make career-advancement decisions. Furthermore, research has been focused mainly on women in management, excluding lower levels of employment or women who form part of unionised labour. The presence of trade unions within organisations presents a unique dynamic as the inclusive nature of trade unions, coupled with their collective bargaining power, brought to life by the Labour Relations Act (LRA) (RSA, 1995), result in employees contributing to organisational practices and policies. Limited research in this area prevents the exploration of the experiences of women

across collective bargaining and non-bargaining units when employed at the same organisation. This research study aims to address this gap.

### 2.15 Conceptual Framework



**Figure1: Conceptual Framework**

Based on the literature, the conceptual framework for this study encompasses three influences on the woman employee – positive, negative, and neutral influences. These influences all contribute in their own way to the work life of the woman employee and are analysed in greater detail in Chapter 5. The construct of inclusion has not been explicitly included in the conceptual framework as there is little in the literature that specifically focuses on inclusion on women in the workplace.

### 2.16 Constructs with references

This study is aimed at exploring how women experience inclusivity in work-life policy-making and its influence on their career decisions at Transnet Port Terminals, an operating division at Transnet Ltd – a State-Owned Entity. The main constructs with their references, as identified in the literature, are summarised in the table below.

**Table 2: Key constructs from the literature with references**

Construct	References
<p>Need for employment of women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing the number of women employees improves organisational success and decreases poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Hewelt &amp; Luce, 2005)</li> <li>- (Crompton &amp; Lyonette, 2006)</li> <li>- (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009)</li> </ul>
<p>Global and South African statistics on women representation in the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women employment within South Africa and globally is below the required levels</li> <li>- Nordic countries lead Europe for representation of women in the workplace</li> <li>- In South Africa, SOEs outperform the private sector in four of the six employment categories for women representation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 (RSA, 1998)</li> <li>- (Mathur-Helm, 2005)</li> <li>- (Managa, 2013)</li> <li>- (Council for Higher Education, 2009)</li> <li>- (UNDP, 2016)</li> <li>- (Takawira, 2018)</li> <li>- (Ones S. Deniz, Anderson, Neil, Viswesvaran, Chockalingam, Sinangil Kepir, 2018)</li> <li>- (Blau &amp; Kahn, 2016)</li> <li>- (Darcy et al., 2012)</li> <li>- (V Naidoo &amp; Jano, 2012)</li> <li>- (Dewenter &amp; Malatesta, 2016)</li> <li>- (Kabaciński et al., 2020)</li> <li>- (DEL, 2020)</li> </ul>
<p>Work-life conflict, role salience and societal views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women remain primarily responsible for domestic work and childcare</li> <li>- Women find it challenging to meet the demands of work and home and thus experience work-life conflict</li> <li>- Women have different perspectives on why they work</li> <li>- Work-life conflict can result in role overload</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Mathur-Helm, 2005)</li> <li>- (Grady &amp; McCarthy, 2008)</li> <li>- (Crompton &amp; Lyonette, 2006)</li> <li>- (V Naidoo &amp; Jano, 2012)</li> <li>- (Van Aarde &amp; Mostert, 2008)</li> <li>- (Whitehead &amp; Kotze, 2003)</li> <li>- (Fu &amp; Shaffer, 2002)</li> <li>- (Grant, 2000)</li> <li>- (E. P. Cook, 1994)</li> <li>- (Tenbrunsel et al., 1995)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In terms of role salience, women tend to spend more time on the work role but are more committed to the home role</li> <li>- Women value both the work and home roles</li> <li>- Applying boundary theory reveals that, depending on the individual's goals, each domain can have a positive impact on the other</li> <li>- Societal views on women's roles are slowly changing; however, historically women have not valued/pursued successful careers as much as men</li> <li>- Prioritising maternity leave over paternity leave continues the notion that women are more suitable to family responsibilities than men</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Greenhaus &amp; Kossek, 2014)</li> <li>- (Hunter et al., 2019)</li> <li>- (Ashforth et al., 2000)</li> <li>- (Amstad et al., 2011)</li> <li>- (Grzywacz &amp; Marks, 2000)</li> <li>- (Mostert, 2006)</li> <li>- (Ladge &amp; Greenberg, 2015)</li> <li>- (Chou et al., 2005)</li> <li>- (Mehdizadeh, 2011)</li> </ul>
<p>Legislative framework vs societal framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Although there may be legislation that strongly supports families and women, uptake of such support mechanisms is dependent on societal views of women and by women; many women believe that one cannot have both a career and a family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Peus &amp; Traut-Mattausch, 2008)</li> </ul>
<p>Work-life integration and work-life balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work-life integration and work-life balance have been defined in various ways over the years, often with definitions overlapping</li> <li>- Work-life integration can be viewed as the existence of permeable and flexible structures that allow one to move seamlessly between the home and work roles</li> <li>- Work-life balance is when the demands of work and life roles are in equilibrium and one is able to manage both work and personal responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Morris &amp; Madsen, 2007)</li> <li>- (Lockwood, 2003)</li> <li>- (Gatrell et al., 2013)</li> <li>- (Grady &amp; McCarthy, 2008)</li> <li>- (Darcy et al., 2012)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This study leans towards work-life integration; however, it does not aim to explicitly differentiate between the two and uses the terms interchangeably</li> <li>- In South Africa there is legislation to alleviate work-life challenges of employees</li> <li>- Organisations have also identified work-life challenges on employees and introduced work-life practices to address this</li> <li>- Work-life practices are beneficial to both employees and organisations</li> </ul>	
<p>Organisational culture and climate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisational culture and organisational climate influence work-life experiences</li> <li>- Organisational climate refers to structures, policies, procedures and practices at the organisation that influences employees' experiences</li> <li>- Organisational culture on the other hand, include the underlying assumptions and values held by individuals working at the organisation; it is the unsaid, the 'feelings in the corridor'</li> <li>- Organisational climate determines the employee's perceptions of how much the work environment values important matters such as work-life</li> <li>- Where organisations encourage and cultivate a work-family culture, more employees utilise work-family practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Whitehead &amp; Kotze, 2003)</li> <li>- (R. J. Burke &amp; McKeen, 1996)</li> <li>- (Takawira, 2018)</li> <li>- (Phua, 2018)</li> <li>- (Denison, 1996)</li> <li>- (Ashforth, 1985)</li> <li>- (Managa, 2013)</li> <li>- (Watkins et al., 1998)</li> <li>- (Kossek et al., 2010)</li> <li>- (R. Burke, 2001)</li> <li>- (Hyman et al., 2005)</li> <li>- (Ladge &amp; Greenberg, 2015)</li> <li>- (Halpert and Burg, 1997)</li> <li>- (J. Williams, 2000)</li> <li>- (Hamilton et al., 2006)</li> </ul>
<p>Patriarchy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The workplace has been designed from a male perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (R. Burke, 1999)</li> <li>- (Crompton &amp; Lyonette, 2006)</li> <li>- (O'Neil et al., 2008)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “Think manager, think male” attitude continues</li> <li>- Historically men have been available for work full-time and women have been responsible for the home, resulting in a slow acknowledgement and adoption of work-life practices</li> <li>- Women experience work-life adjustment anxieties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Woodd, 2000)</li> <li>- (Coetzee et al., 2019)</li> <li>- (Grady &amp; McCarthy, 2008)</li> </ul>
<p>Race and gender perspectives on women in the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women of different genders experience different challenges in their workplaces</li> <li>- Black women incur greater challenges because of their race and gender</li> <li>- The interlinking aspects of race and gender give rise to two theoretical concepts: social location and standpoint</li> <li>- Traditional views on women’s and men’s roles lead to black men being more supportive of the “think manager, think male” perspective and their success in higher positions could jeopardise the career advancement of black women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Bell &amp; Nkomo, 2001)</li> <li>- (Mazama, 2007)</li> <li>- (L. A. E. Booysen &amp; Nkomo, 2010)</li> <li>- (Hill Collins, 1998)</li> <li>- (Menon &amp; Kotze, 2007)</li> </ul>
<p>Benefits of work-life policies to employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employees are more committed to their jobs when organisations implement work-life practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Dockel et al., 2006)</li> <li>- (Coetzee et al., 2019)</li> <li>- (Martins, Luis L, Eddleston Kimberly A, 2002)</li> </ul>
<p>Need for family support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working women need support, not only from the workplace but also from the spouse and family</li> <li>- Women’s work-life conflict decreases when their spouses share domestic responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Grady &amp; McCarthy, 2008)</li> <li>- (Whitehead &amp; Kotze, 2003)</li> <li>- (Crompton &amp; Lyonette, 2006)</li> <li>- (Ladge &amp; Greenberg, 2015)</li> <li>- (Strauss et al., 2012)</li> </ul>
<p>Defining “career” for women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Often career is still viewed traditionally (length of service, moving up the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (McDonald et al., 2005)</li> <li>- (Hall, 2004)</li> </ul>

<p>corporate ladder); however, career models like boundary, protean and kaleidoscope have become more popular</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These non-traditional career models are often adopted by women and organisations who continue to use the traditional approach and ignore the needs of women</li> <li>- Women are measured on a ‘male base of performance’</li> <li>- Inequality between policies, like maternity and paternity leave benefits create more career breaks and thus lesser career advancement for women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Mainiero &amp; Sullivan, 2005)</li> <li>- (Sullivan &amp; Arthur, 2006)</li> <li>- (Briscoe &amp; Hall, 2006)</li> <li>- (Segers et al., 2008)</li> <li>- (Böhmer &amp; Schinnenburg, 2016; Valcour &amp; Ladge, 2008)</li> <li>- (Gersick &amp; Kram, 2002)</li> <li>- (O’Neil et al., 2008)</li> <li>- (Mattis, 2004)</li> <li>- (White, 1995)</li> <li>- (Hewlett, 2002)</li> <li>- (Grady &amp; McCarthy, 2008)</li> <li>- (O’Neil &amp; Bilimoria, 2005)</li> <li>- (Sullivan &amp; Mainiero, 2008)</li> <li>- (R. Burke, 2001; R. J. Burke &amp; McKeen, 1996)</li> <li>- (Mavin, 2001)</li> <li>- (Takawira, 2018)</li> <li>- (Melamed, 1995)</li> <li>- (Tharenou, 2001)</li> <li>- (O’Neil et al., 2008)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusion has been built on the concept of diversity.</li> <li>- Management use inclusion to ensure employees feel integrated and equal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Derven, 2014)</li> <li>- (Mousa et al., 2020)</li> <li>- (Mor Barak, 2000)</li> <li>- (Roberson, 2006)</li> <li>- (Nishii &amp; Mayer, 2009)</li> <li>- (Mor Barak &amp; Cherin, 1998)</li> <li>- (Mor Barak, 2013)</li> </ul>

Source: Several sources, as captured in the reference list of this dissertation

## **2.17 Conclusion**

Although organisations may have work-life integration practices and legislation exists to assist women in the workplace, if this is not inclusive of women, supported by management behaviour, an organisational culture, organisational policies and societal values that support women's empowerment, women will not be fairly represented in the workforce in South Africa. Women view and define 'career' in increasingly non-traditional ways and currently organisations are not responsive to this evolution, possibly harming themselves and women in the process. Much research has been focused on women in the workplace; however, as women are not fairly represented, continued efforts are needed to shine the light on this long-standing yet slow-resolving issue and perhaps the lens of inclusive innovation will provide the needed stimulus.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter begins with an explanation of the research philosophy, strategy and process undertaken. It provides information detailing the approach and data collection method used as well as justifying the use of this approach and method. Sampling techniques, as well as the data analysis process, are described. The chapter ends with providing the research criteria, limitations, ethical considerations and trustworthiness criteria.

#### **3.2 Research philosophy, strategy and approach**

The foundation of research begins with a research philosophy, which is defined by (Saunders et al., 2019) as, “a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge” (p. 130). Burrell and Morgan (2016) state that throughout a study, the researcher makes several types of assumptions. According to Crotty (1998, as cited by (Saunders et al., 2019), the three main assumptions are ontological (nature of reality), epistemological (nature of knowledge and how knowledge is communicated) and axiological (the role of the researcher’s values and ethics). These assumptions in turn guide how the researcher understands the research questions, methods used and interpretation of findings.

The assumptions lend themselves in different ways to the five research philosophies commonly applicable to business and management studies, namely, positivism, critical realism, postmodernism, pragmatism and interpretivism (Saunders et al., 2019). Positivism is defined by (Saunders et al., 2019) as a “philosophical stance of the natural scientist entailing working with an observable social reality to produce law-like generalisations. The emphasis is on highly structured methodology to facilitate replication” (p. 144). Critical realism purports that things that are experienced in the real world are not the actual things but the appearance of these things (Saunders et al., 2019). (Fleetwood, 2005) states that for critical realists, the most important consideration is reality itself. Reality is not seen as internal and accessible but rather as something that sits outside our observation and knowledge. Postmodernism speaks to power relations and how meanings can be validated by some, or nullified by others. Postmodernist researchers aim to legitimise and bring forth the marginalised ways of knowing and seeing (Chia, 2003). Pragmatism argues that concepts are only relevant where they support action (Keleman & Rumens, 2008). Pragmatism

considers that research starts with a problem, and aims to contribute practical solutions that may inform future practice (Saunders et al., 2019). According to Greenbank (2003, as cited in (Blair, 2015), the interpretivist view means “understanding the world through my interaction with others; acknowledging my dynamic relationship with the data, and accepting my place within the research”. (Blair, 2015) contends that when researchers use an interpretivist view, they do not expect the research to be absolutely impartial or contribute in a classical empirical way; rather, the researcher is well aware of their position and biases, yet are still open to participants’ thoughts. Interpretivism claims that the study of the physical world and the study of people and their social environments cannot be approached through similar means (Saunders et al., 2019).

The ontological assumptions of interpretivism rest in multiple interpretations and perspectives. It argues that realities are complex, filled with numerous meanings built by different experiences, processes and practices (Saunders et al., 2019). Each human being sees the world differently based on their background, culture, experiences and perspectives. Epistemological expectations extend to interpretations, narratives, stories and new understandings of the phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2019). Axiological assumptions are based on the researcher’s values.

For this study, the researcher aimed to understand the experiences of women employees with regard to work-life policy inclusion and its influence on their career-advancement choices. The research was therefore exploratory (i.e. asking open-ended questions to understand what is occurring and to gather insights into a phenomenon) (Saunders et al., 2019). Each participant had a different experience, a different interpretation, a different story to tell, based on their view of the world. Axiologically the researcher was part of the research process, influenced the research, and is therefore highly subjective. This axiological assumption was however, key to the interpretation of the data, and the researcher remained reflexive throughout the process. The research philosophy adopted for this study was thus interpretivism.

The main research question was:

What role does inclusion in work-life policy-making and subsequent work-life integration practices play for women employees when making career-advancement choices?

The sub-questions were as follows:

- How do women employees and managers define and experience work-life integration?
- What is the experience of women employees concerning inclusion in work-life policy-making?
- How does/would inclusion in work-life policy-making influence their career choices?

For any study, the research aims and objectives must be matched with the appropriate methodology. Denzin and Lincoln (2018, as cited in (Saunders et al., 2019) suggest that a research methodology is determined by the nature of the research question and the topic being explored. The format of the research is thus seen as a mechanism to answer the research question. The foremost objective of this research study was to understand the experiences of women employees in work-life policy-making and its influences on their career choices. To uncover the perceptions of inclusion, work-life experiences and career decisions, the study used an inductive approach. Induction is when theory is generated from collected data (Newcomer et al., 2015; M. Williams & Moser, 2019), while deduction, conversely starts with the theory, develops a hypothesis and aims to prove/disprove that hypothesis from the data collected (Newcomer et al., 2015). In induction, a general explanation is developed and justified from the collection of many specific, but similar settings (Gibbs, 2012).

Induction thus constitutes theory-building, and data-collection methods used to build a theory must complement the research aims. Data may be collected either quantitatively or qualitatively and each method has its advantages and disadvantages and achieves different outcomes.

**Table 3: Comparison of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods**

<b>Quantitative methods</b>	<b>Qualitative methods</b>
Quantitative research seeks to quantify variables and identify relationships within phenomena (Moser & Korstjens, 2017a).	Qualitative research considers complex understandings of real-world problems (Moser & Korstjens, 2017a). It maintains that the ‘reality’ perceived by people depends on their experiences of culture and society (Korstjens & Moser, 2017b).
These methods numerically measure the relationship between an independent and dependent variable. Quantitative studies are most successful when conducted in a controlled setting (Lakshman et al., 2000).	Qualitative researchers are interested in the beliefs of people or organisations and their actions and motivations. Qualitative methods “take a holistic perspective preserving the complexities of human behavior” (Lakshman et al., 2000).

	<p>“Qualitative research provides opportunities to locate the genesis of a phenomenon” (M. Williams &amp; Moser, 2019).</p>
<p>Quantitative methodology uses sampling of large numbers, to create statistical models which ensure that findings represent a population (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b; Sale et al., 2002).</p>	<p>Qualitative research uses small sample sizes with the aim of unearthing rich, complex and unexpected insights to the phenomena under investigation. Qualitative research does not provide general results (Korstjens &amp; Moser, 2017b).</p>
<p>Quantitative research is based in the positivism paradigm (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017a).</p>	<p>Qualitative research has its roots in the constructivist, naturalistic (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017a) or interpretivist paradigms (Saunders et al., 2019).</p>
<p>Quantitative research methods often include a ‘contextual bias’, when questionnaire responses are reinterpreted in terms of the socio-cultural values of respondents (Lakshman et al., 2000).</p> <p>However, the researcher in quantitative research is normally seen as independent of those being researched.</p>	<p>The researcher has an influence on the study, building either a short-term or longer-term relationship with participants during data collection (interviews and/or observations or longitudinal studies); therefore it is important for the researcher to communicate their subjectivity transparently (Korstjens &amp; Moser, 2017b).</p>
<p>In quantitative research strict sampling parameters are adhered to (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b); sampling continues based on the pre-defined amount of data needed.</p>	<p>Qualitative research starts with a wide sampling plan (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b). The researcher samples until data saturation is achieved (Polit &amp; Beck, 2017, as cited in (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b); i.e., enough data has been collected to provide sufficient information on the phenomenon and new data does not provide any new findings (Polit and Beck, 2017, as cited by (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b).</p>
<p>It usually uses probability sampling in order to build statistical models (Saunders et al., 2019). Probability sampling is aimed at creating nomothetic knowledge, generalising from sample to population (Sandelowski, 2000).</p>	<p>It uses non-probability sampling (Patton, 1990, as cited in (Sandelowski, 2000). Sampling strategies may include purposive, criterion, theoretical, convenience, snowball, maximum variation, extreme case, typical case, and confirming and disconfirming sampling. (Moser &amp; Korstjens, 2017b).</p>
<p>Usually data is collected through surveys, in the form of questionnaires, structured interviews or structured observation (Saunders et al., 2019).</p>	<p>Most common data collection techniques are observations, interviews and focus groups. Interviews allow for the researcher to uncover</p>

	participants' experiences, emotions, thoughts and perceptions (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b).
It follows a deductive approach (Saunders et al., 2019).	It follows an inductive approach (Saunders et al., 2019).
Analysis is conducted through statistical models and diagrams (Saunders et al., 2019).	Data for analysis is collected through coding (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b).

Considering the aims of this research, the study used qualitative data collection methods, as they present a well-suited match for exploratory research.

### 3.3 Research design and research instruments

The following section provides the research design (the plan undertaken to answer the research question) and research instrument (the mechanism used to gather data). A suitable combination of research design and research instrument helps to ensure trustworthiness of the study.

Exploratory research may use several research designs e.g., action research, grounded theory, narrative enquiry and case study. Action Research is a developing and reiterative process of investigation designed to create solutions to organisational problems through a participative and collective approach, using different kinds of knowledge and has implications for both the organisation and participants, which extend beyond the research project, Coghlan (2011, as cited in (Saunders et al., 2019). The purpose of this study was to better understand the phenomenon and although a praxis model was included, it was not the intention to explicitly fix the phenomenon. Hence, it was not envisaged that an action research design was applicable at this stage. This can however be utilised in future similar research.

Grounded theory is when theory is developed inductively from a set of data. Grounded theory is used widely in the social sciences to understand a broad range of issues, like people's behaviour (Saunders et al., 2019). Grounded theory appeared very suitable for this research; however, it requires a strict coding regime (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) coupled with the concurrent collection of and analyses of data. This assisted in determining new directions and participants. Grounded theory also most often use abductive thinking (Saunders et al., 2019). The researcher found that this approach would divert focus from the phenomenon under review and did not provide the necessary balance of structure and flexibility.

Narrative enquiry considers participants telling their whole stories, rather than fragmented bits in response to questions asked by the researcher. It aims to maintain sequential connections with the chronological

occurrence of events, as expressed by the participant, to enhance understanding and support the analysis of data (Saunders et al., 2019). The researcher did not see experiences of inclusion, policies and career-building as following a chronological order. Some or all may exist together in a participant's experience at a point in time, or not at all. This research envisaged these concepts as moving parts, applicable to participants at varying times over their lives.

Case study research does not typically have one definition (Gustafsson, 2017). Case studies are usually used in social and life sciences as a rigorous methodical examination of a person, group of people or unit, in which the researcher thoroughly investigates data relating to multiple elements (Heale & Twycross, 2018). Case study research rests in the 'one'. That one could be one in the singular person or one in the whole or the unit – as in one entity, one family or one community (Sandelowski, 1996); Yin, 2003, as cited in (Gustafsson, 2017). (Heale & Twycross, 2018) further state that case studies investigate multi-faceted phenomena in their natural environment to increase understanding. Single case studies are suitable when a researcher wants to investigate a particular phenomenon evident in a particular entity. This approach allows for a detailed understanding of the single phenomenon and involves collecting different types of data (Heale & Twycross, 2018).

This study is focused on exploring a particular phenomenon at a single institution at a point in time. The researcher used a cross-sectional single case study research design, with embedded units. The unit of analysis for case study research is referred to as the 'collective' and should not be confused with the units of data collection of the case study (Yin, 2018). This research is based on the experiences of women who are all employed at the same organisation; hence, the unit of analysis is the organisation. Available studies on women in the workplace, groups women into categories, e.g., women who belong to a particular department in an organisation (Lewis-Enright et al., 2009), or women who are part of a certain profession – academics, lawyers, etc. – (Managa, 2013; Youens & Hutton, 2019) or professional women as a whole (Takawira, 2018; Whitehead & Kotze, 2003). The researcher strongly believes that this study is unique as the phenomenon is based on the inclusion and experiences of women who are affiliated to either a Bargaining Unit or a Non-Bargaining Unit within the same organisation. Different policies apply to women in the different groups and this may affect their experiences and perspectives and the researcher could not substantiate this with similar research in the literature. In line with (Yin, 2018), a single case study is thus appropriate when, as is the case in this study, the phenomenon is unique. A single case study is thus appropriate and other organisations can learn from this study. Embedded units within case studies

refer to when the researcher explores the case with the capability to analyse data within the analysis of the cases, between the case analyses and perform a cross-case analysis. The researcher can thus analyse sub-units located within a larger case (Sandelowski, 1996). The levels of employment at the organisation are grouped into Non-Bargaining Unit (management) and Bargaining Unit (junior offices), providing the units of analysis or embedded cases. These units were chosen as the embedded cases as they provide the differentiation factor for policies and thus for the work-life experiences of women at the organisation.

Single case studies have their advantages and disadvantages, as listed below.

**Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages of single case study research**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Case studies in qualitative research are flexible (Meyer, 2001), fluid and often used at times where it is difficult to find a specific solution (Heale & Twycross, 2018).	The limitation of case studies includes the high volume of data to sort through and analyse (Heale & Twycross, 2018).
The presence of phenomena can be richly described by single case studies ((Siggelkow, 2007).	Case studies can be difficult to report (Stake, 1995, as cited in (Gustafsson, 2017).
When findings are displayed in a suitable way, it becomes easier for the reader to understand and they are able to comprehend the findings adequately enough to be able to replicate the study in their own context (Gustafsson, 2017).	

All research designs have their advantages and disadvantages. Despite the disadvantages of case study research described above, the researcher found this to be the most appropriate research design to understand the phenomenon.

### **3.3.1 Data collection**

The researcher collected data through in-person and online semi-structured interviews as well as analysis of secondary data resources of the organisation. Semi-structured interviews were used, as this method

allowed the researcher to gather particular responses from participants in relation to a specific phenomenon they experienced (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Further, the researcher used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, encouraging further exploration (Dearnley, 2005). This study used the literature review to create the framework used for the development of interview questions. In formulating the semi-structured interview, an interview guide (see Appendix A) was developed and e-mailed to all participants. An interview guide is a list of questions (Whiting, 2008, as cited in (Kallio et al., 2016); (Krauss et al., 2009) asked during the interview to guide the conversation in the direction of the research topic (Krauss et al., 2009; (Cridland et al., 2015). The structure of the interview guide allows for freedom and flexibility, encouraging dialogue between the researcher and participant (Cridland et al., 2015; Dearnley, 2005; Turner, 2010). This also provides the opportunity to switch the layout of the questions and move easily between questions (Dearnley, 2005). In line with recommendations from several studies (notably, Bariball and While, 1994, as cited in (Kallio et al., 2016); (Turner, 2010); (Cridland et al., 2015) questions should be well-constructed, participant-focused, not leading, clearly worded and open-ended. The objective of the questions is to elicit responses that are unique, rich, deep and unprompted (Dearnley, 2005) (Baumbusch, 2010). To determine changes to the questions and the interview process before interviews with the target group of this study were conducted, the interview guide was piloted with three subjects (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). This helped to increase trustworthiness of the research.

The data collection process comprised of in-person and online interviews. (Lobe et al., 2020) found in their recent research that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many researchers adopted online interviews. (Lobe et al., 2020) confirmed that the onset of COVID-19 limited qualitative researchers' ability to collect data, compelling a move away from in-person interviews to socially distanced methods like telephonic and online communication. This is itself not unique, as throughout time, qualitative research has used numerous methods of collecting data and connecting researchers with their participants.

Video calls are live exchanges over the internet, where the participants can see and hear each other, albeit through a screen (Bertrand, 2010). Chen and Hinton (1999, as cited in (Lobe et al., 2020) state that online qualitative methods are the same as the traditional methods; however, the internet is used as the location. This form of data collection is cheaper and more time-efficient than in-person interviews (Krouwel et al., 2019; Weller, 2015). Researchers can also access participants in geographical areas that would otherwise prove challenging (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). (Hanna, 2012) suggests that online interviews are safer

for both researcher and participant, as neither needs to travel to a possibly unfamiliar setting or if they choose not to share their personal space. Also, cost savings from travel equates to savings to the environment, and switching to online helps to avoid loss of interest from participants and the need to re-recruit (Krouwel et al., 2019).

Online interviews may however, limit participation due to the ‘digital divide’ – participants’ access to the internet (C. Cook, 2012) as well as the need for a device (laptop, smartphone, tablet, etc.) with working speakers, microphone and camera (Foley, 2021; Lobe et al., 2020). Participants may also not be trained in using this method (Foley, 2021). Further, (Foley, 2021) suggests that due consideration must be given to how the interviewer and participant build an affinity. However, in (Weller, 2015) longitudinal study on young people born in the late 1980s to mid-1990s, documenting their lives as they unfold, the research moved from in-person to internet video calls and the issue of rapport was investigated. The researcher focused on how comfortable and connected participants and the researcher felt during supportive exchanges like ‘greeting’ and ‘leaving’. All participants expressed feeling at ease with an online interview – 83% said it was “as good as a home visit” and many rated it as good. The interviewer in the (Krouwel et al., 2019) study (comparing online and in-person interviews), while experienced in conducting online interviews, did not note any significant difference in nature and character of the two interviews, even when it came to building rapport.

Online interviews may often fall victim to technical issues associated with the use of computers. Gibson (2010, as cited in (Krouwel et al., 2019) note that observation in online interviews is limited, compared to in-person engagement. Participant confidentiality (Lobe et al., 2020), privacy and security of data collected are all concerns when conducting online interviews (Foley, 2021). (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014) found that it was difficult to make eye contact, as the camera is located off-centre to the screen.

According to (Krouwel et al., 2019), in their study comparing in-person and video calling, in-person interviews were only marginally better than online calls, in that participants said more; however, the difference was insignificant. They concluded that online interviews are a suitable data collection method when there are time and budget constraints. (Lobe et al., 2020) suggest that with the digital age that societies find themselves in and the rapid move to the increased use of online communication methods, due to COVID-19, people are becoming more familiar and adept with the use of such communication channels.

McCracken (1988, as cited in (E Sturges & J Hanrahan, 2004) indicates that partaking in qualitative interviews can be “time consuming, privacy endangering, and intellectually and emotionally demanding”. Therefore, researchers may undertake the best way to get the best data quality, with the least burden on respondents.

This study also analysed secondary documentary data, in the form of the organisation’s policies that influence work life and employment equity. Secondary documentary data is defined as, “data that, unlike the spoken word, endure physically (including digitally) as evidence, allowing data to be transposed across both time and space and re-analysed for a purpose different to that which they were originally collected. They include text, audio and visual media” (Lee, 2012, as cited in Saunders et al., 2019, p. 345). Secondary documentary data is often used to supplement primary data (Saunders et al., 2019) and provides the advantage of saving costs and time (Vartanian, 2010), inconspicuously collecting data (Cowton, 1998), allowing for longitudinal studies combined with comparative data (Saunders et al., 2019) and data of a more permanent nature (Denscombe, 2017). Secondary data may however, be limited by a lack of control over data quality (Wernicke, 2014, as cited in Saunders et al., 2019), challenges in accessing data (Saunders et al., 2019) and the accessed data may not meet the needs of the research (Saunders et al., 2019). The secondary documentary data used for this research was gathered directly from the company and has direct bearing on the study; hence, the limitations noted above did not apply. The researcher used her discretion and analysed only those documents which she believed influenced women’s work-life integration experiences and their careers at the organisation.

The researcher conducted the document analysis through the use of a comparative checklist, i.e., comparing the similarities and differences between policies applicable to the Bargaining Unit and the Non-Bargaining Unit.

The researcher analysed the following policies and guidelines:

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>How sourced</b>	<b>Signed/Not signed</b>	<b>Date document signed</b>
Agreement: TPT Conditions of Employment	Organisations intranet.	Signed	9 December 2002
Policy: Transnet Management Leave	Organisations intranet.	Signed	11 April 2016

Policy: Transnet Time and Attendance	Organisations intranet.	Signed	17 May 2018
Policy: Transnet Employment Equity	Organisations intranet.	Signed	9 June 2016
Transnet Remote Work Guidelines	Organisations intranet.	Signed	29 May 2020

Remote working guidelines drive the climate of an organisation and help provide a holistic understanding of how management at the organisation view work-life integration for this study’s targeted group of women, and how women experience this.

### 3.4 Sampling

This study used a combination of purposeful and convenience sampling. Purposeful sampling is suitable for qualitative research as it seeks to improve understanding of the phenomena, uncovering the richness of information (Paton, 1990, as cited in Sandelowski, 2000) and is used towards the development of nuanced knowledge (Sandelowski, 2000). A purposeful sampling strategy is used to identify cases with commonality and shared experiences. Within purposeful sampling lies criterion sampling. This sampling method chooses participants who meet pre-defined criteria (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). The criteria for this study were women employees between the ages of 25 and 44, with partners/spouses and childcare responsibilities, as well as managers of this target group of women. Convenience sampling is the use of participants who are readily available (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). This researcher is an employee at the Head Office at the organisation under review and many participants were also employed at the Head Office; hence their easy availability for interviews.

The chosen criteria were based on the following:

- According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2019), the age groups of 25–34 (29.8%) and 35–44 (31.2%) contain the highest numbers of employed people as well as the majority of the employed who are either married (38%) or living together as husband and wife (12.5%). Although the publication does not analyse this statistic by gender, for purposes of this research it is assumed that the representations for women employed mirror the same.

- The 2020 Socio-Economic Survey of South Africa indicates that for the period 2000–2018, the majority of births by age of mother coincides with the ages of 25–44 (average of 58.3%).
- Researching only women who have spouses or partners as opposed to also including women without partners or spouses allowed for standardisation and comparability of data.

The researcher determined the number of women in the organisation and those within the specified age range as well as the identities of their managers by consulting with the organisation's Human Resources department. At the start of the research process, there were 1 723 permanently employed women employees within the age group. Including the requirement of spouses/partners and childcare responsibilities could not be determined through consultation with the Human Resources department. Therefore, the researcher sent e-mails to a number of women within the age criteria, requesting those with spouses and with children under the age of 18 to volunteer themselves for interviews. In most instances the researcher determined the managers of women employees within the age group through consultation with the Human Resources department, however this could not be determined for all women employees within the age group. Therefore e-mails were also sent to the managers of the women within the targeted age group requesting volunteers for the study. The researcher conducted interviews with both the targeted group of women as well as the managers of the targeted group. Interviewing both the female employees and managers allowed for the phenomenon to be explored from different perspectives. Although the target group of female employees was within the designated age group, all had children under 18, and all had spouses, the participants varied in age, ethnicity, level in the organisation, ages of their children, and having their spouses/partners living with them or not. That provided diversity in their experiences.

Interviews were audio-recorded (Lakshman et al., 2000) (all participants permitted) and key notes were taken. At the beginning of the online interviews, participants were asked not to record the interview and neither was the online platform used to record the interview, to prevent download by the participant. This ensured the confidentiality of the interviews. The researcher prepared an interview guideline, that was e-mailed to all participants – both employees (see Appendix A) and managers (see Appendix B) (Brinkmann, 2014, as cited in (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b). An open and honest conversational atmosphere created trust, making participants feel comfortable and allowed the discussion to flow. Following the interviews, the researcher compiled a full record of the interview, including context (location, date and time, setting, participants' background information, and the researcher's immediate impressions – see Appendix C). The researcher transcribed the recordings verbatim (see Appendix D)

after each interview (Moser & Korstjens, 2017b) and prepared analytic memos (Saldana, 2009) (see Appendix E) after each first round of analysis. Analytic memos allowed the researcher to reflect on the textual data, consider the overall mood of the participants and any other data points that could not have been captured in-text. Codes were then generated and grouped (see Appendix F). To ensure the anonymity of participants, contextual data and transcripts were stored separately and linked with a 'key'.

### **3.5 Data analysis methods**

Data analysis is conducted systematically by keeping a record of common themes arising from the data and developing concepts and proposals to better understand and rationalise the data. Following (Saldana, 2009), the researcher used eclectic coding to define data, identify concepts and find relations between the concepts. Eclectic coding "combines two or more first cycles of coding methods purposefully" (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016). For this study, eclectic coding combined descriptive, dramaturgical, in-vivo and versus coding. As a first-time researcher, eclectic coding provided the researcher with the flexibility to code without necessitating the need to adhere to strict coding rules. This approach helped to develop a conceptual framework. The researcher did the coding manually (albeit using Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft PowerPoint) without the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS).

According to Giddens (1994, as cited in Brown, 2002), qualitative researchers are poised within the age that they inhabit and are reflexive to that age. In this case, it is a time of rapid technological change. (Brown, 2002) contends that the manual analysis of digital data provides the only opportunity to gather an intimate view of participants as human beings, and this allows the researcher to stay close to the human participants. This main analysis allows for the data to retain its socio-cultural aspects, even though this method is time-consuming. Faherty (2010, as cited in (Ose, 2016) states that no software can truly scrutinise and evaluate data; only the human mind is capable of this. Similarly, (Zamawe, 2015) agrees that CAQDAS are supportive data management platforms for analysing data.

(Ose, 2016) argues that using MS Word and MS Excel provides a simple method of methodically coding and structuring interview data. Using MS Word also allows for a detailed manual analysis, using the array of tools provided by the word processor and over time, this facilitates the analysis to grow in a more natural way (Brown, 2002). The researcher adopted a manual analysis as it allows for flexibility, closeness and open-endedness (Brown, 2002).

The researcher analysed the transcriptions, using MS Word, and inserted codes in the margins, by applying the ‘insert comment’ function. Important quotes were also highlighted in the text. Codes were then transferred as individual points onto ‘sticky notes’ in MS PowerPoint (see Appendix F). Demographic information was captured per participant onto MS Excel spreadsheets and linked with a key to individual transcripts.

The coding followed four cycles (see Appendix F):

- First cycle – coding onto sticky notes.
- Second cycle – grouping similar codes into categories.
- Third cycle – developing themes from categories.
- Fourth cycle – developing Super Themes from themes.

This approach helped to develop an adjusted conceptual framework. (Jabareen, 2009) defines a conceptual framework as a “network or plane of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon or phenomena”. Phenomena are complex and thus networked with multiple bodies of research. According to Levering (2002, as cited in (Jabareen, 2009), a conceptual framework affords a “soft” understanding of purposes, as opposed to “hard facts ... they provide not a causal/analytical setting but, rather, an interpretative approach to social reality”.

### **3.6 Researcher reflexivity**

Qualitative studies are collaborative in nature and as such, can never be bias-free. As both an employee of the organisation and situated within the target group of women researched, the researcher of this study brings her own epistemological assumptions to the study and is not without bias (Jackson, 1990, as cited in (P. Fusch et al., 2018). In addition to this researcher being an employee at the organisation and positioned within the targeted group of women, i.e., between the ages of 25 and 44, she also has a spouse/partner and childcare responsibilities. She began her career at the organisation, over a decade ago as a Chartered Accountant in Training. She married, had both her children and experienced career progression while at the organisation. Her major life events – both professionally and personally – have been intertwined, occurring during her time at the organisation. She found that although on the professional side she was well respected and experienced career growth, the organisation did not display an appreciation for work-life balance for women employees. There seemed to be a mismatch between the organisation’s goals of empowering and growing women, and her own holistic life goals. She was curious about how other women felt about and experienced this phenomenon and wished to gain a much deeper

understanding of it. With this background, it was much easier for the researcher to understand and identify with the different constructs offered by the participants. The researcher's beliefs, values and experiences, are closely related to the concept of reflexivity. Reflexivity is when one thinks about one's actions within the ambit of analysing the fundamentals related to the structure of the way one thinks (May & Perry, 2017). The researcher has been conscious of her bias ensuring that her values or opinions were not imposed on the participants during interviews. She remained reflexive throughout the process and kept a diary, constantly examining her assumptions, preconceptions and values and how they may affect the research. Finlay (1998, as cited in (Dearnley, 2005) suggests that constantly engaging in reflexive activity openly and directly, allows the researcher to relate better to the participants and is thereby more insightful to their views.

### **3.7 Limitations**

This study's inductive qualitative approach to women employees and their managers, as well as an analysis of the relevant documentation, was intended to uncover the wider relationships and complexities around inclusivity, work-life policies and career choices. This approach proved suitable in gathering rich data around the phenomenon. However, it is limited in that the findings are not generalisable to a larger population. A qualitative methodology is thus not suitable for testing theory.

The aspects of inclusivity, work-life and careers are multi-faceted and no single study or method of research would be able to adequately uncover all the complexities within this phenomenon. Each aspect includes a broad range of social, cultural and legislative issues, which this study could not adequately address.

The research is also limited in its target group of women employees and selectivity of the sampling method used. Purposeful sampling focuses on gathering data from a small number of cases to yield the most suitable amount of information (Emmel, 2014). Limiting the study to women between the ages of 25 and 44, with spouses/partners and childcare responsibilities excludes the experiences of women employees outside this group. The researcher also knew many of the participants, having worked and interacted with them and although some may view this as a limitation, the researcher believes that this helped put participants at ease and allowed for a comfortable interview setting.

The context during data collection changed drastically. Thirteen interviews were conducted before the onset of COVID-19, while all participants were physically going to the work premises. The remaining 11

interviews were conducted during the national COVID-19 lockdown period, when participants were working from home. This can however, be seen as an enhancement rather than a limitation.

### **3.8 Research ethics**

In research, there is always conflict between the goals of research and participants' rights to privacy. Ethics in research pertains to "doing good and avoiding harm" (Beauchamp & Childress 1989, as cited in (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012). The potential for the researcher to cause harm to participants is mitigated by the use of suitable ethical standards. Problems of ethics in qualitative research are nuanced and very different from quantitative research and begin when the researcher needs to gain access to a group and in the way in which the researcher influences participants (Orb et al., 2001). For this study, the researcher sought and obtained written approval from the organisation to conduct the study.

The researcher also followed the process of Ethical Clearance from the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business before collecting any data.

Capron (1989, as cited in Orb et al., 2001, p. 95) states that research should be guided by "respect for people, beneficence and justice". Respect for people is when the researcher recognises the rights of participants to be fully informed, free to decide on participation, and free to withdraw their participation whenever they wish to do so. This means that participants have full autonomy to participate or not. This is supported by Williamson (2007, as cited by Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012) who emphasises that researchers must clearly communicate the aim of the research to participants so that they are completely aware of what is required of them and can provide informed consent before participating.

In this study, the researcher provided a participant information sheet to all participants and clearly explained the aims of the research, the participants' role within the research, assured complete confidentiality, and advised participants that they may withdraw at any point.

Furthermore, each participant and the researcher signed a written agreement (consent form) before each interview, either in-person or electronically via e-mail (Hewson et al., 2016, as cited in (Lobe et al., 2020). The researcher asked for permission to audio-record interviews and all participants agreed to this. Confidentiality was emphasised due to the sensitivity of discussing matters related to one's place of employment with a fellow employee. According to (Roth & von Unger, 2018), true anonymity is rarely achieved in qualitative research, as the identity of participants is not unknown to the researcher. True anonymity is more applicable to quantitative research that uses surveys to collect data where responses

cannot be traced back to participants. Confidentiality however, is when the researcher knows the identity of participants but pledges to never reveal such information. Each participant was made aware that their identities and participation would remain confidential. All interviews were fully transcribed and linked with a key, to protect participants' identities.

According to Punch (1994, as cited by Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012) researchers have crucial responsibilities towards oppressed groups, questioning and highlighting the existing state of affairs that limit and isolate these groups. The researcher sincerely hopes that this study will contribute to addressing the challenges still experienced by women in the workplace and shed light on the phenomenon, currently under-researched in this context.

### **3.9 Trustworthiness of the research**

Qualitative research requires the necessary level of trustworthiness, i.e., can the findings of the research be trusted? (Korstjens & Moser, 2017a). Trustworthiness, in turn, is achieved through the following quality criteria:

- Credibility – are we confident that there is truth to the findings?
- Transferability – can results be transferred to other contexts or settings?
- Dependability – stability of findings over time.
- Conformability – can findings be confirmed by other researchers?
- Reflexivity – a process of self-reflection about oneself as a researcher.

Credibility is achieved through seeking negative instances of participant perspectives and piloting the questionnaire with three subjects before conducting the semi-structured interviews with participants. The researcher was mindful to note negative instances of perspectives and documented these accordingly. The transferability criteria are met through thick descriptions of participant perspectives and purposeful sampling. The researcher expects that if a similar purposeful sampling approach is used in a different setting, it will reveal similar findings. Following a consistent approach to collecting, interpreting and coding data, allows the researcher to meet the dependability criteria. Through interviewing the target group of women, their managers and analysing documentation related to the phenomenon under review, the research achieves triangulation that meets the conformability criteria and assists in achieving data saturation (P. Fusch et al., 2018; P. I. Fusch & Ness, 2015). Triangulation is the use of multiple sources of data to analyse a phenomenon. Lastly, the researcher remained reflexive throughout the process by maintaining a diary, continually questioning her biases and assumptions.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined in detail the research methodology used to explore the phenomenon under review. It demonstrated the process used to select the participants, the data collection method and the procedure for analysing the data. The chapter includes limitations, research ethics and the mechanisms used to achieve trustworthiness. The research methodology aimed to better understand the phenomenon of women's inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on their career decisions at Transnet Port Terminals, an operating division of Transnet Limited, a South African SOE. The next chapter presents the findings of the research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter described the research methodology used in this study. It outlined the use of semi-structured interviews and analysis of secondary documentary sources to collect data and explained how audio-recorded interviews were transcribed into written text. The researcher applied eclectic coding to analyse transcriptions and generate themes and subsequently went through a rigorous manual coding method to gain a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon.. This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the secondary documentary data and the coding of transcriptions. The researcher analysed the secondary documentary data with the use of a checklist, comparing policies between the Bargaining Unit and the Non-Bargaining Unit, summarising those policies that are applicable to both groups, and identified themes generated from interviews.

#### **4.2 Analysis of policies**

##### ***4.2.1 Applicable policies***

For purposes of this study, only those policies that are applicable to work life and employment equity for women employees were analysed. Therefore, not all parts of all policies have been considered.

As a result of the collective bargaining power of the Bargaining Unit, some policies have been negotiated by the Bargaining Unit and do not apply to the Non-Bargaining Unit. The analysis contained herein separates and analyses policies to determine the clauses applicable and not applicable to women in both groups.

The researcher analysed the following policies:

- Agreement: TPT Conditions of Employment (Applicable to Bargaining Unit)
- Policy: Transnet Management Leave (Applicable to Non-Bargaining Unit)
- Policy: Transnet Time and Attendance (Applicable to Bargaining and Non-Bargaining Unit)
- Policy: Transnet Employment Equity (Applicable to Bargaining and Non-Bargaining Unit)
- Guidelines: Transnet Remote Working (Applicable to Bargaining and Non-Bargaining Unit)

The researcher sourced the policies from the organisation’s intranet, which is open for download by all employees.

The researcher approached the analysis of the policies in the following way:

- a) Determine the date that the policies were signed. The date of the policies helps to indicate how often policies are reviewed and how up-to-date policies are.
- b) Create a checklist and compare each applicable area of the policies between the Bargaining Unit and the Non-Bargaining Unit.
- c) Discuss the differences and similarities between policies (see Chapter 5).

#### ***4.2.2 Analysis of approval dates***

**Table 5: List of policies and approval dates**

<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Date signed</b>
Agreement: TPT Conditions of Employment	9 December 2002
Policy: Transnet Management Leave	11 April 2016
Policy: Transnet Time and Attendance	17 May 2018
Policy: Transnet Employment Equity	9 June 2016
Transnet Guidelines: Working Remotely	29 May 2020

#### ***4.2.3 Policy checklist***

The below checklist reflects the salient points of the respective policies. Where a point is included under one of the units i.e., Bargaining Unit or Non-Bargaining Unit but not under the other, it indicates that the said policy is silent on that matter in relation to that group.

**Table 6: Checklist for Leave Policies**

<b>Leave</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Non-Bargaining Unit</b>
<i>Annual leave</i>	Number of annual leave days entitlement according to number of years of service	✓	
	Number of annual leave days entitlement according to employment grade		✓
	Leave can be accumulated	✓	
	Compulsory minimum number of days to be taken per year	✓	✓
	Specified number of consecutive days to be taken	✓	✓
	Leave includes the Saturday and Sunday if taken within the leave period i.e., if leave is taken on a Friday and the next Monday, it is counted as 4 days	✓	
	Encashment of remaining leave	✓	
	Employees are remunerated on termination of service for any annual leave days due but not taken	✓	✓
	Leave can be taken during resignation period and/or taken to cover notice period	✓	
<i>Sick leave</i>	45 paid days over 36 months, provided in 1 <sup>st</sup> year of employment the employee does not take more than one paid day sick leave for every 26 days worked	✓	
	30 working days sick leave on full remuneration in a 36-month cycle, starting on 1 January of year 1 and ending on 31 December of year 3		✓

	Sick leave days earned at a different rate during early employment		✓
	A sick note is required in the following instances: - an employee takes sick leave for more than two days - an employee has taken sick leave on more than two occasions over an eight-week period	✓	✓
<b><i>Family Responsibility Leave</i></b>	Minimum working period to qualify (4 months)		✓
	5 days allowed per annual leave cycle	✓	✓
	Reasons allowed for employees to take family responsibility leave: - spouse/partner or child is seriously ill - spouse/partner has given birth or jointly adopted a new child - employee experiences a natural disaster e.g. flooding - relocation - spouse/partner, parents, grandparents or siblings have passed away - birth of a child (unless the employee is eligible for maternity leave) - an employee adopts a child older than two years - death of an employees spouse, parents, adoptive parents, parents-in-law, child, adopted child, grandchild or sibling	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓      ✓ ✓ ✓
<b><i>Maternity Leave</i></b>	Minimum uninterrupted working period to qualify (12 months)		✓

	6 months unpaid maternity leave if the employee has not completed 12 months' uninterrupted service	✓	
	Entitled to 85 working days on full remuneration		✓
	Entitled to 85 working days	✓	
	Maternity leave remuneration payment is at 33% of salary	✓	
	Female employees whose income is above the prescribed limit for Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) membership will be paid 80% of their salary	✓	
	In first 7 months of pregnancy, a female employee is entitled to 1 day for every 4 weeks without loss of salary to go for pre-natal check ups	✓	
	In last 2 months of pregnancy, a female employee is entitled to 2 days per 4 weeks for pre-natal visits	✓	
	Policy also applies in case of miscarriage in 3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester or a stillbirth	✓	
	A female employee who has a miscarriage within the 3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester or who gives birth to a stillborn child is entitled to 30 working days maternity leave on full remuneration, if the employee has worked for the organisation for a minimum of 12 months		✓
	No pregnant employee is compelled to work 4 weeks before her due date or 6 weeks after birth	✓	
	No pregnant employee is compelled to return to work within 6 weeks of giving birth		✓

	unless a medical practitioner or midwife certifies that she is fit to do so		
	A female employee may return to work earlier than the 85 days, provided the employee's and child's wellbeing are not compromised		✓
	Work back period after maternity leave (6 months)		✓
	The female employee is required to reimburse the organisation on a pro rata basis for any remuneration and benefits paid to her, if her employment is terminated (by herself or the organisation) within 6 months of her returning to work. This will not apply in the case of dismissals at the organisation's instance for reasons related to operational requirements, incapacitating ill health or injury		✓
	In case of adoption, there is a minimum child's age in order for the employee to qualify for all maternity leave benefits (under 2 years old)		✓
	In the case of adoption, maternity leave period payment is limited to 2 months but can be extended for a further 3 months, for which paid leave to the female employee's credit and/or unpaid leave can be granted	✓	
	In the case of adoption of a new-born, maternity leave starts from the time the female employee receives the adopted child	✓	✓

	If both parents work for Transnet, only one employee can take maternity leave; the other must take family responsibility leave.		✓
	The employee's position will not be permanently filled while the employee is on maternity leave. The same, similar or equivalent job will be made available to the employee on her return to work from maternity leave		✓
	All female employees, while on maternity leave, will retain other contractual benefits during their maternity leave e.g., salary increases, performance incentives		✓
	The company guarantees that the employee may resume work at the same grade that was applicable to the employee prior to commencing maternity leave and at the same rate of pay	✓	
	A pregnant or breastfeeding employee may not be compelled or permitted to perform hazardous work	✓	
	If practicable, an employee who is required to perform night work or where her health or that of her child may be endangered by such work, must be offered alternative employment without loss of benefits while she is pregnant and for up to 6 months after the child is born	✓	
	On return from maternity leave, for 2 months thereafter, a female employee will not be		✓

	required to work night shifts or carry out any duties which may be hazardous to her health or that of her child		
	Female employees who believe, supported by a medical report that any of their duties may be hazardous to their health or that of their child, must inform their managers		✓
<i>Study Leave</i> (for part-time studies)	Permanent employees qualify		✓
	Minimum working period to qualify (12 months)		✓
	2 working days study leave per subject i.e., the day before the exam and the day of the exam	✓	✓
	For bursar students, employees can take study leave on full remuneration		✓
	Maximum number of study leave days per annum (12 days)		✓
	For self-funded, i.e., non-bursar job-related studies, employees are entitled to the same maximum number of days (12) per year and 2 working days study leave per subject i.e., the day before the exam and the day of the exam, but not on full remuneration		✓
	For self-funded, i.e., non-bursar, not job-related studies, no study leave applies		✓
	Bursar students who are required to be away from work for study blocks/practicals/to attend classes, may take paid study leave for up to 20 working days per annum.		✓

	Master's/PhD students are entitled to a maximum of 20 paid working days per annum		✓
	Study leave is not granted for the re-writing of an exam		✓
	There is no entitlement to study leave and it cannot be accrued		✓
	If an employee cannot sit for an exam where they took study leave because of being sick, the study leave can be reinstated and applied for at the time of the new exam date; a medical certificate is required		✓
<b><i>Sabbatical Leave</i></b>	This is allowed at the organisation's discretion for permanent employees for work-related studies		✓
	Applicable to permanent employees employed at least 5 years and one year in current role		✓
	<p>Granted subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proof of registration for course, etc. is provided</li> <li>- provided for a minimum of 12 months, maximum of 24 months</li> <li>- leave is unpaid</li> <li>- employee can return to work earlier</li> <li>- employee cannot return to do ad-hoc work for the organisation</li> <li>- the employee will not accrue or be entitled to apply for any type of leave during the sabbatical leave</li> </ul>		✓

	- the employee is not entitled to other benefits like salary increases, long-term incentive, short-term incentive		
<b><i>Special Leave</i></b> (i.e., leave not within existing leave provisions)	Applicable to permanent employees and organisation executive committee on a Fixed-Term Contract over 5 years		✓
	Special leave on full salary will be applicable in circumstances not covered by any agreed leave category		✓
	Applications for special leave on full salary will only be considered with due regard to operational requirements, recommendation by line manager, HR managers and approved by head of organisation		✓
<b><i>Unpaid Leave</i></b>	An employee can apply for unpaid leave for good reason, if he/she has exhausted all other types of leave	✓	✓
<b><i>Climatic Leave</i></b>	A resident employee with continuous 12 months in an area defined as a climatic allowance area, is granted 6 days paid climatic leave per annum	✓	
	Does not accumulate and must be taken within 12 months after it has accrued	✓	
<b><i>Leave for sporting competitions</i></b>	6 days per annum for interprovincial Transnet sporting competitions, representing the country or	✓	

	province in a recognised sport, including managing, coaching, training, refereeing, etc.		
<b><i>Long-Service Leave</i></b>	30 years' service — +5 days 35 years' service — +5 days 40 years' service — +5 days	✓	
<b><i>Roles and Responsibilities</i></b>	Line Managers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- acquaint themselves with the policy and guide their department accordingly</li> <li>- ensure that employees take annual leave as prescribed in the policy</li> </ul> <p>Employees must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensure that leave is taken as described in the policy</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> <li>✓</li> </ul>

**Table 7: Checklist for Time and Attendance Policies**

<b>Time and Attendance</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Non-Bargaining Unit</b>
<b><i>Recording mechanism for working hours</i></b>	Biometric clocking or manual time sheets	✓	✓
<b><i>Working hours</i></b>	Maximum ordinary hours per week is 42.5 hours	✓	
	40 hours per week, 8 hours per day		✓
<b><i>Standard working time</i></b>	Standard working time for office workers is 7:30 am to 4:00 pm		✓
	According to shift requirements	✓	

<p><b><i>Flexible working arrangements</i></b></p>	<p>Office workers can work flexible hours if approved by the manager of the department and these hours must be fixed</p> <p>In the case of flexibility, employees are expected to be as productive as if there were no flexibility; flexibility must support the department's goals and not interfere or disturb departmental objectives</p> <p>The employee or manager can revoke flexible working, following consultation, should business, performance or any other concerns arise</p> <p>Not all jobs lend themselves to flexibility and employees must be cognisant of this</p> <p>Managers must be at work during core hours – 9:00 am to 3:00 pm</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Start</td> <td>End</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6:30</td> <td>15:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7:00</td> <td>15:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7:30</td> <td>16:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8:00</td> <td>16:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8:30</td> <td>17:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9:00</td> <td>17:30</td> </tr> </table>	Start	End	6:30	15:00	7:00	15:30	7:30	16:00	8:00	16:30	8:30	17:00	9:00	17:30	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
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<p><b><i>Recording of working time</i></b></p>	<p>Line managers and supervisors are responsible for signing and approving time statements, including overtime worked</p> <p>Line managers and supervisors must ensure that working times are accurate</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>														

	<p>by validating time statements and/or exception reports before granting approval for payment</p> <p>All absence from work must have prior approval from line managers, where possible</p> <p>All employee absence from work must be captured, with reasons for the absence</p> <p>Any absence from work in time and attendance that is not authorised, will result in the deduction of an employee's salary</p> <p>When clocking-employees have off-site work, e.g., meetings, training, etc. attendance must be requested with prior approval from line managers where practically possible</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>
<b><i>Overtime</i></b>	<p>Rostered</p> <p>Maximum hours per week allowed</p> <p>Paid</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	
<b><i>Meal intervals</i></b>	<p>30 minutes granted after 5 continuous hours of work</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<b><i>Daily and weekly rest periods</i></b>	<p>Daily – 12 consecutive hours between ending and commencing work</p> <p>Weekly – 36 hours; however, as business operates 24/7, the 36 hours will not always</p>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	

	include a Sunday but must include a Sunday at least twice in every six-week cycle		
<b>Call outs</b>	Applicable as required	✓	
	Rest periods allowed during call outs are considered on a case-by-case basis	✓	
<b>Night work</b>	The policy defines night work, stipulates that an allowance is paid and transport made available	✓	
<b>Public holidays</b>	Only allowed not to work on three public holidays: - 1 May: Workers' Day - 25 December: Christmas Day - 1 January: New Year's Day	✓	
<b>Shift patterns</b>	Speaks about minimum of 7.5 hours and maximum negotiated at Bargaining Unit level within legislation, etc.	✓	
<b>Absences</b>	Unauthorised absences will be deducted from employees' salaries	✓	✓
<b>Time tolerances</b>	Short time tolerances are 10 minutes before the start of shift and ten minutes before the end of the shift		✓
	Overtime tolerances are 30 minutes before the start of the shift and 30 minutes before the end of the shift		✓

<b><i>Roles and responsibilities</i></b>	Managers must:		
	Acquaint themselves with the policy, guide their staff accordingly and ensure employees adhere to the policy	✓	✓
	Determine whether the type of work done by an employee lends itself to flexible working arrangements	✓	✓
	Be considerate and respect the flexible working agreement	✓	✓
	Ensure that overtime, callouts, breakdowns and standby are not abused and are correctly managed	✓	✓
	Employees must:		
Acquaint themselves with the policy and make sure they adhere to the policy at all times	✓	✓	
Report for duty at scheduled start and end times and if the employee does not comply, a reasonable explanation must be provided to the line manager	✓	✓	

*Transnet Employment Equity Policy*

- The policy supports the amendments to the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998) and the regulations issued in support of the legislation.
- The policy reflects Transnet’s commitment to employment equity principles set out in the Act.
- The purpose of the policy is, amongst others, to:

- “Transform and maintain Transnet as a non-racial and non-sexist organisation that is representative of the diverse South African Population.”
- “Create a framework to identify and abolish workplace barriers and practices, including unfair discrimination, that hamper the employment and advancement of designated groups.”
- “Create awareness and governance to remove all forms of discriminatory practices, based on race, gender, disability, age, language, and to establish equity within Transnet.”
- It makes provision for the formation of Employment Equity Committees (EECs), tasked with coordinating and monitoring the implementation of: Employment Equity, Affirmative Action, diversity management, and disability awareness issues in the workplace.
- EECs will include representatives across all grades, designated and non-designated groups and trade unions. The EEC will meet for the following, but not limited to:
  - Collection of information and compilation of a workforce profile.
  - Analysis of existing employment policies, procedures, practices and working environment.
  - Development of an Employment Equity Plan based on the workforce profile and the analysis from employment policies, procedures and practices.
  - Fulfilment of any statutory reporting requirements as they may apply to Transnet.
- It maintains a workforce profile:
  - It is reviewed annually to ensure equitable representation across all occupational levels.
- It performs regular analysis:
  - Designated persons will review employment policies, procedures, practices and the general working environment to identify employment barriers that adversely affect designated groups.
  - These designated people must ensure that all barriers to Employment Equity are removed to support statutory reporting and compliance.
- It conducts regular monitoring
  - Policies, procedures and practices are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they are not a barrier to Transnet’s Employment Equity targets.
  - The Transnet Employment Equity Plan is consistently monitored, especially with regards to:

- Employment Equity objectives;
  - Workforce profile; and
  - Department of Labour Reporting.
- Monitoring is conducted through the relevant employment equity consultative structures.
  - Disputes are resolved in terms of an accountability matrix.

### *Transnet Remote Working Guidelines*

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown in March 2020 forced many employees at Transnet Ltd to work remotely. The organisation thus created a Remote Working Guideline document. Pertinent points are summarised below.

- Working remotely is defined as the “performance of Transnet work during agreed / operating hours without the need for the employee having to be at Transnet offices as the employee is based at home or another remote location.”
- The organisation recognises that the flexibility and productivity outcomes from remote working can be a beneficial work practice to both Transnet and employees.
- Benefits of working remotely are listed and delineates the following:
  - Working remotely is voluntary and not intended to make employees feel obliged to work excessive hours.
  - Working remotely is not a contractual right.
  - It does not alter an employee’s terms and conditions of employment.
- The guideline document applies to both permanent and fixed-term contract employees of Transnet who have been in the employ of Transnet for a minimum of three months and have the technology to work remotely.
- Both the employee and the job need to be suited for working remotely. Hence, remote working will not apply to all employees.
- The ability to work remotely is dependent on employees’ work performance as determined by their Scorecard Performance Objective rating.
- Certain positions with inherent requirements are excluded from remote working. These go across both Bargaining and Non-Bargaining Unit.
- Reasons that could require remote working are listed and include work-life balance.

- Reasons for remote working not listed are dependent on the managers and employee's judgement.
- Employees who are working remotely are required to be available during core working hours of 9:00 – 15:00, must work per the hours approved by their manager and according to the Time and Attendance Policy. Lunch breaks and body breaks are still applicable in line with wellness requirements.
- No client or representative meetings are allowed to take place at employees' homes.
- Employees can apply to their managers to work remotely.
- Applications are approved after considering a number of questions related to the nature of the employee's job, technology concerns and team collaboration.
- Requirements for the remote work site are listed.
- Requirements for the protection of the organisation's assets are listed.
- Employees are required to adhere to all Transnet Policies and maintain accurate records of hours worked remotely.
- The approval process for remote working and the procedure to be followed are detailed.
- Remote work arrangements are on a three-month trial basis. The arrangement may be discontinued at any time at the request of either the employee or employer based on a number of different situations.
- Notice is required when either the employee or the employer wishes to terminate the agreement.
- In instances where remote working negatively impacts employees' productivity and/or performance, the arrangement may be terminated immediately.
- The roles and responsibilities are set out for employees, managers and Human Resources administrators.
- Employees who do not conform to the guidelines/principles and procedures are subject to disciplinary measures in line with the Transnet disciplinary process and procedures.

### **4.3 Demographics of interview participants**

Twenty-four interviews were conducted in total – 13 face-to-face and 11 virtually. Two of the virtual interviews were not fully recorded and have subsequently been removed from the analysis process.

Fourteen female employees and eight managers were interviewed.

Detailed demographics of participants are presented below.

**Table 8: Demographics of female employee participants**

<b>Employee/Interview number</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Bargaining/Non-Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Straight hours/Shifts</b>	<b>Key</b>
1 - A	Female	Indian	42	Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant A - FEB,42,2)
2 - B	Female	African	42	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant B - FENB,42,2)
3 - C	Female	Coloured	41	Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant C - FEB,41,2)
4 - D	Female	African	34	Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant D - FEB,34,2)
5 - E	Female	Coloured	42	Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant E - FEB,42,2)
7 - G	Female	Indian	36	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant G - FENB,36,3)
8 - H	Female	Indian	39	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant H - FENB,39,3)
11 - K	Female	African	32	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant K - FENB,32,2)
14 - N	Female	African	33	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant N - FENB,33,1)
16 - P	Female	African	33	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant P - FENB,33,2)
17 - Q	Female	African	39	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant Q - FENB,39,2)
18 - R	Female	Coloured	37	Non-Bargaining Unit	Shifts	(Participant R - FENB,37,2)
20 - T	Female	Indian	36	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant T - FENB,36,2)
24 - X	Female	Indian	31	Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant X - FEB,31,1)

**Table 9: Demographics of manager participants**

<b>Manager/Interview number</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Bargaining/Non-Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Straight hours/Shifts</b>	<b>Key</b>
6 - F	Female	African	35	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant F - FMNB,35)
9 - I	Male	Indian	44	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant I - MMNB,44)
10 - J	Female	Indian	46	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant J - FMNB,46)
12 - L	Male	Indian	48	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant L - MMNB,48)
13 - M	Female	Indian	36	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant M - FMNB,36)
21 - U	Male	Coloured	44	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant U - MMNB,44)
22 - V	Male	African	43	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant V - MMNB,43)
23 - W	Female	African	44	Non-Bargaining Unit	Straight hours	(Participant W - FMNB,44)

Questions were structured at two levels – main themes and follow-up questions. The order of the main themes allowed for a logical build-up (Krauss et al., 2009) and encouraged interviewees to speak openly and honestly about their experiences. Follow-up questions allowed for responses to be probed for better understanding and meaning. Responses were encouraged through verbal and non-verbal techniques like asking the participant to “tell me more” and remaining silent to allow the participant time to think aloud. Any possible identifying items e.g., names, position names, etc. were removed to protect the participants’ anonymity.

#### 4.4 Themes and Super Themes

Following the coding approach described in Chapter Three and presented in Appendix G, the following number of codes, categories and themes per cycle emerged:

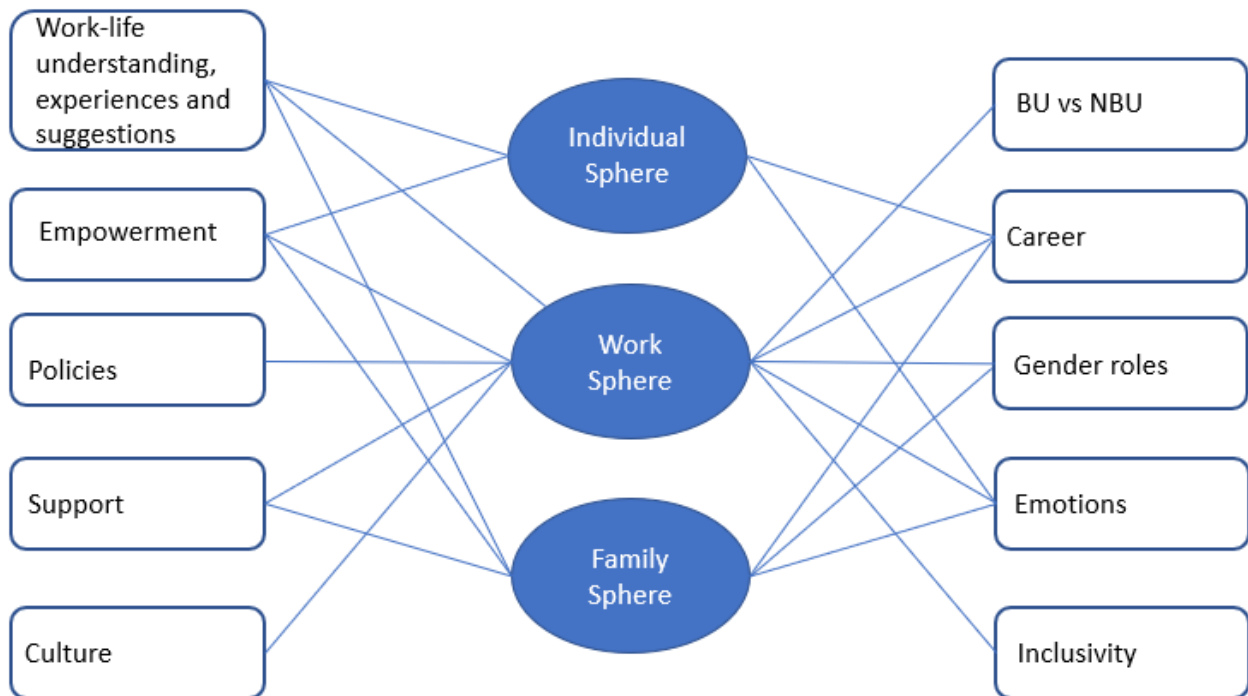
1<sup>st</sup> cycle – 321 codes

2<sup>nd</sup> cycle – 41 categories

3<sup>rd</sup> cycle – 10 themes

4<sup>th</sup> cycle – 3 Super Themes

Identified Super Themes are the individual sphere, the work sphere and the family. The ten identified themes can be applicable to more than one super theme, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: Themes and Super Themes**

The coding process resulted in 10 themes, namely, work-life understanding; experiences and suggestions; empowerment; policies; support; culture; Bargaining Unit vs Non-Bargaining Unit; career advancement and experiences; gender roles; feelings/emotions; and inclusivity. These 10 themes were then grouped

into three Super Themes, namely, individual sphere; work sphere; and family/society sphere. The findings of each theme are discussed below.

#### ***4.4.1 Work-life understanding, experiences and suggestions***

Some female participants understood work-life integration as two different spheres, separated from each other. They wanted to be able to dedicate themselves to both and be able to do both successfully without either one overlapping with the other. This is evident from looking for work-life balance, as illustrated below by Participant A and Participant P:

It's a balance between work and my personal space...keeping it separate in terms of me coming to work and serving my time during the day and being professional about that and then after a day's work leaving and going home and then putting on the role of a wife and a mother (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

...a clear separation. So if I leave work at four, I know work is at work; it's gone, and from four I can be a mother without interruptions from work...that clear distinction and time limits, yes, that for me would be so important (Participant P - FENB,33,2).

Other female participants see work-life as an amalgamation, moving between the two throughout the day. These women were content to shift their focus between the two roles and felt that they best met the responsibilities of their two roles through this amalgamation. This is best illustrated by the comments of Participants H and F:

...meaning the flexibility to either drop them off at school, pick them up after school. And be able to have the flexibility to work, even if it's the full 8 hours, but it's broken down to different times of the day (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

You can't say when I'm home, I'm no longer a manager; you're still a manager of the company. So, there will be some activities that you are expected to do whilst at home. And also, you can't say, "I'm not a mom during 8am and 5pm" (Participant F - FMNB,35).

Some participants did not view it in terms of time commitments or moving between the two roles but rather as the two roles reinforcing their sense of being. These women viewed both roles as essential to their reality and expressed a consciousness of bringing their whole selves, in the form that they were comfortable with, to these two roles, as expressed by Participants K and M below:

It's more me being able to be present in both lives. So, these two must work hand-in-hand at all times for me (Participant K - FENB,32,2).

To have a life as well as work and not seeing them as one stopping the other. So, being able to be me (Participant M - FMNB,36).

A common theme for women interviewed before lockdown and the introduction of remote working, was that they felt that they did not have work-life balance, often citing working hours and physical clocking-in as the biggest challenge. Women voiced that they wished the organisation focused more on outputs and meeting deliverables rather than time requirements. They strongly expressed the importance of their roles as mothers and that they needed to devote the necessary effort to their families; however, excessive and stringent working hours jeopardised that. This situation left women feeling unappreciated, frustrated and unhappy, as illustrated by Participants F, P and T:

Sometimes it does get quite hard...I still need to play a more guiding, loving role to my children even though I am a working mom so...it is quite hard to be able to instil those values and guide your children, because you need time; there's only 24 hours in a day; you can't stretch it. (Participant F - FMNB,35).

If I had that balance right, it would make me happier...I think my biggest challenge with Transnet is the fact that they track time a lot...in the sense that they assume that employees will steal time from the company, but they don't check what they steal from the employee...especially from a management perspective, you know they don't track the time they steal from us. And it's not as flexible because I think at that level you should have that flexibility. And as long as your deliverables are met, that should be sufficient (Participant P - FENB,33,2).

There was one morning that stands out. I was in a hurry to get to work so that I could clock in on time, and I shouted at my daughter to hurry up. I told her, "Come on, don't you know I'm getting late?" Because all I can think of is that clocking machine. And then I felt so bad that I shouted at this little child and upset her day; I probably scared her just for that damn machine. I mean, I'm a good worker, I do everything that I need to do at work. What's it if I get to work 10 minutes late and still leave on time? It would make my life so much easier, so much less stressful (Participant T - FENB,36,2).

Although this study was aimed at women employees, managers of women employees (including male managers) were also interviewed to help achieve triangulation. In line with the findings of women employees, male managers interviewed before lockdown and the introduction of remote working also felt that they did not have work-life balance. These participants however, did not bemoan the lack of work-life balance to the extent that women managers did, as expressed by Participant I below:

So, as far as possible, I try to get that balance correct. Obviously, work has its particular challenges and some days you have more focus on your work situation...I also feel that sometimes I work maybe too much at home (Participant I - MMNB,44).

Some female participants expressed that flexi-hours, implemented before lockdown and the introduction of remote working, helped them meet their responsibilities of taking children to school and fetching them from after-care, as expressed by Participants A and Q below:

The flexi-hours, which were quite awesome, because I could then structure my time to see how it best suited me in the morning and afternoon and coming back to the kids and stuff (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

The flexibility of working hours – even before COVID-19 we were flexible. I could take my kids to school and be able to fetch them from school, that's how the organisation has assisted me (Participant Q - FENB,39,2).

However, other participants expressed that flexi-hours still required a strict 8-hour day, being physically present at the office, and did not provide the necessary flexibility that women needed on a day-to-day basis, as illustrated by Participant H:

I think the flexi-hours...it supports me to a certain extent...but I still feel there is not much flexibility because it is still sort of cast in stone – the 8-hour rule has to be adhered to...at one point HR forced you, even if you were working flexi-hours; you needed to indicate your time. So, let's say if I want to work from 7 to 3, and all of a sudden I decided this week I want to work 8 to 4, it came up as short-time or unauthorised attendance, or something like that (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

The onset of COVID-19 and the implementation of lockdown forced the organisation to allow remote working, which brought work-life balance/integration/satisfaction to most female participants. Participants were more comfortable being at home and felt that this allowed them more oversight over

their home and children, while meeting work deliverables. They felt less restricted in their day-to-day activities. Most participants who were interviewed after lockdown were generally happier, their tones of voice lighter and they expressed feelings of appreciation and fulfilment. This is illustrated below by Participants P and Q:

I'm loving the fact that now I'm able to be at home, like now. I don't need to worry about somebody who might be looking after my kids. I am at home. I know what's going on at home...I think for me, the COVID-19 situation has saved time...I feel I'm more productive...They can come up with this "work from home" anytime, I'll support it (Participant P - FENB,33,2).

With regards to COVID-19...I know that my family is safe. I know that I'm able now, while talking to you right now, I have my kids doing their school-work there, but I'm able also to deliver on my work deliverables (Participant Q - FENB,39,2).

However, the introduction of remote working out of necessity rather than a planned implementation, resulted in a hinderance for one female employee, as she found herself working longer hours at home, and there were no boundaries put in place between the work role and home role. According to Participant W,

I was just saying yesterday, I managed to switch off even though I was thinking there's still this that I was supposed to have finished and all that when I got home later after six. But I managed to say, "I'm not going to open that computer"...But if I was working at home, yesterday, for the whole day, I know I would have pushed until 7:00 or 8:00 (Participant W - FMNB,44).

One male manager – Participant U – interviewed after lockdown, expressed both positive and negative experiences from the remote working situation. He felt that working from home prevented a daily routine and required him to be more mindful to attain a balance. However, it seemed that this was a temporary measure, as he expressed an appreciation for the change in mindset that remote working has brought and felt that going back to an '8-5 day' was less feasible. This implies that although remote working has its challenges, over time, with adjustment tactics, employees can comfortably adapt to the remote working arrangement. In the words of Participant U:

On the positive side, it has allowed much more flexibility with work. The stress and rush of morning/afternoon routines is no longer there. The main shift has been moved from managing a person's time to managing a person's output. I have much more liberty on my start-up/shut-down times. On the negative side, I find myself working unstructured hours – either starting very early,

working late at night or a combination thereof. This flexibility has blurred the lines between work time and home time. Whereas before lockdown, my routines were clear...now I don't have that clear distinction and it requires a lot more effort on my part to maintain the balance. One benefit from our lockdown, is that it's forced all of us to radically think about what's possible in the work environment. It will be hard to go back to the 8–5 clock-in and clock-out routine (Participant U - MMNB,44).

Some female participants interviewed, worked shifts (18:00 – 02:00, 02:00 – 10:00 or 10:00 – 18:00) and found this kind of work more challenging, as it varied from week to week, thwarting any kind of routine or balance, as illustrated by the comment of Participant R:

I think for myself, I'm not, there's probably other women that also would want to work straight shifts...it's shift working. Sometimes you need to work night shifts. So, to be able to see your children grow up and be here in the morning, in the evening...that [straight hours] I would call a 50/50 balance (Participant R - FENB,37,2).

Female participants interviewed before lockdown and the introduction of remote working, provided suggestions for improving work-life integration, including short leave periods, crèche/aftercare services at the organisation's premises, women's support groups and remote working. The strongest emphasis was on remote working and the ability to work from any office was suggested in instances where an employee works remotely, but needs to go into the office for short periods of time. This is illustrated by the comments of Participants G and H:

I think a "working from home" policy could be easily integrated based on...I mean it depends on the nature of your job...they should be more flexible in that regard...you know, it is demanding on a first-time mother, for example. Even the second time, when you have a new-born, even if you're back from maternity leave, you'll just have the comfort of making provision for some things, from time-to-time, allowing the person to work, or the mother to work from home (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

I think it should be so flexible, that even with our different terminals in and around Durban and the head office – if I have a meeting and my Skype isn't working – I should have the flexibility to go to one of the terminals or the nearest port...or alternatively out of the six divisions, I could use...as

one of the closest to me to get there and just have a meeting or use it as a dialling point (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

#### **4.4.2 Empowerment**

Women see working as a way to meet financial needs and attain independence. They remain acutely aware that working empowers them and reduces financial burdens on their spouses, as expressed by Participants A and Q below:

It does benefit me in the sense that me having my career gives me a sense of independence...we're all driven by finances at some stage and you need that for survival (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

I cannot just sit back and expect that my husband will come back and, you know, expect him to go out there and be the breadwinner (Participant Q - FENB,39,2).

Most women interviewed appreciated having both the home and work roles. They felt that having the two roles contributed to their personal growth and confidence. They also indicated that sometimes the two roles complimented each other, in that skill from one role is transferred to the other, more from the work role to the home role, as illustrated by Participants X and F below:

I can't have one without the other as much as like you have your job for, you know, to earn money and stuff. For me it's more like it makes me happy to do something that I like, to be studying towards my career and goals and also having a family; it just completes me; so I can't have one without the other (Participant X - FEB,31,1).

When I give practical examples while I'm still setting values, I can tell them that at work, this was my experience...Whereas, just maybe if I am at home, maybe my experience in terms of me being able to share practical experiences in terms of life learning, might be limited if I am just a stay-at-home mom (Participant F - FMNB,35).

However, some women participants expressed that if they had to choose one, they would choose the home role, as it fulfilled them more, or they expressed dissatisfaction if they were to only have the work role. This is best summarised by the comments of Participants K and G:

I wouldn't have a problem having a home life...I think that would be more fulfilling for me than only having a work life (Participant K - FENB,32,2).

Where we had no kids, when it was just me and my husband...I was very career-focused...so I dedicated my life to my career...And yeah, it wasn't great, because I feel I was sadder then (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

Women participants interviewed felt that there is an expectation that they can perform both roles and they strongly believed that they have the characteristics, ability and tactics to fully meet the expectations of both work and home roles. Participant Q illustrates this below:

So, I also need to go out and be able to provide for my family...and it's doable, especially when ...you put your mind to it, as much as there are so many hurdles for us. I mean, for us to get into that position [job] we have to come back home and make sure the kids have done their homework, we have to make sure supper is cooked we have to make sure that we actually take care of their needs...We have seen and we have proven that it's quite doable for us and we are doing it each and every day (Participant Q - FENB,39,2).

#### **4.4.3 Policies**

A common finding was that participants, both female employees and their managers, have a limited knowledge of all organisational policies. When these participants were asked about their knowledge of policies that impact on work-life integration, almost all were familiar with leave policies, as expressed by Participants A and M:

When it comes to leave and those kind of things in terms of, you know, when I can and cannot take leave and those...kinds of policies, also like your family responsibilities, I am aware of it (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

I know [am familiar with] things like the leave policy, the family responsibility leave policy, the sick leave policy (Participant M - FMNB,36).

Employees who expressed that they had a good knowledge of policies, developed that knowledge as a requirement of their current or prior job function. They actively referred to policies to meet the deliverables of their jobs and this heightened their knowledge of policies, as summarised by the comments of Participants B and C:

I think more so, when I was in the space of managing people, I really, really, really had to know my policies...because we're dealing with labour and unions and you know, you need to know your story (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

In my role as a [job], I had to read through the policies in order to...understand what the policy says and then what my constituents are going through (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

Many participants who expressed that they were not knowledgeable of all organisational policies, attributed that lack of knowledge either to an oversight by themselves or the organisation's poor communication of policies. Furthermore, most participants who accessed policies and familiarised themselves with them, only did so when the need arose. This is illustrated by the comments of Participants H, M, and D:

...maybe not taking the time to actually going onto our intranet and reading that information (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

If you go onto the intranet and you're looking for one, you need to know what you're looking for. It's not just gonna be visible to you. If I don't know what I'm searching for, I don't know what I'm searching for...Also, policies are not...socialised very well. They'll go to whichever committee it goes to get approval, then you'll just get a blanket e-mail (Participant M - FMNB,36).

When there's a need, like...you want to ask [for information], then you go to HR; that's not something that is just at your disposal (Participant D - FEB,34,2).

When asked about possible consequences of limited policy knowledge, female participants and their managers admitted that this left them at a disadvantage, as summarised by the comments of Participants N and J:

The fact that not knowing all the policies, short-changes you from doing your role a little bit better or being informed because there is some very handy information in the policies, once you do actually give yourself some time to read the policies, paragraph for paragraph (Participant N - FENB,33,1).

It leaves me a little bit uneasy because as an employee I don't know what's my rights, when I'm infringing on that. I'm also not very clear on whether the policies are unbiased and neutral or whether it's a 60/40 principle where it's more in favour of the employer than the employee (Participant J - FMNB,46).

Several participants commented that policies are long, complicated, inflexible and often contradictory or inconsistent across Transnet divisions. This creates confusion and inconsistent application, as expressed by Participants H, I and U:

I requested to work from home. Nowhere in the policy did it state that if a person is sick and made a request to work from home, so that they could still be assisting in completing their work and still be on sick leave to take care of their health. I wasn't able to do so, because nowhere in our policy does it say so. Our policy states that if you are on sick leave, you are on sick leave; and you cannot be allowed any flexibility (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

You'll find a document that's 20 pages long...some probably [containing] contradictory information in one section or the other (Participant I - MMNB,44,2).

We as a division operate within the bigger Transnet group and at least from my space, what I see happening is that we might have a group policy and there's a group communication on how to deal with a matter. It doesn't necessarily talk to our divisional policy. You know, we often have those types of things (Participant U - MMNB,44).

While the nature of the business of such a large organisation – where a significant number of employees do not have a computer or laptop – can lead to gaps in communicating policies, employees must also be willing to receive and be attentive to such communication, as expressed by Participants U and N:

Just communicating it via e-mail doesn't necessarily mean that people have received the information as such, and you could have situations where people are not even on the mailing list (Participant U - MMNB,44).

I can send out an e-mail, I can distribute a pamphlet. But if you are not willing to receive that information, if you're not willing to interpret it, and you know that information and understand it and go through it, then it just feels like my efforts are in vain (Participant N - FENB,33,1).

Some policies allowed managers to use their discretion. However, participants (female employees and their managers) were apprehensive about managers using their discretion, as this discretion is subjective, depending on the managers' own context, beliefs and values. Without any guidance from the organisation regarding what is within the managers' realm of decision-making and what is not, it leaves managers

feeling uneasy, can create inconsistencies in application, and results in employees not being treated equitably. This is best summarised by the comments of Participants K and M:

When it says “at discretion of your manager”, then you’d have a problem in terms of who you are reporting to – what is their life-style about? What are their priorities? (Participant K - FENB,32,2).

There’s no policy that governs [a specific matter], so is it left to my discretion? And what does my discretion mean? I could be on a different wavelength to someone else in the same department. Then how do we treat everybody fairly?...Maternity leave is well defined...but if an employee says, “You know what I’m battling today? I’m huge [heavily pregnant], can I please work from home?” I can’t say yes to that. Or if she tells me, “I can’t travel”; that’s my discretion, that you don’t have to travel; but what if you have a horrible boss? Or what if you have a person who says, “I don’t care.” What do you do then? There’s no policy that says that if you are pregnant, you are exempt from doing things (Participant M - FMNB,36).

When women employees and their managers were asked about policies enabling or hindering work life for women employees, reactions from participants were mixed. Some felt that policies like leave policies enhanced their work life, as they were confident of their entitlement to such benefits, while others bemoaned the rigidity of policies, as expressed by Participants A and C below:

I’ll say, for me it will enhance it, especially in terms of the leave policy. The fact that it is there, and I have X amount of days available to me, as and when the need arises, I know that that is something that I’m entitled to (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

It’s not enough days...for example, family responsibility – I think it’s 5 days. Sometimes your child can get sick for more than 5 days; sometimes your child is lying in hospital. And I’m talking about an instance that has happened, where it’s not enough and then you have to go into unpaid leave (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

A stark difference in policies applicable to the female employees in this study relates to maternity benefits. However, this was raised sparingly by participants, which is further evidence of employees’ limited knowledge of policies. Participants X and R expressed frustration at the inequity of maternity leave benefits for the two groups. Participant R worked at the terminal and was promoted from the Bargaining Unit to the Non-Bargaining Unit. She therefore had both policies apply to her at different stages of her career. The more favourable Bargaining Unit maternity policy applied to her during her first pregnancy

while the less favourable Non-Bargaining Unit applied during her second pregnancy. Both participants comments are illustrated below:

Your grade shouldn't be a factor in determining things like that when it comes to your personal leave, and especially maternity leave. I think in that regard, all employees should be getting the same benefits, regardless of your grade (Participant X - FEB,31,1).

There are some policies that I don't agree with, especially on our level as managers. There are just certain policies, that are good for the bargaining council, and somehow not for us...like maternity benefits for managers. We are only allowed to get four months full pay while bargaining council [members] get their four months' full pay; but you have the option to extend it to six months and it [salary] goes down...But my question is: what is different in that woman in relation to me? (Participant R - FENB,37,2).

#### **4.4.4 Support**

Most female participants had support at home to help them in their home role. This support included, either a partner, nanny, parents, in-laws or a combination thereof and female participants relied heavily on these support mechanisms. This was underscored by participants G and H:

My live-in nanny – I cannot do without her...and I rely on her heavily...And then for instance, if she falls ill or she's on leave, I have my mother (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

[I depend on my support structure] a hell of a lot. If I have an unexpected meeting in the very late afternoon...my parents would fill in and they would pick my kids up (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

A common theme amongst female participants who experienced support from the organisation in their work life, did so through their managers. Their managers were comfortable to make informal family-supportive arrangements when the need arose and female participants were appreciative of such arrangements and valued their managers' understanding, as expressed by Participants G and X below:

My line manager is absolutely supportive. The other day I was called to school...she wasn't even here; I just sent her a WhatsApp message: "I have to go to school", without even explaining because I didn't know what to say. So, then she says "Fine, okay." You know she's concerned; she just wants to know how everything went (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

Having an understanding manager helps a lot, because when I do have family emergencies...he's very understanding (Participant X - FEB,31,1).

Most participants – both female employees and their managers – were conscious to ensure job requirements were met in exchange for the informal family-supportive arrangements, but remained cautious that the granting of informal family-supportive arrangements may be situational, dependent on the manager's personality, own life responsibilities and circumstances. This is best demonstrated by the comments of Participants J, G, and A below:

If she needs to run out for something critical...and she wants to take a little time away from her desk, she just sends me a message and she knows I'm very understanding about it. For me, the most critical thing is to "make sure your deliverables are delivered on"; and she's done that (Participant J - FMNB,46,1).

And you know...what I noticed as well, when you're reporting to someone who already is placed in a situation where they are balancing the work-life integration, it really helps (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

[A difficulty was] the person not being approachable; or I felt that in terms of people having different characters [personality traits] and they're fine the one day and not the next day; and just me not being comfortable asking at that point in time, of that specific manager (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

As much as informal managerial arrangements provided employees with support in finding work-life integration, some female employee participants and some managers sought an established policy that allowed such arrangements. This would bring them comfort and negate the granting of such arrangements, based on the manager's situation, personality and life responsibilities, as shown by Participants A and M below:

You know, to be able to; just so I know it's something that I've got. But I don't have to keep going and asking (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

For me, having an employee that's now pregnant, I was able to understand...But I'm a woman; what if someone else in that role who said, "I don't care; even if you're pregnant, get on the damn flight." What do you do then? There's no policy that says you can't; you know, you can't say that. Where does it say that? So, I don't feel like those things are considered (Participant M - FMNB,36).

In addition to supportive managers, participants cited Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) as a way in which the organisation supported employees in their pursuit of work-life integration; however, some participants questioned the effectiveness of the programmes. They believed that although the programmes were in place, employees were not well aware of the service offerings. Employees were not provided with feedback after using the services and some people believed that the information shared with the EAP did not remain confidential and was shared with managers. This is demonstrated by the comments by Participants B and C:

The one policy that I think does [help] is the EAP programme, and I say this because...the EAP programme makes sure that your wellbeing is correct (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

Some people are scared to report those things, but when they do, in our EAP there is no proper follow-up. Some people are scared to talk to EAP because the information is shared with your manager as well. Some people say the EAP is supposed to be a confidential thing, but it's shared. So, some people are afraid to talk to the EAP (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

When managers were asked whether they felt supported by the organisation to manage employees' work-life needs, most replied in the negative. They were aware that employees experienced challenges but did not feel well equipped to assist employees. Also, because of organisational demands, the organisation would not be comfortable with them assisting employees with their work-life needs. This was confirmed by Participants M and J:

No, sometimes I feel that the pressure starts, and then the pressure has to go down. Where is it going to go?...I feel that, if I had to go to my boss and say, "I cannot do this now because somebody is off sick or somebody is away", it doesn't feel like that will be well understood or respected (Participant M - FMNB,36).

I don't think that exists. I really don't think anything exists because you're put into a manager's role, and you have to feel your way through it (Participant J - FMNB,46).

#### ***4.4.5 Culture***

Despite the presence of policies which may or may not enable work-life balance or integration, a common theme was that the organisation did not have a culture to support this. Employees felt that over time, the positive mechanisms that were in place were removed, thereby diluting any work-life culture that existed, as shown by the responses from Participants B and X below:

Unfortunately, no, a culture is something that happens without thought. It's like something that happens automatically. It's embedded in you; it's what you eat, breathe and live. Unfortunately, that is not where we are right now as an organisation (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

I don't think there's any work-life balance culture. And yeah, we do get e-mails about, you know, learning to take a rest, rest well, rest on your weekend off; but those are just e-mails they don't really promote it. There's no Wellness Day in our organisation...there's no Family Days anymore. I don't think there's a culture of work-life integration and balance (Participant X - FEB,31,1).

Many participants questioned the role of leadership in creating a work-life integration culture. They believed that the organisation's leadership was responsible for setting the tone for work-life culture, but that the leadership did not recognise employees' work-life needs, as shown by the remarks of Participants B and J:

When we want to change culture, we always think we need to start from the bottom up. No, we need to change our perception, because it's been proven many a times that it's not the bottom that has the issues. It's the top; because the top needs to implement and walk the talk...So, you rather start from the top, which is the leadership, to say, "Listen, you need to change your mindset and your culture and be more people-focused", and then that will cascade down to the bottom (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

Actually not; that's not been incorporated at all and we've seen it from the higher levels...It's all about how we can make sure that we meet the bottom line and grow South Africa as an economy, but what does that mean to us? Grow us only from a GDP point of view; from a revenue point of view. Is it making us more stable individuals? I don't think so. It's actually forcing us to be part of that rush, of that business rush. The rat-race. It's taking us into that (Participant J - FMNB,46).

Along with leadership, some participants identified gender dynamics as playing a significant role in the organisation's work-life culture. Women employees have had negative experiences with some male managers or when working in male-dominated spaces, where their work-life needs were not respected and, in some cases, not acknowledged. This is best illustrated by the comments from Participants E, G and B:

Look at this one manager...I was 14 weeks pregnant when I found out; so they wanted to terminate my pregnancy, they said I'm old...And he [doctor]keeps on saying about this termination. And one

morning, this guy is not even my boss, and he phones me while this doctor is telling me that this child needs to go, we need to make a decision. And he's phoning me...and as I'm telling him, "Look, I'm in the hospital, I will be back at the office at 8 o'clock", this man goes on and on and on. And now this man is phoning me. I'm telling him, "I'm at the hospital, so leave it alone." He's not even my boss. I had a manager. The last day before I went on maternity leave, he asked me, "So, because you decide to be pregnant, my time card will not be cleared?" (Participant E - FEB,42,2).

I did report to male employers or managers. They're not as receptive to you coming and saying that I need to do this and to do that (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

It's more male-dominated and as much as you would prove yourself that you're capable and able, but you just have to work a hundred times harder to prove that. So, what that does to you in trying to balance that home and work, it puts a lot of pressure on your home life (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

Some participants felt that the organisation focused too much on results/outputs and this contributed to creating a poor work-life culture, forgetting the human aspect of human capital. They felt that employees were only valued for their outputs, as demonstrated by Participants U and B:

We don't seem to have that Ubuntu culture, if I can say that. We just narrowly focused on outputs...By way of an example: we had an employee that worked for the organisation for 35 years or 37 years; nobody knew that his retirement was coming. He retired last week and after 37 years he wasn't even someone we could say goodbye to, or give him a handshake. He just left the organisation and it's like, "OK, 37 years, can we get the next person in?" So, we don't seem to value employees, apart from what they can produce. Yeah, it's very clinical, we don't seem to have that caring culture or comforting culture (Participant U - MMNB,44).

I think leadership, more than anything else, is there to push you. I mean, there are certain things for empowerment, maybe even training or something, and your manager says, "No, no, no, you cannot be released for that because we have deadlines!" But within that training, he does not or she does not know, that could have been an empowering tool to make either your personal or your work life much easier or even be more efficient and productive. But because they are chasing targets, it takes away their sensitivity of making you feel like they really care about your needs. So maybe not all [of management], but *you* can accept that majority (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

#### ***4.4.6 Bargaining Unit and Non-Bargaining Unit***

A common theme among participants who mentioned the differences between policies applicable to the BU and the NBU, was a strong feeling of segregation. They felt that in different instances, policies favoured one group over the other, even though needs may be the same and this created feelings of ‘us and them’. Also, within the BU, policies are blanket for all employees, irrespective of the nature of their jobs. This is summarised by the comments of Participants A and C:

From what I understand, it is only for management and not for junior officers. So, if employees are going for classes and stuff in the day or so, they can, I think it’s a maximum of 20 days within that year that they’d be able to take, but then that segregates the junior offices from the managers, but it is there...So, in terms of studying as a junior officer, the 20 days only apply to managers; it makes me wonder why are we not entitled as junior officers for that. However, then there are others like you just mentioned as well. There are some perks that you get as a junior officer and not as a manager (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

There is segregation right now because managers get more and we get less. So we count it as days off; it takes cognisance of the Saturday and the Sunday, but we are support [staff], so how come we are [grouped] in shift work and operations? (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

#### ***4.4.7 Career***

Several participants did not measure career success traditionally, but rather relatively – relative to their contribution to the organisation and others, to their life responsibilities, to their work-life integration and personal growth, and to their purpose and passion, as illustrated by the following quotes from Participants E and W:

For me, it’s not about the money. I know it sounds strange...it’s more about happiness, the fulfilment...Did I make a difference in somebody else’s life; did I do well in order for the company to move forward; in order for the company to generate money; did I add value to the company?...It’s how fulfilled I feel the day when I leave [the company]. Did I make a difference? (Participant E - FEB,42,2).

I must be able to work freely in my area, for my career, and be able to mentor others at the same time without impacting my work. So, if I’m mentoring other people in other areas or maybe in the

same career, I must be able to mentor people and grow and develop them in this career (Participant W - FMNB,44).

Participants also measured success in their careers in terms of happiness and the absence of constant and excessive stress. They wished for calm in their day-to-day activities and general health and wellbeing in their lives, as articulated by Participants M and W:

It's becoming more for me, to be less stressed, to have less drama, you know, just to be happier (Participant M - FMNB,36).

I think then it's a successful career where I'm happy. I know that I don't have, I'm not very stressed, no stressful days, there will be stressful times, just those few instances. But I must not be the person who will be going in and out to the doctors because I'm very stressed in my work. And that would mean I'm not successful at all in my career (Participant W - FMNB,44)

When asked about whether they considered work-life balance when making career-advancement decisions, almost all participants – female employees, female managers and male managers – expressed that they actively considered this. Participants remained relative in their career-advancement decisions, considering their choices in relation to their life responsibilities, specifically prioritising their families. This is best summarised by the comments from Participants T and U below:

Yes, definitely I do. I must consider it because I have a family and I don't want to take on a job that I know demands too much of my time and jeopardises the time I have for my family. I always have this in my mind (Participant T - FENB,36,2).

So yeah, it does play a role in my decisions...that's my first question, "What is it going to take away?" Because I need to have that right balance. So, at some point, you've just gotta say, "That's it, thank you very much. I've got my balance correctly and I'm not going to do anything to upset the apple cart." So, undoubtedly, it's the first thing I consider (Participant U - MMNB,44).

However, some participants expressed that their consideration for work-life integration was dependent on their age and life stage. Their career aspirations and work-life aspirations changed over time, from little consideration for work-life needs, to actively considering work-life needs, as expressed by Participant M below:

If you asked me this ten years ago, I would have said, “Let’s first focus on the career and once you’re well established, you can then decide.” But maybe, at the age that I am at now, where you see it’s more important to actually have that balance than to chase a career, and I don’t just think that’s true for a female; I think it’s true for guys as well (Participant M - FMNB,36).

Many female and male participants associated career advancement with impaired work-life integration. They felt that moving up the ladder naturally, equated to increased work-life challenges. They were content with their current jobs and were content to forgo career advancement. This is illustrated by Participants U and I below:

Work-life balance for me is one of the key aspects...as you move forward or upward in an organisation, obviously that will decrease because the higher up you go, the more responsibility you have, and the more commitment you need to deliver on your particular portfolio. So, in my space that obviously plays a role in where I want to be and what I want to do. At some point, you’ve just got to call it and say, “I’m happy.” Sure, there might be prospects or opportunities in the workspace, but at what price? We can’t be working 24/7, or at least I can’t (Participant U - MMNB,44).

For example, if you’re applying for the GM [general manager] position and you go there [being appointed], you know it’s gonna be tough. So, you’ve already in your mind made peace with having to work the extended hours, having to travel a lot...Because I see what the GMs do in our business and I don’t think I’d want to be a GM. Maybe when my kids are older, I’d reconsider that; but at the moment, definitely not (Participant I - MMNB,44).

In line with this perception, was that participants believed that employees who sacrificed work-life balance, would be recognised for this and therefore viewed as better candidates and were more likely to receive career advancement. This made participants feel that if they really wanted career advancement at some stage, they would then be forced to make decisions that compromised their work-life integration. This is summarised by Participants L and K:

So, if you work 14 hours a day, there’s probably a higher chance of you getting promoted...so, there’s a recognition that you’re working long hours, churning out stuff, but is it really effective? (Participant L - MMNB,48).

So, when there are opportunities, you know how work is. If you have excuses about travelling too many times, you tend to be put on the backburner...sometimes I get the feeling that when there’s a

promotion in place or any tasks that need to be done, they do tend to – although a person won't say it – consider those things. They say that, “Oh, when it's [a busy] time, so and so has kids; they might not be able to do A, B and C”, and you just get the feeling. So, you'll make excuses; but then you will limit yourself, you know – I said no to this and no to that; OK, now maybe I have to [agree to do it] in order to keep up with the requirements (Participant K - FENB,32,2).

#### ***4.4.8 Gender roles***

A common theme identified by participants was the traditional experiences of gender roles in the home and the caring of children. Partners shared in the domestic tasks; however, this was mainly when the woman was not available or able to complete a domestic task herself, as reflected by the comments of Participants C and L below:

My husband – he's very hands on – if needs be, he takes over the cooking; if needs be, he takes over the washing [of laundry] (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

I know that the days that my wife is working late and I have to pick up the kids, are stressful for me (Participant L - MMNB,48).

However, participants commented on the increasing involvement of fathers in raising children, acknowledging that working fathers also considered work-life integration when making decisions, as expressed below:

I think when you have kids, you need those leave days; not for yourself but for them (Participant I - MMNB,44).

You have dads who also support kids (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

#### ***4.4.9 Emotions***

The majority of female employee participants shared their experience of destructive feelings of anger, guilt and frustration when experiencing work-life conflict. They felt overworked and bemoaned their lack of work-life integration, citing the problems it created in their personal lives. This is best demonstrated by the comments of Participants C and H:

Because we're under-staffed, so you've got to take work home. So, there's no choice if deadlines having to be met; you obviously [have to do the work] and you can't get it done in the 8 hours because there are other things that are happening. So, we've gotta take work home. So, right now there's an overload of work and to manage that at home, it's tough (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

It initially caused lots of issues between me and my husband because he explained that I was spending too much time at the office. And then obviously getting fatigued and tired, and waking up again and leaving [for work] early in the morning. So, it gave me fewer hours with the family...[I felt] terrible at the time; I really felt bad, it was a guilt trip, I really felt bad...I missed a lot of my bigger one's [older child's] matches...It made me feel bad because I wasn't there, and I needed to be there, to be supportive. And sometimes I would get home and want to put them to bed, and sometimes I would get home and they would have already had supper (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

On the positive side, several participants were optimistic about the implementation of work-life integration practices at the organisation. They felt that it was a desired, reasonable and achievable task if both employees and the organisation were determined to achieve work-life integration, as articulated by Participants G, H, and U:

So yeah, I think like a "working from home" policy could be easily integrated based on ...the nature of your job. (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

I think it may seem like a long road to get there, but we can do it (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

In a nutshell, yes, I think we can do more in that regard and it's something we need to strive for, going forward (Participant U - MMNB,44).

Almost all female employee participants shared constructive feelings of achievement, financial independence, empowerment and gratitude towards having a career. They valued their careers and the benefits derived from them. This is best summarised by Participants A and C:

Having my career, gives me a sense of independence; a sense of knowing that I can do certain things on my own; that I don't have to be dependent on someone else...So, it gives me a sense of accomplishment that I can do things on my own (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

My thinking is that I'm able to get what I need to get done at the end of the month – pay the bills; so, for me my focus is that I'm stable; I've got something. So, I think I can be grateful for what I've got (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

Almost all female employee participants expressed constructive feelings of gratitude, empowerment and being valued, particularly towards managers who provided informal family-supportive arrangements. They valued their managers' family-supportive arrangements and believed that the value of such arrangements was dependent on both their own behaviour and attitude, as well as their managers' understanding and willingness to assist, as illustrated by the comments of Participants B and C:

I tell you, it's a breeze and it's refreshing, and it empowers you; it gives you a reassurance (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

Well, excellent, my line [manager], anytime. I don't have a problem, I must admit. There were some times where the line [manager] said, "No [problem], go, your child is sick. Don't worry, go." So, the relationship building [is important]...that my line [manager] values me, whenever. She relies on me, I rely on her; it's a tag-team relationship (Participant C - FEB,41,2).

#### **4.4.10 Inclusivity**

A common theme arose, where female employee participants were not involved in work-life policy-making. They were not exposed to the drafting of policies and did not have an opportunity to provide inputs or to voice their challenges. This is illustrated by Participants A and E:

No, me personally, I have not been [involved]. I haven't been exposed to making suggestions or anything of that sort, in terms of any policies regarding that [work-life balance] (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

No...there's a lot of these policies and I don't feel that all women, or women [generally] are usually included in the [formulation of the] policies (Participant E - FEB,42,2).

While female employees expressed that they were not included in work-life policy-making, they commented on the issue of membership of the BU and the NBU and their influence on inclusion. Some female employee participants expressed that NBU employees needed to use their voices within the spaces that are available, to raise concerns. This is best summarised by participants B and H:

I think some of the times the cries are made by labour and I think the voices of the unions on the bargaining side, are much louder than those of the voices on the non-bargaining side. I mean, for example, I think there was one union meeting called upstairs in the canteen – the numbers were so pathetic...How do you expect a labour representative to raise your issues when they have to go to EE and the SD and all the other forums where your voices are heard, and there they can fight for your rights when you don't partake? Whereas, on the Non-Bargaining Unit – and I've been on that side. Listen, when labour says they're having a meeting – full house and everybody has their hand up to say, "Listen, we're not happy about this and we're not happy about that" (Participant B - FENB,42,2).

[Despite] our advantages of being non-bargaining [members of the NBU], we still have our challenges, but we're not putting it forth to say, "These are our challenges" (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

Many female employee participants experienced discontentment when they indeed used their voices, as no positive changes or feedback were received, or they were viewed in a negative light for speaking up. This deters them from speaking up, as underscored by Participants A, E, and R:

I had an experience which was off the books, a couple of years ago with my previous manager and it was said to me, "You know, you being a union member, it's not good, and blah, blah, blah." So, you sometimes, on that point, you want to just hold back in voicing your points so that there isn't any friction and to maintain the harmony and the peace (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

I raised all that concerns with HR with the union and with my general manager, and nobody stood up for me (Participant E - FEB,42,2).

I think I'm not the only female manager that has complained about that [difference in maternity leave policy for BU and NBU]. But OK, we must take it as it comes...If you go and complain to the HOD, it just stays there...Nothing happened after that – that it's been escalated to maybe it's at HR in Head Office, or something...but I haven't received anything (Participant R - FENB,37,2).

Some female employee participants expressed that one's ability to use one's voice, may depend on whether the environment empowers female employees to speak up, is willing to listen to female employees, and the employees' strength of personality. This is summarised by remarks below from Participants E, H, and M:

[I aspire to] Just one day have the courage, and just arrange a meeting with the group CE and the group HR manager. I just want to tell them, “I don’t want money; I don’t want anything. But I just want you guys to see that the policies and everything are aligned, and then you will have happy employees” (Participant E - FEB,42,2).

I think if I didn’t have them [parents] and got stuck in the situation [no one available to fetch children], I would have to ask to be excused, and certainly for higher management [intervention]. I don’t think it is the norm for them to accept [that] (Participant H - FENB,39,3).

There are times where I now say, “I’m not prepared to” [perform a certain task]...and it has been received by my manager...But I feel like, what if I wasn’t strong enough to go and say that, you know, what if I was a quiet person who said, “It’s OK, let me just go”? (Participant M - FMNB,36).

Several female employees expressed the need for inclusivity and suggested forums as a mechanism for empowering women to use their voices, evidenced by the following quotes from Participants D and R below:

I think once in a month or twice in a month, where you meet up; for those 30 minutes, you have engagements...If they [forums] can open our minds to other things...then there’s one hurdle that’s okay, and they’re [management] trying to assist me with this at work (Participant D - FEB,34,2).

You know, I’m not sure if there is a forum where we can complain about this thing (Participant R - FENB,37,2).

Several female participants welcomed the prospect of being included in work-life policy-making and asserted that their inclusion would contribute positively to their sense of being. They felt that they would be valued by the organisation and their contribution could assist other women and the organisation. This is affirmed by the comments of Participants A and J:

It would be nice to be able to have that role to make those decisions so that I can have my say and add some sense of purpose and value to me as being a woman to say, “OK, these are the things I would like to do or to implement”, so that other women can also benefit from this input (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

Gees, my gosh, it brings a different perspective to things, hey. It would have made me feel, that as an employee, the organisation actually felt and empathised with the requirements that were my responsibility outside of my day-to-day work (Participant J - FMNB,46).

A common theme arose where female employee participants felt that if they were included in work-life policy-making, it would influence them to make positive career-advancement decisions (either seeking promotion or choosing to stay at the organisation). This is effectively illustrated by Participants A and G:

I think in terms of a career path and goals and making decisions and just being out there, it will definitely change, if we did have a bigger say in certain things...It won't restrict us or won't make us scared to take on other roles and stuff like that, should we know that we've got a voice and we're not looked down upon (Participant A - FEB,42,2).

Definitely...for example, if you were influenced by an external position...and...[were invited] inclusively into the process [work-life policy and practice making]? No. It would have influenced [career advancement decision], if I had an external job offer or job decision that I wanted to make. I would have thought twice if I was included, if I was made aware of this...Yes, it does...influence your decision to stay within Transnet, or even to move within Transnet (Participant G - FENB,36,3).

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter outlined the themes developed from the participants about policies, work-life understandings and experiences, careers and inclusivity. The research questions and answers from interviews guided the findings discussed in this chapter. The study identified ten main themes, grouped into three Super Themes. The next chapter interrogates, interprets, and discusses these themes, with reference to key literature in this regard.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of the analysis of policies, using a checklist and ten distinct sub-themes grouped into three Super Themes uncovered during interviews. This chapter links the findings to the relevant theoretical framework and literature with the aim of better understanding the phenomenon under review. The research focuses on exploring the impact of inclusion in work-life policy-making on women and their related career decisions at Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), an operating division of Transnet Ltd, a State-Owned Entity.

#### 5.2 Discussion and analysis of policies

It is important to note that the discussion of policies is based on the researcher's interpretation and understanding. The researcher noted several differences between policies applicable to the Bargaining Unit (BU) and the Non-Bargaining Unit (NBU). Where a policy was silent on a particular item, it is assumed that the item does not apply to members in that group. For example, the NBU policy states that an employee must have a minimum working period of 4 months to qualify for family responsibility leave; the BU policy is silent on any minimum working period; hence, it is assumed that no minimum working period applies to employees of the BU to qualify for family responsibility leave. Differences in policies affect both groups (BU and NBU), as well as both male and female employees (barring maternity leave), and only those salient differences which may have a negative impact on work-life balance, are discussed in the tables below.

##### *5.2.1 Inequality in annual, sick and family responsibility leave clauses*

**Table 10: Annual, sick and family responsibility leave clauses detrimental to the work-life balance of women employees**

Bargaining Unit	Non-Bargaining Unit
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<p>When BU employees take leave on a Friday and Monday, the Saturday and Sunday are included, leading to four days' leave taken instead of two. This applies whether the employee is in Operations/Shift (a seven-day week with three eight-hour shifts a day) or Support (a five-day week with straight eight-hour days).</p>	<p>Employees are not entitled to accumulate annual leave.</p>
	<p>Employees are not allowed to take leave during resignation period/take leave to cover notice period.</p>
	<p>Employees are entitled to fewer sick leave days than the BU.</p>
	<p>Employees earn sick days at a lower rate during early employment.</p>
	<p>A minimum working period of four months is applicable to qualify for family responsibility leave.</p>
	<p>There are fewer qualifying reasons for NBU employees to take family responsibility leave compared to the BU.</p>

Based on the above BU, women employees who work a straight eight-hour day, five-day week, are prejudiced with regards to annual leave when taking leave on a Friday and Monday, as the intervening Saturday and Sunday are included and this can negatively impact their work-life. NBU women employees on the other hand, face several prejudices with regards to annual, sick and family responsibility leave, compared to the BU. These inconsistencies in policies resonated during interviews and the analysis above

justifies the view from participants. Furthermore, the researcher believes that the differences perpetuate workplace inequality and possibly sows division amongst employees.

### 5.2.2 *Inequality in maternity leave clauses*

**Table 11: Maternity leave clauses detrimental to work-life balance of women employees**

<b>Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Non-Bargaining Unit</b>
In the case of adoption, paid maternity leave benefits are applicable for two months. An employee can take up to a further three months from annual leave or as unpaid leave.	Employees must have a minimum of 12 months of uninterrupted working service to qualify for maternity benefits. The NBU policy is silent on the situation when a women employee has less than 12 months uninterrupted working service and it is assumed that sick leave rules will apply, i.e., a maximum of 30 days.
The employee may return to work at the same grade/level and rate of pay, but not necessarily the same job.	Employees are not entitled to extra leave over and above the usual leave categories for pre-natal visits.
	In the case of miscarriage or a stillborn child in the third trimester, women employees in the NBU are entitled to 30 working days leave as compared to all maternity leave benefits which BU women employees are entitled to claim.
	There are no prescribed working periods before and after the birth of a child, where women employees cannot be compelled to work.

	A work back period of 6 months is required.
	In the case of adoption, there is a minimum child's age applicable namely, under two years old, for the women employees to be entitled to full maternity benefits.
	The employee's position will not be permanently filled while on maternity leave, she will return to either the same/similar/equivalent job.
	On return from maternity leave, for two months thereafter, a female employee will not be required to work night shifts or carry out any duties which may be hazardous to her health or that of her child.

The BU women employees are prejudiced with regards to adopting a child, as they are entitled to only two months of paid leave. Any other leave will come from their annual leave or be unpaid. This may be damaging to the work-life balance of women employees who adopt children. It is possible for BU employees to not return to the same job and this may have a negative effect on their careers, as it derails them from their chosen career path.

During interviews, a few participants mentioned that female employees in the BU could access up to six months of maternity leave at a reduced salary; however, this was not included in any of the policies analysed. The researcher speculates that this benefit was negotiated during wage agreements and excluded from the policy and therefore the scope of this study.

There is severe inequality between women of the BU and NBU concerning maternity leave. From the minimum working period for qualification, to no entitlement to leave for pre-natal visits, inability to take a longer maternity leave period at a reduced salary, and possibly dangerous working environments. It is clear that women in the NBU are not treated fairly in the organisation concerning maternity benefits, and

this is perhaps a result of their lack of access to collective bargaining. The policy that provides gratuitous benefits to BU women was signed in 2002 and the latest equivalent policy for NBU women was approved in April 2016. The two policies are 14 years apart and one could argue that the policy applicable to the NBU has had sufficient opportunity to align to that of the BU. The stark difference in policies was however, picked up sparingly by participants – further evidence of employees' lack of knowledge and self-awareness of policies.

**5.2.3 Inequality in study, sabbatical, special, climatic, sporting events and long-service clauses**

**Table 12: Study, sabbatical, special, climatic, sporting events and long-service clauses**

<b>Bargaining Unit</b>	<b>Non-Bargaining Unit</b>
Self-funded non-bursar students are not entitled to study leave.	A minimum working period of 12 months is required.
No study leave is allocated for attendance of classes.	The maximum number of study days is limited to 12 days per annum.
No study leave is allocated to conduct research/write thesis for a Masters/PhD degree.	Study leave is not granted for re-writing an examination.
Employees are not entitled to sabbatical leave.	Study leave cannot be accrued.
Employees are not entitled to special leave.	Sabbatical leave is allowed at the organisation's discretion.
Employees resident for a minimum period of 12 months in an area defined as a climatic allowance area, are entitled to this benefit.	Sabbatical leave applies to a minimum of five years of service and one year in the current role.
	Employees are not entitled to climatic leave.
	Employees are not entitled to leave for sporting competitions.

	Employees are not entitled to any long-service leave.
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The above leave categories are non-traditional and ancillary to the leave clauses discussed previously. There are however, differences that persist within these leave categories, which may impair women employees' work-life.

#### ***5.2.4 Time and attendance***

Time and attendance policies are reflective of the difference in the nature of the majority of jobs found within the two groups – BU members occupy more operations-facing positions while NBU members occupy all management positions. However, some employees are operations-facing but fall into the NBU group. The time and attendance policies are suitable, given the nature of the environment.

#### ***5.2.5 Transnet Employment Equity Policy***

The existence of an Employment Equity Policy is intended to benefit women employees and other marginalised groups. The 31% (see Appendix G) representation of females at the organisation is evidence of the progress that the organisation has made in empowering women, arguably as a result of the Employment Equity Policy. One of the key objectives of the policy is to “Create a framework to identify and abolish workplace barriers and practices, including unfair discrimination, that hamper the employment and advancement of designated groups”. However, the lack of work-life policies and poor work-life appreciation culture lend itself to the notion that these significant barriers are not addressed by the policy. The policy goes on further to list, "Create awareness and governance to remove all forms of discriminatory practices, based on race, gender, disability, age, language, and to establish equity within Transnet”. The Employment Equity Policy applies to all employees at the organisation. However, the differences in policies tabled above between the BU and the NBU are essentially discriminatory, resulting in union collective bargaining inequality. The researcher purports that this was probably not the intention of these policies but an undesired result nonetheless. Women employees in the NBU are discriminated against with regards to maternity leave benefits; yet the needs of women in both groups are the same and the policies should reflect this.

### ***5.2.6 Transnet Remote Working Guidelines***

This policy was approved in May 2020, after the country went into lockdown, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and employees were forced by lockdown rules to work from home. The policy provides instances where remote working is suitable and outlines the benefits of remote working. The policy was however, only developed as a result of the lockdown and had there not been a lockdown, it does not appear that the policy would have been considered. The benefits thus derived from the policy are ancillary to the people management of the organisation. This indicates that in the pursuit of increasing the number of women employees, the organisation is not holistic in its approach to women's employment and has not considered the work-life challenges of women employees. The gaps within and across policies could not be substantiated in the current literature.

The oldest policy is the Agreement TPT Conditions of Employment, which only applies to the BU. The most recent is the Transnet Guidelines on Working Remotely, which apply to all employees. The Agreement TPT Conditions of Employment, which contains the favourable maternity leave clauses for the BU (except the extended maternity leave at a reduced salary), was signed 14 years before the Policy Transnet Management Leave policy, which governs maternity leave for the BU. Despite the existence of an Employment Equity Policy, which makes provision for the creation of Employment Equity Committees (EECs), tasked with analysing employment policies and removing workplace barriers and unfair discrimination, the differences within the maternity leave clauses remain. This raises the question of the processes followed by the EEC to identify unfair discrimination.

## **5.3 Discussion of themes**

This study began in early 2020 and the researcher conducted 13 semi-structured interviews. However, with the onset of lockdown and COVID-19 regulations due to the spread of the pandemic, the remaining 11 interviews were conducted virtually. There is no doubt that the pandemic has significantly shifted the ways of the workplace and the completion of this study was not excluded from this trend.

The researcher uncovered ten themes during interviews and grouped them into three main themes namely, work sphere, family sphere and individual sphere. The most pertinent themes concerning the phenomenon under review, are discussed further below.

### ***5.3.1 Work-life understanding and experiences***

For reasons outlined in Chapter Two, this research focused on work-life integration and adopted a definition from (Morris & Madsen, 2007). However, when participants were asked how they defined

work-life integration, some answered in terms of a balance i.e., a clear separation of the two spheres in terms of both time and space. Most often participants referred to family when discussing the 'life' aspect of work-life integration. This is unsurprising, as all female employee participants had children. They saw the work sphere and home sphere as two distinctly different areas and did not wish for any cross-interference of both. It seems that in their experience, cross-interference created work-family conflict. Some participants defined work-life integration as the intertwining of both the work sphere and the home sphere, going between one and the other throughout the day as needed. Participants clearly expressed the need to be productive in both spaces. Whether it was balance – as work stays at work or stays within work times; or integration – as in the overlap of the two, the common factor was that participants wanted to be able to meet the requirements of both areas successfully. They wished to be present in both spheres and be able to meet the responsibilities of each sphere as and when needed. This can perhaps be viewed as work-life satisfaction, as opposed to popular terms of work-life balance or work-life integration. (Clark, 2000) argues that work-life balance does not refer to spending equal amounts of time in each sphere, but rather, it is the satisfaction and proficiency in both spheres with minimal role conflict. This implies that people experience work-life balance when they are satisfied with the running of work and home. The researcher believes that this is a more apt description reflecting the work-life goals of participants in this study. Further, Jessica (2017, as cited in Lakkoju 2020) suggests that as 'balance' is in itself arguable, that it is more appropriate to use the term 'satisfaction' to reframe the work-life balance notion. Many participants in this study expressed their lack of work-life satisfaction before lockdown and the introduction of remote working, and the work-family conflict they experienced. This is supported by numerous studies exploring and investigating the relationships between work-family conflict, and work-family balance. In the study by (Pattusamy & Jacob, 2017a), using the Greenhaus and Allen 2011 model on work-family balance among academics in India and the USA, they found that work-family satisfaction is inversely related to work-family conflict, while work-family satisfaction is directly related to work-family facilitation. (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011) also claimed that the work-life balance of a professional is severely influenced by any incongruity between work and life. (Golden et al., 2006) and Golden (2012) contend that both work-family conflict and family-work conflict contribute to poor work-life balance, but work-family conflict has a greater effect. Early studies by (Behson, 2002) and (Nielson et al., 2001) found that increased work-family conflict was experienced by women. However, (Haar, 2013) states that work-life balance has an impact on both job and life satisfaction for both men and women and for parents and non-parents. Similarly, (Taşdelen-Karçkay & Bakalım, 2017) did not find a difference between men and

women, indicating that work-life concepts are as important for men as for women. The main focus of this research has been on the experiences of women; however, it was found that men also did not experience work-life satisfaction and sought this in their lives, supporting recent findings on the matter. (Raiden & Räsänen, 2013) further support this with the notion that as both genders share the financial burden and domestic care, both experience the same levels of work-family conflict. (Taşdelen-Karçkay & Bakalım, 2017) unearthed a positive relationship between work-life balance and life satisfaction and proved that work-life balance acts as a mediator between work-family conflict, family-work conflict and life satisfaction. Studies by (Crosbie & Moore, 2004) and (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007) have found that remote working enhances work-life balance. They claim that remote working allows for ease of moving between work and family worlds and remote working enhances job satisfaction, possibly due to time-saving and flexibility, increased autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007) and decreased stress (Baruch, 2017). All these reasons were cited by participants in this study as benefits of remote working.

(Pattusamy & Jacob, 2017b) found that work-family balance moderates the relation between work-family conflict and both job and family satisfaction. This is supported by (Kamel & Omran, 2016) who purport that work-family balance is directly related to life satisfaction and job involvement. Participants in this study also expressed how much they valued the two roles, that of worker and parent, and the positive aspects of the two roles combining, often taking learnings from one role to the other. This is supported by (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) who claim that work and family can intertwine and create enrichment for an individual. Greenhaus and Powell (2006, as cited in Taşdelen-Karçkay and Bakalım, 2017. p. 4) defined work-family enrichment as "the enhancement of performance and positive affect in one role from the experiences in another role". Work-life conflict was found to be harmful and work-life enrichment advantageous to life satisfaction when investigated by (Haar, 2013). Although numerous research studies display the benefits of remote working and the related decrease in work-family conflict and increase in work-life satisfaction, there is an equal body of research that has found the opposite. (Dex & Bond, 2005) and (Russell et al., 2009) found that employees who work from home endure longer hours and this increases work-life conflict. (Dex & Bond, 2005) found that some employees use personal time to work longer hours at home because if they do not, they feel under pressure to finish work at the workplace. (Jostell & Hemlin, 2018) demonstrate that job satisfaction is impaired by remote working and when work responsibilities impede on personal time, it may worsen the work-life conflict as the boundaries between family and work weaken. (Song & Gao, 2020) state that when compared to working at the workplace, remote working can lead to employees experiencing ill feelings, while (Noonan & Glass, 2012) claim that

work-family conflict is not reduced by remote working. The disappearance of boundaries between work and home cripples work-life balance (Song & Gao, 2020).

(Bellmann & Hübler, 2020) expand on the notion of remote working increasing or decreasing job satisfaction and work-life balance by examining the existence of several conditions and their impact on the phenomenon. The researchers found that remote working has both positive and negative effects on job satisfaction, aligned to the work of (Baruch, 2017) and emphasise that of all job conditions tested, autonomy, stress from multitasking and deadlines contribute most when assessing remote working and work-life balance. (Bellmann & Hübler, 2020) conclude that job conditions are more relevant for remote working's negative effect on work-life balance than personal conditions and that remote working enhances job satisfaction at the introduction of remote working, but this is temporary.

Participants in this study expressed that flexi-hours which existed before lockdown, helped to an extent with work-life satisfaction. However, despite the existence of research to the contrary, it appears that remote working has provided the greatest positive influence on most participants' work-life satisfaction. Participants interviewed after lockdown showed true appreciation and contentment with the remote working setup. It is however, the researcher's opinion that as remote working was implemented as a result of the national lockdown and not a clear and deliberate intention of the organisation, a longitudinal study is needed to determine the prolonged effect of remote working and the possibility of changes in the working environment from remote working to at-the-office or hybrid situation.

### ***5.3.2 Manager support and policies***

When asked about the organisation formally supporting women employees to balance their work and life, most participants interviewed before lockdown responded that there was little or no support. Where participants responded in the affirmative to informal support, the most valued, and what appears as the only mechanism mentioned, was that of a supportive manager. Participants expressed strong feelings of appreciation for managers who were comfortable and willing to make informal arrangements that allowed them to meet family responsibilities. These informal arrangements influenced their work-life satisfaction positively. In (Greenhaus et al., 2012) study on 170 business professionals and how supervisor support for employee family responsibilities relate to work-family balance, the researchers found that family-

supportive supervisors result in low work-life conflict and family-work conflict which in turn resulted in high work-life balance.

Family-supportive supervision is defined as "behavior demonstrated by a supervisor that consistently acknowledges and promotes the family" (Hammer et al., 2007, as cited in Hill et al., 2016, p. 472). Indeed, various research studies have found that employees who have family-supportive supervisors, express better job satisfaction, decreased turnover aspirations and reduced work-family conflict (Frye & Breugh, 2004; Lapierre et al., 2008; McCarthy et al., 2010). In turn, managers who were comfortable with providing the support, believed that it increased the performance of the department (Casper et al., 2004). However, further studies by (Reeve et al., 2012) suggest that the culture of an organisation, operational and business needs, play a key role. When (Daverth et al., 2016) conducted their study on three different organisations with varying levels of work-life balance practices, managers' support for employees' work-life balance, in turn, reflected the organisation's level of support. Managers' awareness of work-life balance policies was also related to their respective contexts, e.g., a middle manager of a female team of shift workers was acutely aware of the challenges of managing operational needs while a senior manager of a mainly male team was almost completely unaware of challenges, as it did not impact his team. However, most managers were of the view that work-life balance policies created friction and aimed to ensure harmony within their departments. Specifically, female managers without children felt that they were expected to shoulder more work responsibilities and workload due to their seemingly lesser life responsibilities. All managers advised that operational requirements impacted their decision-making. This aligns with findings in this research where both managers and employees remained acutely aware of business needs when making arrangements. Participants conveyed their request, that informal arrangements should only be provided where the requestor was deserving of such approval, when they ensured that they met their work outputs and remained loyal to the organisation.

Participants also articulated as reasons for support from their managers or their support to reportees, in terms of the managers' views on parenting and traditional gender roles. This is supported by (Daverth et al., 2016) who found that gender roles were viewed traditionally and managers who were parents saw male and female workers being more different than alike, while the opposite was true for managers who did not have children. (Chandra, 2012) purports that gender, cultural and generational differences between employees and supervisors result in poor support of work-life practices. This unconscious bias often leads to supervisors making decisions on employees' work-life without the supervisor realising that their biases

are impacting their decisions (Banaji and Greenwald, 2013, as cited in Robertson, 2018; (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006); Nosek and Riskind, 2012, as cited in Robertson, 2018; (Rudman, 2004). Managers' decisions were also impacted by their manager's views and by their beliefs of what was fair. When choosing between making formal or informal work-life arrangements, managers were impacted by their perception of the employees' value and their understanding of the request. More often than not, managers were likely to approve work-life requests when they felt that the employee's loyalty deserved such reciprocity, and the request was for a warranted reason.

As the discourse on informal and formal manager arrangements and work-life balance has evolved, it has led to the development of flexible idiosyncratic deals or flexibility i-deals. Flexible i-deals include flexible work arrangements which, according to Lewis (2003, as cited in Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019, p. 406) include flexi-time, telecommuting or remote working and length of working hours. Furthermore, i-deals are close to but not the same as managerial allowance decisions (Poelmans & Beham, 2008) or supervisory support (Greenhaus et al., 2012). With flexibility i-deals, employees expressly negotiate work to meet both work and home demands. Employees make known to the organisation how much they value work and family responsibilities and the organisation in turn is willing to negotiate individual flexibility terms with the employee. (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019) purport that the successfulness of an employee in securing desired flexible work arrangements depends on their perceived value to the organisation and their negotiation skills. This aligns in part with the findings from this research. Participants expressed that the request for flexibility, even if not formally in terms of a flexibility ideal, depends on the requestor's strength of character, and not all employees will have the confidence to make such a request. To a large extent, this is due to the lack of a policy allowing for such a request. Participants expressed that they would feel more comfortable if such flexibility was contained within a policy; then the employee would feel that it was deserved and their manager would be supportive. Research shows that the presence of work-life policies facilitates the implementation of flexibility i-deals. Policies influence flexibility i-deals in several ways (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019). Policies make flexibility i-deals valid for both employees and managers. Policies allow for the creation of a standard in terms of remote working, length of hours worked and work schedules. Employees can therefore be more successful in negotiations as the policy makes managers feel more at ease as there is a policy supporting them. Additionally, i-deals can result in many different work settings, which can help to decrease employees' inequality concerns and policies can encourage employees to enter into i-deals. The existence of a policy enhances employees' belief that if they asked for flexibility, they would receive it (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019).

According to (D. G. Allen et al., 2003), one of the reasons organisations implements work-life policies, is to improve employee loyalty and reduce turnover. Work-life policies also create better employee wellbeing, thereby improving productivity (Russell et al., 2009) and the benefits of such interventions have been well recorded (Theodorakopoulos & Budhwar, 2015 as cited in Daverth et al., 2016 p. 89). Participants in this research expressed their appreciation of remote working and the positive impact it has had on their work-life productivity. Remote working was however, implemented out of necessity due to the onset of COVID-19 and it could not be determined that, had COVID-19 not emerged, the company would still offer remote working.

In a study by (Thompson et al., 1999), the researchers concluded that managerial support was the most important factor considered by employees when deciding to use work-life policies or not. In turn, (Todd & Binns, 2013) state that managers play a vital and increasing role in the implementation of work-life programmes. (Abendroth & den Dulk, 2011), p. 323) put it simply, that “Managers’ support for work-life policies is crucial for shaping employees’ capabilities to use them”. However, work-life policies have garnered criticism over the years. Policies can have negative impacts on the workforce, as employees may feel that the policies create inequality (Teasdale, 2013), leading to lower productivity (Beauregard, 2014) and antagonistic attitudes towards such policies (Young, 1999). This perceived inequality may lead to employee anger, resentment and indignation (Beauregard, 2014). Further, (Smithson & Stokoe, 2005) suggest that organisational policy and practice are not well aligned and although policies may be intended to be universal and gender-neutral, most often working mothers are favoured. This was touched on during this study, as one participant queried how to treat everyone fairly. However, the researcher in this study believes that work-life policies are necessary for women's participation in the workplace. This is supported by (Hegtvedt et al., 2002) who claim that when policies are viewed as necessary, there is no perception of inequality.

Furthermore, participants in this study admitted to poor policy knowledge, and this was evidenced by the limited mention of the difference between the BU and the NBU maternity leave policies, despite all female employee participants being working mothers. (Ollier-Malaterre & Andrade, 2016) found in their study on employee awareness at two European pharmaceutical companies, that one of the reasons for employees not being aware of policies, was due to the sheer number of policies available at the organisation. This may be true at Transnet Port Terminals, as, although a holistic view of policies was not undertaken,

participants did make reference to it. The other reason purported by (Ollier-Malaterre & Andrade, 2016) was the frequent changes made to policies. This is not true in this study, as was explained earlier, the policies reviewed were infrequently changed. Participants also had access to the intranet and could not use the digital divide as a reason. In this study, the researcher is of the view that a combination of a large number of policies, lengthy policies, poor communication on salient points of policies, lack of updating the intranet on policies, and workloads of employees led to poor awareness of policies.

This lack of awareness of policies can result in female employees being at a disadvantage. Research conducted on workplace policies and working mothers reveals that the mental health of working mothers is positively influenced by workplace policies that recognise the family obligations of women employees (Chatterji & Markowitz, 2012; Dagher et al., 2011). These policies focus on aspects like flexibility and parental leave, while postpartum depression is highly linked to obstructive or unsupportive workplace policies (Chatterji & Markowitz, 2012; Dagher et al., 2011). Where work pressures negatively affect family life (work-family conflict), this leads to diminished mental health for full-time working mothers (W. B. Goodman & Crouter, 2009), whereas policies that promote flexibility, benefit the mental health of working mothers by decreasing work-family conflict (W. B. Goodman & Crouter, 2009; Perry-Jenkins et al., 2017). (Chatterji & Markowitz, 2012) demonstrate that increased lengths of parental leave are linked to decreased postpartum depression. (Newkirk et al., 2020) contend that jobs with increased work-family conflict severely impact mothers' depression levels and longer parental leave work as a buffer. Therefore, mothers with high-stress jobs who experience shorter parental leave levels, experience higher levels of depression. This is a significant finding for working mothers as many participants in the NBU in this study reported no work-life satisfaction before lockdown and they are not entitled to up to six months of maternity leave. It is important to note however, that in (Newkirk et al., 2020) study, the role of partners must be considered.

### ***5.3.3 Culture and Bargaining Unit vs Non-Bargaining Unit***

Participants rated the organisation poorly when asked if they considered the organisation to have a culture that considered work-life balance. Research has shown that although policies play an important role (Kossek et al., 2010), informal support has also been proven to create similar desired results (T. D. Allen, 2001; Hammer et al., 2009). Supportive organisations play a key role in encouraging work-life balance and decreasing work-life conflict for employees (Andreassi & Thompson, 2008, as cited in Greenhaus et al., 2012). Policies themselves do not ensure that the work-life satisfaction needs of women employees

are met; however, as found from the literature review there is a need for policies as they influence the climate of the organisation, which in turn provides employees with an indication of what is valued and expected by the organisation.

When asked whether the organisation had a culture that supported work-life integration, the most common response of participants was simply 'no'. (Mennino et al., 2005) found that a workplace culture that supports workers' family responsibilities decreases work-to-family and family-to-work spillover, whereas the implementation of policies alone does not achieve this. The culture of the workplace is thus more significant than the implementation of policies to reduce negative spillover. Further, (J. C. Williams et al., 2013) suggest that although policies may be available, the use thereof is limited to the culture of the organisation, as employees may be influenced more by the negative perceptions of using such policies. (Bayazit & Bayazit, 2019) hypothesized and confirmed that where the culture is supportive, employees are comfortable to ask for flexibility and report low-level intensity in negotiations as they expect to get the flexibility and managers are happy to provide it. This study found that it was possible for employees to successfully negotiate flexibility, even in watered-down family-supportive work cultures. This is contrasted by (Greenhaus et al., 2012) who argue that when the organisation has a poor culture of supporting work-life balance, employees may be reluctant to take family support from their supervisor, as they may feel that this jeopardises their career. This study hypothesized that despite a supportive supervisor, an employee may not take up that support when the organisation is unsupportive, hence work-life conflict is high and work-life balance low. Their study supports previous findings that family-supportive supervision is directly related to enhanced work-life balance and plays a bigger role in reducing work-family conflict than family-work conflict. Furthermore, this relationship is stronger in family-supportive organisations than in unsupportive ones. Therefore, combining both a family-supportive supervisor with a family-supportive organisation is most likely to lead to the most desired levels of low work-life conflict and high work-life balance. This combination between supervisor and organisation conveys one message to employees about what the organisation deems as important (Schein, 2004, as cited in Greenhaus et al., 2012), which amplifies and heightens the impact of a family-supportive supervisor on an employee's wellbeing.

It is clear that the interplay between organisational policies, supportive managers and organisational culture is critical and cannot be ignored. Some participants in the study felt supported to a degree by policies and managers, while others felt that policies and managers discriminated. Participants also

mentioned the inconsistencies and gaps within policies and the different lived experiences of policy implementation, which is supported by the literature. (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011) conducted a study on how discrimination based on gender plays out in the workplace. The study looked at how gender perspectives and workplace policies combine into discriminatory actions. The policies analysed were not limited to work-life balance but related to all employee policies. Although this research is not aimed at exploring policies and discrimination specifically based on gender, it is interesting to note that (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011) found that in terms of policies as a way to discriminate, policy issues are cited most often concerning gender discrimination, with discretionary policy application at the highest ranking, followed by discriminatory policies and a lack of policies altogether. This aligns with findings in this research where participants expressed the inconsistency of policies, discriminatory practices of policies and the ambiguity when policies encourage managers to use their discretion. (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011) found that in male-dominated environments, policies matter the most, while in female-dominated environments, employers use discretion less and a lack of policies and discriminatory policies are cited more often. In integrated settings, policy issues were mentioned less but remained a significant factor. In terms of demographics at the State-Owned Entity, women constitute 31% of the total workforce. Of that 31%, 28% form part of the BU and the remaining 3% of the NBU; however, within these two groups women have a larger representation within the NBU (40%) than the BU (30%). This means that although in absolute terms more women form part of the BU, in terms of their relation to men, more women are represented in the NBU. However, the maternity leave policy in particular in the BU is more supportive of female employees than the maternity leave policy applicable to women in the NBU. In line with the findings of (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011) it appears that policies are needed to alleviate discrimination based on gender. The researcher is of the strong belief that due to the existence of a trade union and their collective bargaining power, it is clear that some policies create inequality between women who are part of the bargaining unit and those who are not. This creates a new situation where women within the same organisation experience inequality based on their union or non-union status. The gap is thus not a gender gap but a union or collective bargaining gap. According to (Ntuli, 2012) the efforts of trade unions are key to promoting gender equality in the workplace. (Hoque & Bacon, 2014) support this view, with the belief that trade unions will collectively bargain for equality by calling on employers to implement more equality practices and protect employees from discrimination. Prior studies have shown that unions in Britain have positively contributed to the equality agenda in recent years (Dickens, 2007), evidenced by the larger number of equality related policies in workplaces with unions compared to those without (Hoque, 2004; Walsh,

2007) and the link between unions and the implementation of distinct equality opportunity practices like recruitment, selection and promotion monitoring by gender (Bewley & Fernie, 2003; Walsh, 2007). (Bewley & Fernie, 2003; Budd & Mumford, 2016) also found that organisations with unions have more family-friendly policies than those without. However, when (Ntuli, 2012) studied the membership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the researcher found that the population of women members was lower than men and often men occupied decision-making and senior-ranking positions, similar to that of traditional patriarchal structures. Using this rationale, one would assume that work-life balance-related policies at the organisation might be lacking for women. However, the favourable maternity leave policies prove otherwise. Although women who form part of the occupational levels belonging to the union only comprise 30% of the total union, they enjoy more progressive benefits than their non-union counterparts. (Hoque & Bacon, 2014) conclude that although policies may exist, turning policy into practice still lacks in over 25% of such workplaces and even when equality practices are implemented, there is no guarantee that equality will occur or apply to the whole workforce. This is similar to the findings in this research – the existence of the union with its collective bargaining power has benefitted its members with regards to enhanced maternity benefits, but created inequality between women belonging to the union and those who did not.

#### ***5.3.4 Gender roles and emotions***

Some women employees in this study reported gender-based discrimination experiences which clearly disturbed and offended them. Gender-based discrimination is a subset of ‘harmful workplace experiences’ – roughly defined as abuse or violations committed by employees against other employees that damage or hurt them and contribute to an antagonistic work environment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Rospenda et al., 2009). Although this study was not aimed at gender discrimination, the finding align to the findings of (Schmitt et al., 2002) who found that gender-based discrimination is more likely to affect women, while a scarce number of studies reveal that there are no gender differences in harmful experiences at work (Leymann, 1996). These harmful experiences can translate to challenges for women’s organisational and individual welfare as well as career advancement and satisfaction (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Willness et al., 2007). This link between harmful workplace experiences and career advancement is significant as it contributes to the research on challenges to women’s career progression. This researcher believes that it would be beneficial if this phenomenon was further researched within the context of SOEs.

During interviews, several constructive and destructive emotions were elicited by participants. Constructive feelings included appreciation towards supportive managers; feelings of self-actualisation, empowerment, and achievement from their careers; and feelings of optimism for the implementation of comprehensive work-life balance practices. Female participant employees expressed that their female managers and male managers with families understood their work-life challenges, having the same challenges themselves and this was supported by comments from male and female managers. This finding aligns to the study by (Basuil et al., 2016) who found that female subordinates perceived higher family support from female supervisors, and parent subordinates perceived higher family support from supervisors who were also parents. There is little research on emotion and family-supportive managers; however, based on the shared reality theory (Echterhoff, 2012; Jost et al., 2008) individuals wish to find and sustain shared views and understanding in relationships. Thus, when a subordinate is a female parent and experiences strains in that role, which is also experienced by their female supervisor, it may result in their subordinate feeling a strong affinity to that supervisor (Basuil et al., 2016).

Participants also showed destructive feelings of anger, guilt and frustration when experiencing work-life conflict. Research on emotion and work-life conflict has focused on two constructs, viz. that of guilt (Livingston & Judge, 2008) and hostility (Lazarus et al., 2001, as cited in Bochantin & Cowan, 2016). Guilt is a response to perceived 'wrong-doing' (Eisenberg, 2000) and as such is inward facing, while hostility is seen to mirror the experience of anger (Lazarus et al., 2001, as cited in Bochantin & Cowan, 2016) and is outward facing aimed toward another (Brisette & Cohen, 2002). Morgan and King (2012) found that gender-role orientation mediated both work-family conflict and family-work conflict and when individuals experienced work-family conflict, it resulted in them tending to evade work responsibilities. Although this was not touched on during interviews in this study, it is important to consider, as it may have an impact on job satisfaction and productivity. Furthermore, (Judge et al., 2006) found that feelings of guilt and hostility were positively related to work-family conflict and family-work conflict. Hostility was high when conflict prevents or challenges the accomplishment of one's goals, e.g., when parents feel that it is important for them to devote sufficient time to their children and work responsibilities prevent them from doing so. This aligns to the findings in this study where female employees wished to spend more time with their children, but were unable to do so.

### *5.3.5 Careers and inclusivity*

Participants in this study, both men and women did not measure career success traditionally, but rather in terms of the three areas identified within the kaleidoscope model, that of authenticity, balance and challenge (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008). Authenticity refers to the career choices employees make to be true to themselves; balance pertains to those choices made to balance between the responsibilities of work and life; and challenge refers to those career choices that allow an employee to experience invigorating work and career progression. Almost all participants expressed that they actively considered work-life when making career decisions and some expressed that this consideration was based on age and life stage, which again ties to the kaleidoscope model, where generally depending on life stage, employees may seek one area over the next. According to (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008) women look for challenge in early career, balance in mid-career, and authenticity in late career, and women with families seek more balance; and the greater chance of external factors interrupting women's careers tends to facilitate non-linear career paths (Leberman & Hurst, 2017). This research study's findings, however, indicate the suitability of the kaleidoscope model for many men, as male participants also sought authenticity, balance and challenge. Women participants emphasised work-life satisfaction in their measure of career success (Tlaiss, 2015). Most participants were comfortable in their current positions and did not wish for career progression, as they felt that it would diminish their work-life satisfaction. This aligns with (Adisa et al., 2016) who confirmed that work-life conflict was the greatest challenge faced by women and attaining career advancement often resulted in higher conflict (Murniati, 2012 as cited in Mustapa et al., 2018, p. 105). Participants were also of the view that employees who forfeited work-life satisfaction were viewed more positively by the organisation and therefore more likely to experience career advancement. (Carlsson, 2011) concludes that often organisations discriminate against working mothers as they believe that due to their family commitments, women are less committed to work and more likely to take career breaks. Furthermore, (Fernandez & Shiang, 2017) observe that fewer working hours is viewed poorly by organisations and makes career advancement challenging.

It is safe to assume therefore, that participants are not incorrect in their assumption that career advancement comes with hindered work-life satisfaction. It is important to note that this is true for both men and women, confirming the importance of implementing work-life policies and a culture supporting work-life, ensuring the most conducive environment where employees are comfortable and motivated to seek career advancement.

When participants were asked about their inclusion in work-life policy-making, many stated that they had not been included. They appeared surprised by the question. However, it must be remembered that most participants (NBU and BU) worked at the Head Office of the organisation and due to the qualitative nature of the study, findings are not representative of the organisation as a whole. Perhaps if more NBU employees who worked at the different terminals were interviewed, the results may be different as a greater number of NBU employees work at the terminals and this is where the collective bargaining power resides.

The theory on inclusion has evolved from the diversity management paradigm (Oswick & Noon, 2014; Sabharwal, 2015). Although diversity research is abundant, there is much less research on inclusion (Garg & Sangwan, 2021). While diversity looks at the attributes of the employee, inclusion focuses on the organisational climate and organisational culture, such that diverse people are wholly received within the organisation and the most frequent category of diversity researched between 2010 and 2017 is 'women' (Garg & Sangwan, 2021). Yet, as explored in this research, women are not fully represented and do not feel included in an organisation that is progressive in employing women. This aligns with the findings of (L. Booyesen, 2007) and (Horwitz et al., 2002) who found that organisations are aiming to reach transformation targets and align to legislation without consideration for the change needed within the organisation and individuals.

It can be argued that the divide between the NBU and the BU and how the organisation engages with the two groups, lead to greater inclusion of BU women, evidenced by enhanced maternity policies, compared to NBU women. Although some participants suggested that NBU women needed to use their voice more, those women who did use their voice, encountered a culture not responsive to such action, leaving them feeling frustrated. Also, one's ability to use one's voice is dependent on one's strength of personality, especially so in environments that are discouraging. The organisation does not display Organisational Inclusive Behaviours (OIB) (Sabharwal, 2014). OIB has been described as "the degree to which individuals feel part of critical organisational processes" through access to information and inclusion in the decision-making process (Mor-Barak and Cherin, 1998, as cited in Sabharwal, 2014, para. 5). OIB does not have a single theory of inclusion; however, social comparison theory (Sabharwal, 2014), social identity theory (Tajfel 1978, 2010 as cited in Sabharwal, 2014) and optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer 1991, as cited in Sabharwal, 2014) have been used to develop the OIB paradigm.

Social identity theory relates to the groups that one belongs to; these groups provide one with the notion of fitting in and provide a source of self-esteem and one's social identity – the people that an individual identifies with. The theory goes on to distinguish between a 'them' and 'us' notion, as a way to determine clear in-groups and out-groups, with the in-group discriminating against the out-group to increase their self-image. Possibly, this can be applied to individuals belonging to the BU and the NBU, as a clear divide between the two groups was expressed by participants. However, this requires further in-depth research and one group discriminating against the other was not noted in this research. OIB focuses on three areas: leadership responsibility to create inclusion; employees' ability to influence decision-making; and the ability of management to treat employees fairly (Sabharwal, 2014). Participants in this study expressed that they did not see a commitment from leadership on the need for work-life practices and were surprised at the notion of inclusion in work-life decision-making, but some participants experienced fair treatment from managers, although it was raised that ambiguity in policies makes it difficult for managers to treat all reportees fairly. There exists therefore, a building block of fair managers, upon which OIB may be built. Furthermore, when an organisation requests input from employees, it creates inclusion and the variation in opinions can be harnessed and lead to improved performance (Ferdman et al., 2010), while flexible work arrangement policies and mentoring programmes are the foundation of diversity management practices for improving performance (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Pitts, 2009). (Sabharwal, 2014) concludes that inclusion positively impacts organisational performance and those organisations who hire in terms of diversity and also provide work-life balance capabilities and mentoring will receive improved performance from employees. Similarly, the efforts of top leadership and employees' ability to influence decisions also result in the desired outcome of increased organisational performance. Inclusion enhances job satisfaction for employees, which often leads to improved performance (Hwang & Hopkins, 2015). Participants articulated their need for inclusion through the use of forums and appreciated if they were to be included in work-life policy-making, seeing benefits in that inclusion, particularly its influence on career decisions. Participants felt that if they were included in work-life practices, it would cause them to stay within and seek promotion at the organisation. This shows the value of including women in work-life decision-making.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter unpacked and discussed findings with consideration to key literature. The study uncovered that women participants experienced work-life conflict and strived for work-life satisfaction. Women felt that before the implementation of remote working, they received little support from the organisation in

achieving work-life satisfaction, barring supportive managers. They valued both the work and home role and took learnings from one to the other, more from the work role to the home role and showed constructive feelings towards their supportive managers and their careers. In line with existing research, family-supportive managers decreased work-life conflict for women in this study. The introduction of remote working through the Transnet Remote Working Guidelines Policy brought work-life satisfaction to most women. However, women were not fully aware of all policies affecting their work-life balance, except for leave policies and were not included in work-life policy-making. Employees further expressed the lack of work-life satisfaction culture at the organisation. The literature shows that policies alone do not ensure their utilisation by employees and the success of policies is dependent on the fostering of a culture of work-life satisfaction. An analysis of the policies revealed inconsistencies in benefits, like maternity leave benefits between women in the BU and those in the NBU, creating inequity between women who work at the same organisation and have the same needs. This is a novel contribution of this study. Women strongly expressed that they would appreciate inclusion in work-life practice-making and saw it both as a way to contribute to the organisation and that inclusion would positively influence their career-advancement choices at the organisation. The next chapter provides the conclusion, broader implications of the research, cogent approaches to the research and recommendations in the form of a praxis model.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

This study was an exploratory enquiry into the experiences and perceptions of women employees' work-life satisfaction, inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on their career-advancement choices at Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), an operating division of Transnet Ltd, a South African State-Owned Entity. Adopting a qualitative methodology, the research design was based on semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. The aim of interviews with women employees was to understand their lived experiences, while interviewing managers of women employees and analysing policies helped to achieve triangulation and gain deeper appreciation of the phenomenon. This insight resulted in a praxis model to ensure a more inclusive environment for women employees.

#### 6.2 Key conclusions

The following key conclusions have been derived from this research study research:

Women employees experienced work-life satisfaction after the mandatory lockdown, as a result of COVID-19, and the implementation of remote working. However, when remote working was not permissible, women employees who received support from the organisation, did so through supportive managers.

Maternity leave policies applicable to Bargaining Unit (BU) women are more favourable than those applicable to Non-Bargaining Unit (NBU) women, even though women's needs in both groups are similar. Women employees are not included in work-life policy- and practice-making; yet they actively considered work-life satisfaction when making career-advancement choices. Women employees would appreciate inclusion in work-life practice-making and this would positively influence their career-advancement choices at the organisation. Interestingly, male employees also required work-life satisfaction and actively considered work-life satisfaction when making career-advancement choices.

Thus, in response to study's the research question:

“What role does inclusion in work-life policy-making and subsequent work-life integration practices play for women employees when making career-advancement choices?”

The question is answered in the following way:

Inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making plays an important role for women employees at the organisation. Women employees feel that they do not have a voice and those who have questioned non-supportive work-life practices have received either undesirable or no responses. They would appreciate if they were to be included in work-life policy- and practice-making and feel that this would positively influence them to make career-advancement choices at the organisation.

### **6.3 Broader implications of the research**

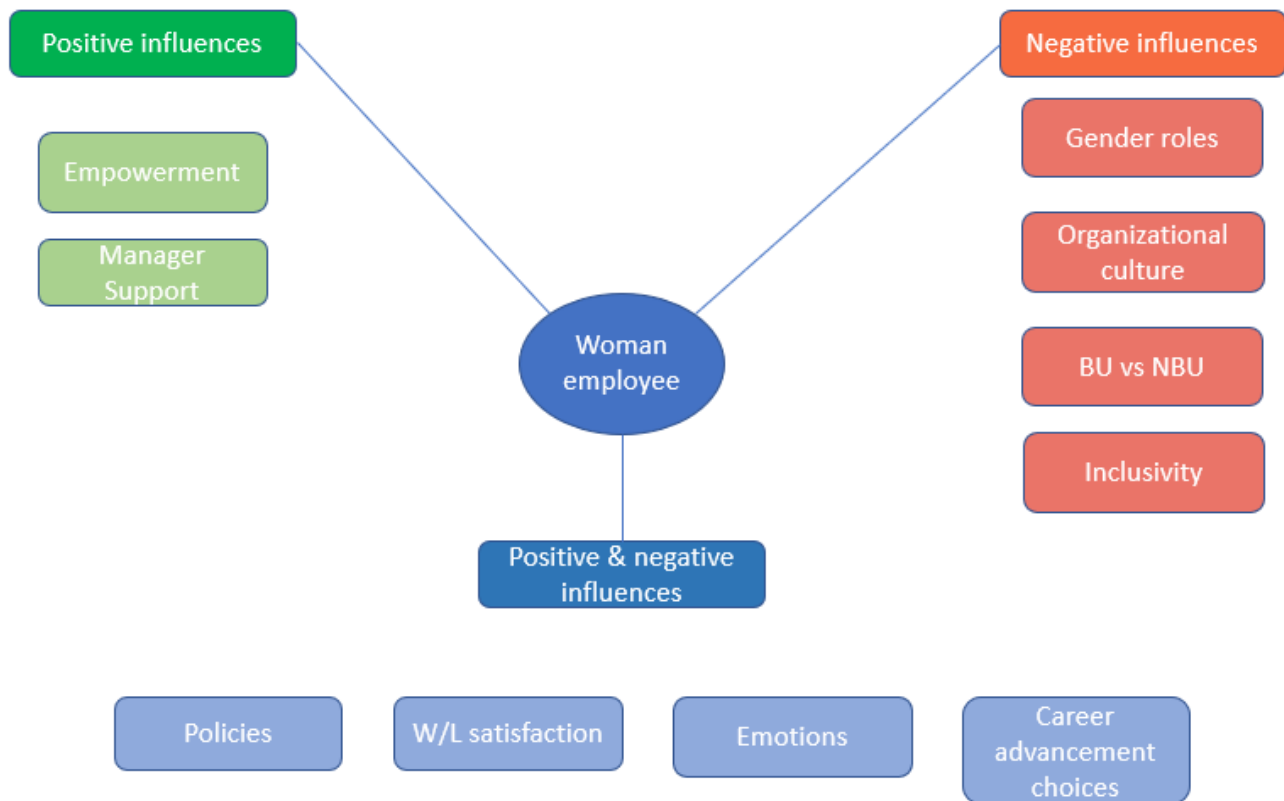
The researcher believes that the collective bargaining power of the union has contributed to better maternity leave policies and improved equality for women employees who are members of the union, aligning to the findings of (Ntuli, 2012). Also, current work-life or family-friendly policies and practices available may also have been influenced by the union, as found by (Bewley & Fernie, 2003; Budd & Mumford, 2016). The aspects of the two groups, namely the BU and the NBU, and its regulation on women's current work-life experiences through different policies, are of substantial significance. Women within the same organisation, whose needs are the same, are treated differently due to their union status. This creates a gap and inequality between women themselves. This gap must be addressed by the organisation to create harmony and equality among women employees. The role, structure and interactions of unions with organisations can thus provide a discourse for building more equitable organisations in terms of work-life practices and policies but may, as revealed in this study, unintentionally create inequity between union and non-union members, if initiatives are not inclusive. The need for improved policies and practices for inclusion remains. However, these practices need to be customised for the context and needs of this specific organisation, as supported by the findings of (Derven, 2014; N. R. Goodman, 2013). The research was aimed at working mothers with spouses; however, from (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015) study on the work-life conflict experiences of 24 dual-earner couples, the researchers found that when women experience more flexibility in their jobs, it puts added pressure on them to resolve daily work-life conflicts. Although not an objective of this study, the discovery that male employees, like their female colleagues, seek work-life satisfaction and actively consider this when making career-advancement choices, is of importance. The increasing role of fathers in domestic and child-nurturing duties became apparent in this study and implies that, although historically seen as a 'woman's issue', work-life practices are needed by all employees and uptake for both men and women must be encouraged by the organisation (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2015). The researcher cautions that as the study is aimed at women, the praxis model

in turn, has been aimed at the inclusion of women. However, this in itself may not be sufficient and should not contribute to the notion that work-life challenges are a ‘woman’s issue’. The societal shift of men’s role in the home is occurring, albeit slowly, and it requires an organisational shift to recognise that male employees, especially those with families, are in need of work-life satisfaction. This in turn, can accelerate the fight for women’s inclusion and equality in the workplace.

#### **6.4 Cogent approaches to expanding the investigation**

The objectives of this study should be expanded on with further research on theoretical aspects of women inclusion and innovation, as these studies become available. Also, qualitative studies, assessing the relationship between women’s work-life satisfaction, inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making and their career-advancement choices at other institutional groups as mentioned in the CEE Report 2019/20 (e.g. Private Sector, National Government, Provincial Government etc) as well as other State-Owned Entities will assist in providing a more holistic understanding of this phenomenon. This in turn can be expanded upon with quantitative studies, empirically identifying relationships. The sample criteria (women between the ages of 25 – 44, with spouses/partners and childcare responsibilities) can be changed to include women outside of this age specification, single women, single women with childcare responsibilities, women with elderly care responsibilities, etc. The study should also be applied to male employees further expanding on the research surrounding male employees and their increased roles in domestic and childcare responsibilities. Lastly the existence of the union gap requires additional research, as, to this researcher’s knowledge, it has not been identified before. Given the extent of trade unions within South Africa and the role they play, emboldened by legislation, the activities, progress and bargaining power of trade unions may provide useful insights to strengthen the voice of women employees.

## 6.5 Adjusted conceptual framework



**Figure 3: Adjusted Conceptual Framework**

Based on results of the study, the conceptual framework has been adjusted, as presented above. Empowerment and manager support have been identified as positive influences on the women employees, while gender roles, organisational culture, BU vs NBU, and inclusivity have emerged as negative influences. Neutral influences on women employees are replaced by positive and negative influences and encompasses policies, work-life satisfaction, emotions and career-advancement choices. These themes have been identified as such, as they positively influenced some participants while negatively influencing others.

## 6.6 Praxis model

### 6.6.1 Challenge and praxis

Female representation is below the economically active population (EAP) target as advised by the Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) Report 2019/20. However, State-Owned Entities (SOEs) have made progress in the employment of women at their institutions. The researcher explored whether this

employment of women is holistic, considering inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on women's career-advancement decisions. The literature review included a robust and thorough process to gather a deeper understanding on the research conducted in and around this phenomenon in recent years. The study uncovered key constructs that contribute to the phenomenon and the praxis model that follows, sets about solving the phenomenon of women inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making and its influence on their career-advancement choices.

A praxis model provides the practical activities to solve a problem, thus separating itself from theory. The exploration conducted in this study has revealed that women participants interviewed have not been included in work-life policy-making; however, they would appreciate if they were to be included and this would positively influence their career-advancement choices at the organisation. For this study, the praxis model identifies current practices in place at the organisation and provides practical initiatives for creating an organisational process framework by way of the "Work-life Policies and Practices Framework" for the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practices-making. This framework is then applied to the Employee Life Cycle to ensure that women are included in work-life policy- and practice-making during all stages of their employment.

#### ***6.6.2 Current practices in place at the organisation and organisational process framework***

From the exploration of policies and interviews, it has been established that the following elements supporting work-life practices are available at the organisation:

- a) The Employment Equity Policy empowers the formation of the EEC tasked with analysing policies, practices and working environment and abolishing any practices that hamper the employment and advancement of designated groups.
- b) Some managers are acutely aware of their women employees' work-life satisfaction needs and attempt to assist through informal ad-hoc arrangements.
- c) Women employees appreciate their jobs and the efforts of the organisation and are committed to ensuring that work commitments are met with efficient productivity.

The organisation has the Employment Equity Policy as the basis for enabling an inclusive environment. However, it is imperative that leadership are committed to work-life practices and the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making by including this in their strategic models, displaying behaviour that supports this commitment, and constantly communicating this commitment to employees. This helps

to empower women to speak up, as, according to McDonald (2018, as cited in (Pološki Vokić et al., 2019) empowerment initiatives are needed, as more often women shy away from expressing their views. Leadership must task the EEC with implementing the initiatives outlined in this praxis. The EEC must ensure that its membership includes fair representation of women (and other groups) across both the BU and the NBU. This will help to ensure that there are no work-life gaps experienced by women belonging to the two groups.

The first step is for the EEC to formally evaluate current work-life policies and practices, benefits and usage at the organisation. This forms the basis of the redesign of work-life policies and practices. The EEC must gather employee inputs through surveys and forums to inform the customised Work-life Policies and Practices Framework. The main pedagogy for inclusion is the organisation engagement process. If the organisation clearly communicated its commitment to work-life satisfaction and work-life policy- and practice-making, women employees will be encouraged and more comfortable to engage in focus groups and complete surveys. The Work-life Policies and Practices Framework will provide the overall structure for inclusivity at the organisation and influence work-life satisfaction for women employees. Key stakeholders of the framework are:

- Women employees in the Bargaining Unit
- Women employees in the Non-Bargaining Unit
- Shop stewards
- Leadership
- Human Resource practitioners
- Communications personnel
- Potential employees
- Employment Equity Committee members

Once women are empowered to use their voice and the organisation displays their willingness to listen, the framework itself will be adapted by the employees, according to their context and needs. It is envisaged that the framework will include the following key areas and initiatives, at a minimum:

## Leadership

- Complete a declaration of commitment to work-life policies and practices and the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making
- Include inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and work-life policies and practices in strategic models
- Actively demonstrate their commitment to work-life policies and practices and the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making

## Forums and surveys

- Create forums for women employees to join and use their voices; at a minimum, the following forums must be created:
  - Work-life challenges and needs
  - Wellness
- Each forum to include a terms of reference, outlining the objective of the forum, compilation of members and frequency of meetings
- Conduct routine surveys for women employees to better understand their work-life needs
- Ensure feedback from forums is provided to the Employment Equity Committee and encapsulated into work-life policies and practices where applicable
- These policies must then be fed back to the forums for vetting before implementation

## Communication

- Create a communication plan outlining Leadership's commitment to work-life policies and practices and the inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making.
- This plan must include the following initiatives:
  - - testimonials by Leadership of their commitment
  - - distribution of the organisation's strategy which clearly outlines inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making and work-life policies and practices once developed
  - - the benefits of work-life satisfaction and inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making for employees and the organisation
  - - the forums and surveys that women employees can partake in for them to be included
- Once the framework and the work-life policies and practices are developed, the organisation must create a communication plan for the implementation of the framework and must include the following initiatives:
  - - details of the framework
  - - clearly explain its applicability to employees
  - - list of forums and surveys that informed the framework
  - - list of work-life policies and practices with key points
- Ensure that all employees are made aware of work-life policies and practices through constant communication using face-to-face roadshows, handing out printed communications, e-mail and virtual engagements
- As part of their brand awareness, the organisation must communicate the framework and work-life policies and practices to potential employees via the organisation's website, social media and job fairs; this communication must include:
  - - highlights/key elements of the policy
  - - testimonials from employees on their experiences of work-life satisfaction at the organisation
  - - benefits to both employees and employers of work-life practices



**Figure 4: Work-life Policies and Practices Framework**

### ***6.6.3 Application to the Employee Life Cycle***

The above framework can then be applied to the Employee Life Cycle (ELC) model to ensure that women are included in work-life policy- and practice-making throughout their careers at the organisation. Application in this way allows for reinforcement over the entire Employee Life Cycle.

There are six stages to the Employee Life Cycle model, namely:

- *Attract* – an organisation's ability to attract new hires, based on the strength of the organisation's brand.

- *Recruitment* – the candidate’s interview experience at the organisation.
- *Onboarding* – welcoming the new hire into the organisation.
- *Retention* – actively rewarding employees.
- *Development* – employees’ experience of learning and development at the organisation.
- *Separation* – effective offboarding off the employee through resignation, retrenchment or retirement.

The Work-life Policies and Practices Framework applies to the ELC in the following ways:

*Stage 1 – Attract*

- Communication of the framework and work-life policies and practices makes potential candidates aware of the organisation’s commitment to women’s inclusion and work-life satisfaction.
- This can make the organisation more attractive to potential women employees and increase the talent pool from which the organisation can hire women employees.

*Stage 2 – Recruitment*

- Including a section on candidates’ work-life needs reinforces the organisation’s message of commitment to work-life satisfaction and inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making. Discussing this with potential women employees at the interview stage also helps to create an environment where potential women employees are provided with their first opportunity to use their voice. Interviewers are encouraged to actively engage with candidates on this topic, explain the work-life policies and practices available at the organisation and answer any questions the candidate may have.

*Stage 3 – Onboarding*

- During this stage, as part of the onboarding protocol, the organisation should ensure that all policies are made available to women hires and explained to them. Also, new women hires can be made aware of and encouraged to join available forums where their work-life needs are discussed.

*Stage 4 – Retention*

- The creation of forums and surveys where women can express their work-life challenges, experiences and requirements assists in retaining women employees. Insights and suggestions from these forums must be used to create policies. These policies must then be fed back to the forums for review before implementation.

#### *Stage 5 – Development*

- The organisation must ensure that all women employees and managers are continuously trained on work-life policies and practices and made aware of forums and surveys available. When managers are well versed with the policies and practices and can speak about them comfortably and with confidence in their benefits, women employees will be encouraged to utilise such policies. Managers must also be trained on implicit bias theory which will both assist them in their personal and professional growth as well as help them identify their unknown biases which impact their decision-making regarding subordinates' work-life needs.

#### *Stage 6 – Separation*

- At this stage when the woman employee and organisation part ways, the employee's experience of inclusion in work-life policy- and practice-making must be reviewed during the exit interview. The woman employee can be asked to recount her experience of work-life during her time at the organisation. Applying a longitudinal lens allows the organisation to gather insights of work-life satisfaction along both the Employee Life Cycle and against the kaleidoscope career model.

### **6.7 Conclusion**

The praxis model provides a framework for inclusion of women in work-life policy- and practice-making. However, the researcher does not believe it to be prescriptive and envisages that once women are included in work-life policy- and practice-making, they will take ownership, ensuring their work-life needs are met, their voices are heard and the framework is further developed. This study was focused on women and inclusion of women and the praxis model followed this approach. However, the researcher advises readers to remain mindful that work-life satisfaction is not only a “women’s issue” and the net must be cast wider for equitable work-life implementation and utilisation at the organisation. This research has not ambitiously tried to solve the problem of equitable representation and inclusion of women in the workplace and there is not a one-size-fits-all solution. However, the research looked at the niche of women

at Transnet Port Terminals (TPT), an operating division of Transnet Ltd, a South African State-Owned Entity and the nuances created by unions. The identification of the difference in policies applicable to the BU and the NBU women is a unique contribution to the literature and provides a realm of possibilities for new studies.

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## APPENDICES

## **Appendix A – Employee Participant Interview Guide**

### **Demographic questions**

1. What is your age?
2. What is your current job?
3. How long have you worked at the organisation?
4. Do you have employees reporting to you?
5. What is your level in the organisation?
6. Do you work shifts or 8 am – 4 pm ?
7. How many children do you have?
8. How many children are aged from 0 – 5 years old?
9. How many children are aged from 6 – 12 years old?
10. How many children are aged from 13 – 17 years old?
11. Does your partner live with you and your children?

### **Theme questions**

1. What does work-life balance or integration mean to you?
2. Some studies have shown that having both work and home roles enhance a woman, that work-life role intersections have positive outcomes, that the two roles benefit the woman, how do you feel about that?
3. Do you feel that you need both roles in your life? How would you feel if you only had one role? Either work or home?
4. What support mechanisms do you have at home for your home role? E.g., your partner, a domestic worker?
5. To what extent would you say the support mechanisms assist your day-to-day responsibilities?
6. Are you aware of all the employee related policies available at the organisation? How did you become aware? Why are you not aware?

7. The policies that you are aware of, do you think the policies enables/hinders you integrating/balancing work and life? How?
8. Aside from policies in what other ways do you feel that the organisation supports you in your home role? Can you give me examples?
9. Aside from policies in what other ways do you feel that the organisation does not support you in your home role? Can you give me examples?
10. Do you feel included in work-life policy-making at the organisation? Why do you feel that way?
11. What does a successful career look like for you?
12. What does an unsuccessful career look like for you?
13. When you make career choices, do you consider work-life? How? Why?
14. Thinking about the organisation, what could be done that would help create a better work-life balance?
15. How would you feel if you were included in work-life policy-making?
16. Do you feel that the organisation has a culture that supports work-life integration/balance?
17. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the organisation in terms of supporting work-life balance or integration?
18. On a scale of 1-10, how important would you rate work-life when making career decisions?

## **Appendix B – Manager Participant Interview Outline**

### **Demographic questions**

1. What is your age?
3. How long have you worked at the organisation?
4. What is your level in the organisation?
5. Do you work shifts or 8 am – 4 pm ?

### **Theme questions**

1. What does work-life balance or integration mean to you?
2. Are you aware of all the employee related policies available at the organisation?
3. In what ways do you feel that the organisation supports you in your role as a manager of employees?
4. In what ways do you feel that the organisation does not support you in your role as a manager of employees?
5. What has your experience been with work-life for the women employees who report to you?
6. Do you feel that the organisation supports employees in balancing/integrating work and home?
7. Do you feel adequately prepared/trained in assisting reportees with balancing work and home?
8. Do you feel that reportees have enough agency to balance work-life?
9. Do you feel that the organisation supports you in using your discretion when it comes to reportees work-life balance?
10. How do you feel about work-life balance and career decisions?
11. What has your experience been with regards to work-life and career decisions when hiring employees?

12. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the organisation in terms of supporting work-life balance or integration?

13. On a scale of 1-10, how important would you rate work-life when making career decisions?

## **Appendix C – Context of Interview Example**

Interview Number: 5

Date: 18 February 2020

Participant background information: Female, Non-Bargaining Unit member, 42 years old, two children

Participant key: Participant E - FEB,42,2

Location: Boardroom

Time of day: Morning 10:00

Setting: Quiet and private

Immediate Impressions: The interview lasted approximately 57 minutes. The choice of location was suitable, free of noise and interruption and comfortable for both me and the participant. The participant appeared very relaxed and eager to chat. She, like the participants before her, welcomed the research and expressed that it is needed. This reassured me that I am researching an appropriate area and makes me hopeful that findings can help to further understand the phenomenon and contribute to the literature. The participant traced her time with the organisation and her experiences during different stages of her career. She started at a very junior level with few qualifications but has worked her way up and furthered her education while at the organisation. This participant is full of character and animation. She is comfortable to talk freely. I feel that my role as a fellow employee provides her with that comfort. She expressed her different experiences with a lot of emotion, especially the negative experiences; however, she looks at the positive in situations and remains hopeful that things can always get better. I enjoyed this interview and the rich insights this participant has provided.

## Appendix D – Transcript Example

**Interview number: 7**

**Participant G - FENB,36,3**

INTERVIEWER: Hi (Participant G - FENB,36,3), how are you?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Very well, thanks and you?

INTERVIEWER: I'm well, thank you so much for volunteering for the study, I really do appreciate it. Just to confirm that you're happy for this to be recorded and you've went through the participant information sheet, you have any questions?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, I'm very happy for it to be recorded, and willing to cooperate and yeah, tell me what you need to, I did go over the questions the ones that you have sent the demographic questions in particular, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. If at any point you just need clarity, let me know. If you're not happy with the question you want to pass, that's fine, if you want to abandon the interview completely that's fine as well.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Sure.

INTERVIEWER: So, we're going to start off with the demographic questions and then move into a few theme questions I might take down some little notes here and there just of important things that maybe we'll come back on and touch on but things are being recorded, so it's not going to be fully scribe. So just for the demographic questions, what is your age?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: I'm 36 at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: What is your current job?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: [discipline] specialist.

INTERVIEWER: How long have you worked at the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: March, the first would be five years.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, and do you have employees reporting to you?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, just the YPT.

INTERVIEWER: What is your level in the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: I'm on F level at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: And do you work shifts or a straight –

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Straight shift, I do the seven to three.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, and how many children do you have?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Three.

INTERVIEWER: And what are the ages?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: My daughter is 11. My son, the second one is 7, and my last one son is well, he's 5.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so full house then.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Full house yes.

INTERVIEWER: And does your partner live with you and your children?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes, he does.

INTERVIEWER: So just going to the theme questions, what does work-life integration mean to you?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: So basically to me it's all about the balance, you know, to balance your career, your chosen career path together with your family life, in particular and your social because I don't believe that you know life is only limited to you being a mom, a wife and doing everything you know a good wife should do and a good mother should do. Yeah, so it's that it's a full integration interaction between your social life, family responsibilities and your balancing out that would be well trying to balance it out with your career and notwithstanding, it's not only social as well as to other, like as we were just talking, into educational needs, you know, up skilling yourself. So that's also life, I mean life; there's so many facets to it. So I believe it's obviously incorporating all of that and for me, I always say it's like a seesaw, that's how I see it. So, you know I try and it's not easy at times but you know basically work-life balance is actually trying to get it right. Like a scale, a seesaw almost, trying to balance it out. Yeah, that's how I see it.

INTERVIEWER: And what do you try to achieve in this balance?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Hmm. Yeah sanity.

INTERVIEWER: Definitely.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah no sanity, I mean I try to achieve a successful career as well as successful life as a family home, in the home environment social environment outside you know with friends, family also up skilling myself in respect of furthering education. So, yeah success basically, I'm driven by success. And it's not easy because you know, you got to – for me I see it as you wearing different caps you fitting different roles. So yeah, it's about those responsibilities that come with it. So it's as to achieving what, you know, that question about how to, yeah, it's basically trying to ensure that you achieve success, harmony and happiness in doing all of those activities on any given day.

INTERVIEWER: And how do you feel about having these roles of work and the home responsibilities or the home role?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Just generally having this is, I don't feel overwhelmed because it's something you become used to. You have to adapt to because I mean you get used to it so it becomes a habit, yeah it becomes more of something of a habit. You know, you got to get up in the morning, get the kids – well before that see to yourself, have a bath, and go into the kitchen to the lunches see to the breakfast, but I have assistance with that which is very helpful. And yeah, it becomes a routine based activity every single day. So yeah, that's the sort of responsibility. That, I mean, it actually becomes priority, you know, there's certain things you have to prioritise, when the kids get sick, then you know, you know you need to call in, you have to call on your family responsibilities leave. So it's, there's so

many responsibilities that if I have to name them on a page it will take me a long time to write them down, you know.

INTERVIEWER: And how would you feel if you only had one of the roles, the work role or the home role?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Hmm. That's an interesting question because would work and I mean just observing people, although I don't have it. But if I just have to picture having – with work then you become so, you know all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy kind of yeah, I feel that, because I mean I'm trying to place myself in a situation now in a role where we had no kids, when it was just me and my husband, and yeah, I was very focused, career focus, to stay in the office till 11, 12, you know, it was – because practice, with legal practice its quite demanding so I dedicated my life to my career. So my career became my life as such. And yeah, it was, it wasn't great because I feel I was sadder then in because you feel like you need a break. I used to actually say to my work colleagues, I can't wait for pregnancy so I can go on maternity leave.

INTERVIEWER: Cause you thought that was going to be a break?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Correct, I thought that was gonna be the break. So yeah, so, you know that was it and then if I place myself on the opposite end of the, you know, I would think yeah, you know, it's fulfilling having a family, having children in particular because I think they just enjoy their little talks, their laughter, you know, do little events with them so, and a but as to whether and just focusing on that is being a stay-at-home mother and doing all those activities, I think I'll get a bit bored as well, you know, because, you I mean, I think it depends on personality as well, it depends on a lot of things; other factors like financially if you are secure because then you know you have to worry about stresses of not being able to, well making ends meet. But not living comfortably as you want to, if one partner, if your partner is working and you're not, but then at the same time I think I'll get bored because I'm so energetic, you can only do your housework and stop at a certain point, you know, and then you tend to kids and you're going to have this time in the day doing what? So yeah, I think there's pros and cons to both but I wouldn't particularly say I would prefer one role one part than the other. No, I'd like both.

INTERVIEWER: You'd like to have both.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, excellent. So when we speak about home, you just mentioned that you have a nanny as well or a helper.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What support mechanisms do you have at home for your home responsibilities?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Okay, my live-in nanny. I cannot do without her. So she's been with me from the time my daughter was born. So that's 11 years already and yeah, we moved from Johannesburg so I brought her with me down. So, you know what, I'm so used to having her as a central role of support. So yeah, and she attends to a lot of things and I can't because I start my, I come to work early; seven o'clock. And so it actually does, she does their breakfast, get them ready actually for school, give them a bath especially the little boy, my daughter is self-sufficient. So yeah, she does a lot of that, she even cook simple meals like, you know steamed veggies and rice and stuff, and I call her every time; please don't forget to take something out to defrost and I rely on her heavily, because even when I go home the house is completely neat I don't have to do anything, just stand there and cook, correct. And

even when I'm cooking and messing around she's cleaning around me and at the same time, you know after that giving the kids a bath, so there's a whole routine to it. So she's my primary support structure on a day-to-day basis. And then for instance if she falls ill or she's on leave, I have my mother and that was the primary reason as to why we left Johannesburg because I had no family support, you know, so she's at home, she doesn't work, so she really lends a helping hand when I do need her. So yeah, that's for me family support and an essential support structure such as a domestic is extremely helpful, and I appreciate that because in countries like where my brother is currently in London, he has to work and his wife stays at home because it's too expensive, there's no cheap labour, and sad to say there's no cheap labour and we employ the cheap labour. But at the same time we see it as a major advantage living here, you know, it's a luxury.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, we don't realise.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Absolutely, so yeah, I do have firm support in place which helps me.

INTERVIEWER: And your sort of oversight of the support, would you say that you have to have a lot of oversight of the support?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, because she's been with me for such a long time, just talking about the day-to-day, very minimal so oversight and supervision, because I mean for me she is brilliant. She's got a lot of experience, she knows the kids, they know her, they basically grow up – they grew up with her and she's basically part of the family so very minimal.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, it's great help to you.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Hmm. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, so we're just going to talk a bit about the organisation now, so are you aware of all the employee related policies at the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Hmm. I am, well, you get your Basic Conditions of Employment Act, I sit on the cooperative governance committee, so a lot of these SOPs and policies are brought in. So, yeah largely employee policies, yeah, there's a lot but predominately in HR basis yeah, I am aware of most of them and lots of what is in leave policies that applies, you know to employee related to your benefits in terms of leave maternity leave, all facets of life, study leave and everything else, travel work policies, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay and how did you become aware of these policies?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Well when I joined the – said, this is the intranet, go and look at all the policies that applies and I know they gave us an induction for –

INTERVIEWER: and you're a good reader [laughs]

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes, we're forced to, correct. So I did, and from time to time, you know, HR comes to us or whatever even if its terminal operations areas, they come to us for employee assistance or employee queries related to policies that applies to them. So you forced to make sure you up-to-date with it. And then we also audit the, you know, I come to Interviewer; your due date to update your policies, okay? So we have to keep, I keep up-to date based on that

INTERVIEWER: So the policies that you are aware of, do you think that these policies support women or employees in the work-life integration? Let's say support women

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah. It's a very good question in my view; no because we do the bare minimum as Transnet. We you know, within Basic Conditions of Employment Act we just get your, you know, your – I think yeah, Transnet it's fine, what I like about maternity, let's talk about the maternity leave in particular family responsibility. The maternity benefits are good because they pay you out for your full salary that as financial support is very important, and you really need that. You have peace of mind when you are home with the baby for that four months and you can have the election of extending it by going into annually. For me, yes to some extent it does but then, like your family responsibility leave is five days based on Basic Condition says that, you can go over and above you can as an employer offer more favourable term not less favourable than what legislation offers. So yeah, and I think like a working from home policy could be easily integrated based on, I mean it depends on the nature of your job.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, yes.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Obviously the operational environment it doesn't, you can't.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, you can't drive the crane at home.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Correct, it just depends on the nature. But yes, they should be more flexible in that regards not because a person wants to stay slacking around and such, but you know, it is demanding on a first-time mother for example, even the second time, when you have new born, even if you're back from maternity leave you'll just have the comfort of allowing, making provision for some time to time, allowing the person to work or mother to work from home or even a woman to have – she could be having issues as well, you know women, having any issues so not necessarily limited to kids. I'm just thinking kids for now. But you know, you know just allow them to have the bereavement time if they lost their spouses or if they had a miscarriage for example, just allow them to work. I don't think our policies absolutely address that. It does not address that and that's subject to you going and applying for annual leave, tapping to annual leave by agreement with your line manager. And if your work – nature of your job is deliverable based, output based and if you're delivering on that, you know, your manager should assess it and if you're producing the quality within the time frames there shouldn't be an issue. It should always be subject to but they should allow that, in my view.

INTERVIEWER: So you're speaking about your manager being able to allow these things.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Aside from policies, do you think that there are ways that the organisation supports women employees in their work-life integration?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: There are ways. Well, I know our EAP system is quite good. That's a very good support that they've offered. So, but over and above that I would say the working from home – I mean everyone's going to that now, businesses, South Africa is actually lagging behind. Well, some industries are in South Africa, but like, you know, I speak to my brother again, you know in the UK and they said no, it's like the norm to work from home. And I mean those countries, where labour is not cheap, you know, having support like a domestic or a nanny. So that really helps and it assists and I think you know, you don't have to slack, I think this should be monitored by line. Line should monitor it better. Yeah, I don't think, other than that what can you really offer a woman? I mean, you can set up little support groups, you know I said EAP have a support group for crisis management like for a woman who's been through a lot, whether it be abuse or whatever it is, you know, I think we could sort of form a support group or campaign so people can join that. That would be something that you can think about.

Wellness, from the wellness side, and you know women are always talking about I'm person and I'm going on this strict diet on my own doing it on my own – it will also be nice, you know, because that's what women always talk about; everyone's talking about weight losses and stuff. So you know from a wellness side, I think we can improve there. They can you know, be accommodating having something in place – I don't know like a program in place to support that, having dietitians on call. I don't know whether it's due to EAP or whatever, but they should have something like that for women, because I mean that really goes to self-confidence as well. So a lot of women need it due to self-esteem low because of the weight and some eating disorders and stuff people employ. You know there's a lot to think about but for me Transnet does the basic and the bare minimum. For me, it can improve by employing such benefits to women.

INTERVIEWER: And in your experience at Transnet, have you had any instances where you have received support in terms of work-life integration that's, is not in a policy?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Hmm. Yeah, I didn't really go to, well not in the simpler – we talking generally in the sense of this organisation in particular?

INTERVIEWER: Yes in this organisation.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, not really here, previously yes, but not really here. But then I think it depends on your line as well. Let me, no no – maybe I'm wrong in saying this and I'm thinking of a like a catastrophic situation that I went through where I needed my line to be supportive. No, but she is really supportive, my line manager is absolutely supportive, that the other day I was called to school because the second one was involved in a fight. Yes, but fortunately he was the victim here. I was trying to establish what's going on.

INTERVIEWER: Fortunately...

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah, exactly [laughs]. So I just admitted that she wasn't even here just sent her a WhatsApp message; I have to go to school without even explaining because I didn't know what to say. So then she says fine, okay, you know she's concerned, she just wants to know how everything went. Like she's very accommodating, if I have to say I need to attend a school function, you know the Mother's Day Celebrations of whatever Valentine's Day that they have from time to time – very accommodating; go. If I have to say that my mommy is not well she's in hospital, I need to see to her; fine. You can do that, because she knows I work, you know, and I said to her; I'll make sure; I have this outstanding; I'll make sure to deliver to by such a date. Is that okay? So it's all about the support from your line. And you know, what for me what I noticed as well when you reporting to someone who already is placed in a situation where they are balancing have the work-life integration, it really helps because if you reporting, I did report to – especially male, the male employers or managers, or your woman who's probably not married or don't have any kids. They don't, they're not as receptive to you coming and saying that I need to do this and to do that, they're not. So with – it helps when you have someone who has that experience.

INTERVIEWER: And how does it make you feel?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Being accommodating?

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, absolutely it's a pleasure because it creates a very comforting work environment. You know, you don't feel threatened, you don't feel oh, I'm so stressed out now I have to

worry about my kid being sick for example and I've to worry of a manager throwing tantrums, you know, that I'm not at work. You know, the clock watches and stuff, that's not an issue here and for me what's absolutely important and I should have said this at the outset actually, and I would like to place on record trying to thank Transnet for affording us the flexi-time. For me the flexi-time is the most important thing because I always say I won't leave this organisation because of the flexi-time, you know, and like I previously went for an interview, about three years into yeah, and I said to this company, and I said the first thing I said my main benefit is flexi-time, would you be able to offer that to me? They said yeah no you can work at your own pace, but you know, there's lots of travelling, there's lots of this, there's lots of that. Even on the travel side it depends on the nature of work and in respect of mine, I plan my own travel but the certain times where you have to go but it's minimal, but that's one thing I'll ensure that it's not – you know especially if you want to see your kids grow up. You don't want to be sleeping in hotel rooms and you know having to just travel everywhere. So for me that's very important for all the positives.

INTERVIEWER: So what does the flexi-time – How does it help your life?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: It's really, it absolutely helps because I put my kids, I actually save money because if I have to leave them for the full day and after care because they finish school at half-past 12 and then my daughter finishes so the two boys finish at 12:30 and my daughter finishes at 2:15. She's fine; she's got a Homework Centre which runs till five o'clock. But with the boys now the Aftercare is structured in such a way where you have a half session which ends at quarter past three and you have the full session at five o'clock. So it's so convenient. I finish a three so I start at seven and I finish at three in majority of the day unless I have a more travelling or I have meetings but it's great because then I fetch them at that quarter past three time that I have enough time to go take them even stop at the supermarket buy stuff to cook go home, you know cook and still have the afternoon free to sit down and do their homework projects or whatever the case may be. So and I said this to my previous manager that for me that is the most, it is a real blessing, and yeah that's what I appreciate the most. It really helps me.

INTERVIEWER: Have you had any experience where the organisation does not support you in your home role?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: I've not had any experiences no, as I said, my line managers have all been great, accommodating.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel included in work like policy-making at the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes, I definitely feel included at Transnet. We have this remote working policy now that the board has approved and it's been rolled out, it's open to everyone. You know, it's quite flexible. It's still a matter of sitting down with your line manager and agreeing to the remote you know working from home in line with the policy where we've got to obviously sign off on an agreement as well. So they made it very easy and I think it's also flexible in respect of all the items that listed in that policy as to who qualifies. Even it's not a closed ended, you know, it's very flexible. It actually goes to the extent to bring out the issues where you've got children, you know, they're taking to account where you've got minor children in home schooling as well. So it's very flexible and I actually definitely feel included by that process.

INTERVIEWER: So you feel that you have been included in the work-life policy-making at the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: From where I sit, I used to be part of the Corporate governance committee, and I know ..... whose the chair of that committee did circulate it for comment, you know, I received it at that stage, but so I actually dissolved my role as the ..... specialist at the .....because I took on the role at the ..... office. So I remember seeing something, but I didn't really make any comments, you know, in terms of that process, but it was handled by TPT and we did submit comments which was considered and was moved up to Group. They did consider some comments made by TPT. But I personally didn't give input into that process.

INTERVIEWER: Those comments or that circulation. Do you think it was more from a job perspective? So if your job requirements or your job specifications sort of dealt with policies, then you were then asked to give a comment into the guideline. Or was it from an open woman employee perspective?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: It wasn't from an open woman employee perspective. It was mainly because you are a part and parcel of a committee like a corporate governance committee which looks at comments on various group wide policies, including TPT policies. But SOPs as well, but no. Yeah, you're right. It wasn't open for comment to everybody. It was confined to the governance committees, to that process.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. And how would you feel if it was open to employees in particular woman employees?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah, look from a more perspective you know, it would have been ideal because remember, they introduced this to Group wide, the group wide process. So I think it would have been more idea to open it up, as I said, for a transparency perspective.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, great. And if this was something that the organisation did more often, do you feel like it would influence your career decisions at the organisation in any way?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: For if I didn't hear that for I didn't hear you?

INTERVIEWER: If it was open to women employees more from a transparency perspective, the policy-making and including women employees in work-life policy-making. Do you think that it would influence your career decisions at the organisation or how you would go about making career decisions at the organisation?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No, definitely. I mean, if it was that they did open it up, I mean think about it. You would want to ensure like for example, if you were influenced by an external position where you wanted to consider leaving Transnet and you know, for me, if they included or were open to women to make comments and give some contribution to, it is better, because they would have been aware that, you know, that because remember employees on the ground, for example, they're not aware not even employees on the ground, any other person, that are not part of the corporate governance committee, They wouldn't have known about the policy. I mean, from time to time we did receive internal communicate that there is working the Remote Working Guidelines that's in the process of been implemented, you know, they just keep us aware but inclusively into the process. No, it would have influenced if I had an external, you know, job sort of decision that I wanted to make. I would have

thought twice if I was if I was brought in, if I was made aware of this. I mean, think about some people would have left the organisation to an external organisation which wouldn't have actually offered remote working condition. Sorry, where they couldn't be allowed to work from home. I think so. Yes, it does some extent. It does influence your decision to stay within Transnet, or even to move within Transnet an internal advertisements where they do a point internally where you're looking for a career move within Transnet, but personally for me you know, I can tell you now I have attended external job interviews. I asked them. I said, "you know what Transnet has flexi working hours, not even, even before we had remote working you know we had seven to three and so on. i actually elected for that and i asked them, I said "can you, would you be able to provide a favourable working environment such as this where I start at 7 and finish at 3 because I need to go fetch my kids from school in the afternoon, then Cook and, you know, have their homework time and, you know, that company point blank says "No, you're lucky that you've got that." I mean, there are certain times that you need to be travelling and you know, you work outside of hours outside working time as well what your contract of employment obviously States 04:00 as cut off. You will be expected to work outside of that time. So, I mean, majority of the time that I spend with legal. I mean, from seven to three. You know, before we had this remote working arrangement, it was very flexible and other companies, you know, won't allow you to do that. I'm just saying, I just wanted to also put that out there outside of this remote working arrangement.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. It has come up that people are very appreciative of the flexible working hours.  
PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Is the anything that you want to add on around inclusion for women in policy-making.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah. Look the recommendation is such that, as I said, transparency is very important as a state-owned organisation. You know, obviously, we come across as an organisation, who want to promote gender equality in the workplace, getting women up there and promoting from even from a recruitment perspective. So while if you're doing that recruitment, you can't just say area with recruiting, you take as part of the EE requirements, employment equity requirements to promote women. They should also be including them in this policy-making, to have their view to have their views, you know, brought to light. So it is important under the auspices of transparency and you want to adopt woman in your organisation and enhance their contribution. We should be involved in wider decision-making. Well, policy-making in the company. So I think so. I think that's something that I would definitely endorse.

INTERVIEWER: And we touched a bit on career, and your past experience having going for an interview so what does a successful career look like for you? And what does it mean for you?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Well, I think firstly you need to be, you need to be very happy and content with your job firstly, job satisfaction is very important that drives a successful career for me. If I have to just have a successful career; job satisfaction. You need to be passionate about what you're doing and have passion for, you know, for your related work. Yeah, and obviously it's what drives success I mean what's output of success is well, is to show how you can have the ability to grow within the organisation. So you are developing climbing the ladders, not stagnant in one position for a long time, you know, and then you have all this IDPs and you're, you're up skilling but then you still feel

you're not going anywhere. So yeah, but no but I'm saying generally success is measured by that; your ability to thrive. You have your passion thrive in your environment, still keep that passion, wake up every day been eager to come to work. And yeah, that's for me aside obviously to earn a comfortable salary because that will show you a success that where you started from and where you are today. You can measure in terms of rand value, you know to live a comfortable – to meet your lifestyle requirements.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, and I know it's implied but just to cover it and then what would an unsuccessful career look like for you?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah. Well the downside of all I just said, you know, you don't like what you're doing take all the negatives of what I just said as to the positive; so you just don't like it, you don't want to get up to come to work, you're not earning enough, you just frustrated in the work environment as such. I know I factored in some negatives with the positives, it's your ability not to thrive and grow, you know you are stagnant for too long. So for me that's not successful because a career, you know, that's why you have to – you know, you get people who are advertising jobs – step up in your career. For me that would be a negative of the organisation as what doesn't support that.

INTERVIEWER: And you spoke about when you were interviewed and you asked about the flexi-time, so you obviously consider work life when you making career choices,

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Correct. Absolutely that like as I just gave you that example the first thing was flexi-time and travel as well for me is very important. So it's those two.

INTERVIEWER: Are there any other areas?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yeah, I asked them what, whether you are accommodating, you know, if I need to go attend to my family whoever it is in my family, would I be able to do that? And if my child is hospitalised, can I stay as long as necessary as I have the five day, you know, very responsible – how would you accommodate me in that regard? So yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel that the organisation has a culture that supports work-life integration for women employees?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: No it depends, if our culture in one department differs to our culture in another department or another area of the business.

INTERVIEWER: So it's just based on your experience.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Yes. So in this department, as I said my line, even my previous lines in this department, when I joined five years ago, absolutely supportive of however you want to, you know, yeah, however you want to, they support you with regard to whatever you need to do with your work-life balance, they would. And I know my previous managers where they used to have one-on-ones with us, which is very helpful; one-on-ones is so critical because my first one-on-one I remember my first year of joining the first few months of joining. Well I didn't know what one-on-one was about, so I took my entire file with my work, you know with what to report on, and then Mark says; oh no keep that aside this one-on-one so just tell me how you feel...

INTERVIEWER: Mark was so good hey

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Wonderful, such a sweetie. Tell me what you're going through, are you stressed out about anything at work that you want to talk to me about? So I felt so comfortable and I was wrecking off. So I said Mark do you regret asking me that question? [laughs] and he's so quiet, you know, so and he says no I'm happy and I'm here for you if you need further support, if you believe I can provide to you let me know. So yeah for me it's been absolutely wonderful working here and environment and everything else.

INTERVIEWER: Okay and just the last two questions. So on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the organisation in terms of supporting work-life balance integration for women employees?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: I'll give it an eight out of 10. Yeah, because, as I said this other areas and improvements that can get it to a 10 out of 10 as I mentioned. Yeah, like your working from home policies, trying to be more flexible, and I mean the work time is flexible enough, but just sometimes if you need to accommodate more than need to. Yeah for me that's important.

INTERVIEWER: And on a scale of 1 to 10, how important would you rate work life when making career decisions? Work-life integration?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: How important for me it's very important. So I'll do give it a 10 out of 10. Yeah, for me, as I mentioned those reasons as for the interview and stuff. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Okay Participant G - FENB,36,3, thank you so much for your time. Is there anything in this area that maybe you just want to add on its closing remark that maybe we didn't touch on during the questions?

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Not really. This is the other questions of themed and the demographic, but of themed it's actually spot on because it addresses what you, you know want to achieve but no, yeah nothing really. I think we're covered.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Thank you so much for your time. I'll keep you updated on the progress and the outputs from the study.

PARTICIPANT G - FENB,36,3: Okay yeah, all the best with interviews, and you have been great.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you.

## Appendix E – Analytic Memo Example

Participant: Participant B – FENB,42,2

The interviewee expresses her personal life and work life in relation to each other. As much as she does not wish for the two to cross interfere with each other, each has inevitably impacted on the other. Career success has been limited by the decision to start a family. However, she questions whether she would attain career success even without the family responsibilities. It appears that the very male-dominated space she is in, is more accountable for women's slow career growth, than any decisions women themselves make.

She is well aware of policies because she managed BU employees and feels that EAP helps employees as it forces managers to worry about employees' wellbeing. However, the culture vs climate argument remains, as some managers do not care.

I feel that the participant has experienced much personal growth in her move from the BU to the NBU; however, she mourns the time lost with her babies, when she had to go back to work when they were 3 months old and wishes that she could do it all over again as the maternity leave policy has improved tremendously. I understand why she is sympathetic to BU women; she has been there. She understands the challenges of working in Technical and Operations.

There is a big focus on Leadership, their shortcomings in creating a space that takes into account the wellbeing for employees. You do not feel that your wellbeing is valued in the organisation. Leadership needs to set the tone. To the participant there is a difference between the organisation and management. The organisation includes the people you work with; she finds support in the people she works with. She believes that the organisation is human-focused, but Leadership is not.

## Appendix F - Coding Example



Figure 1: Extract of 1<sup>st</sup> cycle coding – codes onto sticky notes

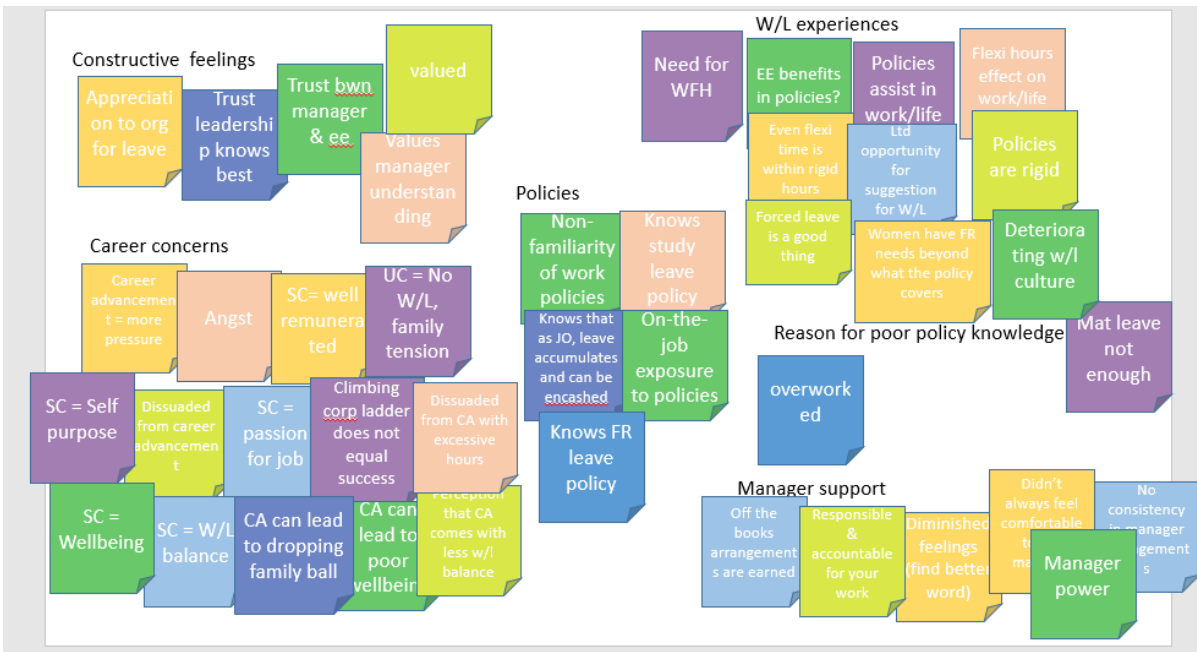


Figure 2: Extract of 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle coding - grouping codes into categories

## 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle Complete list of Categories

- Work-life understanding
- Work-life lived experiences (Separate work and life, Autonomy (home) vs non-autonomy (work))
- Work-life needs/desired state
- Work-life suggestions
- Traditional home roles
- Non-traditional views of women
- Traditional work roles
- Home support
- Work support
- Manager support
- Culture by gender
- Culture by geography
- Poor work culture
- Poor knowledge overall of policies
- Good knowledge of leave policies
- Reasons for good or poor policy knowledge
- Refer to policies when needed
- Rigid/inflexible policies
- Adequate/inadequate policies
- BU vs NBU inclusion/segregation
- BU vs NBU policies
- BU vs NBU enabling/disabling environment
- Communication methods
- Constructive feelings
- Destructive feelings

- Family safe space
- Empowerment
- Wellbeing
- Non-traditional career definitions
- Career concerns
- Interview experience
- Lost family time
- Leave not respected

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle – Themes derived from categories

Theme 1 – Work-life understanding, experiences and suggestions

Theme 2 – Empowerment

Theme 3 - Policies

Theme 4 - Support

Theme 5 - Culture

Theme 6 – BU vs NBU

Theme 7 - Career

Theme 8 – Gender roles

Theme 9 - Emotions

Theme 10 - Inclusivity

### 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle – Super Themes derived from themes

Super theme 1 – Individual Sphere

Super theme 2 – Work Sphere

Super theme 3 – Family Sphere

## **Appendix G – Organisational Context**

### **Labour relations and demographics**

#### **Bargaining and Non-Bargaining Unit**

The Labour Relations Act of 1995 (RSA, 1995) provides for the following, amongst others:

- To give effect to Section 27 of the Constitution of South Africa
- To regulate the organisational rights of trade unions
- To promote and facilitate collective bargaining at the workplace and at sectoral level
- To promote employee participation in decision-making through the establishment of workplace forums

Section 27 of the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996) embeds the following rights:

“(1) Every person shall have the right to fair labour practices.

(2) Workers shall have the right to form and join trade unions, and employers shall have the right to form and join employers’ organisations.

(3) Workers and employers shall have the right to organise and bargain collectively.

(4) Workers shall have the right to strike for the purpose of collective bargaining.

(5) Employer’s recourse to the lockout for the purpose of collective bargaining shall not be impaired, subject to subsection 33(1).”

Transnet Port Terminals as an Operating Division of the State-Owned Entity, Transnet Ltd recognises two trade unions. These are, UNTU (United National Transport Union) and SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union).

Transnet Ltd has a grading system which determines employment levels. Employees are graded from level A to level L. The unions may have members across all employment levels however collectively bargains on behalf of Levels G to L. This is referred to as Bargaining Unit. Levels A to F are therefore referred to as Non-Bargaining Unit.

Policies applicable to Bargaining Unit and Non-Bargaining Unit defer in material ways. This is discussed further in Chapter Six and Seven.

For the purposes of this study, only permanent employees have been included in the study. The reason for this is that Contract and Trainee employees are more volatile in their headcount as contract

employees are hired as needed and trainees who are also on contract follow a program for a limited period e.g., two years.

### **Categorising the organisations employment grades into the Commission for Employment Equity Report 2020 occupational levels**

The organisations grading system determines employment/occupational levels. This grading system is aligned and reported to the Commission for Employment Equity according to the following:

<b>Commission for Employment Equity</b>	<b>Organisation’s Grading</b>	<b>Bargaining Unit (BU) vs Non-Bargaining Unit (NBU)</b>
Top management	Levels A and B	Non-Bargaining Unit
Senior management	Levels C and D	Non-Bargaining Unit
Professionally qualified	Levels E and F	Non-Bargaining Unit
Skilled	Levels G to I	Bargaining Unit
Semi-skilled	Levels J and K	Bargaining Unit
Unskilled	Level L	Bargaining Unit

### **Comparing the organisations demographics to the Commission for Employment Equity Report 2020**

#### **By race and gender group**

According to the Commission for Employment Equity Report (DEL, 2020):

<b>National EAP by population and gender group</b>				
<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>		
African Male	42.7%	African Female	36.2%	78.9%
Coloured Male	5.3%	Coloured Female	4.4%	9.7%
Indian Male	1.7%	Indian Female	1.0%	2.7%
White Male	4.9%	White Female	3.8%	8.7%
Total	54.6%	Total	45.4%	100%

The organisations representation at January 2021 is as below:

<b>Employee headcount by population and gender group</b>				
<b>Male</b>		<b>Female</b>		<b>Total</b>
African Male	49%	African Female	24%	73%
Coloured Male	9%	Coloured Female	4%	13%
Indian Male	4%	Indian Female	1%	5%
White Male	7%	White Female	2%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Representation of females at the entity is below the national EAP at every level, except for Indian female (which is at the required target). The largest singular difference is evident in the African female gender group. Male representation overall is above the national EAP level except for the African male gender group which is below the national EAP level.

SOEs are mandated with attaining employment equity targets, however women as a whole are still not fairly represented at this entity. This further strengthens the need for research into women in the workplace in South Africa.

**The Organisation’s demographics by Gender and Employment Level compared to Commission For Employment Equity Report (all organisations) and Private Company’s**

<b>Occupational Level</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% change between occupational levels for females</b>
Top Management	75.6%	24.4%	-10.9%
Senior Management	64.7%	35.3%	-11.6%
Professionally Qualified	53.1%	46.9%	-.8%
Skilled	52.3%	47.7%	+2.9%
Semi-skilled	55.2%	44.8%	+3.2%
Unskilled	58.4%	41.6%	

All organisations

<b>Occupational Level</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% change between occupational levels for females</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Top Management	76.8%	23.2%	-10.6%	Table 9
Senior Management	66.2%	33.8%	-7.3%	Table 12
Professionally Qualified	58.9%	41.1%	+0.2%	Table 15
Skilled	59.1%	40.9%	-1.1%	Table 18
Semi-skilled	58%	42%	+2%	Table 21
Unskilled	60%	40%		Table 24

Private Companies

The organisations representation by gender at each employment level at January 2021

<b>Occupational Level</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% change between occupational levels for females</b>
Top Management	45%	55%	+22%
Senior Management	67%	33%	-7.8%
Professionally Qualified	59.2%	40.8%	+11.2%
Skilled	70.4%	29.6%	+0.4%
Semi-skilled	70.8%	29.2%	-6.8%
Unskilled	64%	36%	

Female representation according to occupational level, is below that of men at the organisation, and below the Commission for Employment Equity Report (DEL, 2020) for women (both overall and private sector) in all employment categories except top management. Female employees have therefore

shattered the glass ceiling at the organisation; however, all other levels are still lacking. The largest singular decrease for women representation is from Professionally Qualified to Senior Management and the largest singular increase between Senior Management and Top Management. Also, the low level of women representation compared to men in all levels below Top Management is significant, ranging from 29.2% to only 40.8%.

Despite the favourable female representation at Top Management, female employees at all other levels are significantly outnumbered by their male counterparts and are likely to face many gender challenges.

### **Further analysis of the organisation’s demographics**

#### **Employees by gender**

<b>Employees</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Males	5805	69%
Females	2586	31%
Total	8391	100%

The SOE has 8396 permanent employees. There are 5 807 male employees and 2589 female employees. Female representation is at 31% while males represent 69% of the organisation.

#### **Female employees by race**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
African	2045	79.1%
Coloured	299	11.6%
Indian	101	3.9%
White	141	5.5%
Total	2586	100%

African females make up the largest percentage of females at 79.1%, followed by Coloured females at 11.5%, White females at 5.5% and Indian Females at 3.9%.

### Female employees by level

	Number	As a % of all female employees	As a % of all employees
Top management	6	0.2%	0.07%
Senior management	33	1.3%	0.39%
Professionally qualified	204	7.9%	2.43%
Skilled	1154	44.6%	13.75%
Semi-skilled	889	34.4%	10.59%
Unskilled	300	11.6%	3.58%
Total	2586	100%	31%

The largest proportion of female employees by level within all female employees is at the Skilled level (44.6%), followed by Semi-skilled (34.4%), Unskilled (11.6%), Professionally Qualified (7.9%), Senior Management (1.3%) and Top Management (0.2%).

The largest proportion of female employees by level within all employees follows the same ranking i.e. Skilled level (13.75%), Semi-skilled (10.59%), Unskilled (3.58%), Professionally Qualified (2.43%), Senior Management (1.3%) and Top Management (0.2%).

### Female employees by level and race

African	Number	As a % of all female employees	As a % of all employees	As a % of that level
Top management	3	0.1%	0.04%	27%
Senior management	20	1%	0.2%	21%
Professionally qualified	144	6%	2%	29%
Skilled	866	33%	10%	22%
Semi-skilled	736	28%	9%	24%

Unskilled	276	11%	3%	33%
Total	2045	79%	24%	

The largest proportion of African females by level within all female employees is at the Skilled level (33%), followed by Semi-skilled (28%), Unskilled (11%), Professionally Qualified (6%), Senior Management (1%) and Top Management (0.1%).

The largest proportion of African female employees by level within all employees follows the same ranking i.e. Skilled level (10%), Semi-skilled (9%), Unskilled (3%), Professionally Qualified (2%), Senior Management (0.2%) and Top Management (0.04%).

African females make up 79% of all female employees and 24% of all employees.

<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>As a % of all female employees</b>	<b>As a % of all employees</b>	<b>As a % of that level</b>
Top management	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Senior management	3	0.1%	0.04%	3.1%
Professionally qualified	24	0.9%	0.3%	4.8%
Skilled	152	5.9%	1.8%	3.9%
Semi-skilled	97	3.8%	1.2%	3.2%
Unskilled	23	0.9%	0.3%	2.8%
Total	299	11.6%	3.6%	

The largest proportion of Coloured females within all females is at the Skilled level (5.9%), followed by Semi-skilled (3.8%), Professionally Qualified and Unskilled (both at 0.9%) and Senior Management (0.1%). Coloured females are not represented at Top Management.

The largest proportion of African female employees by level within all employees follows the same ranking i.e. Skilled level (1.8%), Semi-skilled (1.2%), Professionally Qualified and Unskilled (both at 0.3%), Senior Management (0.04%) and Top Management (0.0%).

Coloured females make up 11.6% of female employees and 3.6% of all employees.

<b>Indian</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>As a % of all female employees</b>	<b>As a % of all employees</b>	<b>As a % of that level</b>
Top management	2	0.1%	0.02%	18.2%
Senior management	5	0.2%	0.1%	5.2%
Professionally qualified	27	1%	0.3%	5.4%
Skilled	46	1.8%	0.5%	1.2%
Semi-skilled	20	0.8%	0.2%	0.7%
Unskilled	1	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	

The largest proportion of Indian females within all females is at the Skilled level (1.8%), followed by Professionally Qualified (1%), Semi-skilled (0.8%), Senior Management (0.2%), Top Management (0.1%) and Unskilled (0.0%).

The largest proportion of Indian female employees by level within all employees follows the same ranking i.e. Skilled level (0.5%), Professionally Qualified (0.3%), Semi-skilled (0.2%), Unskilled (0.0%), Semi-skilled (1.2%), Professionally Qualified and Unskilled (both at 0.3%), Senior Management (0.0%) and Top Management (0.02%).

Indian females make up 3.9% of all female employees and 1.2% of all employees.

<b>White</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>As a % of all female employees</b>	<b>As a % of all employees</b>	<b>As a % of that level</b>
Top management	1	0.04%	0.01%	6.7%
Senior management	4	0.2%	0.05%	4.1%
Professionally qualified	9	0.3%	0.1%	1.8%
Skilled	91	3.5%	1.1%	2.3%
Semi-skilled	36	1.4%	0.4%	1.2%
Unskilled	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Total	141	5.5%	1.7%	
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The largest proportion of White females within all females is at the Skilled level (3.5%), followed by Semi-skilled (1.4%), Professionally Qualified (0.3%), Senior Management (0.2%), Top Management (0.04%) and Unskilled (0.0%).

The largest proportion of White female employees by level within all employees follows the same ranking i.e. Skilled level (1.1%), Semi-skilled (0.4%), Professionally Qualified (0.1%), Senior Management (0.05%), Top Management (0.01%) and Unskilled (0.0%).

White females make up 5.5% of all female employees and 1.7% of all employees at the organisation.