



Cape Peninsula
University of Technology

**CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE SENIOR MANAGERS IN
SELECTED SPORT ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

ANZA TSHIFARO RAMATSIA

Thesis/Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Sport Management

in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences

at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Supervisor: Professor S.E.H. Davies
Co-supervisor: Dr J. Hemmons-Lodewyk
Co-supervisor: Mr J.J. Moroe

Mowbray Campus
September 2022

CPUT copyright information

The thesis/dissertation may not be published either in part (in scholarly, scientific or technical journals), or as a whole (as a monograph), unless permission has been obtained from the university

DECLARATION

I, Anza Tshifaro Ramatsia, declare that the contents of this thesis/dissertation represents my own unaided work, and that the thesis/dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Signed: 

Date: 30 September 2022

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate the perceived challenges facing female senior managers working in selected South African sport organisations. A qualitative research approach was adopted, where twelve in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with purposively selected female senior managers. Furthermore, an inductive approach to data analysis was applied using Atlas.ti (v. 9) for coding purposes, and the data was thematically analysed. The key findings suggest that historical events linked to Apartheid (segregation) in South Africa, along with a largely patriarchal culture, have led to extensive challenges in the representation of females, particularly Black females, at senior management levels of South African sport organisations. The study further revealed the negative impacts of autocratic leadership styles, and the perpetuated impacts of the Apartheid era on the current state of management in South African sport organisations. The findings propose that a lack of capacity-building, networking and mentoring impacts the career advancement opportunities of female senior managers in South African sport organisations, and it is apparent that the poor implementation of existing policies or guidelines on gender equity hinders the support for females in senior sport management positions in South Africa. The outcomes of this study support the sports business literature on the documented challenges females face in corporate organisations. The study contributes to decision-makers and organisations in the sport business, by adding knowledge, from the Global South perspective, about the unequal access to decision making positions in sports and the maintenance of the predominantly male power over female employees in sport organisations, as per liberal feminist theory, and further details the application of the constructs of management in relation to the liberal feminist ideology.

Keywords:

Challenges; female; senior management; sport organisations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank (in no particular order of importance):

- My supervisors, Prof Simeon Davies, Dr Janice Hemmonsbey and Mr Jacob Moroe for their supervision, patience and unwavering support during the course of my studies.
- My parents for their patience, encouragement and unfailing emotional and financial support.
- The entire CPUT Sport Management Department (special mention goes to Mr Raeeq Gamielien, Prof Sharhidd Taliep, Dr Sacha West, Dr Udhir Ramnath, and Prof. Brendon Knott) for their support in their respective ways.
- CPUT Postgraduate support staff, Ms Philippa Campbell (Librarian, Mowbray Campus) and Dr Corrie Uys (Manager, Centre for Postgraduate Studies) for their urgency in providing additional support to postgraduate students.
- The CPUT Ubuntu Postgraduate Forum (specifically PhD Candidate and Exco member, Mr Uchenna Okwuosa and PhD Candidate and Chairperson of the forum, Oiva-Viety Kamati) for exposing postgraduate students like myself to greater postgraduate networks, and extensive postgraduate support services and opportunities.
- My academic and sport industry colleagues – special mention goes to Dr Talent Moyo.
- My extended family and friends for their patience and understanding during this period; and especially
- My Creator for his presence throughout this academic journey and his continuous restoration during challenging times:

“And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished ...” [Phil. 1:6].

The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation towards this research is acknowledged. Opinions expressed in this thesis and the conclusions arrived at, are those of the author, and should not necessarily be attributed to the National Research Foundation.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Research background	1
1.3. Research problem setting and statement	3
1.4. Aim and objectives of the study	4
1.5. Research questions	5
1.6. The research paradigm, design and methods	5
1.7. Research processes	6
1.8. Demarcation of the study	7
1.9. Significance of the study	7
1.10. Definition of key concepts	7
1.11. Thesis layout	8
1.12. Chapter summary	9
CHAPTER TWO	10
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1. Introduction	10
2.2. Sport in society	11
2.4.1. The socio-economic impact of sport	15
2.3. Defining sport management	17
2.3.1. Fundamental management functions	18
2.3.2. Key management roles	21
2.3.3. Levels of management	22
2.3.4. Organisational behaviour as part of management	26
2.4. Managing within the changing environment of sport	26
2.5. Laws and policies guiding females in sports	28
2.5.1. Legislation and policies guiding females in sport organisations within an international context	28
2.5.2. Legislation and policies guiding females in sport organisation in South Africa	29
2.6. Politics and females in sport organisations	37
2.7. Theories of feminism	42
2.8. Females in senior positions in sports	44
2.9. Organisational practices to support female challenges in sport organisations	50
2.9.1. Selection, recruitment and promotion processes	51
2.9.2. Support systems in place to advance females in sporting organisations	53

2.10.	Case studies of female senior managers in sports	54
2.11.	Chapter summary	57
CHAPTER THREE	58
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	58
3.1.	Introduction	58
3.2.	Interpretive and liberal feminist research paradigms	58
3.3.	Cross-sectional research design	59
3.4.	Qualitative research method	60
3.5.	Qualitative data collection methods.....	61
3.5.1.	Semi-structured interviews	62
3.6.	Sample method, size and selection.....	63
3.7.	Qualitative data analysis	65
3.7.1.	Data validity and reliability	67
3.8.	Ethical considerations	67
3.9.	Reflexivity	68
3.10.	Data collection limitations.....	69
3.11.	Chapter summary	69
CHAPTER FOUR	70
FINDINGS	70
4.1.	Introduction.....	70
4.2.	Code groups, themes and independent code development	70
4.3.	Participant profile.....	73
4.4.	Status quo of female representation	73
4.5.	Identified challenges facing female senior managers	76
4.5.1.	Decision making challenges	77
4.5.2.	Demographic related challenges	78
4.5.3.	Financial concerns.....	79
4.5.4.	Gender stereotyping	79
4.5.5.	Glass ceiling.....	81
4.5.6.	Higher education and experience	83
4.5.7.	Inclusion.....	86
4.5.8.	Lack of mentors	88
4.5.9.	Male dominance.....	90
4.5.10.	Organisational management.....	92
4.5.11.	Recruitment and hiring processes	93
4.5.12.	Remuneration	94
4.5.13.	Work-life balance	96
4.6.	Organisational and government policy and support.....	98
4.6.1.	Government initiatives and policies	98
4.6.2.	Organisational practices	101
4.6.3.	Networking	102
4.7.	Chapter summary	104
CHAPTER FIVE	106
DISCUSSION	106

5.1.	Introduction	106
5.2.	Representation of female senior managers in South African sport organisations	106
5.3.	Systemic historical factors	107
5.4.	A strategic view of leadership at senior management levels	108
5.5.	Inclusion of females in the sports business industry	109
5.6.	The influence of policies and organisational support on management functions	110
5.7.	Career advancement opportunities for females in sports	111
5.8.	Effects of organisational practices on remuneration for females in the sports business	113
5.9.	Limitations of funding opportunities for females in senior management positions.....	114
5.10.	Achieving work-life balance as a female senior manager in the sports business.....	115
5.11.	Chapter summary	116
CHAPTER SIX		118
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS		118
6.1.	Introduction	118
6.2.	Revisiting the research questions and objectives	118
6.3.	Summary of the key findings	119
6.4.	Implications of the study for theory, policy and practice.....	123
6.5.	Limitations of the study.....	125
6.6.	Recommendations for future research.....	125
6.7.	Conclusions of the thesis	126
REFERENCES		127
APPENDICES		147
Appendix A: Interview schedule		147
Appendix B: Letter of consent 1		149
Appendix C: Letter of consent 2		151
Appendix D: Ethical clearance.....		153
Appendix E: Editing Certificate.....		154

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Levels of management.....	23
Figure 2: Skills, tasks, approaches, functions, responsibilities and roles of a senior manager	25
Figure 3: Link between the liberal feminist theory and the four fundamental management functions..	44
Figure 4: Percentage of females who hold senior management positions (2011 – 2021).....	45
Figure 5: Gender representation in the SRSA: Ministry level	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Global female representation in senior management (2017-2021)	47
Table 2: Females in leadership positions at JSE-listed companies and SOEs for the period 2008-2017	60
Table 3: Comparison of quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry.....	61
Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages of interviews	65
Table 5: Senior management positions and number of participants per role	70
Table 6: Code groups, themes and independent codes	76
Table 7: Key challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations.....	74
Table 8: Respondents justifications for no wage gap.....	95

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APAC	Asian-Pacific
BWASA	Business Women's Association of South Africa
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operating Officer
DSAC	Department of Sports, Arts and Culture
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
FTSE 100	Financial Times Stock Exchange
HOD	Head of Department
IOC	International Olympic Committee
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MD	Managing Director
NBA	National Basketball Association
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
NPO	Non-profit organisation
POLC	Planning, Organising, Leading, and Controlling
SA	South Africa
SASCOC	South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee
SOEs	State-Owned Enterprises
SRSA	Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
USA	United States of America
VP	Vice President

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

This chapter begins by providing a brief background of the study, which outlines the research gaps in the literature, policy and practice that are related to the research topic. The chapter discusses the research problem statement and explains the rationale of the study. The aims and objectives, and research questions are subsequently described, followed by the research methodology and processes. Then the chapter presents the demarcation of the study, the significance of the study to theory, policy and practices, the key concepts used, followed by a brief outline of the layout of the thesis.

This chapter introduces the research topic, being the challenges that females in senior management positions encounter in sport organisations. The existing literature explores mainly the challenges female employees encounter in various industry sectors, which, in turn influenced the current study, which questions the challenges that female senior managers face in the patriarchally dominated industry of sport in South Africa (Vázquez-Carrasco, López-Pérez & Centeno, 2011; Choge, 2015; Thomas, Thomas & Smith, 2019; Chyu, Peters, Nicholson, Dai, Taylor, Garg, Smith, Porten, Greene, Browning, Harris, Sutherland & Psutka, 2020). This study's investigation is summarised by means of an overview of the background, the problem statement, and rationale, as well as the aims, objectives, and research questions.

1.2. Research background

Studies focused largely on female representation in sports previously revealed the gross underrepresentation of females within sport's public and private sectors (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012; Lapchick, 2016; Evans & Pfister, 2020; Pape, 2020). The situation is improving slowly as male employees continue to occupy decision making positions in senior management levels of sport organisations (Smith & Wrynn, 2013; Evans & Pfister, 2020:2). Evans and Pfister (2020:2) stated that due to the trend of female underrepresentation, it has become imperative to understand the causes and impacts of gender imbalances in senior management levels of sport organisations, primarily because "gender shapes not only identities in sport, but also constitutes an axis of power around which interactions, structures and processes in sport rotate".

A number of studies have explored various factors concerning women in management, which spans numerous industries and various levels of management (see for example Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011; Choge, 2015; Thomas et al., 2019; Chyu et al., 2020). The key areas range from the challenges for women in management in the twenty-first century (Vázquez-

Carrasco et al., 2011), the challenges facing women leadership development in primary schools (Choge, 2015), the challenges for gender equity and women in leadership in universities (Thomas et al., 2019), and the case for increasing diversity and equity of women in urology (Chyu et al., 2020). The aforementioned studies suggested that the challenges experienced by women in management include aspects such as the glass ceiling, underrepresentation, career immobility, limited job security and training opportunities, a lack of mentors and role models, the wage gap, work-life factors (e.g. child-rearing), self-limiting beliefs (low confidence), gender bias, gender stereotypes, and power dynamics in the workplace (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011:1350, 1353-1354; Choge, 2015:30; Thomas et al., 2019:1, 4-6; Chyu et al., 2020:16, 18-21). For example, the glass ceiling is an “invisible barrier” which prohibits females from progressing in the workplace over men who share similar qualifications (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2012:1340), while the wage gap is a term used to signal differences in remuneration between male and female employees in the same job position (Salloum, Azzi, Mercier-Suissa & Khalil, 2016:220). Gender stereotypes are a set of shared beliefs that differentiate men and women’s values, attitudes, interests, psychological traits, occupations and social relations (Koca, Asrlan & Asci, 2011), and the challenge of underrepresentation refers to the low numbers of female employee’s present in the senior management structures of organisations (Chyu et al., 2020:21). In addition, the challenge of limited job security is expressed through the likes of rolling short-term contracts that do not result in permanent employment (Thomas et al., 2019:5), and career immobility refers to hindrances in female employee’s ability to make advancements in their careers, for example, geographical immobility as a result of familial duties (Choge, 2015:30). Literary evidence suggests that the status of sport governance emulates that of other industry sectors despite significant evidence that gender diversity can positively impact senior management positions of corporate organisations (Torchia, Calabrò & Huse, 2011; Joecks, Pull & Vetter, 2013).

Similarly, within the sporting context, literary sources have also delved into factors concerning women in management. Adriaanse and Schofield (2013) analysed the gender dynamics in sport governance. Walker, Schaeperkoetter and Darvin (2017) looked into the institutionalised practices in sports leadership. More recently, Heffernan (2019) considered the role of men in addressing the gender-leadership gap in sport organisations, while Pape (2020) investigated the underrepresentation of women in sports leadership in relation to gender segregation and organisational change. Much of this literature stems from developed contexts such as a “liberal Western tradition that conceptualises gender inequity in a specific socio-cultural and political way” (Evans & Pfister, 2020:1). The scarcity of females in positions of power in sport was determined in British and American sport organisations as early as the 1970s and 80s (White & Brackenridge, 1985:95, Acosta and Carpenter, 2012:B). In South Africa, it was first discovered that national sport federations comprised few or no females in senior management around the year 2000 (Burnett, 2001:74). Around 2006, twenty three per cent female

representation in senior management structures had been achieved in the South African sports sector (Goslin, 2006:5). Generally, it was found that male employees dominated the political and strategic structures of the Ministry within the Department of Sports, Arts, and Culture (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal, 2018:300). Although there has been a slight increase in the proportion of females in senior management positions, as well as increased initiatives to implement change to better accommodate female employees, we are continuously reminded of the trend of female underrepresentation in business in general and specifically in the unique trajectory of the male dominated sphere of sports business.

Importantly, South Africa underwent a period of legislative segregation, more commonly known as Apartheid, which becomes important to consider, as this might provide insight into why females in South Africa are facing unique challenges, particularly regarding female representation in organisations. The Global South has different circumstances to the Global North, in relation to wealth, demography, technology, and politics (Todaro & Smith, 2012; Haug, 2021). The study within a South African context, adds a unique contribution to the developing Global South perspective and seeks to balance the overwhelming amount of research regarding this topic that largely informs 'Western liberal' (i.e. European, North American, and Australasian) contexts, as identified by Evans and Pfister (2020:9-10). Over time, South Africa has seen only a slight increase in the percentage of females occupying senior management roles in organisations (see for example Grant Thornton, 2017:10; 2018:10). By 2020, South African females comprises only fourteen percent of the available chief executive officers, chief financial officers, and executive directors of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) listed companies (PwC, 2020:53; West, 2020). Despite some improved statistics over time, critics such as the Business Women's Association of South Africa (BWASA) argued that the improvements "are not yet good enough" (BWASA, 2017:8).

This study differentiates itself from existing studies on the subject by expanding its focus to the challenges encountered by female employees in sports business, primarily in the Global South. The current study aimed to critically investigate the challenges that female senior managers face in South African sport organisations. It aimed to identify the contextual challenges that females encounter as senior managers in sport organisations, in order to understand the status of female representation within the senior management level of South African sport organisations, and to determine how government and organisational policies and initiatives support females in senior management positions in South African sport organisations.

1.3. Research problem setting and statement

Evidence has shown that men are over-represented in senior decision making positions in sports administration in South Africa (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012; Smith & Wrynn, 2013; Lapchick, 2016). Burton and Leberman (2017:1), and Evans and Pfister (2020:1), suggested

that the over-representation is typically “able-bodied white men,” who are involved in the decision making processes of mainly international sport organisations. This highlights the importance of understanding why men continue to dominate the sport industry (Burton & Leberman, 2017:1). The existing literature (detailed in the previous section) explored the challenges faced by females in the working environment is largely in accordance with the objectives set out by Scambler (2005) and Jarvie (2006) regarding feminism. The objectives include investigations into the various political agendas surrounding sexuality, patriarchy, gender logic, gender roles, engendered power relations, and oppression (Scambler, 2005:152; Jarvie, 2006:30-31). Therefore, this study was concerned with framing the study within liberal feminism, to better understand the experience of females within the mainly patriarchal senior levels of sport organisations.

Malie (2011:95) stated that “that future research on the study topic area should be extended to other business sectors in South Africa.” Hence, the researcher was inspired to investigate the experiences and related challenges facing female senior managers in selected South African sport organisations. Although previous studies explored the challenges within different contexts such as varying management and leadership roles, within various industries and sectors (see for example Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011; Choge, 2015; Thomas et al., 2019; Chyu et al., 2020), a gap in the literature remains in that the challenges females are likely to face in a statistically evident, and overwhelmingly male dominated industry of sport have not been evaluated (Surujlal, 2015; Lapchick, 2016; Hancock, Darvin, & Walker, 2018; Gray & Weese, 2021).

The study therefore provides female senior managers, sport organisations, and various internal and external sports stakeholders an opportunity to gain in-depth insight into the experiences and challenges that female employees encounter at senior management levels in South African sport organisations. Although an array of policies has been designed and drafted in South Africa to address the systemic challenges experienced by females in typically male dominated workplaces, there is also the related question of whether these policies have been effectively implemented.

1.4. Aim and objectives of the study

The research aimed to critically investigate the challenges that female senior managers face in South African sport organisations. The secondary objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the contextual challenges that females encounter as senior managers in sport organisations.
- To understand the status of female representation within the senior management level of South African sport organisations.

- To determine how government and organisational policies and initiatives support females in senior management positions of South African sport organisations.

1.5. Research questions

The main research question is: what are the contextual challenges that female senior managers encounter in South African sport organisations? The following secondary research questions emerged from the previous studies explored in the literature review of this study, and from the main research problem of the study:

- What are the perceptions of female representation in the senior management level of South African sport organisations?
- How do government and organisational policies and initiatives support female senior managers in sport organisations?

1.6. The research paradigm, design and methods

This study adopted an interpretive research paradigm; an approach that considers the participant's perspective, in order to uncover significant meanings, values, and explanations (Jones, 2015:22-23). In accordance with Yilmaz (2013:311-312) and Jones (2015:22-23), the researcher understands and acknowledges that multiple truths exist regarding a particular phenomenon as opposed to a single truth. This paradigm was suitable for this research study because it achieved the aims and objectives of the study.

The feminist theory served as an additional paradigm that was adopted as this study specifically investigates female employee's challenges and therefore acknowledges that gender is a key determinant of one's chances in life (Costa & Guthrie, 1994:235). The study investigates senior managers in sport organisations. The study utilised the liberal feminist theory because the theory sought to address matters pertaining to the equal distribution of power and membership within male-controlled economic, political, judicial, educational, and medical structures (Hattery, 2010:100; Enyew & Mihrete, 2018). The theory has been criticised for how it has commonly overlooked the socioeconomic status, race, and sexual orientation differences, therefore not offering an accurate assessment of women's overall status (Oxley, 2011; Lewis, 2019). Though commonly criticised, liberal feminism has continuously concerned itself with addressing issues regarding the maintenance of predominantly male power over females, and unequal access to decision making roles in sports (Scambler, 2005:152; Jarvie, 2006:30-31). In addition, feminists have revealed that the aims and objectives of the theory remain unfulfilled (Oxley, 2011), therefore investigating liberal feminism became important in this study and was thus the most suitable paradigm for the context and objectives of this study.

In line with the interpretive research paradigm, this study employed a qualitative research method and adopted a cross-sectional research design. The study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from a cross-sectional sample that was derived from a specific population (Jones, 2015:116-117; Zheng, 2015:67). South African national sport federations who were representative of typical sport organisations in South Africa served as the sample. All the interviews were conducted during individual scheduled time slots with the research participants, and both in person and online interviews took place in a quiet environment with minimal noise interference at a time and location that was most convenient for the participant. The predominant settings for the interviews were the respondent's work offices (in person interviews) and respondent's homes (online interviews).

1.7. Research processes

The senior management positions considered for the sample included the following job titles: president, vice president, general manager, member of the management committee (composed of individuals from senior management), for instance, chairperson, chief executive, chief officer, and chief director, the board of directors and managing director. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample group because the research participants were selected based on the following set of criteria: the participant needed to be a female occupying a senior management position in a South African national sport federation. The study required a maximum of fifteen research participants. A maximum of two female employees within the senior management level of each national sport federation were considered for the study. The maximum was implemented to minimise saturation of the study's research results.

Semi-structured interviews of fourteen open-ended questions were administered face-to-face, in person and online. The interviews were used to enquire, probe, and obtain clarification and feedback about the challenges that female senior managers were likely to face in senior management positions in South African sport organisations. Piloting the content of the data collection instrument refined the interview instrument to ensure that the responses would be accurately targeted at attaining the research objectives of the study. Furthermore, the research participants were requested to consent to their participation in the study via email. The email included a brief synopsis of the study, the study's main objectives, information on who the study sought to benefit from, and a description of how confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study.

Following the data collection, qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analysed using qualitative data analysis techniques (transcribing, coding, and assigning themes) by using a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti (v. 9). Selective coding was used to identify information in the raw data that was relevant to the study, whereupon it was sorted into themes (Jones, 2015).

1.8. Demarcation of the study

This study investigated South African sport organisations. The study was limited to female employees in senior management level positions in the sports sector in South Africa. The study focused on female employees due to their marginalised status in male dominated settings such as in their working environment. Senior management level positions were selected. The respondents comprised managers with the required years of experience and exposure to a specified level of complexity. Thus, expertise in planning, leading, and related skills (i.e. conceptual and technical skills), tasks (i.e. forecasting, delegating, recruiting, etc.), approaches (i.e. task-orientated, democratic approaches, etc.), and responsibilities (i.e. profitability, business expansion, etc.) associated with senior management level employees. These criteria, therefore, excluded those occupying posts such as female team managers/coaches, commentators, referees, or athletes. The criteria the researcher intended to be satisfied required in-depth information regarding the experiences of the female senior managers. The study focused on the sports sector in particular, due to its global reputation of male dominance, and furthermore, it only considered sport organisations based in South Africa. The geographical location was suitable for the study as it was easily accessible to the researcher.

1.9. Significance of the study

The study will benefit individuals and organisations in the sports business, with a particular focus on the South African sport industry. This includes female senior managers, sport organisations, sport governing bodies, and internal and external industry stakeholders who will gain insight through the findings and recommendations that arise from this study. The findings and recommendations will assist various stakeholders with their considerations for formulating policies and best practices that can support female senior managers in the sports business environment. This study will also provide comprehensive understanding of the challenges that exist for female employees in the perceived male dominated industry of sport, and furthermore, will expand the knowledge of the research area from a Global South perspective. In line with the knowledge on feminist theory, this study will provide fresh insights into gender relationships within the current patriarchal sports society. Furthermore, the study will be of significance to the literature on management functions by enhancing the current literature by increasing knowledge about how female employees navigate fundamental management functions (to ensure the effective use of an organisation's resources), as senior managers in sports business.

1.10. Definition of key concepts

The key terms and concepts commonly found in this study are defined below:

Female: The term female is scientifically defined as "of or denoting the sex that produces ova or bears young" (*The American Heritage(R) Dictionary of the English Language*, 2016). Alternatively, it is defined as "a woman or girl". (*The Chambers Dictionary*, 2015), which serves as a classification of gender/sex, in this case, the female sex.

Challenges: On a general basis, a challenge is considered as any factor that "[tests] one's abilities or resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking" (*The American Heritage(R) Dictionary of the English Language*, 2016). In management, "contemporary challenges" are perceived as factors that are responsible for the transformation of management principles such as change, globalisation, managerial and economic empowerment, cultural diversity, technology, and ethics (Smit, 2002). Such challenges require organisations and individuals to adapt, by finding new ways to address the changes created by the above principles. The current study, therefore, considers the challenges caused by factors such as change, globalisation, and managerial and economic empowerment, which negatively impact female senior managers in sport organisations in the modern era.

Senior manager: A senior manager is classified as an 'upper-level executive' whose main duties are to guide and control the overall organisation's plans and objectives' (Pride, Hughes & Kapoor, 2014:172-173). Senior managers are also fundamental for developing strategic goals and establishing an organisation's vision and mission (Rue, Ibrahim & Byars, 2013:3; Koohang & Hatch, 2017:386). This term is further elaborated in the literature review chapter in relation to the levels of management, particularly senior management level.

Sport organisations: On the most basic level, sport organisations are establishments or companies that dedicate their work responsibilities to the promotion and development of sports, for example, sport federations, national associations, clubs, local departments and sporting bodies (Gómez, Opazo & Marti, 2007:4). In greater depth, a sport organisation is a goal-directed social entity that operates in the sport industry with a "consciously structured activity system and a relatively identifiable boundary" (Eksteen, 2014:8).

1.11. Thesis layout

This thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter One sets out with an overview of the background, problem statement and rationale, the aims and objectives, and the research questions of the study.

Chapter Two focuses on reviewing the existing literature on the key topics related to the research problem and the key concepts associated with the study.

Chapter Three outlines the research processes in line with the selected research design and discusses the selected research approach and methods. It also reports on the data analysis and coding processes that accompany the methodological procedures.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the study by outlining the code groups, themes, and independent codes, which are developed during the process of data analysis; and thereafter discusses the key themes of the study, as per their respective code groups.

Chapter Five discusses the key themes in relation to the existing literature. The aim of this discussions chapter is to provide insight into the main research questions and address the research objectives of the study.

Chapter Six concludes by describing the key findings of the study and then evaluates the attainment of the study's aims and objectives. It concludes by acknowledging the limitations of the study, and thereafter makes recommendations for future research.

1.12. Chapter summary

This chapter provided an overview of the background to the research topic by examining the existing literature on females in management, and the associated challenges of female employees in various management and leadership roles.

It then provides insight into the problem statement, rationale, the aims and objectives, and the research questions of the study. Additionally, the chapter outlined the methodological approaches and processes used to address and achieve the objectives of the study. The next chapter provides an in-depth review of the literature on the factors related to female senior managers in sport organisations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Numerous studies have explored the challenges facing females in management positions, with a particular focus on challenges experienced in terms of their hierarchical progression in organisations (see for example Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011; Choge, 2015; Thomas et al., 2019; Chyu et al., 2020). The researchers identified the challenges associated with aspects such as the glass ceiling, underrepresentation, discriminatory culture career immobility, limited job security and training opportunities, the lack of mentors and role models, the wage gap, work-life factors (e.g. child-rearing), self-limiting beliefs (low confidence), gender bias, gender stereotypes, and power dynamics in the workplace (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011:1350, 1353-1354; Choge, 2015:30; Thomas et al., 2019:1, 4-6; Chyu et al., 2020:16, 18-21). While these challenges are typically observed in fields such as education, business management, and health sciences, Malie (2011:95) suggested that future research should be extended into other industry sectors. This research thus set out to investigate females in the sport industry, an industry that historically has been considered to be male dominated (Scambler, 2005; Burton, 2019; Toffoletti & Palmer, 2019).

This chapter aims to review existing literature on key topics pertaining to the challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations. The chapter commences with defining sport management and reviewing the key fundamental management functions and roles, the levels of management, and the behaviours associated with organisational management and the changing environment of sport. Thereafter, the study reviews literature related to sport in society, and the laws and policies for females in sports, the politics related to females in sport organisations, the theories surrounding feminism, female representation in senior management, and organisational practices to support females in sport organisations.

The literature was particularly important in establishing areas that the researcher could enquire about throughout the data collection process, and additionally, it proved to be significant for understanding the landscape in which females operate, within the sports labour market. In the literature review, the research study addresses the following key research questions: (a) What are the contextual challenges that female senior managers encounter in South African sport organisations? (b) What are the perceptions of female representation in the senior management level of South African sport organisations? and (c) How do government and organisational policies and initiatives support female senior managers in sport organisations?

2.2. Sport in society

Since the general origins of sport in 776 BC with the establishment of the Olympic Games in Greece (Reid, 2011:25), as well as the modern professionalisation of sport (which is generally thought to have evolved between 1888 and 1980) (Beech & Chadwick, 2013:8;13-14), the common supposition of sport being practised and managed by males has continued to be the dominant convention, whereas females were largely presumed to have a more domesticated role (Roberts, 1992:3-4; Vertinsky, 1994:63-64; Powell, 2011:15). Sociologists have long developed an interest in the varied functions of sport in society. This includes discussions surrounding sport and various societal components; otherwise referred to as “the functions of athletics in relation to basic social institutions and processes” (Edwards, 1973:9-11, 14). Included as part of these functions is the importance of sport in society, the socio-economic impact of sports, and the contribution of sports to the economy, which are factors which will be reviewed in the following sections.

The impact of sport can be widely recognised in a range of areas, be it economic or social. A key factor, which stands out among scholars is sport’s ability to unite people (Naughton, n.d.; Suter, n.d.; Charaf, 2016). The Netherlands Olympic Committee and the Netherlands Sports Confederation (2016:3) added that other key factors include sport’s ability to be a healthy pursuit; thus possessing health benefits for participants or athletes; its ability to develop people into the best versions of themselves; its ability to form relationships and encourage respect; and its ability to create a sense of pride, resulting in the presentation of a positive image of a certain community or country. In addition, it is said that any form of physical activity and sporting code helps develop one’s personal skills; and helps develop and strengthen values such as tolerance, self-discipline, team spirit, and strength of character (Naughton, n.d.).

Similarly, despite the benefits associated with physical sport participation, Coakley (2008:18) drew attention to the importance of sport from a sport’s spectator perspective. The author states that sport has the potential to influence people’s identities, moods and perceived wellbeing, which is achieved by an individual’s association with a particular athlete or sport team during a sports match or competition (Coakley, 2008:18). The author added that through this form of interaction, including sharing personal opinions about athletes, critiquing sport teams, analysing matches, and weighing in on media interaction and coaching tactics; such practices result in individuals improving in areas such as education, politics, work, and other areas of life which, in turn, enhances one’s social networks and further enhances one’s social capital (Coakley, 2008:18).

Furthermore, within schools, academic institutions and communities, sport is said to serve as an indispensable educational tool which has a significant impact in addressing social challenges faced by society. For example, sport is able to address issues of social exclusion,

anti-social behaviour, and alcohol and substance misuse. Furthermore, it has the ability to influence enhanced relations within communities, promote greater understanding and respect for the traditions and rights of others with the sole purpose of creating a cohesive society (Naughton, n.d.).

Much knowledge can be drawn from the literature reviewed in this section on the role of sport in a variety of areas in society (for example, Naughton, n.d.; Coakley, 2008; and Netherlands Olympic Committee and Netherlands Sports Confederation, 2016:3) therefore, it became important to unpack, within the sections to follow, sport's role within a classical and modern society in light of the study's context.

Sport in a classical society

As reviewed prior to this section, the onset of sport is commonly known to have begun at the Ancient Olympic Games, however, it is suggested that the efforts and events prior to the Olympic Games, for example the Games created by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1896, should not be disregarded (Rowe, 2016). Furthermore, it has been stated that though artefacts, cave drawings and vases originating from Greece and Roman were discovered, the notable details of ancient sport remain relatively unknown (Kennard & Carter, 1994; Hamed, 2015).

It was also revealed that the onset of physical sport is embedded in what can be referred to as the "ancient Mediterranean world;" notably in Egypt, Crete, Greece, and Rome, which sustained the advancement of male prowess in terms of athleticism and further construed it to serve as effective 'weapons' that were useful in preparing for war (Kennard & Carter, 1994; Rowe, Guttman, Thompson & Maguire, 1998; Burnett, 2001). One activity recognised in Crete was bull vaulting in which both males and females participated, although females were believed as having not been mentioned in past articles (Kennard & Carter, 1994). Both genders in Egypt participated in activities such as wrestling, weightlifting, long jump, swimming, rowing, shooting, fishing, and athletics, including various kinds of ball games (Hamed, 2015:2). However, the male-intended activities were perceived to be rougher than those of females, which resulted in the belief that females were not concerned with fighting and hair pulling and furthermore, led to their participation in sports often being frowned upon (Hamed, 2015:2).

A large body of literature reports that females were excluded from sport (Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003; Serra, 2015; Mansky & Wei-Haas, 2016; Nunes, 2018), with academic literary sources at times revealing that "women were one of the first groups discriminated against [in sports]" (Anderson, 1979:7). Female exclusion was an act largely orchestrated by the reviver and founder of the modern Olympic Games, de Coubertin (Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003;71-72; Nunes, 2018:2) as he believed that Olympic sport participation required "the solemn and periodic exaltation of male athleticism with female applause as a reward," and furthermore, he

added that “as no women participated in the Ancient Games, there obviously was to be no place for them in the modern ones.” (Mansky & Wei-Haas, 2016). As a result of these discriminatory beliefs, the influence of gender-based discrimination was evident in physical education, recreational and competitive sport, sporting organisations and sports media (Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, 2007:2). An example of gender-based discrimination was the barring of females from participating in public events in the very first Olympic Games in 776 BC (Serra, 2015:76). Though deliberately excluded from participating in the Olympics under de Coubertin’s leadership, females displayed considerable resilience and ambition, and later formed their own Women’s Olympics in the 1920s, where they partook in physically demanding activities such as shotput and the 1000m race (Mansky & Wei-Haas, 2016: Rowe, 2016).

In South Africa, documented sport activities can be traced back to the Western colonisation of the country (around the onset of the 1800s) and the Apartheid era, which began in 1948 (Nauright, 1997; Dubow, 2014). Although recognised sport activities such as rugby, cricket and athletics were part of the period of colonisation, Nongogo (2011) suggests that sport did exist in the country prior to that. However, it was of an informal nature. An example of the ‘informal sports’ that existed could be the tribal dances and hunting which were popular among the South African community (Odendaal, 1995). Similarly, females were excluded from South African sport (i.e. soccer) in the nineteenth century when sport was first introduced into South Africa by British colonialists (Pelak, 2010:63). Apart from competitive sport, Pelak (2010:63) emphasised that the exclusion does not suggest that females of different regional, economic, and ethnic groups have not historically ventured into new sporting identities and opportunities (i.e. sports administration).

Notwithstanding the point of exclusion which does not suggest that females of different socio-economic backgrounds have not historically explored new sporting identities and opportunities; due to the perceived male domination in sports, the current study seeks to determine whether the perceived historical marginalisation of females in sport participation reflects within the administrative roles of sport, particularly senior administrative roles in sports business.

Sport in a modern society

It was only during the middle to latter half of the twentieth century that females found improved opportunities to participate in sport activities within voluntary organisations, athletic clubs, at exclusive female colleges, and through involvement in agricultural affairs (Vertinsky, 1994; Bell, 2008). Noting the progress of females in sports, Rowe (2016) highlighted how females had acquired a much-increased representation in the twenty-first century Olympics than in other areas of sport.

After years of striving for gender equality within the Olympic sphere, equal participation was achieved at the London Olympic Games in 2012, which is recorded as a century after the first modern Olympics took place (Nunes, 2018). Nunes (2018) continued to reveal the growth of female participation in the many Olympic Games hosted throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The percentage of female athletes compared to males ranged between 1-2 per cent in 1900-1920, which improved to 10 per cent in Antwerp (1920) and increased to 21 per cent in Montreal (1976), 26.1 per cent in Seoul (1988), 34 per cent in Atlanta (1996), and continued to increase to 42 per cent in the 2008 Beijing Games, 44 per cent in the 2012 London Olympic Games, and 45 per cent in the 2016 Rio Olympics (International Olympic Committee, n.d.; Mansky & Wei-Haas, 2016; Nunes, 2018). The International Olympic Committee (IOC) intends on reaching 45 per cent female athlete representation at the 2022 Beijing Winter Games, after acquiring a 48 per cent ratio at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games; which are figures that were publicised in an effort to enhance the promotion of gender equality and opportunities provided for female athletes globally (International Olympic Committee, n.d.; International Olympic Committee, 2021:4).

Though South Africa saw an increase in the development of organised sport, sport participation was only first recorded there at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Anderson, 1979:35-41). Years after the end of racially, socially, and economically segregated sport (due to British colonialism and the Apartheid era) in South Africa, the transformational state of sport within the country was still considered to be a work in progress (Booth, 1998:1; South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2016). South Africa's transformational state in sports comes as a result of a sport transformation status report, provided by the former Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA), which revealed the following statistics concerning females in national and provincial South African sport federations: a) 'There is an underrepresentation and inadequate opportunity to participate for females and disabled persons in sports on and off the field of play, and b) There are low participation numbers of females (girls) in football, rugby and cricket at senior and underage representative level[s]'. (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2016).

More recently, the 2018/2019 comparative sport federation transformation status report revealed the following statistics concerning female presidents and CEOs across South African sport federations: (a) Only two out of eighteen audited federations had a female president; (b) Only five out of eighteen audited federations had female CEOs; (c) Ten of the eighteen federations had reached or exceeded the Transformation Charter's stipulated twenty-five per cent women representation on their boards; and (d) Four of the eighteen federations had full-time female employees (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2019a). As early as 2017, it was revealed that when the transformation results of South African sport are compared to the results of pre-1994, and the twenty years thereafter, the country's

situation is a “much-changed” sporting environment (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2017:6). It is important to note that the statistics provided by the South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (2016) and South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (2019a) indicate that transformation in sports is not simply about achieving demographic representation in all sporting codes; it also considers aspects such as access to sport for previously disadvantaged populations (e.g. access for female candidates in senior management structures of sport).

2.4.1. The socio-economic impact of sport

Despite being described as a competitive or non-competitive human activity, which involves physical participation, sport can be described socially as ...

... ‘a ritual sacrifice of human energy; [as] providing a common cultural currency between people; [as] a means of compensating for deficiencies in life; [as] a mechanism for the affirmation of identity and difference; [as a] business rather than sport; [as] a social product; [as] a contested arena shaped by struggles, both on and off the field of play; [as] a euphemism for Western or capitalist sport; and [as] a form of humanitarian aid and international development’ (Jarvie, 2012:2,6).

Furthermore, it has been stated that sport assists social and economic development and contributes to a healthy society, through curbing sickness, disability, and mental health (Naughton, n.d.).

Social impacts can be explained as environmental, technological, or social changes of the structure and functions of specific social orders, for example the changes of sport tourism to the host residents’ quality of life (Ohmann, Jones & Wilkes, 2006:130). Sport is seen as socially impacting communities or countries by creating opportunities for self-actualisation, encouraging unity through entertainment among communities and families, and having a positive effect on peoples’ health and fitness levels (Fredline, 2005:268; Ohmann et al., 2006:24). Regarding sport events, social impacts include improving the destination image, increasing participation in sport, enhancing the quality of life, social cohesion, and social capital formation, instilling pride, euphoria and patriotism to the host destination, and influencing the interest in foreign destinations and their respective cultures (Swart, Bob & Arrey, 2008:124; Kim, Jun, Walker & Drane, 2015:21; Perić, 2018:2).

The United Nations (UN) Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2005:3) revealed that sport not only serves as an economic force but is also found to be a catalyst for economic development. This sequentially supports the assumption made by Charaf (2016) that suggests that economic development is directly proportional and is as important as sport development. It is believed that the relation between sport and the economy first became

apparent when athletes received compensation in the form of “goods or species” during the first Olympic Games (Andreff, 2008:13).

Economically, sport is believed to influence organisations, mechanisation, administration and markets of sport businesses, entities and governing bodies through commercial interests such as television audience share, ticket sales, website hits, concession sales, sponsor revenue and media coverage (Charaf, 2016). The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2005:10) and Craig (2008:3) stipulated that sport’s economic contribution is determined by factors such as manufacturing sporting goods, offering sport related services, infrastructure developments and hosting of sport events. For example, the benefits generated from sport tourism include additional business opportunities, in this case home-grown economic and social issues such as urban regeneration, various media outcomes, as well as the impact of spectators, sponsors and vendors (Craig, 2008:3; Knott, Fyall & Jones, 2016).

Furthermore, it is noted that through the involvement of small to large organisations, for example advertising agencies, printing companies, food and beverage suppliers, audio-visual professionals, sports goods suppliers, and cleaning services involved in a particular sport or sport event, the organisations are able to contribute to the development of their country’s economy (Charaf, 2016). Perić (2018:2) added that sport events are seen to result in the generation of new business ventures and employment opportunities through efforts to redevelop new service sector opportunities, while Kim et al. (2015:21) similarly highlighted the economic impacts of sport, for example, decreasing inflation, employment opportunities, increased income and the improved reputation of under-represented countries and destinations. With sport’s contribution in mind, it was argued that the onset and commercialisation of professional sports and gambling in various sporting codes resulted in the development of the sports economy in the nineteenth century (Andreff, 2008:13). Since then, the sports sector has recorded an 18 per cent contribution (USD 180 billion) globally (Serra, 2015:85). South Africa’s 2010 FIFA World Cup™ is an example of such a contribution as it resulted in the availability of four hundred thousand employment opportunities and a fifty-five-billion-rand injection into the country’s economy (Serra, 2015:85).

Given the foregoing information on the socio-economic impact of sport, sport has identified itself as one of the fastest growing industry sectors globally (Gratton, 1998:101; Pitts & Stotlar, 2013:1; Collignon, Sultan & Santander, 2011). Sport has subsequently identified itself as one of the largest segments in the world’s economy because of its wide span of fields that range from sport tourism, marketing and advertising, sport and physical education, organisation of sport events, research and development, and medical treatment and rehabilitation, to list a few (Charaf, 2016). The establishment of sport as a growing “multi-billion-dollar industry” has

initiated the increased demand for the implementation of precise administrative and business practices by persons educated specifically about the unique aspects of the sport industry (Gillentine, Crow & Harris, 2015:1). The size and the rate of growth of the sports sector amplifies the competitiveness of sport as an industry within the global economy. Thus this study reinforced the need to explore the potential challenges that female senior managers might encounter in senior managerial roles within such a large-scaled, competitive industry.

2.3. Defining sport management

It can be argued that the ideal definition of sport is ambiguous and is often defined differently in various types of literature (Delaney & Madigan, 2015:10; Pedersen & Thibault, 2019:7). The widely used definition of sport commonly refers to sport as a physical activity that consists of competitive and challenging contests (Coakley, 2014:6). A more inclusive definition of sport was cited in the 1992 European Charter as; the development of one's mental and physical fitness, the formation of interpersonal bonds and achievement of outcomes in all areas of competition through casual or organised participation of varying forms of physical activities (also see Jarvie, Thornton & Mackie, 2018:2).

In South Africa, sport is notably understood as:

“any activity that requires a significant level of physical involvement and in which participants engage in either a structured or unstructured environment, for the purpose of declaring a winner, though not solely so; or purely for relaxation, personal satisfaction, physical health, emotional growth and development” (South Africa: Department of Public Safety, 2012:166).

While Coakley (2014:8) mentions that there are different criteria used to define sport globally, the general consensus is that sport comprises all forms of physical activity, inclusive of play, recreation, casual, organised or competitive sport, all of which aims to enhance recreation, mental wellbeing, physical fitness and the social interaction of the participants (The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2005:i).

Sport has continued to play a critical role in management since its development into an industry comprising the public sector, commercial and non-profit organisations, and facilities (Veal & Darcy, 2014:4). In 1949, the first attempt at professional preparation in sport management was established in the form of a curricular programme in baseball business administration in the United States (Baker & Esherick, 2013; Pedersen & Thibault, 2019:6). Since then, sport management has expanded into various areas, marking historical and notable events that emerged, such as the commercialisation of sport in areas such as business, education, and academia, to mention a few (Pedersen & Thibault, 2019:6-7). In the context of this study, the definition of sport management is adopted in relation to characteristics associated with sport

as a business, which considers managerial tasks involving organisations' business models, strategic planning, leadership and governance (Petkovic, Jasinskas, & Jesevičiūtė-Ufartienė, 2013:56; Hoyer, Smith, Nicholson & Stewart, 2018:4-5). As a result of the commercialisation of sport which commenced approximately one hundred and fifty years ago, sport managers have emerged, due to the need to organise the legal, business, and managerial aspects of sport (Hums & Crosset, 2012:3). Practically, the organisation of sport includes working with components such as game tickets, online and media content, sponsorships, community events and merchandise or consumer products (Pitts & Stotlar, 2013:6). In essence, the management of sport requires sport managers to liaise with important stakeholders and manage key organisational resources to ensure the "efficient realisation of business and sporting goals of an organisation and/or sportsman in all management functions" (Retar, Pišot & Kolar, 2015:275).

Management is known to involve the act of bringing about, conducting, accomplishing, overseeing, or having responsibility for an organisation or specific aspects of an organisation (Bennis & Nanus, 2003:20). Years later, Kreitner and Cassidy (2011:5) defined management beyond the act of working with and through people, but more towards efficiently and effectively using resources to achieve the organisation's goals and objectives in a rapidly changing environment. Although it is argued that despite management's status in the global paradigm of business, no consensus has been reached about a common definition of management (ITT Technical Institute, n.d.:17). Despite there being no general definition of the concept, the definition of management continues to be largely viewed as the act of ensuring the optimal use of an organisation's resources, in order to achieve its goals, by means of planning, organising, leading and controlling (Gutterman, 2015:2-5; Jones & George, 2019:7-9).

This current study therefore ventures into the sports sector from a management perspective, and in particular, it explores the personal perceptions of female managers and their role as leaders and decision-makers within a given context. In addition to the definitions of management and sport management, the following subsection outlines the factors that contribute towards understanding the broader context of what management entails.

2.3.1. Fundamental management functions

In line with the definitions of management that highlight the appropriate and effective use of an organisations' resources to achieve its organisational goals (Kreitner & Cassidy, 2011:5; Jones & George, 2019:7), it is crucial to consider two key facets, namely, traditional and contemporary management functions. Fayol (1949:6) and McLean (2011) averred that traditional management functions involve forecasting, planning, organising, commanding, co-ordinating and controlling; while contemporary functions, believed to have been adapted from traditional functions according to Robbins and Coulter (2012:9), Griffin (2016:7), and Jones

and George (2019:7-9), include leading, decision making, influencing, motivating, staffing, and communicating. Griffin (2016:14) highlighted that an addition to traditional management functions comes as a result of the change and complexities being experienced by organisations in current times, as opposed to the simple and stable state of organisations in the past. However, throughout time, four fundamental management functions have remained prevalent, namely, planning, organising, leading, and controlling (also referred to as POLC) (Carpenter, Bauer & Erdogan, 2012:11; Griffin, 2016:14). POLC is deemed to be the predominant management framework across the globe, because the functions are essential in producing exceptionally performing organisations (Carpenter et al., 2012:11; Jones & George, 2019:7).

Planning

Planning involves the development of an organisation's future actions, which provides purpose and direction to the organisation's employees, sub-units, and the organisation as a whole (Kreitner, 2009:14). The planning process involves stipulating how and when tasks should be implemented to achieve success through the formulation of short-and long-term goals (Certo & Certo, 2012:7). It is then generally agreed that formulating organisational goals and stipulating the best ways to achieve the goals is the simplest means of defining the planning process (Griffin, 2016:6). Notably, planning aligns itself as the primary management function in the management process, as defined by Gutterman (2015:2-5), and in sport organisations, this process involves making decisions on the purposes, politics, strategies, programmes and plans that guide the operations of the sport organisation (Ilić, 2013:113).

Organising

Boddy (2008:21) described organising as the act of creating a realistic situation off abstract plans by allocating time and effort to specific organisational goals. The process of organising could involve formulating an organisational structure, finalising the necessary resources needed by employees, and developing policies for human resource management (Boddy, 2008:21). McLean (2011:33) further revealed that organising involves allocating the appropriate human, financial and material resources that will in turn, ensure the optimal use of the organisation's systems, resources, procedures, processes, and services. It is evident that organising involves managers determining which tasks are to be implemented, by whom they are to be implemented, how the tasks are to be categorised, who various employees are to report to, and where decisions are to be taken (Robbins & Coulter, 2012:9). Organising is therefore identified as the second function of the management process, which in turn, aligns itself with Bennis and Nanus' (2003:20) description of what management entails. When applied in sports administration, organising entails developing a formal structure (a.k.a. organisational

chart) identification of organisational units; for example, describing the position of Assistant Athletic Director for Marketing (Petronel & Florentina, 2013:96; Barr & Hums, 2014).

Leading

Leading is said to be the process of utilising informal and social means to influence employees to act towards achieving the organisation's objective (Carpenter et al., 2012:34). It is therefore emphasised that the process of effectively influencing an organisation's employees can be achieved by means of motivation (Smit et al., 2016:8), while power, personality, persuasion, and communication are other effective ways that can be utilised (Jones & George, 2019:9). Leading practically involves the act of visioning, inspiring, energising, networking, forming and maintaining relationships, the ability to plan long-term, and the ability to initiate a positive impact in an organisation, during extremely challenging and changing times (ITT Technical Institute, n.d.:24). Leading remains a key imperative for management, as postulated through its definition by Mintzberg (2007:39), and when practically applied in sports administration, the process requires sport managers to "supervise, manage limits, create challenges, encourage self-management, and promote an atmosphere of social support in the organisation" (Imbroda-Ortiz, Castillo-Rodríguez & Chinchilla-Minguet, 2015:62).

Controlling

The process of "verifying that everything occurs in accordance with plans, instructions, established principles and expressed command" (Mullins, 2005:197) serves as the primary purpose of the fourth management function that is reinforced in Jones and George's (2019:7-9) definition of management. In detail, controlling entails the process of ensuring that all plans executed conform to organisational policy and practice, conform to the initial command and rule and the initial plan of action, and lastly, ensures the evaluation of the organisation's performance in its aim of identifying any incongruences that need to be addressed (McNamara, 2009:64). Practical examples of monitoring include using information systems to measure cost, productivity, and overall organisational performance, and receiving progress reports from employees on the allocated tasks (DuBrin, 2011:14).

In sport organisations, however, controlling entails, for example, ensuring that the implementation of the organisation's strategic and operational plans, as well as of the projects and initiatives of the organisation are in accordance with the initial plan(s) (Guță, 2019:319-321).

It is evident that each management function plays a unique role in an organisation and the literature affirms that the application of these functions cannot act in isolation (Jones & George, 2019:7). In line with the functions, female employees are perceived to be incapable of fulfilling

tasks associated with leadership (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2012; Aman, Yusof, Ismail & Mohamed Razali, 2018). Contrary to such views are the practical examples of Meghan Jenkins as the Vice President International of the National Basketball Association (NBA) in the United States of America, and Sumayya Khan in the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO) at the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in South Africa. This study builds on the Jenkin's and Khan's examples, that will be reviewed later in this chapter; by investigating the contemporary challenges that female senior managers might face in sport organisations, despite the sometimes-ambivalent perceptions of female leadership abilities.

2.3.2. Key management roles

The processes that managers are required to use to achieve organisational goals and objectives is understood as the concept of managerial functions (Elkins, 2019). Managerial roles on the other hand, include certain behaviours and actions, which are expected to be executed by managers (Robbins & Coulter, 2012:10). One can thus assume that managerial functions are more concerned with functions geared towards meeting the overall objective (organisation-based), while managerial roles are concerned with the actions needed to fulfil a certain task, which will, in the long run, aid in achieving the overall objective (individual-based) (Elkins, 2019).

Management roles are influenced by a manager's authority and status. These roles have been placed into three categories, namely, (1) interpersonal-related roles which include the tasks of a figurehead, a leader, and liaison; (2) informational roles which include serving as a monitor and disseminator of tasks, or as a spokesperson within the organisation/sub-unit; and (3) decision making roles which include being an entrepreneur, a disturbance handler, a resource allocator and negotiator within an organisation/sub-unit (Seshadri & Elangovan, 2019:124; White, 2019:6).

While managers are expected to undertake such roles, sport managers are expected to perform a range of interpersonal, informational and decision making roles that differ from mainstream management regarding context, for instance, the environment (e.g. sport environment or the sports sector) and its stakeholders (unique stakeholders involved in sports e.g. sponsors, athletes, spectators, etc.). Retar, Plevnik and Kolar (2013:86) cited that sport managers ought to perform the following roles:

- develop a sustainable plan and execute the business processes needed to produce sport services;
- identify talented sportspersons and adapt to their specialities;
- understand and realise the business goals;
- design and analyse work processes, jobs and tasks;

- organise and delegate tasks;
- employ and select candidates for jobs;
- establish partner relationships;
- maintain communication with stakeholders;
- develop a positive working environment;
- display preparedness for any change needed to improve operations within the organisation; and
- stimulate employees through work, supervision, awards and instituting success rate indicators.

Subsequently, Hoye et al. (2018:4) added that other roles that sport managers are expected to be cognisant of and perform are: engaging in strategic planning, managing various human resources, as well as dealing and negotiating broadcasting contracts. With such a large and diverse set of roles and scope of responsibilities associated with sport managers, it is crucial to explore whether the increased managerial roles and responsibilities resulted in potential challenges for females, particularly those who have progressed through various levels of management, towards a senior management level. The levels of management will be reviewed in the next section, in context with the roles and responsibilities associated with each level of management.

2.3.3. Levels of management

With the review of constructs of management and roles, it becomes relevant to review the levels of management as this study particularly focuses on senior level management. The classification of the levels of management depends on the size and scope of the organisation's activities, and the levels become particularly essential when classifying the various management roles. Therefore, the managerial levels to be reviewed are: i) supervisory management; ii) middle management; and iii) senior management. Figure 1 below provides an example of each level of management (Rue et al. (2013:3-5).

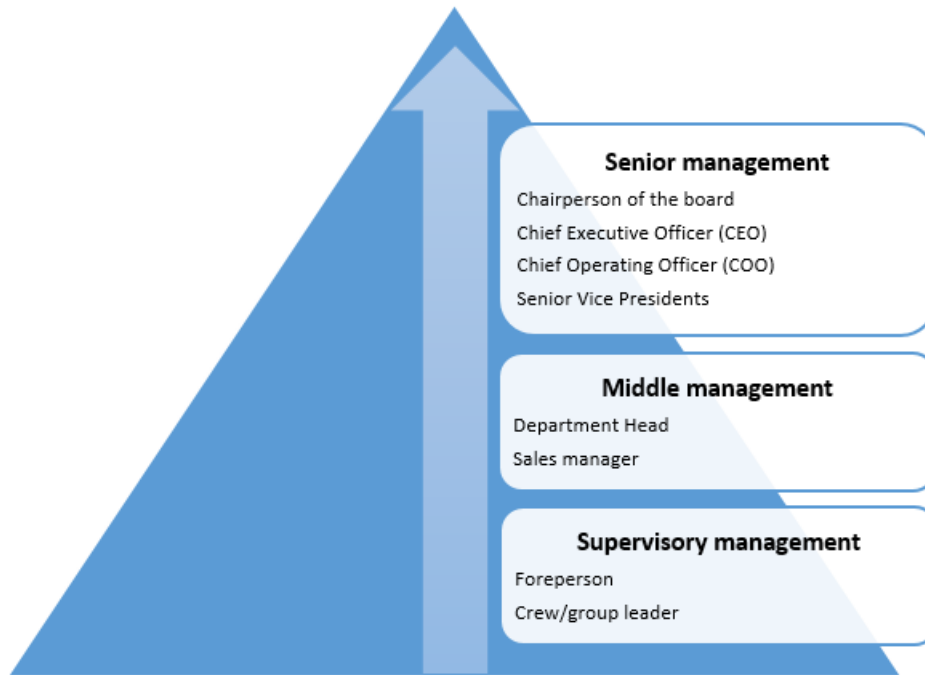


Figure 1: Levels of management

Source: Rue et al. (2013:3-5)

As illustrated in Figure 1 above, supervisory management consists of first-line managers who are required to organise and administer the tasks of non-managerial employees that are responsible for producing goods and fulfilling an organisation’s service mandate (Pride et al., 2014:173; Jones & George, 2016:11). Although it is the lowest level of an organisational design, exceptional quality production of goods and rendering of services is pivotal to the success of any organisation and thus the execution of such technical skills result in first-line managers being promoted higher up in the hierarchy (Gutterman, 2015:16).

However, Turkel (2004:48) debated the supposed ‘promotion’ (discussed by Gutterman, 2015) by introducing the “pipeline theory”. The pipeline theory is a concept that suggests that few females advance to senior management due to the low numbers of females currently existing in lower level; meaning supervisory level management (Turkel, 2004:48). Similarly, Massengale (2009:7) advanced Turkel’s (2004) description of the pipeline theory as the “pipeline problem”, stating that, within the sport environment, the progression of females into senior management is often dependent on supervisory management tasks (e.g. coaching and/or sports administration). However, with a deficit of females at the supervisory level of management, that consequently decreases the presence of females in senior management.

In keeping with Figure 1 above, middle management comprises managers who implement the strategic plans and policies derived from senior management (Rue et al., 2013:4). Middle management roles include organising and administering the tasks carried out by the supervisory managers and developing operational and tactical plans that can be fulfilled by

sales managers, branch managers, department heads and more (Pride et al., 2014:173). In sports, it is revealed that female employees in management positions are commonly “left” in low and middle management levels of sports organisations due to structural and culture-driven societal traits (Kara, Çolakoğlu & Ögüt, 2016:82). Öge, Karasoy and Kara (2014) suggests that this may be due to the absence of female employees in senior management levels of sports organisations, which promotes prejudice towards them, therefore, resulting in the notion that female employees are more suitable for middle management level positions. Despite the significantly increased representation of females in middle management throughout the last twenty years, female representation in senior managerial roles of businesses remains significantly low (Oakley, 2000:321; Salloum et al., 2016:215), hence this study was undertaken to ascertain the perceived challenges that might explain this phenomenon.

The senior management level, also known as top level management, is composed of senior level executives who possess the greatest responsibility in an organisation (Hartzell & Scalia, n.d.). Senior management roles involve setting long-term objectives, developing strategic goals and establishing the organisation’s vision and mission (Rue et al., 2013:3; Koohang & Hatch, 2017:386). Practically, senior management responsibilities can include formulating an organisational strategy based on the information gathered and analysed on the opportunities and threats of the internal and external environment of the organisation (Gutterman, 2015:18).

This study focused primarily on the senior management level because of the varied demands and the degree of complexity associated with that managerial level. The focus of this study is a result of the skills, tasks, approaches, functions, responsibilities, and roles expected of a senior manager, which includes factors such as POLC and interpersonal-related roles that are presented in Figure 2 below.

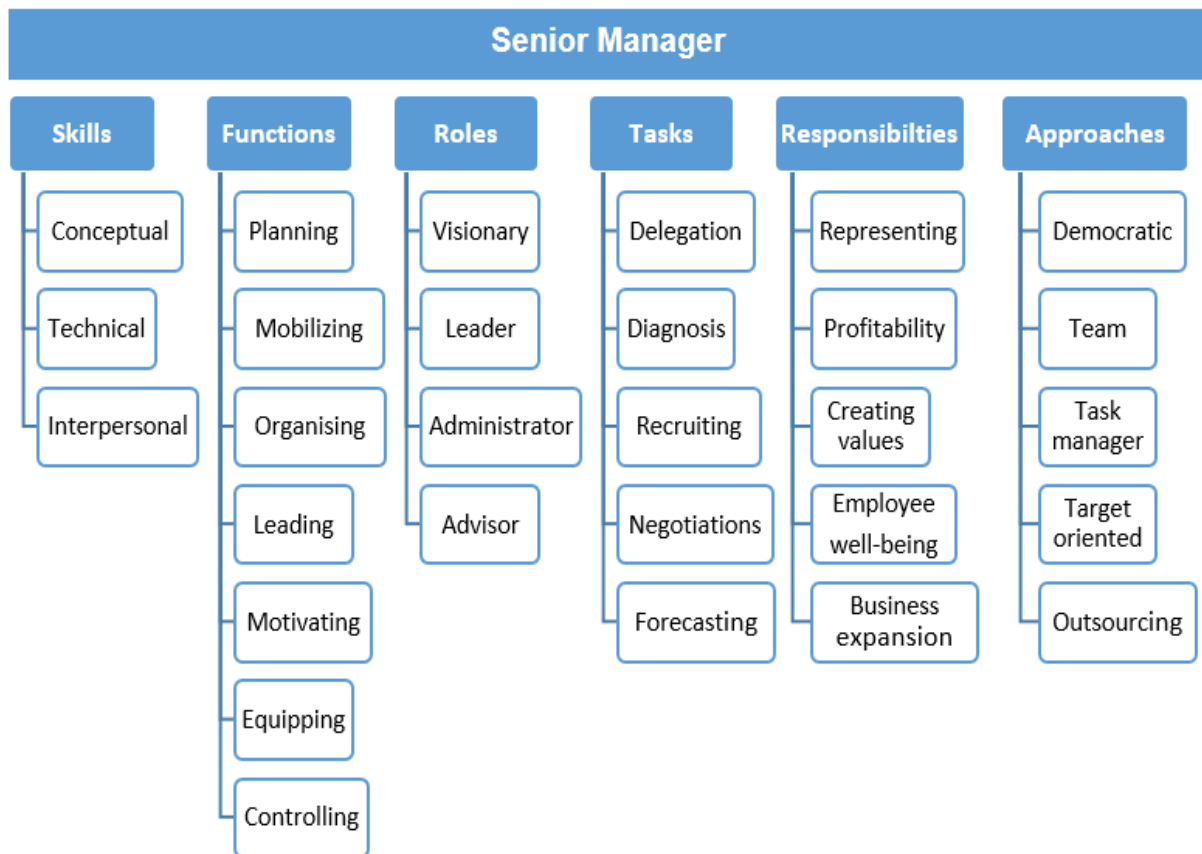


Figure 2: Skills, tasks, approaches, functions, responsibilities and roles of a senior manager

Source: Stanley and Karolin (2016:170-178)

Globally, management positions in sport organisations are still largely dominated by males (Burton, 2019:259; Tegethof, 2019; Martin, 2020; Knoppers, Spaaij & Claringbould, 2021:1-2). However, it is noticeable that females are increasingly found to be in managerial occupations that were previously dominated by males (Burton, 2019:255; Toffoletti & Palmer, 2019:1-2). The South African COO of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ (Clark, 2011:841), Malaysia’s Minister of Youth and Sport (Megat Daud, Radzi, Abdullah & Johari, 2013:872), and the USA’s Vice President of Player Development for the NBA (Burton, 2019:255) serve as evidence that supports the increasing trend of females who have been found to be occupying positions that were previously male dominated.

Additional evidence is provided by the special reference to the cases of the Vice President International of the NBA in the USA, Meghan Jenkins, and the role of COO of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in South Africa, Sumayya Khan, which will be reviewed later in this chapter. The cases of Jenkins and Khan serve as prime examples of senior management positions considered within the context of this study. However, despite the growing trend of females occupying previously male dominated positions, the Minister of Youth and Sport in Malaysia, has reverted back to being occupied by a male employee (Sukumaran, 2018; Ar, 2020).

2.3.4. Organisational behaviour as part of management

Although management functions, management roles, and levels of management primarily focus on factors concerning the organisation's success, Mullins (2010:3) emphasised that researcher's cannot ignore one of the key resources that make up an organisation, the organisation's employees.

Organisational behaviour is the process of studying the behaviour of individuals (for example the frustration or conflict as a response to influences of the organisation and the external environment), groups (for example retaliatory actions influenced by the pressure from group leaders or other members of a group), and actions within an organisational setting (Robbins & Judge, 2013:44; Aswathappa, 2016:6; Rao, 2017:10). Additionally, Mullins (2010:7) suggested that during the behavioural assessment of individuals, factors such as organisational structures and the environment in which an organisation operates should be considered. Therefore, organisational behaviour is largely understood as the study of employee's or a group of employees' thoughts and actions, as well as its organisational operational practices, and overall performance (MacIntosh & Burton, 2019:3).

While the productivity and effectiveness of employees in organisations is widely discussed as a part of organisational behaviour (Dailey, 2012:1/2), the subject of masculinity has been observed with the aim of assessing the similarities and dissimilarities in individuals and groups (Rao, 2017:7). Rao (2017:7) posited that masculinity, from an organisational behaviour perspective, refers to key societal values such as industrial development, entrepreneurial and economic growth (i.e. money, materialistic things and success), while femininity includes key societal values such as the act of caring (e.g. a friendly work environment) and a relationship-driven quality of life (Rao, 2017:7). From this backdrop, organisational behaviour thus becomes pivotal in understanding management (Jackson & Carter, 2007:2) and, likewise, it became vital in the context of this study. It was thus imperative for this study to elicit the managerial characteristics of female senior managers in sport organisations.

2.4. Managing within the changing environment of sport

The need to assess the external environment when observing organisational behaviour was recommended by Mullins (2010:7), and so as a result, one should ask whether a rapidly changing environment such as the sports environment can influence the way people operate and manage in the workplace.

Factors that are believed to contribute to the changing environment include the advancement of various technologies, mainly information technology-related advancements, scientific developments, increased global competition, changes in the economy, for example,

inconsistent currency exchange rates and eco-political differences, meaning changes initiated by government, and pressure from internal and external environments (Brauns, 2015:37; Pettinger, 2012:46-47; Jones & George, 2019:17). Recently, issues concerning work-life balance have emerged as additional factors which add to the evolving business environment (Schermerhorn, Davidson, Woods, Factor, Simon, McBarron & Junaid, 2020:12).

The sport environment has transcended from being considered a ceremony, a physical activity, and a recreational activity to being considered as a multi-million-dollar industry (Chadwick, 2009:191; Bester, 2012:11530). The transition of sport could be a result of the following factors:

- The growth in the commercialisation of sport (Taylor, Doherty & McGraw, 2015:5).
- Globalisation, for instance, the establishment of national and international sport organisations, the development and growth of sport competitions globally, and the mutual agreement of rules which govern various sporting codes across the world (Hoye et al., 2018:6).
- New innovations in technology and media that are commonly found and used in areas such as information technology, coaching, sport facilities, and performance enhancing techniques (Coakley & Dunning, 2000:253; Bester, 2012:11530); and,
- Internationalisation and the emergence of a dominant free market system (Chadwick, 2009:191).

Practical examples of the change within the sport environment can be observed in cases where previously amateur sports such as rugby and triathlon have now achieved professional status; and where highly established sport clubs, for instance Bayern Munich and Manchester United have succeeded in building brand equity and obtaining tremendous exposure, globally (Taylor et al., 2015:5). Furthermore, Taylor et al. (2015:5) revealed additional changes such as, the management of athletes and coaches by global organisations, for example Octagon and IMG, and the increasing growth of organisations such as the FIFA World Cup™ and the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games, which continue to deliver mega sport events across the globe. Bester (2012:11530) therefore recommended that sport managers should adopt 'sound commercial business principles in managing, developing and promoting sport organisations,' in such a profitable industry, and that such adaptations to management are primarily important in the strategic planning and management of an organisation; which is likewise an area which is of key importance in senior management.

Examples of the business principles required to counteract the changing environment in sports includes strategic and innovative thought processing, critical management of organisational resources and employees, and strengthening the commitment towards the quality of products and services and stakeholders (Robinson, Minikin & Palmer, 2011:292). Furthermore, the need to develop policies (e.g. particularly regarding the use of information technology), the need to

prioritise the protection of intellectual property that has a marketable value and adjusting the use of organisational operations in achieving the organisation's goals serve as additional strategies which can be used to work in concert with the rapidly changing sport environment (Hoye et al., 2018:7). Lastly, Beech and Chadwick (2013:214) emphasised the need to avoid stagnation, defeat, and potential demise by reiterating the importance of establishing and implementing effective techniques and strategies to address the changing environment of sport. The strategies discussed above are mainly associated with decision making positions (Robinson et al., 2011; Beech & Chadwick, 2013), thus it becomes important to consider whether the development and implementation of such strategies could lead to a vast range of challenges which females might encounter in senior management roles, and further urges one to question where female senior leaders find themselves in the changing world of sport. This becomes particularly important because Osborne and Skillen (2020) suggest that 'the more things change in the sports environment, the more they stay the same', with a specific reference to the continued uneven trend in the history of women in the sports environment.

2.5. Laws and policies guiding females in sports

2.5.1. Legislation and policies guiding females in sport organisations within an international context

As early as 1995, the global audience at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, expressed the importance of females "assuming positions of power and influence" in various sectors, not only because of the need for their talent and perspectives but primarily because of their human rights (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1997:3, 29). In 1997, the UN 'Women 2000' publication highlighted the increased number of females in decision making roles with the consideration of social values, development strategies and resource allocation; which enables females, as well as males, to set priorities and influence societal objectives (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1997:3).

Thus at the forty-first session in 1997, the Commission on the Status of Women flagged 'females, power, and decision making' as an area that warranted attention; while requesting governments to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action within the context of decision making by 'taking into account diverse decision making styles and by projecting positive images of females in politics and public life.' (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1997:4). The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, along with other international and local laws, policies, and initiatives; for instance, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill of South Africa, will be reviewed in the following sections. This section will begin by introducing The Constitution of South Africa.

2.5.2. Legislation and policies guiding females in sport organisation in South Africa

South Africa is said to house a range of laws that are considered as one of 'the most progressive in the world' (Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012:128). Among these laws is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which was adopted in 1996 as a result of a constitutional democracy that sought to bind all aspects of the State across all the levels of the South African government (Bhoola, 2002). The Constitution of South Africa is said to be based on matters pertaining to non-racialism, non-sexism, human dignity, equality and the freedom and human rights of the people of South Africa (Kayi, 2013:13). Furthermore, embedded in the Constitution is the Bill of Rights, which is a legislative initiative that protects the rights of all South Africans (Bhoola, 2002). Serving as a foundation for the sections to follow is Section Nine (3) of the Bill of Rights, which stipulates that ...

“The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth” (South Africa: Constitutional Assembly, 1996:6).

In addition to the Bill of Rights are a variety of labour, employment, and gender-related laws and policies. Laws and policies that are said to protect the rights of females in the workplace in South Africa include the Equality Clause in the Bill of Rights, Section 9(3) and Section 9(2); the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 2003, Section 1 & 2(d); the Employment Equity Act 1998, Section 6a(1); the Employment Equity Amendment Act 2013, Section 6b(4); the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997, Section 26(2); and the Labour Relations Act 1995, Section 187(e) (BWASA, 2017:87).

For the purposes of this study, the following policies were deemed relevant (provided by Malie, 2011:29-30; Ndinda & Okeke-Uzodike, 2012:128-131; South Africa: Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2013:1-18; Singh & Coetzer, 2017):

- The Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995.
- The Employment Equity Act, Act No. 55 of 1998.
- The Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill.

Meanwhile, key legislation and policies in sports noted by Singh and Naidoo (2017:1409-1411) and Adom-Aboagye and Burnett (2019:300-301) include the following:

- The National Charter for Women and Sport South Africa.
- The National Sport and Recreation Amendment Act, Act 18 of 2007.
- The White Paper on Sport and Recreation (2012).
- The Transformation Charter for South African Sport (2012).

It is important to note that policies such as the Labour Relations Act of 1995 and the Employment Equity Act of 1998 might have come as a result of female political movements in South Africa, for instance, the women's suffrage movement around 1889 (Walker, 1990) and the Black Sash Movement; a movement which sought to challenge injustice and inequality through coordinated marches, petitions, overnight vigils and protest meetings across various South African provinces (BlackSash, 2015).

In a much broader perspective, the women's suffrage movement and the Black Sash Movement could have stemmed from one of the largest feminist paradigms – liberal feminism or otherwise known as the liberal feminist movement – which challenged sexism and highlighted the importance of obtaining equality through the equal application of liberal principles to both males and females (Costa & Guthrie, 1994). Ntwape (2016) suggested that the liberals aimed to oppose patriarchy by moving away from the general public's false belief that females are naturally less intellectual and/or physically capable than men. With Costa and Guthrie (1994) and Ntwape's (2016) findings in mind, the impact of sport, on policy, is described below.

Jarvie (2006:66) elaborated on the use of politics in sport in two ways, the first being politics in sport, which illuminated how governments use sports and the processes involved in the formulation and implementation of public policy; and the second way includes politics in sport which involves considering matters related to how sport organisations use power for their personal interests while compromising other social groups. Focusing on the formation and implementation of government policies, Bramham (2008:10:19) revealed how sport had the ability to produce wider externalities through its considerable influence on government policy. For example, sport contributes to matters concerning national elite sports performance, alcohol and drug abuse, football hooliganism, racism and sexism, childhood obesity and more, which are addressed within a respective governments' political ventures. A practical example of Bramham's (2008:10:19) finding is the South African government's use of sport (i.e. sport mega events) to reinforce the country's image of a unified and stable nation (Serra, 2015:63).

According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the universal women's suffrage movement; a movement that involved the input of females in the struggle for gender equality and equality in education and the workplace (ACLU, n.d.), and its impact on the formulation of policies, for example the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women in America the right to vote (Brown, 1993:2176), can be viewed as efforts from the liberal feminist movement. Thus, drawing from the great strides of the liberal feminist movement, it seemed imperative to unpack the feminist theory as the source of liberal feminism and other crucial feminist theories as a contribution to policy, which supports females in the context of this study.

Primarily, this section focuses on the policies that support females in the South African workplace; such as the United Nations (UN) CEDAW, the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Labour Relations Act of 1995 of South Africa, the Employment Equity Act of 1998 of South Africa, the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill of South Africa, and the Transformation Charter of South African sport, which are reviewed at length in the following sub-sections.

Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Following the adoption of the CEDAW in 1979 (United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2006:3), 189 countries endorsed the CEDAW, including South Africa, who ratified the CEDAW in December 1995, thereby legally binding the country to the objectives of the law (Khanna, Kimmel & Karkara, 2016a:1-2; South Africa: Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, 2016:41).

As a result of the ratification, South Africa are set to adopt thirty articles found in the law, with a particular focus on Article 11 (Employment) which requires countries to ensure equal opportunities in a specific profession, and equal remuneration for equal job occupations with the objective of eliminating discrimination in employment (Khanna et al., 2016b). Locally, in South Africa, the commitments of Article 11 include ensuring equal employment opportunities; equal rights to benefits and conditions of service, including the right to vocational training; equal remuneration and benefits; the right to social security, as well as the rights to benefits relating to retirement, unemployment, sickness, incapacity and paid leave, and health and safety in the workplace; including the provision of special protection for pregnant women (Mathonsi, 2011:38). Ultimately, through the implementation of the CEDAW, South Africa seeks to address civil, economic, political, and social rights-related matters of both young and adult females, with the ultimate purpose of avoiding gender discrimination by promoting equal rights and recognition for females, and to ensure equality for females in education, employment, healthcare, and involvement in politics and economics (Ramaite, 2013:24; Cole, 2016:1).

A shadow report, which was compiled in response to South Africa's 2009 CEDAW report, sought to highlight core concerns of various articles found within CEDAW and also to provide "a comprehensive picture of the status of women and compliance by the [South African] state [to] its obligations in terms of the Convention" (Mathonsi, 2011:6). The concerns raised included the ineffective responses to inequality regarding the employment rates of females; the poor protection of vulnerable females by labour laws; inequality of workplace social security benefits for women; the scarcity of access to training and development; the risks to the health and safety of pregnant women; sexual harassment in the workplace; the ineffective monitoring

of labour-legal compliance; the lack of an effective childcare network; and the non-recognition of unpaid domestic work (Mathonsi, 2011:38-41).

This could possibly indicate that although the CEDAW has good intentions, the implementation of the policy by government and/or associated entities continues to be a concern, which in the context of this study raises concerns about whether the implementation of various policies could potentially serve as a challenge for female senior managers in sports.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

In 2015, South Africa reiterated its ratification of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, while subsequently highlighting the declaration as a key driver for the promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, within the government's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (Statistics South Africa, 2015:1, 62-64). As a driver of gender equality and women empowerment, the declaration involves addressing issues such as (1) women and poverty; (2) the education and training of women, (3) women and health, (4) violence against women, (5) women and armed conflict, (6) women and the economy, (7) women in power and decision making, (8) the institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, (9) the human rights of women, (10) women and the media, (11) women and the environment, and (12) the girl child (UN Women, 2015a:9-48). Of the twelve strategic objectives, this study was particularly concerned with objective 7, which seeks to address the issues of females in power and in decision making roles.

Twenty-five years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was established, the UN Women Executive Director, and South African-born, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka highlighted that up until the onset of 2020, females continued to be squeezed into just one quarter of the positions of power, as no country, up to that time, had achieved gender equality (McCarthy, 2020; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2020:1). This significant finding could be due to the consistent trend of direct or indirect prejudice towards females in various areas (e.g. laws and policies), despite the fact that 143 of 195 countries worldwide in 2014 guaranteed equality among males and females within their constitution (UN Women, 2015b). McCarthy (2020) further argued that 'laws, and the absence of laws, continue to oppress and economically harm females in dozens of countries,' which further supports the pursuit of the study's primary objective.

The Labour Relations Act and the Employment Equity Act

The Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995 (which was later amended in 2018) endeavoured to "promote economic development, social justice, labour peace and democracy in the workplace" (South Africa, 2018; South Africa: Department of Labour, 2018). Meanwhile the

Employment Equity Act, Act No 55 of 1998 (later amended in 2013 (South Africa, 2014:1-22)) strives to ...

'achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and by implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce' (South Africa: Department of Labour, 2004:5)

When implemented, the Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995 included protection against unfair dismissal from work due to pregnancy-related matters while the Employment Equity Act, Act No 55 of 1998 protects females in the case of unfair gender-based treatment, sex, pregnancy, marital status, family-related or any other arbitrary-related discrimination, and equal pay protection (Singh & Coetzer, 2017).

Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill

In an effort to enhance and expand on gender equality and the empowerment of females in terms of section 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), according to the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG), the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill was introduced by the National Council of Provinces and later withdrawn for further consultation consecutively within the year 2014 (PMG, n.d.; South Africa: Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2013:1-18).

While the sole purpose of the bill was to "align all aspects of laws and implementation of laws relating to women empowerment, and the appointment and representation of women in decision making positions and structures; and to provide for matters connected therewith" (South Africa: Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2013:2), section 7(1) of the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill remains of particular interest to this study, as it stated as follows in the case of equal representation and participation as per South Africa's legislature (South Africa: Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, 2013:6):

'Despite any other law, designated public bodies and designated private bodies must, within their ambit of responsibilities and available resources, develop and implement measures, in order to achieve the progressive realisation of a minimum of 50 per cent representation and meaningful participation of women in decision making structures including boards, which must include —

- a) building women's capacity to participate;
- b) enhancing the understanding and attitudes of communities to accept the capabilities and participation of women as their equals; and
- c) developing support mechanisms for women'.

Although the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill was later withdrawn in 2014 and has not been 'resuscitated' for further action since then (Bosch, van der Linde & Barit, 2020:27); elements of the bill, such as section 7(1), remain instrumental in the current debate. Furthermore, the unfortunate withdrawal of the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill prompts one to consider the potential impact the bill might have had, for females in the workplace had it not been withdrawn, because as of March 2020, Bosch et al. (2020:22) revealed that there was no legislation in South Africa obliging companies to include females on their boards of directors, or in this case, senior management.

Although no known policy exists which asserts that organisations should have females in senior managerial positions, in January 2020, the national Olympic committee in South Africa, the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC), welcomed the adoption of a mandatory 50 per cent female representation on the organisation's board (Isaacson, 2020). When implemented, the 50 per cent female representation will translate to the presence of four of eight females on the SASCOC board and at least one female occupying the senior managerial role of president, and first or second vice president (Isaacson, 2020). Drawing from SASCOC's proposed stance on increasing female representation on the boards of South African sport organisations, it can be questioned whether such a constitutional stride will filter down and implement the legislation that governs sport organisations within South Africa.

Within the sporting fraternity, a number of legal developments have been established with the aim of supporting females in various areas of sport across the globe. Among these developments is, the globally renowned Brighton Declaration (later updated to the Brighton plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration on Women and Sport); which provides principles to guide the implementation processes intended to increase female participation across all levels, as well as functions and roles in sports (International Working Group on Women and Sport, n.d.(a):1). Serving as a 'road map for a fairer and equitable system of sport for females of all ages' across 600 organisations worldwide (International Working Group on Women and Sport, n.d.(b)), it comes as no surprise that the Brighton Declaration had previously influenced South Africa's efforts in aligning and achieving the declaration's objectives (United Kingdom Sports Council, 2008). Perhaps this influence is further evident in South Africa's National Sport and Recreation Act, the White Paper on Sport and Recreation, and the Transformation Charter of South African sport, which are reviewed at length, below.

Transformation Charter of South African sport

The National Sport and Recreation Amendment Act, Act 18 of 2007 seeks to promote equity and representation and redress the inequalities of sport and recreation, such as that experienced by females and people of differing abilities in South Africa (South Africa, 2007:2;

Sikes & Adom-Aboagye, 2017). Meanwhile, the White Paper on Sport and Recreation had aimed, with special emphasis, to include, empower and promote the South African government's priority groups; which includes females (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012:19; Western Cape Government: Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. 2014:4). Similarly, the Transformation Charter of South African sport is concerned with implementing change to various ways in which individuals and organisations deliver sport (SASCOC, 2012:23). One of the ways the Charter seeks to achieve this objective is by ensuring that the priority groups, which include females, persons with disabilities, the youth, children, and the elderly, obtain more access and opportunities within sports (SASCOC, 2012:14-23). The Transformation Charter seeks to achieve the above through its optimal objective of ...

[establishing] a sport system focused on the principles of: human capital development; equitable resource distribution; elimination of all inequalities; increased access to participation opportunities; skill and capability development at all levels, and in all areas of activity; greater community involvement through new sport infrastructure development; empowerment; respect for each other; fair and just behaviour; innovation to stay ahead of competition; sustainable internationally competitive performance; and good governance' (SASCOC, 2012:14-23).

In April 2019, based on the Scorecard of the Transformation Charter; the Individual Federation's Transformation Barometer Report revealed that sport federations had made significant progress in areas such as the number of Black African presidents of National Federations, representation of Black Africans on the boards of national federations, the appointment of Black CEOs, and the election of females on the boards of national sport federations (South Africa, 2019). "Calls to restart SASCOC..." (2020) states that although the election of females into senior managerial roles such as that found within a number of sport federations in South Africa has gained traction, concerns as to the implementation of policy, locally, were raised in a recent broadcast interview. During the broadcast interview, Nicole Alcock, a representative of Western Cape Women in Sport revealed a lack of implementation with regard to the transformation of both young and old females and emphasised the lack of enforcement by national sporting bodies to ensure that the South African Confederation and districts allocates 50 per cent females onto their boards or into decision making roles ("Calls to restart SASCOC...", 2020). Subsequently, a PhD candidate in gender equity in sports, Nana Akua, weighed in on the non-responsiveness to policy by highlighting how South African sport policies lack "guidelines and direction" as is often implied, and that it was not stated that sport federations should have 50 per cent representation; and that therefore there were no repercussions for organisations who do not ensure that there is 50 per cent representation within their senior managerial structures ("Calls to restart SASCOC...", 2020).

The concerns and criticisms detailed by Alcock and Akua ("Calls to restart SASCOC...", 2020) above could be applicable to the majority of sport policies and related laws intended for females

within the sporting fraternity, as according to the literature explored above, the established legislative initiatives appear to have been largely ineffectual, and/or have not been suitably supported or implemented to achieve the goal of equity in the workplace. Furthermore, the points raised during the interview, as well as the point raised earlier by Bosch et al. (2020), reinforced the existence of a potential gap in policy; that although South African legislation intends to address gender-related matters in the workplace, no 'tangible obligation' is imposed on organisations to ensure equal gender representation in senior management roles (Bosch et al., 2020:28-29). This reinforces the urgent need for this study to investigate whether such a gap still continues to exist within the contemporary era of legislation, and furthermore to seek and record the perceptions of female employees regarding policies that have supported them as senior managers in sport organisations.

Organisations and governments are tasked with developing public policy in an attempt to guide strategic and potential investment developments (Casey, Fowlie, Charity, Harvey & Eime, 2019:3-4), however, a number of factors have been raised which could have an impact on the processes of policy formulation in the context of this study. Concerns such as the critical mass of females in senior management positions, a lack of literature concerning gender and sport governance, and the ambiguity surrounding gender equity have previously been identified and will be discussed in the following sections. As early as 1997, it was revealed that when the subject of females and decision making was discussed, their style and substance was often questioned (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1997:3). Furthermore, the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (1997:3-4) emphasised the need for the participation levels of females to reach "critical mass" (thirty to thirty-five per cent representation) within the scope of decision making, in order to influence organisational culture, management styles, and group dynamics. One could postulate that the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (1997:3-4) strategy could be useful in influencing the development of policies for females within sport management. However, the lack of critical mass serves as an inhibiting factor.

The literary gap caused by the lack of literature that explores gender and sport governance (Burton, 2015; Sotiriadou & de Haan, 2019:2) comes across as an additional factor, which could affect policy formation. This is derived from Sotiriadou and de Haan's (2019:2) finding which revealed that research concerning the discrimination of females in leadership frequently stems from a sports administration and management perspective, with a focus on the choices and resources of females, without considering factors such as organisational structures and cultures to expand on knowledge about gender and sport governance. The lack of literature could result in a lack of adequate theory and knowledge which governments and sport organisations can refer to when developing legislative initiatives.

Focusing on the unique premise of leadership positions being male dominated across all levels of sport; when the researcher of this study sought to understand how males in leadership positions, in this case sports leaders and coaches, perceived the concept of gender equity, the findings presented four categories, namely, (a) the sceptic, (b) the cynic, (c) the women's right advocate, and (d) the constructionist (Kempe-Bergman, Larsson & Redelius, 2020:333-334). The four categories are explained as follows:

'The sceptic raises doubt about the reasonableness and fairness of gender equity, the cynic constructs gender equity as something unrealistic or impossible, the women's rights advocate articulates a semi-essential and quantitatively orientated support for gender equity, and the constructionist voices a norm-critical approach.' (Kempe-Bergman et al., 2020:333, 339-344).

Kempe-Bergman et al. (2020:345) found that the concept of what gender equity entailed was often confused, as the study's findings emulated the common notion found within previous studies (see Hoeber, 2007; Anderson, 2009; and Soler, Prat, Puig & Flintoff, 2017); being that "the dominance of orthodox notions of masculinity, and a rationalisation – sometimes even denial – of gender inequities, which may instead be understood as expected, natural or normal." Although the current study does not primarily focus on gender equity, the literature on gender equity was important to consider as the ambiguity of gender equity could be a factor which hinders policy formulation in a sector where males occupy senior managerial roles that enable them to produce and control the implementation of gender-related initiatives and policies, as alluded to by Kempe-Bergman et al. (2020:334).

2.6. Politics and females in sport organisations

The term "politics" consists of a wide range of definitions, however, for purposes of this current study, politics refers to an "individual or collective action that disrupts ordinary states of affairs, normal life, or routine patterns of behaviour" (Dryzek, Honig & Phillips, 2006:8; Alexander, 2014:277). With the meagre proportion of females in senior management, referred to in previous sections of this chapter, it was impossible to ignore the possibility of an existing range of challenges, which female senior managers might encounter in sport organisations. For example; the old boy's network, the glass ceiling, the wage gap, education (i.e. educational profiles), gender stereotypes, discriminatory culture, the power dynamics in the workplace, the lack of mentors and networking opportunities (Davies, 2011; Koca et al., 2011; Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011; Dennehy, 2012; Salloum et al., 2016; Grant Thornton, 2019:12), and more (see for example Choge, 2015, Thomas et al., 2019, and Chyu et al., 2020), which have been previously identified in the literature and will be detailed in the following sections.

Old boys' network

The “old boys club”, also known as the “old boys’ network” is regarded as one of the top barriers facing female managers (Dennehy, 2012:81). When found in senior management, the network serves as an “informal male social system that stretches within and across organisations excluding less powerful males and all females” from opportunities (Oakley, 2000:328). This involves exclusion from knowledge about, for instance, job-related opportunities, therefore reproducing and strengthening gender inequality within the organisation (McDonald, Lin & Ao, 2009:385-386). It is also said that elements of competition and power-related aspects, derived from the organisational structure, are further adopted and transferred into social practices such as friendships and alliances within such an informal network (Oakley, 2000:328). Considering the trends of the old boy’s network, it became clear for the current study therefore to probe on the question of whether additional organisational elements were retained by the powerful men, and whether or not additional issues transpired as a result of the marginalising network.

Glass ceiling

Accompanying the old boys’ network is probably the most noticeable challenge encountered by females in management - the glass ceiling - which is defined as an “invisible barrier” which prohibits females from progressing in the workplace over men who share similar qualifications (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2012:1340). Components of the glass ceiling that hinder females from obtaining top positions can include promotion, compensation and corporate rules and practices in career development (Oakley, 2000:323). It is further argued that the negative impact of the glass ceiling is most evident within the statistical representation of female senior managers in large organisations, which highlights the scarcity of the managers, particularly chief executive officers, in such organisations (Oakley, 2000:321). Additional terms such as “glass walls” and “glass cliffs” have been developed in pursuit of explaining the glass ceiling. Glass walls are believed to prevent females from progressing into particular fields and positions while the glass ceiling remains the core reason for the lack of females in senior management (Arfken, Bellar & Helms, 2004:180). The glass cliff, which exists as a consequence of breaking the glass ceiling, comprises ‘females being placed in top management positions over equally qualified males only when there exists a high risk of organisational failure, for example, employment in an organisation that comprises a history of failure, lack of resources or low levels of support’ (Ryan & Haslam, 2009:14; Buckalew, Konstantinopoulos, Russell & El-Sherbini, 2012:150). With the perceived existence of the glass ceiling, glass walls and glass cliffs, it thus became important for this study to investigate the challenges that female senior managers might face by specifically asking questions about the awareness of the glass ceiling in South African sport organisations.

Wage gap

In a study seeking to address the rise of women and their impact on firms' performance; social and cultural norms, and societal expectations such as starting a family were found to hamper female employee's job progression (Salloum et al., 2016:240-241). Within the same study, it was found that there exist differences in remuneration between male and female employees, and female managers received fewer opportunities to establish growth in their careers in comparison to males; and gender-governed promotions existed within the workplace (Salloum et al., 2016:220). Woudstra (2016:350) discovered similar challenges where female managers were not often considered for promotions and challenging projects. Even if promoted, their remuneration was sometimes less than that of males in the same position; and females were perceived to be less career-orientated than their male counterparts. The issue of female senior managers receiving lower wages than males who are occupying the same position is attributed to prejudice that reduces their chances of being promoted to senior management positions, as it is alleged that substandard earnings negatively affected their ascendancy in the organisational hierarchy (Oakley, 2000:324). This led the researcher to question the perceptions of female senior manager's personal encounters with the wage gap, as part of the remuneration processes of sport organisations in South Africa.

Education

Clifford (1996) and Kirchmeyer (2002) revealed that sometimes educational profiles between males and females are comparable (as cited by Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2012:1339). Furthermore, Clifford et al. (1996), suggested that males are often found to have greater experience and knowledge of the business world compared to females who merely possess higher education but have little to no knowledge of business management. It was suggested that when discussing educational profiles of males and females, that the differences cannot solely be attributed to educational matters but rather it was suggested that one should consider a range of tangible or intangible aspects concurrently, for example biological or cultural factors, or characteristics based on gender (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2012:1339).

Additionally, it was discovered that females hindered their opportunities to occupy senior managerial roles by selecting academic qualifications, termed "traditional female academic qualifications;" for they tended to select Human Resource Management and Communications-related courses that did not primarily serve as training prerequisites for senior management level positions (Research Focus, 2009:viii; 49-50). Furthermore, a report prepared by Research Focus (2009:viii) added that many females avoided pursuing postgraduate studies, for example a Master of Business Administration, due to a negatively perceived cost-benefit ratio. In a working paper that investigated the factors that prevent female executives from reaching the top, it was argued that female senior managers tend to have higher levels of

education compared to their counterparts (Keloharju, Knüpfer & Tåg, 2018:3). They are more inclined towards obtaining degrees from career paths that require large numbers of senior managers, and thus they are better positioned to acquire great experience from large firms (e.g. consulting firms) which in turn improves their ability and willingness to work in competitive corporate environments (Keloharju et al., 2018:3).

Focusing on historically perceived male dominated careers, for example Technology and Engineering, the Business Women's Association of South Africa (BWASA) (2017:84) stated that despite females achieving a higher percentage of graduates within such fields, they tend to experience difficulty in overcoming the challenges posed by the stereotypical societal perspectives of such careers, as females were frequently viewed as "incapable" and "unsuited" for male dominated careers. BWASA's (2017) finding brings into question whether the perceived male dominated environment of sport poses similar challenges to female senior managers. Ruotsalainen (2019:73) added to that debate by revealing the increased appreciation of education within the sport corporate environment in more recent years, which is a factor that the author believed enhanced females' chances of occupying senior positions based on their education and job experience; as opposed to positions being "automatically handed to members of the inner circle, which very often includes only men". Ruotsalainen's (2019) finding, above, is a result of the revelation that sport organisations (e.g. sport clubs) commonly operated in an "amateurish way" which at times jeopardised the entire organisation and often resulted in poor financial performance (Ruotsalainen, 2019:73). Given the different perceptions of females and education, this study found it important to probe into the importance and role of higher education for female senior managers in sports business.

Gender stereotypes

When Koca et al. (2011:595) analysed attitudes towards work roles of females and female managers in sport organisations, they identified gender-role stereotypes and discrimination as a catalyst for increasing negative attitudes towards female managers in sport organisations. Terming it "male stereotyping" (Schein, 2001:684), as opposed to gender-role stereotyping in her earlier publication, Schein (2007:6-7) considers gender stereotyping as a key factor which hampers female's advancement into the higher managerial ranks of an organisation, where, as a consequence, the gender gap becomes more visible. In addition to the debate, the challenge of gendered roles, identified in Aman's et al. (2018:154) findings, found that the majority of the participants who applied for senior managerial positions were contesting for female gendered roles or roles within an all-female company.

White and Kay (2006:470) shared similar sentiments as Aman et al. (2018), pointing out that such a barrier translates to perceived evidence that increased entry of females into senior managerial roles could be a result of female's entering organisations that deal with "female

sports” for example, hockey and netball, or occupying positions on boards and committees of organisations working with ‘neutral sports’ such as swimming. Such recruitment trends thus reinforce female underrepresentation in organisations handling traditionally ‘male sports’, like football or rugby (White & Kay, 2006:470). It is thus posited that such a biased recruitment process not only restricts females’ career advancement within sport organisations, but in turn emphasises the unfair practices attached to the hiring processes of certain sport organisations (Aman et al., 2018:158). Furthermore, gender stereotypes in sports organisations materialise “based on a masculine conceptualisation of operational practices, such that humour, dress codes, informal networking and even informal gender segregation reproduce implicitly patriarchal forms of inequity” (Evans & Pfister, 2020:14). Considering the negative impacts posed by gender stereotypes in organisations, this study found it necessary to question the perceived role of gender stereotypes in the South African sports sector.

Mentorship and networking

When Singh and Vinnicombe (2005:14) reported on the value that female directors add to the Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) 100 boards, they noted the lack of female role models as a theme that emerged from most companies within their study.

In 2006, the importance of role models for females within the sports sector was deemed “undeniable” and most likely a “virtuous circle” due to the effect which role models have, by taking up roles such as decision-makers, on the existing perceptions of gender equality (International Labour Office, 2006:30). Focusing on the underrepresentation of adult females in interscholastic sports leadership, the respondents revealed the value of mentorship; being mainly, the mentor’s achievements and the importance of mentors for females who aspire to pursue a leadership role in interscholastic athletic administration, and it further revealed the need for increased mentoring at every level of leadership in interscholastic athletics (Massengale, 2009:83). In connection with issues of mentorship, it was found that too few females serve as role models and thus the lack of females in senior management results in the lack of role models and mentors (Davies, 2011:28). It could thus be why Aman et al. (2018) emphasizes that, by means of mentoring and social networking, female role models within senior management play a significant role in realistically demonstrating that women qualify to be senior sport managers. The female senior managers working in professional sport in Cosentino, Wesse and Wells (2021:6) indicated that they benefitted from mentoring in following ways: (a) improving opportunity and success in career advancement; (b) increasing institutional loyalty; (c) improving time management and productivity behaviours; (d) increasing the procurement of grants; (e) improving mentee satisfaction with professional and work-life balance; (f) instilling higher administrative aspirations in mentees, and; (g) assisting mentees with improved networking skills.

Coupled with mentoring, respondents in Massengale's (2009:85) study emphasised the need to establish bonds with professionals as it is essential for hierarchical progression in interscholastic sport. However, they further emphasised the perception that females do not initiate adequate attention and effort to networking. In 2019, when participants were asked to report on the greatest challenges that females faced, the participants highlighted the lack of access to networking and development opportunities, which showed overall access of 26 per cent worldwide (Grant Thornton, 2019:12). Although the low percentage of networking has remained an area of concern, organisations have established various initiatives in an attempt to address the issue. A prime example of such initiatives is a training and networking programme known as the Female Future programme, in which, of the 600 female candidates who have successfully completed the programme, 60 per cent have secured positions on Norwegian boards (Davies, 2011:26).

Given the importance of mentoring and networking, described in the sections above, it became imperative for this study to investigate the role of mentors in the lives of female senior managers. As such, the benefits and challenges of mentoring and networking will be used as a baseline for inquiry in this study.

2.7. Theories of feminism

Many theories are discussed in pursuit of sociologically theorising sport, for example the Marxist theory, functionalism, figurational sociology, cultural studies, feminism, interpretive sociology, post-structuralism, pluralism, political economy, post-modernism, the globalisation theory, and hegemony theory (Edwards, 1973; Jarvie & Maguire, 1994; Coakley & Dunning, 2000; Scambler, 2005; Jarvie, 2006; Malcolm, 2016). Feminism, however, is believed to be integrated with theories that pursue various political agendas on issues pertaining to sexuality, patriarchy, gender logic, gender roles, space, femininity, engendered power relations, notions of the body, social differences and oppression (Jarvie, 2006:30-31). Feminism in sport management, for the purpose of this treatise, can be described as follows:

'a dynamic, continually evolving complex of theories or theoretical traditions that take as their point of departure the analysis of gender as a category of experience in society . . . [thus] feminist theory within the sociology of sport has as its main purpose theorising about gender relations within our patriarchal society, as is evidenced through sport and other practices' (Birrell, 2000:61).

More specific to issues within the sporting fraternity, Scambler (2005:152) stated that feminist theories are based on (1) liberal democratic beliefs, for example liberal feminism, (2) structural power relations, for example radical and socialist feminism, and (3) post-structuralist notions of difference and power, for example post-structural Black feminism. A practical of this is the way liberal and radical feminists continue to argue about issues such as the maintenance of

predominantly male power over females, and unequal access to decision making roles in sports (Scambler, 2005:152).

In light of the study, the feminist theory, in particular the liberal feminist theory, served as the most suitable paradigm, solely because it seeks to address matters pertaining to the equal distribution of power and membership within male-controlled economic, political, judicial, educational and medical structures (Hattery, 2010:100). More specifically, it is deemed important for this chapter to review how gender ideologies influence the sporting industry. The following subsection reviews in-depth the area of gender ideologies and sport.

Gender ideology and sport

Biologically, males and females differ. However, the social theory highlights the importance of considering the social and cultural environment which one is raised in when discussing gender (Craig & Beedie, 2008:103). This influenced Craig and Beedie (2008:103) to define the term sex before later defining the term gender. The authors define sex as “the anatomical and physiological differences that define male and female bodies” and gender is defined as “the psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females” (Craig & Beedie (2008:103). Kamberidou (2010:7) and Serra (2015:59) expanded on the ideology of gender, explaining that such an ideology encompasses the use of set ideas to define, evaluate, and judge the relationship between males and females, and issues surrounding masculinity and femininity, in order to determine the more natural and morally acceptable description of gender.

Jarvie (2006:224) adds that gender is a bodily experience, thus aspects such as feelings, experiences, representations, and body politics are relative to and are not only limited to masculinity and femininity, but instead extend to other cultures including homosexuality and heterosexuality. The use of the term ‘female/s’ in this study aligns itself with the description of sex rather than that of gender, thus only considering females based on their biological characteristics.

When gender ideology couples with sport, issues regarding gender equity and equality, fairness, culture and ideology in sports arise, and the general consensus is that sport participation across most parts of the world has been and continues to be predominantly male. This has prompted questions to be asked about issues pertaining to the exclusion of female population from sport participation in the twentieth century (see for example Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003; Serra, 2015; Mansky & Wei-Haas, 2016; Nunes, 2018). On the issue of gender equity, The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace (2005:12) believes that sport can be utilised to empower females, reconstruct the perceptions of female roles in sports, and curb discrimination, by directly dispelling and challenging misconceptions involving female capabilities.

In all areas of sport, particularly in leadership positions including sports business, female roles are believed to be scarce (Burton, 2015:1; South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2016), which potentially affects their management practices. Therefore, the study narrows its focus down onto key management constructs of POLC that are significant to feminist ideologies. In terms of tackling ideology and culture in sport, the UN Division for the Advancement of Women and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2007:12) notes how sport can be used as a catalyst to oppose and challenge traditional misperceptions of gender roles and responsibilities. As such, Figure 3 below conceptualises the link between the four fundamental management functions and the liberal feminist theory.

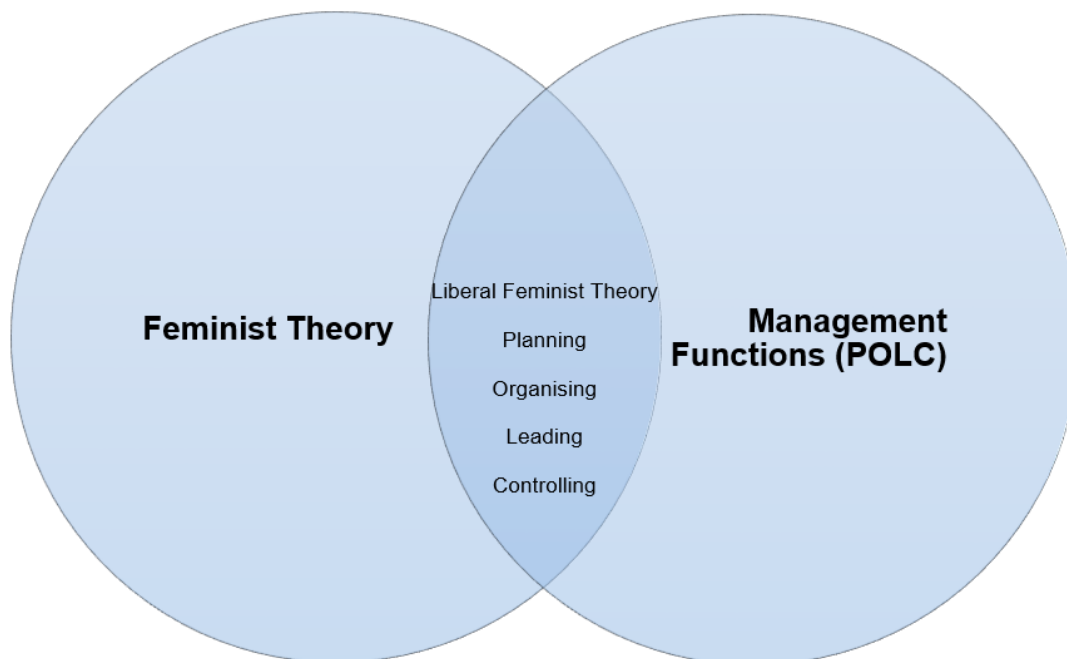


Figure 3: Link between the liberal feminist theory and the four fundamental management functions

Source: Author

2.8. Females in senior positions in sports

There was an increased interest in female managers in the early 1980s (Paoloni & Demartini, 2016:2), however, evidence depicting the lack of effort put into female representation in managerial positions, across the world, later surfaced and will be detailed in this section. Despite efforts to improve the situation, Vázquez-Carrasco et al. (2012:1338) reiterated evidence which Leonard (2001) discovered approximately eighteen years ago, that female representation in management has remained approximately the same. Likewise, evidence which focused largely on female representation in sports revealed the gross underrepresentation of females within sport's public and private sector senior management structures (Hartmann-Tews & Pfister, 2003; Acosta & Carpenter, 2012; Lapchick, 2016; Evans & Pfister, 2020). Thus it was imperative to observe whether such a trend has persisted, over the years, specifically for females in the senior managerial sphere of sport. A number of reports

have observed the global scope (percentage-based) of the occupancy of senior management positions by females in the corporate sector, over time. The statistics of females who hold/held senior management positions for the period 2011 to 2021 is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

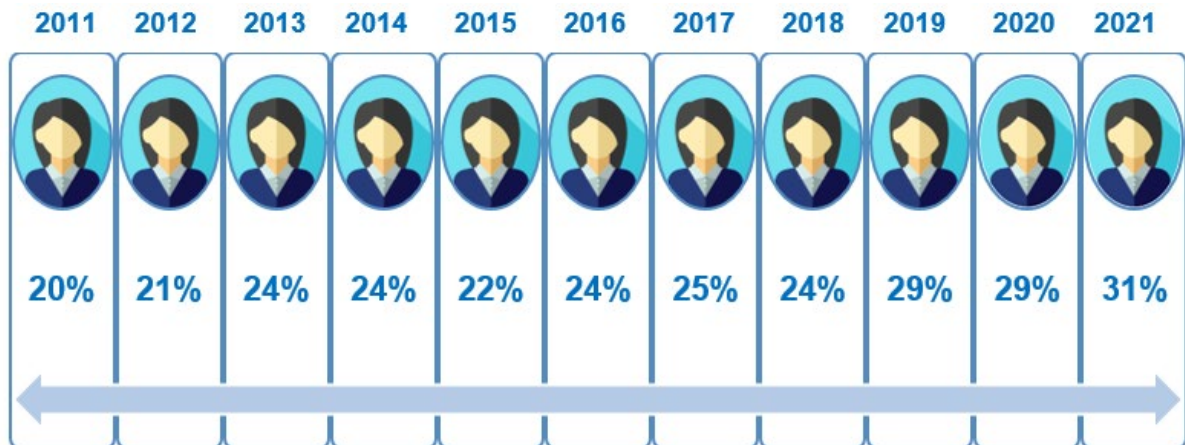


Figure 4: Percentage of females who hold senior management positions (2011 – 2021)

Source: Grant Thornton (2014:10; 2018:7; 2021:4)

As reported by Grant Thornton (2014:10; 2018:7; 2021:4), Figure 4 above depicts the percentage of female senior managers (i.e. chief executive officers, managing directors (MD), chairpersons, and other senior decision making positions), across all industry sectors, derived from approximately 10 000 businesses in thirty-five countries, including countries in Africa, Asian-Pacific (APAC), Eastern Europe, the European Union, Latin America, North America and more (Grant Thornton, 2019:8-11). The timeline begins at 20 per cent in 2011, with a 1 per cent increase in 2012 and a later increase to 24 per cent in 2013. The percentage remained consistent at 24 per cent in 2014 (Grant Thornton, 2014:10). It then decreased by 2 per cent in 2015 and once again increased to 24 per cent in 2016. A further 1 per cent increase results in 25 per cent in 2017, while a 1 per cent decrease back to 24 per cent is witnessed in 2018 (Grant Thornton, 2018:7). More recently, the percentage increased by a high of 5 per cent from 2018 onwards, followed by 29 per cent for two years consecutively (2019 and 2020) while an additional 2 per cent increase was recorded in 2021 (Grant Thornton, 2021:4). Therefore, for the past six years, a general upward trend can be observed which might indicate an increase in the opportunities available for females for senior management positions. For a detailed overview, the statistics and progress over time of the female representation in senior management, sorted by region, investigated by Grant Thornton (2018:8; 2019:8-11; 2020:5-6; 2021:6-7) can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Global female representation in senior management (2017-2021)

REGION	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Africa	29%	30% ↑	31% ↑	38% ↑	39% ↑
APAC	25%	23% ↓	28% ↑	27% ↓	28% ↑
Eastern Europe	38%	36% ↓	32% ↓	35% ↑	-
European Union	26%	27% ↑	28% ↑	30% ↑	34% ↑
Latin America	20%	30% ↑	25% ↓	33% ↑	36% ↑
North America	23%	21% ↓	31% ↑	29% ↓	33% ↑

Source: Grant Thornton (2018:8; 2019:8-11; 2020:5-6; 2021:6-7)

With a focus on the growth of the African region as per Table 1 above, Africa has positioned itself as one of the best performing regions for female representation within senior management, as shown by its continued upward trajectory for the period 2017 to 2021 (Grant Thornton, 2021:6). Within a much focused scope on Southern Africa; an update on the proportion of females in the South African workplace was provided by statistical analysis, which considered the employment per sector, employment per industry (e.g. mining, construction, finance and the employment by occupation, to name a few factors (Geldenhuys, 2013:33-42).
















Regarding the number of females employed as managers at the beginning of 2011, 361 000 female managers were recorded, but towards the end of 2011 the amount had decreased to 340 000, and it further decreased to 330 000 at the end of 2012 (Statistics South Africa, 2011; 2012). It was also established that females were commonly represented in lower level job occupations, and that job seniority among females had been eroded (Geldenhuys, 2013:38-39). Furthermore, it was found that females fared less well than males in managerial positions (Geldenhuys, 2013:38).

With regard to senior managerial roles, it was found that there were few females occupying roles such as CEO (3.6 per cent) and MD (5.5 per cent) in 2012, while furthermore, it was found that females experienced a lack of progress in traditionally male dominated work environments, for instance, within the South African corporate and entrepreneurial sector (Geldenhuys, 2013:41).

When the BWASA (2017:10-19) reported on its findings from the year 2008 to 2017, it was found that the representation of female CEO's and chairpersons from two hundred and seventy-seven JSE-listed companies and twenty schedule 2 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) increased from 7.8 per cent in 2008 to 11.8 per cent by 2017, while female directors increased

from 14,3 per cent to 20,7 per cent and executive managers increased from 25,3 per cent to 29,4 per cent, within the same period. Detailed findings of from BWASA's (2017:10-19) report can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Females in leadership positions at JSE-listed companies and SOEs for the period 2008-2017

Position	2008	2010	2011	2012	2015	2017
CEO/Chairpersons	7.8 %	10.4% 	9.7% 	9.1% 	11.6% 	11.8% 
Directors	14.3%	16.6% 	15.8% 	17.1% 	21.9% 	20.7% 
Executive managers	25.3%	19.3% 	21.6% 	21.4% 	29.3% 	29.4% 

Source: BWASA (2017:11)

Table 2 above, showed that a concentrated effort impacted the senior managerial state of females in South Africa, with female chairpersons and CEOs having increased by 51.3 per cent, while female-held directorship increased by 44.8 per cent, and executive managers increased by 16.2 per cent between 2008 and 2017 (BWASA, 2017:11). It was later revealed that females held 23 per cent of senior management positions in 2016, 28 per cent in 2017, and reached 29 per cent after almost a decade in 2018 (Grant Thornton; 2018:10).

By 2020, according to a PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) survey detailing remuneration trends, females only made up 14 per cent (114 females) of three hundred and twenty-nine CEOs, two hundred and ninety-one chief financial officers (CFOs) and eight hundred and twenty-six executive directors of JSE-listed companies (PwC, 2020:53; West, 2020). Furthermore, it was reported that CEOs recorded a stark representation of only 5.8 per cent (19 females on JSE-listed companies) which showed a bleak perspective of the country's progress in advancing females to senior managerial positions (PwC, 2020:12).

The percentages observed by BWASA (2017) and Grant Thornton (2018), above, might indicate that there is a gradual increase in the number of females taking up senior managerial roles. However, females remain grossly under-represented (BWASA, 2017:11; Msomi, 2019:8). The literature showed that despite plans of change, the pace of implementing change has been quite slow (Wirth, 2001:35), while it is further argued that greater strategies and initiatives are required to increase their numbers in senior managerial roles (BWASA, 2017:11). Such a trend could be attributed to many different factors yet scholars have flagged a crucial point regarding the underrepresentation of females in senior management; stressing that information of that nature is not only limited but could be obscured by the terminology used

by organisations and differing countries in defining executive jobs and the scope of terms, for example the use of “senior management” or “top level management” (Wirth, 2001:38; International Labour Office, 2004:20).

Within sports, the scarcity of females in positions of power was determined by White and Brackenridge (1985:95) as early as 1985, when the authors set out to evaluate gender divisions in the power structure of British sport organisations from 1960 to 1985. Similarly, in the late 1970s, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the USA recorded a female senior managerial figure of around 20 per cent, when a national, longitudinal study was conducted which observed a thirty-five-year update during the period 1977-2012 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012:B).

In 2006, when White and Kay (2006:470) revisited White and Brackenridge’s (1985) concept, the authors discovered that noticeable change had occurred within positions of influence in committees, councils and boards, in British sport organisations. In their findings concerning National Pan-sport Organisations, White and Kay (2006:467) found that females constituted 21 per cent of the British Olympic Association in occupations such as president, vice president (three of the twelve posts), and director, which is a great improvement on the 6 per cent overall representation recorded in the same organisation for the period 1960 to 1980 (White & Brackenridge, 1985; White & Kay, 2006:467).

In 2012, Yiamouyiannis and Osborne (2012:1) reflected on the NCAA’s attempt to improve the number of female senior managers and revealed that the NCAA’s national office recorded an overall female senior managerial figure of only 23.5 per cent (four of thirteen executives). However, more detailed findings revealed that in the most senior levels of the organisation; there had been 16.7 per cent (three of eighteen board members) female representation in the Division I governance committee; 33 per cent female representation in the Division II governance committee; and 12 per cent (three of twenty-five members) female representation in the Division III governance committee (Yiamouyiannis & Osborne, 2012:5-6).

It was discovered that South African national sport federations comprised few or no females in senior management around the year 2000 (Burnett, 2001:74). Around the year 2006, female representation in senior management was 23 per cent within the South African sports sector (Goslin, 2006:5). Focusing on South Africa’s national sport governing department, the former Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (recently the Department of Sports, Arts, and Culture), it was found that males dominated the political and strategic structures of the Ministry (four males over two females), as can be seen in Figure 5 below (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal, 2018:300).

Meanwhile, the directorate level revealed that the majority of positions (e.g. secretary, personal assistant, and administrative assistant) were occupied by females (thirty-three females and

thirty males) (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal, 2018:300-303). However, the strategic positions at directorate level were largely occupied by males (four males over two females) (Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal, 2018:300-303). The gender statistics within the department, at the time of Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal’s (2018) report, stood as follows (Figure 5):

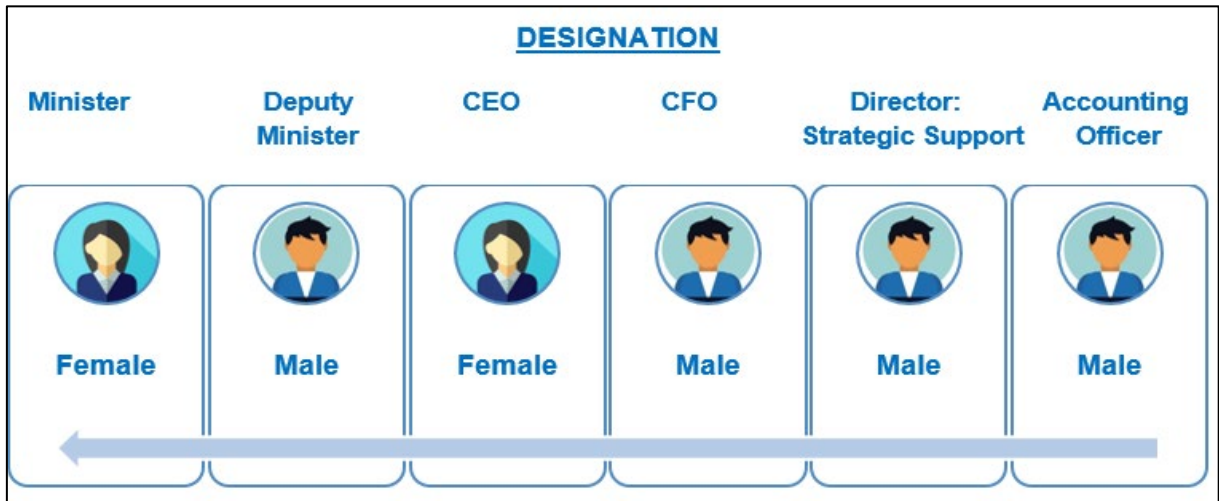


Figure 5: Gender representation in the SRSA: Ministry level

Source: Vyas-Doorgapersad and Surujlal (2018:300)

When the Department of Sports and Recreation and the Department of Arts, and Culture merged in 2019, the Department of Sports, Arts, and Culture comprised two females, deputy minister and COO, and two males, the minister and the director general; within the senior level of the department (South Africa: Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, n.d.; South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2019b:27).

Although there has been a slight increase in the proportion of females in senior management positions, as well as initiatives to implement a change to better accommodate females, we are continuously reminded of the trend of female underrepresentation in business in general and specifically in the unique trajectory of the male dominated sphere of sports business. This brings the researcher to consider the prediction found within a report that suggested that, in the UK (and probably the world at large) as postulated by Davies (2011:3); obtaining the level of forty per cent female representation in the senior tiers of organisations will take a number of years if transformation continues to be implemented at its current rate.

He then suggested that various stakeholders (e.g. chairman and chief executives, investors, executive search firms and the government) would have to “take action” in order to combat the challenges surrounding the low representation of females in senior management (Davies, 2011:3). Recent literature suggests that despite the increase in female representation in senior management, an incongruence remains between intention and implementation; thus suggesting that challenges surrounding female senior managers might still exist (Goslin &

Kluka, 2014:94). Therefore, this study was launched to investigate the perceptions regarding female representation in senior management positions in South African sport.

2.9. Organisational practices to support female challenges in sport organisations

Research has averred that sport organisation's operations and functions serve to disadvantage females in leadership or senior managerial positions (Burton, 2019:260), therefore, it becomes important to explore whether the existence, or lack thereof, of policies and/or practices can present challenges for female senior managers. Burke, Burgess and Fallon (2006:417) investigated organisational practices supporting women and their satisfaction and wellbeing with the status quo; they discovered that organisations that implemented supportive and developmental practices for females pursuing managerial roles reported improved female representation in essential training and development activities, and furthermore, they recorded increased numbers of females being shortlisted for promotions and senior managerial positions. Straub (2012:15) attributed the increased female participation to organisational practices such as flexitime, shorter working hours, job sharing, teleworking, childcare services, and special maternity leave arrangements. Gender awareness training, flexible work hours, mentoring and sponsorship opportunities, access to training and development, using gender in increasing women's career opportunities in hiring, training, promotions and international assignments, were believed to aid in the advancement of females in organisations (Burke, Koksal & Wolpin, 2015:6).

Generally, organisational practices of support span areas of administration, resources and policies, training and development, recruitment and external rotations, and managerial support (Burke, 2009:340-342). In practical terms, this might include developing training programmes that aim to develop specific qualities of female managers; as well as promoting the understanding of various male and female-orientated management styles, to achieve efficient organisational management; and/or establish supporting programmes that increase awareness levels of work and family conciliation (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011:1352-1353). Female senior managers from various industries revealed their choice of organisational practices that supported them best in their respective positions; which can be seen in the following list, as reported by Senden and Visser (2014:53-54):

- Including at least one female in the available training courses.
- Conducting quarterly assessments of the qualifications, behaviour, goals, and achievements to enhance the confidence levels of female managers.
- Influencing the improvement of qualifications by developing internal tuition programmes.
- Developing a female board-sponsoring programme at senior management level.

- Considering females in the long-term succession plan of an organisation which will catalyse the awareness of the potential that female senior managers possess as organisations increasingly identify female candidates.
- Establishing special arrangements for female managers on maternity leave, for example, while maintaining inclusion for females on leave.
- Ensuring consistency and continuity of efforts geared to support female managers across all levels of the organisation.

While organisational best practices are observed by female senior managers from different countries and industries (see for example Straub, 2012:15, and Burke et al., 2015:6), questions concerning its impact on female senior managers in sport organisations remain. Singh and Naidoo (2017:1415) specifically revealed that sport organisations rarely implement practices in support of females in decision making roles (e.g. family-related responsibilities), yet their organisational functions and structures often remain unquestioned. The researcher considered whether the possible existence, or lack thereof, of varied organisational practices could potentially inhibit support for females in the context of this study, and thus set out to investigate the perceptions of female employees regarding organisational policies and practices that support them as senior managers in sport organisations.

2.9.1. Selection, recruitment and promotion processes

It is theorised that professionally, South African organisations are advised on matters of selection, recruitment and promotion within the workplace, by the framework for Human Management Resource, and additional interventions, which are stipulated on the 1997 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (Singh & Naidoo, 2017:1410; Vyas-Doorgapersad & Surujlal, 2018:304). Aspects involved in the processes of selection, recruitment and promotion will be detailed in the following sub-sections according to the policy mandate.

According to South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), the selection criteria for females within the sport industry could be based on the availability of applicants, the person best suited for the position, the basis of the applicant's skills, experience, abilities, personal attributes, future potential, as well as the need to achieve a representative and diverse workforce in the Public Service (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). Additionally, South African national departments, provincial administrations and organisations alike stipulate the following selection requirements (whether for purposes of recruitment or promotion): job-related selection criteria; fairness; equity; and transparency (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). However, it is argued that the key challenge with the selection process of the South African Public Service is that it does not successfully appoint the most suitable candidate for the job (South Africa:

Public Service Commission, 2010:9). Thus, Motsoeneng and Kahn (2013:13-16) proposed a selection process model that prioritised factors such as the external environment, material functions, institutional characteristics and institutional effectiveness, for recruiting qualified and competent individuals.

Recruitment according to the 1997 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service is the most important tool to utilise in achieving employment equity as it includes various societal groups, including females (Singh & Naidoo, 2017:1410). The recruitment process included in the 1997 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service considers applications using four factors, namely; recruitment policies and procedures, departmental advertising, skills search, and psychometric tests (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). In keeping with the South African DPSA; when compiling recruitment policies and procedures, organisations need to be cognisant of successfully meeting specified employment equity objectives, mainly those specific to race, disability, gender proportionality, including fulfilment of the respective department's operational needs (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; Motsoeneng & Kahn, 2013:6). The DPSA and the Public Service Commission added that when composing effective departmental or organisational advertisements, organisations are expected to apply numerous principles which range from an accurate description of the duties, to a clear and simple language style, as well as reasons which are consistent with the purpose of the 1997 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, to list a few (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; South Africa: Public Service Commission, 2004:18-19). Regarding females, South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration (1997) urges that "the advertisement should make it clear that the Public Service is committed to employment equity, and that applications from Blacks, women and the disabled will be encouraged".

Furthermore, the DPSA further advises that organisations should utilise techniques of head-hunting or skills search, particularly when recruiting candidates for senior posts such as those considered within this study; while remaining aware of the application of factors considered in the selection process which were reviewed earlier (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 2003:4-5). Furthermore, the DPSA encourages that organisations should focus on previously disadvantaged groups such as females, to avoid overt or unintended bias when formulating psychometric tests or similar tests for purposes of recruitment (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997).

Within the process of promotion, organisations are advised not to confuse a promotion with an incremental advancement within a job grade but should rather consider promotion only if the applicant applies for a vacant post at a much more senior level where competition for the post

is apparent (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997). Employees are said to be considered for promotion based on the skills, experience, abilities, personal attributes and competencies they possess (South Africa: Department of Public Service and Administration, 2003:9).

Notwithstanding the clearly stipulated processes of selection, recruitment and promotion discussed above, in practice, the processes are said to be easily manipulated and there are growing concerns about the level of competence of human resource employees across South African organisations (South Africa: Public Service Commission, 2018:35, 41-43; PMG, 2021). The growing concerns with the competence of South African human resource employees is said to have a negative impact on the performance of employees and labour-related departments (PMG, 2021). Furthermore, it was previously revealed that selection committees were plagued with gender inequality as they were found to be male dominated with little or no representation of females (Motsoeneng & Kahn, 2013:9). Taking Motsoeneng and Kahn (2013:9), and PMG's (2021) concerns into consideration, including the above processes, principles and applications found within the 1997 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, it was imperative for the study to consider the efficiency and effectiveness of the stipulated processes. This is particularly important in determining how female candidates are selected, recruited and promoted to senior management positions within the sporting fraternity.

2.9.2. Support systems in place to advance females in sporting organisations

Many initiatives have been recommended with the aim of supporting females within the leadership and decision making roles found in senior managerial positions (see for example Titus, 2011:132; Step Up Equality, 2020:5). Prime examples of established support systems is that of organisations such as the joint effort of UK Sport and Sport England, and the South African Women and Sport Foundation (SAWASF), which will be discussed in the following sections.

Spearheaded by the government of the United Kingdom yet overseen and facilitated by Sport England (grassroots level) and UK Sport (elite level), the UK Sports Governance Code was developed in 2016 (Martin, 2020). The code is used to provide 'high level statements' of good governance, by having five basic principles embedded in the code, namely; (1) Structure, (2) People, (3) Communication, (4) Standards of Conduct, and (5) Policies and Processes (Sport England & UK Sport, 2016:7-11,24-28). The UK Sports Governance Code was implemented to ensure that sport organisations who received government funding attempted to achieve a minority of thirty per cent equal gender representation on their boards; or else the organisations would be at risk of forfeiting their funding (Martin, 2020). The SAWSF has been known for hosting annual conferences and workshops to assist female sports leaders in various areas

(De Dominicis, 2020). One such initiative hosted by the foundation was a three-day Women in Sport Leadership Training Workshop, which was held in partnership with the Women Sport Leadership Academy from the University of Chichester and the Anita White Foundation, that focused on areas such as conflict management, networking, communication, presenting with impact, having difficult conversations, and team building; throughout the period of the workshop (De Dominicis, 2020). It is important to note that SAWSF's Woman in Sport Leadership Training Workshop was conducted by entities that could be viewed as external to one's sport organisation, thus making it important to explore whether support initiatives exist, internally, within South African sport organisations, as a result of the respective organisation's best practices. Speculative discussions such as that of females receiving minimal support regarding contracts, job opportunities, exposure, and media coverage in South African sport organisations further enhanced the need for this investigation (Maties Sport Media, 2020).

While sport organisations have contributed support through the formulation of best practices directed at females within their organisations; females, in their own right and having individual abilities have assumed senior management positions within the sport industry, and have demonstrated a shift away from the trajectory of the male dominated sport structure towards a more inclusive social order. Although not directly attributed to best practice, which are intended to support females in senior structures of sport organisations, one could postulate that, to a degree, the following examples of females in senior management were influenced by the respective sport organisation's practices. Examples of females in senior management levels of sport organisations include the likes of Suzy Whaley who was revealed by SportsPro's 2018 magazine article as the President of the Professional Golfers' Association of America; thus making her the first female to serve as a secretary, vice president, and president in the association. Other examples include Sally Munday in her occupation as the CEO at UK Sport (Dixon, 2019) and Tokozile Xasa in her post as the minister of the former Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (Serra, 2019). Furthermore, the cases of Meghan Jenkins and Sumayya Khan will be observed in much more detail in the following sections.

2.10. Case studies of female senior managers in sports

The case of Meghan Jenkins at the National Basketball Association in the USA

Internationally, Meghan Jenkins has been described as "a seasoned leader" (Long, 2019), while her very recent addition to Asia's largest global sport media property, One Championship, has been described as ['resulting in the] most seasoned and experienced world-class leadership team in the entire Asian sport media industry [to date]' ("Former investment banker Meghan...", 2019). Having being described as a seasoned leader, Jenkins's career and notable history is important.

“Former investment banker Meghan...” (2019) reports that Meghan Jenkins began as an investment banker and later found her way into the NBA’s headquarters in New York, where she dealt with corporate strategy, international expansion, strategic partnerships and investments for just over seven years. One Championship revealed that before moving to Asia, Jenkins played a key role as part of a team that was tasked with liaising with local partners, scaling operations, and partaking in long-term strategic planning with the aim of fulfilling the overall responsibility of the growth and management of NBA China (“Meghan Jenkins Named...”, 2019). Furthermore, it was revealed that Jenkins initiated a number of expansion markets such as Mexico and Brazil; co-founded and foresaw the NBA’s growth equity investment platform across the media (i.e. media deals negotiated in Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and varied sports and technology sectors); discovered innovative and new opportunities across emerging digital media platforms and e-Sports; and expanded the global fan base by funding locally-produced content and social media initiatives (“Meghan Jenkins Named...”, 2019). Jenkins was later tasked with the development of key strategic partnerships across different markets and business lines, the execution of growth strategies, and the prioritisation of investments with the objective of expanding the NBA’s business in Asia Pacific (“Former investment banker Meghan...”, 2019). This follows after her appointment as the Vice President: Head of Strategy, and a member of the NBA Asia’s (Hong Kong) leadership team (Mazique, 2019).

Long (2019) and the “Former investment banker Meghan...” (2019) reports that after serving over a decade at the NBA, in March 2019, Jenkins joined Singapore-based One Championship as the new Vice President International. In this newly appointed role, Jenkins assumed responsibility and managed the international growth of the organisation, which incorporates the expansion, new markets, and the strategic initiatives of One Championship’s existing markets (Long, 2019).

The case of Sumayya Khan at the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in South Africa

A key example of a female within the senior structures of a South African sport organisation is Sumayya Khan from the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in South Africa. Khan’s career began as a physical educator, later transcending to the position of deputy director, director, acting chief director, chief director, head of department (HOD), and most recently COO of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture in South Africa. Much like Jenkins, the progression from physical educator to COO could be seen as placing great emphasis on Khan’s eagerness, determination and strong capability and willingness to pursue a senior managerial role as a female, within the sports sector.

“Profiles in leadership” (2019) explains that Khan began her journey with approximately seventeen years of experience as a primary and high school physical education teacher, which

included a coaching background in sports such as netball, volleyball, athletics, gymnastics, and cricket. She obtained a National Diploma in Further Education and in Sport Management, while her other qualifications include numerous certificates in areas of leadership, sports coaching and administration (i.e. a Sports Administrator's course accredited by the IOC) (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. n.d.).

In 1998, after joining KwaZulu-Natal's (KZN) Department of Education and Culture, Khan secured the role of Deputy Director for the former Department of Sport and Recreation ("Profiles in leadership", 2019). The KZN Department of Education eThekweni region, Khan later became the Director for Cultural Services where she was tasked with managing the schools and youth's sport and recreation development, arts, culture and youth-related activities ("Profiles in leadership", 2019). South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (n.d.) further reports that in the year 2004, the country witnessed Khan occupy the role of Acting Chief Director, then later occupy the role of the Chief Director, and in 2005, become HOD of the Department of Sport and Recreation in KZN. Leading up to her most recent position, Khan was appointed as the newly merged Department of Sports, Arts and Culture's (DSAC) COO in March 2010 (South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. n.d.). Her role as the COO required her to plan, manage and coordinate the department's planned actions, while leading and closely mentoring DSAC employees with the aim of fulfilling the director general's strategic directives, "Profiles in leadership" (2019) reported. Khan's accolades and achievements which she has acquired during her time within the sport industry can be seen below as provided by South Africa: Department of Sport and Recreation (n.d.):

- KZN's U19 Women's Cricket team manager.
- Founder and executive member of the of Women's Cricket in KZN.
- Member of the KZN National Sports Council Development Committee.
- KZN representative for the Women and Sport advisory committee.
- South African representative at the World Conference on Women and Sport in Japan in 2007.
- One of three South African representatives at the IOC Conference on Women and Sport in Jordan, 2008.
- Nominated for the 2011 *gsport4girls* Woman of the Year award (an award which recognises industry females who have achieved in their field of expertise), and therefore being considered a role model for other persons, more importantly other females, according to an article by *gsport4girls*.

It was important for this study to draw reference to the two cases because Jenkin's and Khan's achievements and accolades resonate with findings of existing studies regarding females having the ability to be an anchor and a driving force in the senior management level of

numerous sport organisations, and ultimately, the sport industry (Megat Daud et al., 2013:870; Perez-Rivases, Torregrosa, Viladrich, & Pallarès, 2017:102). It is further clear that these cases do not only challenge the patriarchal order of sport but could also reflect the perception that females are highly capable of fulfilling tasks found in senior management positions.

2.11. Chapter summary

This chapter aims to review the existing literature on key topics related to the challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations. The chapter began with defining sport management with a specific focus on sport as a business, then further discussed the complex and demanding nature of the management functions and roles, and the responsibilities associated with the varying levels of management. This was followed by the literature related to the internal and external factors that potentially influence organisational behaviour, the pressure of managing in the changing environment of sport, and the socio-economic impact and contribution of sport to the economy.

The chapter then reviewed literature related to the laws and policies formulated to support females in the working environment of sport, the politics affecting female senior managers in sport organisations, the development and purpose of the feminist theory, the state of female representation in the senior management structures of sport organisations, the organisational practices developed to guide and promote the advancement of females in sport organisations, and the selection, recruitment and promotion processes of female candidates used by sport organisations. The chapter ended by presenting examples, through case studies, of female senior managers in sports.

The next chapter will focus on the research methodology used to address the primary research questions and objectives of the study. It will detail the research processes in relation to the selected research design, and the qualitative research approach and methods. Furthermore, the chapter will report on the data collection instruments, and the data analysis and coding processes used in the study, before outlining the ethical considerations, the researcher's reflexivity throughout the process of data collection, and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

To recap, the primary objective of this study is to critically investigate the challenges that female senior managers face in selected sport organisations in South Africa. The research question that the study aimed to answer is what are the challenges that female senior managers encounter in South African sport organisations? A qualitative approach thus guides this study's aims and objectives and research question as it elicits the perceptions of female senior managers in selected sport organisations.

This chapter outlines the research processes in line with the interpretive and liberal feminist research paradigms, and the appropriate cross-sectional research design within a qualitatively grounded methodology. It reports on a semi-structured interview and protocol which were selected for data collection purposes. The sample processes are discussed, and the non-probability sampling is advocated for this study. The data analysis and coding processes that accompany such methodological procedures are outlined. The chapter then discusses the ethical considerations and the overview of the researcher's reflexivity on the research process, before concluding with limitations within the study's scope and context.

3.2. Interpretive and liberal feminist research paradigms

The interpretive paradigm believes that events are subjective as opposed to objective, and considers contextual, humanised, and reflexive research practices (Dean, 2018:3; Pham, 2018:3). It is argued that the interpretive paradigm strongly considers the participant's perspective, from which the research data is obtained, and then later interpreted to discover meanings, values, explanations, and more (Jones, 2015:22). Notably, interpretivism aims to "understand how members of a social group, through their participation in social processes, enact their particular realities and endow them with meaning, and to show how these meanings, beliefs and intentions of the members help to constitute their actions" (Goldkuhl, 2012:5). The advantages associated with interpretive paradigm include the ability to probe matters a researcher cannot easily observe, for example, the interview respondent's feelings, perspectives, thoughts, values, prejudices, views, and perceptions (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007:81). Another advantage includes the ability to delve into a deeper social understanding of a particular phenomenon, as opposed to simply describing it (Pham, 2018:3). The interpretive paradigm was suitable for the study because it aimed to understand the values, feelings, perspectives, thoughts, views, and perceptions of the challenges which female senior managers are likely to experience in selected sport organisations.

Liberal feminism serves as one of the most commonly used approaches in investigating and comprehending gender-related issues and discrepancies (Guzu, 2016:12). It is detailed that the liberal feminist theory focuses on aspects such as individual rights, personal autonomy, and equal opportunity and power in institutions, as well as in the economic, political, educational, medical, and judicial arena, to mention a few (Hattery, 2010:100; M'mbaha, 2018:80). Furthermore, the theory is governed by the "humanist ontological position" that males and females are alike with no differences (Birrell, 2000:64). Apart from specific similarities, the liberal feminist theory posits that, based on the barriers that hinder equivalent participation in society, males and females thus live differently, with differing opportunities, experiences and expectations (Birrell, 2000:64). The argument about females having unequal opportunities to decision making roles, serves as an example of the efforts of liberal feminists in sports (Scambler, 2005:152). Burns and Walker (2005:67) point out that the advantages of using feminist paradigms include:

- Using methodologies that focus primarily on revealing the perspectives of females as opposed to only male's concerns;
- Developing science that minimises harm and control in the research process; and
- Using methodologies which will produce research that relates to females, and results in the social impact or plans that are beneficial to females.

In the context of this study, a liberal feminist paradigm will foster the understanding of females in sports with regard to their personal insight and perceptions of the challenges they are likely to face in senior managerial positions of various sport organisations.

3.3. Cross-sectional research design

Considered as an overall 'blueprint', research designs serve as a guideline when collecting data and the following seven designs have continued to be commonly used in research: experimental design, cross-sectional design, time series design, longitudinal design, case study design, grounded theory, and ethnography design (Gratton & Jones, 2010:101-109). Cross-sectional designs are deemed most popular within the social sciences as they are usually used in research concerning sport studies (Gratton & Jones, 2004:94). Moreover, this study is associated with the cross-sectional research design due to the use of interviews to collect data over a single period of time from a cross-sectional sample, which is usually derived from a specific population (Gratton & Jones, 2004:94-95). South African national sport federations serve as a cross-sectional sample because they are representative of typical South African sport organisations. The strengths associated with cross-sectional research design is that it is a relatively fast way to conduct data collection. It is inexpensive, and it allows for the direct observation, by the researcher, of the phenomena being investigated (Setia, 2016:262;

Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg, & Leone, 2018:357). Due to the strengths, a cross-sectional research design was used for this study.

3.4. Qualitative research method

In an effort to define qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) stated that complexity and a variety of concepts and assumptions surround the term. However, qualitative research is said to be a field of inquiry that seeks to interpret events using case studies, personal experiences, life-stories, life-history interviews, participant observations, artefacts, cultural texts and productions, and observational, historical, interactional and visual texts (Smith & Sparkes, 2016:1-2). Jones (2015:24) stated that qualitative research makes use of non-numerical data derived over a set period, to describe and understand phenomena. Unlike qualitative research, quantitative research is a field of inquiry that concerns itself with the statistical or numerical analysis of data collected by means of polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or through the manipulation of pre-existing numerical data using digital techniques (Muijs, 2011:1-7). Therefore, the most distinct difference between qualitative and quantitative research is the use of numerical and non-numerical data (Babbie, 2020:25). To distinguish between the two modes of inquiry, Yilmaz (2013:314) compares the characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research in Table 3 below based on the assumptions, the purposes, the approach and the researcher role of each mode, respectively.

Table 3: Comparison of quantitative and qualitative modes of inquiry

	Quantitative mode of inquiry	Qualitative mode of inquiry
Assumptions	• Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable. Social facts have an objective reality	• Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic. Reality is socially constructed
	• Knower and known are independent; a dualism	• Knower and known are interactive; inseparable
	• Primacy of method	• Primacy of subject matter
	• Variables can be identified and relationships measured	• Variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure
		• Inquiry is subjective, value-bound
Purposes	• Generalizability (Time and context free generalisations through nomothetic or generalised statements)	• Contextualisation (Only time and context bound working hypotheses through idiographic statements)
	• Prediction	• Interpretation
	• Causal explanations	• Understanding actors' perspectives
Approach	• Begins with hypotheses and theories	• Ends with hypotheses or grounded theory
	• Manipulation and control	• Emergence and portrayal
	• Uses formal, structured instruments	• Researcher as the instrument
	• Experimentation and intervention	• Naturalistic or non-intervention
	• Deductive	• Inductive
	• Component analysis	• Searches for patterns
	• Seeks consensus, the norm	• Seeks pluralism, complexity
	• Reduces data to numerical indices	• Makes minor use of numerical indices
	• Abstract language in write-up	• Descriptive write-up
	• Detachment and impartiality	• Personal involvement and partiality

Researcher role	• Objective portrayal	• Empathic understanding
	• Etic (outsider's point of view)	• Emic (insider's point of view)

Source: Yilmaz (2013:314)

Based on the characteristics of the two research inquiries observed in Table 3 above, the study was found to be best aligned with the assumptions, purposes, approaches and the researcher role of the qualitative mode of inquiry. This included, for example, the assumption related to the socially constructed reality based on the respondent's experiences; approaching data collection with the minor use of numerical influence; the process of interpreting participant responses for purposes of data analysis; and prioritising the respondent's view throughout the process of data collection, the reporting of findings, discussion and conclusions of the study. Specifically, in the present study context, the qualitative approach was deemed to be the most suitable. This was because the study ultimately sought to collect data based on the personal experiences of female senior managers, with the aim of describing and understanding the challenges they might face in senior management.

3.5. Qualitative data collection methods

Throughout qualitative research, the most common data collection methods include in-depth interviews, participant observation, document analysis and focus groups (Yilmaz, 2013:315). Other methods include action research, grounded theory, and document analysis. Although there is a range of data collection methods, Galleta (2013:22) maintained that ultimately, the use of a specific method may be based on time, cost, practical concerns and access to the research participants. Considering the factors mentioned by Galleta (2013:22), in-depth interviews were the chosen data collection instrument for this study. Batmanabane and Kfour (2017) highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of using interviews, as can be seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Advantages and disadvantages of interviews

Advantages	Disadvantages
▪ Opportunity for feedback	▪ Cost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographic proximity - Length and complexity - Number of non-respondents/call-backs
▪ Opportunity for clarifications	▪ Lack of anonymity
▪ Probing of complex answers	▪ Personal interviewer style
▪ Personal connection/rapport	▪ Cultural considerations

Source: Batmanabane and Kfour (2017)

Based on the advantages tabulated in Table 4 above, the use of interviews was further decided upon due to the need to establish a personal rapport with the female senior managers within

the context of this study. The rapport was ultimately beneficial in obtaining in-depth feedback and clarification and it provided the opportunity to enquire further into crucial aspects concerning the contemporary challenges facing female senior managers.

While other data collection methods involve the use of newsletters, reports and video tapes (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010:70), in-depth interviews comprise a question-and-answer conversation between two or more people, in this case the researcher (interviewer) and respondent (interviewee); that takes place with the aim of retrieving in-depth information from the respondent (Smith, 2010:39). Wilson (2012:96) suggested that interviews mostly fall into the following categories: (a) structured – interviews that comprise a set of questions which are asked in the same rigid manner; (b) unstructured – an interview style that adopts a unrestricted and flexible conversation style, while the researcher remains aware of the main areas of inquiry; and (c) semi-structured – interviews that comprise a set of guided questions while simultaneously conducting an open-ended conversation that allows for the emergence of additional topics. Semi-structured interviews were the selected mode of inquiry for this study and the reasons for this decision are given in the next discussion.

3.5.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews can consist of segments ranging from open-ended questions to theoretically structured questions throughout the progression of the interview, which is an exceptional technique that focuses on lived experiences while simultaneously addressing theoretically driven areas of interest (Galleta, 2013:24). Furthermore, Longhurst (2010:113) stated that semi-structured interviews are deemed beneficial for obtaining information about various experiences, like the personal challenges experienced by female senior managers, and exploring complex behaviours, opinions and emotions related to the challenges experienced within the context of the study. Keller and Conradin (2019) mentioned additional advantages of semi-structured interviews below:

- Encourages two-way communication between the researcher and respondent.
- Confirms what is already known but also provides the opportunity for learning, for example discovering emerging factors regarding an existing challenge (based on literature) within the study's context.
- Easily promotes the discussion of sensitive issues such as the personal hindrances which female senior managers might individually encounter.

Accompanying the advantages that semi-structured interviews have, is the promotion of flexibility that offers the interviewer the ability to probe, which sets the technique apart from structured and unstructured interviews (Curran, Lochrie & Gorman, 2014). Thus, the use of semi-structured interviews was adopted.

Online interviews

At the outset of the data collection process, data was obtained by means of physical appointments which were arranged with the participants. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, primarily the restricted movement of South African citizens posed by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, channels such as online interviews in the form of video calls were considered to be ideal methods for the completion of the data collection process. Therefore, virtual appointments (conducted via Skype) were also scheduled to ensure the completion of the data collection process.

The advantages of in-depth, semi-structured interviews continued in the use of online interviews via a video, audio, and text communication application known as Skype (Keller, 2020). Skype is used to make free video and voice calls, send instant messages and share files with people online (Microsoft, n.d). Although this technology possesses certain advantages such as being time efficient and financially affordable (Lo Iacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016:1), the use of Skype was primarily decided upon due to its accessibility and familiarity to the researcher; as one of the prominently used video and instant messaging applications at the time of the data collection stage (Keller, 2020). Beyond the application's (Skype) familiarity and accessibility, Skype was also used due to its increased importance, influence and use in qualitative research studies such as that of Cater (2011) and Lo Iacono et al. (2016). Throughout the interview process, the researcher strove to reduce bias by maintaining neutral body language and probing in an appropriate manner, as advised by Gratton and Jones (2010:158).

3.6. Sample method, size and selection

Sampling can be referred to as the process of identifying a small group of participants (sample) who serve to represent a larger group (population) of interest, in order to obtain findings that are applicable to the larger population (Peersman, 2014:7; Sirakaya-Turk & Uysal, 2017:12). The sampling method, sample selection process, and sample size will be discussed in this section. Two common sampling techniques were identified by Smith (2010:118-122) and Jones (2015:126-130) as follows: Probability sampling – is a method commonly used in quantitative research methods where each participant has a probability of being randomly selected for the sample (Smith, 2010:118); non-probability sampling – is a sampling method which is often linked to qualitative research methods where the characteristics of the target population are used to select a sample (Smith, 2010:118).

Non-probability sampling boasts a number of sampling techniques such as snowball sampling, theoretical sampling, purposive sampling, maximum variation sampling, typical case sampling, opportunistic sampling, convenience sampling, extreme cases sampling, and the key informant

technique (Jones, 2015:126-130). Although sampling can be useful, Jones (2015:125-130) argued that in the case of qualitative research, the use of the term 'selection' would be more suitable than that of 'sample', and the concept of transferability is more applicable than generalisability because qualitative research is primarily focused on the descriptions and explanations of a particular phenomenon; as opposed to generalising the information back to the population. Therefore, the study resorted to a non-probability sampling technique, with a specific focus on purposive sampling, where participants (female senior managers in selected sport organisations) were selected, based on their characteristics or traits; for example, their potential ability to provide rich information due to their high level of experience and senior managerial capacity in the workplace, as per Ruddell (2017:151).

Qualities such as being inexpensive and using the best information available, reinforced the decision to use a non-probability sampling method for this study. Ten to fifteen interviews served as the initial benchmark for the data collection process of this study, as per Brinkmann's (2013:59) qualitative sampling guideline. Though similar studies such as Malie's (2011:39) and van Wyk's (2012:22) targeted twenty and ten interview participants respectively, it is important to note that this study's sample size was predominantly dependent on the number of female senior managers employed in national sport federations in South Africa. The study's requirement of senior management positions, such as those stipulated in Table 5 below is due to the years and level of experience needed to attain such positions, and the intensity of the roles and responsibilities associated with senior management positions. These factors played a critical role in receiving in-depth information regarding the experiences of the female senior managers. A total of twenty-seven female senior managers who met the criteria were contacted via email to take part in the study. Email was the chosen method of communication, as the method was of a formal nature and because it was one of the commonly used methods of communication within the environment where the sampling took place. Twelve female senior managers participated due to availability and accessibility. The sample size was sufficient to eliminate bias and sizeable enough to be a representative sample of the female population being studied (Brinkmann, 2013:59). It was also important to consider the aspect of saturation when selecting the sample size as that indicated when the data from the interviews was sufficient enough to "develop a robust and valid understanding of the study phenomenon" (Hennink & Kaiser, 2019). The findings from the selected sample would be transferred and contextualised to the theory related to female senior managers in sport organisations. The selection criterion required research participants who occupied senior management positions such as president, director, chief executives, and chairpersons as can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Senior management positions and number of participants per role

President	2
Vice President	5
Chief Executive:	3
National Director	1
Vice Chairperson	1
TOTAL	12

Source: Author

Semi- structured interview schedule and protocol

Similarly, to Malie's study (2011:105-111), a semi-structured interview schedule was used (see Appendix A). The interview protocol of Appendix A comprised fourteen open-ended questions that were used to enquire, probe, obtain clarification and feedback about the challenges that female senior managers were likely to face in senior management positions in South African sport organisations. Additional topics included information pertaining to networking, government, and organisation support. To emphasise the reliance on the perceptions, views, and opinions of the female senior managers, questions were often posed using phrases like, 'how would you describe' ... 'based on your awareness'... and 'in your opinion' ...

All the interviews were conducted during individual scheduled time slots with individual female senior managers. Both in person and online interviews had to take place in a quiet environment with minimal noise interference, and at a time and location that was most convenient for the participant. Work offices were the predominant venues for the in person interviews, while respondents usually attended the online interviews in their homes. Data was collected towards the end of November 2019, continued in February and March 2020, and was completed at the beginning of April 2020.

3.7. Qualitative data analysis

It is important to note that both qualitative and quantitative data undergo data preparation and exploration before being analysed and interpreted (Creswell, 2012:10). In the case of data preparation and exploration, data from the research interviews was automatically transcribed using Otter. Otter is a software used to record and transcribe rich notes from interviews, meetings, lectures and other voice conversations for individual, team or educational purposes (Otter.ai, n.d). Following automatic transcription, the interview transcripts were manually edited and formatted using Microsoft Word, checked for accuracy, and later organised by randomly identifying respondents as R1, R2, R3, etc. for reporting purposes. The data was then re-checked by means of jotting down memos on the thought processes derived from the data and by developing codes to be used during analysis, as per the qualitative data analysis procedure in Creswell and Plano Clark (2018:210-211).

Data codes and themes

Atlas.ti, a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) was used to code the data (Smit, 2002:65). Atlas.ti is a software programme used for qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio and video data (Atlas.ti, n.d). Though other qualitative data analysis programmes such as HyperRESEARCH, MAXQDA NVivo, and QDA Miner (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:214) exist, Smit (2002:65) recommended Atlas.ti over other analysis software as it offers the following functions:

- qualitative data analysis tools such as coding and annotating processes,
- a comprehensive overview of one's research project,
- immediate search and retrieval functions, and
- visual connection and presentation in the form of diagrams, texts, memos and codes via its network formulation feature.

Using Atlas.ti (v. 9), the data was placed into the relevant independent codes, and thereafter underwent the process of open coding; also known as inductive coding (Medelyan, 2020). Open coding is a bottom-up approach where the data is carefully read, and the data which is related to each research question, is then identified and assigned a category or theme, as suggested in the phases provided by Jones (2015:276-279).

Following open coding, the data underwent the process of axial coding where the data was re-read and where further evidence, where necessary, was identified and placed into code groups as per suggestions by Jones (2015:278) and Scott and Medaugh (2017:1-2). In line with Gledhill (2010:17) and Jones's (2015:279) suggestions for the final phase of coding, selective coding was used to identify data that outlined the study's analysis by means of identifying information that was similar and/or contradictory to a particular concept or theme. The development of the codes, along with the themes, emerged from the data set itself (inductive coding) by means of identifying and allocating meaning to the respondent's responses.

Using Medelyan's (2020) steps as a guideline, the development of the independent codes and themes required the following process:

- Reading the interview transcripts.
- Assigning codes based on the meaning derived from the data, for example the 'underrepresentation of female senior managers'.
- Re-reading the interview transcripts and assigning additional codes where necessary.
- Matching and merging similar codes.
- Grouping relevant codes into themes, and then into code groups that sought to tackle a specific research question. For example, 'informal meetings' (independent code) was placed under 'inclusion' (theme), which was later grouped into the 'identified challenges

facing female senior managers' (code group), to address the research question pertaining to the contemporary challenges facing female senior managers in the context of the study.

The researcher stressed that during the process of data analysis, she adhered to the suggestions provided by Gratton and Jones (2010:242), in order to avoid confirmation bias; in other words, to avoid forming personal opinions and making conclusions as a researcher that would probably result in bias.

3.7.1. Data validity and reliability

When assessing qualitative research, researchers are advised to use criteria that include reliability/dependability, rigour, credibility, and authenticity (Jones, 2015:106-107). Though differences exist when assessing qualitative and quantitative research, both research methods are primarily concerned with assessing the quality of the research data, the research results, and the interpretation of the research findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018:216).

The quality of the research data, the results, and the interpretation of the findings was achieved through the process of checking and rechecking the interview recordings and transcripts in order to eliminate any bias. Furthermore, using Creswell and Plano Clark's (2018:217) three strategies, qualitative validity of the data was assessed by means of (1) compiling evidence during data analysis from the participants for a specific code or theme (triangulation); by (2) revealing and reporting on information that opposed the initial perspective discovered through the obtained data (disconfirming evidence); and by (3) having the data reviewed by a qualitative data analyst from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted in order to develop and examine the adequacy of the data collection and analysis methods, which was conducted with the objective of enhancing the rigour and validity of the data, in accordance with Janghorban, Latifnejad Roudsari and Taghipour (2014:5).

3.8. Ethical considerations

Within the qualitative component, particularly with interviews, ethical considerations include respecting participants, being sensitive to participant's consent and confidentiality, being faithful to the lives and experiences of the research participants and being aware of the interview's ability to influence the participant's responses (Brinkmann, 2013:154-156). This study adhered to aspects of voluntary informed consent, respect for the participant, the maintenance of the participant's confidentiality, and the influence of the interviews, using the following measures:

- Ethical clearance to conduct the study was approved by the Ethics Committee from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (Appendix D).

- Consent/permission in the form of consent letters was requested from the research participants prior to the interviews (Appendix B and C).
- The objective/s of the research were carefully explained to the participants.
- The personal privacy of participants and maintenance of participant's confidentiality was ensured during the study.
- The researcher remained objective during data analysis.
- Potential harm to the participants was considered.
- Summarised versions of the results obtained from the study were used for academic purposes only.

3.9. Reflexivity

Qualitative research has been deemed contextual due to its occurrence within a specific time and place between two or more people (Dodgson, 2019). Therefore, to ensure the creditability of a study's findings and to foster a greater understanding of the content, it is important for the researcher to explicitly describe the 'contextual intersecting relationships between the research participants and themselves' (Dodgson, 2019:1). According to Olmos-Vega, Stalmeijer, Varpio, and Kahlke (2023:241), reflexivity is "a set of continuous, collaborative, and multifaceted practices through which researchers self-consciously critique, appraise, and evaluate how their subjectivity and context influence the research processes." This includes "examining the role of the researcher, researcher-researched relationships, power, privilege, emotions, positionalities, and different ways of seeing" (Lutrell, 2019). As such, the researcher of the current study used the following reflexive awareness strategies that have been suggested by Haynes (2012):

- The researcher participated in the ongoing process of taking notes of any theoretical assumptions about the subject of the study throughout the entire research process, also noting any changes in the assumptions;
- The researcher reflected on the influence of the assumptions when revising the research questions, research focus and research findings of the study;
- The researcher made use of a notebook to note any thoughts and feelings concerning the research process, and to note the emotions, interactions, or any other observation during the interview process;
- The researcher had to listen to the audio recordings of the interviews to determine how their presence or interaction influenced the interview process; and
- The researcher engaged in discussions and evaluative processes with other researchers to foster constructive conversations regarding the subject of the current study.

These strategies were implemented not only as a reflective practice but to prevent any bias in the reporting of this study's data.

3.10. Data collection limitations

Due to the use of face-to-face semi-structured interviews, the study acknowledges the limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic which began affecting South Africa around March 2020. This resulted in the COVID-19 pandemic being declared a National State of Disaster, which furthermore resulted in the country being placed on a national lockdown (Labuschaigne & Staunton, 2020). Having the national lockdown drastically restricted movement of persons, which in turn, impacted the opportunity to conduct face-to-face interviews. Due to the circumstances imposed by the National State of Disaster and the attendant lockdown, a few interviews (two) were conducted online from home via Skype. Though video call interviews are the most relative method to in person interviews, certain limitations were experienced. These included the inability to establish a good rapport with the research participants and the inability to accurately observe the participant's non-verbal communication such as facial expressions and other forms of body language.

3.11. Chapter summary

The study employed a qualitative research method approach, with a cross-sectional design as a guideline during the data collection process. The researcher purposively selected the research sample of female senior managers from selected sport organisations, because of their ability to provide rich information due to their high level of experience and senior managerial capacity in the workplace. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the sample whereupon the data obtained was later analysed using qualitative data analysis techniques (transcribing, coding, and assigning themes). Furthermore, the chapter detailed the use of various qualitative validity techniques and highlighted the ethical considerations that were considered during the study. The significant findings and discussion thereof will be thematically outlined in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

Upon completion of the data analysis process, the findings from the semi-structured interviews are detailed in this chapter. The chapter begins by outlining the code groups, themes and independent codes that were developed during the inductive coding process. Thereafter, the key themes are presented as per their respective code group, namely, (a) the status quo of female representation (b) the identified challenges facing female senior managers, and (c) organisational and governmental policy and support. It was important to report the direct views of participants to illustrate key responses and insights into a specific topic. Thus, some of the findings are presented using excerpts from the participants, in order to emphasise or elaborate on their responses. For reporting purposes, and to maintain the confidentiality of the research participants, respondents were assigned random codes, such as, R1, R2, R3, etc. There is no significance in the ordering of respondent numbers.

4.2. Code groups, themes and independent code development

During the data analysis phase, the data was assigned independent codes, using the interview transcripts. Thereafter, the independent codes were placed into themes based on similarity and relevance to the specific code group. These groups formed the basis for the thematic presentation of the findings, which will be shown in the sections to follow. The code groups and independent codes are illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Code groups, themes and independent codes

Independent Codes	Code Groups	Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Females dominating lower-level management ▪ Inclusion ▪ Increased demands/pressures ▪ Lack of employment opportunities ▪ Lack of improvement/change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges with female representation 	Status quo of female representation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Within mixed-gender sports ▪ Within National sport federations ▪ Within SASCOC ▪ Within volunteer-based organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Underrepresentation of female senior managers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of females for strategic decisions ▪ Lack of opportunity to participate ▪ Opposition ▪ Perpetuation of gender power roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decision-making challenges 	Identified challenges facing female senior managers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undermining role of female senior managers 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Age ▪ Race 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demographic related challenges 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of organisational funds ▪ Sourcing funding/sponsorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial concerns 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender stereotyping within sports sector ▪ Gendered roles ▪ Lack of employment opportunities ▪ Lack of knowledge/understanding from colleagues ▪ Lack of orders from national sports bodies ▪ Sexism ▪ Stereotypes ▪ Zero to none gender stereotyping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gender stereotyping 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenging the glass ceiling ▪ Evidence of glass ceiling ▪ No evidence of glass ceiling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Glass ceiling 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Balance of education & experience ▪ Benefits of higher education ▪ Experience ▪ Importance/level of importance ▪ In relation to management ▪ Lack of support for education & skills ▪ Previous disadvantages (higher education) ▪ Recommendations for higher education ▪ Sport as a career path ▪ Subject matter required for senior managerial positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher education and experience 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Constantly advocating for women ▪ Impact of systemic & historical events ▪ Informal meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclusion 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges associated with male mentors ▪ Challenges with female mentors ▪ Lack of female mentors ▪ Role of mentors in sports sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of mentors 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Influence of South African culture ▪ Male dominated network ▪ Within management of sports teams ▪ Within senior management level ▪ Within SASCOC ▪ Within sport industries ▪ Within sports sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Male dominance 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autocratic leadership ▪ Organisational change ▪ State of leadership structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational management 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Best candidate for job ▪ Consideration of demographic factors ▪ Lip service ▪ Potential hindrances ▪ Recruitment of sportspersons ▪ Perceived resistance towards employing females 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment & hiring processes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Associated with male colleagues ▪ No evidence of wage gap ▪ Previous experiences ▪ Remuneration considerations ▪ Wage gap in South African sports sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remuneration 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concept of balance ▪ Difficulty level ▪ Family/household responsibilities ▪ Job responsibilities ▪ Lonely workplace environment ▪ Multitasking (responsibilities) ▪ Nature of sport code ▪ Possibility of Achieving Work-life balance as female senior managers ▪ Societal pressures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work-life balance 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges with policies and initiatives ▪ Support from policies & initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government initiatives and policies 	Organisational and governmental policy and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges associated with organisational practices ▪ Evidence of support/opportunities for growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational practices 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Challenges associated with networking ▪ Networking opportunities ▪ Potential benefits/benefits ▪ Reasons for engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Networking 	

Source: Author

The key themes in Table 6 above are presented within the following sections, as per their respective code group.

4.3. Participant profile

The research participants were female senior managers from South African national sport federations. The racial profile presents White female senior managers (seven), two Black African, two Indian, and one Coloured female senior manager. Most participants held a postgraduate qualification (eight), while others held undergraduate qualifications and national senior certificates.

4.4. Status quo of female representation

Participants were asked about their perceptions regarding female representation in senior managerial positions in the sports sector. The majority of respondents noted that there had been slight improvements made regarding female representation, while a few of the respondents found that there had been no significant improvements throughout the years. The participants who noted significant improvements emphasised that the progress had come largely as a result of substantive negotiations. An example of such a response is as follows:

“There is a slight improvement, but that improvement is through a lot of negotiations, and convincing.” [R7]

Other respondents further acknowledged how the use of transformation charters, targets and action plans had gone a long way in transforming the South African sport environment:

“I think things such as transformation charters and having targets and action plans and so forth have gone a long way in terms of transforming sport.” [R4]

Additionally, respondents noted that the improvement in female representation was due to the recognition of female employee’s capabilities within the workplace, the personal belief in their abilities, female employee’s involvement in senior management, a greater interest in female senior managers, increased even representation in sport organisations, the establishment of stronger networks, and the existence of greater platforms for the voices of female employees to be heard and noticed. The following findings are detailed below.

Regarding recognised capabilities of female employees within the workplace:

“I have noticed that there is a lot of more change and people are becoming more aware of the fact that women are peacemakers, and more organised, and I think they are starting to move towards employing a lot more of them.” [R12]

With regard to respondents’ personal belief in their own abilities in the workplace, the next response reflected:

“Look, I think we have come a long way, but I also not really, you know. I think women are doing fine in business because of the belief in themselves, but, also because of survival.” [R7]

In relation to female employee’s increased involvement in senior management levels of sport organisations, about two respondents reflected on this finding. This finding is summarised by the following response:

“But women are gradually building up and getting in and getting more involved [in senior management].” [R8]

Regarding the greater interest for female senior managers displayed by society, a key respondent said:

“They (female senior managers) are proving themselves in sports if I can put it that way. There is a greater interest - not all sports, I think some unfortunately not - but, I think there is a greater interest in society as to what is happening more in sports, which then unlocks opportunities in the employment sector within sports and managerial positions.” [R4]

Regarding the increased even representation in sport organisations, a respondent indicated:

“It was very male dominated, at the beginning, and now it is, I think, spread quite evenly with a lot more women having joined committees, etc.” [R11]

In relation to how female employees were gaining stronger networks in sports business, and how female employees had discovered better platforms to voice their concerns, Respondent 4 made the following two separate statements:

“I think in terms of women; our networks are getting stronger.” [R4]

“In this world, now, women have a better platform to have their voices heard, and they can use those platforms smartly, and also in sports.” [R4]

Considering the respondents’ views on the underrepresentation of female employees in sports, a key respondent asserted that “the landscape hasn’t changed much since [approximately ten years ago].” [R6] Other respondents described the lack of change or improvement using statements such as “definitely has not improved.” [R3] “I do not think it necessarily is where it needs to be,” [R4] and “it is still a challenge. It is a battle we’ve been fighting. It is not easy.” [R2] The following excerpt emphasises the lack of improvement in female representation within the context of the study:

“I think sport federations in general, focus far more on racial demographics than we do on gender representation. And where it has improved, I mean, if you say, ‘it has improved’, the improvement is definitely not exponential. There is some movement, but not sufficient movement.” [R5]

Respondents believed that female employees are largely under-represented in senior management of South African sport organisations. Most of the respondents weighed in on the underrepresentation of females in executive committees and/or executive boards in South African sport organisations. The next three excerpts unpack these factors:

“I think if you even look at the way national federations are structured, even from an executive board representation perspective, the numbers are relatively low. So that will obviously then translate when you look at senior management positions within federation's themselves.” [R6]

Mirroring Respondent 6's response, Respondent 3 illustrated an underrepresentation in specific senior management positions in the following response:

“We do not have enough female leaders and board members in presidential and board positions who are making the strategic decisions.” [R1]

Respondent 10 supported that response, and further revealed lower level management positions which female employees tend to occupy as opposed to senior management positions:

“In our group, strangely, females predominate in our sporting code. There seems to be a reluctance of men to become involved, however, in my recall, we have only had one female president. The females usually take the part of treasurers, secretaries, representatives, and things like that. But for some reason it is usually a male that is president.” [R10]

Through probing, respondents were often found referring to the most prominent sports committee in South Africa, the SASCOC, where the consensus was that the organisation consisted mainly of men. The following statements reflect the above:

“I must admit, at the SASCOC meetings women are few and far between. So they are not that many. But then having said that, if you think of the SASCOC's meeting, they are male dominant, they are far more males. It has been a standing joke at SASCOC meetings that they are very few women there. And I am not quite sure, when I think about it, but I think if you go then it is the presidents, and there are more male presidents across the sporting fraternity than there are female.” [R8]

Mirroring Respondent 8's response, Respondent 6 also mentioned the underrepresentation of females in the leadership of SASCOC in the following response:

“I think if I look at even the leadership that sit at the SASCOC council meetings, it is largely men.” [R6]

Illustrating the lack of a 50 per cent equal gender representation split in the sport organisation, Respondent 9 stated:

“When I look at, let us say, for instance, SASCO; when I look at the representation of the floor, there is a change but it is not as significant, it is not a 50/50 change.” [R9]

Other challenges that emerged from the respondents included the increased pressure on females which influenced their decisions on taking up senior positions, and female employees’ large presence in lower level management. The next responses show these factors.

Regarding the various increased societal pressures influenced female employee’s decisions in taking up senior positions, Respondent 6 said:

“From a gender perspective, I would imagine that there is more pressure on women taking up a firm role within their homes, and their work environment. Before, you used to have a scenario where people were housewives; they had enough time to contribute to their communities and to volunteer, but in this day and age, women have jobs, they are mothers, partners, and they work in communities. So, the demand for women representation is greater, but, at the same time, the demands on women as a gender, is much greater than what it used to be.” [R6]

On the large presence of female employees in lower management levels in sport organisations, Respondent 1 weighed in:

“I would think across the board, in administration, not necessarily in leadership, not necessarily on the boards, not necessarily on the council's, but in the administration; [there is] definitely [a large presence of female employees] at lower levels, definitely at lower levels.” [R1]

4.5. Identified challenges facing female senior managers

Respondents were asked to elaborate on any challenges they currently faced, and a plethora of challenges were discovered. Of the challenges that emerged, respondents suggest that there were thirteen key challenges which are affecting female senior managers in sports. The identified challenges are tabulated in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Key challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations

1. Decision making challenges	5. Glass ceiling	8. Lack of mentors	11. Recruitment and hiring processes
2. Demographic related challenges	6. Higher education and experience	9. Male dominance	12. Remuneration
3. Financial concerns	7. Inclusion	10. Organisational management	13. Work-life balance
4. Gender stereotyping			

Source: Author

With reference to Table 7 above, the key challenges are subsequently outlined based on the respondents' views, starting with decision making.

4.5.1. Decision making challenges

The participants of this study indicated that decision making was a big challenge in their role as senior managers. To this end, the respondents expressed the opposition and lack of respect they encountered regarding decisions made by female senior managers, undermining the role of females in decision making, the perpetuation of gender power roles, the lack of females in decision making structures for purposes of strategic decision making, and the lack of the opportunity to participate in decision making structures, as challenges they had encountered. The findings are shown in the next section:

Regarding the opposition and lack of respect displayed towards the decisions made by female senior managers in sport organisations, the following excerpts were recorded:

“That falls under the same heading, having less respect for our decisions, if it is made by a woman. Only when decisions have to be made. There is no problem with respect on the playing field, but when difficult decisions are made, you probably get more opposition than a man would.” [R10]

“You find you are a leader and the only female, and they have to take up whatever you are suggesting. Sometimes it is not easy because some men will just pull out and say, ‘no, I don't want to take this position anymore’; ‘I cannot’ or ‘we do not see eye to eye’.” [R2]

Concerning the undermining attitudes towards the role of females in decision making, two respondents revealed:

“There is sometimes a lot of undermining, thinking you are not fit for the job, or you do not know [what you are doing].” [R2]

“[They question whether] we are able to do these kind of things? And are we able to make these big decisions, etc., etc.?” [R11]

In relation to the lack of the opportunity to participate in decision making structures, Respondent 6 stated:

“When I say quality opportunity to participate, I am referring to the general trend for female managers to be given secretarial type of positions, and that you find that, *decision* making positions still remain largely in male hands.” [R6]

In addition, the following excerpt elaborates on the lack of females in senior management for purposes of strategic decision making in organisations:

“We do not have enough female leaders and board members in presidential and board positions who are making the strategic decisions. And the reality is that, men know best for men, and women know best for women. So, we have got men making strategic decisions for a sport that is female dominated; it does not always work so well.” [R1]

Furthermore, at least four respondents motioned the perpetuation of gender power roles in sport organisations. The following excerpts present two respondent’s views on how gender power roles had persisted in their respective organisations:

“Well, in our federation, it was always a case of ‘oh well, these are the guys that are going to be presented’. But then it was a case of we need to start looking at the fact that it is not just men.” [R12]

“What is really interesting is that, because we have amalgamated, sometimes the men assume that in an amalgamation, they are still going to be the ones in charge, as opposed to the best person for the job.” [R4]

The above could therefore beg the question whether the female senior managers collude on their own subordination in their work environments.

4.5.2. Demographic related challenges

The responses revealed aspects such as age and race as factors which affected work experience within senior management. One respondent particularly illuminated concerns about the attitude towards young female senior managers and the differing nature of challenges between females of different races. The above is reflected in the next two excerpts.

In relation to age, the following excerpt presents a key response from the youngest participant in the study:

“My greatest challenge has been that I have been younger than most of the men who have sat on the committees. So, the attitude and behaviour that they have towards you is always that of the petulant woman who does not sit in her corner and be quiet and do what we tell her to do. So, you deal a lot with trying to cement the respect of your opinion, especially when you're speaking to older white men, and older men in general.” [R5]

With regard to race, one of the Black African participants of this study elaborated on her experience within the working environment using the next text extract:

“There is a type of intersectional level of challenge where it is intensified being a Black woman above being a woman in general. Are the challenges that I faced as a Black woman the same challenges that the white woman who we have on the board face? We cannot really know that, but we can understand that a difference can be mentioned.” [R5]

4.5.3. Financial concerns

The difficulty with the sourcing of funding or sponsorship and the lack of funds within sport organisations were found to be factors that affected the research participants. In one organisation, the respondent described the lack of funds within her organisation as a “huge problem,” [R8] while a second respondent revealed that there are financial concerns that affect employment and funding across the South African sports sector. The challenges are detailed below.

In relation to the lack of funds, a respondent who had served in senior management for over ten years provided the following key response:

“Generally, the biggest challenge we face as an organisation is finance, never mind having to look at it from the gender perspective. So, that is a challenge in the sport industry. There is a lack of funding, overall, be it from national government or be it from the private sector that look after employment opportunities within sports.” [R6]

Regarding the sourcing of funding or sponsorship, a respondent detailed her challenges as follows:

“I think also the challenge is that sometimes it is easier for men to source funding, to get sponsorships. It is a sport that is very individual, so, a young boy, it will be easier for him to take up a game [the less it] will be for a girl.” [R4]

4.5.4. Gender stereotyping

Respondents were questioned to find out whether they were aware of gender stereotyping in their respective organisations, to which five respondents agreed, another five disagreed, while two respondents recorded no direct evidence of gender stereotyping within their organisation with substantiated responses. The themes that emerged from respondents included a lack of knowledge or understanding from sporting colleagues, the lack of strict instructions from national sporting bodies, the existence of sexism, and gender roles contributed to the trait of gender stereotyping in sport organisations. The following responses were offered.

Concerning what appears to be a lack of knowledge or understanding surrounding gender-related aspects (i.e. policy guidelines) within the sports sector, a respondent said:

“Yes, there is so much stereotyping. I am fighting and trying to educate these presidents by making them understand that we are guided in this country and in the world. Especially by the IOC; that when you consider gender-based (*sic*), you need to ensure that there is 20 to 30 per cent of women integration in any level.” [R2]

Regarding traits of sexism that are displayed in her sport organisation, a respondent disclosed:

“I think you struggle with just the basic tenants of sexism. I mean, if you are the only woman in the room - I often do not offer to be the one who makes the coffee - and you [are asked to] make the tea and whatnot. Fortunately, I do not drink it, so you will never find me at the teapot and ask me to make tea. So, I think it is the sexism that you find in general, in all sectors and all circles of life.” [R5]

In addition, Respondent 5 first described that the focus for many sport federations with regard to transformation was on “racial demographic aspects,” as opposed to “gender dynamics” in South African sport. This respondent was probed on whether she felt that by focusing primarily on the racial aspects of transformation that had created room for bias, the respondent agreed non-verbally by nodding. Respondent 5 later clarified her response by emphasising the lack of strict instructions from South African national sporting bodies that should be communicated and adhered to by national sport federations:

“It is not there, but I think that a lot of people are okay with it being there because they can explain [it] away in the way that I have just did. So, I think that gives federations a little comfort, where they tell you that, ‘Oh, but you know, we are trying but we also have not gotten instructions from the top’. But, SASCOC has instructed now in terms of their constitution to put that into a requirement. Is every federation going to follow suit? I do not know.” [R5]

Additionally, respondents were probed on whether gendered roles were prevalent in their organisations. Most of the respondents agreed to the prevalence of gendered roles within their organisations, while four other respondents disagreed, and three others provided no specific evidence of gendered roles within their organisation. In response to the agreement of the existence of gendered roles, the majority of the respondents felt that females were commonly found in lower level administrative roles, while senior management positions, especially the role of president, were predominantly occupied by males, as can be seen below:

“We have so many women who have studied to be in these high positions, not just to be administrators; women that are capable.” [R2]

“Yes, but for presidents; presidents have dominated as males; and if you go around to all the administrators of the provinces, they are all females, pretty much.” [R1]

In light of the disagreement about the existence of gendered roles, a respondent said:

“No, in fact, our secretary is a male, and I do not think any of us could handle that situation better than he can. He is just brilliant at what he does. So, I would go with no, definitely not. It is the person who is the best suited for the role.” [R12]

Mirroring Respondent 12’s response, Respondent 9 specified a position (which she believed was commonly perceived to be occupied by female employees) within her organisation, which had been occupied by a male employee:

“No, I am the president and our Secretary General is a man” [R9]

Another response on the occupied roles reads:

“No, not necessarily, because we have a female that who is a chartered accountant and she is in charge of all our funds, which normally sits with a male in most organisations.” [R7]

In cases where respondents did not directly indicate the tendency of gendered roles within their organisations, respondents usually elaborated on factors such as “the best person for the job” [R4] usually being considered for a specific job position, on the lack of senior employment opportunities for females, and sometimes on the female’s deciding against occupying senior managerial positions due to, for example, the demands of the role. These findings are reflected in the following section.

Regarding how the best individual for the job usually gets employed for a specific position in their respective sport organisations, a respondent mentioned:

“The best person for the job would get those positions as we currently stand now.” [R4]

Concerning the lack of employment opportunities for females in senior management, one respondent said:

“I am one of a handful of [senior managers] within the sport structures. In South Africa, you have 76 national federations, and if I can say I can count them on one hand, that already gives you an impression as to the lack of opportunity for female leaders in the space.” [R6]

Additionally, at least three respondents mentioned various issues that might negatively influence a female candidate’s decision around occupying a senior managerial position. A quotation that illustrates the respondent’s views read as follows:

“I suspect that in some cases, the women just do not put their hands up to be the leaders. I do not know if it is because we are already multitasking a lot of things. So, to voluntarily add leading an organisation at board level is one challenge that they might not choose to do. And another challenge might be that it is always been done by the men, and the men happily put their hands up, so we are also happy to follow as opposed to leading.” [R1]

4.5.5. Glass ceiling

The study explicitly focused on questions around the glass ceiling as this is a pertinent global phenomenon in all sectors (see for example Coleman, 2010; Jonge, 2015; Storey, 2019; Pape, 2020; Thornton & Etxebarria, 2021). The following themes emerged that explain the glass ceiling related challenges from the viewpoint of the stakeholders: the existence of the glass ceiling in sport organisations, and glass ceiling’s effect on remuneration. Other emergent

themes included factors related to employee's abilities and the existence of a female staff complement in sport organisations.

One question sought to explore whether the respondents had ever encountered the glass ceiling as female senior managers. The results reported that half of the respondents had experienced the glass ceiling while four had not experienced the glass ceiling, and two other respondents provided varying insights concerning the aspect of the glass ceiling within the sports sector.

Respondents who agreed to having experienced the glass ceiling proceeded to share their personal encounters, for example, having to "fight" their way up to senior management. Respondents also revealed how the glass ceiling is mainly prevalent within the executive boards of sport organisations, where respondents felt that they were being hindered with regards to a) the opportunity to occupy decision making positions, and b) from partaking in opportunities that foster the implementation of policies that advance gender equality.

The following extracts provide more detail on that finding:

"Generally, I have. But I tried to fight my way up and show them that I am capable, and I can do it. But sometimes you definitely feel that that ceiling is there, and it cannot be broken." [R2]

"Yes, I have. There is a need for critical mass, when it comes to female representation. Specifically, in regards to decision making positions. Because if we are not sitting in decision making positions, we are not going to implement policies that are going to advance gender equality." [R6]

Respondent 5 supported the responses above by describing the negative effect that the glass ceiling had had on her career progression:

"I am the longest serving member to sit on the executive board and I am not the president. Yes, I do not have to say more than that." [R5]

Interestingly, the glass ceiling's effect on remuneration was another factor which was illuminated within this query, as seen in the next excerpt:

"Yes, I have [experienced the glass ceiling]. And it goes even beyond just progressing. It goes even beyond that, to two people doing the same job; a male gets paid more than a female. Let us say there is two people, a male and a female, selling sponsorships, a male earns more than the female." [R3]

In addition, the two respondents who had not experienced the glass ceiling used terms such as "I can't truly say I have [experienced the glass ceiling]" [R9] and "not in my organisation" [R1] in response. Respondents further presented factors such as self-imposed restrictions, the recognition of employees based on their abilities, and the existence of a female staff

complement within the organisation as factors which contributed to there being no evidence of a glass ceiling. The responses are shown below.

Regarding self-imposed restrictions, Respondent 10 stated:

“There is no glass ceiling, the restriction is self-imposed.” [R10]

Regarding recognising employees based on their abilities, Respondent 12 stated:

“I have not [experienced the glass ceiling]. I have just always seen the person who works the hardest always gets recognised. I have been fortunate in that situation [because] I have always been surrounded by people that would acknowledge me for who I am not for my sex.” [R12]

Concerning the existence of a female staff complement within the organisation, Respondent 11 said:

“Well, we only have ladies here. I am going to say the reason why we have women here, okay, instead of men is because we would never be able to pay a man.” [R11]

4.5.6. Higher education and experience

Most of the respondents rated higher education as very important when respondents were questioned about the importance of higher education for female senior managers. Ten respondents had university/higher education qualifications while the remaining two had obtained National Senior Certificates. Despite possessing academic qualifications, respondents revealed the challenges experienced with regard to higher education.

Respondent 7 highlighted the challenges posed by South Africa’s patriarchal past, where a female enrolling at university, graduating, and fulfilling work in a certain profession was “unheard of”:

“Compared to the past in South Africa, there are now more girls that are going to university, they are graduating; taking top positions; they are researchers, engineers, actuarial scientists, where it was not heard of before.” [R7]

The respondents presented challenges and disadvantages associated with the role of higher education in the context of management such as the balance between education and experience, selecting sport as a career path, and the lack of support for education. These findings are revealed in the following sections.

In relation to the disadvantageous role of higher education in the practical context of management, the following responses were recorded:

“I think it can teach you all the theory and most of the time that pretty much means nothing when you are dealing with the real world, and I think in this day and age where entrepreneurship should be encouraged and all of that stuff, I don’t think they teach that to you to university, with all due respect.” [R1]

In support of Respondent 1’s response, Respondent 3 detailed the application of educational principles in, precisely, senior management levels of sport organisations:

“I do not think just having education alone is going to suffice because while I believe it is critical, I also think that if you are not aware, or if you have not experienced how to apply those educational principles that you have learnt into practice, and you have made mistakes doing it at lower levels, by the time you get to higher level, there is not room for mistakes.” [R3]

Although education was discussed as a key imperative to progress to senior management positions, it was not made clear by the respondents as to what the importance of education is towards the practical operations of the job requirements for senior managers.

Regarding having or employing an adequate number of educated/qualified, and experienced individuals within sport organisations, the majority of the respondents said:

“I think one of the things that we struggle with in sports is to find a comfortable balance within our boards. So, some of these people are the best people to lead the sport-specific elements of it but sometimes, because, education is not a requirement for election, a lot of these federations then have people who are only good at the sport. And then, when we come and speak of governance and academic discussions, you speak of general models and structures, it becomes a bit difficult.” [R5]

Emphasising the importance of having a suitable balance (qualified and sport-experienced employees) in the organisation, Respondent 7 stated:

“You need to have a balance because when you are going to debate, you need to also understand the bigger picture of theory as well as practice.” [R7]

Concerning the challenges associated with selecting sports as a career path, a respondent who had acquired a Masters qualification in a non-sport related academic discipline explained:

“It sometimes comes down to this, funding streams and scholarships for women to be able to consciously make a choice that they want to go into sports administration or management. I think sometimes they (females) go into the more traditional kind of streams, because, it is a bit of an uncertain future if I can put it that way.” [R4]

In relation to the finding above, Respondent 5 highlighted the lack of support for education in the sports environment:

“So other challenges would be access to support for education. So maybe it is about setting up foundations. Yeah, Nedbank did it, they have got a sports trust

and they are working on the ground with youngsters and so forth. But, maybe corporates also need to look at opportunities to sponsor bursaries and things like that for women to move into the administration of sport and actually make it a paid career.” [R4]

In addition, respondents frequently indicated the importance of experience and provided examples of varied types of experience, followed by the challenges and the benefits it offers. The types of experience which participants mentioned ranged from experience gained from the job, sport experience/background, volunteer-based experience, and general life experiences, as can be seen below. In relation to work experience or background in a particular sport code, two respondents emphasised this finding as follows:

“You could not expect someone who has a non-[sporting] mind, to necessarily just step into a position and start ministering sport. And I think that would apply to all sports. I would not necessarily want to be an administrator in netball, or I may have an interest or a passion, but I would not, without experience, feel comfortable.” [R4]

Similarly, other respondents described the role of the experience gained from specific job positions:

“People come in with different degrees and they are not necessarily sport related. So, I guess most of the experience is on-the-job, definitely.” [R8]

Additionally, one respondent particularly illuminated on how the experience she had acquired as a volunteer assisted her in acquiring a position in the sports environment:

“As much as my final qualification was not sports management, I remained, from an experience perspective, involved in sports as a volunteer. It is nice because then, when you leave tertiary education, you can say I studied ‘x’ and I also did the following things. And immediately, people can pick up, because it is on your CV. It is all the other things that you have done where they can say, okay fine, this person clearly must have some sort of leadership skill, because I can see she was president of her sports union, she cheered her netball club, she did this and that.” [R6]

With a slightly different perspective, Respondent 12 reflected on the lack of opportunity she had to study further, and how, then, her general life experiences were important in assisting her in her current position:

“I was not privileged enough to go and study further. So, I have learnt through other people, through mentoring; through people opening themselves up to give me the knowledge. I think you learn every day; it does not necessarily have to come from a higher institution. It is always beneficial, but I do think your experiences in life help you a lot more than textbooks.” [R12]

In addition, respondents found that work experience benefitted them with regard to the ability to leverage in certain situations or work engagements, it increased their credibility, and earned them respect. The above is shown in the following responses:

“Experience gives you a leverage to everything. Because, at the end of the day, they will come back to you because of your experience.” [R2]

Emphasising the benefits of work experience on one’s credibility, Respondent 4 stated:

“I think [experience is important]. To some extent, your credibility is earned, but I think also if you can have some experience, [it is beneficial] because it is very much an industry that is very service orientated.” [R4]

Similarly, Respondent 9 explained the element of gaining respect after gaining more experience in the sports business environment:

“I also came back a lot more experienced, better experienced, better skilled, slightly more advanced in terms of knowledge and stuff, and people kind of have been really respecting what I bring to the table. There have not discriminated against me as a woman at this stage.” [R9]

Conversely, at least four respondents disclosed how using their experience to prove their worth and expertise in the workplace was a key challenge. Respondents described the extent to which female senior managers have to prove themselves; as shown in the following text excerpts:

“You just have to make the work speak for itself, you have to work a little harder and you have to be right most of the time. As a woman, you do not have the freedom or the luxury to just take a swipe of something and say, ‘Ah, I was actually thinking’. You have to ensure that those opinions are backed by solid facts in order for it to not be dismissible just because it came from you.” [R5]

“People have to first see who you are; you have got to prove yourself; what are you about; do you have the capability? They do not take it at face value that you have got the capability; you have got to first show your mettle.” [R6]

4.5.7. Inclusion

Based on participants’ responses, three key factors emerged within this query, namely, a) the impact of systemic and historical events, b) the notable trend of having informal meetings to discuss work-related matters, and c) the need to constantly advocate for the inclusion of females. The aforementioned factors are detailed in the next sections.

Regarding systemic and historical events, the exclusion of females in areas such as sport education and administration which affect females within their current roles as senior managers was revealed in the following responses:

“I think we are unsure of ourselves as women because we have always been on the back foot of a lot of scenarios, but, it is changing and I see it changing on a regular basis and it is wonderful to see.” [R12]

“The availability of women might be another thing as well because, remember, for many, many years, women did not practise or did not go and study sport management or governance, or where we are now.” [R9]

“If we look at what we see now, there are more girls that are going to university, they are graduating, they are taking top positions, they are researchers, engineers, actuaries, where it was not heard of before.” [R7]

In response to the challenges that females are likely to be faced in senior managerial positions, interestingly, one respondent delved into the specific challenges associated with inclusion, and additionally touched on aspects of belonging, transformation and diversity in a lengthy response to the question. An example of this can be seen in the following passage:

“I think inclusion is a big problem for me, being included on different levels. It is still very much a boy’s club, so it is old boys club relationships. I struggle with being excluded from, for example, a face-to-face meeting.” [R3]

Furthermore, Respondent 3 described the trend of meeting in informal settings to discuss work-related matters as a “massive problem in the sporting sector;” [R3] as having drinks and playing a round of golf seemed to be “the way of doing things.” [R3] Respondent 4 indicated that male employees “get together, sit and have a chat over beer or coffee, and make certain decisions” [R4] while they, as female managers, question the consultation processes and their inclusion in work-related matters. Additionally, the challenges associated with meeting to discuss and partake in the decision making processes of work-related matters at informal settings is summed up in the following excerpt:

“I mean, we do not have a girl’s club and it is something that a lot of us women who are in leadership in the sports world are trying to impress upon each other, that, a lot of these things were being left out at golf clubs; on the golf course, at bars, because, gents go and agree to things as gents, and we do not have that type of system.” [R5]

In addition, at least two respondents felt that they constantly need to advocate for the inclusion of females in their respective work environments. This finding is shown in the following responses:

“We have had to work really hard from the side-lines. Sometimes you sound like the broken record. ‘Hey, what about the women? What about the women? Have you thought about the women?’ It is constantly having to champion that space for women.” [R4]

“So, for me, I enjoy working with my president because he has this view about equality and that. [And] the other three executive members, except for the one

executive member who is always telling me, “You are always pushing for women!” that sort of thing.” [R7]

4.5.8. Lack of mentors

In relation to mentorship, a few respondents used the term “role models”, and at times used the terms (“mentors” and “role model/s”) interchangeably. When the question of mentors was raised, it was revealed that “there were few [mentors] in the country and in the [African] continent.” [R2] Most of the respondents felt that they had been influenced by a female mentor at some point in their career, and the respondents believed that a similar trend was established with regard to female mentors. Three respondents disclosed, in the statements below, the lack of female mentors within the context of the study:

“[Female mentors are] very few. It is very few and I think it also speaks to the fact that there are few female leaders in the space.” [R6]

“I think that we are far too few that people could draw on, as a result and for that reason, I want to be in a position to become that [support] for a generation that comes after me.” [R3]

“Female [mentors] were quite absent in my life.” [R7]

In addition, respondents delved into the importance of mentors with a greater focus on female mentors; the presence of mentors of both genders in relation to their respective professions; and the challenges associated with both male and female mentors, which are discussed in the next few sections.

The importance of female mentors was stressed regarding their ability to influence one’s approach to sports administration, for their assistance with job tasks, training and work experience, as well as women’s ability to gain knowledge from them due to them being known to be ‘knowledgeable and logical’. The findings are shown below.

In relation to how particular traits are displayed by respondent’s predecessors, and how former colleagues influence respondent’s approach to sports administration, Respondent 8 commented:

“She will sit the whole way through a five-day conference, and on that fifth day when it is question time, she will come up with all those pertinent questions. I respect and admire her completely analytical approach and that mind that focuses [and separates] wood from the trees’ I have been lucky to actually learnt a lot from her.” [R8]

Similar to Respondent 8, Respondent 4 detailed how former female administrators from her sport organisations assisted her in areas such as job tasks, training and work experience:

“So, there were women administrators when I started out. And I kind of found myself moving into the administration side of the sport, so I relied on those people to assist, and to train and to give me experience. And a lot of it was kind of on-the-job experience, if I can put it that way.” [R4]

On the other hand, Respondent 7 detailed how she acquired knowledge from a number of female employees:

“There have been quite a few women that I have learnt from. I have always looked at them and decided that these people are knowledgeable, and I could actually talk to this person and bounce a few things off. All of them are older than me, they have been there forever, and they are logical.” [R11]

The respondents said that female mentors were commonly found to include executives, sport administrators/predecessors, academic professors, sport personalities, professional coaches and sporting icons, while male mentors included executives, mainly presidents. These findings are shown in the next few excerpts:

Regarding the impact and role of female executives and sport personalities as mentors, Respondent 3 described her personal experience:

“I guess it would be a massive role [that female mentors play] through other female executives, or other female personalities that have excelled in this male dominated environment. They have provided me with the belief that I can achieve that as well if I persevere.” [R3]

Similarly, Respondent 8 detailed the impact of a former female president who had served as her mentor:

“I have had some really super people (i.e. female employees) that I have actually learnt from and been able to learn a lot about and work with. She was president here for two years. She is just really, really special.” [R8]

On the other hand, Respondent 7 revealed her male mentor in the form of a former president of a particular sport organisation, while Respondent 1 similarly revealed how she had recently found a male mentor who serves as the president of a particular sport organisation:

“I will say Dr Sam Ramsamy was a mentor in a way to me.” [R7]

Illustrating her recent encounter with a male mentor, Respondent 1 stated:

“So, it is only recently that I have had a male mentor (a president of a particular sport federation) because him and I are very similarly aligned.” [R1]

The ‘pull-her-down syndrome’ - “a way in which too often women denigrate other women” (Carr, 2016) - and the lack of influence were found, by respondents, to be challenges

associated with female mentors. Two respondents spoke about the existence of the 'pull-her-down syndrome':

"Our own women will embarrass you, you know; we love to take women down, we do it all the time. I would see a woman do it whenever." [R10]

"Females have this tendency of the pull-her-down syndrome." [R2]

Another two respondents reflected on the lack of influence from female mentors in their roles as senior managers. The respondent said:

"They have played a little bit of a silent role in that I have just watched how perform despite the challenges that I know that they facing, but, it is a little bit tricky because I know that they experiencing the same challenges, but I don't hear them saying anything. And so, that role for me, it has affected me in that I am forced to adopt the same style because my thinking is that that may be the only approach to succeeding in this industry." [R3]

With regard to male mentors, one respondent reflected on the difficulty in obtaining information from male employees who are meant to serve as mentors. This can be seen in the following excerpt:

"It is not easy with men. When you ask a man about something he will tell you, 'you know the answer'. And you ask yourself, you might have so many answers but you need a direct answer from him to explain that this is what it is. They will not tell you the truth, or the information that you want." [R2]

Furthermore, one respondent revealed a notable importance in having mentors to influence the perceptions of young males, concerning the role of females in society, in order to better understand a female's extended scope of roles, apart from home responsibilities, such as that found within the workplace.

"Role models are important, not only for young girls but for young boys as well, so that they can live to grow up in a society where they know that women have value, and that women are capable, and so that they can obviously treat women as equals in the future. They cannot see their mom in the kitchen and think that that is all women can do." [R6]

4.5.9. Male dominance

Male dominance was a finding that frequently emerged throughout various questions as respondents found that males dominated extensively; in the sports sector, including specific sport industries, at the senior management levels of sport organisations, and in the management of sports teams. This is shown in the next excerpts:

"Generally, the sports sector remains male dominated." [R6]

Illustrating male dominance in, specifically, senior management, Respondent 1 stated:

“So, probably at my level it is probably male management dominated and female lower driven.” [R1]

Supporting the responses above, a Respondent highlighted how the male dominated South African sport industry affects the representation of female employees at senior management level:

“Our national women's team is obviously all female, but the entire team management is male; and it will stand to reason that, as they move up, there will be fewer females to then go forward and go into the senior executive positions.” [R3]

Within senior management levels of sporting organisations, respondents elicited that male dominance was evident within executive boards and committees. The following excerpts elaborate on the male dominance within executive boards:

“I do think that one of the challenges that we face in the organisation is, our board is male dominated, but our sport is female dominated.” [R1]

“There are challenges when it comes to committees that are predominantly male representative.” [R7]

Furthermore, respondents discovered the existence of a male dominated network and the influence of South African culture on the trend of male dominance. The existence of a male dominated network was discovered through the use of statements such as “a whole network that is very male dominated,” [R4] and “still very much a boy's club,” [R3] which were comments taken from respondents'. Offering a different perspective, Respondent 5 referred to the existence of a “boys club mentality,” while divulging details about her observation of the male cooperation within such a network. The above sentiments are expressed in the following excerpt:

“The male cooperation is unbelievable. It is simply unbelievable. You can see people try to kill each other in a boardroom, they will go play a round of golf, they will come back tomorrow and they are different gents. And you will be like, what happened here? And it is a boy's club mentality, the gents all went and bought each other beers, and they say, “Guys, we can't operate like this, let us agree on a couple of things”.” [R5]

In addition, three respondents revealed that the cultural perception of males as the dominant figure in the household and females being predominantly homebound, which is shown in a number of South African cultures (i.e. Black Africans, White Afrikaners and Indians), could be largely attributed to the trend of male dominance within a workplace setting. The following extract summarises this finding:

“I can only talk from my own country and my own experience because of our situation. Eighty-five per cent of our population or even more, is African, and I know the African culture in terms how girls, women, and mothers were at home, and all of their husbands were out in the field and in the mines.” [R7]

4.5.10. Organisational management

Throughout various interview questions, respondents shared personal encounters that exemplified their challenges with regard to organisational management. The state of leadership structures and the autocratic leadership style within sport organisations were challenges posed to the stakeholders. These challenges are detailed in the sections to follow:

Respondent 1 detailed her thoughts on the Apartheid era and its impact on the current state of leadership structures in South African sport organisations:

“We are dealing with leadership, which comes from the hearts of Apartheid. It (leadership style) is either driven by oppression and fixing what was wrong or still trying to hold on to what you think was right. And so, the clash of those two worlds is our leadership at the moment. And the problem is, they are replicating below them so there is not always necessarily working together, it is always more opposition, so you are not creating any convergence.” [R1]

Furthermore, one of the longest serving respondents spoke about the management and leadership of one of South Africa’s prominent national sport organisations, where she highlighted the autocratic manner in which the organisation was managed during her time of service:

“What I am very pleased to see is that, because of the challenges we experienced with the national committee and with the leadership at that time, and the manner in which the organisation was managed - which was totally autocratic - as a woman, it was a *huge* challenge.” [R7]

In continuation, Respondent 7 went on to disclose the unfair treatment she had encountered under the autocratic-led sport organisation:

“I mean, when you are sitting in a meeting and the president tells you that, listen, ‘I want you to shut up’, pointing his finger to you, saying, ‘I’m tired of listening to you.’ Then you say, okay, now what do you do? And obviously, I was going to report him to the Human Rights Commission, but, instead I got a lawyer to send him a letter, and then I got a retraction and an apology.” [R7]

Additionally, within their roles and responsibilities as senior managers, respondents revealed that aspects related to organisational change, such as changing organisational practices, and the employees’ or colleagues’ dislike towards change hinders their ability to manage their respective organisations. The following sections show the findings.

In relation to how female senior managers experience challenges with the process of implementing change to the practices in sport organisations, a respondent reflected, saying:

“And we must not fall down on that a lot of our restrictions are because sport is an organisation, a culture, and a community that has been running for hundreds of years. And you are sitting here and you are telling people who have been running their sport since Apartheid, since even before Apartheid that some of these archaic things that they have brought in from yesteryear are not the things.” [R5]

Additionally, another two respondents explained how they experienced challenges posed by the dislike displayed by their employees or colleague’s towards organisational change. This finding is summarised as follows:

“I came into this organisation specifically to manage an entire organisational restructuring so that in itself is a challenge because most people do not like change. So, it is people entrenched in what they grew up knowing and grew up in a comfort zone.” [R1]

4.5.11. Recruitment and hiring processes

Respondents revealed various reasons and considerations, which could potentially serve as challenges that affect the recruitment and hiring of female senior managers. The challenges ranged from the consideration of demographic factors to the perceived lip service towards the recruitment of female candidates, and the perceived resistance towards employing females. Motherhood, and solely relying on gender as a recruitment strategy, were identified as further potential hindrances. These findings are discussed in the sections to follow.

At least two respondents highlighted the importance of a clear and thorough representation across a range of demographic factors when recruiting female senior managers. The following excerpt summarises this finding by highlighting the consideration of factors such as sexual orientation and age when recruiting and employing female candidates:

“Companies say they are conforming to transformation policy by employing a woman and then they think that is it, their jobs done. But, there is so much more to that; the female needs to be well-represented across her sexual orientation, her age, her views, and her entire spectrum of demographic characteristics but even beyond that.” [R3]

Furthermore, one respondent disclosed how the ‘lip service’, the action of “publicly supporting or approving of something, while actually taking no action to produce it” (*Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*, 2008), was initiated by male employees towards the recruitment of female candidates:

“I think the biggest challenge for me personally is the lip service that is paid. And, it is not token appointments, but, as a sector, us as women, we want to see the right person for the job, and the right woman in those positions.” [R4]

Additionally, the perceived resistance towards employing females in sport organisations was referred to in the following excerpt which was provided by a respondent who served as the only female senior manager on her executive committee:

“The proof is in the pudding, because, if you are not resisting, where are these girls and women that can occupy these roles because I know they are visible, I speak to them all the time.” [R3]

Moreover, Respondent 1 considered the role of a “potential mother or mother” [R1] as a factor which could affect a female’s recruitment and/or employment within the senior management level:

“So, I think that all businesses - the sporting sector might just be a little bit more okay with it - but, in all sectors, the fact that you are either a potential mother or a mother, brings its own dynamics into the fear of hiring women.” [R1]

Respondent 9 added that using gender as a form of leverage to enhance the chances of being recruited and hired could at times serve as a self-imposed challenge:

“If you can have a package of being educated, experienced, and well versed, you will probably have a lot more respect in fulfilling a position like this, that I am currently in than just saying ‘okay, I am a woman and I want the position’. And I think that has been what is putting off a lot of people as well in appointing women.” [R9]

4.5.12. Remuneration

When respondents were asked about their remuneration, the responses suggested that most of the sport organisations did not have a wage gap. The findings indicated that of the twelve respondents, a majority received no monthly income, while the second most respondents received between R51,000 to R70,000 after tax deductions. The predominant finding for no monthly income (and thus a lack of evidence of a wage gap) was that most stakeholders occupied volunteer-based positions. To further justify the non-existence of a wage gap in sport organisations, respondents provided the following reasons (tabulated below) into why there is no wage gap within their respective organisations.

Table 8: Respondents justifications for no wage gap

Key points/reasons	Quotations
Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	“It is not a distinction between a man or a woman; it is going to be what is the job and the KPI required, and you will be paid accordingly.” [R9]
Qualifications	“No [there is no wage gap when both male and female employees share the same skills and qualifications], except when you are a coach, where you would be paid differently. But, yes, it is mostly based on your qualifications as well.” [R2]
Non-profit organisation	“We are a non-profit organisation, so we do not have any wages. So, we do not have that issue at all.” [12]
Financial constraints	“Well, it has been honorarium in the past three or four years, but that is because of financial constraints. So, it is not to say it was because it was based on being men or women, it is because the organisation could not afford it.” [R9]
Female staff compliment	“In our organisation, no, [there is no wage gap], and I think I say that purely because most of us that are full-time employed, in my organisation, are female.” [R6]
Equal benefits or expenses	“But even when it comes to us as executive members, you will not get less than what the other one gets, not only the wages but even in terms of any other benefits and expenses (e.g. transport), it is all the same.” [R7]

Source: Author

In contrast, the remaining respondents indicated that they believe there is a wage gap in South African sport organisations, and this is presented in the following excerpts:

“In this organisation, no, [there is no wage gap], but I do believe [there is a wage gap] in other organisations.” [R1]

“I am going to say yes [there is a wage gap], although there is not an example here because we do not have males. But I know, from outside point of view, the males get more money than the females.” [R11]

Illustrating the negative impacts of the wage gap on the employment of personnel, Respondent 8 stated:

“Yes, [there is] *definitely* [a wage gap]. That is why we have not got a male National Director or CEO. No question about that.” [R8]

In addition to her response regarding the wage gap in the South African sports sector, Respondent 1 further mentioned how the difference in remuneration in the sports sector was dependent on the sporting code and the level of responsibility associated with the position. This finding is revealed as follows:

“Does the CEO of rugby earn more than me, I am pretty sure that he does? Right? But, he has a far bigger commercial entity on his hands, than I do. So does the

CEO of, I do not know, a smaller sport, who is a male, earn more than me? I do not know.” [R1]

4.5.13. Work-life balance

Respondents were questioned on how they perceived work-life balance. At first, two respondents argued against the concept of the terms ‘balance’ or ‘work-life balance,’ postulating that ‘there’s no such thing as work-life balance,’ [R1] while the other respondent questioned its existence:

“Well, it is a myth to think that there is such a thing as work-life balance.” [R1]

“Does it exist?” [R6]

In response to the interview question, respondents presented a number of factors, for example, family or household responsibilities (e.g. child-related duties); job responsibilities (e.g. portfolios, meetings, and sport tournaments, to name a few), workplace environments; the nature of the sport, multitasking responsibilities (e.g. education, travel and extra-mural activities) and societal pressures. Additional discoveries were related to the level of difficulty of navigating through various tasks and responsibilities. These findings are detailed in the following sections.

At least four respondents reflected on having to manage multitasking responsibilities, for example, family/household responsibilities and the job responsibility of serving on committees. A respondent said:

“Women are multifaceted. You could be a leader in your church, and at the same time be a CEO of a national federation, or a school mom and at the same time be asked to address a cabinet minister, or you might have to go to Parliament and address the sports portfolio committee. So, as women, we fill many roles, with the added benefit of obviously being the caregivers within our households.” [R6]

Respondent 4 described the demands which stem from the nature of the sport code, which she and her colleagues have to deal with in the organisation:

“The men who are employed in our organisation also have a huge juggle to perform. It is just the nature of our sport that it does take time. It might not necessarily involve a lot of people because it is an individual sport, [especially with the] tournaments and so forth. So, I think everybody in the sport actually has to juggle [work and personal responsibilities]. It is just the nature of our sport.” [R4]

Conversely, Respondent 3 disclosed the challenge of dealing with a lonely workplace environment as a female senior manager in her effort of dealing with work-life balance:

“I think it is a lonely place, let me put it that way, because, you have got to sort it out yourself. And, particularly in terms of my situation, I do not have any other female colleagues on my level.” [R3]

Three respondents reflected on how the “world has changed,” and how the current societal pressures which females face affect their efforts in navigating work-life balance. The following quotation presents the respondent’s views:

“I think that the whole world has changed, whereas in my day, you did not have all these pressures, financial [pressure], work [pressure], etc. You could do all these things [back then]; the women, the girls, they could fit in all their responsibilities [back then].” [R11]

Furthermore, at least five respondents indicated the difficulty in dealing with various tasks and responsibilities in aiming to achieve a work-life balance. One particular respondent vehemently cited the level of difficulty experienced when navigating work-life balance by highlighting how ‘work-life balance’ was not recognised as a commonly accepted norm within the sports environment:

“It is very challenging mainly because there is no understanding or appreciation by the [sport] organisation. It is not something that is well accepted. It is not something that your manager wants to hear about; it is not something that is spoken about. So, if you do speak about it then it is considered a weakness.” [R3]

Participants were further probed on their ability to achieve work-life balance as female senior managers. The probing came about because having a work-life balance was previously perceived in literature as a factor which hindered female employees in corporate organisations. The results showed that most of the participants perceived that work-life balance was attainable within their senior capacities, while a smaller minority perceived that it was not possible to achieve. Respondents who indicated the possibility of achieving work-life balance credited the use of strategies such as developing a good work structure, setting boundaries, including family (e.g. children) in the sport, to list a few, as shown in the following excerpts:

“I can only speak for myself, but I think it is possible to achieve [work-life balance]. I think it is important to have a good [work] structure.” [R3]

Regarding setting boundaries, Respondent 9 stated:

“So, drawing the line (especially in this digital age) of not answering the phone or not looking at emails and things like that, I think it is really important. So, you need to switch off as well, and you need to find a balance.” [R9]

Regarding family members (e.g. children) in sporting circles, Respondent 2 stated:

“I have tried to accommodate my child's life within my sports circles. I would travel with her, if possible, to some tournaments but when there were meetings, she would be at home with my mom.” [R2]

On the contrary, it emerged from respondents that the possibility of achieving a work-life balance could be affected by the fast paced societal changes taking place in the world, as detailed earlier, and the move away from the commonly assumed traditional role of females within society:

“The world is a very different place now; life is very fast; the pressure which society puts on one another, for men and for women quite honestly; but, because women tend to assume a more traditional role sometimes, I think it is particularly difficult. The younger generation has it tougher than when I was at the age of having children, and that is unfortunately just the nature of the world we live in now.” [R4]

The following section will discuss the themes found in the third code group (organisational and governmental policy and support), namely government initiatives and policies, organisational practices, and networking.

4.6. Organisational and government policy and support

4.6.1. Government initiatives and policies

Participants were questioned about the government initiatives or policies which had supported them in their capacity as senior managers. The results indicated that the stakeholders had been supported by elements of the National Sport and Recreation Plan, the Transformation Charter of South African sport, and guidelines brought in by the IOC:

“The Transformation Charter is something that has more of where one wants to go and has an action plan and so forth. But [in terms of] supporting female senior managers, I think the statements in there give support; the Transformation Charter and the National Sport and Recreation policies and so forth give support to women and transformational support.” [R4]

Illustrating the support from the guidelines presented by IOC, Respondent 2 stated:

“The president of the IOC has always ensured that the policy must always be implemented. So, some of the federations, and I think even in our federation, internationally, we have seen it. We have a few women [now] as well as council members; so, you can see that at least high up it is happening but at the bottom it is slow, it is still a fight, we are trying but that 30 per cent of women integration [from the IOC] needs to be implemented.” [R2]

However, respondents were found to be supported by initiatives that focused on addressing issues such as gender representation, women development and gender-based violence in sports, as commented:

“I think the opportunities given by government in terms of encouraging gender representation have certainly helped, especially in our industry.” [R6]

Highlighting the support provided by initiatives that focus on women development and gender-based violence, Respondent 7 stated:

“Three federations were identified by the National Lotteries Commission to put in a proposal for funding [for aspects] of gender, women development. It was an initiative from the president of the country, [in aim of catering] to gender-based violence and all those programmes for sports.” [R7]

The findings further revealed a number of factors and challenges associated with government initiatives, these included the classification of female employees within various initiatives and policies (e.g. the Transformation Charter); concerns (e.g. the lack of literature) regarding the formulation processes of the policies and initiatives; factors concerning the implementation and effectiveness of the initiatives (i.e. the lack of implementation and/or ineffective application); the lack of knowledge or awareness about legislative initiatives; the lack of gender-specific policies and the non-reliance on policy. These developments are described in the next sections.

With regard to the classification of female employees within initiatives and policies such as the Transformation Charter, two respondents weighed in on this finding. Their views were as follows:

“And, you know, in terms of women, as a focus area, are part of that transformation. Okay, yes, also PDIs (Previously Disadvantaged Individuals) and so forth are also a priority, but women, and this is what we kind of trade on, we say, ‘women in general are the priority here!’ as well as disabled, PDI, etc. etc.” [R4]

Regarding the concerns (e.g. the lack of literature) regarding the formulation processes of the policies and initiatives that support female employees in sports, Respondent 5 specifically emphasised the following:

“We are lacking literature, and those of us who rely on literature to try and codify legislation - let us put it that way - it is definitely difficult to find that. You rely a lot on regulations and resolutions take place in meetings, but there is no policy about gender at all; not to our knowledge, other than declarations we have signed that we do not implement.” [R5]

With regard to the factors concerning the implementation and effectiveness of the initiatives, at least six respondents expressed, respectively, the lack of adherence, the ineffective

application and/or the lack of implementation, and the lack of sustainability of policies and initiatives in sports:

“Maybe the IOC gender equality mandate/percentage is being overlooked. Because it is there as a policy, no one wants to follow it.” [R2]

Regarding the ineffective application and/or the lack of implementation of certain aspects of policies, Respondent 3 stated:

“We obviously have, in theory, we have diversity, inclusion, and transformation, but, in practice, it is a very different position, [I think].” [R3]

Regarding the lack of sustainability of organisational policies and initiatives, Respondent 8 explained:

“You have [watched] someone who has been appointed go through all the phases, and, they are magic; new broom sweeps clean. But then suddenly, after a year or two years, it is all faded again until the next person comes in and all inspired and that. There is no continuity, there is no [sustainability].” [R8]

Furthermore, about two respondents reflected on their personal lack of knowledge or awareness about legislative initiatives aimed at supporting senior female employees in the sports environment. The following quotation illustrates this:

“I would be lying to you, I cannot [mention any policies or practices that have supported me]. I cannot even say that, but I do know that SASCOC helps us quite a lot; which is part of the federation which we report to in government.” [R12]

In addition, at least two respondents mentioned the lack of gender-specific policies, which is presented in the next extract:

“There is no policy on gender and sports at current stage. Apparently, one was being workshopped at one point.” [R5]

“The IOC guidelines, yes. Even SASCOC has now made changes, where I think six women will be on the board of thirteen; the new constitution will be published now. [Other than that,] we do not have a particular policy as such (such as the IOC), in South Africa.” [R9]

Interestingly, two respondents spoke on how they did not quite rely on policy support as female senior managers in the sport environment. The next excerpt represents the respondent’s views on this finding:

“But you do not want to use that as your fall-back position; you do not want to say, ‘oh, because it is in the Transformation Charter, therefore, you have to do that’. I think, sometimes, it is needed, but, I do not think as women senior managers, that is what your default position should be.” [R4]

Though challenges did exist, Respondent 12 indicated that there was an opportunity for improvement as there are “good people out there sitting in a lot of high positions who are trying to make a very big difference,” [R12]. She believed that with cohesion, sport federations and affiliates can “achieve a lot more than they are allowing themselves to.” [R12]

4.6.2. Organisational practices

Similarly, to the previous question, participants were probed on the existence of organisational practices, which have supported their growth or advancement as female senior managers in the workplace. The results indicated that the stakeholders were often supported by way of capacity-building initiatives (e.g. leadership programmes/summits and various training e.g. administration). Subsequently, support was usually provided by national sport governing bodies and provincial councils (e.g. the Department of Culture and Sport and the Cape Town district council), and internationally affiliated sport organisations:

“It is three programmes; one was for the athletes, one was for administrators, leadership, and the other was for the youth. So, three projects were submitted. But it is titled, “My gender, my strength.” [R7]

With regard to the support commonly provided by national sport governing bodies and provincial councils, Respondent 4 stated:

“I think definitely through the Department of Culture and Sport, Western Cape, and the Cape Town district council, they have had a lot of opportunities. Not as many as I think they would like, but opportunities to train coaches, train administrators and so forth.” [R4]

Similarly, Respondent 1 reflected on the support provided by internationally affiliated sport organisations:

“And [an international sport federation] have put in a gender equity clause of 30 per cent on their boards, so, that was the reason for doing this leadership course was to empower women so that they can take on leadership roles, within the sport because there are so few.” [R1].

Additionally, respondents presented an array of challenges that were associated with different organisational practices. The challenges included the lack of organisational practices to support female employees, and the lack of support and/or opportunities for growth or career progression within the organisation. Excerpts about this can be seen below:

At least four respondents criticised the lack of organisational practices to support female employees in sport organisations. The following quotation applies:

“I think we need to do a lot for women. We need to work a lot on women and focus on education, and skills, and ensure that the programmes that had been there in the past are being revived because they used to be so many.” [R2]

Additionally, respondents were further questioned on whether they had received any form of support or opportunities for growth in their respective organisations, and nine respondents said they had received some form of support or opportunities, while three other respondents indicated the direct opposite. With regard to the lack of support and/or opportunities for growth or career progression within the organisation, respondents reported the lack of capacity-building initiatives (approximately four respondents), the lack of opportunities for career progression (three respondents), the lack of support (e.g. from corporate level), and the lack of confidence displayed by female senior managers (one respondent), as concerns with the support and/or opportunities for growth or career progression within sport organisations:

“Do we have particular capacity-building initiatives that build women? No. Other than, when I participated in those processes as a youth promoter, then yes, they were. We do not really run that programme anymore; I do not know why. But there aren't really.” [R5]

Concerning the lack of support from corporate organisations, Respondent 4 stated:

“I think our sport, together with a lot of sports that sit out of the big three sport codes have really struggled to create the opportunities that they potentially could for women. So, I think the ability for corporations to really get behind sporting administration support is key. Often, they look to the sporting personalities because obviously there is mileage, but they do not necessarily look to the sport administrators.” [R4]

Illustrating the lack of support from corporate organisations, Respondent 2 stated:

“Sometimes there is [mentoring and skills provided for women], but it is the confidence that is also not there from the women themselves.” [R2]

4.6.3. Networking

In relation to how female senior managers have benefitted from networking opportunities presented by and through associations, respondents revealed multiple responses. A number of respondents indicated that there were opportunities available, in most cases providing practical examples or cases, while others indicated the non-availability of opportunities, and the remainder indicated neutrality while highlighting the challenges associated with networking as a female senior manager. The potential benefits or benefits associated with networking, and the reasons for engaging in networking as a female senior manager, were presented by respondents as additional findings arising out of this question.

Respondents revealed that opportunities to network were often presented through affiliations such as the national government's departments and sports departments, provincial sport federations, other sport organisations, local sport foundations, media and news outlets and various international affiliations:

"[There are] opportunities in national sports government departments; they support us; they support us." [R10]

Concerning the opportunities presented by provincial sport federations, Respondent 11 stated:

"Well, look, all the affiliates to [the federation], I get to know. So, I think I have got quite a broad networking scheme in all the provinces." [R11]

Regarding the opportunities presented by local sport foundations, other sport organisations, and various international affiliations, respondent 4 stated:

"There are a lot of people external to the organisation who also give support. For example, [ex-players who have] foundations, a whole lot of them that have foundations." [R4]

Regarding the opportunities presented by media and news outlets, Respondent 6 stated:

"Even something like *g Sport* for girls where you have a platform that solely focuses its energy on only looking at women's achievements and keeping day-to-day news in the headlines about what women are doing in the sporting space. And I think that that has given a face to women's sport over the last couple of years." [R6]

Furthermore, three respondents revealed that events were found to facilitate opportunities to network. The next quotation shows this:

"I am not affiliated with SAWSF. I do attend their conferences, I have spoken at one of their conferences and I facilitated one of their conferences because we will always support any initiative that looks to benefit women and young girls in the field of sport." [R5]

In addition, one respondent found that the use of cliques was used as a form of networking:

"I do find women can be very cliquey, I think men can as well, and you will find that the same cliques will sit together and work together." [R8]

Moreover, one respondent revealed how female senior managers were found to be engaging in networking for purposes of advancement (e.g. advancement of self), and to optimise the opportunities presented:

"It goes back to your earlier question about work-balance and what you need to do to grow as a person. And I think every person has to take their own decisions with regard to how do I advance myself, how do I learn from other people that are in similar situations as I am in." [R6]

Regarding optimising the opportunities presented in the sport industry, Respondent 6 explained:

“Every other opportunity, in terms of attending seminars, courses, etc. are not necessarily looking at women's specific needs, they are quite broad, so it is important for women to take up those opportunities when they avail themselves.” [R6]

Additionally, according to respondents, the benefits of networking are that it creates a platform for female senior managers to voice their concerns, and it allows for the sharing of resources and showcasing of one's abilities. The following quotation applies:

“At the very least, I think that these networking get-togethers will assist in a support aspect for one another. Number one; just to be able to voice your concerns about judgement, and number two; to be able to get some advice on how to handle certain challenges.” [R3]

Regarding the sharing of resources and showcasing one's abilities, Respondent 5 stated:

“There is a great level of networking that happens at those events held by the Department of Women and Persons with disability, and you get to come together and make use of some of the resources that other women have in other sectors.” [R5]

The challenges associated with networking include the lack of networking opportunities at senior management level, and difficulty in attracting media attention that are addressed in the following extracts:

“The opportunities to network at that level are few. So, the ones when you do get the opportunity, you have got to take them.” [R6]

Illustrating the difficulty in attracting media attention, Respondent 2 stated:

“We have got opportunities through the media. We have got to work hard at it but we do have opportunities and we see some and grasp them; for radio, for TV and so forth. But they do not necessarily come looking for us. We have got to leverage and push ourselves.” [R2]

4.7. Chapter summary

This chapter presented the key themes associated with female representation, the challenges, and the policy and support initiatives available for female senior managers in South African sport organisations.

The chapter began with the development of the independent codes, themes and code groups established during data analysis. Thereafter, key themes which form part of the three code groups, namely, the status quo of female representation, the identified challenges facing

female senior managers, and organisational and governmental policy and support were presented.

The key findings presented the perspective that female senior managers in South African sport organisations were often under-represented in managerial structures, which tended to be male dominated. Furthermore, they did not feel a sense of inclusion and/or belonging and issues relating to sexist attitudes were ongoing challenges. The key challenges experienced by female senior managers included decision making related challenges, gender stereotyping, the glass ceiling, the lack of mentors, organisational management, and achieving a work-life balance. Further challenges pertaining to government policies and initiatives, and organisational practices, higher education, networking, recruitment and hiring processes, financial concerns, and the impact of systemic and historical events were highlighted. The findings will be discussed in the following chapter, in conjunction with the existing literature and the research objectives of the study. The chapter will begin by discussing the state of female senior managers in South African sport organisations and will then develop into discussions pertaining to the sixteen contemporary challenges encountered by female senior managers. Thereafter, the chapter will discuss the policy and organisational support for females, in the form of networking, organisational support practices and initiatives, and government and organisational policies and initiatives.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

Following the findings chapter, this chapter discusses the key themes in relation to existing literature. The chapter aims to provide insights into the main research questions and address the research objectives of the study.

The chapter begins with a thematic discussion about the representation of female senior managers in South African sport organisations, followed by a discussion that considers the challenges associated with the systemic, historical factors that impact the management practices of female senior managers in the sport industry. The chapter continues to provide a strategic view of leadership at senior management levels, as well as insight into the perceptions concerning the inclusion of female employees in the sport industry. It discusses the influence of policies and organisational support on the management functions of sports practitioners. The chapter subsequently discusses career advancement opportunities for females in sports. The chapter then discusses the effects of organisational practices on remuneration for females in sports business, the limitations on funding opportunities for females in senior management positions, and the aspect of work-life balance in sports business.

5.2. Representation of female senior managers in South African sport organisations

This study reveals that the underrepresentation of females still exists across the senior management levels within South African national sport federations and national sports committees. Reflected in the majority of responses, it was noted that:

“[South Africa] has not even achieved 25 per cent representation yet. So, the aim should probably be 25 per cent because South Africa’s not even close to meeting a 30 per cent representation by women.” [R9]

This finding is consistent with studies by Acosta and Carpenter (2012), Lapchick (2016), and Evans and Pfister (2020) that emphasised that female employees are largely under-represented in sport’s leadership positions. These authors cited the positions of president, vice president, director, and executive board members but mentioned the lack of representation of female employees. This study’s findings similarly noted that females are under-represented in sport organisations in respect of chief executive officer, vice president and president positions. It is therefore clear that female representatives are under-represented across multiple senior management positions in sports. This underrepresentation might exacerbate issues of male domination, power dynamics, patriarchal organisational cultures, and electoral and selection

practices, as identified by Birrell (2000:61), Scambler (2005:152), and Burton (2019), which might be contributing to the lack of female senior managers in sports. The lack of female senior managers in sports might thus discourage and dilute diversity in decision making practices, skills and opinions in sport organisations.

5.3. Systemic historical factors

In light of the historical antecedents of South Africa, the themes that emerged reveal that race demographics and gender stereotypes are factors that significantly affect the managerial roles of female employees within the sport industry. To demonstrate this point, the nature of challenges experienced by Black African female senior managers differs from that of females those of other races/ethnic backgrounds, such as white female senior managers. The following response encapsulates the nature of this issue from responders:

“There is a type of intersectional level of challenge where it is intensified being a Black woman above being a woman in general. And are the challenges that I faced as a Black woman the same challenges that the white woman who we have on the board faces? We do not really know, but we can definitely understand that a difference can be mentioned.” [R5]

Such findings are consistent with Sanchez-Hucles and Davis (2010:173) and Pace (2018) who proposed that the perpetuating racial issue might consequently be adversely affecting Black female employees within sport organisations by hindering their career progression and overall success in the organisations they work for (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010:173). Likewise, studies have reported that in the global context where females predominantly occupy senior sport management positions, females from racial/ethnic minority groups (e.g. women of colour) are usually under-represented (Palmer & Masters, 2010; Melton & Bryant, 2017).

In addition to race demographics, Koca et al. (2011) identified gender stereotypes and discrimination as factors that foster negative attitudes towards female senior managers in sport organisations. Schein (2007) further noted that gender stereotypes negatively affect the hierarchical progression of females in sport organisations. The findings of this study concur with those studies as most respondents revealed that gender stereotypes and discriminative traits remain prevalent within sport organisations. To this end, key respondents emphasised that biased and stereotypical perceptions (e.g. perceptions that females are weak and emotional) largely exist not only at senior management level, but right across the sporting sector. According to the responses, this form of discrimination consists of perceived basic, sexist traits.

5.4. A strategic view of leadership at senior management levels

Studies by Robbins and Judge (2013:44), Rao (2017:10), and MacIntosh and Burton, (2019:3) suggest that employees' thoughts, behaviour, and actions can be influenced by individuals (e.g. group leaders or members of a group), organisational structures (e.g. leadership styles and management systems), and the external environment. This was found to be true in the current study where factors linked to autocratic leadership styles and exclusion emerged as a reflection of the leadership within respective sport organisations. An autocratic leadership style appeared to affect staff members' behaviour towards female senior managers in sport organisations. The study also discovered how several respondents grappled with unfair exclusion of their ideas during work discussions and engagements, which might indicate how female senior managers are undervalued in decision making and leadership contexts. The following extract reveals the lived experience of a key respondent:

“As a woman, it (the manner that the organisation was managed) was a huge challenge. Although I was the deputy president and the vice president, you always had to convince them why you were saying or raising things or debating things. There was always this battle to convince them what needs to be done and it was quite very challenging.” [R7]

The respondents' statements revealed that the leadership within South African sport organisations is still trying to reconcile the Apartheid era's oppressive practices and attitudes, while at the same time re-writing policy and legislation to redress the previous injustices of Apartheid. The following response encapsulates this:

“We are dealing with leadership, which comes from the heart of Apartheid. [The leadership] is either driven by oppression and fixing what was wrong or still trying to hold on to what they think was right. And so, the clash of those two worlds is our leadership at the moment. And the problem is, [executives of sport organisations] are replicating below them so there is not always necessarily working together, it is always more opposition, so you are not creating any convergence.” [R1]

Previous leadership during Apartheid had autocratic tendencies linked to governance, segregation, inequality, and politics. Therefore, the perception of the abovementioned stakeholder's response could be linked to such factors. The incongruence found in South African sports leadership might thus be subjected to negative impacts of the broader strategic management functions of leaders within sport organisations, as posited by Kreitner (2009). Moreover, the perceived state of leadership might adversely impact the allocation of the appropriate human, financial and material resources, so change is needed to ensure the optimal function of sport organisations, as mentioned by McLean (2011), because failure to initiate such change could lead to the ineffective operation of sport organisations.

5.5. Inclusion of females in the sports business industry

According to Wolff and Hums (2020) and Dixon (n.d.), inclusion in sports comprises providing individuals across their gender, age, race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, or ability, with the full respect, dignity, value, belonging, and opportunity to participate in various roles in sport (i.e. athletes, spectators, coaches, officials, and administrators). The definition of inclusion thus comprises aspects of diversity, belonging, and inadvertently emphasises transformation. While the study's inquiry focused specifically on inclusion as a key concept of female senior managers, the findings revealed that other additional aspects as mentioned by Wolff and Hums (2020) are reflected in respondent's views when discussing inclusion in the workplace:

“One of the biggest challenges is the inclusion and the belonging. In South Africa we speak about transformation, diversity, inclusion and belonging, [yet] people do not understand the difference between these.” [R3]

This therefore shows that management, especially for females in the sport business industry, needs to consider additional aspects of inclusion. South African sport policymakers should also consider Dixon-Fyle, Dolan, Hunt and Prince's (2020:41-44) recommendations when drafting new policies or amending existing policies on the aspects of inclusion. These recommendations include a) increasing diverse representation in leadership positions, b) enabling equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency, c) promote openness, tackling bias and discrimination, and d) foster belonging through support for multivariate diversity, as recommended by Dixon-Fyle et al., (2020).

Interestingly, a few respondents expressed that social practices within sport organisations developed a trend where female senior colleagues were excluded from work-related decisions. Such trends are generally linked to what Oakley (2000:328) refers to as the 'old boy's network or club'. When referred to senior management, the network serves as an “informal male social system that stretches within and across organisations, excluding less powerful males and all females” (Oakley, 2000:328). To illustrate the reality of the 'old boy's network' in the workplace, one respondent specifically said:

“I think inclusion is a big problem for me, being included on different levels. It is still very much a boy's club, so it is old boys club relationships. I struggle with being excluded from, for example, a face-to-face meeting.” [R3]

Dennehy (2012:81) stated that the existence of the old boys' club creates an extra barrier against preventing them from entering their rightful space in workplace settings. This might have particular implications to female senior managers regarding their knowledge and job-related opportunities in the sports business. It might also hold implications for organisations as a whole, in terms of strengthening gender equality practices (McDonald et al., 2009:385-386).

5.6. The influence of policies and organisational support on management functions

The Transformation Charter of South Africa was commended by a number of respondents for its outstanding role in transforming South African sport. However, what was clearly noted from the findings was that the Transformation Charter was more inclined towards aspects of sport participation than to support for management-specific functions. Furthermore, respondents noted that gender is treated as a subsection within the Transformation Charter which questions the priority of gender by South African sport governing bodies.

In theory, the Transformation Charter is concerned with implementing change to the different ways in which individuals and organisations deliver sport (SASCOC, 2012:23). It prioritises groups that include females, persons with disabilities, the youth, children, and the elderly, to obtain more access and opportunities within sports for them (SASCOC, 2012:14-23). While the Transformation Charter thus provides a broader scope to the consideration of vulnerable groups, which includes females, this might not be evident in the lived experiences of respondents. Thus, what is questionable or missing is the clear delineation of the objectives of the Transformation Charter towards the support of females in management positions. This is reflected in the following response:

“I mean, I keep mentioning the Transformation Charter and the EPG (Eminent Persons Group) because those are things that we are supposed to look at to drive transformation and change in sports in South Africa. It is interesting to note that the Transformation Charter does not actually have a section that focuses just on gender. Gender is mentioned as a sub-sub section in some of the sub-sections such as capacity-building [regarding] woman referees, coaches, etc. (aspects of sport participation).” [R5]

As a result of the lived experiences of respondents, and in consideration of the current objectives of the Transformation Charter, albeit the focus being on sport participation, sport policymakers could revise the objectives of the Charter towards more management-inclusive guidelines. The following key objectives from the Transformation Charter are suggested:

- elimination of all inequalities,
- increased access to participation opportunities,
- skill and capability development at all levels and in all areas of activity,
- human capital development; and
- equitable resource distribution.

Without mentioning specific policies, respondents clearly experienced a lack of priority from sport governing bodies and the overall sport industry towards female policy support. The findings revealed the following key areas that were mentioned by respondents that might give insight into the gap in prioritising policy. The first area is the lack of academic literature that exists to guide gender-specific policies. Second is the lack of implementation of existing

policies; and lastly, the unsustainability of adopted policies of sport organisations. The South African government has policies and initiatives that support female senior managers such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the CEDAW, and the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill of South Africa. However, while such policies explicitly prioritise support for female employees, it seems that they are not clearly seen in South African sport organisations. Therefore, a gap exists in the implementation of such policies, which is then viewed and translated by respondents as a lack of priority of women's interests in sport governing bodies.

5.7. Career advancement opportunities for females in sports

The findings revealed that three key areas impact the career advancement opportunities of female senior managers across South African sport organisations, namely; capacity-building, networking and mentoring. Specifically, these areas highlighted the lack of female senior managers who were progressing in sports business.

Capacity-building

The findings reflected that, while a number of capacity-building strategies were identified within sport organisations (e.g. leadership programmes/summits and administrative training), there is still a lack of capacity-building initiatives geared specifically towards female senior managers. This is presented by the following response:

“I think we need to do a lot for women. We need to work a lot on women and focus on education, and skills, and ensure that the programmes that had been there in the past are being revived because they used to be so many.” [R2]

Because organisations are not providing effective capacity-building programmes, females in management positions might not be chosen often enough for promotions in senior management positions, as cited by Burke et al. (2006). Later, Davies (2011:3) predicted that it will take a number of years to obtain forty per cent female representation in the higher tiers of organisations if transformation continues to be implemented at the current slow rate. To challenge this prediction, and the lack of promotion of female employees, the findings from Senden and Visser's (2014:53-54) study suggest the following best practices that could be used to support female senior managers in sports:

- Include at least one female in the available training courses.
- Conduct quarterly assessments of the qualifications, behaviour, goals, and achievements, to enhance the confidence levels of female managers.
- Influence the improvement of qualifications by developing internal tuition programmes.

- Develop a female board-sponsoring programme at a senior management level.
- Establish special arrangements for female managers on maternity leave, for example, maintaining inclusion for females on leave.
- Ensure consistency and continuity of efforts geared to support female managers across all levels of the organisation.

Senden and Visser's suggested practices might be useful in enhancing specific qualities of female managers, achieving efficient organisational management and shifting the image of male domination in sport organisations, as posited by Vázquez-Carrasco et al. (2011:1352-1353) and Step Up Equality (2020:11-13).

Networking

With regard to networking, the findings report that networking is beneficial for predominantly sharing experiences, resources, advice and possible solutions related to the challenges that senior managers encounter in sport organisations. The findings reveal that networking usually takes place between female senior managers and stakeholders from national government (i.e. the Minister of Sport and Recreation), national sports departments and other sport organisations (i.e. and managers across various management levels and presidents of both genders, other female employees). It is a concern that at least three respondents stated that opportunities to network at a senior management level are few or are considered not to be available at all, especially to female employees in the workplace. The respondents' views reflected that networking opportunities are rather broad and are not specific to female employee's needs. Such findings are in line with Grant Thornton (2019:12) who cited the lack of access to networking and development opportunities for females in senior management positions. Networking thus remains an area of concern in South African sport organisations, despite Massengale's (2009:85) effort in advocating the need for establishing bonds with various professionals for the purpose of hierarchical progression in the sport industry.

In South Africa, sport organisations are required to report to the national Olympic committee, SASCOC. SASCOC then reports to the national government, the Department of Culture, Arts and Sports (formerly SRSA); and DSAC reports to the highest position in the South African sports structure, the Minister of Sport (Jacobs, De Bosscher, Venter & Scheerder, 2018:25). The findings of this study suggest that affiliations such as national government departments (i.e. DSAC) are organisations which national South African sport organisations, and female senior managers of sport organisations, are commonly expected to liaise with, to drive South African sport across the country. This finding, therefore, presents a limitation as this would mean that female senior managers are only limited to networking with organisations they are

directly affiliated with. As a result, this could potentially limit their exposure to the benefits of a broader network in sports.

Mentoring

This study's findings suggested that the impact of mentors is critical in empowering females to pursue senior management level positions. Studies such as Davies (2011:28-34) particularly referred to the lack of female mentors for females in senior management positions. Mirroring such studies, the respondents mentioned the general lack of female mentors across sport organisations in South Africa, which, therefore, could explain the perceived under-representative state of female senior managers in the overall South African sport industry. This is presented by the following response:

“I think that we (female mentors) are far too few that people could draw on, as a result and for that reason, I want to be in a position to become that [support] for a generation that comes after me.” [R3]

Respondents used the terms “mentor/s” and “role model/s” interchangeably, thus revealing relationships beyond the formal and established ones, by expressing admiration and respect for others. This finding concurred with Dennehy (2012:104) who states that ‘informal’ mentors are at times managers who have a mentoring style that influences female senior manager’s work identity and style. Respondents openly revealed that female mentors are important because of their influence on one’s approach to sports administration, and because of their assistance with practical job tasks, training, and work experience. The International Labour Office (2006:30) and Massengale (2009:83) described the role of mentors as an undeniable, virtuous cycle because of the impact that role models (e.g. through their achievements) have on the existing perceptions of gender equality, once they take up senior management roles.

5.8. Effects of organisational practices on remuneration for females in the sports business

Considering the study’s findings, it is clear that key aspects of the wage gap and the glass ceiling are delineating factors towards organisational practices that deal with remuneration. Oakley (2000), Salloum et al. (2016), and Woudstra (2016) stated that the wage gap is a challenge that continues to hinder female employees in terms of their progression in organisations as they seemingly earn less than their male counterparts. In South Africa, as in most sport organisations that operate as NPOs, most of the respondents who took part in this study might have not been directly affected by the wage gap. However, some respondents proposed that the effects of the wage gap are prevalent in the South African sports sector (whether sports administration or sport participation). Due to these discrepancies, as well as the experiences of some of the respondents who do earn wages, sport governing bodies and sport organisations should perhaps reconsider the laws surrounding sport in respect of

providing fair and equitable remuneration to female employees in senior management levels of sport organisations. Beyond the disparities in the wage gap, this study's findings revealed that the glass ceiling in sport organisations negatively affects respondents in the areas of remuneration and promotion. This finding is encapsulated in the following excerpt:

“And it (glass ceiling) goes even beyond just progressing (career progression i.e. promotion). It goes even beyond that; to two people doing the same job. Let us say there is two people, a male and a female, selling sponsorships, a male earns more than the female.” [R3]

The study's findings also revealed that the glass ceiling is mainly prevalent within the executive boards of sport organisations where respondents believed that they were being denied opportunities to occupy decision making positions and thus were being prevented from taking opportunities to implement policies that advance gender equality. This finding is aligned with Oakley (2000) who suggested that corporate policies and practices concerning promotion, compensation, training, and career development are key components of the glass ceiling that hinder females from obtaining top positions. This research recognises the glass ceiling as a persistent global challenge, whereby females are consistently disadvantaged compared to their male counterparts; especially when it comes to the key components of the glass ceiling that hinder females from obtaining top positions; as mentioned by Oakley (2000) above.

5.9. Limitations of funding opportunities for females in senior management positions

The findings reveal that there is a lack of financial resources which hinders female senior manager's ability to effectively implement certain senior management tasks and responsibilities. This finding is expressed in the following response:

“Generally, the biggest challenge we face as an organisation is finance, never mind having to look at it from the gender perspective. So, that is a challenge in the sport industry. There is a lack of funding, overall, be it from national government or be it from the private sector that look after employment opportunities within sports.” [R6]

More prominently, respondents highlight the difficulty of acquiring sponsorship which, according to Bowes, Lomax and Piasecki (2021), is in line with the complexity of accessing and obtaining financial resources (i.e. sponsorship). Burnett (2018) posited that the difficulty of acquiring sponsorship can negatively affect female employees' access to career opportunities in sports, equal recognition and rewards, and income. Funding plays an integral part in a senior manager's role to enable them to employ and select candidates for jobs and display preparedness for any change needed to improve operations within an organisation (Retar et al., 2013). However, respondents said that the limited funding opportunities from sport governing bodies adversely affected their ability to effectively employ, compensate and retain employees. From a practical perspective, the lack of funding hinders the ability of senior

managers who are responsible for organising sport activities such as sports camps, as well as impacting their ability to offer capacity-building training and workshops to upskill employees.

5.10. Achieving work-life balance as a female senior manager in the sports business

The respondents mostly expressed their belief that it is possible to achieve work-life balance, although there might be existing challenges to managing it. This study presented work-life balance as a factor that is difficult to manage; as seen in the following excerpt:

“So, a woman will still manage ten more hours, deal with and manage the household for like seventeen hours versus a man's eight hours or six hours or something like that, and this is on top of their job, which adds to the stress.” [R1]

Respondents recalled having to balance job responsibilities such as meetings, portfolios (e.g. university sports, social media), managing sport events (e.g. sports tournaments), and serving on committees or commissions (e.g. women's commissions), along with their personal responsibilities. Moreover, respondents encountered a range of family or household responsibilities, including managing their households and being a caregiver and/or a mother; which are known to adversely affect a female employee's hierarchical progression as posited by Salloum et al. (2016). Therefore, it is apparent that household responsibilities have not decreased substantially for female senior managers in the current societal and working environments. To a great extent, managing work-life balance affects female employees' management practices, as well as aggravating the demands of work responsibilities and personal life; due to the increasing complexity of societal issues (Schermerhorn et al., 2020).

The nature of the sporting environment is believed to add its own dynamic to managing work-life balance which affects the areas of work and personal life. This could be due to the changing environment (i.e. the transition of sports into a multi-million-dollar industry) of sports, as posited by Chadwick (2009:191) and Bester (2012:11530). To combat the challenges that managing work-life aspects pose, the respondents developed strategies such as maintaining a good work structure, setting boundaries, including family (e.g. children) in the sport, being flexible and using time management. Chandra (2012:1045-1046) and Bharadwaj and Shanker (2019:52-53) posited that job sharing, more flexible working hours, and childcare and recreational facilities such as gymnasiums improve the lives of female employees in achieving autonomy concerning their work and personal responsibilities. Sport organisations can therefore consider factoring the recommended factors into the organisation's practices, to create a more supportive working environment for female senior managers.

5.11. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the key themes in support of existing literature. The chapter began with a discussion about the underrepresentation of female senior managers in South African sport organisations. This is predominantly a result of the lack of female employees in specific senior management positions (i.e. CEO, VP, and president). The chapter then underlined the impact of systemic historical factors such as specific race and gender-discriminatory beliefs and practices that continue to influence current managerial practices in the sport industry. This confirmed the global literature where females from racial/ethnic minority groups were usually under-represented in sport management positions. Next, a strategic view of leadership at senior management levels was discussed. This discussion revealed the impacts of specific leadership styles, and the impacts of the Apartheid era on the current state of South African leadership and management in sport organisations. Some insights into the inclusion of females in the sports business industry were then expressed, which revealed a range of exclusive practices that could be attributed to the prevalence of the 'old boys' network in the sport industry. This supports the theories found in the literature regarding the primary role of the 'old boys' network.

The discussion followed by examining the influence of government and organisation policies and initiatives, and organisational support practices and initiatives on the constructs of management. It is evident that while female senior managers are supported by a range of national and international policies, laws, guidelines, and initiatives from government, macrostructures, sport governing bodies, and sport organisations; the trajectory of the Transformation Charter towards the support for female senior management remains a concern among respondents. In addition, it seemed appropriate to include the issue of networking, as a key imperative regarding management functions, in the current discussion. The chapter continued with a discussion on the lack of capacity-building, networking, and mentoring that impacts career advancement opportunities for female senior managers.

The latter sections of the chapter discussed the effects of organisational practices on remuneration for females in the sports business, which highlighted the existence of the wage gap. Furthermore, respondents shared experiences that demonstrate the prevalence of the glass ceiling in the global sport industry, which is consistent with the current literature on this subject. Subsequently, the chapter discussed the limitations on funding opportunities for female senior managers, particularly when sourcing funding, for example, sponsorships for amateur and individual sport codes, and concluded with a discussion on the aspects related to achieving work-life balance as a female senior manager in sports business. The discussion also discussed the difficulties of managing work-life balance as a female senior manager.

The next chapter will conclude with the study's key results, state the study's implications, and provide recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The current study was introduced by providing the background of the research area, which identified research gaps related to the challenges facing female employees within the senior management levels of sport organisations. Chapter Two reviewed the literature concerning management functions, organisational behaviour, and the formulation of policies for females in sports, to identify the latest developments within these areas. This study followed a qualitative research method that used semi-structured interviews to collect in-depth data from the research participants, which is explained in Chapter Three. Thereafter, Chapter Four presented the key findings that were discovered during the qualitative data analysis process. In Chapter Five, the findings were thematically discussed in conjunction with the existing literature wherein similarities and differences were then clearly defined.

This final chapter provides a summary of the key findings of the study and concludes the context of the study. Furthermore, the chapter reveals the implications and limitations of the study and highlights recommendations for future research on this subject.

6.2. Revisiting the research questions and objectives

The amount of literature on the challenges faced by females in management has steadily increased. However, it remains important to expand on the existing literature by exploring the challenges faced by females in senior management. Specifically, an in-depth inquiry into the South African sports business is imperative. Previous literature typically observed the challenges females encounter in fields such as education, business management, and health sciences, (Vázquez-Carrasco et al., 2011; Choge, 2015; Thomas et al., 2019; Chyu et al., 2020). These studies identified challenges associated with the glass ceiling, underrepresentation, career immobility, limited job security and training opportunities, the lack of mentors and role models, the wage gap, work-life factors (e.g. child-rearing), self-limiting beliefs (low confidence), gender bias, gender stereotypes, and power dynamics in the workplace. Although the challenges encountered by females have been explored in an array of contexts (e.g. in various industry sectors and low-level management), it was important to consider the primary research question of this study, being: what are the contextual challenges that female senior managers encounter in South African sport organisations?

Following the main research question, two secondary research questions were developed: (1) What are the perceptions of female representation in the senior management levels of South

African sport organisations? And (2) How do government and organisational policies and initiatives support female senior managers in sport organisations? Additionally, the following research objectives were developed: (a) To identify the challenges that females encounter as senior managers in South African sport organisations, (b) To understand the status of female representation within the senior management levels of South African sport organisations, and (c) To determine how government and organisational policies and initiatives support females in senior management positions of South African sport organisations.

To achieve the study's objectives and to address the research questions, the study adopted a qualitative research approach, which comprised twelve in-depth semi-structured interviews that were held with female senior managers from selected national sport federations in South Africa. The predominant locations for the interviews were the respondent's work offices (in person interviews) and online interviews (via Skype). All the interviews were electronically recorded using a voice recorder, transcribed using Otter, and then manually edited, and formatted using Microsoft Word. The interview transcripts were subsequently coded and themed using CAQDAS, Atlas.ti version 9.

The following section reveals the key findings of the study and thereafter highlights the significance and contribution to existing knowledge on the subject.

6.3. Summary of the key findings

- **Female senior managers remain under-represented in South African sport organisations:**

It is evident that there is a general underrepresentation of females in senior management positions in South African sport organisations. A greater representation of females in specific leadership positions should be recognised from an organisational perspective, in order to provide key imperatives that the sport industry can take note of; including existing policies, and thereby advance the position of females in sports. This is especially important to alleviate the continued issues of male domination, power dynamics, patriarchal organisational cultures, and electoral and selection practices that contribute to the lack of female senior managers in sports.

- **Previous systemic and historical events affect the current management practices of female senior managers in South African sport organisations:**

The effects of Apartheid are perceived to be evident in the challenges experienced by female senior managers. Specifically, race demographics have remained a defining issue in female senior manager's experiences within current management practices. This is largely because of systemic, marginal practices, aimed particularly at Black female employees, which are particularly influenced by their gender and race or ethnicity. Critically, the demographic evolution of the workplace will mean that increasing numbers of Black Africans will occupy

management and leadership positions. Thus, South African sport organisations must be careful not to ignore the issues that continue to pose challenges for Black African females.

Biased and stereotypical perceptions, as well as sexist traits were identified in the literature (Schein, 2007; Koca et al., 2011) which impact South African female senior managers in sport organisations. The study showed that the current perceptions of females, and the bias exhibited by male colleagues towards female senior managers typically hinders their ability to fulfil their work responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

- **Autocratic leadership styles influence the current state of leadership and management in South African sport organisations:**

An autocratic leadership style was found to be the predominant feature across South African sport organisations. Under an autocratic leadership style, female senior managers must deal with the exclusion of their ideas and arguments during work discussions and engagements. In the long run, the autocratic leadership style found in the leadership and management of South African sport organisations could affect the effective implementation of the broader management functions that are pivotal in a senior manager's role. These findings could, therefore, extend the theoretical conceptualisation of the constructs of management, by providing knowledge about how female employees navigate their fundamental management functions (to ensure the effective use of an organisation's resources) as senior managers in sports business, and, moreover inform the South African leadership and management context, as a whole. This will prompt stakeholders to consider management functions that conceptualise female leadership in particular; as opposed to simply forming part of existing generalised leadership and management contexts.

- **There is a need for effective implementation of transformation, diversity, and inclusion of female employees in the sports business industry:**

It is clear that a gap exists in the delineation of inclusion. As a result, sport organisations need to consider factors such as belonging, diversity, and inadvertently transformation to better implement inclusive practices for females in the sport business industry. South African sport policymakers should seek to increase the diverse representation in leadership positions, enable equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency, promote openness, tackle bias and discrimination, and foster belonging through support for multivariate diversity (Dixon-Fyle et al., 2020).

What is euphemistically referred to as the 'old boys' network' appears to be prevalent in many South African sport organisations. The old boys' network negatively affects female inclusivity in senior management. This is a result of commonly accepted practices that typically involve discussing formal, work-related matters in informal, male dominated settings within the sports

business environment. To challenge the negative effects of the old boys' network, female senior managers can establish women's networks that assist female employees, through the use of supportive and advisory practices, as suggested by Dennehy (2012).

- **There is a need to prioritise policy realignment to enhance organisational support practices for female managers in sports:**

Although the intention, by a number of South African government and organisational policies and initiatives is to support sport organisations, there appear to be some shortcomings; for example, the Transformation Charter provides a broad scope to the consideration of vulnerable groups, which includes females, and it is further aimed at supporting aspects of sport participation, as opposed to management-specific functions. Altogether, these shortcomings highlight a gap in policy on the imperative of explicitly delineating the objectives of the Transformation Charter, towards the support of females in management positions. It would thus be beneficial for sport policymakers to revise the objectives of the Charter by moving towards more management-inclusive guidelines. Female senior managers in sport governing bodies and the overall sport industry feel marginalised and sense a lack of support. It is important therefore that this matter be addressed in terms of prioritising and effecting female policy support. This gap is highlighted by the lack of academic literature that exists to guide gender-specific policies, the lack of implementing existing policies, and lastly, the unsustainability of adopted policies of sport organisations. This therefore prompts the generation of female-focused knowledge by academics in the field of sports administration, and further prompts sport organisations to prioritise support for female employees by effectively implementing the existing policies found in the South African sports sector.

- **There is a need for improved capacity-building, networking, and mentoring towards career advancement in sport organisations:**

There is a lack of capacity-building initiatives for female senior managers in South African sport organisations. South African sport organisations need to revive the large number of organisational programmes that previously existed, in order to enhance the development of sports programmes that focus on female employees. Additional best practices, inspired by Senden and Visser (2014), that sport organisations can consider include developing a broad programme at senior management level; to include at least one female in all available training courses, and to consider females in the long-term succession plan of the organisation. This will catalyse the awareness of the potential that female senior managers possess as sport organisations will then continuously identify female candidates. Similarly, the best practices might be beneficial to enhancing the specific qualities of female managers, achieving efficient organisational management and shifting the image of male domination in sport organisations, as suggested by Vázquez-Carrasco et al. (2011) and Step Up Equality (2020).

In relation to networking, there is a paucity of opportunities for networking for female managers at senior management level, because the available opportunities are vague and are not specific to female employees' needs. In the South African context, female senior managers are limited to networking with sport organisations and associates that their respective sport organisations are directly affiliated with. South African sport organisations need to develop networking programmes to affect areas such as broader female representation on the boards of South African sport organisations, as recommended by Davies (2011).

Additionally, there is a lack of female mentors across the South African sport industry. The lack of female mentors seems to be consistent with the low numbers of females in senior management of sport organisations, consequently resulting in the low numbers of female senior managers who are meant to empower other female employees in pursuing senior management level positions in sports. There is no consistent approach to mentoring which leaves room to develop standard frameworks for mentoring, for purposes of the managerial and operational elements of sport organisations, as well as to advance the sports careers of female employees. South African sport organisations should, therefore, consider assigning internal or outsourced executive coaches for mentoring purposes, as was recommended by Dennehy (2012). Additionally, sport organisations can consider adding mentoring as a management tool, which can be used to enhance the management styles of existing female senior managers in sports that can in turn then significantly impact the development of aspiring female senior managers (Dennehy, 2012).

- **The wage gap and the glass ceiling remain prevalent issues in South African sport organisations:**

The effects of the global challenges of the wage gap and the glass ceiling have continued across the South African sports sector. The wage gap continues to hinder female senior managers' hierarchical progression in South African sport organisations; typically, as a result of the allocation of low salaries (Oakley, 2000; Salloum et al., 2016; Woudstra, 2016). Therefore, sport governing bodies, as well as sport organisations, should reconsider the laws surrounding providing fair and equitable remuneration to female employees in senior management levels of sport organisations. Some considerations include allocating higher minimum living wages and universal social policies and protection, adopting effective remuneration equity laws, requesting transparency from organisations regarding remuneration, and providing effective gender-specific measures to address the undervaluation of the work of female employees, as suggested by Rubery and Kouikadaki (2016), and the UN Women (2020).

The glass ceiling contributes to remuneration disparities by hindering the promotion of female senior managers in South African sport organisations. Much of the glass ceiling is encountered

at the executive board level of sport organisations, which significantly inhibits female employees from occupying decision making positions and implementing policies that advance gender equality. Therefore, the persistence of the wage gap and the effects of the glass ceiling potentially place female senior managers in disadvantaged positions, when compared to their male counterparts particularly towards career progression.

- **There is a need for better allocation of financial resources for female senior managers in sport organisations:**

Female senior managers in South African sport organisations are less able to source and attract funding (e.g. sponsorship); which not only affects their core senior management responsibilities (i.e. employing, compensating and retaining employees) but even more so, affects their career opportunities in sports, their income, and equal recognition and rewards. This shows the need for South African sport organisations to allocate increased funding and sponsorship opportunities to support female senior managers.

- **Managing work-life balance in a changing sports environment:**

In an effort to manage work-life balance, female senior managers in South African sport organisations currently have to balance factors such as various senior management responsibilities, managing sport events, and serving on committee meetings, together with personal responsibilities such as managing their households, and being family caregivers.

Domestic responsibilities remain substantially challenging for female senior managers, in both a social and corporate context, and even more so in comparison to their male counterparts. This finding should prompt South African sport organisations to formulate or amend organisational policies and initiatives to include alternative work arrangements and accommodative leave policies (Chandra, 2012; Bharadwaj & Shanker, 2019). To greater lengths, sport organisations could go further by considering developing childcare and other facilities within their workspaces, to better support female senior managers, as suggested by Bharadwaj and Shanker (2019).

6.4. Implications of the study for theory, policy and practice

Although previous studies have stated that female senior managers experience similar challenges across various industries, the current study adds to the existing literature related to female executives in the sport industry by delineating the challenges of female senior managers in the unique context of a male dominated sports environment. This theoretical contribution is in line with the aim of the feminist theory, which seeks to understand and eliminate the oppression of all females through theoretical development and practices such as those found within this study (Costa & Guthrie, 1994). By focusing on the South African sport

industry, this study contributes to the emergent and developing literature of the study's context from a Global South perspective; a perspective which is often overlooked in the literature. Therefore, this study adds knowledge, from the Global South perspective, about the unequal access to decision making positions in sports, and the maintenance of the predominantly male power over female employees in sport organisations, as per the liberal feminist theory. It further explains the application of the constructs of management to liberal feminist ideology. For example, according to this study, sport organisations might need to consider operating in less authoritative leadership styles, in order for female senior managers to effectively produce high-performing sport organisations, using the fundamental constructs of management. Additionally, regarding the constructs of planning, sport organisations need to critically consider the decisions made by female senior managers on the purposes, politics, strategies, programmes and plans that guide the operations of a sport organisation (as per Ilić, 2013); particularly regarding the advancement of females in the organisation, which creates gender-inclusive organisations that could well ultimately assist in achieving greater overall organisational success.

In addition, the study contributes to policy by providing sports governing bodies and decision-makers in South Africa with an overview of the experience of female employees in senior management. The study's results equip sport organisations with insight into new policy support and best practices that can support female senior managers within the sports business environment.

The results can be used as recommendations for amendments to existing legislation such as the National Sport and Recreation Amendment Act and the Transformation Charter, where key considerations should be given to the following factors: the historical events and practices that continue to negatively impact female senior managers in the current sports business sphere; the contextual dynamics of the current female representation in sports; the inclusion of female employees in senior management structures in sports; issues of a wage gap between different genders; and the systematic constructs that support the glass ceiling.

Moreover, financial resources should be better distributed across the board, and South African sport organisations should seriously consider the challenges that exist with work-life balance when formulating internal organisational policies and practices such as those developed by the SASCO. These are argued to alleviate human resource issues of recruitment and appointment practices in sports. This study has practical implications for female senior managers and sport organisations by providing an in-depth overview of the perceived challenges that female employees face at senior management levels of South African sport organisations. Sport organisations, particularly national sport federations in South Africa, and various internal and external sports stakeholders at large, will gain insight from the study's

findings about how South African sport organisations can emulate the extant sports business literature on the underrepresentation, gender stereotyping, the glass ceiling, the wage gap, and work-life balance challenges, which females face in corporate organisations.

Furthermore, the sport institutions will gain insight into the ongoing systemic and historical consequences of the Apartheid era, which include exclusion, and the lack of funding opportunities. It is argued that these factors have a significant impact on current management practices, particularly in the case of Black African female senior managers in South African sport organisations.

6.5. Limitations of the study

This study focused on South African sport organisations. The empirical findings of this study might also be applicable to sport organisations within the Global South region, due to the degree of similarity in the demographics such as racial/ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic standings. However, the findings might be limited in terms of the degree of transferability to sport organisations in other countries and areas outside the South African region.

6.6. Recommendations for future research

Recommendations that emanate from this study need to be cognisant of the unique socio-economic consequences of Apartheid, and the systemic challenges that continue to confront females in senior management positions. This study recommends future research to identify the challenges posed to female senior managers of different races/ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds in the South African sport industry. This will provide a richer understanding of the distinct challenges posed to female senior managers of different backgrounds, and possible recommendations on how best to address their challenges. Due to the likely increase in numbers of Black African females who will apply and occupy management and leadership positions in the future, research and policy development must consider the socio-economic issues that will invariably pose challenges for females, especially Black African females.

Concerning policies and organisational support practices; this study encourages researchers to conduct an in-depth investigation into the effectiveness and implementation of existing South African legislation that was designed to support female senior managers in South African sport organisations and provide solutions to overcoming identified weaknesses and shortcomings. The findings can then be used to build on the existing literature or alternatively, refute the findings of this current study.

Due to the limitation imposed on this study by conducting exploration on a single region or country, it is recommended that the results of this study be further explored across additional

regions and countries, particularly in a Global South context. Some findings are consistent with other trends in society, for example, the glass ceiling, the wage gap, and navigating work-life balance as a female senior manager, however, the countries considered as part of the Global South would have a degree of similarity in terms of social and political stances, as well as the socio-economic challenges encountered. Therefore, further studies could provide a greater understanding of the challenges encountered by female senior managers in sport organisations within the Global South region.

6.7. Conclusions of the thesis

Chapter One of this thesis set out with an overview of the background, problem statement and rationale, the aims and objectives, and research questions of the study. Chapter Two focused on reviewing the existing literature on the key topics related to the research problem and the key concepts associated with the study. Chapter Three outlined the research processes, in line with the selected research design and discussed the selected research approach and methods. It also reported on the data analysis and coding processes that accompanied the methodological procedures.

Chapter Four presented the findings of the study by outlining the code groups, themes, and independent codes, which were developed during the process of data analysis and thereafter, discussed the key themes of the study, as per their respective code groups. Chapter Five then set out to discuss the key themes in relation to the existing literature. The discussions chapter aimed to provide insight into the main research questions and address the research objectives of the study. The current chapter, Chapter Six concludes on the key findings of the study and evaluates the attainment of the study's aims and objectives. It additionally concludes by acknowledging the limitations of the study, and then highlights recommendations for future research, as can be seen below.

The outcomes of this study support the extant sports business literature on the underrepresentation, gender stereotyping, the glass ceiling, the wage gap, and work-life balance challenges which females face in corporate organisations. This study further concludes that the ongoing systemic and historical events consequences of the Apartheid era, such as exclusion and the lack of funding opportunities, have a significant impact on current management practices, particularly in the case of Black African female senior managers in South African sport organisations. While policies or guidelines exist; the poor implementation of these policies or guidelines have hindered the inclusion and advancement of females in senior sport management positions.

REFERENCES

ACLU see American Civil Liberties Union.

American Civil Liberties Union. n.d. *Women's rights*. <https://www.aclu.org/issues/womens-rights#act> [28 May 2019].

The American Heritage(R) Dictionary of the English Language. 5th ed. 2016. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Acosta, R.V. & Carpenter, L.J. 2012. Women in intercollegiate sport: a longitudinal, national study: thirty five year update: 1977-2012. Unpublished manuscript, Brooklyn College, New York. www.acostacarpenter.ORG [23 April 2019].

Adom-Aboagye, N.A.A. & Burnett, C. 2019. Society and gender equity in sport: analysis from a South African perspective. *African Journal for Physical Activity and Health Sciences*, 25(3): 296-312. https://www.academia.edu/40856905/Society_and_gender_equity_in_sport_Analysis_from_a_South_African_perspective [4 May 2020].

Adriaanse, J.A. & Schofield, T. 2013. Analysing gender dynamics in sport governance: A new regimes-based approach. *Sport Management Review*, 16(1): 498-513. DOI: 10.1016/j.smr.2013.01.006.

Alexander, J. 2014. Notes towards a definition of politics. *Philosophy*, 89(348): 273-300. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24779080> [11 August 2022].

Aman, M.P., Yusof, A., Ismail, M., & Mohamed Razali, A.B. 2018. Pipeline problem: factors influencing the underrepresentation of women in the top leadership positions of sport organisations. *Malaysian Journal of Movement, Health & Exercise*, 7(2): 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.15282/mohe.v7i2.186> [16 March 2019].

Anderson, E.D. 2009. The maintenance of masculinity among the stakeholders of sport. *Sport Management Review*, 12(1): 3-14. DOI: 10.1016/j.smr.2008.09.003.

Anderson, P.G. 1979. An investigation into the effect of race and politics on the development of South African sport (1970-1979). Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch.

Andreff, W. 2008. Globalization of the sports economy. *Rivista di Diritto ed Economia dello Sport*, 4(3): 13-32.

Arfken, D., Bellar, S.L. & Helms, M.M. 2004. The ultimate glass ceiling revisited: The presence of women on corporate boards. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 50(2): 177-189. DOI: 10.1023/b:busi.0000022125.95758.98.

Aswathappa, K. 2016. *Organisational behaviour*. 12 rev. ed. Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House.

ATLAS.ti. n.d. *What is ATLAS.ti?* <https://atlasti.com/product/what-is-atlas-ti/> [5 July 2020].

Babbie, E. 2020. *The practice of social research*. 15th ed. Belmont, C.A.: Cengage.

Baker, R.E. & Esherick E. 2013. *Fundamentals of sport management*. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics.

Barr, C.A. & Hums, M.A. 2014. In Masteralexis, L.P., Barr, C.A. & Hums, M.A. *Principles and practice of sport management*. 5th ed. Burlington, M.A.: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Batmanabane, V. & Kfour, J. 2017. Qualitative data collection interviews. https://trp.utoronto.ca/students2016/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2016/09/Interviews-JK_VB-V7-March-1.pdf [13 April 2020].

- Beech, J. & Chadwick, S. 2013. *The business of sport management*. 2nd ed. U.K.: Pearson Education Limited.
- Bell, R.C. 2008. A history of women in sport prior to Title IX. *The Sport Journal*, 20: 1-8. Available from: <http://thesportjournal.org/article/a-history-of-women-in-sport-prior-to-title-ix/> [25 May 2019].
- Bennis, W.G. & Nanus, B. 2003. *Leaders: strategies for taking charge*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper Business Essentials.
- Bester, P. 2012. The business environment of sport organisations: a review. *African Journal of Business Management*, 46(1):11530-11535. DOI: 10.5897/AJBM12.1167.
- Bharadwaj, V. & Shanker, M. 2019. Women at workplace and work life balance: a literature review. *Management & Technology Review*, 7(1): 46-59. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351068790_Women_at_workplace_and_Work_life_balance [4 August 2022].
- Bhoola, U. 2002. *National labour law profile: South Africa*. https://www.ilo.org/ifpdial/information-resources/national-labour-law-profiles/WCMS_158919/lang--en/index.htm [27 April 2020].
- Birrell, S. 2000. Feminist theories for sport. In Coakley, J. & Dunning, E. (eds). *Handbook of sports studies*. London: SAGE: 61-76.
- BlackSash. 2015. *Our history*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20150426012713/http://www.blacksash.org.za/index.php/our-legacy/our-history> [29 May 2019].
- Boddy, D. 2008. *Management: an introduction*. 4th ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall.
- Booth, D. 1998. *The race game: sport and politics in South Africa*. Oxon: Frank Cass Publishers.
- Bosch, A., van der Linde, K., & Barit, S. 2020. *Women on South African boards: facts, fiction and forward thinking*. University of Stellenbosch Business School, South Africa.
- Bowes, A., Lomax, L. & Piasecki, J. 2021. A losing battle? women's sport pre- and post-COVID-19, *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 21(1):1-19. DOI: 10.1080/16184742.2021.1904267.
- Bramham, P. 2008. Sports policy. In Hylton, K. & Bramham, P. (eds). *Sports development: policy, process and practice*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge: 10-24.
- Brauns, M. 2015. The management of change in a changing environment – to change or not to change? *Corporate Board: Role, Duties & Composition*, 11(3): 37-42. DOI: 10.22495/cbv11i3art4.
- Brinkmann, S. 2013. *Qualitative interviewing*. New York: Oxford.
- Brown, J.K. 1993. The nineteenth amendment and women's equality. *The Yale Law Journal*, 102(8): 2175-2204. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/796863> [29 May 2019].
- Buckalew, E., Konstantinopoulos, A., Russell, J. & El-Sherbini, S. 2012. The future of female CEOs and their glass ceiling. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 3(4):145-153. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/future-female-ceos-their-glass-ceiling/docview/1036929638/se-2> [26 March 2019].
- Burke, R.J. 2009. Supporting the career development of managerial women: recent evidence. In Özbilgin, M.E. (ed). *Equality, diversity and inclusion at work: a research companion*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar: 332-343.

- Burke, R.J., Burgess, Z. & Fallon, B. 2006. Organizational practices supporting women and their satisfaction and well-being. *Women in Management Review*, 21(5): 416-425. DOI: 10.1108/09649420610676217.
- Burke, R.J., Koksall, H. & Wolpin, J. 2015. Organizational experiences, satisfactions and psychological wellbeing among managerial and professional women in Turkey. *Journal of Intercultural Management*, 7(2):5-20. DOI: 10.1515/joim-2015-0007.
- Burnett, C. 2001. Whose game is it anyway? Power, play and sport. *Agenda: Empowering women for gender equity, No. 49, Culture: Transgressing Boundaries*, Taylor & Francis: 71-78. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4066495> [22 June 2018].
- Burnett, C. 2018. Politics of gender (in)equality relating to sport and development within a sub-Saharan context of poverty. *Policy and Practice Reviews*, 3(27): 1-15. DOI: 10.3389/fsoc.2018.00027.
- Burns, D. & Walker, M. 2005. Feminist methodologies. In Somekh, B. & Lewin, C. *Research methods in the social sciences*. London: SAGE: 66-73.
- Burton, L.J. 2015. Underrepresentation of women in sport leadership: a review of research. *Sport Management Review*, 18(2): 155-165. DOI: 10.1016/j.smr.2014.02.004.
- Burton, L.J. 2019. Under-representation of women in leadership roles in women's sport. In Lough, N. & Geurin, A.N. *Routledge handbook of the business of women's sport*. London: Routledge: 255-268.
- Burton, L.J. & Leberman, S. 2017. *Women in sport leadership: research and practice for change*. London: Routledge.
- Business Women's Association of South Africa. 2017. *Women in leadership: census 2017*. Johannesburg: Business Women's Association of South Africa.
- BWASA see Business Women's Association of South Africa.
- Calls to restart SASCOC voting process. 2020. eNCA. 27 April. <https://www.enca.com/sport/wc-women-sport-challenge-sascoc-gender-parity> [7 May 2020].
- Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*. 2008. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Caroo, K. 2016. "Pull her down" syndrome. <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/community/discussions/2016/11/pull-her-down-syndrome> [5 July 2022].
- Carpenter, M., Bauer, T. & Erdogan, B. 2012. *Management principles (v. 1.1)*: Creative Commons.
- Casey, M., Fowlie, J., Charity, M., Harvey, J. & Eime, R. 2019, The implications of female sport policy developments for the community-level sport sector: a perspective from Victoria, Australia. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 11(4): 1-22. DOI: 10.1080/19406940.2019.1618892.
- Cater, J. 2011. Skype – a cost-effective method for qualitative research. *Rehabilitation Counselors & Educators Journal*, 4(2): 3. [https://www.academia.edu/540705/Skype A cost effective method for qualitative research](https://www.academia.edu/540705/Skype_A_cost_effective_method_for_qualitative_research) [8 May 2021].
- Certo, S.C. & Certo, S.T. 2012. *Modern management: concepts and skills*. 12th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Chadwick, S. 2009. From outside lane to inside track: sport management research in the twenty-first century. *Management Decision*, 47(1):191-203. DOI: 10.1108/00251740910929786.

The Chambers Dictionary. 13th ed. 2015. London: Chambers Harrap.

Chandra, V. 2012. Work-life balance: eastern and western perspectives. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23(5): 1040-1056. DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2012.651339.

Charaf, T. 2016. *The importance of sport from an economic and social point of view*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-sport-from-economic-social-point-view-dr-tarek-charaf> [12 September 2019].

Choge, J.R. 2015. Gender factor in decision making: challenges facing women leadership development in primary schools' management in Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(12): 30-37. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1080616> [14 August 2022].

Chyu, J., Peters, C.E., Nicholson, T.M., Dai, J.C., Taylor, J., Garg, T., Smith, A.B., Porten, S.P., Greene, K., Browning, N., Harris, E., Sutherland, S.E. & Psutka, S.P. 2020. Women in leadership in urology: the case for increasing diversity and equity. *Urology* 150: 16-24. DOI: 10.1016/j.urology.2020.07.0790090-4295.

Clark, C. 2011. Leading or losing? women challenging male hegemony in South African football and the FIFA world cup. *Soccer & Society*, 12(6): 834-849. DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2011.609683.

Clifford, V. 1996. A case study of a feminist small business: theory into practice. *Int. Rev. Women Leadership*, 2(1): 98-111.

Coakley, J. 2008. *Sports in society: Issues and controversies*. 10th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Coakley, J. 2014. *Sports in society: issues and controversies*. 11th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Coakley, J. & Dunning, E. (eds). 2000. *Handbook of sports studies*. London: SAGE.

Cole, W.M. 2016. Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW). In Naples, N.A (ed). *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*. 1st ed. Wiley Blackwell: 1-3.

Coleman, I. 2010. The global glass ceiling: why empowering women is good for business. *Foreign Affairs*, 89(3):13-20.

Collignon, H. Sultan, N. & Santander, C. 2011. *The sports market: major trends and challenges in an industry full of passion*. Chicago, I.L.: A.T. Kearney.

Costa, D.M. & Guthrie, S.R. 1994. Feminist perspectives: intersections with women and sport. In Costa, D.M. & Guthrie, S.R. (eds). *Women and sport: interdisciplinary perspectives*. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics: 235-252.

Craig, P. 2008. An introduction to sport sociology. In Craig, P. & Beedie, P. *Sport Sociology*. Exeter: Learning Matters: 3-7.

Craig, P. & Beedie, P. 2008. Class and gender differentiation in sport. In Craig, P. & Beedie, P. *Sport Sociology*. Exeter: Learning Matters: 92-109.

Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V.L. 2018. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE.

Creswell, J.W. 2012. *Educational research: planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. 4th ed. Boston, M.A.: Pearson Education.

Curran, K., Lochrie, S. & Gorman, K. 2014. Gathering qualitative data. In Gorman, K. & MacIntoch, R. *Research methods for business management: a guide to writing your dissertation*. Oxford: Goodfellow: 113-135.

- Dailey, R. 2012. *Organisational behaviour*. [Course text]. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Business School.
- Davies, E. M. 2011. *Women on boards*. U.K.: Department for Business, Innovation & Skills.
- Dean, B.A. 2018. The interpretivist and the learner. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 13(1): 1-8. DOI: 10.28945/3936.
- De Dominicis, F. 2020. *Blazing a trail for female sports in South Africa*. <https://www.fisu.net/news/gender-equality/blazing-a-trail-for-female-sports-in-south-africa> [28 June 2021].
- Delaney, T. & Madigan, T. 2015. *The sociology of sports: an introduction*. 2nd ed. USA: McFarland.
- Dennehy, J. 2012. *Competition, gender and management: beyond winning and losing*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2011. Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.). *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: SAGE: 1-19.
- Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat. 2007. *Women 2000 and beyond: women, gender equality and sport*. New York: Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat.
- Dixon, E. 2019. *UK Sport makes Sally Munday new CEO, plus more*. <http://www.sportspromedia.com/movers-and-shakers/uk-sport-sally-munday-ceo-movers-shakers> [24 July 2019].
- Dixon, T. n.d. *Inclusion and diversity: understanding the difference*. <https://vicsport.com.au/blog/2935/inclusion-and-diversity-understanding-the-difference--#:~:text=Inclusion%20in%20sport%20means%20everyone,religious%20affiliation%20or%20sexual%20orientation>. [21 March 2022].
- Dixon-Fyle, S., Dolan, K., Hunt, V. & Prince, S. 2020. *Diversity wins: how inclusion matters*: McKinsey & Company.
- Dodgson, J.E. 2019. Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 0(00). DOI:10.1177/0890334419830990
- Dryzek, J.S., Honig, B. & Phillips, A. 2006. *The Oxford handbook of political theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dubow, S. 2014. *Apartheid, 1948-1994*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DuBrin, A.J. 2011. *Essentials of management*. 9th ed. Mason, O.H.: Cengage Learning.
- Edwards, H. 1973. *Sociology of sport*. Homewood, I.L.: Dorsey Press.
- Eksteen, E. 2014. *Sport organisation and administration*. <https://bookboon.com/en/sport-organisation-and-administration-ebook> [11 January 2022].
- Elkins, H. 2019. *Does a managerial function differ from a managerial role?* <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/managerial-function-differ-managerial-role-38713.html> [16 February 2020].
- Enyew, B.E. & Mihrete, A.G. 2018. Liberal feminism: assessing its compatibility and applicability in Ethiopia context. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 10(6): 59-64. DOI: 10.5897/IJSA2018.0769.

Evans, A.B. & Pfister, G.U. 2020. Women in sports leadership: a systematic narrative review. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 00(0): 1-26. DOI: 10.1177/1012690220911842.

Fayol, H. 1949. *General and industrial management*. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons.

Former investment banker Meghan Jenkins named One Championship VP International. 2019. *The Star*. 31 January. <https://www.thestar.com.my/business/business-news/2019/02/01/former-investment-banker-meghan-jenkins-named-one-championship-vp-international/> [30 September 2019].

Fredline, E. 2005. Host and guest relations and sport tourism. *Sport in Society*, 8(2): 263-279. DOI: 10.1080/17430430500087328.

Galleta, A. 2013. *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond*. New York: New York University Press.

Geldenhuys, M. 2013. A statistical update on women in the South African workplace. In Bosch, A (ed.). *South African board for people practices women's report 2013*. Parktown: SABPP: 33-42.

Gillentine, A., Crow, B. & Harris, J. 2015. In Gillentine, R. & Crow, B. (eds). *Foundations of sport management*. 3rd ed. Morgantown, W.V.: FIT Publishing.

Gledhill, A. 2010. Research methods for sport and exercise science. In Adams, M., Barker, R., Davies, W., Gledhill, A., Hancock, J., Lydon, C., Phillippo, P., Sutton, L., Taylor, R. & Wilmot, N. *BTEC level 3 national sport and exercise sciences*. Essex: Pearson Education: 1-34.

Goldkuhl, G. 2012. Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 21(2): 1-19. DOI: 10.1057/ejis.2011.54.

Gómez, S., Opazo, M. & Marti, C. 2007. Structural characteristics of sport organizations: main trends in the academic discussion. Working paper No. 704. Barcelona: IESE Business School, University of Navarra.

Goslin, A. 2006. Challenges and opportunities for women in sport under the socio-economic conditions of South Africa. *Global Center for Social Change through Women's Leadership and Sport: Discussion Series*, September 2006. Pretoria: University of Pretoria: 1-7.

Goslin, A.E & Kluka, D.A. 2014. Women and sport leadership: perceptions of Malawi women educated in sport business leadership. *South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation*, 36(3): 93-108. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/43377> [21 May 2018].

Grant Thornton. 2014. *Women in business: from classroom to boardroom report*. London: Grant Thornton International.

Grant Thornton. 2017. *Women in business: new perspectives on risk and reward report*. London: Grant Thornton International.

Grant Thornton. 2018. *Women in business: beyond policy to progress report*. London: Grant Thornton International.

Grant Thornton. 2019. *Women in business: building a blueprint for action report*. London: Grant Thornton International.

Grant Thornton. 2020. *Women in business 2020: putting the blueprint into action report*. London: Grant Thornton International.

- Grant Thornton. 2021. *Women in business 2021: a window of opportunity report*. London: Grant Thornton International.
- Gratton, C. & Jones, I. 2004. *Research methods for sport studies*. London: Routledge.
- Gratton, C. & Jones, I. 2010. *Research methods for sport studies*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Gratton, C. 1998. The economic importance of modern sport. *Culture, Sport, Society*, 1(1): 101-117.
- Gray, E. & Weese, W.J. 2021. Does the next generation of sports leaders perceive the presence of the glass ceiling and the need to shatter it? insights of undergraduate students. *Journal of Leadership Accountability and Ethics*, 18(4):116-131. <https://doi.org/10.33423/jlae.v18i4.4642>.
- Griffin, R.W. 2016. *Fundamentals of Management*. 8th ed. Boston, M.A.: Cengage Learning.
- Guță, E.L. 2019. Importance in the organization of controlling in sports management. *Annals - Economy Series*, 6(1): 319-324. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=141654419&site=ehost-live> [11 August 2022].
- Gutterman, A. 2015. Management: a guide for growth-oriented entrepreneurs: sample chapter: management roles and activities. In Gutterman, A. *Growth-Oriented Entrepreneur's Guide to Management: Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurship Project*.
- Guzu, A. 2016. The third millennium development goal: Romanian case. Unpublished 10th Semester Master Thesis, Aalborg University, Denmark.
- Hamed, A.E.A. 2015. Sport, leisure: artistic perspectives in ancient Egyptian temples (part I). *Records*, 8(1): 1-17. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/306014679_SPORT_LEISURE_ARTISTIC_PERSPECTIVES_IN_ANCIENT_EGYPTIAN_TEMPLES_Part_I [21 February 2019].
- Hancock, M.G. Darwin, L. & Walker, N.A. 2018. Beyond the glass ceiling: sport management students' perceptions of the leadership labyrinth. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 12(2):100-109. <https://doi.org/10.1123/smej.2017-0039>.
- Hartmann-Tews, I. & Pfister, G. 2003. Women's inclusion in sport: international and comparative findings. In Hartmann-Tews, I. & Pfister, G. (eds). *Sport and women: social issues in international perspective*. London: Routledge: 266-280.
- Hartzell, S. & Scalia, S. n.d. *Management in organizations: top, middle & low-level managers* [Lesson]. Business 101: Principles of Management.
- Hattery, A.J. 2010. Feminist theory and the study of sport: an illustration from Title IX. In Smith, E. (ed). *The sociology of sport and social theory*. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics. 97-113.
- Haug, S. 2021. *What or where is the 'global south'? a social science perspective*. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2021/09/28/what-or-where-is-the-global-south-a-social-science-perspective/> [21 April 2022].
- Haynes, K. (2012). Reflexivity in qualitative research. In Symon, G. & Cassell, C (eds). *Qualitative organisational research: core methods and current challenges*. London: SAGE.
- Heffernan, C.D. 2019. Gender allyship: considering the role of men in addressing the gender-leadership gap in sport organizations. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minnesota. <https://hdl.handle.net/11299/201034> [13 August 2022].

- Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. 2019. Saturation in qualitative research. In Atkinson, P., Delamont, S., Cernat, A., Sakshaug, J.W., & Williams, R.A. (eds.) *SAGE research methods foundations*. London: SAGE.
- Hoeber, L., 2007. Exploring the gaps between meanings and practices of gender equity in a sport organization. *Gender, Work, and Organization*, 14(3): 259-280. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-0432.2007.00342.x.
- Hoye, R., Smith, A.C.T., Nicholson, M. & Stewart, B. 2018. *Sport management: principles and applications*. 5th ed. New York: Routledge.
- Hums, M.A. & Crosset, T.W. 2012. History of sport management. In Masteralexis, L.P., Barr, C.A. & Hums, M.A. *Principles and practice of sport management*. 4th ed. Sudbury, M.A.: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Ilić, R. 2013. Strategic planning at sports organizations. *Journal of Process Management – New Technologies, International*, 1(4): 113-121. DOI: 10.5937/JPMNT13041131.
- Imbroda-Ortiz, J., Castillo-Rodríguez, A., & Chinchilla-Minguet, J.L. 2015. Sports management, leadership in the organization. *Journal of Physical Education and Sports Management*, 2(2): 56-65. DOI: 10.15640/jpesm.v2n2a5.
- International Labour Office. 2004. Breaking through the glass ceiling: women in management. In Wirth, L. *Women in professional jobs*. Geneva: International Labour Office: 5-11.
- International Labour Office. 2006. Women in sports: How level is the playing field? *World of Work No. 56*: 27-30.
- International Olympic Committee. n.d. *Promotion of women in sport through time*. <https://www.olympic.org/women-in-sport/background> [6 August 2019].
- International Olympic Committee. 2021. *Factsheet: women in the Olympic movement*. <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/Olympic-Movement/Factsheets/Women-in-the-Olympic-Movement.pdf> [30 September 2022].
- International Working Group on Women and Sport. n.d.(a) *Brighton plus Helsinki 2014 Declaration on Women and Sport*: IWG Women & Sport.
- International Working Group on Women and Sport. n.d.(b) *Brighton Declaration*. <https://iwqwomenandsport.org/brighton-declaration/> [5 May 2020].
- ITT Technical Institute. n.d. *Management process, roles, behaviour and skills*. [Coursework]. ITT Technical Institute.
- Isaacson, D. 2020. *SASCOC votes for gender equity at board level*. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sport/2020-01-25-sascoc-votes-for-gender-equity-at-board-level/> [4 May 2020].
- Jackson, N. & Carter, P. 2007. *Rethinking organisational behaviour: a poststructuralist framework*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Venter, R. & Scheerder, J. 2018. Country profile: sport in South Africa. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*: 1-33. DOI: 10.1080/19406940.2018.1547780.
- Janghorban, R., Latifnejad Roudsari, R., & Taghipour, A. 2014. Pilot study in qualitative research: the roles and values. *Journal of School of Nursing and Midwifery*, 19 (4): 1-5. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264416271_Pilot_Study_in_Qualitative_Research_The_Roles_and_Values [6 May 2021].
- Jarvie, G. 2006. *Sport, culture and society: an introduction*. New York: Routledge.

- Jarvie, G. 2012. *Sport, culture and society: an introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Jarvie, G. & Maguire, J. 1994. *Sport and leisure in social thought*. London: Routledge.
- Jarvie, G., Thornton, J., & Mackie, H. 2018. *Sport, culture and society*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Joecks, J., Pull, K. & Vetter, K. 2013. Gender diversity in the boardroom and firm performance: What exactly constitutes a “critical mass?” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 118(1): 61-72. DOI: 10.1007/s10551-012-1553-6.
- Jones, G.R. & George, J.M. 2016. *Contemporary management*. 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Jones, G.R. & George, J.M. 2019. *Essentials of contemporary management*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Jones, I. 2015. *Research methods in sport studies*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Jonge, A. 2015. *The glass ceiling in Chinese and Indian boardrooms: women directors in listed firms in China and India*. Chandos Publishing.
- Kamberidou, I. 2010. Social gender and biological gender: gender in sports and the historicity of women’s exclusion. *Women & Sports*, VII: 7-24. <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/article/publication/social-gender-and-biological-gender-gender-sports-and-historicity-womens> [23 September 2019].
- Kara, F.M., Çolakoğlu, T. & Ögüt, E.E.E. 2016. Career barriers of women managers in sports organizations*. *International Journal of Sports, Exercise and Training Science*, 2(3):82-92. DOI: 10.18826/ijsets.04634.
- Kayi, N. 2013. *The progression of women to senior management positions at a South African university in the Western Cape*. Unpublished Master’s dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town.
- Keller, J. 2020. *Skype: everything you need to know!* <https://www.imore.com/skype> [8 May 2021].
- Keller, S. & Conradin, K. 2019. *Semi-structured interviews*. <https://sswm.info/planning-and-programming/decision-making/gathering-ideas/semi-structured-interviews> [8 May 2021].
- Kempe-Bergman, M., Larsson, H. & Redelius, K. 2020. The sceptic, the cynic, the women’s rights advocate and the constructionist: male leaders and coaches on gender equity in sport. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 12(3): 333-347. DOI: 10.1080/19406940.2020.1767678.
- Kennard, J. & Carter, J.M. 1994. In the beginning: the ancient and medieval worlds. In Costa, D.M. & Guthrie, S.R. (eds). *Women and sport: interdisciplinary perspectives*. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics: 15-25.
- Keloharju, M., Knüpfer, S. & Tåg, J. 2018. *What prevents female executives from reaching the top?* Working paper No. 2/2018. Oslo: Centre for Corporate Governance Research, Norwegian Business School.
- Khanna, P., Kimmel, Z. & Karkara, R. 2016a. *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) for youth report*. New York: UN Women.
- Khanna, P., Kimmel, Z. & Karkara, R. 2016b. *Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) for youth report*. New York: UN Women.
- Kim, W., Jun, H.M., Walker, M., Drane, D. 2015. Evaluating the perceived social impacts of hosting large-scale sport tourism events: scale development and validation. *Tourism Management*, 48(1): 21-32. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2014.10.015.

- Kirchmeyer, C. 2002. Gender differences in managerial careers: yesterday, today and tomorrow. *J. Bus. Ethics*, 37(1): 5-24. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25074729> [25 January 2019].
- Koca, C., Arslan, B. & Aşçı, F.H. 2011. Attitudes towards women's work roles and women managers in a sports organization: the case of turkey. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 18(6): 592-612. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-0432.2009.00490.x.
- Koohang, A. & Hatch, M. 2017. Leadership effectiveness in IT-centered organizations: gender and levels of management. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 57(4): 385-391. DOI: 10.1080/08874417.2017.1330128.
- Knoppers, A., Spaaij, R., Claringbould, I. 2021. Discursive resistance to gender diversity in sport governance: sport as a unique field?, *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*: 1-13. DOI: 10.1080/19406940.2021.1915848.
- Knott, B., Fyall, A. & Jones, I. 2016. Sport mega-events and nation branding: unique characteristics of the 2010 FIFA world cup, South Africa. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(3): 900-923. DOI 10.1108/IJCTHR-06-2015-005.1.
- Kreitner, R. 2009. *Management*. 11th ed. Boston, M.A.: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
- Kreitner, R. & Cassidy, C.M. 2011. *Management*. 12th ed. Mason, O.H.: South-Western, Cengage Learning.
- Labuschaigne, M. & Staunton, C. 2020. *COVID-19: state of disaster in South Africa*. <https://verfassungsblog.de/covid-19-state-of-disaster-in-south-africa/> [26 August 2020].
- Lapchick, R. 2016. *Gender report card: 2016 international sports report card on women in leadership roles*. Orlando: The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.
- Leonard, M. 2001. Old wine in new bottles? women working inside and outside the household. *Women's Stud. Int. Forum*, 24(1): 67-78. DOI: 10.1016/S0277-5395(00)00168-0.
- Lewis, J.J. 2019. *Liberal feminism*. <https://www.thoughtco.com/liberal-feminism-3529177> [23 February 2023].
- Lo Iacono, V., Symonds, P.A, & Brown, D.H.K. 2016. Skype as a tool for qualitative research interviews. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(2): 1-25. DOI: 10.5153/sro.3952.
- Long, M. 2019. ONE Championship hires NBA's Meghan Jenkins as international lead. *SportsPro*. 31 January. <http://www.sportspromedia.com/movers-and-shakers/one-championship-nba-meghan-jenkins-mma> [25 July 2019].
- Longhurst, R. 2010. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In Clifford, N., French, S. & Valentine, G. *Key methods in geography*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE: 103-115.
- Luttrell, W., 2019. Reflexive qualitative research. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Oxford University Press.
- MacIntosh, E. & Burton, L.J. 2019. *Organizational behavior in sport management*. Champaign, I.L: Human Kinetics.
- Malcolm, D. 2016. Sport and sociological theory. In Houlihan, B. & Malcolm, D. *Sport and society: a student introduction*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE: 11-31.
- Malie, S. 2011. Challenges faced by executive women in financial services companies and coping mechanisms. Unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

- Mansky, J. & Wei-Haas, M. 2016. *The rise of the modern sportswoman*. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/rise-modern-sportswoman-180960174/> [31 August 2019].
- Martin, T. 2020. *Are women leaders the key to growing women's sport?* <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/sport-fitness/are-women-leaders-the-key-growing-womens-sport> [28 June 2021].
- Massengale, D. 2009. The underrepresentation of women in interscholastic sport leadership: a qualitative study on the effects of role incongruity. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- Mathonsi, C. 2011. South African shadow report on the implementation of the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. *Proceedings for the CEDAW Committee's 48th Session*, 17 January - 4 February 2011: 1-74. Geneva: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.
- Maties Sport Media. 2020. *Women and successful leadership in sports*. www.sun.ac.za/english/Lists/news/DispForm.aspx?ID=7176 [28 June 2021].
- Mazique, B. 2019. *ONE championship hires Meghan Jenkins as newest vice President*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brianmazique/2019/01/31/one-championship-hires-meghan-jenkins-as-newest-vice-president/#684d3a51743a> [23 September 2019].
- McCarthy, J. 2020. *The 1995 Beijing declaration promised gender equality — but it has fallen short*. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/beijing-declaration-legacy-after-25-years/> [27 April 2020].
- McDonald, S., Lin, N., & Ao, D. 2009. Networks of opportunity: gender, race, and job leads. *Social Problems*, 56(3), 385-402. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/sp.2009.56.3.385> [1 May 2022].
- McLean, J. 2011. Fayol - standing the test of time. *Manager: British Journal of Administrative Management*, 74(1): 32-33. <http://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/621543/> [11 December 2019].
- McNamara, D.E. 2009. From Fayol's mechanistic to today's organic functions of management. *American Journal of Business Education*, 2(1): 63-78. DOI:10.19030/ajbe.v2i1.4023.
- Medelyan, A. 2020. *Coding qualitative data: how to code qualitative research (updated 2020)*. <https://getthematic.com/insights/coding-qualitative-data/> [6 May 2021].
- Megat Daud, M.A.K., Radzi, W.M., Abdullah, R. & Johari, F. 2013. The participation of women managers in managing sport: challenges and reality. *Life Science Journal*, 10(3): 870-878. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256454212_The_Participation_of_Women_Managers_in_Managing_Sport_Challenges_and_Reality [20 April 2019].
- Meghan Jenkins Named ONE Championship Vice President International. 2019. *ONE Championship*. 31 January. <https://www.onefc.com/press-releases/meghan-jenkins-named-one-championship-vice-president-international/> [30 September 2019].
- Melton, E.N. & Bryant, M.J. 2017. Intersectionality: the impact of negotiating multiple identities for women in sport leadership. In: Burton, L.J. & Leberman, S. (eds). *Women in sport leadership*. London: Routledge: 76-96.
- Microsoft. n.d. *What is Skype?* <https://support.skype.com/en/faq/FA6/what-is-skype> [8 May 2021].

- Mintzberg, H. 2007. The manager's job: folklore and fact. In Vecchio, R.P. (ed). *Leadership: understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations*. 2nd ed. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame: 33-50.
- Motsoeneng, R.P. & Kahn, S.B. 2013. Selection in the South African Public Service: ideal and reality. *Administratio Publica*, 21(3): 4-19. <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/25897> [13 August 2022].
- Msomi, J. 2019. *Distributional changes in the gender wage gap in the post-Apartheid South African labour market*. SA-TIED Working Paper #31 and WIDER Working Paper 2019/17. https://sa-tied.wider.unu.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/SATIED_WP31_Mosomi_March_2019.pdf [27 June 2021].
- Muijs, D. 2011. *Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS*. 2nd ed. London: SAGE.
- Mullins, L.J. 2005. *Management and organisational behaviour*. 7th ed. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Mullins, L.J. 2010. *Management & organisational behaviour*. 9th ed. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- M'mbaha, J.M & Chepyator-Thomson, J.R. 2018. Factors influencing career paths and progress of Kenyan women in sport leadership. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*.
- Naughton, J. n.d. *The importance of sport and its benefits to communities and participants' – by Paschal Donohoe TD*. <https://www.sportsnewsireland.com/gaa/the-importance-of-sport-and-its-benefits-to-communities-and-participants-by-paschal-donohoe-td/> [12 September 2019].
- Nauright, J. 1997. *Sport, cultures, and identities in South Africa*. London: Leicester University Press.
- Ndinda, C. & Okeke-Uzodike, U. 2012. Present but absent: women in business leadership in South Africa. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 13(1): 127-145. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11910/3493> [25 January 2019].
- Netherlands Olympic Committee* Netherlands Sports Confederation. 2016. *Sports agenda 2017+: the power of sports to influence society for the better*. Arnhem: National Olympic Committee*National Sports Confederation.
- Nongogo, P. 2011. The effect of sport boycott and social change in South Africa: a historical perspective, 1955-2005. Postgraduate research grant programme, 2010 Olympic Studies Centre, International Olympic Committee.
- Ntwape, L.F. 2016. A historiography of South African women's history from c. 1990. a survey of monographs, anthologies and journal articles. Unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- Nunes, R.A. 2018. Women athletes in the Olympic Games. *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 14(3): 1-10. DOI: 10.14198/jhse.2019.143.17.
- Oakley, J.G. 2000. Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: understanding the scarcity of female CEOs. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 27(4): 321-334. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25074386> [22 June 2018].
- Odendaal, A. 1995. The thing that is not round: the untold story of Black rugby in South Africa. In Grundlingh, A., Odendaal, A. & Spies, B. (eds). *Beyond the tryline: rugby and South African society*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press: 24.

- Ohmann, S. Jones, I. & Wilkes, K. 2006. The perceived social impacts of the 2006 football world cup on Munich residents. *Journal of Sport Tourism*, 11(2): 129-152. DOI: 10.1080/14775080601155167.
- Olmos-Vega, F.M., Stalmeijer, R.E., Varpio, L. & Kahlke, R. 2023. A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical teacher*, 45(3):241-251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287>.
- Osborne, C.A. & Skillen, F. 2020. Women in sports history: the more things change, the more they stay the same? *Sport in History*, 40(4):411-433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17460263.2020.1835707>.
- Otter.ai. n.d. *Otter is where conversations live*. <https://otter.ai/> [5 July 2020].
- Oxley, J.C. 2011. Liberal feminism. In Bruce, M. & Barbone, S (eds). *Just the arguments: 100 of the most important arguments in western philosophy*: 258-262.
- Öge, S., Karasoy, A. & Kara, Ö. 2014. A research on glass ceiling syndrome career barriers of women academics. *International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 8(9):3011-3020.
- Pace, C. 2018. *How women of color get to senior management*. <https://hbr.org/2018/08/how-women-of-color-get-to-senior-management> [7 August 2022].
- Paoloni, P. & Demartini, P. 2016. Women in management: perspectives on a decade of research (2005–2015). *Palgrave Communications*, 2(1): 1-7. DOI: 10.1057/palcomms.2016.94.
- Palmer, F.R. & Masters, T.M. 2010. Māori feminism and sport leadership: exploring Māori women's experiences. *Sport Management Review*, 13(1): 331-344. DOI: 10.1016/j.smr.2010.06.001.
- Pape, M. 2020. Gender segregation and trajectories of organizational change: explaining the underrepresentation of women in sports leadership. *Gender & Society*, 34(1): 81-105. DOI: 10.1177/0891243219867914.
- Parliamentary Monitoring Group. n.d. *Women empowerment and gender equality bill (B50-2013)*. <https://pmg.org.za/bill/26/> [3 May 2020].
- Parliamentary Monitoring Group. 2021. *Recruitment and selection norms applicable in the Public Service; Training programmes aimed at developing public servants; African Charter on Statistics; with Minister and Deputy Minister*. <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/33993/> [13 August 2022].
- Pedersen, P.M. & Thibault, L. 2019. Managing sport. In Pedersen, P. M. & Thibault, L. (eds). *Contemporary sport management*. 6th ed. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics: 4-29.
- Peersman, G. 2014. Overview: data collection and analysis methods in impact evaluation. *Methodological Briefs*, Impact Evaluation No. 10. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research.
- Pelak, C.F. 2010. Women and gender in South African soccer: a brief history. *Soccer & Society*, 11(1-2):63-78. DOI: 10.1080/14660970903331342.
- Perez-Rivases, A., Torregrosa, M., Viladrich, C., & Pallarès, S. 2017. Women occupying management positions in top-level sport organizations: a self-determination perspective. *Anales de psicología*, 33(1): 102-113. DOI: 10.6018/analesps.33.1.229171.
- Perić, M. 2018. Estimating the perceived socio-economic impacts of hosting large-scale sport tourism events. *Social Sciences*, 7(10): 1-18. DOI: 10.3390/socsci7100176.

- Petkovic, J., Jasinskas, E. & Jesevičiūtė-Ufartienė, L. 2013. Significance of strategic planning for results of sport organization. *Ekonomika a management*, XIX(4): 56-72. DOI: 10.15240/tul/001/2016-4-005.
- Pettinger, R. 2012. *Management: a concise introduction*. London: Red Globe Press.
- Petronel, M. & Florentina, M. 2013. sports organization management: between constraints and objectives. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 81(1): 95-99. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.06.394.
- Pham, L. 2018. *A review of advantages and disadvantages of three paradigms: positivism, interpretivism and critical inquiry*. The University of Adelaide, Adelaide.
- Pitts, B.G. & Stotlar, D.K. 2013. *Fundamentals of sport marketing*. 4th ed. Morgantown, W.V.: FIT Publishing.
- PMG see Parliamentary Monitoring Group.
- Powell, G.N. 2011. *Women and men in management*. 4th ed. London: SAGE.
- Pride, W.M., Hughes, R.J., & Kapoor, J.R. 2014. *Business*. 12th ed. Mason, O.H.: Cengage Learning.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers. 2020. Executive directors: practices and remuneration trends report. *Proceedings for the 12th edition Executive directors: practices and remuneration trends report*, August 2020: 1-96. South Africa: PwC.
- Profiles in leadership. 2019. *Public Sector Manager*. 1 January. <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/public-sector-manager/20181201/281500752365847> [24 September 2019].
- PwC see PricewaterhouseCoopers.
- Ramaite, T. 2013. South African female individuals' perceptions and experiences of their gender and leadership roles. Unpublished mini-thesis, University of the Western Cape, Bellville.
- Rao, P.S. 2017. *Organisational behaviour: (text, cases and games)*. 3rd rev. ed. Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House.
- Reid, H.L. 2011. *Athletics and philosophy in the ancient world*. London: Routledge.
- Research Focus. 2009. Women in management in the financial services sector in South Africa: a review of the literature. *Report prepared for FASSET*. Randburg: FASSET.
- Retar, I., Pišot, R. & Kolar, E. 2015. The definition of sports management. *Physical Education and Sport*, 13(2): 275-281. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326440026> THE DEFINITION OF SPORTS MANAGEMENT [19 June 2021].
- Retar, I., Plevnik, M. & Kolar, E. 2013. Key competences of Slovenian sport managers. *Annales Kinesiologiae*, 4(2): 81-94. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273141574> ANNALES KINESIOLOGIAE BULLETIN KEY COMPETENCES OF SLOVENIAN SPORT MANAGERS [15 February 2020].
- Roberts, C. 1992. *Against the grain: women and sport in South Africa*. Cape Town: Township Publishing Co-operative.
- Robbins, S.P. & Coulter, M. 2012. *Management*. 11th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Robbins, S.P. & Judge, T.A. 2013. *Organizational behaviour*. Global ed. New York: Pearson.

- Robinson, L., Minikin, B. & Palmer, R. 2011. The future of management in voluntary sport organisations. In Robinson, L. & Palmer, R. *Managing voluntary sport organisations*. London: Routledge: 291-300.
- Rowe, D. 2016. Sports, sexism and the law: some contextual history. *Text of a panel presentation to Sports, Sexism and the Law*, Western Sydney University Law School Public Seminar, Parramatta, 28 April 2016. Australia: Western Sydney University.
- Rowe, D.C, Guttman, A., Thompson, W.N. & Maguire, J.A. 1998. *Sports*. <https://www.britannica.com/sports/sports> [5 March 2019].
- Rubery, J. & Koukiadaki, A. 2016. Closing the gender pay gap: a review of the issues, policy mechanisms and international evidence. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Ruddell, E. 2017. Qualitative research in leisure, recreation and tourism. In Sirakaya-Turk, E., Uysal, M., Hammit, W.E. & Vaske, J.J. (eds). *Research methods for leisure, recreation and tourism*. 2nd ed. Oxfordshire: CABI Tourism Texts: 147-164.
- Rue, L.W., Ibrahim, N.A. & Byars, L.L. 2013. *Management skills and application*. 14th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ruotsalainen, S. 2019. Reasons for underrepresentation of female leaders and figureheads in Finland according to male sport executives. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.
- Ryan, M.K. & Haslam, S.A. 2009. Glass cliffs are not so easily scaled: on the precariousness of female CEOs' positions. *British Journal of Management*, 20(1): 13-16. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8551.2008.00598.x.
- Salloum, C., Azzi, G., Mercier-Suissa, C. & Khalil, S. 2016. The rise of women and their impact on firms' performance. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, 27(2/3): 213-246. DOI: 10.1504/IJESB.2016.073976.
- Sanchez-Hucles, J.V. & Davis, D.D. 2010. Women and women of color in leadership: complexity, identity, and intersectionality. *American Psychologist*, 65(3): 171-181. DOI: 10.1037/a0017459.
- SASCOC see South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee.
- Scambler, G. 2005. *Sport and society: history, power and culture*. New York: Open University Press.
- Schein, V.E. 2001. A global look at psychological barriers to women's progress in management. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(4): 675-688. DOI: 10.1111/0022-4537.00235.
- Schein, V.E. 2007. Women in management: reflections and projections. *Women in Management Review*, 22(1): 6-18. DOI 10.1108/09649420710726193.
- Schermerhorn, J.R., Davidson, P., Woods, P., Factor, A., Simon, A., McBarron, E. & Junaid, F. 2020. *Management*. 7th Asian-Pacific ed. New York: Wiley.
- Scott, C. & Medaugh, M. 2017. Axial coding. In Matthes, J. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. John Wiley: 1-2.
- Senden, L. & Visser, M. 2014. *Promoting women in management*. Brussels: CEC European Managers.
- Serra, P. 2015. The sociology of sport. In Rudansky-Kloppers, S. & Strydom, J. *Principles of sport management*. Cape Town: Oxford Press University: 57-93.
- Serra, P. 2019. *Gauteng throngs to women in sport policy roadshow*. <https://gsport.co.za/gauteng-throngs-to-women-in-sport-policy-roadshow/> [25 July 2019].

- Seshadri, V. & Elangovan, N. 2019. Role of manager in geographically distributed team; a review. *Journal of Management*, 6(1): 122-129. DOI: 10.34218/JOM.6.1.2019.013.
- Setia M.S. 2016. Methodology series module 3: cross-sectional studies. *Indian Journal of Dermatology*, 61(1): 261-264. DOI: 10.4103/0019-5154.182410.
- Sikes, M. & Adom-Aboagye, N.A.A. 2017. *South Africa needs to do more to promote women in sports*. <https://theconversation.com/south-africa-needs-to-do-more-to-promote-women-in-sports-73704> [6 May 2020].
- Singh, S. & Coetzer, S. 2017. *SA's laws protecting women in the workplace*. <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/717/166217.html> [3 May 2020].
- Singh, T. & Naidoo, L.D. 2017. Assessing gender inequality in South Africa: a case study of women in sports management. *Journal of Research in Business, Economics and Management*, 8(2): 1407-1428. <http://scitecresearch.com/journals/index.php/jrbem/article/view/1027> [17 September 2021].
- Singh, V. & Vinnicombe, S. 2005. *The Female FTSE Index 2005*. Cranfield: Cranfield School of Management.
- Sirakaya-Turk, E., Uysal, M. 2017. Research methods for leisure, recreation and tourism. In Sirakaya-Turk, E., Uysal, M., Hammit, W.E. & Vaske, J.J. (eds). *Research methods for leisure, recreation and tourism*. 2nd ed. Oxfordshire: CABI Tourism Texts: 1-27.
- Smit, B. 2002. Atlas.ti for qualitative data analysis. *Perspectives in Education*, 20(3): 65-76. <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/4543> [7 May 2021].
- Smith, B. & Sparkes, A.C. 2016. Introduction: an invitation to qualitative research. In Smith, B. & Sparkes, A.C. (eds). *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise*. New York: Routledge: 1-8.
- Smith, M.F. 2010. *Research methods in sport*. Exeter: Learning Matters.
- Smith, M. & Wrynn, A. 2013. *Women in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: an analysis of participation and leadership opportunities research report*. Ann Arbor, M.I.: SHARP Center for Women and Girls.
- Soler, S. Prat, M., Puig, N. & Flintoff, A. 2017. Implementing gender equity policies in a university sport organization: competing discourses from enthusiasm to resistance. *Quest*, 69(2): 276-289. DOI: 10.1080/00336297.2016.1226186.
- Sotiriadou, P. & de Haan, D. 2019. Women and leadership: advancing gender equity policies in sport leadership through sport governance. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 11(3):1-19. DOI: 10.1080/19406940.2019.1577902.
- South Africa. 2007. No. 18 of 2007: National Sport and Recreation Amendment Act, 2007. Notice 1082 of 2007. *Government Gazette*, 509(30476):1-20, November 2007.
- South Africa. 2014. Act No. 47 of 2013: Employment Equity Amendment Act, 2013. Notice 16 of 2014. *Government Gazette*, 583(37238):1-22, January 2014.
- South Africa. 2018. Act No. 8 of 2018: Labour Relations Amendment Act, 2018. Notice 1304 of 2018. *Government Gazette*, 641(42061):1-21, November 2014.
- South Africa. Constitutional Assembly. 1996. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- South Africa. Department of Labour. 2004. *Employment Equity Act, No. 55 Of 1998*: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Labour. 2018. *Labour Relations Act and Amendments*. <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/legislation/acts/labour-relations/labour-relations-act> [23 April 2019].

South Africa. Department of Public Safety. 2012. *Sports and recreation policy: "managing sport and recreation in the workplace"*. North West Provincial Government.

South Africa. Department of Public Service and Administration. 1997. *White paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Public Service and Administration. 2003. *Senior management service: Public Service handbook*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. n.d. *Organogram*. <http://www.dac.gov.za/node/1276> [2 June 2020].

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2012. *The White Paper on Sport and Recreation for the Republic of South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2016. *EPG: sport transformation status report: a comparative & sport code specific assessment & introduction to school sport structure: 2016/17*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2017. *EPG sport transformation: status report overview 2017/18*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2019a. *EPG: Comparative sport federation transformation status dashboard 2018/2019: part 2*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2019b. *Annual report 2018/2019*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa. n.d. *Acting director general*. <https://www.srsa.gov.za/content/office-coo> [25 July 2019].

South Africa. Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. 2016. *South Africa's 5th periodic report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women 2009-2014*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

South Africa. Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities. 2013. *Women empowerment and Gender Equality Bill*: Government Printer.

South Africa. Public Service Commission. 2004. *A toolkit on recruitment and selection*. Pretoria: The Public Service Commission.

South Africa. Public Service Commission. 2010. *State of the Public Service report: integration, coordination and effective Public Service delivery*. Pretoria: The Public Service Commission.

South Africa. Public Service Commission. 2018. *Evaluation of the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection system of the public service*. Pretoria: The Public Service Commission.

South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee. 2012. Transformation Charter for South African sport. *Proceedings of the 2011 National Sport and Recreation Indaba, 22 August 2011: 1-47*. Johannesburg: SASCO.

Sport and Recreation South Africa. 2017. SRSA legislative framework for 2017. Presentation presented to the Portfolio committee on Sport and Recreation.

Sport England & UK Sport. 2016. *A code for sports governance*. Sport England & UK Sport.

- Stanley, J. & Karolin, R. 2016. Top level manager: skills, functions, tasks, approaches, responsibilities and roles. *Asian Journal of Management Research*, 7(2): 170-178.
- Statistics South Africa. 2011. *Quarterly labour force survey: quarter 1, 2011*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.
- Statistics South Africa. 2012. *Quarterly labour force survey: quarter 4, 2012*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.
- Statistics South Africa. 2015. *Millennium development goals: country report 2015*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.
- Straub, C. 2012. Antecedents and organizational consequences of family supportive supervisor behavior: a multilevel conceptual framework for research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 22(1): 15-26. DOI: 10.1016/j.hrmr.2011.08.001.
- Step Up Equality. 2020. *A handbook of best practice: women's leadership and decision making within sport*. Step Up Equality Project.
- Storey, J. 2019. Bumping into the glass ceiling: exploring women's experiences seeking positional leadership roles within the student affairs profession in South Africa. *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education*, 11(Winter):192-195. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jcihe.v11iWinter.1547>.
- Sukumaran, T. 2018. *Meet Malaysia's Syed Saddiq, 25, youngest cabinet minister in Asia*. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/2166977/meet-malaysias-syed-saddiq-25-youngest-cabinet-minister-asia> [2 June 2020].
- Surujlal, J. 2015. Penetrating the glass ceiling in sport leadership positions: the lived experiences of women beyond the ceiling. *Proceedings of 30th International Business Research Conference*, 20-22 April 2015. Dubai.
- Suter, K. n.d. *The importance of sport in society*. <http://global-directions.com.au/Articles/Business/EconomicImpactOfSport.pdf> [12 September 2019].
- Swart, K., Bob, U. & Arrey, V. 2008. Sport events and their socio-economic impact: residents' perceptions of the Isuzu Berg River canoe marathon. *Africa Insight*, 38(3): 123-134. DOI: 10.4314/ai.v38i3.51222.
- Taylor, T., Doherty, A. & McGraw, P. 2015. *Managing people in sport organizations: a strategic human resource management perspective*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Tegethof, S. 2019. *Why do we have so few women leaders (in sports)?* <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-do-we-have-so-few-women-leaders-sports-silke-tegethof> [28 June 2021].
- Thomas, J., Thomas, C. & Smith, K. 2019. The challenges for gender equity and women in leadership in a distributed university in regional Australia. *Social Sciences*, 8(165): 1-9. DOI: 10.3390/socsci8060165.
- Thornton, O. & Etxebarria, N. 2021. Against the odds of tradition: nudging the glass ceiling of sport leadership. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 36(5):591-604. DOI 10.1108/GM-01-2020-0013.
- Titus, S. 2011. Female sport administrators' experiences of organizational fit in the workplace. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, June (Supplement): 123-133. DOI: 10.4314/ajpherd.v17i3.68081.
- Todaro, M.P. & Smith, S.C. 2012. *Economic Development*. 11th ed. Boston: Addison-Wesley.
- Toffoletti, K. & Palmer, C. 2019. Women and sport in Australia—new times? *Journal of Australian Studies*, 43(1): 1-6. DOI: 10.1080/14443058.2019.1579081.

- Torchia, M., Calabrò, A., & Huse, M. 2011. Women directors on corporate boards: from tokenism to critical mass. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 102(1): 299-317. DOI: 10.1007/s10551-011-0815-z.
- Turkel, A.R. 2004. The hand that rocks the cradle rocks the boat: the empowerment of women. *The Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry*, 32(1): 41-53. DOI: 10.1521/jaap.32.1.41.28337.
- UN Women. 2015a. *The Beijing declaration and platform for action turns 20*. New York: UN Women.
- UN Women. 2015b. *Infographic: Human rights of women*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2015/12/infographic-human-rights-women> [27 April 2020].
- UN Women. 2020. *Explainer: Everything you need to know about pushing for equal pay*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/9/explainer-everything-you-need-to-know-about-equal-pay> [7 January 2021].
- United Kingdom Sports Council. 2008. *Women and sport; from Brighton to Windhoek; facing the challenge*. International Working Group on Women and Sport.
- United Nations Development Fund for Women. 2006. *Advancing gender equality – using CEDAW and UN security council resolution 1325: training module for gender equality advocates*. UNIFEM Regional Project “Women for Conflict Prevention and Peace-building in the Southern Caucasus”.
- United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women. 1997. *Women 2000: women and decision-making*. New York: United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women.
- United Nations Economic and Social Council. 2020. Political declaration on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fourth world conference on women. *Proceedings of the sixty-fourth session*, 9-20 March 2020. 1-6. New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council: 1/1-6/6.
- United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace. 2005. *Sport as a tool for development and peace: towards achieving the United Nations millennium development goals*. https://www.un.org/sport2005/resources/task_force.pdf [25 May 2019].
- van Wyk, M. 2012. Women leaders, personal leadership and challenges. Unpublished Mini-dissertation, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg.
- Vázquez-Carrasco, R., López-Pérez, M.E. & Centeno, E. 2011. A qualitative approach to the challenges for women in management: are they really starting in the 21st century? *Quality & Quantity*, 46(5): 1337-1357. DOI: 10.1007/s11135-011-9449-6.
- Veal, A.J. & Darcy, S. 2014. *Research methods in sport studies and sport management: a practical guide*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Vertinsky, P. 1994. Women, sport, and exercise in the 19th century. In Costa, D.M. & Guthrie, S.R. (eds). *Women and sport: interdisciplinary perspectives*. Champaign, I.L.: Human Kinetics: 63-79.
- Vyas-Doorgapersad, S. & Surujlal, J. 2018. Assessing gender equality in the South African sports sector. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies*, 10(1): 294-310. <http://hdl.handle.net/10210/289620> [2 June 2020].
- Walker, C. 1990. The women's suffrage movement: the politics of gender, race and class. In Walker, C (ed.). *Women and gender in Southern Africa to 1945*. Cape Town: David Phillip: 131-345.

- Walker, N.A., Schaeperkoetter, C. & Darvin, L. 2017. Institutionalized practices in sport leadership. In Burton, L.J. & Leberman, S. (eds). *Women in Sport Leadership: Research and Practice for Change*. London: Routledge.
- Wellington, J., & Szczerbinski, M. 2007. *Research methods for the social sciences*. London: Continuum.
- West, E. 2020. *Women thin on ground in top positions in SA*. <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/women-thin-on-ground-in-top-positions-in-sa-bf5d26cb-8e9d-4438-975a-1bb0b1968719> [26 June 2021].
- Western Cape Government: Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport. 2014. *National Sport and Recreation Plan*. Cape Town. Government Printer.
- White, A. 2019. Thinking like a manager: a participatory exercise for understanding managerial roles. *Management Teaching Review*, 00(0): 1-12. DOI: 10.1177/2379298119825829.
- White, A., & Brackenridge, C. 1985. Who rules sport? gender divisions in the power structure of British sports organisations from 1960*. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 20(1-2): 95-107. DOI: 10.1177/101269028502000109.
- White, M. & Kay, J. 2006. Who rules sport now? White and Brackenridge revisited. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 41(3-4): 465-473. DOI: 10.1177/1012690207077708.
- Wilson, V. 2012. Research methods: interviews. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*, 7(2), 96-98. <https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/10233/8146> [15 May 2019].
- Wirth, L. 2001. *Breaking through the glass ceiling: women in management*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Wolff, E.A. & Hums, M.A. 2020. *The power of sport for inclusion: including persons with disabilities in sport*. <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/article/news/power-sport-inclusion-including-persons-disabilities-sport> [21 March 2022].
- Woudstra, I. 2016. Gender at work, one size does not fit all. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 48(7): 349-353. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-01-2016-0010> [25 January 2019].
- Yamagata-Lynch, L.C. 2010. *Activity systems analysis methods: understanding complex learning environments*. New York: Springer.
- Yiamouyiannis, A. & Osborne, B. 2012. Addressing gender inequities in collegiate sport: examining female leadership representation within NCAA sport governance. *SAGE Open*, 2(2): 1-13. DOI: 10.1177/2158244012449340.
- Yilmaz, K. 2013. Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education*, 48(2): 311-325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12014> [27 May 2022].
- Zangirolami-Raimundo, J., Echeimberg, J.O. & Leone, C. 2018. Research methodology topics: cross-sectional studies. *Journal of Human Growth and Development*, 28(3): 356-360. DOI: 10.7322/jhgd.152198.
- Zheng, M. 2015. Conceptualization of cross-sectional mixed methods studies in health science: a methodological review. *International Journal of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, 3(2): 66-87. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.24477.33763.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview schedule



For office use only:

Interview no.: _____

Date: ____/____/2020

Federation: _____

Department of Sport Management

Female Senior Managers Interview Schedule:

Contemporary challenges facing female senior managers in selected sport organisations in South Africa.

This interview forms part of the data collection for a Master's degree at the Department of Sport Management, Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This study explores the challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations, which will significantly contribute to individuals and sport organisation's theory and practice pertaining to the challenges which female senior managers are likely to face. You are cordially invited to participate in this interview. The information that you provide will be treated confidentially and your identity will be protected. If you feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, you have the option to withdraw from the study.

The study is aligned to the principles of the American Psychological Association whereby the researcher will respect the dignity and worth of all people (in this case the participants), and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination. Furthermore, the interview respects the right of participants to make their own informed choices and to live their lives by their own beliefs, values and preferences.

SECTION 1: THE AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE SENIOR MANAGERS

1. What is your perception of the female representation in senior management positions in the sports sector and in your view, has the representation changed/improved?
2. How would you describe your understanding of the challenges which females are likely to face in senior management positions within the sports sector?
3. As a senior manager, can you elaborate on any challenges you may currently face?
 - a) Would you say you faced the same challenges prior to becoming a senior manager?
 - b) What other challenges, besides those mentioned, did you face?
 - c) How have you overcome these challenges?
4. Are you aware of gender stereotyping in your organisation?
 - 4.1. Based on your awareness of the question above, would you say gendered roles are prevalent in your organisation? (That being the belief that masculine and feminine traits are associated with certain occupations).

Based on literature sources, the “glass ceiling”, which is an invisible barrier that prohibits females from progressing in the workplace over males who share similar qualifications, is seen to be the greatest barrier for females in senior management (Vázquez-Carrasco *et al.*, 2012).

5. If you have experienced the above, how have you dealt with the glass ceiling as a female senior manager?
6. In your opinion, what are the typical managerial characteristics of male and female employees?
7. Can you describe the remuneration process for male and female employees in your organisation?
 - a) Are you aware of the term “wage gap”? Yes/No?
 - b) Is there a wage gap between male and female senior managers in your organisation? (Can you elaborate?)
8. As a female senior manager, how do you perceive work-life balance?
 - 8.1. Is it possible to achieve work-life balance as a female senior manager? Please elaborate.

SECTION 2: NETWORKING, POLICY, AND ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

1. If you are affiliated with any association e.g. the South Africa Women and Sport Foundation, how have you benefitted in relation to networking opportunities?
2. How important is higher education for female senior managers?
 - a) (Does experience come into play?)
3. In your opinion, are there any governmental policies that have supported you as a female senior manager? (Could you name a few)
4. In your opinion, are there any organisational practices that have supported you as a female senior manager? (Could you name a few)
5. In your experience as a senior manager, has there been any form of support or opportunities for growth in your organisation?
6. What role have mentors in the sports sector played in your role as a female senior manager?
 - a) What role have female mentors played in your occupation as a female senior manager?)
7. Is there any additional information that you feel is necessary to add to these questions or that can contribute to this study's topic area?

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING.

Appendix B: Letter of consent 1



Cape
Peninsula
University
of Technology

Faculty of Business and
Management Sciences
Ethics Informed Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Category of Participants (tick as appropriate):

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study being conducted by **Anza Ramatsia** from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The findings of this study will contribute towards (tick as appropriate):

<i>An undergraduate project</i>		<i>A conference paper</i>	X
<i>An Honours project</i>		<i>A published journal article</i>	X
<i>A Masters thesis</i>	X	<i>A published report</i>	

Selection criteria

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a:

- (a) Female Executive
(b) Female Senior Manager

~~Y/N~~
✓N

The information below gives details about the study to help you decide whether you would want to participate.

Title of the research:

Contemporary challenges facing female senior managers in selected sport organisations in South Africa.

A brief explanation of what the research involves:

This interview forms part of the data collection for a Master's study at the Department of Sport Management, CPUT. This study explores the challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations which will significantly contribute to individual's and sport organisation's theory and practice pertaining to the challenges which female senior managers are likely to face. The information that you provide will be treated confidentially and your identity will be protected. If you feel uncomfortable at any given time during the interview, you have the option to withdraw from the study.

The study is aligned to the principles of the American Psychological Association whereby the researcher will respect the dignity and worth of all people (in this case the participants), and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination. Furthermore the interview respects the right of participants to make their own informed choices and to live their lives by their own beliefs, values and preferences.

Procedures (Interview or Self-administer questionnaire)

If you volunteer to participate in this study the following will be done:

1. Describe the main research procedures to you in advance, so that you are informed about what to expect;


2. Treat all interviewees with respect by arriving on time for all the interview schedules and well prepared;
3. Conduct an introduction with the interviewee in order to break ice;
4. All the interviewees will be asked for permission to record the interviews and also take some note where applicable;
5. In a case where there is no clarity, the interviewees will be allowed to ask for confirmation or clarity of words/sentences/phrases to ensure accuracy of the data collected;
6. Participants will be told that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs;
7. Participants will be given the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer or feel uncomfortable with;
8. Participants will be told that questions do not pose any realistic risk of distress or discomfort, either physically or psychologically, to them;
9. At the end of each interview all the interviewees will be thanked for their time and information provided for this study;
10. Participants will be debriefed at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study).

You are invited to contact the researchers should you have any questions about the research before or during the study. You will be free to withdraw your participation at any time without having to give a reason.

Kindly complete the table below before participating in the research.

Tick the appropriate column		
Statement	Yes	No
1. I understand the purpose of the research.	✓	
2. I understand what the research requires of me.	✓	
3. I volunteer to take part in the research.	✓	
4. I know that I can withdraw at any time.	✓	
5. I understand that there will not be any form of discrimination against me as a result of my participation or non-participation.	✓	
6. Comment:		

Please sign the consent form. You will be given a copy of this form on request.

	
Signature of participant	Date 27/11/19

Researcher

	Name:	Surname:	Contact details:
1.	Anza	Ramatsia	072 06

		aaaramatsia@gmail.com
--	--	-----------------------

Contact person: Anza Ramatsia

Appendix C: Letter of consent 2



Cape
Peninsula
University
of Technology

Faculty of Business and Management Sciences
Ethics Informed Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Category of Participants (tick as appropriate):

You are kindly invited to participate in a research study being conducted by **Anza Ramatsia** from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. The findings of this study will contribute towards (tick as appropriate):

<i>An undergraduate project</i>		<i>A conference paper</i>	X
<i>An Honours project</i>		<i>A published journal article</i>	X
<i>A Masters thesis</i>	X	<i>A published report</i>	

Selection criteria

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a:

- (a) Female Executive **N**
(b) Female Senior Manager **Y**

The information below gives details about the study to help you decide whether you would want to participate.

Title of the research:

Contemporary challenges facing female senior managers in selected sport organisations in South Africa.

A brief explanation of what the research involves:

This interview forms part of the data collection for a Master's study at the Department of Sport Management, CPUT. This study explores the challenges facing female senior managers in sport organisations which will significantly contribute to individual's and sport organisation's theory and practice pertaining to the challenges which female senior managers are likely to face. The information that you provide will be treated confidentially and your identity will be protected. If you feel uncomfortable at any given time during the interview, you have the option to withdraw from the study.

The study is aligned to the principles of the American Psychological Association whereby the researcher will respect the dignity and worth of all people (in this case the participants), and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination. Furthermore the interview respects the right of participants to make their own informed choices and to live their lives by their own beliefs, values and preferences.

Procedures (*Interview or Self-administer questionnaire*)

If you volunteer to participate in this study the following will be done:

	28/11/2019
Signature of participant	Date

Researcher

	Name:	Surname:	Contact details:
1.	Anza	Ramatsia	072 06 aaaramatsia@gmail.com

Contact person: Anza Ramatsia	
Contact number: 072 06	Email: aaaramatsia@gmail.com

Appendix D: Ethical clearance



P.O. Box 1906 • Bellville 7535 South Africa • Tel: +27 21 4603291 • Email: fbmsethics@cput.ac.za
Symphony Road Bellville 7535


Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
--	--

At a meeting of the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee on **16 October 2018**, Ethics **Approval** was granted to **Anza Tshifaro Ramatsia (214091899)** for research activities of **Master of Sport Management** at Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Title of dissertation/thesis/project:	CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE SENIOR MANAGERS IN SELECTED PROVINCIAL SPORT FEDERATIONS IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE. Lead Researcher/Supervisor: Prof S E.H. Davies
---------------------------------------	--

Comments:

Decision: **Approved**

 Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	17 October 2018 Date
---	-------------------------

Clearance Certificate No | 2018FBREC585

Appendix E: Editing Certificate

PROOFREADING AND EDITING CERTIFICATE

Hugo Chandler

BA Psychology and Drama (UCT)

20 Oester Avenue, Struisbaai North, 7285, Western Cape, South Africa
Email: hugochandler49@gmail.com / Website: www.busybeeediting.co.za / Cell: 072 244 4363

I Hugo Chandler have completed the proofreading, editing, layout, syntax, spelling, grammar and reference checking to the best of my ability on a 58,818-word Master's Thesis/Dissertation titled CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE SENIOR MANAGERS IN SELECTED SPORTS ORGANISATIONS for ANZA TSHIFARO RAMATSIA, Student No.: 214091899, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SPORT MANAGEMENT, in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at the CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY.

Any amendments or alterations done to this Thesis/Dissertation by Anza Tshifaro Ramatsia hereafter are not covered by this proofreading and editing confirmation. It is up to Anza Tshifaro Ramatsia to ultimately decide whether to accept or decline any amendments done by me and it remains Anza Tshifaro Ramatsia's responsibility at all times to confirm the accuracy and originality of the completed Thesis/Dissertation.

Hugo Chandler

Hugo Chandler

Date: 26 September 2022