



“INTRUDERS IN THE SACRED GROVE OF SCIENCE”?

**A Critical Analysis of Women Academics’ Participation in Research
in the Humanities and Social Sciences**

Suchitra Singh

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**Dissertation Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for a Doctoral Degree in
Education (D. Ed.) in the School of Educational Studies at the University of Durban-
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Abstract

Knowledge production or research in South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, does not occur within ‘innocent’ spaces devoid of personal, social, political, economic and cultural contexts. Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences has been largely the domain of white, male academics operating within positivistic, western, or eurocentric paradigms that have consequently cast all differing modes of knowledge production as ‘other’. Research has been ‘normalised’ within particular frames of reference that have often served to marginalize knowledge production emanating from other contexts such as a feminist perspective or a black perspective.

This thesis presents a critical analysis of the participation of women academics in research in the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa. I argue in this study that the discourses and practices of the academy have traditionally operated to marginalize, and continues to marginalize women effectively excluding them from the arena of research. Whilst there are many studies that have been conducted investigating women in academia, the emphases have been essentially on establishing baseline data such as the numbers and positions women occupy and explanations for the situations that exist. There are, however, very few studies that have extended the analysis to focus on women as researchers and knowledge producers within academia as is the case with this study. I also advance the analyses by arguing for a shift from the widely accepted conceptions that cast women academics as the problem and focus attention instead on the often hostile culture or climate of academia.

I argue further that the historical exclusion of women and more especially black women, from the production of knowledge or research has contributed to the exclusion of women from positions of power in the social, cultural, political, economic and academic contexts. My own passion for these issues is directly linked to a conviction that in its public absence, and in the assumption that knowledge about gender is largely irrelevant to the possibility of social justice, lies some of the deep roots of women’s complex degradations.

This study grew out of my participation in the former Centre for Science Development’s (now part of the National Research Foundation) audit of women academics and

researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa and was carried out in three phases. The first phase entailed a secondary analysis of the audit data, drawing comparisons between the national findings and the findings for the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Besides conducting a general analysis the data was also disaggregated according to the historically designated racial categories to establish how black women, in particular, were faring.

Having established a statistical picture, the second phase was concerned with exploring the qualitative understandings of women academics in research, through the eyes of six black women academics from KwaZulu-Natal. The six women in the study were selected from the University of Durban-Westville, the University of Zululand (both historically disadvantaged institutions) and the University of Natal (a historically advantaged institution).

Although it is my contention that all research is necessarily autobiographical, the third phase of the study turned my 'subtext' of being the researcher who is simultaneously 'other' into 'text'. In the autobiographical data I author and reflect on my own experiences as an academic and researcher who is 'other'.

Conducted in a style that challenges the mainstream or what is described as 'male-stream' conventions and understandings of research practice, I inscribe the personal into the 'scientific' by employing an autobiographical, feminist 'gaze' throughout this study. The narrative style of communicating parts of the study to the audience, and my attempt to blur the divide between researcher and researched, express a significant feminist desire to infuse the generic aspects of feminist theory, feminist methodology, feminist practice and feminist politics into each other.

Finally the insights gained from this study about the general participation of women academics in research and more especially, the position and experiences of black women academics, including myself, achieve many objectives. Not only does it provide baseline information for the province of KwaZulu-Natal in relation to the national trends but also serves to unpack this baseline information with respect to the historically designated racial categories and deepens our understandings of the problems through insights into the day-to-day lived experiences of black women in particular. All of which are integral to

informing equity and redress initiatives designed to bring about transformation and democratisation in the arena of research in the humanities and social sciences.

Dedication

To my parents
Anand and Minawathi Singh

My greatest source of inspiration.

Not having had the benefits of further education, they continue to astound me with their profound insights and ways of knowing, fuelling my passions to discover and understand the deeper meaning of knowledge, intellect, reason, logic, rationality and truth. I am continually humbled by their ability to critically engage their world and their sense of being and becoming.

This dissertation is but a humble dedication to two great people
who bloom unseen in the desert.

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Whilst I am deeply indebted to and appreciate the intellectual guidance and critique of an overlapping community of family, colleagues, friends and 'ships that have passed through the night' I do wish to single out and honour some of the intellectual and spiritual anchors of this study.

Words cannot express my deep respect and admiration for my supervisor Prof. Jonathan Jansen who continually re-inscribes, redefines, rewrites and crosses borders in academia and research. He has been the 'divine intervention' and inspiration I needed to kick-start my career. His role has always been more than that of supervisor. His ability to critically engage issues with a profound sense of humility and ordinary-ness of being, are remarkable qualities that desperately need to be emulated by all. He is totally devoid of the arrogance and smugness that often masquerades as intellectualism and critique in academia. A role model par excellence, I will always remember him as a 'life is too short to stuff mushrooms' person. Jonathan, you are a closer relative to God than you realise!

I would also like to honour Prof. Carol Patitu (Fulbright Senior Scholar, University of Texas), for the co-supervisory role she has played since her timely arrival at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW) School of Educational Studies. The immense experience and insights that she has brought into our numerous conversations regarding my doctoral work and the meticulous readings of all my drafts have helped tremendously in bringing this study to its completion.

In addition I recognise and honour friends and colleagues whose ideas, affection and conversations have sustained and challenged me over the years:

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Renuka Vithal whose friendship and mentorship provided the grounds for me to learn how to become an engaged critic;

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I would also like to acknowledge the role played by following institutions:

The former Faculty of Education Women's Forum that supported me through the various stages of the Women in Research Project by providing critique of the research instruments and for allowing the questionnaire to be piloted amongst them;

The University of Durban-Westville, for the generous grants towards this study as well as for conference presentations abroad;

The former CSD for their support by way of their training workshops, women in research network and research capacity building initiatives, their generous grants for this study as well as for the numerous conference presentations in Russia, India, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Austria, United Kingdom and France;

The Swedish National Council for the generous grants and allowances that allowed me to participate in their doctoral studies programmes, especially the Centre for Women's Studies Doctoral Programme at Lulea University for the excellent focus group discussions, seminars and research training;

The Satwac Foundation and the Norwegian Agency for Development Assistance (NORAD) for funding all my preparatory work at the various institutions across India in 1996;

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Paulina Ntsele for keeping the home fires burning and smoothing the way for me in the domestic arena.

Suchitra Singh

South Africa, June 2000

Declaration of Originality

I, Suchitra Singh, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university.

.....
S. Singh

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Chapter One

The Story Began Long Ago...

This is the world in which I move uninvited, profane on a sacred land, neither me nor mine, but me nonetheless. The story began long ago...it is old. Older than my body, my mother's, my grandmother's. ...For years we have been passing it on, so that our daughters and granddaughters may continue to pass it on. The story never really begins nor ends, even though there is a beginning and an end to every story, just as there is a beginning and an end to every teller (Minh-ha, 1989).

1.1 Introduction

When I began the research for my doctoral work, my primary intent was to document the experiences of women academics that engage in knowledge production or research in the humanities and social sciences. I painstakingly searched for information and wanted to provide concrete evidence to refute the anecdotal arguments of many that women academics were not experiencing any problems in academia, arguments that refuse to acknowledge that the gendered production of knowledge is an immensely political act. I decided to frame my study broadly, by engaging some of the questions that Naidoo (1995) posed in his attempts to analyse science education research in South Africa. His questions urge us to think critically about who is doing research, what is being researched, for what purpose and with what effect, under what conditions and influences and with what skills and competencies.

If it is indeed true that: *Research, like almost everything in life, has autobiographical roots (Seidman, 1991, 24)*, it seemed almost impossible to embark on a study of this nature without being autobiographical at times. Yet, for many months I was in a state of denial. I buried my head in literature reviews, policy documents, previous studies conducted, doctoral dissertations, masters dissertations, research reports, completed projects, etc. Whilst I thought I was preparing the way for my study, what I was really doing was delaying the inevitable soul-searching “plunge” into areas of my own life as an academic and researcher, which were violent, painful and problematic.

My soul-searching led me back to where it all began, to the moments when I thought I was all alone and began my personal “feminist uprising,” by beginning to try to name my

practice and to formulate my “theory” from my lived experience as an academic and a researcher but most significantly for me, as a woman of colour.

Writing about my own story, my own journey as an academic and a researcher, seemed so dangerous an act, filled with apprehension, fear, embarrassment and shame but absolutely necessary if I were to let my deeply held personal theory about my study guide my own research practice. My beliefs about this study and the research process and the intertwined nature are issues that I raise and debate at length at all stages of this work in various forms. I felt that if I continued without acknowledging at the outset these personal feelings, I would be guilty, in my opinion, of trying to conduct adulterous research, when I ought to have been “faithful” in developing a liaison between my research theory and my research practice. I revisit my acts of research infidelity later in my discussions on my theory-practice relations.

I have always felt that researchers who expect respondents to share confessional narratives with them but who are themselves unwilling to share, are exercising power in a manner that may, I believe, appear coercive. Empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging others to take risks, to share in any way that we would not share. I felt that it would be an act of ‘bravery’ if I took the first risk, linking my confessional narratives to discussions around research and academia, and in the process establishing how experience can illuminate and enhance our understandings of the gendered nature of research.

“The politics of location” (hooks, 1990), whilst it engages issues about how our psyches, desires, and bodies provide a reference point: “to be able to name our location, to politicise our space, allows us to question where our particular experiences and practices fit within the articulations and representations that surround us” (Borsa, 1990).

Like Giroux (1992), I believe that it is never easy to turn the tools of dialogue and self-criticism upon one’s own work. “ We have to become border crossers, allowing the focus of our analysis to shift, move, circle back on itself, and push against its own discourse so as to extend and deepen its implications for critical pedagogy while tracing out a recognisable shape of the complexity that informed its underlying project.”

Having established this as my starting point, my study stems from a very personal scepticism and reflects an epistemological, intellectual, academic journey, socially shaped through a long and very often painful and difficult educational apprenticeship. This apprenticeship has been intrinsic to my subjectivities as a black woman of Indian descent growing up in a racially segregated South African society, a female student, a female science educator in a secondary school, a woman academic, and at this point in time, a woman researcher of colour in the humanities and social sciences in a changing South Africa.

The perspectives, lenses or filters that I embody, which inform and shape my work, my involvement in the field of education and research, in social and political arenas, are the outcomes of the inter-relationship between my personal biography, my location in the social structure, and the cultural milieu and historical period in which I live. My beliefs, values, frames of reference and obsessions should not be viewed only in terms of individual preference or 'individual imagination' as Popkewitz (1991) suggests, but involve a complex relationship between us, as individuals, our communities and the cultures of which I am an integral part.

As an educator, researcher, feminist, social theorist and activist, my approach to research contexts is framed by particular sets of personal interests, which in turn prompts questions about how people view themselves and others; how power and hegemony work through social interactions and bureaucratic procedures; how change is socially constructed, reconstructed and resisted. These interests form the broader framework of my study. In addressing them, I begin this study by opening a small window into my personal life as an academic and researcher, revealing how this has created a particular identity for me. I take this a step further by reflecting on how this personal identity has shaped and become the impetus for my actions, interactions and passions and how these get played out in my activities that construct my everyday world.

1.2 “Loureiro’s Course”

My fascination with the field of educational research and social theory in particular, can be traced to the postgraduate year I spent studying towards a Higher Diploma in Education, in

the former Faculty of Education at the University of Durban-Westville. My most memorable deconstructions began in a course called English Usage. I had heard so much about “that crazy, white guy, Loureiro” from students but when I walked into his lecture I was totally unprepared for the challenges that this course would throw at me. He was strikingly different, he infuriated, frustrated and taunted in ways that could best be described as tantalising.

Here I was, self-assured, confident - having performed extremely well in my undergraduate studies. I walked about with my head held high, as only a high-flying science graduate could. I had the answers to everything – I was a B.Sc. graduate! Equipped with a smugness that irked me when I was to see it later in my own students, from my position as a lecturer in the very same faculty, my understandings about knowledge, the scientific method and research were at the time, deeply embedded within a positivistic paradigm. What could this balding, ageing white man teach me about education? In retrospect, he knew exactly where I was coming from and the baggage I was carrying. He agitated, challenged, ruptured, disrupted, pushed and deconstructed in ways that seemed at times unreasonable and unacceptable but drew me time and again to his lectures. I could not wait for those encounters in those lectures. I was completely captivated. I had experienced none of this exhilaration in my three years in the Faculty of Science at UDW.

We had a very simple task to complete at the end of each lecture: to reflect in writing on the lecture and what we thought we had learnt from it. This was promptly submitted for assessment the following morning. His assessments of my work initially hovered around 1 and 2 out of ten! This was a shocking experience. I could not believe this audacity! To rate my responses in such demeaning ways! I had never in my entire life, received such grades! And so the weeks went by. Then I realised that something was happening to me. I became aware of a change that had come over me. I found myself constantly thinking, critiquing, questioning but perhaps most importantly for me, I was being humbled. I was learning my very first lessons in humility in my engagement with knowledge and the world. The more I knew, the more I realised how little I knew! This exercise in humility, the realisation that nothing was sacred, absolute and concrete and tangible; has lived with me from student, to educator, to researcher and continues to shape my actions and interactions in most profound ways. This experience, for me, marked a silent, personal

revolution in my life. I could never again enter any situation with a closed mind, or, with an arrogance that I often see masquerading as self-confidence or expertise in academia. My thoughts, my actions, my life, would forever be framed in a paradigm of possibilities.

I reflect on this “freeze-frame moment” in my life because I really do believe that whilst there may have been others that were involved in equally transgressive teaching, none had the impact of “Loureiro’s course”. The opening up and unpacking of my thinking, the mental gymnastics of trying to see the world differently for the first time, from varied positions, of contemplating possibilities were all a hugely liberating and exhilarating experience for me. It opened up new possibilities, new challenges - I felt “born again”. For the very first time in my life, I felt the exhilaration of becoming a “critical thinker”. I was now poised to enter the whole new exciting world of education and research. I completed this diploma with a distinction in “Loureiro’s Course”.

I present a more comprehensive account of my theoretical studies and their influences on my development and growth in the chapter entitled Restor(y)ing My Life in Academia. I also contemplate the shifts in my personal epistemology over the twelve years I have spent as lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Durban-Westville. I journey through critical moments and periods over the twelve years and focus on selected moments in the autobiographical account that unfolds in Chapter Seven but is also evident throughout my writings.

1.3 Changing Times, Turning Tides?

Returning to the present, I find myself in a South Africa caught up in a period of excitement, of great expectations, of challenge, but also a transformational moment in history fraught with difficulties, frustrations, uncertainties and insecurities. The racist policies of the Apartheid Era turned us into an international pariah, not without its negative effects on education, the research environment and the research community at large, amongst other sectors. Since the collapse of apartheid, we have become a nation focused on addressing pressing social problems. But no other government faces quite such a challenge in trying to overhaul a political, economic and social ethos wracked by the

legacy of the apartheid era that discriminated against people on the basis of colour for decades.

We grapple, in this milieu, with transforming a highly fragmented and inefficient higher education system into one that will serve the social and economic imperatives of our fledgling democracy. Calls for reform have taken various forms including research on marginalized groups, arguments for culture and gender inclusive curricula and policy provisions, and attempt to theorise difference as foundational to pedagogical practice. Despite the widespread rhetoric in support of social justice in and through education, much of this work and many of its advocates continue to be marginalized.

Whilst educational institutions do not operate in a vacuum, they certainly shape and are shaped by the social, cultural, economic, and political relations of larger society. Being a microcosm of society at large, they are not immune to its tensions and struggles. Within educational institutions themselves, the policies that govern and direct the pedagogical, curricular and evaluative practices are socially complex constructs as well.

Some of the key emerging issues facing all higher education institutions in South Africa, are questions around inequality, equity and social redress. At all levels of education attention is being given to the development of appropriate strategies and policies to redress the current situation of race and gender inequality (de la Rey, 1998). In a widely expressed observation, it has been found that equal opportunities and gender policies can be both enabling and constraining (Walker, unpublished; Nicolson, 1996). Analyses of gender ratios in higher education in different national contexts (see for instance, Allen, 1990; Bacchi, 1993; Rose, 1994) have shown that in many cases even when there are strong programmes to support women, the proportion of women in professorial positions for instance, has not significantly increased. The answer lies clearly in a combination of factors.

There have been strong political and moral imperatives to redress these inequities such as the former Centre for Science Development's *Women in Research Project* that seeks to redress imbalances in the arena of research in the humanities and social sciences. However, the ambivalent results of redress strategies and initiatives implemented to date, have underscored the need for further research, in particular the need for research that

utilises quantitative description of inequalities as well as qualitative approaches. Given the critical under-representation of women's realities as loci of autonomous socio-political insight and interest, I believe that rigorous attention needs to be given to the experiences of those gendered 'female', 'women' or 'other'. Put much more simply, there is a dire need for research which analyses and describes, from multiple perspectives including those based in feminisms, the complex and the multiple experiences of women, living in a variety of contexts.

I am arguing in this study, that the historical exclusion of women from the production of knowledge (which I refer to as research) has resulted in the exclusion of women from positions of power in the social, cultural, political, economic and academic contexts. My own passion for these issues is directly linked to a conviction that in its public absence, and in the assumption that knowledge about gender is largely irrelevant to the possibility of social justice, lies some of the roots of women's complex degradations.

I argue further that the discourses and practices of the academy have traditionally operated to marginalize, and continue to marginalize, academic women. I also argue that, in order to challenge the discourses of the academy, academic women need to challenge the power relations of the academy. I maintain throughout the study that the dominant position held by white, male academics in higher education (where most of the research activity is traditionally located) has arisen from their control of the production of knowledge in the academy.

In practice, my study entailed thinking through connections between statistical or numerical evidence, voice and reflections and to creating and interacting with opportunities for evidence or experience to become theory. With gender sensitive statistics, it is possible to answer the question of macro level structural inequalities in academia, but qualitative methods were needed to reveal the invisible and hidden mechanisms and obstacles that affect women's successes and failures.

1.4 Messy Kitchens, Smart Diningrooms!

Research is not neat and tidy and unproblematic, although this is not the sense one gets from reading many of the doctoral and masters dissertations. They are often presented in such highly clinical ways, “uncontaminated” by the so-called messy, gory details. But I believe that the social and political processes that inextricably surround fieldwork can be crucial in scrutiny of the methods itself. The issues of politics and ethics that surface during the research process are subtly intertwined with both the outcome of the project and the nature of the data. This for me is highly significant in that it epitomises the very essence of my feminist gaze that encourages the merging of theory and practice, that speaks of praxis oriented research that defies the separation of theory from practice.

I signal a move away from the traditional manner in which methodology chapters are generally written, by opting for an interweaving of some of the theoretical issues instead of a straightforward description of the research process. I refer to my feminist gaze that shaped my engagement with the research design. The broad generic aspects of feminist theory, feminist methodology and feminist politics are so infused in each other that it is difficult to make distinctions. Feminism is always about struggle and critique and I try to unpack this in my methodology chapter by demonstrating how an essentially positivistic tool such as survey, was used in a critical way.

Feminist discussions of research have focused on discovering the relationship between the knower and the known, arguing that the attempt at scientific neutrality obfuscates and denies this relationship (Harding, 1986). Contrary to the scientific image of the knower as a neutral and objective party, feminist epistemologists have argued that the relationship between the researcher and her subjects is a social relationship and is bound by the same patterns of power relations found in other social relationships.

I argue through this study that the reconstruction of knowledge from a feminist standpoint is a necessary one if one wants to study the world from the perspective of women (Stanley, 1997). Because androcentric scholarship has imposed on sociological observations categories, concepts and theories originating in the lives of men from dominant groups, we have created an incomplete and distorted knowledge of social life (Gourley, 1996). Studying women on their own terms is more likely to engage the subjective self – that of

both the actor and the researcher, yet when our research remains too tightly bound by the framework of scientific methodology, we miss much of the texture and nuance characteristic of social relationships. I try to build a more inclusive way of seeing or inquiring. To do this required me to take multiple views abandoning the idea that there is one single reality out there.

The study was carried out in three parts. The first phase analysed data provided by the former Centre for Science Development (CSD) that conducted an audit of women academics and researchers in the humanities and social sciences in South Africa. The story about what came to be known as the Women-in-Research Project (WIRP) can be told from many different vantage points. In this study, I conduct a secondary analysis of the data set presenting a snapshot of the position and problems of women in research in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) situating the comparisons within the broader context of the national trends; which was one of my key responsibilities as joint KZN project leader and UDW co-ordinator of this project. My concerns about the silences and gaps in the WIRP with regards to the race question necessitated an unravelling of the data according to the demographic profiles of the country and the province, wherever possible. This is an attempt to initiate a process that maps and charts the position of black women in particular, in research. The project came into being precisely to engage the gender imbalance in research firstly but with the added concern about why black women in particular were not represented in research. In the chapters that follow I conduct a critical analysis of the findings of the survey as well as reflect on my own participation in this project as one who was both researcher and 'other', raising questions and dilemmas about what it means to be both 'self' and 'other' in a 'scientific' research enterprise.

The second phase of the study entailed a series of interviews with six black women academics, capturing the everyday worlds, the experiences and perspectives of a traditionally excluded and marginalized group of women in academia. The voices of black women researchers are not to be readily found in the literature. The various factors that contribute to this reality could be debated. Because of my commitment to rediscovering voices, in this study I attempt to break the silence of black women researchers through the process of ethnographic conversations. I consider this to be a step towards providing an arena where such voices are generated, heard and ultimately transferred into a political form.

The respondents for this component of the study were black academic women whose lives have not been the lives captured by research in general and the project in particular and hence a distorted picture of research appears to emerge. These are women whose experiences have been underrepresented at best; most typically they are excluded and ignored in studies on research even though their lives provide a rich portrait of the fabric of social life and gender relations. The chapter, 'Breaking the Coloured Silence', is presented in a format where the data merges into analyses and theory. The women were encouraged to not only reflect on their research trajectories but to also begin to theorise and analyse their experiences. Their testimonies incorporating a sense of how they have analysed their choices and decisions are kept intact demonstrating how feminist theory, feminist politics, feminist methodology and feminist praxis are categories that 'leak' into each other. Pursuing a forced separation of themes, categories and analyses of the various processes inherent in their stories would have risked running counter to the feminist principles or feminist gaze that influences and shapes my engagements with my research and teaching.

The third phase of the study presents the data from my own lived, personal experiences as a researcher, an academic and a black woman. My presence as the researcher is a social and emotional involvement in the research setting and constitutes an important source of data that could not be glossed over (Personal Narratives Group, 1989). Why do I choose to include such a personal account of the social, ethical, political aspects of my research in this study? I have often seen descriptions of personal involvement in the field relegated to methodological appendices, as they are thought to be superfluous and lacking any "scientific value." I signal a challenge to this tradition by offering my experiences here. I wish to break with the tradition of many researchers who generally engage with methods and techniques in a dispassionate and detached manner. My personal experience provides information that is useful in understanding the overall purpose and intention of this study. As an outsider within, I use the tensions in my own identity to generate new ways of seeing, new insights, new understandings that became critical to investigating the experiences, perceptions, decisions and beliefs of women in research. I use my own marginality as a women researcher of colour to bring a distinctive analysis and understanding of the interconnectedness of race, class and gender. I analyse and generate feminist theory through the autobiography considering it to represent a significant source of knowledge for understanding why women are underrepresented in research and

academia. The confessions, the analysis and the theory are interwoven rather than presented as separate entities or components.

Conducting the research through my feminist gaze, I try to bring new meaning and understandings to age-old debates about quantitative and qualitative research. These research paradigms do not represent fixed categories. Whilst my feminist gaze could be described as being embedded in a qualitative research paradigm, I demonstrate how aspects of quantitative research can be appropriated and used in a feminist way.

1.5 Comparing Notes with Jansen

In all my ramblings, trying to make sense of my frustrations, I came across Jansen's (1991) writings on *Knowledge and Power in South Africa*. In his book, Jansen sets the scene for his work in the following way:

“knowledge and power....is a prerequisite step in directing that challenge towards defining a critical theory of research in South Africa which not only establishes an autonomous science but contributes to the broader movement for black empowerment and political emancipation.”

Although Jansen was addressing our racialized or apartheid arrangements concerning knowledge production in South Africa, his work posed a challenge that resonated with my own concerns about research and academia. I immediately saw how what he was saying could apply to the gendered, academic/research arrangements I was struggling to make sense of. His arguments suggested a framework for articulating my own frustrations and anguish at the time. Here was discourse that could provide some of the tools I so desperately sought. Here was discourse that pointed to a way out of my research dilemmas.

The data, evidence and debates around the problems of academic women and researchers are presented within a feminist framework of analysis. I refer to this approach as my feminist gaze that shaped my thinking, decisions and actions within this study (Singh, 1998).

However, conducting research through a feminist gaze presents its own sets of challenges and dilemmas. It is not a very easy task to demarcate a theoretical framework in a study where the theory is the methodology, the data, as well as the analytic framework, as I have already pointed out in my discussion on my methodology. How does one begin to capture what is essentially a three-dimensional dynamic process, in the two dimensional form of a dissertation? But in a “hopelessly practical world and for hopelessly practical purposes” (Roy, 1998), I try to resolve this dilemma by focusing specifically on some of the explanations that try to account for the under-representation of women in academia and research in the chapter entitled, “It Does Not Go Away Just Because I Am Pointing To It!” My critique of some of the existing streams of thought sets the platform for advancing my own theoretical position that shifts the focus from what is wrong with women academics and researchers, to an understanding of how the patriarchal, phallogentric and sexist discourse, culture or climate of academia counts women out.

The presentation of these theoretical issues in that chapter is but an arbitrary separation as the theoretical debates and concerns play themselves out across all of my chapters in the form of data, process, analysis and outcome. It is for this reason that the chapters are mostly self-contained, interweaving data, process, findings and analysis into a coherent story. I did try, in earlier drafts to make an artificial separation but again found this to be too constraining and going against my feminist ways of working. I make brief reference to how this plays itself out in the various chapters that capture the research process and outcomes. This method in itself also signals a challenge to ‘male-stream’ research practice as well as what it means to conduct scientific research.

Besides this alternate way of capturing the study, broadly, I also draw attention to my use of language and voice throughout this dissertation. I have tried to use a language that is accessible to all, not necessarily those au fait with the field. Although at times I have found myself slipping into conventional ways of languaging and expressing myself, I have tried for the most part to use an autobiographical, strong narrative voice to convey my thoughts. This style of writing is a further attempt to address the theory/practice relations of my feminist gaze. It is highly personalised for the most part presenting a narrative that interweaves the personal journey with the study and its research process.

1.6 An Overview of the Chapters

Because of the complexity of the terrain, I found that a variety of perspectives were necessary for addressing the research dilemmas (I am not calling them research questions). Each chapter articulates a somewhat different “take” on the research question. They are more or less self-contained, written with a particular focus, addressing the research concerns from particular perspectives. Each one demonstrates that the reality that I am reviewing is partly dependent on the specific conceptual, theoretical and valuative lenses that I am using to construct it.

Chapter One, *The Story Began Long Ago*, is the introduction that sets out the background to this study, provides a rationale, briefly introduces the methodological strategy and sets out the research dilemmas that guide this inquiry. I begin with an autobiographical insight and then delve into, very briefly, the problem of women academics in academia and research by focusing on some of the concerns in higher education, situating it in an extremely important historical moment in South African history. I acknowledge some of the studies conducted locally and abroad on the problems of women in academia. I outline some of the main tensions that arise in attempting to construct a theoretical framework for the analysis of women’s participation in research, consider what this means for the broader transformation of research in the humanities and social sciences, and finally briefly reflect on methodological issues. With regard to the latter, I also introduce the notion of ‘research without illusions’ by talking about the style I have adopted in writing up this dissertation. I use an autobiographical style of writing to convey this, focusing on my own journey that gave rise to the research questions.

Chapter Two, *Hunting Teddy-Bears in the Saloons of the Academy?* (a title adapted from Gulbrandsen, 1995) offers a critical synthesis of the literature framing the problems of women in higher education. It explores the local as well as international scene. The literature review reveals a gap in the research, a gap that prevents us from adequately examining the nature of knowledge production, its links to issues of social justice and redress. In short, the second chapter sets out to examine in more detail the problem of women academics in research by analysing the broader problem of women academics in higher education which alludes to their participation patterns in research since little is

written on women's research involvement per se but much has been written about women in higher education.

Chapter Three, *It Does Not Go Away Just Because I Am Pointing To It!* develops my theoretical argument for a deeper understanding of the position and problems of women in research and academia. I critique some of the existing attempts to theorise women's marginalization and subordination in higher education, arguing for a shift from the ideology that views women as the problem to an engagement with the phallogentric and patriarchal climate of the social organisation of academia and research.

In Chapter Four, *“Though There Be Madness, Yet There Is Method”* (a title adapted from Scheman, 1992) I provide a detailed account of the research methodology and design of the study. Besides describing the procedures and methods employed and the underlying rationale, I infuse into this chapter a theoretical argument about the implications of my feminist ways of working for research methodology and ultimately the transformation and democratisation of research.

In Chapter Five, *Academia and Research in South Africa: a 'fairer' place?* I present the findings of the WIR audit establishing a context or broader picture of the position of women in research and academia in South Africa, making a comparison with the KwaZulu-Natal region generally as well as with respect to the historically designated categories of race.

Chapter Six, *Breaking the Coloured Silence!* presents the conversations and analyses of six novice and experienced women academics in the KZN province. The narratives, incorporating their analyses, are presented intact, as far as possible, showing the day-to-day lived experiences of black women in academia and research and how they choose to theorise it.

In Chapter Seven, *Restor(y)ing My Life in Academia*, I open a window into my academic and research trajectory with an autobiographical account of critical moments in my life in academia, significant experiences and turning points that have profoundly influenced my own practice in the academy.

Chapter Eight, *In Between the 'No Longer' and the 'Not Yet'*, the final chapter, draws on all the previous chapters, trying to 'pull together' the main research concerns of my inquiry. I discuss the implications of this study for women in higher education, academia, research, methodology and theory. I also make suggestions for further research.

1.7 Conclusion

I want this study to push the boundaries of how we think about the relationship between research and social, political and personal action, between education and social life. I use the situation of women academics in research as a tool to unpack, deconstruct and reconstruct a more just and fair research arena.

I feel it is important to offer a female perspective on research in the social sciences and humanities, as women have already done in fields such as literature, history, sociology and psychology. I believe, as I argue later, that an examination of these issues concerning research from the point of female experiences does actually change the whole picture of research. Perhaps it is no longer a picture but a pudding. My principal concern in this study is to stress the importance of the social, political in understanding the arena of research in the humanities and social sciences.

With this study, I add my singular, feminist voice to a collective call for renewal and rejuvenation of our research practices in the humanities and social sciences. Launching my forays from a feminist perspective, I urge everyone involved in the research endeavour, to open their minds and hearts so that we can know beyond the boundaries of what is acceptable, so that we can think and rethink, so that we can create new visions. I want this study to be a celebration of research that enables transgressions - a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is in this rupturing of conventional research that research in the social sciences and humanities can claim to be truly liberatory.

Chapter Two

Hunting Teddy-bears In The Saloons Of The Academy?

2.1 Introduction

From the very inception of this study, I have often been subjected to anecdotal comments that suggested that there is no 'real' problem with women in academia and research. Was my study simply a case of 'hunting teddy-bears in the saloons of the academy instead of hunting real bears out in the woods?' (Gulbrandsen, 1995). I was faced with the dilemma of presenting a convincing argument that this was not just some esoteric exercise about a group of elite women in society when there are more pressing problems 'out in the real world' Such comments served not only as a reminder but also provided the impetus to further commit to my passions. They served to clearly demonstrate to me how critical it was not only to address the issue of equity and redress but also to begin to show the strong links to deep philosophical, sociological and political issues. I thought that perhaps embedding my concerns in such a context would signal the seriousness of the situation I was trying to address. The challenge lay in demonstrating that research is not simply some ivory tower practice that happens somewhere out there, but to show how it pervades the minute fibres of our everyday worlds in direct and indirect ways, overt and covert ways. I expand on this argument in the chapter that follows entitled "It Does Not Go Away Just Because I Am Pointing To It!"

I found it impossible to write about women's absence from research or knowledge production without acknowledging the under-representation of women generally from academia. Even in rare instances where the representation is fair, women are located at the lower levels of academia and virtually non-existent at the professorial or higher levels of the academy. In South Africa, while women in general are underrepresented at the higher levels of academia (Tothill, 1998), women of colour in particular are virtually non-existent in academia and hence research (Singh, 1999).

My earlier research at the master's level focused on the influences, experiences and aspirations of first year female students. That study showed that if equality for women in higher education is to be reached, there was yet another frontier that had to be explored,

namely, the barriers to teaching and research in higher education, especially in universities, which play a leading role in research and knowledge production. For, although teaching is widely regarded as a women's profession, in universities women remain in the minority amongst the academic staff and, most notably, women are virtually non-existent at the upper end of the academic ladder of the university.

I needed to capture this scenario by gathering evidence from research conducted in other parts of the world as well as in South Africa. The review that follows presents a snapshot of the position of women in academia and research both internationally and locally.

My study, like all aspects of my work, is informed by literature from many areas of scholarship. My earliest attempts found me delving into the growing body of knowledge on higher education, but more especially the literature on gender and higher education. There has been a number of studies abroad, of women in the academic labour market (Allen, 1990, Bacchi, 1993, Davies, 1982, Holton, 1988, Grimes, 1990, Over and McKenzie, 1985, Sawer, 1984, Gale and Lindemann, 1989). These studies have focused attention on the issues affecting higher education and women academics. I also found literature on career development and career issues with specific emphases on women and careers. Some studies such as Tonkinson (1988), Wieneke (1988, 1991, & 1992), Strachan and Duirs (1993) have paid particular attention to the problems and concerns of general staff at universities. Whilst studies such as those of Sawer (1984), Poiner et al (1986), Crawford & Tonkinson (1988), Butler & Schutte (forthcoming) have looked at all women staff both academic and non-academic staff within a particular university context, other researchers (Conrad, 1994; Moses, 1990, 1992; Powles, 1986, 1988; White, 1996) have been concerned specifically with female postgraduate students' experiences. The barriers to women's participation as postgraduate students have also been recorded by Conrad (1994), Moses (1990) and Powles (1986, 1988), highlighting the differences in how women and men experience postgraduate study. Most studies of academic women have, however, been approached from one of two perspectives viz.: institutional constraints on women's equal participation, or status conflict in the lives of individual women (Jensen, 1982, 67). Most captivating of all are the several studies that span various disciplines on topics such as women and work, women and leadership and women and professions.

In South Africa, the production of knowledge is largely the domain of white academics, located at the historically white institutions. Research documenting this under-representation includes Evans (1991) Jansen (1993), Pityana (1993), Seepe (1993), Reddy (1995), Lewin (1995), Dyasi (1995) and Naidoo (1996).

The literature on academic women in South Africa is rather sparse. Anecdotal responses suggest that it probably reflects a tendency to consider women researchers as members of an elite rather than a disadvantaged group worthy of feminist concern. However, research conducted by Reddy (1995) indicates that there is an under-representation of black women in Science and Mathematics Education research in South Africa. She looks at the relevance and promotion of equity in science and mathematics education research, reflecting on various reports on higher education that highlight the race and gender imbalances in the higher education sector. In a more recent study, Reddy (1997) begins to document the “texture of experience” of under-representation of black women in research in a paper that traces the life history of Black South African women scientists.

Naidoo (1996) presents an emerging picture of research in Science Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. He finds that researchers are mainly from the university sector, but there is a race and gender imbalance; very few researchers are black and female.

The data collected from annual returns made to the National Department of Education show that not much has changed since 1993, when Keith S. Peacock carried out his investigation which was published under the title - *South African Universities: Race and Gender Factors in Employment Patterns*. The figures in the annual returns show that whites still predominate in institutions of higher education at about 45% while blacks account for 35%. The Peacock report depended “heavily on effect to identify possible areas of discrimination in the university environment” (Peacock 1993: 7). But this, too, is problematic. It is difficult to distinguish “between real or imagined discrimination over and above the effect (that is statistics or otherwise)” (Sarinjeive, 1996: 7)

Sarinjeive (1996) conducted a study on race and gender factors specifically with regard to employment practices in South Africa. The emphasis however, was on comparing Vista University with other universities in South Africa. Her study investigated aspects of staff distribution, gender distribution and the race distribution of university staff with a focus on

Vista University. The main objective, as far as race and gender factors are concerned, was to determine the position at Vista University in order to make recommendations for improving the situation there.

The South African Science and Technology Indicators (1996) published by the former Foundation for Research and Development (FRD) provides some indication of where women stand in higher education, academic posts and in the professional workforce in the fields of science, engineering and technology. The indicators show very clearly that women are struggling to break into the male-dominated fields of science, engineering and technology. The report fails however, to explore the reasons for this situation.

In her address to the postgraduate symposium at the University of Durban-Westville in 1999, Professor Ramashala pointed to some national and international trends in research and postgraduate education. Higher education is undergoing radical changes locally and internationally, the restructuring of our research activities, in particular. At least four interrelated factors were identified as having a significant impact on restructuring within higher education. They are the broadening of access to particularly disadvantaged populations, increasing Higher Education relevance, improving accountability, and the progressive reduction of resources for higher education. These factors have a significant impact on research and postgraduate education. This has itself become an area of study with rapidly increasing literature as recent national conferences on postgraduate education demonstrate.

“Research and research skills are fundamental to fuelling the information economy. Society has made increasing demands on research to solve societal problems, and a new societal contract is fast emerging between research and society. In fact... it is imperative that we take on board the development mandate of linking science and research to society.” Ramashala (1999).

What follows is a review of only those studies that have direct implications for my research. Through all my intensive searches I found it extremely difficult and could barely muster a handful of studies on women in research and women of colour in research. The literature on women and research is virtually non-existent except for a few conference papers at the international level and the recent Forum for African Women Educationalists

– South Africa (FAWESA) Report capturing some aspects of women academics in South Africa.

I also present a synopsis of some of the findings of a few studies on women academics in higher education. I do this firstly by making broad general transnational comparisons and analyses and then focus my argument particularly within some of the categories that were generated from the focus group discussions with the participants of the WIR Project. With this synopsis I demonstrate the differential positions typically occupied by women and men in the hierarchical structures of universities, both locally, wherever possible and internationally.

2.2 Continuum of Outsiderness

The most comprehensive study on women in higher education was conducted by Aisenberg and Harrington (1988). Their study based on interviews with 37 women that were categorised as having off the normal career track and 25 tenured women academics, produced extremely rich data about the position of women in higher education. The general categories covered in each interview included: the formation of ambition to pursue an academic career, familial attitudes towards professional career goals, graduate school experience, professional socialisation, personal life in relation to professional life and issues concerning the support of other women. A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed similarities across disciplines, ages, marital status and class origins which overall contributed to a portrayal of professional marginality and exclusion from the centres of professional authority. Instead of finding clear lines of demarcation between tenured and the category comprising part-time staff, non-tenured academic women, Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) introduced the concept of a continuum of outsidersness.

A recurring theme emerging from their study reflected difficulties faced by academic women in dealing with the co-existence of two sets of social norms about the role of women; on the one hand the old norms which privilege the significance of marriage and family in the lives of women continue, but on the other hand, there are new emerging norms which endorse equality of opportunity. The authors acknowledge that these difficulties are probably faced by all professional women, they however, argue that it is

especially salient in the lives of academic women because academia constitutes the domain most directly marked by intellectual power and there is a long tradition in western history which has seen womanhood and intellectual power as antithetical. Therefore, Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) contend that for women, entry into academia marks a process of transformation of self that is typified by an internal battle not to be limited by traditional gender expectations. This internal strife, they argue, manifested in the accounts of the interviewees: common across all the accounts was a sense of tentativeness about their careers typically expressed as a period of veering and doubt, hesitation, often accompanied by shifts in direction and false starts (de la Rey, 1998).

Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) conclude that this psychological conflict is likely to produce negative consequences for the careers of academic women. They established that the early period of hesitation is generally viewed as a lack of commitment when it comes to considerations of appointment and promotion. Also, because of the sense of internal strife these women experience, they usually show no clear career strategy. Furthermore, it seems to result in a blurring of the boundary between work and self evidenced by an extremity of reaction when work is rejected. Problems in developing a voice of authority were also evident in the interview transcripts: silence, self doubt a sense of being inadequate and being an impostor saturated their testimonies.

Many of the trends reported by Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) were confirmed in the more recently published work of Nicolson (1996) that focused extensively, although not exclusively, on academic women. Nicolson focused on the psychological dimensions of power in work organisations from the perspective of senior, middle ranking and aspirant professional women. Her findings suggest that a central dilemma for these women concerns the question of how to negotiate and give meaning to their sense of femininity and gender identity in a world of power and intellect that views ambition and career successes in women as inimical to femininity. It was also found those women in such positions experience difficulties in managing psychological boundaries between self, social context and gendered identity.

Nicolson (1996) argues that for women there are three main stages of socialisation into patriarchal organisational culture: firstly, shock on entry, secondly, anger and/or protest that may either result in a decision to leave or the development of coping strategies and

thirdly, for those who remain, the internalisation of 'male-stream' organisational values. Nicolson goes further to suggest that this latter group of women, become the future Queen Bees, a term used to describe women who because of gender discrimination, have to succeed by distancing themselves both from men and other women. As a consequence they often end up seeing themselves as exceptions to the rules. Furthermore, it has been found that most women in senior positions turn their back on feminist ideology (Nicolson, 1996), especially at the earlier stages of their careers. As a result of all these factors, they often do not enjoy gender solidarity nor experience collaboration with other women.

2.3 One of the Barriers facing Women is that they are Not Men!

Internationally this pattern remains depressingly consistent, despite very large differences in educational systems, population participation data at the various levels of education, variations in levels of economic development and indicators of the position of women socially, economically and legally. For example, a 1993 comparison of the position of women in higher education management, published as a joint UNESCO/Association of Commonwealth Universities publication (UNESCO/ACU, 1993), found that with hardly an exception the global picture of senior management in universities is overwhelmingly a male preserve. This same report identified a common pattern present across the eleven regional and country reports on this matter, reports based on detailed data and analysis from regions and countries which differ more than they correspond on almost any other dimension. In her introductory overview Dines (1993:20) noted a 'disconcerting uniformity in the factors considered by the writers of these essays to be the barriers to the participation of women in higher education management', factors which are named and discussed in the publication under the headings 'Alienation from Male Culture' and 'Male Resistance to Women in Management Positions'. Dines concludes that 'One of the barriers facing women is the fact that they are not men' (1993, 22).

Analysis and descriptions concerned with the issue of climate in universities have been common in the North American literature for over a decade; indeed the term the 'chilly climate' is used in both Canada and the United States to refer to women's experiences of university culture. For example, in a series of papers written between 1984 and 1994 on behalf of the United States Project on the Status of Women in Education, the chilly

climate's expression and impact on women academics, administrators and students, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, is described and analysed. (Sandler and Hall, 1984,1986, and Sandler, 1992, 1993,1995).

2.4 Man-centred Universities – with some women in them!

What needs to be explained is why we find women academics so relatively disadvantaged and men so firmly in control - why we have a man-centred university (Rich, 1979) with some women in it.

The literature on academic women in Britain is rather sparse, probably reflecting the tendency to consider them members of an elite rather than a disadvantage group worthy of feminist concern (Acker, 1984)

Britain appears to lag behind other similar countries in its commitment to improving the status of women in general and women academics in particular (Johnson, 1990). Reasons might be sought in its particular historical and political traditions (Gelb, 1989). Gelb argues that in comparison with the United States and Sweden, British feminist groups are more radical, ideological and decentralised. They lack input into the policy making process. There has been no extensive feminist infiltration into bureaucracies such as observed in Eisenstein's (1991) account of 'femocrats' in Australia. Feminism remains a fringe pursuit, outside the dominant discourse.

Among academics in Britain, women are not only a minority but disproportionately in lower ranks and in less secure posts. In 1988/89, women were about 19 per cent of all fulltime academics in universities (UFC, 1990). The figures can be broken down into two subsets: those faculty members who teach and are expected to do research as part of their normal work (termed 'traditional academics') and those who do 'research only'. Women are much more likely than men to be in the second category, so much so that the 19 per cent figure becomes misleading: women are 31 per cent of the research-only group but only 13 per cent of those that following traditional university careers. Even this figure of 13 percent obscures subject variations. Women are 27 percent of the 'traditional academics' in language, literature and area studies and 23 percent of those in education.

At the other extreme women represent 6 percent of academics in biology, mathematics and physical science and an even smaller 3 percent of those in engineering. Most of the people in the research only group are employed on contracts, which means that their salaries come from bodies outside the universities such as research councils. Their job security only extends for the duration of their contract, usually as short as six months. For some a succession of contracts constitutes a career. Contract researchers are often excluded from other academic employee benefits such as maternity leave and are not always well integrated into the department.

Canada provides an interesting contrast. In neither Britain nor Canada is there a network of privately financed universities as in the United States. Women make up 18 percent of Canadian academics (similar to the British situation (Statistics Canada, 1991). There is also a tendency for women to be disproportionately located in contractually limited appointments and part-time positions (Drakich et al, 1990). But once on the 'tenure track', women's chances of advancing to middle levels are greater than those of their counterparts in Britain. Slightly over a third of each sex holds the middle rank of associate professor. The difference comes at the full professorial rank that is held by about 13 percent of the women and 40 percent of the men (Statistics Canada, 1991).

In Canada there are policies at both federal and provincial level that have as their aim the reduction of gender (and other) inequality (Breslauer and Gordon, 1990; Canadian Association of University Teachers, 1991). The Federal Contractors Program requires employees of more than 100 people who wish to receive federal contracts for \$200,000 or over to put into place plans to increase equity for women, visible minorities, aboriginal people and the disabled. Many universities have joined this programme. Canadian universities also benefit from a higher level of feminist activism than British ones, reflecting the greater prominence of the women's movement generally, and there is evidence that such efforts have been influential (Drakich et al, 1991).

The use of competitive promotion procedure in British universities, together with minimal commitment from the government to redressing gender inequities, may produce the contrast with the Canadian situation. Unlike the American practice of allowing individuals to compete against a standard to attain higher ranks, judged by one's peers, the typical British university makes its candidates for internal promotion (senior lectureships

and readerships) compete against one another for a restricted number of promotions, usually judged by senior personnel (professors and deans). The academic profession is ageing and there are large numbers at the top of the 'lecturer scale' (reached at about age 40) competing for promotion. The system discourages geographical mobility except at the professorial level and is open to micro-political manoeuvring as professors struggle to get 'their' candidate promoted.

The individuals making these judgements are almost all men. Few will be familiar with research on gender, thus placing women doing research and scholarship in that area at a possible disadvantage. Because women are concentrated in relatively few subject fields, they also in effect compete against one another to the extent that promotions are 'shared out' among departments. It is also possible that when promotions are restricted and many candidates are of equal merit, male preference will operate, however unconsciously. A further ironic consequence of the small numbers of women in the system is that opportunities for organising to improve matters are thereby limited. Women academics are too scattered to provide a critical mass, nor do they hold many positions of influence.

Finally, the economic situation has been perilous for some time in Britain. Universities have been experiencing cuts and retrenchment since the early 1980s (Reynolds, 1990). It would not seem the best of times to push for feminist reform. But there are always contradictions and points of intervention. The institution is reproducing the divisions of the labour market while at the same time providing the means for challenge and critique.

2.5 Casualization

In many countries casualization of academic labour is giving increasing cause for concern, particularly to women academics. In the United Kingdom, for example, Joanna de Groot has suggested that the position of women academics is worsening:

Not only are women academics more likely to be at the lower end of pay scales and/or job grades, they are also more likely to experience job insecurity...[a] study of the rapid growth of part-time academic jobs showed that this growth also involved 'feminisation', with women making up nearly 59% of part-time pro-rate staff in 1994, compared with 38% in 1983. It is also significant in this context to note that women form a larger

percentage of contract researchers [mostly fixed-term employees] than they do of staff on academic contracts.¹

In South Africa the extent of the “casualization” problem is not clear, as the national Department of Education gathers information only on academic staff on two-year contracts and above.

2.6 Networking, Mentors and Role models

Universities’ organisational structures rely heavily on informal power and influence. Informal networking plays an important role in the academic research community in a variety of areas, including publication, mentoring, and the dissemination of information. Inability to tap into existing networks may prevent marginalized groups from functioning effectively in the research community. Various writers have argued that informal networks tend to work more effectively for men than for women, suggesting that this has allowed men to achieve more professionally, for example Sekaran & Kassmer (1992), Bagilhole (1993) and Sandler (1995).

To counteract this less effective networking, many of those concerned with the conditions of women academics have suggested forming networks of women academics and promoting formal or informal mentoring relationships.

Broadly speaking, “a mentor shares experience, wisdom, knowledge, and an orientation to an organisation’s culture.”² “Mentoring” can span a wide range of formal and informal relationships and levels of involvement, and the boundaries between “mentors” and others (such as supervisors, Heads of Department, peers and co-researchers) are not always clear. This variety of possible mentoring forms may help to explain the differences of opinion about the nature, value and legitimacy of the mentoring function.

According to a report commissioned by the Australian Research Council, “the need for mentoring is now almost universally recognised as beneficial when embarking on, and

¹ <<http://www.aus.ac.nz/swc/autpres.htm>>

² <<http://www.thecoach.com.mentoring.html>>

developing a research career” (NBEET, 1996)³. In the broadest sense of mentoring - having someone take an interest in your career - this is probably true. On the other hand, there is a certain degree of suspicion about possible undertones of patronage and favouritism. Further, while mentoring may be of benefit, Sandler (1995) characterises as a myth the notion that mentoring is necessary. In a sufficiently “nurturing” environment the need for formal mentoring is reduced.

On the issue of male versus female mentors, studies in the United States have pointed to a number of differences between styles and outcomes of relationships with male and female mentors. Male mentors tended to be more directive than female mentors are, and also more work-focused, looking only at the professional lives of students (Sandler, 1995). On the other hand, there was a perception that male mentors may ultimately do more for women’s careers, because of generally being in positions of greater influence. Because there are few women in senior academic positions, women’s support networks may provide emotional support and some general professional advice but fail to have significant impact on career development.

Related to mentoring is the concept of “role models.” Once again the terminology may refer to a range of functions, and as with mentoring the significance of the role modelling function is contested. An “imitative” construction of role modelling places emphasis on active imitation. Brooks’s (1997) questionnaire, for example, stated that: “*role modelling* - operates when a person is used as a reference for imitation using the model to create a feeling of self identification.” On this reading, role modelling was problematic for a number of Brooks’s respondents, as indeed it is for me. Conversely, role models may be viewed as generally valuable in breaking down stereotypes, without treating them as subjects for active imitation. In this understanding, “critical mass”⁴ is seen to play a key role in effective modelling, with studies such as Conrad (1994) indicating that women postgraduates are more likely to succeed “where the proportion of female academics in the staff is relatively higher.” Women may need to see other women succeed if they are to “even consider the possibility that they themselves have the ability and perseverance” to

³ National Board of Employment, Education and Training, (1996) p. 25.

⁴ The role of “critical mass” is noted, for example by Kanter (1977); Conrad (1994); and Bagilhole (1993).

do so, but an awareness of a critical mass of successful women may be generally more useful than seeking to imitate a single female role model.

2.7 Teaching, Administrative and ‘pastoral’ commitments

International research suggests that women often bear more than their fair share of teaching, pastoral, and administrative duties.⁵ Brooks (1997), for example, reported that academic women in the United Kingdom carried heavier teaching and administrative loads than men. Similarly the majority of women academics interviewed in Bagilhole’s (1993) study “had different roles to their male colleagues on equivalent grades. This was mostly to do with more pastoral duties, either self-imposed, student initiated or colleague driven.”

The 1990 Carnegie study in the US indicated that women spent more time “in service” to their universities than their male counterparts, but were underrepresented on decision making bodies. Women were characterised as “good campus citizens” with higher teaching, administrative and “pastoral” care loads than men. Women were also often allocated lower-level classes, rather than higher-level research related ones.

Some of the studies that I cite in this chapter look only at women’s own perceptions of their workloads, while in others it was unclear whether both women and men had been surveyed. The findings of a recent Australian study which canvassed *both* men and women are thus useful as a “control,” and tend to support women’s own perceptions of their workloads: “[m]en reported lower teaching loads and lower administrative loads than women...[l]ower loads were associated with greater involvement in research.”. Men were also “significantly more likely to report that research interfered with their teaching” (NBEET, 1996).

In addition,

Several heads of department admitted that women in their department were sometimes exploited in terms of their teaching loads: ‘The women tend to be at Level B and in many cases are on fractional appointments because

⁵ See, for example, Brooks (1997); Bagilhole (1993); Sekaran & Kassmer (1992); and Simeone (1987).

they've chosen to prioritise their family...tends to mean that they work very hard teaching because you get exploited if you're on a fractional appointment."

The question remains, of course, of how women have the time for exploitative teaching loads if they have "prioritised" their families.

Differences in workloads did not only fall along gender lines, however. Distinctions were also evident on disciplinary lines, with men and women in the humanities and social sciences more likely to report teaching interfering with their research than did those in the sciences.

2.8 Research Output

Internationally, male academics' research output exceeds that of women. Women are thus at a disadvantage within organisational structures which measure productivity in terms of research output and which develop promotion criteria accordingly. The academic reward system is biased towards research and publications, not towards rewarding "good campus citizens."

Women's lower research productivity can be ascribed to a number of factors that combine in a vicious circle. Women academics are disadvantaged with respect to many of the factors promoting research productivity:

Researchers with PhDs tend to be more productive than those with lower qualifications; this appears to be a function of the opportunities doctoral-level study provides for the development of skills, confidence, and networking. Women academics have a lower proportion of PhDs.

Studies elsewhere have suggested that women's teaching and administrative burdens tend to be higher than men's, giving them less opportunity to engage in research - including in research towards higher degrees with the benefits outlined above.

Networking and contact with colleagues may play an important role in research productivity.⁶ Women academics tend to have less effective access to networks than their male colleagues.

Researchers who have been mentored effectively during their careers tend to be more productive than others; women academics in a number of studies have expressed a need for mentoring.⁷

Kyvik (1995) ascribes significant differences between male and female publication productivity to the “caring responsibilities” of women, indicating that (Norwegian) women’s productivity increased as their children grew older. To some extent, women’s “caring responsibilities” may always interfere with other activities - but a more sensitive and supportive organisational context would lessen this effect.

Finally, the NBEET report suggests that successful researchers are characterised by obsession: “[t]hey were marked by an inner drive and intense focus, often working 70+ hour weeks and 12+ hour days.” If this is the case, it is small wonder that many women academics, with their multiple roles, are less productive than men.

2.9 The Question of Merit and Reward systems

Related to the general problems of time spent on teaching versus research are the methods by which academics are assessed. Problems in this area take on even greater significance with international drives towards quantification and the application of performance indicators. While such moves are an important and legitimate part of public accountability, existing and emerging performance indicators may not always accurately measure women academics’ contributions to their institutions: “focus on specific goals and demonstrable outcomes gain more credit than the ability to sustain diverse activities and valuable

⁶ Bland & Schmitz (1986) cited in NBEET (1996).

⁷ In the Women-in-Research survey, however, mentorship ranked low in respondents’ priorities for facilitating their research.

processes.”⁸ Research output is also “easier to quantify and evaluate than teaching performance.”

It is important to increase women’s research output; CSD’s Women-in-Research project is itself premised on this notion. It is no less important to recognise and reward women’s contribution towards sustaining the diverse activities of the academy, and to understand the role these activities play in the broader cycle of knowledge creation.

It is easy to suggest solutions: women do less research than men therefore they should be supported to participate more extensively in research. Women’s teaching and “good campus citizen” activities do not receive adequate recognition; therefore appropriate award systems should be instituted in order to reward activities across the full academic spectrum.

Answers, unfortunately, are not so clear-cut. A number of studies have indicated that even when women academics are “productive” by mainstream measures of research output, they are less likely than men to be rewarded. In their report on the status of women academics in the United Kingdom and United States, Blackstone and Fulton (1993) stated:

We have shown that women, including those to whom, to judge by their research output, it would be insulting to dismiss as lacking motivation or commitment to their work, are not rewarded for their achievements to the same degree as comparable men.⁹

Similarly, Brooks’s (1997) study indicated that while United Kingdom women did indeed tend to have lower qualifications than men (79.7% of male academics had PhDs as opposed to 55.8% of women), women academics *with* PhDs were appointed at lower levels than their male counterparts. As Simeone puts it, “[i]t seems that women perish more due to a lack of publications, while men gain more from productivity.” These sentiments were echoed by one respondent to the Women-in-Research questionnaire:

Women tend to be discouraged by the fact that the same criteria do not apply to women with regard to promotion as compared to their male colleagues.

⁸ <<http://www.aus.ac.nz/swc/autpres.htm>>

⁹ Quoted in Bagilhole (1993) p. 262.

2.10 Research Funding

Bagilhole suggests that, at least in the United Kingdom, women are “less successful” than men in getting research funding. More generally, it appears that women *get fewer research grants* than men, but not necessarily that they are *less successful* in their applications. The NBEET (1996) study indicates that in Australia, even allowing for the lower proportion of women academics, women are underrepresented in the ranks of *applicants* for ARC research grants;

Women who applied to ARC schemes experienced as much overall success as men, though more often as second or third named researcher; they were, however, much less likely than men to apply for ARC funding (both for small and large grants).

2.11 Postgraduate Studies

Success of, and experiences during postgraduate study lay the foundations for an academic career. The student/supervisor relationship can be a significant factor in the success, or lack of it, of postgraduate research. Research elsewhere has pointed to a number of problems with the support and supervision of women postgraduate students. Issues include funding, domestic circumstances, institutional inflexibility, lack of mentors, and differences in communication style between women and their predominantly male supervisors. In Australia, for example, women postgraduates were shown to spend less time with their supervisors than men, and be less likely to rate their academic environments as “friendly and helpful.”¹⁰ For those hoping for an academic career, the supervisory relationship may be of key importance, determining not only success in the degree itself, but also wider research career prospects.

2.12 Glass Ceilings and ‘male-stream’ Culture

It is relevant here to note that the literature on women in higher education, and indeed the concepts and discourse which frame it, share some significant similarities to the related, wider literature which describes and discusses the negative experiences of women at the

¹⁰ Powles (1987b) cited in Conrad (1994). See also “Monash report aims to boost women researchers,” *Campus Review*, December 11, 1996.

senior management level of all types of organisations. This wider literature identifies a range of intangible barriers as the explanation for the exclusion and marginalisation of women at senior levels in the workforce and this phenomenon is commonly expressed metaphorically as 'the glass ceiling'. While the precise expression of the excluding behaviour experienced by women may vary, being more subtle and less visible among senior managers than for example, among skilled technicians, its impact and outcomes for the women themselves is remarkably similar. The literature is characterised by the extensive use of words such as exclusion, alien, outsider, different, out of place, resistance, impenetrable, boundaries, barriers, rejection and isolation, and on the other hand, group solidarity, inner circle, network, club, camaraderie, bonding and in-group understandings. Women are, therefore, described as excluded and marginalized by the dominant male-stream culture, which is often expressed by group habits and customs, unspoken rules and expectations, and patterns of communication and activities.

The number of women in senior management positions in universities, while growing, are still so unrepresentative as to provide evidence of continuing systemic and cultural barriers to women's progress within the higher education sector and their contribution to it. Such barriers are not, of course, all generated from within the sector. Barriers to women's fair professional progress and full participation operate at various levels: in individual institutions, in higher education sector as a whole and in society. Some of these barriers are caused by current conditions; others are the legacy of unfair practices in the past.

In recent years public and private sector organisations have attracted significant criticism for their lack of inclusive structures and development opportunities for women (Sinclair 1995; Industry Taskforce on Leadership and Management 1995; Smith & Still 1996). This criticism has been extended to the higher education sector, where the senior management ranks do not yet display the level of diversity that is now widely considered a pre-condition of increased productivity in large, modern organisations. In at least some universities, women constitute a still largely untapped source of talent. Their relative absence from senior levels of management has negative implications for their institutions' future viability and capacity to respond to change.

The consistent references in this wider literature to apparently benign abstractions, such as organisational culture and norms, as the collective representation of the activities, values

and behaviours which impact in such negative ways on women, echo our interest in the chilly climate for women in universities. Even more pertinent is the relationship that is drawn in the more analytical literature between masculinity, sites of power and influence, and the expression of an organisational culture that excludes and marginalises women. These analyses make it clear that in both senior management and non-traditional, skilled technical work, the organisational culture that excludes women is an expression of and a mode of reproducing men's control of and dominance in, sites of influence of particular significance to them.

Cumulatively, these entrench, endorse and reflect a culture of solidarity and comfortable co-existence amongst men, and serve to maintain the exclusion, marginalization and alienation of women on a daily basis.

2.13 Perceptions of Discrimination

While there are often marked similarities across countries and institutions of women's academic status and experiences, women may interpret their situations differently and have different perceptions of discrimination.

In Abell's New Zealand study, *all* female respondents (both staff and postgraduate students) considered that there was sexism¹¹ in their institutions.

Three-quarters of the women in Bagilhole's United Kingdom survey felt that there was discrimination against women in their institution, ranging from

direct discrimination in recruitment and selection, to what can be categorised as indirect discrimination in areas such as representation on committees, difficulties with family commitments, lack of support for gender research, workload balance and time pressure.

Two-thirds reported that they had personally suffered from discrimination. Brooks (1997), on the other hand, found a "low level of awareness of many aspects of sexism and patriarchy in the academy."

¹¹ <<http://www.aus.ac.nz/swc/reports.htm>>

Women may relate experiences or concerns that point to discrimination, but fail to characterise these as gender-related:

While it is the case that academic women, in many cases, do reveal a concern about patronage, prejudice, discrimination and discriminatory practices facing women in the academy, there appears to be a failure to link this in any systematic way to the operation of sexism or patriarchy in the academy.

In Brooks's United Kingdom study, 57% of academic women maintained that they had *not* been discriminated against, but often their comments painted a different picture. Women may be reluctant to view their experiences as "discrimination" unless discrimination is overt; they may also interpret the problem as one relating to their own performance or character (which it of course may do) rather than reflecting systemic factors.

2.14 Domestic Responsibilities

For the purposes of this study I have taken a conscious decision not to explore the domestic situation and responsibilities of women academics and researchers. Factors relating to women's domestic situations can and certainly do affect their chances of success at all levels, from undergraduate study to research output as professional academics. I would, however, recommend further research and in-depth analysis of the domestic situation. While the diversity of roles many women juggle may be their choice, the absence of adequate institutional support is not. Women academics work in an "institutionalised context governed by the male life cycle,"¹² while "men are systematically advantaged by having institutionalised supports both at home and at work that are closely adapted to their needs and experience."

Family commitments may work against women and *for* men. Women may not be seen as "serious academics" if they have children. Men, on the other hand, may be given priority for jobs or promotion because they have families "to support."¹³ Failure to take women seriously as autonomous professionals is a form of sexism that hampers their employment and promotion prospects. Even when women are seen as being equally capable of doing

¹² Acton & Warren Piper (1984) quoted in Bagilhole (1993) p. 242.

¹³ Brooks (1997) p. 49.

the job, they may still be relegated to the status of someone's wife, or someone's daughter - people who don't need to earn a living, or be on medical aid, or pay off mortgages.

2.15 Recurring Patterns

I have demonstrated with reference to the specific studies internationally as well as a few local studies that women constitute a minority - often a small minority - of academic staff, and are concentrated at the lower end of the academic scale.¹⁴ While the proportion of women academics at all levels in countries such as the United Kingdom has increased over the past two decades, growth has been strongest at the lower end of the scale. In the countries under consideration women generally constitute under ten percent of full professors, outnumbering men only in casualized positions or at the bottom end of the scale. However, this research has primarily presented measurable aspects of the postgraduate experience (such as, the amount of time spent with supervisors, the number of consultations with supervisors, and gender of supervisor), rather than asking female postgraduate students about their experiences.

Women postgraduates when they do appear in the literature, appear as a homogenous group. Thus, the diversity of women undertaking postgraduate study has received little recognition. Amongst the diversity of women undertaking postgraduate study, one group of women have remained particularly invisible in the literature - part-time postgraduate research students who hold full-time academic positions in our higher education institutions.

Under-representation of women in higher education management reflects world-wide trends. Singh (1997) who is the women's program manager for the Association of Commonwealth Universities, notes that 'women are grossly under-represented in higher education management.' She quotes a UNESCO report that globally 'men outnumber women about five to one at middle management level and at about twenty to one at senior management level.' A recent Commonwealth Higher Education Management Scheme

¹⁴ See, for example, Bagilhole (1993) and Brooks (1997) on the United Kingdom; Simeone (1987) and Sekaran & Kassmer (1992) on the United States; and Brooks (1997) on New Zealand.

(CHEMS, 1998) report confirms this under-representation for full-time staff in both academic and administrative streams, although it acknowledges that both Canada and Australia perform well among the developed countries in the Commonwealth. UNESCO has argued that ‘the presence of a critical mass of women in the decision-making process remains vastly inadequate’; as a result of this report, the recent World Conference on Higher Education resolved that:

“Efforts should be made to eliminate political and social barriers whereby women are under-represented and in particular to enhance their active involvement at policy and decision-making levels within higher education and society.” (UNESCO, 1998)

“While women are now in the majority in all Australian universities, we remain absent or significantly under-represented wherever status, influence and power reside at both institutional and national level.” (Ramsay, 1995, p. 91; and see Higher Education Management Review Committee, Australia 1996)

There has been a number of national calls for the sector to address the issue more concertedly, leading for example to the establishment in 1994 of the national Colloquium of Senior Women Executives in Australian Higher Education which consists of women at the most senior levels.

The small number of women in the academy, the concentration of women in part-time, contract and fractional positions, coupled with the gendered culture of universities results in what has been aptly described as a “chilly climate” for women (see Payne and Shoemark, 1995).

Although the experiences of women in the academy are diverse, I have observed that there are, however, recurring international patterns that suggest several areas in common. I summarise them by referring to the work of Brooks (1997). In her comparative work on New Zealand and the United Kingdom, Brooks identified a number of commonalities: the operation of practices which privilege the White, male, middle-class academic; the attitude of academic men in positions of power and decision making in the academy (including the ‘old boys network’ and homosociability); the system of promotion which identifies and defines ‘productivity’ in terms which disadvantage women; the greater likelihood of

academic men holding a doctorate; the lower productivity level (defined by research and publications) of academic women; the heavier teaching workload carried by academic women; the failure of the academy to recognise the primary caregiver status of many academic women; the lack of role models and an effective process of mentoring for academic women; the failure of equal opportunities policies to be effectively translated into equal opportunities practice (Brooks, 1997:120).

This pattern of disproportionate representation in undergraduate courses and at middle and lower employment levels of universities, ensures that it is male students and staff, who are setting the research priorities and academic directions of the disciplines, and determining matters of policy, resourcing and the overall running of the higher education system at the national and institutional levels.

...there are factors inherent at least in the present dominant epistemologies, and structures of those institutions charged with knowledge generation and dissemination, and the norms both within them and in the society of which they are a part, that maintain and justify the low levels of participation of women in career positions in universities.¹⁵

2.16 The Silences

An omission in all the literature reviewed is a focus on the salience of race in the lives of the participants. Only one of the studies, specifically mentions the inclusion of women other than white, Harris (1995:13) informs the reader that “all but three” of the women she interviews were white. No further details are provided and there is no mention of whether this had any significance in the lives of these three women.

The SAPSE¹⁶ data on university staff provides evidence of the impact of racism in South African society. Although the data does not combine race and gender, in 1995 black people comprised only nine percent of the total percentage of permanent academic staff at 15 universities. Decades of apartheid legislation have clearly left its impact.

¹⁵ Burns (1984) cited in Powles (1987) p. 100.

¹⁶ South African Post secondary Education

Thus, a focus on gender without regard to race would ignore a powerful dimension of social stratification.

2.17 What have men got to do with it?

Even more interesting than the experiences of these two very different groups of women, is the remarkable absence of men in either the literature on women at senior levels of organisations or that, which refers to women in male-dominated contexts. Where men do appear in this literature, it is as a group rather than as individuals, and their activities which exclude women are cloaked in abstract generalities, such as organisational culture, norms, myths, symbols, traditions and values, or mysterious metaphors such as the infamous 'glass ceiling'. Indeed negative, unacceptable or challengeable behaviour is seldom attributed to men in a direct or unambiguous way in the literature on either area. Thus women in these significant areas of work are referred to as being excluded, alienated, isolated but men are rarely acknowledged or described as doing anything which achieves this outcome; what the reader is left with is a mysterious and disembodied negative force which impacts only on women, and which expresses itself through abstractions and metaphors with little if any explanatory power. Indeed, whatever these forces or factors may be which are responsible for women's outsider status in these two settings of management and non-traditional work, they are by implication largely accepted as given, facts of life in the organisation, and as such not only unchallengeable but unremarkable. The problem then remains women's alone to solve, for what have men got to do with it?

2.18 Power Relations

Brief mention can be made of only a few key references in this area that clarify the relationship between masculinity, power and what Burton (1991) calls 'masculinity-protection strategies'. Cockburn's (1991) research reveals that both the management levels of organisations, and male-dominated areas of skilled technical work are most definitely regarded by men as their patch, and they exert a range of negative sanctions against women who try to enter either of the terrains. Still (1993) refers to managerial women as trespassing on men's final domain, and suggests that their presence in

management threatens men's sense of ownership of male-dominated and controlled workplaces. Burton (1991) writes of masculinity being embedded in organisational structures, referring to the work by Ferguson (1984) and Eisenstein (1985) that strongly supports this view. Connel (1994) has recently argued that the many practices that exclude, subordinate, or marginalize women in the arena of corporate management are men's collective accomplishment and achieve its masculinization. For, while the notion of superiority to women in general is integral to the construction of hegemonic masculinity, it is obvious from the literature that power and influence are a central and defining characteristic of the more crucial sites for the expression of male superiority. Indeed, Cockburn (1991) argues that organisations themselves are not just of casual interest to men as a sex, since they are essential to the process of effecting power, and that is why men will not readily let women into positions of power and influence within them.

It cannot be overemphasised that differences that have been identified as distinguishing men and women are the result of social and cultural constructions of gender and do not necessarily characterise all or even most individuals.

To write about "women academics" is to affirm a contrast between men and women, but I am wary of speaking too forcefully about "differences" between men and women. My study tells us how South African women interpret their situations and experiences. It does not propose to tell us how - or indeed whether - male academics' interpretation of their own (or women's) situations would differ. It is also risky to set too much store by men or women's own characterisations of themselves or the other:

Much current research shows that men and women tend to stereotype their own behaviour according to cultural views or gender-appropriate behaviour, as much as they stereotype the behaviour of other groups (Epstein, 1991).

Much has been made in recent years of alleged differences in communication styles between men and women, both in the popular press and scholarly writing.¹⁷ It has, for example, been suggested that different male and female communications styles may contribute to a perception that women are less intellectually sound than men.

¹⁷ See for example Tannen (1995).

Such differences in communication style no doubt exist, but those who write about them may focus only on gender, to the exclusion of other lines of division in communication such as culture, language or even “disciplinary culture.” Conversely, writers may focus on cross-cultural communication, without taking gender into account.

2.19 Conclusion

In common with the literature generally, these studies point to the many ways in which women staff and students in higher education are marginalised, and undermined in their endeavours, through the prevailing ethos in their institutions, despite their numbers, and despite their undeniable abilities and their increasingly evident achievements. It is in this chilly climate that women academics balance their postgraduate studies and their personal/professional lives.

It is in this context that I turn my attention in the following chapter to the wider, more encompassing, and necessarily rather undefined concepts of culture and climate in search of an explanation of why women academics are not progressing as far, as fast, or in sufficient numbers to ensure that women’s voices and priorities are heard at these influential sites of higher education. In other words, interest in the issue of climate and culture has arisen in response to the need to explain why, despite increased participation and a range of indicators of successful performance as students and staff, women academics remain largely the consumers of knowledge generated through research rather than determining its nature, content, global and institutional directions.

Chapter Three

It Does Not Go Away Just Because I Am Pointing To It!

3.1 Introduction

The studies presented in the previous chapter, documenting the situation of women in academia and research, clearly supports my thesis that women's poor representation in higher education, effectively excludes them from contributing to knowledge production. In this chapter I try to identify, explain and advance possible reasons why this situation is sustained. I focus on identifying a range of behaviours, patterns of interaction, habits, values and day-to-day ways of being, as the means by which this mainstream or male-stream culture of research for women academics is produced, reproduced and entrenched. I argue that our understandings of our everyday worlds of research are mediated through excluding and marginalizing behaviours, silences that affect feminist scholarship, and gendered patterns of research, all of which constitute the social and epistemic relations of the culture of the universities and not, as has been the generally accepted belief, that women academics themselves are the problem.

As an academic and researcher I experience the cumulative effect of these social and epistemic relations at an individual level, but its institutional impact is clearly apparent at the collective level. Often these excluding and marginalizing behaviours, activities and discourses are very difficult for women to expose, object to or resist. This is mainly because the hostile climate for us women, becomes inscribed and expressed through a variety of apparently harmless, neutral and long sanctioned actions and activities which are themselves embedded in the institutional climate, and which collectively make up its culture.

I learnt very early in academia to maintain a scholarly separation of academic knowledge from the actual people who are engaged in the production of such knowledge. The silences then, on the institutional contexts and personal relations that are the ground for feminist scholarship gloss over the complex realm of struggle that is profoundly political and personal at the same time. Remaining silent or breaking the silence is equally difficult and

fraught with anxiety, self-doubt and uncertainty over whether one has done the right thing or not.

Research is often portrayed as a seemingly gender neutral activity. In this chapter I present an argument advancing reasons why despite research capacity development initiatives that have tended to focus primarily on developing the research skills of women academics, the picture has not altered much. Evidence of this is provided by data in the chapters that follow. Whether one moves from structures and hierarchies to the issue of the culture of the university, gendered patterns are always prevalent. Informal interaction, distribution of information, group formation, internal division of labour in research groups as well as evaluation of accomplishments have all been shown to be gendered. In recent years, awareness of how sexuality works in organisations, how it is related to the gendering of organisations, especially with issues of gender and power has increased gradually (Hearn and Parkin 1987, rev.ed. 1995; Hearn et al 1989).

My discussion that follows focuses firstly on the views that are characterised by their tendencies to pathologise women when responding to women's marginalization within the academy. I then focus on the role of the institution and the culture that it embodies, concluding that the male-stream culture that prevails, has to be seriously engaged, unpacked and reconstituted in a socially just form in order for women to begin to make inroads in knowledge production.

3.2 Blaming the Victim

As women academics negotiate their professional lives, they do so in an environment in which they are 'other'. This demands a constant monitoring of the institutional processes that serve to marginalise and contain women's contributions (Bagilhoe, 1993). Most analyses of women in higher education draw at least loosely on liberal feminist perspectives. The aim of liberal feminism is to alter women's status and opportunities within the existing economic and political frameworks. It concentrates on removing barriers that prevent girls and women from attaining their full potential; that is on the creation of equal opportunities for the sexes. Key concepts often used include equal opportunities, sex-stereotyping, socialisation, role-conflict and sex discrimination (Acker,

1987). In Britain, for example, the liberal feminist discourse of 'equal opportunities' is the most widely acceptable analysis (Acker, 1986; Weiner, 1986)), despite a number of limitations. With respect to higher education there are several strands. Liberal feminists consider the impact of socialisation, conflicting roles, inadequate social investment in women's education, and sex discrimination. Strategies which follow from these arguments tend to depend on individuals changing their practices, in response to better information or appeals to fairness. The extent to which observed patterns are rooted in structures resistant to change is de-emphasised.

A common explanation for women's 'failure' to achieve high status places responsibility on parents, schools and other socialisation agencies which have encouraged women from early childhood to develop a constellation of characteristics not easily compatible with achievement, especially in certain fields. Women have been found to display lack of confidence, low aspirations and ambition, concern with people and nurturance, the need for approval, desires for dependency, motives to avoid success as has been explored by Singh (1995). As a feminist researcher I am now arguing strongly for a shift away from some of these simplistic versions of such conceptualisations, recognising that in their potential for 'blaming the victim' lies there establishment and entrenchment of the 'male as norm' culture or 'male-stream' culture.

In attempting to answer my critical concerns of this study I am suggesting that we look beyond individuals and categories to the social context in which androcentricism is found to circumscribe the reality of both men and women. I argue that organisations, positions and relationships are all constructed in relation to gender. It is my contention that the academy be approached as a gendered organization (Acker 1992; Gerhardi 1995; Mills and Tancred 1992; Fineman 1993) where gender is constantly negotiated and reproduced. By locating issues of hegemony and agency within a broader framework of power as process, I believe that women academics must be viewed as both agents within and subjects of this process.

Whilst the typical rhetoric about women's place in the university derives mainly from liberal feminism, other theoretical approaches become absolutely necessary if we are to grasp why resistance to change is so deep-seated. Designation of some theoretical

approaches as providing better explanatory frameworks than others does not, however, preclude the use of political strategies derived from less satisfactory frameworks.

3.3 Centres of Meaning-making

Although it should be acknowledged that male-stream culture takes particularly sharp form and focus in the more influential levels of universities as organisations, the main issue, however, is that universities themselves are significant sites of influence and power for wider society, and that their power and influence is of a very particular and special kind, expressed at national and international levels as well as generationally over time. Higher education institutions are significant gatekeepers to the more highly paid professions as well as determinants of cultural, political and financial capital at the individual, national and international levels. The power of higher education extends to determining what knowledge is valued, validated and recorded over time, and what is disregarded and lost, as well as what areas are researched, published and resourced for all levels of education. In other words, higher education institutions are not only significant determiners of powers and influence at the individual level, but collectively and historically they are ‘centres of meaning-making’ (Marshall, 1991) for the community, and indeed, for the culture and its heritage as a whole.

From the evidence provided in the previous chapter I have already established that higher education institutions tend to be conservative, masculinist organisations, that often cloak themselves in a rhetoric of liberalism and non-discrimination. Brooks (1997) points to:

a clear contradiction between the model of the academic community characterised by equality and academic fairness, which academic institutions purport to have, and the reality of academic life within these institutions.

While universities internationally tend to incorporate non-discrimination in their charters or mission statements, this “ultimately illusory liberalism...allows gender divisions to be maintained and renewed.”¹ Universities’ claims to be meritocracies can make them

¹ This argument can apply equally to other forms of discrimination.

“complacent to charges of discrimination.”²

She argues further that, these factors, combined with organisational structures characterised by the autonomy of individual academics and academic departments serves only to hinder the progress of women academics. “[I]n academia, where a collegial model rather than a hierarchical model governs decision making, one’s informal power is of special importance.”

In recognition of this very particular form of power and influence, I am suggesting that the male-stream culture experienced by women academics across the whole institution, could be considered higher education’s version of the so-called and infamous ‘glass ceiling’ experienced by women at very senior levels in all sorts of organisations. Universities as whole organisations can be regarded as highly significant sites of power and influence for the society, culture, for the nation as a whole. Much has been written about the ways in which centres of meaning-making are powerfully defended against women. While the glass ceiling is the rather unhelpful metaphor currently in use to refer to exclusion and marginalisation of women approaching sites of key influence and power at senior levels of organisation, the male-stream culture is expressed throughout the entire institution and against all women. This hostile climate may be especially virulent at some levels and in some areas of study and work in universities, and, although it takes diverse forms on the basis of women’s different backgrounds, identities and structural and discipline locations, it is not confined to isolated and identifiable levels or areas of work or study. Thus while attention must be given to its diverse expression and precise nature of its impact on different groups of women, there is also much to be gained from consideration of what may be common for all women academics and researchers at universities.

3.4 Intruders in the Sacred Grove of Science

My argument here is to signal and endorse a shift from the ideology of what is wrong with women in academia towards posing the question: what is wrong with academia?

² Thomas (1990) cited in Bagilhole (1993).

This shift has been characterised by many recent works in this field (e.g. Rose 1994; Caplan 1993). The liveliness of the debate is evidenced also by the fact that the recent conferences are now focusing on these issues (Payne and Shoemark 1995).

The position of women in academia is influenced by the characteristics of the social and cultural setting. One could expect great variations in the gender arrangements from one setting to another, but it is striking how similar they are all over the world. Many studies suggest that it is the research community/arena itself that is against change. As Stolte-Heiskanen states: "women form too often a 'blind spot' in the horizon of the scientific community" (1991,7). My argument is that gender discrimination, both open and hidden, overt and covert, characterises the research arena and academia. This has been proven in several studies throughout the world (Hawkings and Schults, 1990:47).

It is the discrimination on the basis of sex that is difficult or nearly impossible to prove because it is structural, embedded in culture or constructed as a long-term process. This is what I call the hidden discrimination. When studying male-stream culture it is important to remember, that discriminating acts and behaviours are often viewed as unintentional and also in that sense hidden or covert (cf. Wenner and Wold, 1997).

The position of women in academia has been studied extensively during the last two decades throughout the world but especially in the USA³. It is also a growing field of study (see e.g. Borchorst 1995). In the Nordic countries especially in Norway and Sweden the question of gender and academia has been unusually intensely discussed also in the public mainstream media in the mid 1990s. The analysis of these discussions would prove interesting material for further research on gender and academia.⁴

The picture most studies paint of the situation of academic women is surprisingly similar regardless of cultural setting. The metaphors these studies use to describe the situation of women in academia are revealing: women are depicted as 'other', 'intruders in the sacred grove [of science]', 'handmaidens of the knowledge class', 'proletariat of science', 'trying to take the tower by storm', 'not fitting in' (Husu, 1997).

³ See e.g. Aisenberg and Harrington 1988; Chamberlain 1988; Lie and Malik 1994; Lie and O'Leary 1990; Morley and Walsh 1995; Stolte-Heiskanen 1991; Zuckermann, Cole and Bruer 1991.

⁴ For an analysis of part of this discussion, see e.g. Ekerwald 1996.

Further, women academics who have ‘made it’ often find themselves in an ambivalent situation (cf. Widerberg, 1995). Davis (1997, 188) crystallises the situation:

“ Women in higher academic positions typically find themselves betwixt and between. Although they have ostensibly become regular players, they find themselves having to play the game by different rules. They are, somewhat paradoxically, both marginal to the organisation and highly visible.”

When studying academic women, it is important, on the one hand, to study their relation to science and research as “knowing” and, on the other, their relationship to research as social organisations, working places and studying environments. The former has been studied by Keller, Haraway, Smith and Harding (see e.g. Fox Keller and Longino 1996). In my study the focus is on the relationship of academic women to research in the universities as social organisations. Although “knowing” and their relationship to research as social organisations are however, intertwined in many ways, the divisions here are only used as an analytical tool.

Although I have made constant reference to the concept of climate and male-stream culture, I am aware that whilst it conveys some idea about the pervasiveness of the culture, it stops short of unpacking the essence of the problem. The concepts of climate and culture are effective in drawing attention to the fact that there is something about the current operation of universities which acts in a negative way against women as a group and that its impact on both staff and students is debilitating in some currently rather ill-defined way. To be susceptible to change and challenge either through individual objection or policy prescription, structures, processes, behaviours and activities have to be capable of description, identification, recognition and analysis.

The use of such apparently benign, neutral and abstract terms as ‘climate’ and ‘culture’ can convey a normalisation of what is occurring to the extent that women’s reactions remain the problem to be explained and solved. In addition, in their mind-numbing generality, such abstractions distract attention away from those who perpetuate this climate and this culture, whose behaviour, attitudes and activities achieve its negative impact on women academics and who thrive and prosper disproportionately as a direct result.

In this study I try to unravel the culture, in a statistical and narrative way, interrogating its abstract and invisible nature and form, trying to explain why its agency is largely unspoken and unacknowledged. The challenge as I have said earlier is to try to find explanations for the situation of women in the academy and in that light abstractions have little, if any, explanatory power. Even worse the question arises as to why women have such difficulty adjusting, fitting in, coming to terms with, and generally prospering in what is presented as a benign and unproblematical given, that is the existing culture of higher education, when men so clearly do not.

Brief mention can be made of only a few key references that clarify the relationship between masculinity, power and what Burton (1991) calls 'masculinity-protection strategies'. Cockburn's (1991) research reveals that both the management levels of organisations, and male-dominated areas of skilled technical work are most definitely regarded by men as their patch, and they exert a range of negative sanctions against women who try to enter either of the terrains. Still (1993) refers to managerial women as trespassing on men's final domain, and suggests that their presence in management threatens men's sense of ownership of male-dominated and controlled workplaces. Burton (1991) writes of masculinity being embedded in organisational structures, referring to the work by Ferguson (1984) and Eisenstein (1985) which strongly supports this view. Connel (1994) has recently argued that the many practices that exclude, subordinate, or marginalise women in the arena of corporate management are men's collective accomplishment and achieve its masculinization. For while the notion of superiority to women in general is integral to the construction of hegemonic masculinity, it is obvious from the literature that power and influence are a central and defining characteristic of the more crucial sites for the expression of male superiority. Indeed, Cockburn (1991) argues that organisations themselves are not just of casual interest to men as a sex, but are essential to the process of effecting power, and it is for this reason that men will not readily let women into positions of power and influence within them.

Weiner (1993:116-120) uses critical theory to present the argument that women teachers, lecturers and administrators for example, are distinctively and specifically constructed as feminised and uncultured subjects and as 'other' in relation to the male as norm. In relation to research, femininity and masculinity are linked to deeply embedded stereotypes

in the social world, inscribed in powerful practices through which we as women academics are controlled.

In such ways, regimes of truth are constructed, that place limitations on women's behaviour, ambitions and desires. Thus what we consider appropriate behaviour for women and men might appear commonsensical and 'normal' but it is in fact highly regulative and infused with power relations. These power-knowledge relations are inscribed on the academic experiences of women. Although we may have different experiences, through the studies, I have shown that they reflect a pattern of remarkable similarity.

The university specialises in intellectual knowledge production and reproduction. We live and experience this epistemically and procedurally. It is however, a focus on the power-relations within the domains of patriarchal knowledge, phallogocentric and sexist discourse that expands existing explanations of women's marginalization in the academy. Patriarchal knowledge provides the scaffold that supports the structural organisation and differential valuation of women and men, thereby serving to validate sexist knowledge. Institutionalised gender inequalities are thus marked by the differential valuation of women's and men's work, speech, and power reflect patriarchal knowledge.

Grosz (1988) suggests that institutional structures organise and regulate women and men in "places of different value and differential access to self-determination. But patriarchal oppression provides a context, structure, support and legitimisation for the various sexist acts of discrimination" (p.94). Even if the liberal agenda of equal numbers, access, opportunity, and outcomes were implemented, and even if men and women behaved in identical ways, their behaviours would still not have the same social meaning or value.

At the level of patriarchal structure (institutional and discursive) women's struggle against strategies of oppression, marginalisation and exclusion takes on a different form from contestations against sexist encounters. Few other places of work exemplify patriarchal rule better than universities, from the bureaucratic distribution of power to the Foucauldian "network of writing" (1979) rationalised in the rule system of the form and memo that administer procedure, persons and knowledge.

Despite significant gains in the last decade or so, women continue to be grossly underrepresented in senior positions and remain locked in the contract stream of the junior lecturer (Slater & Glazer, 1989). Journals and book publishing editorial boards are dominated by men. Promotions committees, faculty chairs, department chairs remain the seat of male control. There is nothing hidden about this structural distribution of power. They become the visible sites from which voices and interpretations that underwrite oppositional gender politics emanate and yet they persist. The liberal agenda has relocated women into some of these positions and has legislated spaces for women and women's issues.

Positions and unequal representation in the academy can be contested. What is much more difficult to identify and contest are the subterranean politics that bind some men together against women. Male academics still make 'backroom deals' over women's theoretical and research contributions, when it concerns applications for research funds, our promotions and tenure. It concerns the impenetrability of the male network on non-feminist journal editorial boards that decide what counts as publishable and acceptable. Feminist work must fit into male defined parameters of feminist critique.

At the level of patriarchal knowledge and relations we in the academy continue to struggle for equality; of rights to speak and be heard, access to positions of power and resources, and representation on boards and committees. Our work in the academy is not only about fighting for equal access, places, rewards and representation. Our research, teaching and careers require commitment not only to our personal and theoretical politics, but require also that we work within and according to the rules laid down and maintained by those whose interests those rules serve.

I argue that patriarchy then has to do with the underlying structures and processes that regulate and organise women and men in different locations and value systems. So while it is indeed patriarchy that has granted women places in the public, some even of equal formal status to men, our academic titles and positions do not guarantee immunity from the politics of domination and exploitation that continue to have a profound influence on our lives and our work.

For instance, no university calendar, job description or contract explains these rules of the game. The unspoken rules and unspeakable application of those rules are the subtext of many women's academic experiences as I demonstrate in the data presented in the chapters that follow. For all of us, the personal that is generally invisible to the outside world, but which profoundly shapes and influences our work as academics and researchers, is eminently political.

3.4.1 Male eyes, Male sensibilities!

Knowledge production and construction in higher education is largely governed by white, male conceptions of what is studied and how it is studied, of what constitutes appropriate scholarly knowledge and methodologies. "Male values and characteristics define the stated and unstated values and characteristics of scholarship, with an emphasis on objectivity, distance, competition and control." Those events and issues which disciplines choose to study...tend to be within the male rather than the female realm...if men have a view of the world in which women are functionally invisible, then they would tend to generalise their own experiences to include both men and women, whether or not it was appropriate (Brooks, 1995).

Not all women are interested in overtly gender-related research, but knowledge and theory are built on experience, and in an academic discourse created and sustained by men women may be marginalized :

the inception of research questions often comes from observations and puzzles from the researcher's own life. Women may be less likely or able to use their own experience as stimulus, unless they translate their ideas into a more acceptable male-centred framework.. (Robinson, 1996)

Disciplines in the humanities and social sciences are constructed "by men working with mental models of human activity and society seen through a male eye and apprehended through a male sensibility" (Grant & Newland, 1991).

Women have been hard at work contesting phallogentrism across disciplinary knowledge. The master narratives that have written Truth, Logic, Reason, History and the Individual to the center of Meaning and the Real, have been constitutive of Anglo-European male

experience and ‘consciousness’ at the expense of constructing and positioning negative identities outside the masculine positivity. Women are thus construed on the model of the masculine, whether in terms of sameness/identity, opposition/distinction, or complementarity. Women and the feminine function as silent supports for all modes of male theory. This is the one level of the great master narratives of science and philosophy where androcentric Human Nature, Truth, Reason and Impartiality mark difference from the masculine as fundamentally other. Phallogocentric knowledge forms the epistemic horizon for patriarchal knowledge. Feminist work in the academy is structured by and contests all these above-mentioned levels of containment and opposition on a daily basis. The work of feminist researchers and educators reflect the interrogations and interventions of those entrenched knowledge and practices that disavow women, their knowledge and intellectual labour.

It is my contention that this phallogocentric knowledge of the universal male subject and his characteristics and values, subsume the feminine; feminine and masculine principles, and assign women and men an ‘identity of the same’. Because the feminine is all that which the universal human subject is not, she serves as the silent ‘other’ support for all that which is universally human and male. Universal man is cast in the role of a rational impassionate thinker, a builder of civilisations and military strategist, an objective lawmaker and observer, a writer a speaker of doctrine and truth. Women historically have been perceived to be none of these either in practice or in discourse. Our difference then in androcentric and phallogocentric discourse is actualised in our differential valuation at the levels of patriarchal and sexist knowledge. Because women are not that which is universally human and male, our lack and otherness at the level of theory – philosophical, political, social, cultural, etc. translates at the level of social practice into our exclusion, subjugation and inferiority. Political theory denies us political participation and education; philosophy denies us an analytic and logical mind; theory denies us the right to speak and interpret doctrine. The logical transfer, then, from our non-being in androcentric discourse to patriarchal and sexist discourse means that this is where our lesser positioning takes on its ‘natural’ expression.

3.4.2 Taking things Personally

An example of this androcentric discourse is the issue of sexism. Blatant sexism is increasingly rare, at least in the context of higher education. However, a more covert level of sexism remains an obstacle that is even more difficult to deal with, as it is often denied by both ‘perpetrators’ and ‘victims’. The men that contribute to it, often “vehemently deny that they are sexist,” and are also unwilling to “acknowledge systemic discrimination against women” (Sinclair, 1998). Men also “go through the motions of improving women’s situations” while failing to come to terms with their “deeply rooted preconceptions” (Schwarz, 1992). Women who are subject to sexual discrimination tend to attribute the discrimination to other factors, including their own abilities.

Whilst overt sexism can be challenged, a general feeling that women are not being taken seriously as professionals, or that their research interests are somehow less legitimate, or that they are being discriminated against in small but telling ways is a little more complicated to deal with. Challenging people on small individual issues only adds to the stereotype of petty women who ‘insist on taking everything personally’. Therefore, a focus on equity and redress legislation on its own will do little to transform organisational culture, or to address the subtler forms of covert sexism.

3.4.3. The Race Question in Gender

One of the biggest problems I had to face during my years in academia, and one which played itself out, to an extent in the WIR Project, was what I refer to as the race question in gender equity initiatives. For many years I did not have the confidence to raise this for fear of being stereotyped (see Chapter Seven for details). I was constantly aware of the attempts by many to sweep these concerns under the carpet, the greatest fear for many being the so-called fracturing of the ‘women’ project. In this study I address this concern about the lack of information on women of colour, by examining the statistical data within the context of the demographic profiles, both nationally and provincially. The statistical data is further enriched by the qualitative explorations of the problems of women in academia, through the eyes of black women academics in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The statistical data, together with the women’s narratives, and my own testimonies,

provides a uniquely different 'take' on investigating the problems women face as knowledge producers. Whilst it is not the intention of this study to delve deeply into an analysis based on race, it uses the apartheid-designated categories of race to create a 'coloured' portraiture of women in research and offer a different perspective.

My reading in the area has shown that leading black feminists such as Collins (1990), hooks (1984), Amos & Palmer (1984) and Anthias & Yuval-Davis (1983) have shared this concern over the years, expressing grave difficulty to simply allow white, middle-class feminists to set the agendas that invariably foreground issues of gender over race. Whilst women of colour have argued that feminist analysis and theory have represented the experience of white women as the norm, the issues of racism constitutes a primary site of our oppression (hooks, 1984).

The infusion of the race question into matters of gender is linked to its legacy of colonisation and imperialism. White women academics and researchers need to understand that they have been implicated in this colonisation and imperialism and that it was not the sole agenda of white men. South Africa was colonised on a racially imperialistic base and not a sexually imperialistic base. Like men in the comfort of their dominant gender position, white women can afford to take their race and ethnicity for granted; it can be silent because it is a given and generic in its racial and cultural hegemony. Women of colour, on the other hand, have to foreground their race and ethnicity; in its 'otherness' it defines them, it self-defines and it is invoked to specify what 'white' is not in racialised terms. That 'white' is a racial category is now acknowledged as is the fact that it is "privileged, unanalysed, taken for granted and itself a 'minority' status" (Afshar & Maynard, 1994). Spelman (1988) also analyses 'white' as the norm so that 'difference' attaches to others, that is, non-whites, thereby 'othering' them all the more. In addition to a focus on difference, I again emphasise the need to look into power relations. We need to interrogate hierarchical relations that differentiate categories of women, race and other attributes such as class, sexual orientation and disability, within the broad analytical category of women. There is a materiality about the convergence of race and gender discrimination, a double mutually reinforcing jeopardy that qualitatively changes the nature of the subordination (Maynard, 1994; see also Brah, 1991). It colludes with other historical, economic and socio-cultural constraints and exerts pressure to form the

complex dynamics of the multiple jeopardy suffered by classes of non-white women across the world.

In my broadly feminist perspective, I desist from suggesting that women's experience, in South Africa or elsewhere, is a unitary whole. Failure to recognise the way in which factors such as race, ethnicity, class, age, nationality or disability intersect women's experience of the academy does tend to present a sorely distorted picture. However, failure to recognise and emphasise the common threads would preclude the possibility of political action.

Many years ago, Lorde (1977) argued that within the (American) women's movement,

White women focus upon their oppression as women and ignore differences of race, sexual preference, class and age. There is a pretence to homogeneity of experience covered by the word *sisterhood* that does not in fact exist.

Contemporary feminism has moved towards a greater recognition of diversity, but the challenge remains of "how differences among women can be accorded the respect and analytical importance they deserve without destroying the integrity of the concept 'women' upon which much of feminism as a political practice rests" (Acker, 1994). While the experience of South African women academics is diverse, there are areas of commonality and that need not negate substantial diversity within that group. As Oakley (1997) suggests,

What women academics are able to do is important to them as individuals, but also to female students in the academy, whose own notions of identity and autonomy are partly framed in response to this.

Access and development of women academics and postgraduate students at South African universities will depend in large measure on the conditions facing women in the academy at all levels.

The salience of race for women in South Africa has been debated among feminists. This debate is typically referred to as the 'difference' debate (see, for instance, Agenda, 1993; 1997) and it centres both on the relations between black and white women as feminists, as

researchers and as activists as well as on the contribution of race to gendered subjectivity. With regard to the latter, there are two dominant models: a model of triple oppression which includes gender, race and class, and a poststructuralist model which rejects the additive connotations of a triple oppression in favour of a view of subjectivity as simultaneously having race and gender which cannot be viewed distinctly and separately (de la Rey, 1998).

The relevance of acknowledging the effect and significance of 'difference' along race and gender lines goes beyond discourse theory, deconstruction and post-modernism. It has to be political and therein lies the recognition of the purpose of their dismantling. Power, hierarchy and inequality are the consequences of that interaction which in turn explains differentiation between categories of 'white women' and categories of 'black'. Power relations still coincide with lines of racial and gender difference. It is therefore, not possible to separate the two sites of oppression off from each other since they act with and through each other to produce acute occupational segregation along race/gender lines. It would be fruitless, therefore, for any equity and transformation to privilege one form of oppression over the other. This contradictory location that we occupy in academia often makes it difficult to see where and how our politics are co-opted by our institutions, where and how our power and privilege become transformed within the bureaucratic web into potentially disabling political effects on others and ourselves.

The issues that we contest, the various fronts on which we struggle and the political strategies we use are often loaded with contradictory meaning and effects. If we act in one way, it may have repercussions on another level; if we get outraged over one issue, we stand to make enemies in one camp but form alliances in another; if we speak and behave unbecomingly the feminine academic image, we may lose the attention of those men whose attention we need in order to get our issues on the agenda. What this all means is that as women academics and researchers, we are already packaged as 'other'.

3.5. Male-stream Culture Unpacked

Clearly there is a relationship between the normalisation of men's advantaged position and the unremarkability and hence invisibility of their collective behaviour which resists our

attempts to join them. I have already noted the consistent and remarkable absence of men in the literature, as the human agents of the behaviour, activities, habits and traditions which collectively has such a negative impact on women in each of the key areas of research, senior management, skilled technical work and higher education. This absence of men in the very literature which problematises the impact of their 'culture' on women, is a clear reflection of the relationship between the normalisation of male advantage and the invisibility of male resistance to its reduction or removal. So long as the behaviour the men collectively engage in, to exclude and marginalise our contribution to such key sites of power and influence in our society, remains unnamed, masked and congealed in abstract and metaphorical terms and conceptualisations, both that behaviour and the advantaged status which it defends and perpetuates for men, remain normalised, unremarkable, unproblematical and therefore invisible and unchallengeable. As Eduards (1992) points out, the most effective opposition to change is one that is kept intangible. What this study does is try to make the intangible, tangible through its deliberate focus on this male-streaming.

While recognising the historical necessity to explain and document our disadvantaged position in employment, education and indeed in research, Eveline (1994) argues that the almost exclusive attention which has been given to women's problematical disadvantaged status, in policy analysis and practitioners' discourse in this country, has perpetuated and reinforced an assumption that processes advantaging men are immutable, indeed normative. In a recent article entitled 'The Politics of Advantage', Eveline refers to this as the foregrounding of disadvantage (for women), which achieves the corresponding backgrounding of advantage (for men). Thus, she writes, 'the everyday spectrum of privileges that accrue to men are taken as unremarkable...and the dynamics by which they are accorded, also remains unspoken' (p. 130). Cockburn's work (1990) is an exception in this regard, drawing attention to and problematising men's resistance to equal opportunity policy processes in a range of contemporary organisations. Her work builds on earlier analyses, including Woolf's (1933) references to the history of men's resistance to women's emancipation, and more contemporary analyses such as those by Burton (1991) and Connell (1987). However, this emphasis on resistance as a central problematic is not common in either the wider literature, or the strategic and policy discourse of equal opportunity practitioners.

Breaking with the tradition of foregrounding women's disadvantage as the main problematic by confronting the pervasiveness of men's advantages, Cockburn itemises the way men organise against women to retain these advantages, which at the behavioural level involves the fostering of solidarity between men, sexualising, threatening, marginalizing, controlling and dividing women.

Women's choices then in these circumstances would appear to be limited to the following two: to leave, which many do, whether prematurely or simply by not progressing as expected to higher levels of study or work, or to try to cope with, adjust and accommodate and hence to accept as unproblematic this climate and culture which excludes, marginalizes and at times demeans us. Understanding the problem from the perspective of phallogocentric, patriarchal, sexist discourse offers a possibility for change or progress, either for the individual women facing these choices, or for the institutions themselves, or indeed for the nature and directions of higher education as a whole.

3.6. Conclusion

The theoretical issues raised in this chapter argue and advance explanations for the subordination of women academics and researchers. Whilst theories considered under the liberal feminist umbrella tend to answer the question of how women become disadvantaged, for example through processes of socialisation and discrimination. The socialist and radical feminist approaches aim for a deeper, more fundamental understanding, addressing the question of why such disadvantages occur. Behind every 'how' is a 'why' and I have argued in this chapter that our everyday worlds as women academics and researchers within the academy, is important for grounding feminist theory and practice. I have shown how our work continues to be structured by frameworks of power-relations, shaping and influencing our opportunities, identities and subjectivities as researchers.

Gender and race equity initiatives at the level of the academy require us to employ our feminist gaze to consciously engage with masculinities, our feminisms and how we express and deploy them and ultimately, therefore, the power as the underlying

problematic in difference and inequality. Such a level of engagement calls for an informed organic process driven by passion, political commitment and a social justice imperative.

Women cannot continue to allow the assumption that research and academia are ungendered, which in turn leads to the undermining of attempts to address issues of equity for women. It is the processes of power and how it gets played out in higher education and academia that have to be identified and revealed through an analysis of where women academics and researchers are located within these processes.

A fair starting point from which to attempt transformation in the academy would be to revisit the overall mission of higher education and then foreground gender and other intersecting equity issues within that framework. The resultant order of priorities could form the basis for the relatively heavy public investment in this sector. Equity initiatives should ideally be driven by moral, human rights, legal, socio-cultural and economic imperatives.

The chapters that follow reveal the extent of the problem of women in research in South Africa by way of comparison with the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The data presented foregrounds and constructs an emergent picture of the position of women researchers within the context of the demographic profiles of the country and the region. Secondly, I show how this discrimination and oppression works in the various settings, what kind of forms and mechanisms it takes and how it affects women researchers, their lives and research trajectories, including my own. All of this is offered from the uniquely different perspective of black women academics. In pursuance of this objective, I present data that opens a window into the apparently harmless activities that occur on a day-to-day basis, unpacking at these three aforementioned levels, how women academics and researchers experience the power-relations, tensions and lived dialectics of the world of research.

Chapter Four

Though there be Madness, yet there is Method!

4.1 Doing Research without Safety Nets!

In this chapter I provide a description of the research methods employed framing it within the undergirding principles that influenced and guided my thoughts, decisions and actions. My discussion is infused with reflections on the implications of using an autobiographical, feminist approach in the design of my study into the problems facing women in academia and research. Prompted by my dilemma of what it means to do feminist research, to feminize research or democratise research, I found it extremely difficult to compartmentalise feminist theory, feminist politics, feminist methodology, feminist practice, feminist research – these categories are characterised by the fact that they all ‘leak’ into each other. It is for this reason that I sounded, very early in my writings (see Chapter One), my discomfort with the arbitrary separation I was making in developing a so-called theoretical framework for this study.

I echo the concern of Smith (1987), who states:

The problem [of a research project] and its particular solution are analogous to those by which fresco painters solved the problems of representing the different temporal moments of a story in the singular space of the wall. The problem is to produce in a two-dimensional space framed as a wall a world of action and movement in time. (p. 281)

Besides the problem of framing real life events in a two-dimensional space, I confronted the added problems of how the framing is being done and who is doing the framing

I reveal critical practices in my attempts to ‘(un)do’ research, demonstrating how the use of my feminist organising principles or feminist ‘gaze’ initiates a process of destabilising or disrupting mainstream or ‘male-stream’ research. By so doing, I signal a shift from the conventional manner in which methodology chapters are usually framed.

During the course of this study I had perused a number of masters and doctoral studies and found that most tend to stick to the ‘formula’ of what is perceived to be scientific,

acceptable research methods and practice. My own work as advisor and referee, which involved the vetting of research proposals for the University of Durban-Westville as well as the National Research Foundation¹, has revealed that with very few exceptions, research in the humanities and social sciences proceeds in a 'business as usual' manner. I have always been struck by the lack of imagination, especially methodological imagination. A concern echoed by Jansen (1990) in his reflection on the lack of creativity, the will to cut loose, explore and conquer new frontiers, new territories, in the dissertations he has surveyed.

My concerns lie with the fact that most research still derives from an essentially positivist tradition that has dominated social science inquiry (Lee & Green, 1995). This type of research has traditionally been conducted within contexts that encourage a general absence of critical reflection on how or why realities are studied the way they are. If they are alluded to in the form of epistemological and theoretical questions being raised about methodological issues, they are usually divorced from the substantive issues and discussed in a vacuum as philosophical considerations (Eisner, 1996).

In much of the quantitative research literature, one finds information about designing questionnaires, strategies for interviewing, drawing samples and using secondary data sets. Most of the literature grapples with issues concerning interaction of subjects, randomisation of data collection and data analysis. Little of it explores the role of the researcher's life histories in shaping of research designs. There is the presumption that surveys and other sources of statistical data yield objective results if the researcher follows certain technical procedures. Seldom are issues raised about the human faces and consciousness behind the development of such methodological tools and their outcomes (Huberman, 1993). However, the absence of critical reflection about methodology is not only attributed to the pervasiveness of positivism. Whether it is statistical tables or lengthy ethnographic excerpts, all are social and political constructs and are really ideologically determined and culturally biased productions of knowledge. The absence of a self-critical sensibility by researchers makes for lack-lustre research in many instances.

¹ The former Centre for Science Development and the Foundation for Research and Development have now merged to form the National Research Foundation.

In recent years, the former Faculty of Education at the University of Durban-Westville, under the deanship of Jonathan Jansen, has been producing a few dissertations that are noteworthy for their use of mixed genres. The study by Singh (1995) represented early attempts to conduct research without 'safety nets'. Her initial exploratory fieldwork amongst first-year University of Durban-Westville female students, regarding their experiences and aspirations, dictated the design of her larger masters' study. The studies of Samuel (1998) and Dhunpath (1997) on the other hand, whilst demonstrating the ability to draw from literary, artistic and scientific genre also begin to push the boundaries of each of these as well.

Potentially revealing knowledge about critical issues has been either lost or distorted because researchers have failed to reflect on the implications of, for example, their life histories and cultural backgrounds as ideological intrusions in the emotion-laden field of research. It is my concern about these issues that forces me to rethink traditional methodologies, disrupt the familiar or revise them and construct new ones that enable me to see a clearer picture or see the picture differently (Eisner, 1981).

Although I refer to a 'methodology', methodological issues are not the only issues at stake here. I find it extremely difficult to divorce mySelf from the questions, methods, and findings of my research and therefore believe that this 'kinship' not only be disclosed at all stages of the research, where appropriate, but be foregrounded wherever possible. This again signals a departure from the traditional ways in which research has been conducted and reported. I bring to the centre my identity as the researcher rather than subscribing to the idea of a neutral, faceless researcher. I turn into text that which is usually considered the subtext of research. This is a conscious attempt to undo, subvert, disrupt and destabilise mainstream or male-stream thinking, coercing new and different possibilities. Even the style of writing slips between the formal voice of research and the experimental conversational, colloquial, informally punctuated rhythms of everyday speech. Placing myself at the centre of inquiry grounds this research in who I am, it relates the professional to the personal through this engagement.

4.2 Background to the Study

My study grew out of the former Centre for Science Development's Audit of women academics and researchers in the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa. However, my participation in this audit resonated with and brought into focus, a series of issues and concerns that I had personally grappled with during my years as an 'apprentice' in academia. My participation was marked by a deep desire to finally be able to do something constructive about all the research related issues that I had found so troublesome over the years. The Women in Research (WIR) Project as it came to be known, was designed to incorporate a research capacity building element for the participants. A more detailed account of the national Audit can be found in the national report (1999)², as well as in Singh and Vithal (1999). I describe the project and my participation in it in this chapter and present the findings and analysis in the chapter that follows.

I extended the survey data that was generated by the Audit by exploring ways in which a more qualitative understanding of the concerns, practices and experiences of women academics could be attained. I decided to frame these issues from the perspectives of black women academics and researchers for two reasons: the first being a response to the fact that most of the research on women emanate from white women's perspectives and entrenches itself as the 'norm', the second is a response to meet the growing demand for data (statistical and narrative) within the context of demographic profiles, in order that equity and redress initiatives are better informed. I embarked on the next phase of data collection that I refer to as my conversations or dialogue with black women academics and researchers from the University of Durban-Westville, University of Natal and the University of Zululand in the KwaZulu-Natal province. I postulated the expansion of the narrative techniques of data collection by proposing the idea of a dialogue or conversation as data.

I was faced with the task of identifying and defining my sample for further qualitative exploration. Using a range of personal and professional contacts and based on the idea that I should interview one novice researcher and one experienced researcher from each of

² Women-in-Research. Report on the Centre for Science Development Audit of Women Researchers and Academics in the Humanities and Social Sciences. January 1999.

the three universities in the KZN region, I was able to begin the next phase of the fieldwork. My earlier work in the academic field had helped me build up a network of contacts among groups and individuals at the specific institutions in the region. I eventually identified a small number of potential research respondents.

My principal aim during the empirical stage of the study was to build a relatively detailed and vivid picture of how women are situated in research. In particular I wanted to explore how women of colour were faring. I aspired to the kind of detail and insight that are possible through ethnographic research, a form of qualitative fieldwork that blends multiple sources of data, collected over an extended period of time to generate new insights concerning the intricacies of organisational life (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Calderhead & Gates, 1993).

Finally, I reflect upon my own experiences as an academic and woman in research to try to tease out some of the issues and factors that construct such female academic and research trajectories. In this journey I have come to the realisation that my own career experiences - both the pleasant, and the painful - are not unique but mirror those of other women academics. Inevitably, of course, the particular complex combination of personal and professional experiences are unique, but there are parallels and similarities with other women's experiences.

4.2.1 Establishing the Status of the status quo – the Women in Research Project

It was the former Centre for Science Development (CSD), a funding agency now a part of the National Research Foundation (NRF) that supported research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Led mainly by women researchers in its directorate for research capacity development, it was perhaps apt that it launched a new programme aimed at providing research and funding support for women in postgraduate study and research, especially in the historically disadvantaged institutions. Their main concern was the significant under-representation of women in the research and academic community, in part as evidenced in the small numbers of women accessing funding.

A day-long workshop called by the Directorate, entitled Research Capacity Building of the

Centre for Science Development, Human Sciences Research Council, was held at the HSRC offices on 2 April 1996. Twenty-six people, including the Deputy Minister of Arts, Science and Technology, Ms Brigitte Mabandla attended the meeting. The workshop was opened by Prof. Mala Singh, Executive Director of CSD, who outlined the main objective of the meeting: i.e. the CSD initiative to begin to develop a programme to increase the number of women, especially black³ women in the research and academic community in South Africa. This priority of the CSD was confirmed by the Deputy Minister, who presented an overview of the government's agenda for the advancement of representation. The minister expanded on the workings and thinking within government with specific reference to the Transformation Unit, which develops race and gender quotas and oversees the implementation of these quotas. The Deputy Minister stressed the need for all departments to nominate more women for appointments on decision-making structures. She also expressed the urgent need to develop a database of Woman in Science and Technology.

This first national workshop convened with participants from the different higher education institutions was followed by a second provincial workshop in KwaZulu-Natal in September of the same year. Both were intended to give direction and opportunities to women to participate in shaping a programme according to the needs and priorities of women academics and postgraduate students. It was at this second regional workshop led by Sheila Tyeku⁴ held at the University of Durban-Westville that the decision to conduct an audit of women's participation in research was conceived. The key idea was that in undertaking a research project to provide information about women's involvement in research, the process should also simultaneously develop the research skills of the researchers undertaking the research. This was my primary motivation for participating in the study but not the only one. For some of us in the former Faculty of Education at UDW, it clearly meant much more. We grappled with the idea of how it could also serve as a political tool for raising awareness and lobbying management at all levels with hard empirical data about the situation of women in academia and research, as well as bring women researchers together to inform and support one another.

³ The term 'black' was used to refer to women of African, Coloured and Indian origin.

⁴ Sheila Tyeku was Director of the former Centre for Science Development's Research Capacity Development programme.

Whilst I wrestled with the question of who the research participants would include, I was also actuated by moral concerns about the role of the researcher and from where we derive our mandates. This was a study by woman academics and researchers, for women academics and researchers, on women academics and researchers. The politics of participation and representation were some of the early dilemmas we faced. Although the invitation to the September workshop was widely circulated, clearly it did not reach all women academics in the university. My involvement in the first national workshop and our efforts to circulate the invitation to the September workshop in our faculty led to a situation in which all eight staff and postgraduate students from UDW who attended the workshop of the 36 participants, were from the former Faculty of Education.

The partnership between the CSD and the Eastern Seaboard Association of Tertiary Institutions (esATI) secured acceptance and participation institutionally at the senior management levels of the different institutions through its regional structures. While Renuka Vithal⁵ and I were interested to participate in the study, we were concerned about how we had come to be considered the institutional representatives. Our shared concerns with democratic process lead us to question the meaning we give to any notion of democratic practice within research projects. While the evolving structures within the faculty provided the space and opportunity to discuss and legitimate our participation within the faculty, we felt it imperative to seek to have discussions with the view to securing legitimisation at the university level. At this point we initiated contact with another formation also concerned with women in the university, that is the UDW Gender Forum which was pushing for transformation within a much broader set of concerns but focusing more strongly on issues of harassment and abuse rather than on research. The politics of participation is acutely played out in these forums related to woman because of a strong concern with democratic forms of participation and debates about who speaks for whom according to what or whose authority. As a result of our vested interests, we continued to participate in the study while securing support at the institutional level as well as from the very people we were targeting in the research.

We, therefore, also signalled our interest and participation in the study to the managers of research at UDW through the various committees we participated in both formally and

⁵ Renuka Vithal is Programme Co-ordinator of Postgraduate Studies in the School of Educational Studies at the University of Durban-Westville.

informally. The tension that we found ourselves managing arose from the difficult interface in inter-institutional projects. In the legitimisation of participation, we were faced with the dilemma of starting from the bottom-up securing grassroots participation, or securing support at the top and recruiting participation downwards. These have implications for vested interest and ownership of the research and reasons for participation. Legitimisation of our participation was considered an important concern also to facilitate effective data collection. The greater the range of women, who were also expected to be participants in the study, and who accepted and agreed with the reasons for such a study, the better the return rates were likely to be, the stronger our claims and their validity.

The study attempted to be open and drew broad participation from women and this enhanced the quality of the questions that were eventually included in the questionnaire that was constructed. All four universities in the region, the University of Durban-Westville, the University of Zululand and the University of Natal (Durban and Pietermaritzburg campuses) participated, as well as ML Sultan Technikon, Mangosuthu Technikon and Edgewood College of education. While a core group of women stayed with the process from the beginning there was a lack of consistency in participation across institutions and within institutions as the women responded to the varied and multiple demands of the roles, with the result that many of them, including Renuka and I, took this research on over and above our own. We constantly struggled to cope with the rigor and demands that research requires. Ironically, this project was driven mainly by women in the historically black institutions with many of the white women academics showing little or no interest in the early, messy stages of the project. However, once the project was well on its way to being a success we suddenly found the emergence of white women academics and researchers trying to 'lead' the process.

In the former Faculty of Education (UDW), the Research Committee, on which Renuka and I were active members, convened a meeting on the 4th of October 1996, soon after the regional workshop, of all women researchers and academics in the Faculty. At this meeting it was resolved to formulate a women's group that would serve the following functions: to offer and share research support and staff development opportunities especially in the production of research, including feminist research methodology workshops/seminars; participate in the audit; lobby for changes in institutional policy and participate in the faculty and university decision-making structures. The recognition of this structure was

tabled at a faculty meeting and accepted. This was an important breakthrough. At that time there were no women at the level of senior lecturer or higher in the faculty following the resignation of at least three senior women academics in the previous five years from the faculty in the face of perceived marginalisation in the Faculty. These processes were also not unconnected to my involvement in university research structures since 1995 where I have served on the UDW Research Ethics committee and the Inter-Faculty Research Strategic Planning Committee, as executive member and vice-chair from time to time.

In 1997 there began the arduous work of undertaking the audit, designing the research, its instruments and implementing the plan. It was an explicitly articulated concern of the group that women researchers be sought for conducting the research training. A series of workshops led by Vijay Reddy⁶ took place over a year that served the purpose of delineating the scope of the study, clarifying the research question, and developing the questionnaire. This last aspect, that of the construction of a questionnaire by a group of mainly black women who sought to investigate a critical aspect of their lives as researchers and academics with very little research training and experience was arguably the most significant aspect of the entire project. Another feature of the workshops was that they were held at different institutions and therefore co-ordinated by different groups of women. This was a deliberate decision and for many of us it was the first time that we had an opportunity to visit and interact within historically black tertiary institutions. The workshops were typically held over a whole day and often on Saturdays.

The questionnaire which was produced through a collective of 'insiders' to the research process, spanned the broad range of concerns the women brought to the study as indicated by diverse categories that were included. The process involved plenary discussions on the overall framework and structure, and smaller, usually institutionally based group work on different parts of the framework.. These were then collated and integrated into a single document.

In the Faculty of Education, I used the women's research group to conduct focus group discussions as well as to develop those parts of the questionnaire that were our responsibility. In this respect there was not only a sort of cascade training effect but also an

⁶ Vijay Reddy was former Director of the Centre for Educational Research, Evaluation and Policy (Acting), the University of Durban-Westville.

opportunity to critique the instrument and generate further questions that I took back to the regional group workshops. Once the first draft questionnaire was produced, I piloted this version with the women in the former Faculty of Education.

By most accounts this questionnaire was considered a “good instrument” by other survey research experts who were asked to critique and comment on the instrument, so much so that it was adapted and administered nationally by the CSD.

We, the women, who had spent many hours debating and painstakingly developing the questionnaire, were immensely proud of our instrument. We were deeply disappointed when the final questionnaires that were sent to all the institutions in South Africa arrived without our names being acknowledged on the instrument. Although it was a strong affirmation of our effort to have the questionnaire administered nationally it was also the beginning of another tension that remained in the project between the need to manage the project as a whole nationally and the continuation of the process regionally. The question of who owned the questionnaire was continually raised. But also importantly, the workshops that were planned and clearly indicated in the original research capacity building document around data analysis and report writing were scuppered and delayed by more than a year.

Nevertheless, we were committed to the project and developed a plan for administering the questionnaires. Any simple idea of posting the questionnaires on obtaining a list of women academics from the university management were given up when we reviewed the quality of the institutional data on women academics earlier for another part of the study. We were alarmed to realise how inaccurate the university records were. To develop an updated register, we began with the telephone directory, cross-referenced with the university prospectus that lists staff members (without references to gender) and then called the departmental secretaries to confirm names and numbers. This often raised suspicion and required long explanations.

Before giving out the questionnaires at the University of Durban-Westville, we met with each of the Deans in the Faculties of Commerce, Arts, Law, Theology and Education targeted in the study to inform them about the nature and purpose of the study, to obtain their permission for distributing the questionnaire and securing the help of secretaries, but

most important of all their support in calling a meeting of all women researchers and academics in their faculty to be convened by us and the Deans. This process was developed to assist our efforts to maximise returns of a rather long questionnaire, and to some extent meet our ethical concerns and political responsibilities.

We included in each questionnaire the list of women who had participated in producing the questionnaire, a letter explaining the study and an invitation to these meeting where we asked the women to bring their completed questionnaires. The agenda of this meeting was indicated as including a discussion about the context and purpose of the study; information about research groups and networks; their participation in the university and faculty research committees, opportunities for funding and any other matters they deemed important. Through these meetings we interacted with approximately forty women academics in the five faculties. We were struck by many of the women's response to the questionnaire as an empowering experience: "I felt excited that at last something is happening on campus"; "I attended a meeting by [faculty research committee chair] but didn't find it as inspiring as this"; "Just filling in the questionnaire inspired me to try to do something about my situation here" and "I feel excited by the initiative but I am afraid that everything will fizzle out once the audit is over". Another strong issue was about representation on committees and strategies for getting women onto university and faculty committees. Many issues were discussed; around funding, impacting on policy, how to appeal decisions; publications and conference attendance.

We distributed a total of 157 questionnaires to women researchers and academics in 55 departments, units and centres related to the faculties of humanities and social sciences at UDW. By the end of the various faculty meetings we had a 40 percent return rate. We sent one letter to follow-up on our meeting and to appeal for the return of the questionnaires. Of the 1323 responses nation-wide, 74 (50 percent return rate) were from UDW. This made up one quarter of the 304 KZN responses. This figure represented the highest number of responses for the province from the nine institutions that took part in the study and the third highest in the country. It was not surprising therefore that many of the trends and findings made for the national and provincial data sets apply also to the data for UDW.

Finally, it is not unusual to find that research projects generally separate the purposes of a study from the processes engaged in the study on the one hand and from questions of who

conducts the study, on the other. The WIR Project, certainly in its conception for the KZN leg of the study, attempted to integrate these. This is evident in the various documents and letters⁷ that followed from the September 1996 regional workshop where the wide-ranging objectives of the audit included: developing an institutional profile and analysis; and the profile of women academic and researchers so that one could be examined against the other; and an analysis of the factors and processes which affect women researchers.

However, in determining the status of women academics and researchers in faculties of social science, humanities, arts, commerce, law and education, the audit also explicitly sought to encourage and support the participation of women in this and related research activities, and to develop a research process that creates a supportive network of women involved in research.

4.2.2 Conversations with Black Women Academics and Researchers

Using the network that had developed out of the WIR Project, I embarked on the next phase of my study where I extended the survey data that was generated by the audit by exploring ways in which a more qualitative understanding of the concerns, practices and experiences of black women researchers could be attained. I refer to this phase of my data collection as the ‘conversations’ with women academics and researchers of colour from the University of Durban-Westville, the University of Natal and the University of Zululand.

I sought desperately to get behind the statistics, to hear the individual stories of these women academics and researchers of colour. I was conscious of the fact that so few records exist of women’s intellectual past, and that I have constantly criticised existing social theories and research as being androcentric, reflecting only the situation of men, and rendering women of colour in particular, invisible or marginal.

I was faced with the task of identifying and defining my sample for further qualitative exploration. Using a range of personal and professional contacts from my feminist

⁷ Letter from esATI 3 Feb 1997 and 26 May 1997; Research proposal to conduct by Vijay Reddy (1996); document tabled at Faculty of Education Review 4 Oct

engagements, and based on the idea that I should interview one novice researcher and one experienced researcher from each of the three universities in the region, I was able to begin the next phase of the fieldwork. All my feminist work in the academic field had helped me build up a network of contacts among groups and individuals at the specific institutions in the region.

I eventually identified a small number of potential research respondents. In my selection of the experienced women academics I chose only those that had attained their doctorates, were engaged in further research, had lead research projects and were involved in research training. The novice researchers were selected on the basis of having just completed their masters' degrees or were in the process of completing, were not engaged in any further research and were not involved in research training. My principal aim during this stage of the study was to obtain a relatively detailed and vivid picture of how women of colour experienced the world of research. My desire to target black women in the interviews was motivated by my concern that this was indeed a gap in the WIR Project where most of the respondents were white women academics.

The participants were accordingly six black women academics, three of whom were novice researchers, just entering the arena of research, while the other three were more experienced researchers. I tried to include women from the three universities in the KZN region, from varying academic disciplines within the humanities and social sciences.

The three universities in the KZN province have different social histories. The University of Natal being the historically white university that enjoyed the privileges of strong government funding, relatively superb facilities and an excellent research track record. Whilst the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Zululand were established to cater for the apartheid designated people of Indian origin and African origin respectively. They are the historically disadvantaged institutions with little or no research track record and sub-standard facilities due to the discriminatory state funding over the years.

I tried to reconstruct my respondents' experiences, speak about their research trajectories, their own positioning in relation to gender relations in higher education and in the broader social and historical context. Ever conscious of the prevalent paternalistic attitude towards

women in interviewing, I confronted the paradigmatic concern with coding answers and presenting limited, dichotomous choices. Apart from a tendency to be condescending toward women, the traditional interview paradigm does not account for gendered differences (Witheral & Noddings, 1991; Weiland, 1995). As a feminist researcher I have always been concerned with developing ways to circumvent the traditional interviewing paradigm. Like Denzin and Lincoln (1998), I have always felt that interviewing was a masculine paradigm, embedded in a masculine culture and stressing masculine traits, in the process excluding traits such as sensitivity, emotionality and others that are generally accepted as feminine. Gluck & Patai (1991) also highlight the importance of gender in interviewing.

Following in the footsteps of likeminded female researchers (see Reinharz, 1992), I have developed a growing reluctance to continue interviewing women as “objects,” with little or no regard for them as individuals. Whilst this reluctance stems from moral and ethical issue it has serious destabilising implications for research methodology. The researcher, according to traditional techniques, should avoid getting involved in a “real” conversation in which s/he answers questions asked by the respondent or provides personal opinions on the matters discussed. One avoids getting “trapped” by shrugging off the relevance of one’s opinions.

Of course, my own identity as an academic, a researcher and a feminist enabled me to reject these outdated techniques and engage in a ‘real’ conversation with ‘give and take’ and empathic understanding. I found that the use of language and specific terms was important for creating a ‘sharedness of meanings’ in which both interviewer and respondent understand the contextual nature of the interview. In this study I shifted the emphasis to deliberately allow for the development of a closer relation between interviewer and respondent, attempting to minimise status differences and doing away with the traditional hierarchical situation in interviewing. I was not just an interviewer, I was a co-constructor, showing my human side and expressing my own feelings.

This type of empathetic interviewing or dialogue raises methodological concerns because it is a new approach but also one that provides for a greater range of responses and a greater insight into respondents experiences. By attempting to override the hierarchical pitfalls (Reinharz, 1992, p. 22), this style of interviewing as dialogue encourages

respondents to control the sequencing and the language of the interview and also allows them the freedom of open-ended responses (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992; Smith, 1987). Thus: “Women were always... encouraged to ‘digress’ into details of their personal histories and to recount anecdotes of their working lives. Much important information was gathered in this way” (Yeandle, 1984; quoted in Reinharz, 1992, p.25).

I decided to use a semi-structured, conversational approach to the interviews after considering and rejecting structured and unstructured approaches as represented in standard texts. The popular use of precoded interview schedules designed to be followed rigidly, was clearly not appropriate to my research agenda. I wanted to use a method that would enable me to gain deep insights into the women’s experiences. The standard interview procedures would not have been flexible enough to capture the unexpected, to follow up key observations in detail, or to allow opinions and perspectives to emerge freely.

My approach was semi-structured to the extent that it was based on issues identified from the WIR Project research questions, the survey instrument and was enriched and informed by data from previous interviews. In the course of the interviews I used probes to explore in depth and then follow up brief or ambiguous reactions to invitations to comment on aspects of the innovations with queries such as: “Why do you think that?”, “Do you think your colleagues agree?”, “Could you tell me a little more about the experience that leads you to that view?”. I took opportunities to exploit the flexibility of the format and allow issues outside the pre-planned agenda to be discussed. The conversations did not follow a fixed sequence, nor did I rigidly ask questions in exactly the same way. My approach was designed to recognise the concerns raised by respondents as well as to cover the ground previously identified as of interest.

I attempted to establish rapport as quickly as possible and build a relationship of common concern for us as women academics and researchers. I used the stance of an embattled colleague, someone with similar professional concerns and problems as the respondent, as well as that of curious and involved researcher to try to achieve this. Sometimes this worked better than others. Inevitably, factors outside my control influenced the rapport that I could establish. As a result, considerable time was given to develop sensitive, flexible, informed and loosely structured interview procedures.

I tried to create a context that allowed for the development of a closer relation between myself as interviewer and respondent, attempting to minimise status differences and doing away with the traditional hierarchical situation in interviewing. I was not just an interviewer, I was a co-constructor, showing my human side and expressing my own feelings. I believe that this made the interview more honest, morally sound and reliable because it blurred the traditional parameters of the interview situation. It allowed for a greater degree of freedom to express personal feelings and present a more realistic picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview methods. This unstructured conversation - listening to others, without taking notes at times, or trying to direct the conversation is also important to establish rapport and immerse oneself in the situation, while gathering a store of 'tacit knowledge' about the people and the culture being studied. These conversations around the experiences of these women in research provided more depth and greater meaning, enhancing the findings of the survey.

It was much easier to get the women to share their stories with me because they saw me as one of them, one who understood what they were going through, not one who would stand back and judge them. So they did not try to present any facades to me (as has been my experience in other studies I have conducted). My empathetic type of interviewing or dialogue raises methodological concerns because it is a new approach but also one that provides for a greater spectrum of responses and a greater insight into respondents experiences. By attempting to override the hierarchical pitfalls (Reinharz, 1992:22), this style of interviewing as dialogue encourages respondents to control the sequencing and the language of the interview and also allows them the freedom of open-ended responses (Reinharz, 1992).

Whilst this is the positive aspect of the interview situation, the drawback was that the women had disclosed so much at times that they were no longer confident about revealing their identities, as they were at the outset. To address their concerns I allowed them the opportunity to review the transcripts of their conversations to ensure that I had not violated their right to confidentiality in any way.

The interviews spanning a period of six months were audio-taped and supplemented with field-notes. These recordings were transcribed after each interview to provide the basis for

subsequent interview frameworks. The transcripts were then analysed.

In the process of analysis I attempted to group the data according to themes. In this coding, I contemplated deriving concepts inductively from the data, as well as the possibility of applying the data to concepts derived from my own theoretical orientation to establish the existence of these concepts in the data. After transcribing the interviews I represented the data schematically in a conceptually clustered display (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

My dilemma at this point was whether I should present the data as a coherent narrative or whether I should superimpose my analytical voice on the narrative. The latter approach is motivated by a consideration that human experience does not match a carefully crafted congruent story.

Documents of experience can be content analysed; that is, themes, issues, and recurring motifs within them can be isolated, counted, and interpreted. Alternatively, such documents can be read as narratives, or stories, wherein the researcher analyses the narrative, temporal, and dramatic structures of a text, forsaking the rigor of counting, for a close, interpretative reading of the subject matter at hand. I eventually decided, together with the six participants, to present their edited narratives, as a coherent whole. In my discussion of the narratives, I summarise some of key issues and recurring themes that emerged from my engagement with the participants.

4.2.3. One starts with Oneself – autobiography as data.

Although I believe strongly that all research is necessarily biographical, it was not my initial intention to focus on my own experiences as a researcher as part of this study. It was during a supervisory session with my promoter, Jonathan Jansen, that we began exploring the possibilities of turning my lived 'subtext' into 'text', of weaving my own experiences into the study as part of the data. My initial response to his suggestions was that it was too close to me. We had a lengthy discussion about the identity of the researcher and the research problem and meaning the one has for the other. I was not too keen to include the autobiography for reasons I could not disclose at the time. I reminded

Jansen that I still had to work in the institution, faculty and department that I would be reflecting on. I still had to face colleagues that may feel implicated in what I was describing. So this had to be done in a tactful manner and with a great degree of sensitivity to the context and issues I was concerned about. It is for such reasons that some aspects have, of necessity, been left unexcavated. What I do present in the form of autobiography, are selected experiences and moments in my academic and research trajectory.

The autobiographical reflections capture critical moments in my own research trajectory. It is written in a strong narrative style, not attempting any chronology but instead foregrounds the jumps from one critical moment to the next, pulling the threads together within the text from one disruption to the next, adopting a style that consciously depicts the disruptions. It is a highly personalised, revealing practice by which I author and tell my stories about my own lived experience as an academic and researcher. I invite my audience to “relive” the critical moments, traumatic or otherwise, through the specific stories of particular events, sharing in the emotions of joy, frustration, anger and sorrow. To walk in my moccasins is to understand and make sense of my trajectories.

Writing about mySelf relieved me of the problems of speaking for the “Other,” but instead engaged me as the researcher, who is the sample of one, and who is Other. By being the researcher who is other, dispels the dilemma of writing for the other, or appropriating the experiences of the other. It also removes the disparity between researcher and researched (Pinar, 1988; Said, 1994).

I also try to use an autobiographical, confessional, narrative style of writing throughout my dissertation. By constantly interweaving the autobiography, the research process and the personal journey, I tried to constantly challenge the accepted ways of conducting and representing research, destabilising the issues of subjectivity and objectivity, authority and the scientific (Belenky, 1986).

4.3. (un)Doing 'male-stream' research

During my years as an academic, I learnt to pass of as a researcher by internalising the rules and norms that constitute mainstream or “male-stream” research. “Undoing” mainstream research for me has meant having to walk the tightrope between the transformational possibilities offered by my feminist principles and falling into step with the established practice. Argyris (1982) brought considerable attention to this seeming dichotomy when he described the differences between theories-espoused and theories-in-use. The first is comprised of what we think and say about what we do, whereas the latter must be constructed directly from observing our behaviour, from what we actually do. This reflexivity has to be foregrounded as a critical ingredient in any attempt to challenge mainstream research. The development of such challenges requires that we begin to understand ourselves as part of the problem as well as part of the solution. The pressures to legitimating research in conventional ways must be challenged. The feminist gaze that framed the doctoral study forced the reconstitution of seemingly disparate threads such as the use of the survey method together with the conversations with women of colour and the autobiography (Cortazzi, 1993). It also began the process of destabilising ‘representation’ by signalling a shift away from the accepted practices of writing research texts.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter opened the window into the research practices I engaged in as a consequence of my autobiographical, feminist gaze that shaped my attitude and behaviour in the study. I have shown how a feminist questioning of my own research identity and subjectivities lead me to question and begin to challenge the ‘male-stream’ identity of research. This approach initiates an engagement with the dynamics of the autobiographical approach to research as well the ‘autobiography-as-knowledge’ conundrum.

Following Haraway (1991), Lather (1991) and others, I still struggle with the relations between the subject and object, emotions and reason, authority and reflexivity, fact and value. However, the feminist gaze has a long tradition of going against dichotomies and dismissing unproductive myths. Casting a feminist gaze on research can and does provide the impetus to move beyond simply the writing of one’s own history, to becoming

something more formidable. I have shown that the use of an autobiographical, feminist approach goes beyond a simple concern with claiming identity, or celebrating voice. By revealing my personal, feminist engagements, I not only claim identity and celebrate voice, all of which 'male-stream' researchers would dismiss as 'airy-fairy' feminist jargon, but show how it may possibly begin to resolve the age-old feminist dilemma of mainstreaming feminist organising principles.

In the next chapter I present the statistical data, findings and analyses of women's participation in research in the KZN province drawing a comparison with the national trends but also further desegregating the data by the apartheid-designated race groups. I believe it is critical that such an exercise is undertaken in order to begin to chart the position of black women in research as well as develop what is presently a non-existent body of knowledge around the perspectives and experiences of women of colour.

Chapter Five

Academia and Research in South Africa: A 'fairer' Place?

5.1 Introduction

During 1997, the former Centre for Science Development (CSD) of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) conducted a survey of women academics in the humanities and social sciences at South African universities and technikons.¹ The study aimed to establish the position, levels of skills and expertise, and needs of women researchers in the humanities and social sciences in the country. It was intended as a baseline study that would inform policy makers, lobbyists and advocates of institutional transformation.

As a member on the national and regional research teams, I was actively involved at both the regional and national levels in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of this CSD initiative which came to be known as the Women in Research Project (WIRP).

The primary research instrument was a nineteen-page questionnaire developed by a group of novice women researchers and academics, including myself, from institutions forming part of the Eastern Seaboard Association of Tertiary Institutions (esATI).² This survey instrument was later distributed to all women academics and researchers at South African universities and technikons. I have described aspects of my involvement in this project and the implications that it had for my feminist research practice, in Chapter Four.

The findings of the national audit were first reported back to the research community at four regional workshops held during February and March 1998, in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria and Durban. Having been intimately involved in the analysis and findings of the project as a whole, I was requested by the provincial network of women to lead the KwaZulu-Natal provincial analysis and report back.³

¹ By agreement, Edgewood College of Education in KwaZulu-Natal also participated in the exercise.

² See National Report for further details.

³ See National Report

For the purposes of this study, I focus on the resulting data of my primary and secondary analysis of the statistics, establishing the position, skills and expertise, and needs firstly of the women academics and researchers in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, drawing a general comparison between the national findings and the findings for KwaZulu-Natal. Secondly, I disaggregate the data according to the apartheid designated race groups, in order to begin to provide baseline data reflecting the demographics at the provincial and national level on women academics and researchers wherever the data set permitted.

My analysis of the data for the province of KwaZulu-Natal that I subsequently presented at the Women in Research Regional Workshop now forms part of the CSD National Report. In this chapter I present the findings with two objectives in mind. I present a general overview of the provincial findings in comparison with the national findings, and simultaneously examine the data in terms of demographic profile at both the regional and national levels (data set permitting). As I have argued in Chapter Four, the apparent glossing over of the position of black women academics and researchers was one of the critical silences of the national audit. The decision to further disaggregate the data in terms of the apartheid designated race groups wherever possible, should not be construed as an exercise that perpetuates these apartheid classifications but is my response to the urgent need for statistics that map and situate black women especially, in research and academia in South Africa. If we are to take seriously the guidelines set out by the Department of Education that institutions (understood in its widest conception) reflect the demographic composition of broader society, then it is imperative that we conduct research that engages the demographic profile of South African society. Then only will we be able to assess, monitor and achieve a representative profile of women in research in the humanities and social sciences. It also signals my intention to force an engagement with these silences that have served to 'sweep under the carpet' issues that have yet to be settled, such as the subsuming of the impact of the legacy of racial discrimination within the broader category of gender discrimination.

5.2. Profile of Respondents

5.2.1 Responses by Institution

There were 1323 respondents to the CSD questionnaire. As evident from Figure 5.1 below, 83 percent of Women-in-Research respondents are located at universities.

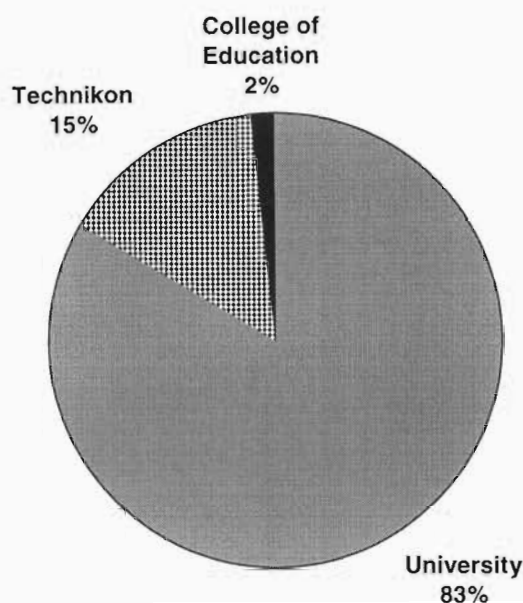


Figure 5.1: Responses by Institution

Table 5.1 shows the breakdown of the 1323 respondents by specific institutions. The institutions are listed in descending order of the number of respondents. The universities generally rank higher than the other institutions. UNISA accounts for twice as many as any other single institution aside from Vista University. The University of Pretoria, the largest institution, accounts for less than half this number. The respondents from historically white institutions (HWIs) made up 48 percent of the returns whilst 28 percent were from historically black universities (HBUs), 13 percent from historically white technikons (HWT) and 9 percent from historically black technikons (HBTs)⁴.

⁴ See National Report for a detailed description of the various institutions and their historical contexts.

Institution	Number	Percent
University of South Africa	148	11.2
Vista University	89	6.7
University of Durban-Westville	74	5.6
University of Witwatersrand	74	5.6
University of Natal (Durban)	69	5.2
University of Pretoria	67	5.1
University of Cape Town	57	4.3
University of the Free State	51	3.9
University of Zululand	51	3.9
Potchefstroom University	41	3.1
University of the Western Cape	40	3.0
Technikon SA	39	2.9
Rand Afrikaans University	28	2.1
Technikon Witwatersrand	27	2.0
University of Port Elizabeth	26	2.0
University of Venda	24	1.8
Technikon Northern Gauteng	23	1.7
University of the North	21	1.6
Cape Technikon	20	1.5
University of the Transkei	18	1.4
University of Fort Hare	17	1.3
Edgewood College of Education	17	1.3
Rhodes University	14	1.1
Technikon North West	11	0.8
Eastern Cape Technikon	11	0.8
Peninsula Technikon	11	0.8
Vaal Triangle Technikon	11	0.8
Border Technikon	6	0.5
Free State Technikon	3	0.2
Total	1323	100

Table 5.1 Responses by Institutions

5.2.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Figure 5.2 reflects the demographic profile, drawing a comparison between the national and regional respondents. For KZN, of the 298 who answered the question, 47 percent were white, 28 percent Indian, 22 percent African and 2 percent Coloured. When this is compared to the national percentages, one will note the high percentage of white women respondents relative to the black women respondents. This is in line with the demographics in higher education and, therefore, does not make it a unique feature to this audit. Whilst three-quarters of the Women-in-Research respondents were white, nearly two-thirds of respondents were located at historically white institutions (HWIs). What is

unique for KZN is that even in HBUs where there are more black women academics, the majority of respondents were white.

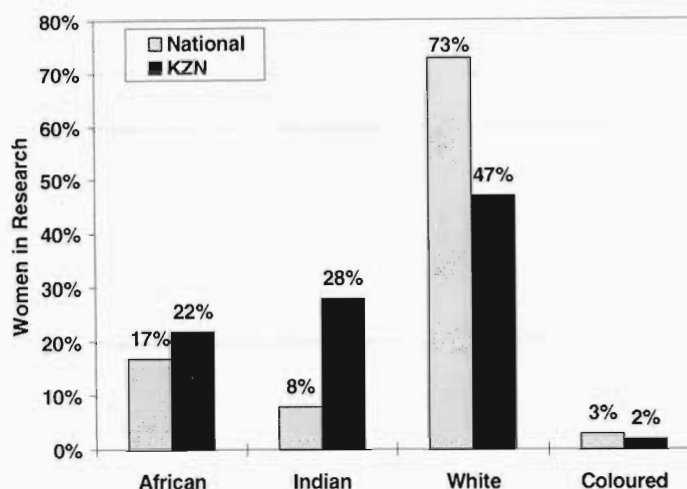


Figure 5.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

5.2.3 Respondents by Institutions (KZN)

Table 5.2 shows that there was a 43.7 percent representation of Women-in-Research respondents in KZN from the University of Natal (the Durban and Pietermaritzburg campuses), followed by 32.7 percent from the University of Durban-Westville and 23.6 percent from the University of Zululand.

When examining the representation by institution across the race groups, the data reflects an apartheid distribution with regards to Women-in-Research respondents in KZN. 84.2 percent of the respondents from the University of Durban-Westville were Indian, 75.6 percent from the University of Zululand were African and almost three-quarters from the University of Natal (both campuses) were white.

Institution	African	Indian	Coloured	White
University of Durban-Westville	8.9 (4)	84.2 (48)	100 (3)	14.3 (16)
University of Natal (Durban)	13.3 (6)	5.3 (3)		51.8 (58)
University of Zululand	75.6 (34)	5.3 (3)		12.5 (14)
University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg)	2.2 (1)	5.3 (3)		21.4 (24)

Table 5.2 Respondents by Institution (KZN)⁵

Data in table 5.3 below shows that despite the recent equity related interventions, the apartheid distribution still prevails at the national and provincial levels.

⁵ Data in all subsequent tables reflect percentages with frequency counts in brackets

At least 82.2 percent of Indian respondents were from KwaZulu-Natal, 59.4 percent of the Coloured respondents were from Western Cape. 20 percent of the Whites are from Gauteng. At least 30 percent of Africans were from Kwazulu-Natal, followed by 18 percent from North and 17 percent from Eastern Cape. There are also a significant number of foreigners across the race groups with 7 percent from the Indian group, 9 percent Coloured, 11.5 percent African and 25 percent from the White group.

Region	African	Indian	Coloured	White
KwaZulu-Natal	30.3 (66)	82.2 (83)	18.8 (6)	14.8 (140)
Western Cape	1.8 (4)	4.0 (4)	59.4 (19)	13.6 (129)
Eastern Cape	17.0 (37)	3.0 (3)	9.4 (3)	8.9 (84)
Free State	1.8 (4)			8.1 (77)
Gauteng	12.4 (27)	1.0 (1)	3.1 (1)	23.1 (219)
North	18.3 (40)	3.0 (3)		1.6 (15)
North-West	6.9 (15)			5.0 (47)
Distance	11.5 (25)	6.9 (7)	9.4 (3)	25.0 (237)

Table 5.3 Respondents by Region

A comparison of the percentages with the information from the annual returns of the institutions confirms the KZN bias in that only 13 percent of all female instruction and research professionals are employed in this province. Gauteng alone accounts for 49 percent of all women employed nationally, the Eastern Cape for 13 percent and Western Cape for 9 percent. Vista University accounts for 6 percent of women professionals employed. This percentage is not assigned to the different provinces.

Overall, the institutions in the KZN region accounted for close on to a quarter of the respondents, constituting 23 percent of the respondents. Gauteng made up 19 percent and the Western Cape 12 percent. Institutions in each of the other provinces accounted for fewer than 10 percent of respondents. There were no respondents at institutions in the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga as there are no higher education institutions in these provinces. The distance institutions made up just over a fifth (21 percent) of the respondents and were mainly from the Gauteng region.

5.2.4 Respondents by Discipline

From the data in Table 5.4 below, it is clear that the majority of respondents were in the discipline of Language and Literature with 21.2 percent in KZN and 15.8 percent

nationally. Education is the next most common discipline with a 13.1 percent representation from KZN as opposed to 8.7 percent nationally. Almost 7 percent are in the Health-related or Psychology fields both nationally and in KZN. Nationally 9.7 percent were in the field of Business Studies as opposed to 1.8 percent in KZN. In the fields of Science and Communication, the representation in KZN is under 1 percent as opposed to at least 3 percent nationally. It is also significant to note that only 0.3 percent of the respondents were located at Research units at their institutions.

Disciplines	National		KZN	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Languages & Literature.	209	15.8	47	21.2
Education	115	8.7	29	13.1
Health-related	91	6.9	16	7.2
Psychology	88	6.7	15	6.8
Social Work	39	3.0	13	5.9
Law	83	6.3	9	4.1
Other	41	3.1	7	3.2
Economics	29	2.2	7	3.2
Sociology	28	2.1	7	3.2
Music	17	1.3	7	3.2
Theology & Religion	16	1.2	7	3.2
Politics & Pub Admin	37	2.8	6	2.7
Support Services	16	1.2	5	2.3
Drama & Theatre	12	0.9	5	2.3
Architecture	11	0.8	5	2.3
Business Studies	128	9.7	4	1.8
Lib & Info Science	36	2.7	4	1.8
Academic Dev.	28	2.1	4	1.8
Maths/Science Education	16	1.2	4	1.8
Geography & Environmental Studies	19	1.4	3	1.4
Philosophy	8	0.6	3	1.4
Science (General)	41	3.1	2	0.9
Visual Art	29	2.2	2	0.9
History	15	1.1	2	0.9
Anthropology	10	0.8	2	0.9
Communication	49	3.7	1	0.5
Computer Science	23	1.7	1	0.5
Home Economics	18	1.4	1	0.5
Libraries	16	1.2	1	0.5
Statistics	10	0.8	1	0.5
Research Units	9	0.7	1	0.5
Economic History	4	0.3	1	0.5
Police Sciences	17	1.3		
Tourism	6	0.5		
Physical education	4	0.3		
Archaeology	2	0.2		

Table 5.4 Respondents by Discipline

As a result of the significant struggles of feminism women have been able to secure access to a wide range of subject areas in the academy but Table 5.4 shows that women are still

highly represented in the traditionally feminine disciplines such as education, languages and literature, and health-related fields. These subject areas have always been associated with being the nurturing and caring disciplines. Acker (1994) demonstrates in her study, how subject divisions have persisted along gendered lines throughout the 1990s. The virtual absence of women from research units is a great cause for concern, as this represents a significant site where knowledge production occurs. These gendered subject divisions serve to sustain and entrench the phallogentric, male-stream culture of the academy.

5.2.5 Rank of Women Academics in South Africa

Women make up a third of South Africa's 10 922 "instruction and research professionals" at universities, and - as in other countries - are markedly underrepresented at the higher levels. Recent statistics from the National Department of Education do, however,

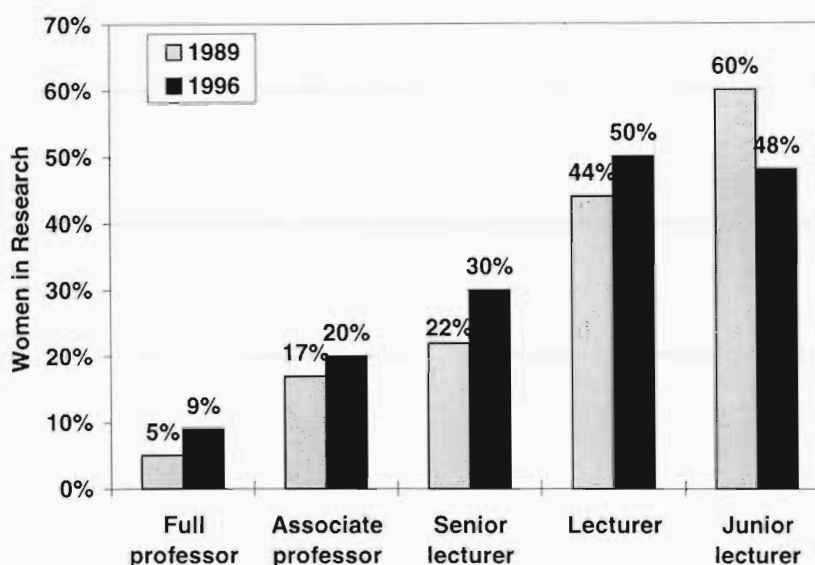


Figure 5.3 Rank of Women Academics in South Africa

indicate movement up the academic ladder, with women constituting a higher proportion of senior academics than in 1989. Figure 5.3 above compares the 1989⁶ and 1996⁷ trends. It is clear that the trends have not changed significantly in any way. Women are still clustered around the lecturer/junior lecturer categories, having made very little impact on the senior levels of rank. It is significant to note that the decision-making, power and authority, is located at the professorial levels. The absence of women from these positions further entrenches and sustains the culture of male dominance in the academy.

⁶ The Department of Education provides breakdowns by race *or* gender, not by race and gender cross-tabulated.

⁷ Figures from NEPI (1992) p. 32. It should be noted that statistics from this period cannot be considered wholly reliable, and generally excluded data from the so-called "independent homelands."

5.2.6. Rank of Respondents by Institution

Rank	UDW Sapse	UNIZUL	UND	KZN	National
Tutor	3 (2)		6 (4)	4 (12)	4 (50)
Junior Lecturer	21 (15)	2 (1)	3 (2)	7 (21)	10 (126)
Lecturer	53 (37)	67 (34)	38 (26)	56 (165)	45 (597)
Senior Lecturer	20 (14)	12 (6)	27 (18)	18 (53)	23 (301)
Associate Prof	1 (1)	4 (2)	6 (4)	3 (8)	6 (74)
Professor	1 (1)	8 (4)	15 (10)	6 (17)	5 (61)
Head of Dept.	6 (4)	6 (3)	10 (7)	8 (24)	7 (91)
Other	3 (2)	6 (3)	9 (6)	8 (24)	7 (99)

Table 5.5 Rank of respondents by Institution

In Table 5.5, it is not surprising that the largest number of respondents were at the lecturer level since SAPSE⁸ figures for December 1996⁹ indicate this to be the level at which women are most strongly represented. 56 percent of KZN respondents and 45 percent of national respondents are at the level of lecturer. The next highest representation is that of Senior Lecturer with 18 percent in KZN and 23 percent nationally.

What is surprising though is the low response rate at UDW from senior women academics at the professorial level. This may be explained in part by an observation made during discussions at the meetings where some women academics, particularly at the professorial level argued that research was not a problem, citing themselves as examples of what can be achieved; and some felt excluded because they did not know about the study. The question here is why did some women take the time and effort to complete the questionnaire and attend the meetings and others not. A complex set of factors appears to encourage or obstruct women to act to change their own situations of research to enable productivity, even when opportunities are provided.

It is significant to note the high percentage of women professors at UND, a historically white institution. UDW has a higher number of women respondents at the junior lecturer level when compared with the same category at the other institutions.

⁸ South African Post Secondary Education

⁹ From Department of Education SAPSE data for 1996. Figures for Wits, RAU, Unisa and Fort Hare are from 1995. No data was available for the universities of the North and North-West.

5.2.7 Rank of Respondents (Black vs White)

Rank	Black		White	
	Number	%	Number	%
Tutor	16	6.4	24	3.4
Junior lecturer	39	15.5	64	9.0
Lecturer	129	51.4	284	39.7
Senior lecturer	41	16.3	200	28.0
Associate professor	6	2.4	60	8.4
Full professor	5	2.0	54	7.6
Head of Dept	11	4.4	45	6.3
Dean	1	.4	3	.4
Other	17	6.8	34	4.8
Non-academic	7	2.8	6	.8

Table 5.6 Rank of Respondents (Black vs White)¹⁰

Three-quarters of respondents from universities were white, with nearly two-thirds of respondents located at historically white universities (HWUs). Overall, 6.1 percent of respondents in the Women-in-Research study were full professors, 6.9 percent associate professors, 24.7 percent senior lecturers, and 42.8 percent lecturers, but there were marked differences between black and white women academics, as illustrated in Table 5.6 above.¹¹ At least half of the black respondents are lecturers as compared to 39.7 percent whites. Only 16.3 percent of black respondents are senior lecturers as opposed to 28 percent of whites. Also, only 4.4 percent of blacks are professors as compared to 16 percent of whites.

5.2.8 Rank of Respondents by race and region

From table 5.7, it is clear that the majority of African and Indian respondents are at the level of lecturer. There is an equal distribution of Coloured lecturers and senior lecturers in KZN. However, nationally there are 67.7 percent Coloured lecturers and about 12.7 percent senior lecturers. Similarly, there is an equal distribution between lecturers and senior lecturers amongst the white population in KZN but nationally the percentage of lecturers is almost twice that at the regional level. The effects of years of racial discrimination clearly account for the situation that exists.

¹⁰ Because multiple responses were possible, totals add up to more than 100%.

¹¹ A handful of respondents gave their race group as "other" or refused to list it.

Rank/ Position	African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat ¹²	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Tutor		4.9 (10)	1.9 (1)	1.1 (1)			3.8 (4)	1.9 (17)
Junior		12.3 (25)	22.2 (12)	17.9 (17)	33.3 (1)	9.7 (3)	2.8 (3)	7.5 (67)
Lecturer	64.3 (27)	56.4 (115)	48.1 (26)	55.8 (53)	33.3 (1)	67.7 (21)	22.6 (47)	41.5 (372)
Senior lect.	16.7 (7)	9.8 (20)	13.0 (7)	12.6 (12)	33.3 (1)	12.9 (4)	22.6 (24)	24.9 (223)
Assoc. prof.	4.8 (2)	1.0 (2)		1.1 (1)		6.5 (2)	4.7 (5)	6.4 (57)
Prof.		0.5 (1)					7.5 (8)	3.9 (35)
HOD		2.0 (4)	1.9 (1)	4.2 (4)		3.2 (1)	1.9 (2)	4.2 (38)
Other	4.8 (2)	8.3 (17)	3.7 (2)	2.1 (2)			2.8 (3)	4.1 (37)
Tutor & Junior			1.9 (1)				0.9 (1)	0.3 (3)
Lecturer & Senior			1.9 (1)	1.1 (1)				0.2 (2)
Lecturer & other	2.4 (1)		1.9 (1)	1.1 (1)				0.2 (2)
Senior & HOD		1.0 (2)	3.7 (2)	1.1 (1)			1.9 (2)	0.6 (5)
Assoc. Prof. & HOD		1.5 (3)		2.1 (2)			0.9 (1)	1.5 (13)
Prof. & HOD	4.8 (2)	0.5 (1)					4.7 (5)	0.6 (5)
Prof. & other	2.4 (1)	1.5 (3)					0.9 (1)	1.5 (13)

Table 5.7 Rank of Respondents by race and region

5.2.9 Years in Rank

Years in Rank	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Less than 1	17.7	15.5	25 (11)	17.7 (38)	26.8 (15)	24 (24)	0	15.6 (5)	10.7 (12)	13.8 (130)
1-3	32.2	34.6	38.6 (17)	48.8 (105)	28.6 (16)	36 (36)	33.3 (1)	37.5 (12)	31.3 (35)	31.9 (301)
4-6	26.1	22.4	6.8 (3)	15.3 (33)	25 (14)	24 (24)	66.7 (2)	25 (8)	33 (37)	24.3 (229)
7-9	13.2	14.6	20.5 (9)	12.1 (26)	10.7 (6)	7.0 (7)	0	18.8 (6)	11.6 (13)	15.7 (148)
10 or more	10.8	12.4	9.1 (4)	6 (13)	8.9 (5)	9 (9)	0	3.1 (1)	13.4 (15)	14.4 (136)

Table 5.8 Years in Rank

Data in table 5.8 shows that the majority of respondents have occupied their current ranks between 1 and 6 years.

¹² National

The trend is similar both nationally and in KZN and across the race groups. In particular, the majority of African respondents and almost half the Indian respondents have occupied their current ranks 3 years or fewer. Amongst the Coloureds almost two thirds have been in their current ranks between 4 and 6 years. More than 55 percent of the white respondents have occupied their current ranks between 1 and 6 years.

5.2.10 Type of Employment

Employment Tenure	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Permanent	755	846	88.4 (38)	85.6 (184)	69.6 (39)	70.7 (70)	66.7 (2)	87.5 (28)	73.6 (81)	85.9 (802)
+2 Years contract	11.3	6.7	7.0 (3)	8.8 (19)	12.5 (7)	9.1 (9)	33.3 (1)	9.4 (3)	11.8 (13)	5.9 (55)
-2 Years contract	8.9	6.5	4.7 (2)	5.6 (12)	12.5 (7)	11.1 (11)		3.1 (1)	9.1 (10)	6.3 (59)
Add hoc	4.3	0.2			5.4 (3)	9.1 (9)			5.5 (6)	1.9 (18)

Table 5.9 Type of Employment

From table 5.9 above, type of employment follows the same trend both nationally and in KZN where the majority of respondents are employed in a permanent capacity. Nationally, at least 80 percent of African, Coloured and whites are employed in a permanent capacity as compared to 70.7 percent of Indians. In KZN, 88.4 percent of Africans are employed in a permanent capacity as opposed to under 75 percent for the other race groups. Also, only Indian and white respondents are employed on an adhoc basis. Nationally, at least 9 percent of Indians are adhoc compared to almost half that number in KZN. Although every attempt was made to capture an accurate a picture as possible concerning part-time staff, the transient nature of their employment made it difficult to achieve a high level of statistical accuracy.

5.2.11 Full-time and Part-time Employment by Race and Region

Table 5.10 shows that overall, the majority of respondents are employed on a full-time basis both nationally and in KZN. This trend prevails across the race groups as well. However, there are almost three times as many respondents from KZN who are employed part-time than at the national level.

Employment Type	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Full-time	82.2	94.1	93.2 (41)	95.3 (204)	94.6 (53)	96.0 (96)	100 (3)	96.9 (31)	91.1 (102)	93.6 (886)
Part-time	17.8	5.9	6.8 (3)	4.7 (10)	5.4 (3)	4.0 (4)		3.1 (1)	8.9 (10)	6.4 (61)

Table 5.10 Full and Part-time Employment by Race and Region

5.2.12 Years in Higher Education

Overall, at least 40% of respondents have been in higher education for at least 10 years. However, as evident in table 5.11, the trend is different across the race groups. More than half of the white respondents have been in higher education 10 years or more both in KZN and nationally. The majority of African respondents have been in Higher Education for at least 7 years as compared to at least 4 years for the majority of Indian respondents. This is significant in terms of the apartheid policies that ensured that even in HBUs, white academics were predominant.

Years in Higher Education	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Less than 1	6	4.9	11.4 (5)	7.9 (17)	12.3 (7)	11 (11)			0.9 (1)	3.8 (36)
1-3	12.9	16.1	18.2 (8)	34.1 (73)	12.3 (7)	18 (18)	33.3 (1)	28.1 (9)	10.7 (12)	11.4 (108)
4-6	18.5	18.1	6.8 (3)	17.3 (37)	26.3 (15)	30 (30)		15.6 (5)	19.6 (22)	17 (161)
7-9	17.5	17.3	31.8 (14)	17.3 (37)	15.8 (9)	14 (14)	33.3 (1)	18.8 (6)	12.5 (14)	17.7 (167)
10 or more	44.9	43.5	31.8 (14)	23.4 (50)	33.3 (19)	27 (27)	33.3 (1)	37.5 (12)	56.3 (63)	50.1 (474)

Table 5.11 Years in Higher Education

5.3 Personal Details

5.3.1 Age Profile

Table 5.12 shows that overall, the majority of respondents were between 26 and 54 years of age, and almost a third of the respondents, in the 35-44 age group. This trend is similar both nationally and in KZN. At least 35 percent of Indian respondents are between 35-44 years and only 14 percent are between 45 and 54. At least 33 percent of African respondents are between 35 and 44 as compared to at least 19 percent between 45 and 54. There is an almost equal distribution with the white respondents with at least 30 percent between 35 and 44 years as well as 30 percent between 45 and 54 years.

Age group	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
25 and under	4.6	4.6	4.4 (2)	6.4 (14)	12.3 (7)	9.9 (10)			0.9 (1)	3.8 (36)
26-34	23.5	25.9	22.2 (10)	28.9 (63)	28.1 (16)	40.6 (41)	66.7 (2)	40.6 (13)	20.5 (23)	23.1 (219)
35-44	35.5	35.6	33.3 (15)	40.4 (88)	45.6 (26)	35.6 (36)		31.3 (10)	32.1 (36)	34.6 (328)
45-54	28.6	26.3	28.9 (13)	19.7 (43)	14.0 (8)	13.9 (14)	33.3 (1)	25.0 (8)	35.7 (40)	29.2 (277)
55-59	5.9	5.2	8.9 (4)	2.8 (6)				3.1 (1)	8.0 (9)	6.4 (61)
60 and over	1.8	2.4	2.2 (1)	1.8 (4)					2.7 (3)	2.8 (27)

Table 5.12 Age profile

5.3.2. Highest Post-degree Qualification

Race group	Honours	Masters	Doctorate
African	19%	31%	14%
Indian	16%	26%	2%
Coloured	50%	17%	17%
White	11%	42%	19%

Table 5.13 Highest Post-degree Qualification (KZN)

Table 5.13 reflects respondents by demographic profile and highest level of qualification in KZN. The figure for the Coloured respondents is skewed because of the low number of returns. The majority of African and Indian respondents have a masters degree with the next level being the honours/honours equivalent qualification. Of the majority of white respondents, 42 percent had a masters degree but is significantly different in that this is followed by a figure of 19 percent at the doctoral level. When compared with the national figures, the masters degree was the most common level of qualification. Over one-third of

the respondents had a masters degree, 18 percent had doctorates and 16 percent had an Honours/ honours equivalent degree. It is also interesting to note that close on to three-quarters (72 percent) of respondents with doctorates and over half (53 percent) of those with masters degrees are employed at HWU's. Only 14 percent of African respondents in KZN have Doctoral qualifications. At least 22 percent of Indians have Professional degrees. At least 10 percent of respondents across all race groups have a Bachelor's degree only. These statistics prove that even in the new democracy, the ravages of apartheid are yet to be redressed significantly. An analysis of these patterns becomes imperative in order to inform transformation initiatives in higher education.

5.3.3 Where Qualifications Obtained

Table 5.14 shows that nationally, almost three-quarters of respondents have obtained qualification from HWUs and only 11.6 percent have obtained their qualifications at HBUs. This is in contrast to KZN where only 46.9 percent have qualified at HWUs and at least a third have qualified at HBUs. It is also significant to note that 8.8 percent of respondents in KZN have obtained qualifications in North Africa as opposed to only 3.3 percent nationally.

Where obtained	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
HBU	33	11.6	53.5 (23)	34.9 (73)	64.3 (36)	45.5 (45)	100 (3)	20.0 (6)	8.1 (9)	2.4 (22)
HWU	46.9	74.3	23.3 (10)	39.2 (82)	21.4 (12)	37.4 (37)		43.3 (13)	71.2 (79)	85.7 (799)
HWT	.05	2.5	2.3 (1)	1.0 (2)		1.0 (1)		10.0 (3)		2.8 (26)
Other African		.8		2.9 (6)						0.4 (4)
Europe	5.6	4.4	2.3 (1)	4.3 (9)	1.8 (1)	1.0 (1)		6.7 (2)	9.0 (10)	4.6 (43)
North America	8.8	3.3	11.6 (5)	9.6 (20)	7.1 (4)	4.0 (4)		10.0 (3)	9.0 (10)	1.8 (17)
Australia/New Zealand	0.5	.02							0.9 (1)	0.2 (2)
Other	3.7	2.8	7.0 (3)	4.3 (9)	5.4 (3)	5.1 (5)		6.7 (2)	1.8 (2)	2.0 (19)

Table 5.14 Where Qualifications Obtained

Further, the distribution in KZN follows the national trend when compared across race groups.

The majority of Whites qualified at HWU's. A significant number of African and Indian respondents qualified at HWU's, at least 20 percent in KZN and 37 percent nationally. At least 10 percent of Africans both nationally and in KZN, have obtained qualifications in North America. This is followed by 7.1 percent Indians and 9 percent whites in KZN.

5.3.4 When Qualification Obtained

Table 5.15 shows that both nationally and in KZN, only a quarter of respondents have qualified between 1981 and 1990 with the majority having qualified after 1990.

This trend is similar across race groups both nationally and in KZN. At least three quarters of African, Indian and Coloured respondents qualified after 1990. In comparison, almost a third of white respondents qualified between 1981 and 1990 followed by at least 46 percent after 1990.

When obtained	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Before 1960	0.5	0.2							0.9 (1)	0.3 (3)
1960-1970	0.5	2.3		0.5 (1)		1.0 (1)			0.9 (1)	2.9 (27)
1971-1980	10.9	7.9	4.8 (2)	4.9 (10)	3.6 (2)	2.0 (2)		3.3 (1)	17.3 (19)	9.1 (84)
1981-1990	26.2	29.4	14.3 (6)	19.0 (39)	20.0 (11)	29.6 (29)		26.7 (8)	34.5 (38)	31.8 (293)
After 1990	61.9	60.2	81.0 (34)	75.6 (155)	76.4 (42)	67.3 (66)	100 (3)	70.0 (21)	46.4 (51)	55.8 (513)

Table 5.15 When Qualification Obtained

5.3.5 Marital Status

Table 5.16 shows that overall, the majority of respondents are married. Although the trend is the same both in KZN and nationally, there is higher percentage of married respondents at the national level. Close on a quarter of the respondents are single.

Marital Status	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Single	28.4	24.7	38.6 (17)	41.7 (90)	29.8 (17)	28.7 (29)	33.3 (1)	21.9 (7)	22.5 (25)	20.4 (193)
Divorced	15.6	14.3	29.5 (13)	19.4 (42)	7 (4)	7.9 (8)	33.3 (1)	15.6 (5)	17.1 (19)	13.8 (130)
Married	55.9	60.9	31.8 (14)	38.9 (84)	63.2 (36)	63.4 (64)	33.3 (1)	62.5 (20)	60.4 (67)	65.7 (620)

Table 5.16 Marital Status

The trend across race groups differs slightly, both nationally and in KZN. Almost a third of the African respondents are either single or married. Almost two thirds of Indian and white respondents are married.

5.3.6 Children (KZN)

From table 5.17, it is clear that almost two-thirds of the respondents have children. However the pattern is slightly different across the race groups, where at least 82 percent of African respondents have children, followed by 60.4 percent white and 56.1 percent of Indians. Only a third of Coloured respondents have children.

Children	Overall	African	Indian	Coloured	White
Yes	63.4	82.2 (37)	56.1 (32)	33.3 (1)	60.4 (67)
No	36.6	17.8 (8)	43.9 (25)	66.7 (2)	39.6 (44)

Table 5.17 Children (KZN)

5.3.7 Number of Dependants

From table 5.18, it is evident that the trend both nationally and in KZN is that at least 40 percent of respondents have either no dependants or between 1 and 2 dependants. The trend across race groups is that at least 45 percent of Whites have no dependants, followed by at least 38.5 percent of Indians and 13.4 percent of African respondents. Almost a third of African respondents have between 3 and 4 dependants.

Years in Rank	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
None	39.8	39.4	19.0 (8)	13.4 (28)	38.5 (20)	44.4 (40)		24.1 (7)	49.1 (52)	45.6 (397)
1-2	39.8	41.5	28.6 (12)	41.1 (86)	44.2 (23)	41.1 (37)	100.0 (1)	65.5 (19)	41.5 (44)	40.9 (356)
3-4	14.9	16.3	26.2 (11)	33 (69)	17.3 (9)	14.4 (13)		10.3 (3)	9.4 (10)	12.6 (110)
5-6	3.5	2.2	16.7 (7)	9.1 (19)						0.9 (8)
6+	1.9	0.6	9.5 (4)	3.3 (7)						

Table 5.18 Number of Dependants

5.4. Current Studies

5.4.1 Intent to Study

From the data in Table 5.19, it is clear that the majority of respondents both nationally and in KZN are not keen on further study. However, this trend is different across the race groups. Almost two thirds of White respondents are not keen on further study. This is in contrast with African respondents where almost two thirds in KZN and 81 percent nationally are intent on further study. Half of the Indian respondents in KZN are intent on further study compared to 68.2 percent nationally. The findings for black women, demonstrates their determination to succeed in the academy. There is the understanding that in order for upward mobility to occur, they would have to study further.

Intent to Study	Overall		Africa		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	40.7	43.7	66.7 (12)	81.0 (68)	50 (12)	68.2 (30)		82.4 (14)	31.4 (22)	34.8 (190)
No	59.3	56.3	33.3 (6)	19.0 (16)	50 (12)	31.8 (14)	100 (1)	17.6 (3)	68.6 (48)	65.2 (356)

Table 5.19 Intent to Study

5.4.2 Degree Registered

Degree	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Doctoral	36.8	30.3	38.1 (8)	15.4 (19)	32.3 (10)	22.2 (12)		12.5 (2)	42.1 (16)	36.0 (130)
Masters	34.8	44.7	38.1 (8)	53.7 (66)	32.3 (10)	42.6 (23)	100 (2)	43.8 (7)	31.6 (12)	39.9 (144)
Honours/B tech	4.3	6.3	9.5 (2)	12.2 (15)	3.2 (1)	1.9 (1)		12.5 (2)	2.6 (1)	4.4 (16)
Professional degree	18.5	13.8	9.5 (2)	8.1 (10)	22.6 (7)	18.5 (10)		18.8 (3)	21.1 (8)	14.1 (51)
Diploma	2.2		4.8 (1)		3.2 (1)					
National Diploma		4.3		7.3 (9)		7.4 (4)		6.3 (1)		2.5 (9)
Teaching Diploma		0.6		0.8 (1)						0.6 (2)
Other	2.2			0.8 (1)	6.5 (2)	3.7 (2)		6.3 (1)		
Bachelor's Degree	1.1			1.6 (2)		3.7 (2)			2.6 (1)	2.5 (9)

Table 5.20 Degree Registered

Data in table 5.20 shows that the majority of respondents are registered for either a Masters or Doctoral degree. Nationally, there is a higher percentage registered for Masters than in KZN. Also, 18.5 percent in KZN are registered for a Professional degree as opposed to 13.8 percent nationally. The distribution is very similar both nationally and in KZN across race groups except that 38.1 percent of African respondents in KZN are registered for a Doctoral degree compared to almost half that percentage nationally.

5.4.3 Institution where Registered

A significant 45 percent of women in the KZN cohort of women were registered for further study in a higher degree or diploma in line with the trend of 42 percent in the national study. 25 percent of respondents were registered at UND, 20 percent at UDW, 14 percent at UNISA, 9 percent at UNIZUL and 4 percent at MLSTECH. In the KZN group just under a third of the women (39 or 29 percent) are engaged in doctoral studies while close onto a half (46 or 34 percent) are enrolled for masters degrees. However what is interesting to observe is that twice the number of respondents from the HBUs in the region – 37 or 28 percent at UDW and 27 or 20 percent at UNIZUL - compared to 16 or 12 percent at UND were registered for further study. This may be read against another statistic that shows that two thirds (27 out of 41) of the respondents in KZN who have their

doctorate qualification were White; 9 or 14 percent were African; and a surprising 2 or 2 percent were Indian. If indeed more women at HBUs are doing further studies, which are also likely requirements for career advancement within a weaker research infrastructure, and generally more difficult teaching conditions that characterise the environment of HBUs, the struggle to become researchers is much more difficult. But this has not deterred the women from registering at an HBU. Of those registered at various institutions around the country for further studies, UDW is second to UND by a relatively small margin of 4 percent. The largest number of women respondents, 34 or 25 percent, are registered at UND; followed by 28 or 21 percent at UDW; third comes UNISA with 19 or 14 percent; fourth UNIZUL with 12 or 9 percent and fifth UNP with 9 or 7 percent of students

5.4.4 Full-time and Part-time Study

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Full-time	9.7	8.8	4.3 (1)	8.8 (11)	9.7 (3)	5.6 (3)		12.5 (2)	13.5 (5)	9.1 (33)
Part-time	90.3	91.2	95.7 (22)	91.2 (114)	90.3 (28)	94.4 (51)	100 (2)	87.5 (14)	86.5 (32)	90.9 (329)

Table 5.21 Full-time and Part-time Study

Overall, at least 90 percent of Women-in-Research respondents are pursuing studies on a part-time basis as evident from table 5.21. At least 90 percent of Indian and African respondents and 87.5 percent of Coloured respondents are pursuing part-time studies. This trend is similar both nationally and in KZN. However, for the White respondents, at least 90 percent at the national level are pursuing part-time studies as compared to 86.5 percent in KZN.

5.4.5 Financing of Studies

Not only are a significant number of women respondents in KZN engaged in further studies (with another 29 percent planning to register), many of them are funding their own studies (see table 5.22). This is also borne out in the national trends where almost three quarters of respondents said they were financing their own studies, at least in part, and 57 percent were receiving some assistance from their institution.



Funder	UDW	UNIZUL	UND	KZN
Self	68 (21)	46 (13)	67 (10)	58 (74)
Own institution	45 (14)	82 (23)	67 (10)	61 (77)
CSD	13 (4)	27 (4)	4 (1)	11 (14)
FRD	7 (2)	4 (1)		3 (4)

Table 5.22 Financing of Studies (KZN)

A surprising inversion between the two HBUs in the region is observed in institutional funding support. Clearly the women in this study are accessing far more support from their institution if they are located at UNIZUL than at UDW. That relatively fewer awards were made to women researchers at UDW can easily be supported with evidence from an analysis of how funds were distributed by the research committee on which Renuka served as a faculty representative. Not only were fewer awards made to women at the time but also much less funding was being accessed by the humanities and social science faculties.

5.4.6 Multiple Supervisors

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	49.4	46.2	40.9 (9)	48.3 (57)	50 (15)	48.0 (24)		46.7 (7)	58.3 (21)	45.2 (171)
No	50.6	53.8	59.1 (13)	51.7 (61)	50 (15)	52.0 (26)	100 (2)	53.3 (8)	41.7 (15)	54.8 (207)

Table 5.23 Multiple Supervisors

Table 5.23 above shows that there is a minor difference between those who answered in the affirmative for this question and those who did not. However, there is a higher percentage of respondents with multiple supervisors in KZN. Nationally, at least 48 percent of African and Indian respondents have multiple supervisors followed by 46.7 percent Coloureds and 45.2 percent Whites. In KZN, 58.3 percent of White respondents have multiple supervisors followed by 50 percent Indian respondents and 40.9 percent of Africans.

5.4.7 Gender of Main Supervisor

Table 5.24 shows that almost two thirds of respondents both nationally and in KZN had male supervisors. Respondents were mainly satisfied with their supervisors. However, across the race groups there is a higher percentage of male supervisors in KZN with 74.3 percent of White respondents having male supervisors.

Gender	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Female	33.3	32.5	45.5 (10)	37.8 (42)	35.7 (10)	36.2 (17)		12.5 (2)	25.7 (9)	31.4 (117)
Male	66.6	67.4	54.5 (12)	62.2 (69)	64.3 (18)	63.8 (30)	100 (2)	87.5 (14)	74.3 (26)	68.6 (256)

Table 5.24 Gender of Main supervisor

5.5. General Research Activities

5.5.1 Non-degree purposes Research activities (NDP)

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	68.9	58.2	63.6 (28)	44.2 (91)	68.5 (37)	54.8 (51)	50.0 (i)	53.3 (16)	71.4 (80)	61.9 (566)
No	31.1	41.8	36.4 (16)	55.8 (115)	31.5 (17)	45.2 (42)	50.0 (1)	46.7 (14)	28.6 (32)	38.1 (349)

Table 5.25 Non-degree purposes Research Activities (NDP)

From table 5.25 above, it is clear that there is higher percentage of respondents involved in NDP research in KZN as opposed to the national level. Almost three-quarters of White respondents and almost two-thirds of Indian and African respondents are currently undertaking NDP research in KZN. This is in contrast with at least 44 percent of Africans, 54.8 percent Indians and 61.9 percent Whites at the national level.

5.5.2 Intent to undertake NDP Research in the next two years

Table 5.26 shows that although the majority of respondents answered in the affirmative, almost three-quarters of KZN respondents intend undertaking research as opposed to 56.6 percent nationally. Nationally, at least three quarters of African respondents intend to undertake research. This trend is followed by Coloureds (61.5 percent) and Indians (59

percent). However, only 50.3 percent of White respondents indicated an intent to undertake research. The trend in KZN is similar where at least 80 percent of African and Indian respondents and at least 68 percent of White respondents intend undertaking research.

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Yes	56.6	76.2	77.5 (79)	85.7 (12)	59.0 (23)	81.3 (13)	61.5 (8)	100 (1)	49.7 (163)	68.8 (22)
No	43.4	23.8	22.5 (23)	14.3 (2)	41.0 (16)	18.8 (3)	38.5 (5)		50.3 (165)	31.3 (10)

Table 5.26 Intent to undertake NDP Research in the next two years

5.5.3 Nature of Current Research Project

The extent to which respondents were involved in individual or collaborative research is very similar for the national and regional figures; i.e. 59 percent in collaborative research nationally and 55.3 percent in the KZN region (See Table 5.27). While the sample size did not permit a complete comparison across institutions, the pattern is similar.

Nature of Research	Overall	African	Indian	Coloured	White
Collaborative	55.3	59.3 (16)	43.9 (18)		61.0 (50)
Individual	44.7	40.7 (11)	56.1 (23)	100 (2)	39.0 (32)

Table 5.27 Nature of Current Research project (KZN)

Table 5.27 shows that across the race groups, at least 59.5 percent of African and 61 percent of White respondents are involved in collaborative research projects. However, this trend is different for Indian respondents where 56.1 percent are involved in individual research projects.

5.5.4 Respondent as Leader of Project

Table 5.28 shows that overall, almost half the respondents in KZN are project leaders as opposed to 51.5 percent at the national level who are not. There is a higher percentage of White respondents as project leaders both nationally and in KZN. Nationally, 53.4 percent of White respondents are project leaders, followed by 36.7 percent African respondents and 26.3 percent Indian respondents. In KZN, the percentage of African respondents as project leaders is almost 20 percent higher than the national figure. The trend is similar for White respondents where the percentage is higher by almost 6 percent. However, Indian

respondents as project leaders are 1 percent fewer in KZN and there are no Coloured respondents as project leaders.

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Yes	48.5	51.9	36.7 (22)	56.3 (9)	26.3 (5)	25.0 (4)	7.7 (1)		53.4 (181)	59.6 (28)
No	51.5	48.1	63.3 (38)	43.8 (7)	73.7 (14)	75.0 (12)	92.3 (12)		46.6 (158)	40.4 (19)

Table 5.28 Respondent as Leader of Project

5.5.5 Leader's Gender

Leader's Gender	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Female	45.9	50	48.6 (17)	66.7 (4)	50.0 (6)	54.5 (6)	50.0 (6)		44.6 (66)	42.1 (8)
Male	54.1	50	51.4 (18)	33.3 (2)	50.0 (6)	45.5 (5)	50.0 (6)		55.4 (82)	57.9 (11)

Table 5.29 Leader's Gender

Table 5.29 shows that overall, there is an equal gender distribution of project leaders in KZN as opposed to a higher percentage of male project leaders at the national level. Nationally, at least 55.4 percent of White respondents have male project leaders. This trend is similar in KZN where the percentage is 57.9 percent. At least 50 percent of African, Indian and Coloured respondents at the national level have male project leaders. However, in KZN, almost two-thirds of African respondents have women project leaders followed by at least 54.5 percent for Indian respondents.

5.5.6 Number of Female Researchers

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
None	13.1	14.3	18.8 (3)	18.3 (11)	11.1 (2)	21.7 (5)		7.7 (1)	12 (6)	13.4 (47)
1	17.8	18.8		10 (6)	27.8 (5)	26.1 (6)		15.4 (2)	20 (10)	20 (70)
2	22.6	25.8	25 (4)	23.3 (14)	11.1 (2)	8.7 (2)		46.2 (6)	26 (13)	26.6 (93)
3	11.9	15.5		16.7 (10)	11.1 (2)	8.7 (2)		23.1 (3)	16 (8)	15.4 (54)
4	13.1	10.3	18.8 (3)	10 (6)	11.1 (2)	8.7 (2)		7.7 (1)	12 (6)	10.6 (37)
5-10	15.5	10.3	31.3 (5)	16.7 (10)	22.2 (4)	21.7 (5)			8 (4)	8.9 (31)
More than 10	5.9	4.9	6.3 (1)	5 (3)	5.6 (1)	4.3 (1)			6 (3)	5.1 (18)

Table 5.30 Number of Female Researchers

From table 5.30, it is clear that the trend is similar both nationally and in KZN, where almost a quarter of the respondents indicated that there are 2 Women researchers per project. The trend is similar across race groups.

5.5.7 Group Involvement

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Institutional	38.9	43	42.2 (19)	29.4 (64)	33.3 (19)	27.7 (28)		31.3 (10)	42.9 (48)	41.7 (395)
Local/Regional	16.3	14.9	15.6 (7)	12.8 (28)	19.3 (11)	16.8 (17)		21.9 (7)	16.1 (18)	12.8 (121)
National	17.2	14.8	13.3 (6)	11.5 (25)	15.8 (9)	13.9 (14)	33.3 (1)	3.1 (1)	18.8 (21)	13.8 (131)
International	14.5	12.2	4.4 (2)	3.7 (8)	10.5 (6)	8.9 (9)	33.3 (1)	6.3 (2)	20.5 (23)	12.9 (122)
Journal Board	13.1	14.9	6.7 (3)	4.1 (9)	5.3 (3)	3 (3)		15.6 (5)	20.5 (23)	16.5 (156)

Table 5.31 Group Involvement

Table 5.31 shows that group involvement follows a similar trend both nationally and in KZN where the majority of group involvement is institutional. At least 40 percent of White respondents (both nationally and in KZN) and at least 40 percent of African respondents in KZN are involved in group research within institutions. Only a third of African respondents are involved in group research at a national level. This trend is followed by a third each of Indian and Coloured respondents at both the national and KZN levels.

5.5.8 Research Productivity

5.5.8.1 Achievements over past 5 years (National vs KZN)

The data in table 5.32 below indicates a similar trend both nationally and in KZN with regards to achievements over the past 5 years. The most common achievements have been national conferences (no paper or sole author), papers in national and international journals (sole author).

Achievements over past five years	National		KZN	
	Valid Cases	Mean	Valid Cases	Mean
Sole SA journal paper	395	3.7	80	3.7
Joint SA journal paper	288	2.5	48	2.3
Sole International journal paper	163	1.9	39	2
Joint International journal paper	117	2.6	22	2.2
Sole book	89	1.7	22	1.7
Joint book	112	2.1	24	2
Sole chapter	188	2.3	39	2.1
Joint chapter	174	2.5	35	2
Sole conference proc	140	2.8	26	2.4
Sole com report	106	2.9	25	2.7
Joint com report	107	2.0	22	3.3
Sole SA conference paper	548	3.6	134	3
Joint SA conference paper	260	3.1	80	2.7
Sole international conference paper	345	2.6	25	2.1
Joint international conference paper	154	2.5	121	3.5
Attend SA conference	673	4.4	37	1.8
Attend international conference	172	1.9	64	4
Attend research network	308	5.1	52	2.6
Lead collaborative project	211	3.2	68	2
International collaborative team	334	2.1	84	1.7
Curriculum development	500	2.2	13	3.3
Other	57	5.5		

Table 5.32 Achievements over past five years (National vs KZN)

5.5.8.2 Achievements over past 5 years by Institution

The national average for the number of sole papers published in SA journals over the previous 5 years is 3,7. There was wide variation across institutions in the KZN region on this measure as reflected in Table 5.33 .

Institution	Mean
University of Durban-Westville	5
University of Natal (Durban)	4
University of Zululand	2
University of Natal (PMB)	3
Mangosuthu Technikon	10
ML Sultan Technikon	2

Table 5.33 Number of sole papers (KZN)

Issues that emerge from this section of the survey include the allocation of time for research by institutions. HWU's are reported as allocating more time and resources to

research. Despite being involved in their own studies the study recorded the involvement of the women at UDW, UND and UNIZUL in 52, 53 and 33 research projects. For UDW and UNIZUL, half of these were individually managed projects and half were collaborative whereas for UND almost two thirds were collaborative. Overall, more women in KZN were involved in collaborative projects (100 or 54 percent) than in individual projects (85 or 46 percent). It was quite surprising that the women who responded from UDW published an average of 5 papers in SA journals, which is higher than even the national average. This is quite a remarkable feat considering the lack of resources and the heavier teaching loads that these women carry.

5.6 Support and Encouragement for Research

5.6.1 Family Encouragement and Support

As evident in tables 5.34 and 5.35, the majority of respondents indicated that they were strongly supported by their families. This trend is similar both nationally and in KZN. In the area of child-care and domestic responsibilities, this appeared to be more of a problem nationally than for the KZN region.

Level of Family Support	Housework support	%	Childcare	%	Emotion	%	Finance	%
Not at all	189	17.2	117	16.4	101	8.7	291	27.3
Fairly	331	30.1	187	26.2	248	21.4	212	19.9
Supportive	292	26.5	212	29.7	329	28.4	271	25.4
Strongly	288	26.2	198	27.7	479	41.4	293	27.5
N/A	233	M	609	M	166	M	256	M

Table 5.34 Level of Family Support (National)

Level of Family Support	Housework support	%	Childcare	%	Emotion	%	Finance	%
Not at all supportive	29	14.9	17	14.2	8	4.0	49	27.2
Fairly supportive	56	28.9	32	26.7	41	20.3	38	21.1
Supportive	49	25.3	34	28.3	68	33.7	40	22.2
Strongly Supportive	60	30.9	37	30.8	85	42.1	53	29.4
N/A	29		103		21		43	

Table 5.35 Level of Family support (KZN)

5.6.2 Encouragement for Research at Institution

5.6.2.1 Encouragement and Support by Head of Department

Against Women-in-Research respondents' perceptions of discrimination, it is worth counter-posing their perceptions of the support they receive for undertaking research. Women were generally positive about the level of support they were receiving, particularly from their heads of department. From table 5.36, at least 30 percent indicated that the support from their HOD is "very good" and at least 40 percent indicated "good" support from their department, faculty, institution, and for the type of research being undertaken.

Encouragement	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very Good
From HOD	11.4%	17.8%	39.9%	30.9%
In Department	13.0%	25.7%	42.7%	18.6%
From Faculty	15.1%	26.2%	42.4%	16.2%
From Institution	12.7%	26.9%	41.9%	18.5%
For type of research	13.3%	25.1%	44.1%	17.6%

Table 5.36 Encouragement for research and Support at Institution

However, there were significant differences between respondents from HBUs and HWUs. Three-quarters of the women at HWUs regarded the support/encouragement they received from their head of department as "good" or "very good", as compared to 64.5 percent at HBUs. Also evident were differences relating to institutional support: 68 percent of women at HWUs indicated that support from their institutions was "good" or "very good" as opposed to under 50 percent of respondents from HBUs.

5.6.2.2 Level of Institutional Support

From the data in tables 5.37 and 5.38 below, the rating at both the national and KZN level is very similar with the exception that there is a higher percentage of respondents in KZN who rate institutional support as "poor" or "very poor" when compared to the National level. When focusing on encouragement from heads of departments, faculties and institutional support, most of the respondents in KZN appeared to receive high levels of support, with the exception of UDW.

Level of Institutional support	HoD	%	Dept Others	%	Faculty	%	Inst	%
Very poor	148	12.8	154	13.2	176	15.4	150	12.8
Poor	209	18.1	307	26.2	304	26.7	305	25.9
Good	468	40.4	505	43.1	480	42.1	500	42.5
Very good	332	28.7	205	17.5	180	15.8	221	18.8
N/A	166	M	152	M	183	M	147	M

Table 5.37 Level of Institutional Support (National)

Level of Institutional support	HoD	%	Dept Others	%	Faculty	%	Inst	%
Very poor	20	10.3	32	15.9	41	21.1	41	20.6
Poor	32	16.5	49	24.4	52	26.8	58	29.1
Good	68	35.1	83	41.3	68	35.1	67	33.7
Very good	74	38.1	37	18.4	33	17.0	33	16.6
N/A	29		22		29		24	

Table 5.38 Level of Institutional Support (KZN)

5.6.3 Perceptions of Discrimination

Nearly sixty percent of the Women-in-Research respondents did not see sexism in their institution as a barrier to their research, while 65.5 percent did not see racism as an obstacle. White women, understandably, were less likely to view racism as an obstacle to their research, but they were also significantly less likely than black respondents to view sexism as a problem. These differences are illustrated in table 5.39 and 5.40. Sexism was also more likely to be perceived as a “problem” or a “major problem” by women between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four than by those from other age groups.

	Black		White	
	Number	%	Number	%
Major Problem	27	13.1%	26	3.9%
Problem	33	16.0%	90	13.6%
Minor Problem	50	24.3%	146	22.0%
Not a problem	96	46.6%	401	60.5%
TOTAL	200	100.0%	663	100.0%

Table 5.39 Perceptions of sexism as an obstacle

	Black		White	
	Number	%	Number	%
Major Problem	20	10.0%	14	2.2%
Problem	37	18.5%	54	8.4%
Minor Problem	56	28.0%	108	16.9%
Not a problem	87	43.5%	464	72.5%
TOTAL	200	100.0%	640	100.0%

Table 5.40 Perceptions of racism as an obstacle

5.6.4 Problems related to Research

Tables 5.41 and 5.42 show that both nationally and in KZN, at least 44 percent of respondents rated time and job commitments as major problems. Family commitments, finance, Research skills and experience as well as Women's roles were factors that contributed to respondent's inability to conduct research.

Factor	Major problem	%	Problem	%	Minor problem	%	Not at all	%	N/A
Time	793	66.7	296	24.9	71	6.0	29	2.4	134
Job Commitments	644	54.4	374	31.6	117	9.9	48	4.1	140
Family Commitments	169	14.7	332	28.8	366	31.7	286	24.8	170
Finance	207	17.9	347	30.0	341	29.5	260	22.5	168
Research experience	138	11.8	290	24.9	402	34.5	335	28.8	158
Research skills	123	10.6	251	21.6	440	37.9	347	29.9	162
Community commitments	55	4.9	160	14.2	381	33.8	530	47.1	197
Sexism at institution	72	6.4	159	14.1	260	23.0	640	56.6	192
Racism at institution	46	4.2	126	11.5	222	20.2	706	64.2	223
Women's roles	237	20.8	327	28.6	253	22.2	325	28.5	181
Young children	168	15.4	165	15.1	147	13.5	612	56.0	231
Lack commitment	36	3.3	110	10.0	286	26.0	669	60.8	222
More teaching than men	126	11.5	144	13.1	193	17.6	635	57.8	225
More administration than men	134	12.2	145	13.2	205	18.7	612	55.8	227
Fewer research opportunities	105	9.7	147	13.5	171	15.7	664	61.1	236

Table 5.41 Problems related to Research (National)

Factor	Major problem	%	Problem	%	Minor problem	%	Not at all	%	N/A
Time	119	59.5	58	29.0	16	8.0	7	3.5	23
Job Commitments	88	44.7	78	39.6	20	10.2	11	5.6	26
Family Commitments	28	14.7	43	22.6	59	31.1	60	31.6	33
Finance	31	16.1	59	30.7	58	30.2	44	22.9	31
Research experience	24	12.0	45	22.5	76	38.0	55	27.5	23
Research skills	19	9.6	42	21.3	75	38.1	61	31.0	26
Community commitments	14	7.4	21	11.2	60	31.9	93	49.5	35
Sexism at institution	10	5.3	37	19.7	48	25.5	93	49.5	35
Racism at institution	8	4.5	27	15.1	38	21.2	106	59.2	44
Women's roles	36	19	59	31.2	43	22.8	51	27.0	34
Young children	25	14.0	24	13.4	22	12.3	108	60.3	44
Lack commitment	5	2.6	20	10.6	47	24.9	117	61.9	34
More teaching than men	26	13.8	20	10.6	37	19.6	106	56.1	34
More administration than men	25	13.5	18	9.7	42	22.7	100	54.1	38
Fewer research opportunities	20	11.0	27	14.9	37	20.4	97	53.6	42

Table 5.42 Problems related to Research (KZN)

5.7 Mentors and Role Models

The Women-in-Research questionnaire asked whether women academics saw themselves as having had mentors and role models during their careers, what positions these mentors/role models occupied, and the gender of the mentors/role models. As no definition of either terms were offered or sought, however, it is not clear to what extent respondents shared a common understanding.

Just under half of respondents indicated that they had a particular mentor. Black and White women reported similar levels of mentoring, but differences were apparent across types of institution. Women at HWUs' (49.4 percent) were slightly more likely than women at HBUs' (43.5 percent) to report having been mentored. Two thirds of mentors were male, and 38.7 percent were (or had been) the respondent's supervisor. The next most common source of mentorship (about a quarter) was the respondent's head of department.

44.9 percent of respondents pointed to a having had a role model. As with mentors, supervisors featured prominently as role model. Head of Department, however, played a lesser role, while colleagues within and outside respondents' department featured more prominently as role models than as mentors. It would seem that while supervisors play an important role as both role models and mentors, in other relationships the mentoring and role modelling functions are more differentiated. Such differences are underscored by the gender of mentors/role models; while only about a third of mentors were women, nearly half of the role models were women.

Finally perceptions of role modelling were divided along racial lines. Black and White women reported similar levels of mentoring, but differed in their perception of role models: Overall, 54 percent of black respondents saw themselves as having had a role model, as opposed to only 41.2 percent of White respondents. The tables below indicate differences across race groups at the national and KZN levels as pertains to role models and mentors.

5.7.1 Mentors

Mentor	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	41.7	44.5	65.0 (26)	47.7 (82)	46.3 (25)	39.6 (36)	33.3 (1)	33.3 (10)	30.8 (33)	44.7 (386)
No	58.3	55.5	35.0 (14)	52.3 (90)	53.7 (29)	60.4 (55)	66.7 (2)	66.7 (20)	69.2 (74)	55.3 (477)

Table 5.43 Mentors

Table 5.43 shows that overall, the trend both nationally and in KZN is that the majority of respondents do not have mentors. This trend is similar across the Coloured, Indian and White race groups where only a third have mentors. However, almost two thirds of African respondents in KZN have mentors as opposed to 47.7 percent nationally.

5.7.2 Position of Mentor

Table 5.44 shows that the majority of respondents indicated that their mentor is also their supervisor with the percentage being higher in KZN. Almost 20 percent have indicated that their mentor is also their HoD.

Position of mentor	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Supervisor	38.8	45	35.5 (27)	42.3 (11)	51.4 (18)	54.2 (13)	30.0 (3)		38.5 (135)	41.4 (12)
HOD	19.1	21.2	19.7 (15)	19.2 (5)	17.1 (6)	16.7 (4)	30.0 (3)		18.8 (66)	27.6 (8)
Colleague (dept)	14.6	12.5	10.5 (8)	7.7 (2)	14.3 (5)	12.5 (3)	10.0 (1)		15.7 (55)	17.2 (5)
Colleague (Inst)	10.4	10	21.1 (16)	30.8 (8)			20.0 (2)		8.8 (31)	
Colleague (other)	14.2	7.5	13.2 (10)		11.4 (4)	12.5 (3)	10.0 (1)	10.0 (1)	14.8 (52)	6.9 (2)
Other	2.9	3.7			5.7 (2)	4.2 (1)			3.4 (12)	6.9 (2)

Table 5.44 Position of Mentor

Further, At least half the Indian respondents both nationally and in KZN indicated that their mentor is also their supervisor. This trend is followed by at least a third of African and White respondents at the national level and at least 40 percent each in KZN. It is significant to note that at least 27 percent of White respondents in KZN indicated that their HOD is their mentor. Also, at least 30 percent of African respondents indicated that their mentor is a colleague from their institution.

5.7.3 Gender of Mentor

Mentor's Gender	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Female	39.2	35.8	53.8 (14)	44.4 (36)	40.0 (10)	41.7 (15)		40.0 (4)	28.1 (9)	33.3 (126)
Male	60.7	64.2	46.2 (12)	55.6 (45)	60.0 (15)	58.3 (21)	100 (1)	60.0 (6)	71.9 (23)	66.7 (252)

Table 5.45 Gender of Mentor

Table 5.45 shows that overall, the majority of mentors are male. However, in KZN almost 40 percent of mentors are female. Across the race groups, almost 60 percent Indian, Coloured and White respondents have male mentors. However, in KZN there is a higher percentage of African respondents who have women mentors. This is significant in that black women who have succeeded in academia generally feel it their duty to 'give back' to their communities, as evidenced in the interviews with the experienced black women academics in KZN. There is this natural tendency to build the capacities of the novice women academics.

5.7.4 Role Models

Data in table 5.46 shows that the majority of respondents at both the national and KZN level indicated that they do not have a role model.

The trend is similar to Coloured and White respondents, where at least two thirds have role models. However, the majority of African respondents at both the national and KZN levels indicated that they do have a role model. Also, at least 53 percent of Indian respondents in KZN do have a role model as opposed to 43.8 percent nationally.

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	43.1	42.4	73.8 (31)	58.3 (105)	53.7 (29)	43.8 (39)	33.3 (1)	33.3 (10)	25.7 (27)	39.2 (332)
No	56.9	57.6	26.2 (11)	41.7 (75)	46.3 (25)	56.2 (50)	66.7 (2)	66.7 (20)	74.3 (78)	60.8 (516)

Table 5.46 Role Models

5.7.5 Gender of Role Model

Role Model's Gender	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Female	54.7	49	46.7 (14)	58.8 (60)	51.7 (15)	56.4 (22)		40.0 (4)	69.2 (18)	45.3 (146)
Male	45.3	51	53.3 (16)	41.2 (42)	48.3 (14)	43.6 (17)	100 (1)	60.0 (6)	30.8 (8)	54.7 (176)

Table 5.47 Gender of Role model

Table 5.47 shows that the majority of respondents have women role models but there is a higher percentage in KZN than nationally. At least 50 percent of Indian respondents both nationally and in KZN have women role models. For African respondents, 58.8 percent at the national level have women role models as opposed to 46.7 percent in KZN. This trend is reversed for White respondents where 69.2 percent in KZN have women role models as opposed to 45.3 percent nationally.

5.7.6 Position of Role Model

Position of role model	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Supervisor	30.5	28.5	29.0 (9)	25.0 (25)	28.6 (8)	28.9 (11)	100.0 (1)	30.0 (3)	31.8 (7)	29.5 (90)
HOD	18.3	18.1	29.0 (9)	27.0 (27)	14.3 (4)	18.4 (7)		10.0 (1)	9.1 (2)	15.4 (47)
Colleague (dept)	17.1	18.5	12.9 (4)	15.0 (15)	21.4 (6)	21.1 (8)		10.0 (1)	18.2 (4)	19.7 (60)
Colleague (inst.)	7.3	8.4	9.7 (3)	11.0 (11)	7.1 (2)	5.3 (2)		10.0 (1)	4.5 (1)	7.9 (24)
Colleague (other)	2.2	21.4	16.1 (5)	17.0 (17)	17.9 (5)	18.4 (7)		30.0 (3)	36.4 (8)	23.0 (70)
Other	4.9	5.1	3.2 (1)	5.0 (5)	10.7 (3)	7.9 (3)		10.0 (1)		4.6 (14)

Table 5.48 Position of Role Model

From table 5.48, almost 30 percent indicated that their role model is also their supervisor. At least 18 percent have indicated that their role model is also their HOD or departmental colleague. Nationally, at least 21 percent have indicated that their role model is a colleague from another institution. The majority of African respondents indicated that the position of their role model was that of supervisor, HOD or a colleague from another institution. The majority of Indian and White respondents indicated that their role model was their supervisor, followed by a colleague from their department or a colleague from another institution. The trends are similar both nationally and in KZN.

5.8 Child-Care and Maternity Leave

5.8.1 Child Care

	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Yes	56	21.1	11.1 (3)	10.9 (15)	69.7 (23)	67.3 (37)	100 (1)	47.8 (11)	69.1 (38)	33.2 (178)
No	44	67.9	88.9 (24)	89.1 (122)	30.3 (10)	32.7 (18)		52.2 (12)	30.9 (17)	66.8 (358)

Table 5.49 Child care

As evident from table 5.49, almost two-thirds of respondents at the national level do not have child care support as opposed to 44 percent in KZN. Only about 11 percent African respondents both nationally and in KZN have child care support. Almost two thirds of Indian respondents have child-care support. 69.1 percent of White respondents in KZN have childcare support as opposed to a third at the national level.

5.8.2 Maternity Leave (KZN vs National)

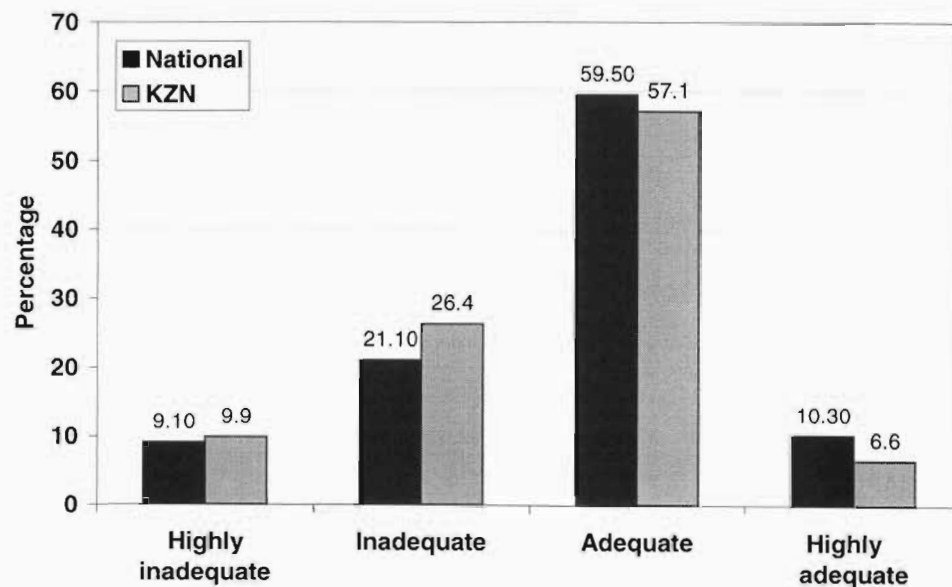


Figure 5.4 Maternity Leave (KZN vs National)

The opinion with regards to maternity leave among KZN respondents compares favourably with the response nationally. Figure 5.4 shows that the majority of the respondents find maternity leave adequate. At least 21 percent indicate that maternity leave is inadequate.

5.8.3 Maternity leave by race and region

Maternity Leave	African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat
Highly inadequate	5.0 (1)	12.8 (15)	7.7 (2)	9.1 (4)		10.0 (2)	14.0 (6)	8.3 (38)
Inadequate	29.2 (7)	28.2 (33)	26.9 (7)	31.8 (14)		20.0 (4)	23.3 (10)	18.3 (84)
Adequate	55.0 (11)	53.8 (63)	65.4 (17)	59.1 (26)	100 (1)	50.0 (10)	51.2 (22)	61.4 (281)
Highly adequate	5.0 (1)	5.1 (6)				20.0 (4)	11.6 (5)	12.0 (55)

Table 5.50 Maternity leave by race and region

Table 5.50 shows that the majority of respondents across the race groups feel that maternity leave is adequate. Almost a third of African and Indian respondents feel that maternity leave is inadequate or highly inadequate.

5.9. Infra-Structure, Service and Information Technology

5.9.1 Access to Computer facilities

Application type	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Office sole	49.7	42.4	58.2 (121)	46.5 (20)	45.4 (44)	44.6 (25)	74.2 (23)	66.7 (2)	79.8 (741)	77.7 (87)
Office shared	5.3	2.5	15.4 (32)	2.3 (1)	6.2 (6)	1.8 (1)	6.5 (2)		6.5 (60)	5.4 (6)
Dept	7.8	10.7	12.5 (26)	18.6 (8)	27.8 (27)	28.6 (16)	3.2 (1)		9.9 (92)	8.9 (10)
On campus	3.6	6.9	7.0 (15)	9.3 (4)	15.5 (15)	21.4 (12)	6.5 (2)	33.3 (1)	3.8 (35)	4.5 (5)
No access	2.3	4.1	12.5 (26)	20.9 (9)	3.1 (3)	5.4 (3)			1.6 (15)	0.9 (1)
Home	30.5	31.6	17.8 (37)	18.6 (8)	50.5 (49)	58.9 (33)	35.5 (11)		50.8 (472)	52.7 (59)
Other	0.7	1.6	1.4 (3)	4.7 (2)	2.1 (2)				0.9 (8)	2.7 (3)

Table 5.51 Access to Computer facilities

Table 5.51 shows that the majority of respondents have access to a sole office computer although nationally this percentage is almost 50 percent as opposed to 42.4 percent in KZN. At least 30 percent have their own computer at home. At the national level, almost 80 percent of White respondents have sole access to a computer at work and at least half have home computers. More than a third of the Coloured respondents have sole access to an office computer and at least a third have a home computer. The trend at the KZN level is similar for White and Coloured respondents. Nationally, 58.2 percent of African

respondents have sole access to their office computer as opposed to 46.5 percent in KZN. Almost 18 percent have a home computer. For the Indian respondents, 45 percent have sole access to an office computer and 28 percent have access to a departmental computer. At least 50 percent have a home computer. This trend is the same both nationally and in KZN.

5.9.2 Computer Facilities

Application type	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
E-mail	23	22.6	61.0 (114)	48.6 (18)	75.0 (72)	76.8 (43)	90.3 (28)	100 (3)	85.4 (785)	90.0 (99)
Word processing	27.3	27.2	93.0 (174)	89.2 (33)	93.8 (90)	94.6 (53)	96.8 (30)	100 (3)	97.0 (891)	97.3 (107)
Database	7.7	6.5	11.8 (22)	5.4 (2)	22.9 (22)	23.2 (13)	16.1 (5)	33.3 (1)	31.0 (285)	28.2 (31)
Spreadsheet	8.8	8.3	22.5 (42)	24.3 (9)	30.2 (29)	30.4 (17)	35.5 (11)	100 (3)	32.6 (300)	28.3 (31)
Presentation	6.4	7.6	9.6 (18)	10.8 (4)	15.6 (15)	30.4 (17)	19.4 (6)	100 (3)	26.3 (242)	28.2 (31)
WWW	14.7	14.3	22.5 (42)	18.9 (7)	56.3 (54)	57.1 (32)	45.2 (14)	66.7 (2)	57.5 (528)	56.4 (62)
Statistics	4.1	5.7	8.6 (16)	13.5 (5)	14.6 (14)	21.4 (12)	16.1 (5)	66.7 (2)	15.8 (145)	20.0 (22)
Qualitative	1.4	2.2	4.8 (9)	8.1 (3)	2.1 (2)	1.8 (1)			5.7 (52)	10.9 (12)
GIS	0.6	0.8	1.6 (3)		1.0 (1)	1.8 (1)			2.4 (22)	4.5 (5)
Graphics	5.1	3.8	10.2 (19)	2.7 (1)	12.5 (12)	10.7 (6)	9.7 (3)	33.3 (1)	20.3 (187)	18.2 (20)
Other	0.6	0.7	3.2 (6)	10.8 (4)	3.1 (3)		3.2 (1)		1.8 (17)	0.9 (1)

Table 5.52 Computer Facilities

Table 5.52 shows that overall, 23 percent of the respondents have access to e-mail, 27 percent to word-processing software and 14 percent to the WWW. This trend is similar nationally and in KZN. However, across race groups, there is lower percentage of African respondents who have access to Email and the WWW.

5.9.3 Availability of Library resources and support

From the data in tables 5.53 and 5.54 below, the majority of respondents at the national level rate the availability of library resources and support as “good” or “very good”. However, almost half the respondents in KZN rate the availability of books and journals as “poor” and about a third also rate inter-library loans, computer searches and staff assistance as “poor”.

Resources	Not available	%	Poor	%	Good	%	Very good	%	N/A
Journals	84	6.8	425	34.3	441	35.6	289	23.3	84
Books	65	5.2	426	34.3	475	38.2	277	22.3	80
Inter-library loans	19	1.6	217	17.8	564	46.4	416	34.2	107
Library staff assistance	23	1.9	228	18.7	508	41.6	462	37.8	102
Computer searches	56	4.7	244	20.4	518	43.4	376	31.5	129

Table 5.53 Availability of Library resources and support (National)

Resources	Not available	%	Poor	%	Good	%	Very good	%	N/A
Journals	17	7.9	103	48.1	81	37.9	13	6.1	9
Books	10	4.7	106	50.0	80	37.7	16	7.5	11
Inter-library loans	2	1.0	59	28.6	106	51.5	39	18.9	17
Library staff assistance	7	3.4	66	31.7	89	42.8	46	22.1	15
Computer searches	17	8.4	60	29.6	97	47.8	29	14.3	20

Table 5.54 Availability of Library resources and support (KZN)

5.10. Attitudes towards Research

5.10.1 Further training required in Research-related skills

An overwhelming 91 percent of KZN respondents answered in the affirmative to this question. Almost three-quarters (74 percent) were very interested in how to obtain funding, 69 percent were very interested in receiving training around producing publications, 58 percent required development of presentation skills. Only 54 percent felt that they required training in the area of data collection.

5.10.2 Reasons for doing Research

Reason	Strongly Disagree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	N/A
Formal Qualification	194	17.8	165	15.1	407	37.3	325	29.8	232
Personal fulfilment	16	1.3	53	4.4	451	37.6	679	56.6	124
Like research	38	3.2	100	8.4	519	43.7	532	44.7	134
Financial gain	231	21.1	329	30.1	386	35.3	147	13.4	230
Publish	36	3.0	104	8.8	496	42.0	546	46.2	141
Promotion	97	8.6	189	16.7	486	42.9	361	31.9	190
Job Security	86	7.4	179	15.5	525	45.4	367	31.7	166
Professional interest	9	0.8	45	3.8	480	40.3	656	55.1	133
Pressure from dep.	249	22.4	411	37.0	326	29.3	125	11.3	212
Pressure from inst.	188	16.8	346	30.9	410	36.6	177	15.8	202
Social interest	122	10.8	258	22.8	510	45.0	243	21.4	190
Community interest	103	9.0	248	21.7	503	44.0	288	25.2	181
Academic status	98	8.5	181	15.8	510	44.4	360	31.3	174
Empowerment	147	12.9	246	21.6	413	36.2	335	29.4	182
Agent of change	73	6.3	161	13.9	430	37.1	495	42.7	164
Produce knowledge	39	3.4	109	9.4	484	41.7	528	45.5	162
Other			2	3.4	7	12.1	49	84.5	1265

Table 5.55 Reasons for doing research (National)

From the data in Table 5.55, it is observed that at least 55 percent undertake research for the personal fulfilment. At least 40 percent either want to publish, like research, view research as an agent of change or feel that research would produce knowledge. Almost a third of the respondents undertake research as part of formal studies, for the purpose of promotion, job security, empowerment or academic status. This trend also prevails at the KZN level as evident from Table 5.56.

Reason	Strongly Disagree	%	Disagree	%	Agree	%	Strongly Agree	%	N/A
Formal Qualification	33	18.3	27	15.0	77	42.8	43	23.9	43
Personal fulfilment	2	1.0	6	2.9	74	35.9	124	60.2	17
Like research	1	0.5	7	3.3	95	45.5	106	50.7	14
Financial gain	34	17.9	59	31.1	75	39.5	22	11.6	33
Publish	1	0.5	11	5.4	75	36.9	116	57.1	20
Promotion	14	7.1	41	20.7	85	42.9	58	29.3	25
Job Security	11	5.5	29	14.5	86	43.0	74	37.0	23
Professional interest	2	1.0	9	4.4	65	31.7	129	62.9	18
Pressure from dep.	48	25.4	71	37.6	51	27.0	19	10.1	34
Pressure from inst.	35	18.4	61	32.1	73	38.4	21	11.1	33
Social interest	13	6.6	29	14.8	104	53.1	50	25.5	27
Community interest	8	4.0	31	15.4	98	48.8	64	31.8	22
Academic status	14	7.0	37	18.5	74	37.0	75	37.5	23
Empowerment	19	9.7	37	18.9	76	38.8	64	32.7	27
Agent of change	9	4.4	16	7.9	76	37.4	102	50.2	20
Produce knowledge	4	2.1	12	6.2	69	35.4	109	55.9	29
Other					3	21.4	11	78.6	209

Table 5.56 Reasons for doing research (KZN)

5.10.3 What could be done to facilitate research (by region)

From the data in Table 5.57 below, at least a third of the respondents indicated that more time is needed to facilitate research. At least 14 percent indicated that more funding and departmental/institutional support would facilitate their research productivity.

Category	National		KZN	
	Responses	% of responses	Responses	% of Responses
Time/workload	393	33.1	75	24.7
Family support	26	1.7	4	1.3
Childcare	5	0.3	1	0.3
Self	57	3.8	17	5.6
Training	108	7.2	20	6.6
Funding	217	14.6	42	13.8
Career	9	0.6	2	0.7
Resources	127	8.5	38	12.5
Dept/Inst. Support	151	10.1	37	12.2
Supervisor	28	1.9	7	2.3
Mentor	54	3.6	18	5.9
Networking	60	4.0	18	5.9
Collaborative Research	36	2.4	7	2.3
Nothing	7	0.5		
Positive	17	1.1	2	0.7
Other	95	6.4	16	5.3

Table 5.57 What could be done to facilitate research

5.10.4 What could be done to facilitate research (by race and region)

Table 5.58 shows that overall and across the race groups, time/workload is a major constraint in conducting research. Funding and departmental/institutional support are other contributing factors.

Almost a fifth of African respondents require training in order to facilitate research. Funding is also a major constraint especially amongst the African respondents. Almost a quarter of Indian respondents indicated more departmental/institutional support and improved resources.

Category	Overall		African		Indian		Coloured		White	
	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN	Nat	KZN
Time/workload	35.5	25.2	35.5 (55)	29.4 (10)	48.0 (36)	54.2 (26)	40.7 (11)	33.3 (1)	63.6 (381)	46.9 (38)
Family support	1.9	1.3	2.6 (4)	2.9 (1)	1.3 (1)				3.5 (21)	3.7 (3)
Childcare	0.4	0.3	0.6 (1)		1.3 (1)	2.1 (1)	3.7 (1)		0.3 (2)	
Self	4.1	5.7	6.5 (10)	5.9 (2)	5.3 (4)	4.2 (2)			7.0 (42)	16.0 (13)
Training	4.4	6.4	22.6 (35)	20.6 (7)	10.7 (8)	10.4 (5)	18.5 (5)		9.3 (56)	8.6 (7)
Funding	15.6	13.7	33.5 (52)	29.4 (10)	17.3 (13)	16.7 (8)	25.9 (7)		23.4 (140)	28.4 (23)
Career	0.7	0.7					3.7 (1)		1.3 (8)	2.5 (2)
Resources	9.2	12.7	15.5 (24)	11.8 (4)	24.0 (18)	33.3 (16)	33.3 (9)	66.7 (2)	12.4 (74)	19.8 (16)
Dept/Inst. support	10.9	11.7	12.9 (20)	11.8 (4)	24.0 (18)	31.3 (15)	11.1 (3)		17.9 (107)	19.8 (16)
Supervisor	1.9	2.3	3.9 (6)	8.8 (3)	2.7 (2)	4.2 (2)	11.1 (3)		2.7 (16)	2.5 (2)
Mentor	3.7	5.7	9.0 (14)	20.6 (7)	2.7 (2)	4.2 (2)	3.7 (1)	33.3 (1)	5.7 (34)	8.6 (7)
Networking	4.3	6.0	5.8 (9)	8.8 (3)	5.3 (4)	6.3 (3)	11.1 (3)		7.2 (43)	14.8 (12)
Collaborative research	2.6	2.3	3.2 (5)	2.9 (1)	6.7 (5)	4.2 (2)	3.7 (1)		4.0 (24)	4.9 (4)
Nothing	0.5		1.3 (2)						0.8 (5)	
Positive	1.1	0.3	0.6 (1)		1.3 (1)	2.1 (1)	3.7 (1)		2.0 (12)	
Other	6.9	5.3	11.0 (17)	8.8 (3)	21.3 (16)	14.6 (7)	7.4 (2)		9.7 (58)	7.4 (6)

Table 5.58 What could be done to facilitate research (by race and region)

5.11. A 'fairer' place -Theorising the Complexities of Academia

As I have already established in earlier chapters, it is highly problematic to generalise about women's position and participation in research and academia, as if it were a coherent and unified whole. The Women-in-Research respondents were from diverse backgrounds, reflecting age, race, parenthood and academic position. However, the general findings show that women are indeed under-represented in the academy with black women in particular, being in a worse position than white women academics.

The picture that emerges from the data shows beyond any doubt that not much has changed since 1993 when Keith Peacock published his findings in: *South African Universities: Race and Gender Factors in Employment Patterns: Race and Gender*. This could be attributed to the low personnel turnover rate, the small number of women applicants for advertised positions, the problems associated with the weak educational system, perceptions about the capabilities of women, especially black women, selections and recruitment procedures, limited upward mobility and lack of career planning and support or better salaried jobs in industry.

Whilst one can identify a number of factors that account for the under-representation of women in academia and research, the critical issues that came through from these statistics could be summarised as the failure of equal opportunities policies to be effectively translated into equal opportunities practice, the lack of role models and an effective process of mentoring for academic women, the failure of the academy to recognise the primary caregiver status of many academic women, the heavier teaching workload carried by academic women, the lower productivity level (defined in terms of research and publications) of academic women, the greater likelihood of academic men holding doctorate degrees, the system of promotion that identifies and defines productivity in terms which disadvantage academic women, the attitude of academic men in positions of power and decision making in the academy (including the old boys network and homosociability) and finally the operation of practices which privileges the white male middle-class academic and the white female academic.

Research productivity and ultimately, upward mobility, is directly related to the issues of teaching loads, administrative duties and resources. The Women-in-Research respondents show clearly that their involvement in a range of additional responsibilities adversely affects their productivity. These responsibilities often tend to detract from the time and energy required for publishing and research, which are the main criteria that institutions use to assess productivity.

This under-representation is a result of the conflation of power, patronage and prejudice that has resulted in the affirming of white, male academics to positions of authority, leadership and control. Whilst the Women-in-Research respondents did not translate this in any systematic way to the issue of sexism and racism, the contradictory findings, as shown

by the data, revealed a significantly low level of awareness of the phallogentric culture of the institutions. Whilst women do express a concern about patronage, prejudice and discriminatory practices, the findings show that there is a failure to link this in any systematic way to the male-stream culture of the academy.

Infused within these attributes, is the legacy of the apartheid policies that promoted recruitment from within, both institutionally and racially. It is evident from the data that despite the new democracy, very little has changed at the level of practice, thus perpetuating the status quo. Educational policies, although reflecting the prevailing ideologies regarding women in general, tend to be closely linked to the needs of the economy rather than issues of equity. Translated in this way, policies serve the dual purpose of masking the phallogentric and patriarchal relations of male-stream culture and capitalist social relations. It is for this reason that women (and men) find it difficult to understand and internalise the institutional and structural causes of women's marginalization in the world of academia. This has contributed to the way in which women construct their subjectivities and how the sphere of research and academia is perceived and experienced by individual women. This generally complicates any attempts to understand the problems that women face as knowledge producers. The struggle ought not to be set up simply as an antagonistic relationship between men and women but rather as one against the deeper, more insidious, institutionalised male-stream/mainstream culture of the academy. Although many advances have been made in the direction of equity and redress, there is considerable concern about how effectively this is being translated into practice. I revisit the broad findings of this audit in the final chapter, with a view to charting a way forward

5.12 Conclusion

The statistics have shown how women are moving to carve out spaces for themselves as academics and researchers and how they try to develop an enabling and productive research culture.

From these statistics, a very clear picture emerges with respect to firstly, how the province of Kwazulu-Natal fares generally in comparison with the national norms and standards and

secondly, what a further disaggregation by race, reveals. An understanding of the racial breakdown of these general statistics conveys rich information essential to policy development, capacity development, affirmative action and equity related initiatives.

The foregrounding of the demographic profile of women as academics and researchers provides an insight into where and how women in the apartheid designated race groups are located and positioned in the humanities and social sciences, working to construct an identity for themselves as credible researchers in an environment that is more often hostile, chilly and lacking in support. Data of this nature has been hitherto sadly lacking.

The specificity of the position of black women academics and researchers is eluded if she is seen as part of a unitary conception of gender. It becomes necessary to distinguish and unravel the specific oppressions before the relations between the various oppressions can be understood and translated into equity and redress related interventions. At present the statistics show clearly that the status quo as regards employment trends in particular are still being reproduced when the emphasis is on gender alone.

The covert, unspoken code which often is not expressed or written down makes women's claims of discrimination against blacks or women all the more difficult to prove. The Peacock Report's emphasis on effect "to identify possible areas of discrimination in the university environment" (Peacock, 1993:7), is problematic in that it is often difficult to distinguish the discrimination from so-called normal, everyday interactions and engagements. It is for this reason that I make a qualitative turn in the next chapter to try to arrive at a deeper understanding of the problems facing women as knowledge producers. I have argued earlier that much of the research produced on women, reflects white women's experiences in the main. I have therefore chosen to present an insight into the problems that women researchers and academics face from the perspective of black women academics and researchers from the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter Six

Breaking The Coloured Silence!

6.1 Introduction

The place of women of colour in research has often been described as a double-bind or double/triple jeopardy, reflecting the multiple conditions of black women in particular. Until recently one could not even chart the progress of women researchers of colour and the purpose of the previous chapter was to partially address that concern. By disaggregating the data to reflect the demographic profile at the national and regional levels, I presented a snapshot not only of women academics and researchers in general, but also reflected on the data in terms of the apartheid designated race groups in South Africa. Although the findings of the Women in Research Audit revealed rich information, black women were subsumed and rendered almost invisible in the broader study.

Having presented the statistical, baseline data, findings and a broad analysis of aspects of the Women in Research (WIR) audit in the previous chapter, I make a qualitative turn to further explore the lived realities of women academics and researchers, translating and unpacking the issues raised by the statistics of the previous chapter through the eyes of black women academics and researchers in KwaZulu-Natal. Seeing that the area of graduate women as researchers has not been investigated in much detail (see Hayes and Flannery, 1997), this chapter begins the process of documenting the everyday research worlds of women academics from the perspective of women of colour through their testimonies.

I have argued in the previous chapter that the picture presented by the WIR audit, although crucial to the empowerment of women in academia and research, is however a slightly distorted one. The incompleteness of this picture is due to the fact that the majority of the respondents were white women academics and researchers, based mainly at historically white institutions. The findings of the Women in Research audit need to be interpreted and understood within this context.

There were also aspects of the findings that did not resonate with the experiences I was having as a black woman researcher. Having worked on many research teams especially

with women of colour, I knew that what I felt about the experiences of women of colour, were echoed by many of them. My concern with these feelings led me to further explore the problem by attempting to foreground the experiences of women academics and researchers of colour in the Kwazulu-Natal region. The value of personal narrative as data has been recognised in a range of areas (LePage and Flowers, 1995; Elbaz-Luwisch, 1997).

In this chapter, I explore the research worlds of six black women academics from the province of KwaZulu-Natal. I share these excerpts from their conversations with their permission. The intent is to place these lived experiences within the institutional contexts of research in the academy. I present the edited transcripts of their testimonies in a manner that tries to maintain a certain degree of flow, creating a sense of their situatedness, as opposed to a content or thematic analysis, which I believe would interrupt the flow and destroy the subtleties and nuances that accompany these stories when they are kept intact. These testimonies are also kept intact to allow for the women's own theorising, analyses and reflections to be infused and become an integral part of their data. By adopting such a stance, I am suggesting that we deconstruct our generally accepted notions of what constitutes theorising. Theorising is not only that which is portrayed within formal languaging systems such as academic jargon. It is also evident and located in the everyday worlds of individuals, portrayed within informal languaging systems such as 'everyday talk'. In their narratives, they intertwine with their experiences, the ways in which they have theorised and made sense of their trajectories. I present the testimonies in a consecutive manner, allowing for a more holistic insight into the research worlds of these women. This is followed by a general analytic summary that theorises some of the more pertinent issues raised by the women's own reflections and analyses. I try as far as possible, not to impose my own 'researcher' interpretation or voice on these testimonies because I believe that the women's own analyses and theorising serves a useful purpose in giving voice to their 'silences'. The summary is also written with the intent of capturing the intertwining, the overlapping, the connections and fusions that constitute women's everyday worlds as academics and researchers.

I do, however, revisit the recurring issues in the final chapter, within a larger framework of charting the way forward for women in academia.

6.2 Coloured Confessions

I present the stories of the six black women academics. Their personal and professional journeys engage with issues of power and their reflections provide interesting and valuable insights into the problems of women of colour in the academy. I draw on the everyday, concrete experiences of these women, revealed through their own testimonies obtained through the interviews and conversations I had with them. Whilst my broad intention is to add to the body of knowledge that has emerged from the traditions of black feminist thought and narrative inquiry, I also try to shed some light generally on the day-to-day lived experiences of women, unpacking the issues of marginalisation and oppression and subordination into its constitutive components of the incidental, the invisible. I try to achieve this by firstly attempting to construct the partial identities and realities of the women of this culturally specific group, individually, from their points of view. Secondly, I examine how the social, political and historical context serves as a dynamic process that simultaneously changes and is changed/shaped by these women's experiences and thirdly, reveal how the interconnected experiences of race, class, gender and other affiliations, interact with and influence the course of each of the women and their development of a research and academic identity.

After I had completed the interviews and transcribed them I became introspective once more. How should I proceed with this phase of the research? I thought of presenting the data in its raw form but this raised ethical concerns for me. I had promised confidentiality. I had promised the women the opportunity to read through their transcripts for comments.

In presenting the findings I was faced with the dilemma of whether the narratives should be presented as is, or repackaged under the specific themes that emerged from the data. My decision to present the narratives in their entirety was based on its successful portrayal by Dhunpath (1997) where he argues for the flow of the narratives to be maintained and not annihilated by splicing them into themes.

The data, presented as a narrative in their own words, reveal the individual identities and experiences of the respondents and establishes linkages between their experiences and the general state of problems concerning women researchers of colour. All elements combine to determine each individual identity and lend insights into the collective identity of

women researchers of colour as a group. The women were placed at the centre of the analysis, participating fully in the interpretative process through the act of confessions and in so doing, defined their own identities, realities and truth.

I returned the transcripts to the women as promised, requesting feedback. They read through them, editing and deleting information that they, in retrospect did not feel comfortable about revealing. All six of them expressed concern that even though names and places had been changed, they could still be identified. I then went through a process of reviewing the transcripts together with each of them allowing them the freedom to withdraw information that they felt would be compromising to their positions in any way. Based on that I present, in this chapter, the edited transcriptions of their narratives. The lack of continuity at some points is due to the editing by the women themselves in order to maintain confidentiality or retractions of some of their earlier statements.

I was not able to create a more comprehensive portraiture as I had initially intended, since the women had decided that it did not in fact conceal their identities but clearly pointed to who they were. What I present here is, therefore, their partial research portraitures.

The following voices tell their own stories and highlight the ways in which the intimate and therefore the very personal nature of the research process impacted on the emotional as well as the professional life of these women.

6.3 I had to wait until I got smarter! Saras – an experienced academic (UDW)

To begin, I just want to be very candid and say to you that I really believe I have wasted my life here at UDW. I look back and wonder where all those years went? All I do now is try to make up for lost time. Part of the problem was my search for my own identity. I was a temporary member of staff for such a long time that I developed pockets of growth and expertise in academia. I was subjugated for such a long time that for many years I accepted it as the norm. I began to eventually believe that I was not a very bright person and that is why I had to wait until I 'got smarter' then doors would open for me. I really bought into that. I was so easily crushed because I had no faith in my own abilities. I became so insecure that the slightest challenge would leave me shattered. I am only

beginning, at this age, would you believe, to find my identity as a researcher and academic. I panic and shudder at the thought of retiring – retire from what? For me this is just the beginning. In many ways I envy you – you still have your whole life ahead of you. You, fortunately, have been surrounded by a critical mass of people that have brought you to the point I am at, in a much shorter period of time.

I saw others come after me and launch into research with success. I was still hung-up on teaching standards and quality assurance. Because of this more and more of my work became administrative. Some of my colleagues teased me about this. They saw teaching as a drudgery and a penalty they had to pay. I enjoyed my teaching but had to do more and more administration. I was appointed acting head from time to time – this meant even more admin and less teaching and research. After several years of admin and teaching and very few publications, I applied for promotion. My teaching was regarded as excellent, the committee noted my administrative contributions but chose to focus on my research track record. Why was your publication track record so dismal? Were you not interested in doing research? You have hardly supervised research? I did not get the promotion.

I tried desperately to study and improve myself but I just never seemed to have enough time to do all the things that needed to be done. My studies were always an uphill battle for me. I used to really feel that there was something wrong with me – everyone else just came in, began their studies and moved on with apparent ease. Mine was never the case. I had problems with my supervisor and things became so tense that I decided to quit. There were so many things that I didn't know about the politics of the research game and academia. I learnt my lesson and since then I have built up a research track record and had publications to my credit – but in my opinion it is too little too late. I ask myself where did those years go? I feel cheated. I was never one to shirk my responsibilities, I always dedicated my life to this institution but was exploited instead. I realise that nobody really cares. They take what they want from you and discard you. Moving up the ladder was never my priority. I always place importance on the quality of my life.

And my family situation was no different. Although I have a kind and loving husband and very supportive children, that is where it stops. I had and still have to constantly deal with the criticism from my own mother and my in-laws and well basically everyone else who

look down their noses at me for what they believe me to be. There were many times when I was called an incompetent mother or neglectful wife because I tried to do the things that gave me fulfilment.

I am very much a human rights person. I have a lot of experience in this. I feel it is important for us to explore and enhance some of the subtle and covert power we hold as academics. At times we have this power to influence decisions. At times what we think are decision-makers are not decision-makers, in essence. Decisions are made elsewhere, either in the consultants reports, or the notes by boards and the much talked about golf course. The other power which we have is the power of numbers. We are there, present, visible and maybe in not so profiled positions. But the power lies in the capacity to claim that space that we occupy such that those in power cannot afford to ignore the gender issues or the gender agenda, or the voice of the women. Yes, agreed, we have to be there also where the decisions are made or endorsed, but lets not underestimate what we can enhance with what we have. We have to continue advocacy, to get more and to improve on what we have. This is the challenge.

I must say that we have to combine the two issues of research and the general problems of women academics. Because they walk hand in hand. For me, all issues are political since it is always male dominated with the rules that have put women in the roles we play today. My role is more of activist, a role I don't find desirable but it is absolutely necessary. I have spoken often at conferences, meetings and basically wherever women gather. We have to place our energies on relevant issues but at the same time become politically involved in order to have our crusade improve. Otherwise, it moves forward at a snail's pace. We have to understand where and who is impeding our issues and organise to overcome the barrier by lobbying and campaigning for the people that support us. But complacency is our main enemy. Life is too good sometimes so it is difficult to inspire women to involve themselves in the political mainstream. Many of us still have a problem ...with our mentality and will only go so far before we condescend to the men.

With more women now in higher education who have climbed the ladder, one would think that we have a more dynamic group aware of women's issues and what battles we are fighting here. But that is not the case. In speaking to some of them over last weekend, none of them knew about any of the issues that are troubling us. I did tell them that they

are partly responsible because they don't keep abreast of what's happening. We desperately need a more informed group of people on campus... and a more active one. Women academics have to effect the team mentality that all young boys grow up with, that carry them through life both academically and career wise. I hope I see the effects of what you are doing with your research. One can only win when one commits to being a team player. Proportional representation has not led to a critical mass of women in power, no. Our female representation was affected quantitatively but not qualitatively, since the women lack a gender perspective.

Being an Indian women in academia has also had its pitfalls. My early years at this institution brought me into direct contact with racism like you would never believe. It scares me to think how normal it was all made to look. How we Indian women academics tried so hard to succeed and in retrospect I believe we inadvertently tried to emulate the white women academics. I certainly had such an inferiority complex that I honestly believed that I had to try to be more like the white women academics. I had no idea about identity politics at the time. I certainly did not realise that I was trying to be something other than my true self. I remember thinking about these issues in terms of role models. I felt ashamed of allowing my Indianess to seep through. It would not be acceptable. Deep down I really did associate my Indian identity with being inferior, unrefined, even uncivilised. Apartheid had succeeded very well in its mission. I know I mentioned earlier that I had published very little in my years here. Yet, ironically I enjoyed writing. But somehow writing for academia and research seemed to me to be separate from the kind of writing that I was engaged in. Now I realise that it was not that I had nothing to say. It was just that I didn't feel that it was worthy of publishing. Who would want to read about my thoughts and feelings on issues? Who would care about my opinions? I almost erased my Indian identity in my bid to be accepted and yes, also respected as an academic and researcher. I understand now about identity, the self and other – I understand now what it means to be at the margins, to be other. I have the courage now to stand up and be proud of who I am, where I come from, my roots. I really must say that it has been some of the strong writings that have emanated from women of colour, third world women, women that have had the courage to stand up and be counted for who they are. Women who have not fallen into the traps of colonialism. Women who challenge the dominant views – they are the shoulders that I stand on. Like I said earlier I did not have the confidence to really stand up for what I believed deep down.

Your comments are quite encouraging Sue, however, I'd like to know what mechanisms exist? Especially to encourage women to participate in research? What support are women given when they try to do research ? Nothing

Our discussions of the past week were very interesting and gave me food for thought. But whose interests are women in positions of power accountable to? This for me is very interesting because women have to address this issue.

6.4 I don't want to be an Oreo! Mandiswa – an experienced academic (UND)

First, I want to thank you for a wonderful job that you are doing. I have followed the discussions and activities of your project and I find it most enlightening and very encouraging.

All I can say is that I had a very difficult time trying to make it or cut it as an academic, let alone in the field of research. It started with a burning desire to make good of my life – to be something more – mainly because of the conditions under which we had to educate ourselves and survive as a Black woman in this country. I came from a very conservative family so that was an uphill battle in itself. My father told me many times that I would not find a man who would want me if I continued to study like this all the time. I must admit that I wanted it all. The marriage, the education, children, a successful career.... I also did not want to go against my culture or what I believed to be my African heritage. It was always a debate going on in my mind – am I doing the right thing? Because I was so steeped in the beliefs by which I was raised. I can be open because you have promised not to mention my details in your study. I wanted always and I still want to be accepted by my people. I don't want to be a misfit –that is putting it kindly – they actually use worse words to describe women like me in my community – but for the sake of your study I will leave it, I won't mention them. I am so conscious that my behaviour, my lifestyle – all are under scrutiny by other black men and women. I try to fit in as best I can – I don't want to be accused of being that American biscuit – Oreo – you know black outside and white inside. I think they are now making it with a further white layer over it so I don't know how significant that is. But sometimes I think that maybe to be a successful black woman academic or researcher I have to try to be like a Oreo. Honestly it just seems less stressful

in an environment dominated by white men and women. It opens the way for me in many instances and many ways. The closer I am to the white women academics, the more I am accepted without question. I know at the back of my mind that I am Black – that I have a different lifestyle, different values from these White women. It worries me because I feel like I have sold out – sold out my identity – sold out my African heritage- turned my back on my brothers and sisters and Mother Africa. I know there are many times when I don't agree with my white female colleagues – there are many times when I see them as simply arrogant – although they would not see it that way. They are so confident about themselves and what they believe that it is so difficult to challenge them on academic grounds – even though deep down inside your gut is telling you that it is different for African women. I go around watching them and think hey they seem as though they were born for this role – it is all so natural to them – it is almost as though they know that their world and the world of academia and research are one and the same.

I even felt this way when I applied for this job. I was so insecure and lacking in confidence. I was quite surprised that I was appointed even though it was a contract. I was fortunate that at the time I was able to take a contract position. And I thought how many women would be in a position to actually accept this contract work with all its uncertainty and insecurity. I know of many women who are academic material but would rather teach in a school because of job security than be a university lecturer without any job security. And the questions they put to me were so unfair, so foreign to me – yet I thought I knew my field. But it was the feeling again of having to answer to a white man, of being spoken to as though I were applying for the job of housemaid. It is moments like this that I feel how much damage apartheid had done to me. It seemed almost automatic – the nature of the relationship, the nature of the interaction – that the moment a black woman was in the presence of white men or white women for that matter – everyone behaved according to some unwritten rules. Maybe I am to blame for allowing this to happen. But it takes a fool not to notice the condescending attitude of many white people in this institution. It's as though nothing has changed – they are never able to speak to you as an equal. Today, I find myself having to fight, argue, be really aggressive if I want to be taken seriously. So because they fear me I am respected – I know it.

I have tried over the years to be a good researcher but I am not too sure what that means. My masters and doctoral work were very important to me not so much for the new

knowledge it produced but for the changes in my status. I think I was more interested in just being a doctor rather than worrying about the intricacies of my research. However, today it is different – I guess the pressure of achieving the doctorate is off – although there are new pressures in the form of publishing papers, leading research projects and so on. My years in postgraduate study were very difficult – there were so many things so many issues but I let them slip by the way because I just wanted that doctorate. There were many obstacles and barriers that I was faced with. The main ones being where to study. I could not just choose a university and automatically get accepted there. It was all the apartheid stupid rules about black people attending black universities, and all that. So it was simply a case of going where the government decided where I could go but there was also the financial side. We were not rolling in money – so it was financially a nightmare for me but I eventually got there.

But even today these unwritten rules apply. There is definitely a club in operation – that includes white women academics! They seem to have access to projects and get seconded to directorships and such things while we poor black academics are sidelined. Just recently there was this project, a national research project and even though it was in my area, my field, I did not know about it. Then I realised that my colleagues were being pulled into this project – all white – and they were going to be paid for their work as well. So it seems that where there is money to be made the whites are still jumping in first or the money is being kept within certain circles where friends refer their friends for certain jobs. And of course they are able to justify their choices and decisions. But it comes back to what we spoke about earlier that who decides and who makes the choices for us – it is still the white people whether they are men or women. I can't understand why they feel that they must play this role of guardian over us.

But I would like to comment on the frustration about the difficulty of establishing a net of research agents. In my masters there was a lot of information but no practical ideas. I have been a union organiser for many years and getting people to participate and make change possible is my main task. I find that having a very clear goal, which women understand and find relevant and can relate to, is very essential. In my case I have adopted the decision to organise. We started by contacting all existing women's groups on the campus and inviting them to participate in research. We tried to decide on specific goals.

I feel we must protest the inefficiency of the management and highlight the fact that we 'invisible' workers are always considered 'disposable' because we are female and that is an outrage and absolutely unacceptable. And being black does not help the situation at all. I thought that in the present situation everything would be done to keep and nurture us black women but that does not seem to be happening. It seems that we don't know how to play the games so to speak. The white women academics are very good at recognising and grasping opportunities – we still are uncertain and lacking in confidence – but this is not just my view – because of the nature of my work I see this colonialism all over. So for me to speak about all women experiencing problems the same way – is very difficult. Certainly, as a Black woman and a representative of black women generally I can say that we are and always have been treated as not even second but third class academics.

I am glad to see that women are achieving positions of power and being effective in those positions. However, whether these women in power are bringing gender issues to the table? It does seem that in general women in power are not bringing gender issues to the table. In fact, when a gender issue arises among their subordinates, they purposefully look the other way or downplay the seriousness.

How can this dynamic be changed? How can women support advancement of promising female subordinates and other females without feeling threatened themselves. I think the institutional structures would or should facilitate this. They need to say what steps need to be taken before there is gender equality in research. But I don't know...what is the government's role in this regard? I am just pondering a few questions. These are really important questions that I think we need to try to find answers to. It is very easy to identify the problems but a lot more difficult to find solutions.

One answer could be the organising of training sessions that only involve women within the institution. For instance, you could organise leadership training for women at the university that integrates gender issues with research and lead to major transformation of the participants. They also leave these sessions feeling bonded to each other. I went through this and can attest to this. This sort of session would get all women thinking alike. This has been the biggest drawback...women have not taken an interest in research and don't understand what it is all about. They are the ones likely to pull others down.

It's true that we women don't stand up for our rights as often as we should. Unfortunately, research is a male dominated area and we wouldn't be accepted if we did. It would just make it harder if the men rebelled against us. Less and less women would get access. It ends up being very tricky. Education is the key. Women have to be educated about their rights, about being equal and deserving a chance. But I am sure things will turn around some day. In fact, I am confident about that. If not, I wouldn't be here talking to you.

In the mean time I feel it is more important to have women in the university. Women who are seen as being just as capable of doing the job. I think that will have a huge impact on attitudes – especially about women's role in society. I am a female lecturer and I hope that my presence in this male dominated field will encourage other women and girls to try it – more especially black women.

We have to show that women are real and important and give recognition of women's contributions in history. Like I said earlier, education is the key. By informing people of women who are successful in research you encourage more and more to try these fields. The more women are recognised for their achievements and skills in research the more they will be accepted in the workplace.

I have found out that having clear milestones and having an idea of what has to be done, makes women start contacting other women, and holding meetings to get funds and so on. In other words establishing a working network. I hope my ideas can be useful to your research.

6.5 Qualitative research actually liberates people! Phumzile – an experienced academic (UNIZUL)

Sue let me just start with my academic training which I did at the University of Zululand between 1970 and 1972 which provided the bare minimum preparation for any person who is supposed to be in research and all we really did was an introduction to research. So when I left the university at the end of 1972, I was very unprepared for research which is a pity because I believe very strongly that as you work you are also doing research, as

you acquire information, planning the programmes, you are busy with research. And this is the skill that is very necessary and important but a skill that has been neglected by the university. After working for about six and half years, I then moved back to the university after being encouraged by a colleague to apply for a position as a lecturer at the University of Zululand. I was very unprepared for the job I was applying for and it is very peculiar that with just an undergraduate degree I was employed as a junior lecturer at that university. Fortunately for me I had an aunt studying at an American university. She wrote to me stating very categorically that I was not university material, that I needed to study more, that at the American universities one didn't teach if one was not a professor. This I suppose channelled my thinking and attitude towards academia. After registering for an Honours degree in 1980, I became very interested in what I was doing. I feel that was my first introduction into research proper. I was expected to write a dissertation and after six and half years of being absent from any kind of academic work, it was really a struggle and I feel very embarrassed with the product that I had at that time. But at the same time also proud that I did it and I can now look back and say confidently now that these are the things that people need to be taught, this is how research training needs to occur for people to succeed in research and academia.

The whole idea of managing a research project and to teach at the same time is daunting. As I said earlier my understanding of research was very minimal. So here I was having to decide on a topic for instance, on what to study and everyone says to you to try and delimit your study. You think of so many issues and they are all important to you and you only have one year to do it in. I started to think about the topic I had chosen for myself. I just couldn't figure out exactly what it was I wanted to study. So I think that's the key issue, trying to help shape the topic and questions that a person would like to study. Whether that subject is worth studying and how you are going to come around and formulate them into a researchable problem, I don't think that we are well vested with an understanding of what a researchable problem is. My second problem was getting guidance from a person who was 'supposed' to be my supervisor. He kind of accepted everything I was bringing to our supervision sessions. I would ask if this was okay and he would say if it's okay with you then it is okay! A colleague of mine who was in education read my analyses and said to me "you've got your tables and you are telling us what the tables are saying but that is not enough because its obvious. For instance if you say 90% or the majority of people are saying this, what does that mean to you?" I did not know how to respond to him. What

sense could I make of this information? So for me these insights came towards the end of the whole year of struggling with my research. At the end of 1980 I was done with that research. I was proud that I had finished it mainly because I had no other reference or anything else to give me the status or credibility that I desired.

It was about 3 or 4 years before I became engaged in research again. In my new job I was not very engaged in research anyway, nobody was making demands on me in terms of research, in terms of studying further, all they wanted was for me to get my teaching done. I suppose my life is punctuated with people who've been kind of umbrellas or support systems to me because a friend kept calling and saying: "are you studying towards your masters" or "what are you doing wasting your life?" and I kept saying, yeah, I'm too busy teaching but I would like to register. I even remember writing to make enquiries but not having the time to follow up. So eventually I didn't register for further studies. Another friend suggested that I go to England for a year and be done. I was interested to go Cape Town, they had a research programme, which was a taught Master's programme and I was very interested in a taught programme. I felt that I needed more guided work in my studies. Fortunately for me the British Council was funding studies in the UK. I wasn't even aware of that until a colleague pointed me in that direction. I then applied and went to study in the UK. Although we had a person who was responsible for research training, looking back now I feel it wasn't really adequate. There was no clear focus on research as such. So I studied all of that but appeared to have been quite disoriented, or I suppose being away from home, having no support that I could count on! It was tough going. I did eventually write a dissertation, a much better dissertation than my last one! But a dissertation which is only a partial fulfilment of a bigger programme is just not the same as writing a fully fledged research masters dissertation. Although that time around I was proud of my work, I still felt that my background was not strong enough. I didn't feel properly grounded in research.

When I returned to South Africa, I started reading more around issues of research. I was actually forced to start reading around the subject because there were such big expectations. Especially being a black woman, having studied abroad and now I had a Master's degree! So I was expected to teach research courses at the university until I left in 1990 to study abroad again but this time I went to the USA. In all of the ten years at UNIZUL, although we did try to get publications and do research, there wasn't any

pressure or accountability associated with those activities. My HOD would ask me how many publications I had or whether I was busy with any type of research just in passing. The main focus was still teaching. That had to come first. And besides that you know the whole story of teaching first years and the load of work that you have and how little time you have for engaging in research. So there was some neglect there that if you are junior, let alone if you were black and female, nobody really cared about the progress you were making.

In the US I had to take more research classes in order to be at the level that they expect one to be at for the PHD level. They expected me to take a summer class. So I joined their Masters programme to update my research whilst at the same time I was taking research classes with my PHD colleagues and a statistics class. The programme expected everybody to take three research classes and three statistics classes. That for me was good preparation. They had good teachers of statistics and research but you know, you hear about teachers who are good, who are excellent, and you are encouraged by others. Teachers, they also advertise. So I heard that there was this very interesting, very good teacher Patti Lather. So I resolved to register with her. She was conducting qualitative research classes in the fall of 1991. Unfortunately I couldn't join the class because it clashed with a required class of mine. I made sure that in winter I joined her class.

I saw the content of her classes. She was doing qualitative research and although I had already taken a qualitative research class, I really wasn't impressed because there were no guidelines that were set out and I believe that if you join any class, even a PHD class, I want to believe that there should be boundaries that are set and that you are given certain readings and that there are expectations either to produce a paper or to do whatever. The lecturer had no guidelines, he gave us few books to read and asked us to evaluate these books. In terms of what? I asked him. He would say, qualitatively and I would say that's not adequate.

So when I looked at the content of the other classes in education, I really felt that this is the class I wanted and students who had gone through her were saying the most wonderful things about her. So I attended her classes and I never turned back.

My department back home didn't encourage qualitative research at all and I suppose because they didn't believe it was research. If for instance the HSRC is saying participatory research is not research, then I'm really worried. There are a lot of people, not just the HSRC, who are very quantitatively oriented, that do not believe that qualitative research is research, let alone when you are moving into participatory research.

After three classes of statistics in the US, I was ready to write a dissertation and used the statistical methods that I was now properly grounded in. But I didn't feel that quantitatively I could do justice to the areas I wanted to do research in. I thought that qualitative methods were very good. I was comfortable that it would not alienate me from the people I was trying to research. I think from that moment I was attracted to qualitative research methods. The way that one worked, the way that one analysed the information and the books that I was reading actually led me to the belief that this is the research method, qualitative research that actually liberates people that you are researching. It was also something that appealed to my feminist leanings. They are not objects to be studied and abandoned. I don't believe in researching people to death or keeping people at that level where they will always be researched and yet not liberating them in order to develop further.

So I took two classes with this woman. The first class was the study of research methods and the second class was studying the analysis of qualitative research. Both of these classes were very interesting for me. I felt relatively confident before I went on to do my comprehensive exams. We had to write our comprehensive exams and later defend orally everything that you've done. At this point I felt comfortable doing that before a panel of about 6 to 7 people including people who were not in my college.

Then came the big test of doing your own dissertation that was really a test in terms of whether it will be acceptable in my own college knowing that they didn't like qualitative research so much. Thankful that there were three or four people who were before me who had attempted to do it and they were accepted. So I felt comfortable even discussing this with my advisor. So I still relied more on Patti for guidance more than my own advisor because as I pointed out he wasn't very versatile with qualitative research and besides in our own classes we had developed what we called not mentors but peers, people who could check your research, check the information that you have and they will help you in

clarifying more your topic or clarifying the data that you have. So I had two wonderful women who supported me and I used them as my peer debriefers in checking the information that I had, who kind of guided the process and when I finished, of course I returned here.

One thing I can say about my programme is how interesting they made research to be. It wasn't a chore anymore. It was something that could be done easily; it was something that was accessible to everybody. It was something that you could do on a daily basis. The Americans are fond of statistics even in sports, even in their everyday life, they are saying this and they like observing basketball. So each time a player was there they would focus on him. They had everything on him from where they have studied, to what his achievements were and so on. That in itself was enough information about the person in that you could write and analyse the information and compare.

So for me when I returned to South Africa, this was so interesting. I started doing research for papers and its unfortunate that some of them are not published. So I began tentatively to do research and write it and I didn't publish it. It was for the consumption of people in conferences. And I just kept it there and then my load of course was different. I found that students were supposed to write a dissertation like how I was expected to write my dissertation. So I kind of reflected on the lack of caring, lack of advice and guidance. I found that students were not able to finish at the end of October as expected because I don't think they had sufficient guidance. Later on I heard that I'd been allocated to supervise all these students. I suggested in the departmental meeting that I would like students to study research while they are busy writing because I didn't believe that they had enough information for them to do individual work and that was accepted. The way that it was structured was the same way as I had studied. For instance, beginning with just a critique of an article, get into the mode of looking at somebody's work from outside instead of being engaged in and absorbed by what this person is writing. Which in itself is okay, but if you are going to write a dissertation you need to be critical of issues and be kind of above the information most of the time.

But as numbers grew I just wasn't able to do all of this alone so I divided the work. My colleagues were quite happy to do that.

But another dimension of the research process entered my life when I had returned to South Africa. I found that there was a group of colleagues who had started what is now known as a research development forum. These were only black members of staff who were unhappy about not getting the attention they desired as black women academics. They were not qualifying for funding for conferences and research because of all the daft regulations that made a mockery of their lives as academics. I'm sure you are quite aware of this, about being published before and published in a recognised journal, that you have an existing project and so on. My colleagues decided to start their own research forum where they could encourage and support each other in the research process, in the writing of articles and so on.

It was not a university initiative but we liaised with different departments and had meetings and really made quite an impact. Our white colleagues wanted to join and we told them that they are already publishing and are competent with the language. If they joined some of the women who were not quite conversant and competent would be made to feel insecure if they compared themselves to the white academics and not develop themselves. It became a very serious issue. We were labelled racists and so on by the white women academics. I tried to explain that it's not about that. It's about black women wanting to feel comfortable first and then competing later, on an equal footing. Relationships of course are terribly unequal and the white women didn't want to believe that. Eventually we had a representative on the Senate research committee meetings. I was the first rep then. So when they sat listening and perusing applications of people saying why this person hasn't fulfilled this or that, I would remind them about why I was there. I was representing a group of black women academics who wanted desperately to be at same level as their white counterparts and given the same opportunities. That worked so well that we now have people who are publishing for the first time. The women were now comfortable enough to present their work. I mean they were wonderful writers just scared of showing people that. Many of them enrolled for Masters degrees because most of the junior members didn't have masters degrees and so two huge workshops have been held and it has become an annual event now. I started last year encouraging black postgraduate students to enrol, have mentors and get published. So we had Honours and Masters students interested as well.

6.6 Not white enough, not black enough! Shakti – a novice academic (UDW)

I didn't think much about research until I got this job here at UDW. I was teaching in a school before this and as you know there is no such thing as research. I didn't have my masters so I was told that if I didn't get my masters I would have a problem. So I started here with the masters programme.

I really enjoyed it very much – I had constant support from others in the group. This masters was so different from what I expected and what I heard from others in other institutions. I never felt alone even in my darkest hours – there was always something that someone would say or someone would just be there for you to encourage you -you know. I don't think I would have completed my studies if it wasn't for the group work, the support from other staff members and students. I say this because I went through terrible times while studying – it's almost a miracle that I finished – I have to pinch myself to believe it.

Some of the problems were family related – others were to do with my health and adjusting to being an academic – everyone around me seemed so together. They all seemed to have a clear direction and purpose – I was struggling with all that. I didn't know what it meant to be a researcher or what it meant to do research. But I knew about what I taught and what inspired me and what I felt strongly about. But I didn't think to relate all of that or see it differently – to see it more creatively. I guess I was stuck very much in a mould that was shaped when I was teaching. You know – where you are treated like a child who has to be told what to do and when to do it and how to do it. There's no scope for independent thinking. I thought all that would change but I still found traces here at the university. Although I was fortunate that my close colleagues were very supportive of my work - others would still relate to me as though I were a child. I didn't like the way I was treated – as though I had to be a certain age before I would understand certain aspects of academia. Fortunately I don't let it worry me that much – but it doesn't mean that I am not hurt by these attitudes or behaviours. I just don't have the time to fight – I am not like you – I can't take it – I can't fight battles all the time – so I choose to sometimes just accept things even though I know it is wrong or even though I know that I don't agree with what is happening.

Like some of the dishonesty and the backstabbing that goes on from time to time – I don't know why people have to behave that way. We can all have such harmonious lives if we just stopped all this nonsense.

I know especially when it came to finding out about what people were doing – everyone just gets so secretive and try to be evasive and hide what they are doing. I really don't understand this kind of behaviour - I am so open about everything – I am so trusting about everything. I know you even told me not to be so trusting in this place that people do get hurt. But it is going against my nature to try to become like others. I would like us especially us women to be able to work together but it doesn't always happen. We get a few people like yourself that feel strongly about empowering women and try to do something about it but not others. I think its great what you – sue have achieved with all your work with the rural women and the work with the women researchers – if only more women or even men – cared a little more then it would be a lot easier to be an academic and a researcher.

But I think the climate is changing. I am so positive about all the new appointments at the university. I think if we are serious we can really turn things around. I know its been so bad here in the past that to talk about women's concerns about research is almost like a joke. But I know how serious it is when I see how it ultimately affects us as women. I see how we are stuck in this place because of the very issues about research and publishing and so on. But I would like to see a more directed attempt to help women at this campus. I think if we had someone just to see to the women's issues on campus then we would make headway. I know you asking about the Women's Forum but they have a different focus – they also need to see that they have a role to play in monitoring and assisting women with research related problems.

Why the present research structures can't do this? I think its too general – they speak about redress and equity but it is all on paper. What have they done here to monitor the position of women in research? What have they done to specifically help women researchers? I know that some of the problems are similar to men as well – but I really feel that women have to be singled out – they have to receive special attention. Like the CSD did in their restructuring – how they set up a special division to help women researchers – I just feel that a similar approach should be adopted by our university.

Maybe a special appointment – a special post – given to a women to help other women researchers. Maybe even someone like you sue, who is so committed – you could provide the leadership and try to really identify women – categorise them in terms of their research needs and then try to support them in all ways possible. You would be a kind of mentor but to all women on this campus. They would know that if they had a problem in research but that it was also related to maybe other issues of harassment or discrimination then they have you to take up the issues for them. Maybe this could happen within the Women's Forum or it could happen within the research division. I don't really know how it might be structured but I know it will work. But it must also have links with all faculties so that there is constant feedback and awareness raising and monitoring. I think besides helping the women, it will also serve to make sure that the men – who are usually the ones in managerial positions – that they understand their own behaviours and learn and change their ways of perceiving women researchers.

But coming back to my masters research, I wish I knew then what I know now. I was so naïve about a lot of things. Like how to apply for research funds – I didn't even know that I could in the first place – I didn't know where to apply, who were the funding agents, how much they were prepared to give me. I later realised that I had to draw up a budget. I wasn't sure how much to ask for and why. I didn't know that I couldn't ask for a computer because this was for degree purposes, I didn't know that I could ask for money for transport and subsistence and running costs and all those sorts of things. Now if there was a workshop or someone who was assigned to all the postgraduate students precisely to assist them with these problems then it would have been easier. In fact I realise now that I could have got more money than what I asked for. And some of the other students were so spiteful they didn't even tell me that they had applied for this or that or the other. But is like a game – you have to know the rules. Once you know the rules then it is easy. But the men here who seem to know the rules tend to keep it to themselves. It's the old boys club mentality. I know even when there is a conference somewhere they wont tell you about it. But I learnt now not to worry about all that. But what does worry me is all these newcomers that have been appointed to this campus. Life is made so easy for them while we are ignored. Its almost like I am the lost generation of researchers. I don't think it's very fair to completely ignore those who were here for some time now. I mean if I look at my office, I don't have a computer for a start. I tried to bring my own but then with all these break-ins I changed my mind. I try to make do with what I have. I heard that all the

new members of staff qualify for a special fund for computers or something like that – I am not too sure how it works – but nobody asked me?

I also have to go to the computer room to use the internet, yet the secretaries and some others have it in their offices but we are not allowed to use it. I just wish that people would change their working habits. Things don't belong to individuals in this place its for all of us. So why do people behave as though they bought the things.

I also had to share a line for a while but it is so frustrating to have to phone the secretaries for outside lines – it just makes it that much harder to get anything done smoothly.

When I compare my development as a researcher with especially the white academics across the hill at UND, I really feel disgusted with myself....yet I know that I shouldn't . Its not entirely my own fault that I have such a long way to go to establish a research record or a publications record. Yet all my white friends at UND seem to know exactly what moves to make ... they just seem to have a better grasp of this research game. We are only just learning the ropes. But of course UND has always had a research track record whereas we at UNIZUL were only concerned with teaching. So in that respect we women at the historically black universities are really at a disadvantage and there's no way you can tell me that all women in this country are at the same starting blocks. Its not fair ... I have heard that most of the funding for research still goes to white women academics...I think it was the CSD that gave that information. So this is not fair on us. They benefited in the past regime because they were white and now they are benefiting because they are women. I'm not being racist or anything but this is what I can see is the situation here in our country.

I also feel that for a while there was talk about special considerations for black women for funding and conferences and things like that ...but now it seems that all of that is forgotten. All they want to know is how many publications I got . how can I publish when every minute of the day I have to deal with faculty issues and university issues and I get so tired at the end of the day that my family life is suffering. I can really see how the stress is getting to my family. My husband tries to be supportive but he feels that I have to give to much to this institution compared to what I get from it. I really have to juggle to survive.

And that is what it has come down to, survive. It is so tiring to be a good, intellectually strong researcher, it completely drains me.

I also have to liase with others in my field in this region and they are mainly white women academics and researchers. I just feel so alienated from them at times. They have one way of seeing things and that's it. They don't really try to appreciate ...I mean really understand where we are coming from. So you find that most of the black women tend to get very angry and aggressive at these meetings not because they don't like whites but it's the frustration of not being taken seriously, of being treated like children, as if you are there to learn from the white experts. I know this may sound like I am contradicting myself because I said that the white academics seem to know the ropes and know what to do. But these are separate issues. Its how can I say itthe patronising attitude that has to change...even here the well meaning white women don't realise how patronising their empathy can be.

I really feel that so much has to be done before the situation in research is reversed. I don't even know if that is the right thing. I just want more fairness and justice when it comes to the way our research records are viewed. I just want for instance, my view or my perspective, or my version of research to be treated with the same amount of respect like the white women academics. I mean when I look at all the people who are doing research consultancy work in this country they are mainly white men and women academics. Nobody seems to be protesting loudly enough to try to encourage and support black women researchers. That is why if the government is serious about equity and equality and all that, they are going to have to do something for black women researchers especially. But to be honest as an Indian woman I am beginning to get a little worried. You know the saying 'that in the past we weren't white enough and now we are not black enough' As the days go by I feel more alienated. Even though I consider myself to be an African, everything that is happening around me keeps reminding me that I am Indian. How can I feel national pride? How can I be proud to be a South African when everywhere I turn I am getting these mixed signals about my role in this country? I have tried so hard to understand what multiculturalism means, I have been so sincere in my efforts to bring about racial harmony especially through my teaching area. Yet the white women are let of the hook. I think the blacks have forgotten who the real oppressors were. They don't make these alienating comments and remarks about the white women here. But

we Indians have to constantly here that we got rich because we exploited them. Once that is said then it is used to justify all the actions that exclude us. I really don't know where all of this is going to take us. But it is very depressing especially as I said when you do your utmost to build bridges.

I don't know if I have said too much or digressed from your concerns, Sue?

I tried so many times to get funding for my research. Then they tell me that I don't have a strong research track record. When I applied for conference funding again they asked me about my publications. All these things seem like luxuries to me. Yet I am working so hard here ...my colleagues will bear testimony to that. Nobody is giving me any credit for all those hours that I spend just sorting out academic things here. And I cant help getting really ticked off when I see all the newer members of staff get so many privileges and concessions. They just came in and suddenly qualify for study leave, special leave, computers, and everything – it just doesn't seem fair on those of us that have to keep this ship afloat. Because that is what I feel my role here has amounted to ...just keeping the ship afloat. I hope we don't end up like the Titanic.

6.7 Feminism, a white man's trick to stir up trouble in the African society? Zinzi – a novice academic (UND)

I know you always tell me to identify people in my field of research and strengthen my research like that – but that is much harder than it sounds. I have tried to identify other women in other faculties and departments and tried on many occasions to chat about my research interests to them but it is a problem. Most of the women don't know that it is harder to do ivory tower research or work in isolation. I think they have been so indoctrinated with the capitalist way of thinking about competition and individual achievements that they don't care to change their ways. I mean they probably think why should I worry about the next person? What do I get out of it?

Yet they don't realise that all these successful white men who are involved so much in research do actually have a kind of network or old boys club that people talk about. You know, the golf course and tennis meetings. We all know what goes on at these gatherings.

I have seen it with my own dean and heads of department's who are male. They already decide what is important and what is not, they already have agreement on who is going where and how before any meeting or discussion. So the women sometimes buy into this. They rather kiss up to the men and try to charm the way around than to really keep their dignity and respect and work collectively. As long as they go along with this male game, as long as they agree to the priorities that the men have already set then our cause is doomed to failure before it can even have a life.

So we always talk of the gender agenda but how does this get placed on the agenda if the women themselves don't push for it. I get tired sometimes being the only one to be concerned about research. I am the only one trying to constantly raise these issues of research by women and it gets pushed to one side. Or they say they take it seriously but nothing ever happens after that.

Its all very well to talk about creating our own networks but the women themselves must wake up and see how they are partly responsible for their own position in the universities. We can't assume that all women automatically see the importance of creating our networks – I think we need to educate women about how to accommodate the gender issues in research.

I really don't know why academics are so secretive about their work. My department is well known for keeping secrets from each other. I don't know what everyone is scared of? There is a lot of peer envy and professional jealousy amongst us – I guess. Everyone is trying hard to cut it as a great academic or to make a great breakthrough in some kind of research or other. Everyone is trying to outdo each other. Sometimes I hear that so and so is asked to work on some project or the other – who decided, when and how – we don't know. I also know of cases where we women are secretive about what we are doing. Maybe we want to outdo the other women – so we don't really know sometimes how to work as a team or what it means to work collaboratively in research. It is a rat race and with all the restructuring and transformation it has become worse. The women are even stealing ideas from other peoples research and publishing it as there own – what does one do in these cases, Sue?

One thing I observed as a researcher and a lecturer in higher education, is how people come to respect your work. The quantitative research still enjoys more respect and status than qualitative ones. I have noticed how academics who teach stats feel that they are doing real research. There is a certain arrogance to it.

Over the years I had many of my proposals rejected. Most of the time no reasons are given. When I persisted and demanded that I be given an explanation -then I was told that my study was not scientific enough, there wasn't enough hard data gathering techniques, that it wasn't clear what was being measured. When I tried to tell them that I was not going to measure anything and compare and control anything – the response was that it was not research, it was not scientific enough. When I tried to show how qualitative research didn't look for those things – I was banging my head against a brick wall. I was told that my research was too vague and too broad and not rigorous enough. I didn't know what to say – I actually felt that maybe they were right. I didn't feel confident enough to stand firm about my beliefs about research methods and what I was trying to do. I felt stupid as though I was not ready to enter the world of research – and the messages I was receiving from my superiors was confirming my inadequate feelings about myself. But today I can say that women have to be confident and bold and assertive – they don't have to let their professors and supervisors destroy them with the negative words and attitudes – they must remember to always get as many different opinions as possible – then only will women be in a position to realise that maybe there are others out there that have similar experiences or that there are others out there that understand what they are trying to do in their research.

It is also quite a rat race when it comes to supervision of students. It is so hard to get to supervise students for masters and doctorates. Somehow it seems like the men just prime the students they want – they only encourage the bright and intelligent ones. So before you know it these students have already been told certain things about their work and they are also told things about us – that maybe we are not experts in the field or something like that. So even if a student liked you or enjoyed your lectures you wonder why they still chose to go with the male lecturer who is professor of whatnot even though they did not understand him or his work or they can't relate to him. Students are funny that way – they seem to think that if we women supervise them then they will be seen to be weak or their work will be seen as not of a high calibre. So they go for the famous professors who have

reputations but are useless. And so the cycle continues. In the past my HOD's actually cut me off from the supervision of the department students. They kept saying that maybe one day when I was more experienced then I would be given students to supervise. But what about them? What experience did they have? When did someone decide that they were experienced enough to handle supervision? And you know Sue what happens after that. They come to meetings saying that they have this and that number of students to supervise and that is why they will not take any lectures at the undergraduate level. You know that the undergraduate level was always the killer with its large classes and constant stream of students outside your office. There is no space to breathe in a day let alone do research or publish. While these men are set – they encourage students to do research in a field that is close to their own and then they continue to publish all the time. I am not saying that this is not right I am just saying that it is not done in a just manner. There is no democracy in research. Nobody asked Mandela if he had experience to be president of this country? But I was always told to wait – when the time was right I would be allowed to supervise. But now what I noticed is that when we get weak students who require a lot of patience and guidance then nobody wants that student. So sometimes I suddenly get a student referred to me for supervision - then nobody says but you have no experience. The student has done his rounds and when others realise that this is no easy ride then they pass it on to the women. So as usual we have to be happy with the crumbs on the table. Then when it is time for promotions the first thing they want to know from you is how many students did you supervise, how many publications do you have, why have you not started your doctorate, why are you not involved in research projects. They never say no look at so and so she has such a heavy teaching load let us give her credit for that. It is completely dismissed. It is as though it never mattered – then again maybe it doesn't only we women are too stupid to know this. Most of the time we think hey I have so many lectures so no-one can fire me or retrench me but somehow there's no connection. Especially now with the universities in financial dire straits. Everything is money. But the logic is skewed. On the one hand we keep the university alive because of the large numbers we teach but in return we are exploited and get nothing of the rewards. Most of the women here have had the same experience. When we keep raising these issues we are told we are disrupting the department. So it's a catch 22 situation. We try to speak to students about our areas of interest but if we are not seen as powerful figures in the institution no student will want to be supervised by us.

As a researcher and academic I have to continually fight off sexual advances of the male staff members. Its harder for me when they represent some form of authority on the campus. The men know this and some of them deliberately take advantage of their positions because they know the women are vulnerable and they see us as fair game. Sometimes if you talk nicely to a man he will take this as a come on. He will think you have no respect or that you are asking for it. I smile a lot and I was shocked to learn that that the men were interpreting it as being easy or trying to smooth my way with them, to have an easier ride so to speak.

Bu the other extreme is when you are constantly treated like a minor, a child who has to be protected by the big strong males in the university. So they will always relate to you as though they were giving you fatherly advice. What do we have to do to just have a normal relationship - a relationship where I am just accepted for myself and I accept them for who they are - but some of the women say that they use this kind of thing to manipulate the situation to work for them. I don't know about this – I could never behave like that. But other women say that as long as they get what they want it doesn't matter how they get it. Maybe there is a strange kind of logic in what they do. While people like me bust our heads trying to be upfront about everything.

This also causes lots of problems for me especially coming from a traditional African background. In my culture it is not acceptable to be an outspoken woman, a woman who has a mind of her own. As you already know we are very much treated as minors. So this is a problem for me. Even with my education I still find myself falling into the same old patterns when I am with my family, my home my community. I have to abide by these customs. It's just easier that way, its less frustrating for me. But inside I feel the conflict about who I am and what I am trying to be. They don't want to hear about research and feminism and all that. You are just a woman, you must be told what to think how to think. When you talk about feminism you are accused of being like the white women, of giving up your African identity. You are told that feminism is a white man's trick to stir up trouble in the African society. African culture does not have any kind of equivalent I am told.

So it's trying to be an African, an academic in a white world, a researcher in a white world, it tears you apart. But one thing I am always sure about is that it is still a white world. We are expected to give up our culture, our values, our customs, our beliefs and

adapt to the white world of research and the university. It is just too foreign for me. But when I talk about how I think I would like things to be, I am told that standards have to be maintained, globalisation, etc. So, I am totally confused. I know what I feel and think but I have to always fit in. Maybe I also feel that that is the road to success. White women have succeeded by doing things in a particular way and behaving in a particular way so now it is easier to just follow the trend. I have no time to seriously take up the issues I have raised with you.

What advice do I have for other women in research?

Well I found that reading a lot helped me a lot. I came to realise that I was not abnormal, that I shouldn't feel that something was wrong with me. When I read other women's stories I realise that hey I feel that way too. So it is not so absurd after all. And I think that is the reason I agreed to talk to you – maybe women out there will identify with some of the things I have experienced and make changes to their own lives. As for me, everytime I tell people about my experiences I feel more empowered, I feel like a conqueror, a survivor.

6.8 You won't get married if you do too much research! Thandeka –a novice academic (UNIZUL)

I've done research. I think its white research, according to me. So most of the time we look into the psychology of Africans and how their minds work. And then I find out that in talking a lot about psychology then I try so as to be an expert in what we think. It helps a lot like we were dealing with social psychology. There I could understand that some of the things said about the identity itself like self esteem. So it helps a lot to do research.

I feel also that the psychology of Africans is not widely researched...especially how Africans think and how they attribute meaning to life. So most of the books that I've read when they say psychology in African context, what they do is to contextualise mainly Skinner's theory and make African examples but my feelings is that I have to adopt an emic approach that is the point of departure. It should be from within the African context.

Although African women share a lot of things or traits with any women universally, they do have their own unique experiences but I think also if it could be approached from that angle. I don't say this or that angle should be substitute for other approaches but it should be one of the approaches to look into black women.

Although it's in a developmental stage, I have identified 4 - that means 3 approaches to communism, Marxism, radical, liberalism and so the 4th one is an emic approach, which could be Afro-centric or it could be Muslim or Hindu - but what we say is that women who belong in a certain culture should speak for themselves - we have some problems like the plight of women in power and so on. We share that as women but we have experiences, which are unique to us, like lobola custom. There are other customs which are experienced by African women. Also, Muslim women have their own experiences, so as women we can sit down and critically analyse our situation and see whether it empowers us or disempowers us and I do informal research on how women feel about lobola, even ask professors, doctors and people who have masters if they feel that lobola is important for African women. I ask African women, I usually ask this question: "if you say you want to be equal to men, what about this custom, it should stop? Do you think it is empowering or disempowering you women?" They don't want to face these issues but we have to grapple if we really want to empower ourselves and see if it empowers us and if it doesn't, it has to be discouraged.

I focus on the Afro-centric approach to education, that is because we are in Africa we have to understand Africans, how they believe, how they socialise and then I think that it should be our points of departure, meaning that we have to teach Africans because we don't understand them.

It does matter because men also have their own way of looking at things, which may overlook the perspective of women.

When I was teaching about feminism in class, I can say men have their own way of attributing to women. They don't even understand why women are concerned with feminism. They feel they are trying their best to level the score and how do you deal with that. Sometimes they make an example. You know Afrikaners felt that there was nothing wrong with racism. They could give us something because they were comfortable with it,

even men are comfortable with their position, so they feel threatened. It could be conscious or unconscious. Another thing they had been socialised that way.

I was doing B.Ed full time. I went to my professor and I told him that I'm interested in doing Masters and would like him to be my promoter and he said are you doing full time B.Ed and I told him. So he said you are ambitious girl and then I told him I'm interested in what he wrote because he wrote about black oriented education and by then it was 1988 and only University of Zululand was teaching education from an Afrocentric point of view and he received a lot of critics but I could see that there was something important in this and I said I want to do masters in this because I'm inspired by what he has written.

I thought he had a point, so I was interested, I don't know why but I was reading all the time, following the argument and the debate. I had to look into it deep and see whether he has a point or not, and then respond. I was worried also because it was only the University of Zululand and you know how low everyone thinks of us.

Ok, and then he said to me you are interested in women. If you can do your research in women and he made examples of American women that are in power now in America. If I can conduct my study on that. I was inspired I went back into the hostel and then we were doing educational research in details, I called my classmate and we set down and we did a proposal overnight, just looking into the chapters and so on and I said it's a practice, lets see how good our educational research is and we finished it. The following morning I went back to him and said again I was interested in masters. He looked into the proposal and said, you know you are amazing. It's amazing because the proposal I drew on that particular day was on the place of women in education. It's amazing because the proposal I drew on that particular day was my guiding line, although I had to change it. My professor played a major role. He likes people who are enthusiastic and energetic and then he can support you I. If he sees that you are interested in academic work and he can motivate you. So he motivated me and he treated me as his daughter and because I was ambitious he pushed me all the time... he was interested. He wanted to see how I was doing so I think he played a role also in nurturing me.

I saw a post, several posts, some of the posts were in philosophy and diversity and I went back to him and I said I saw a post which I'm interested in and he said "you have a lot of

things girl... focus on your exams but I applied for the post. I was called for the interview in March and then I got the post and what I want to say is that, I was fortunate because I could see as a women some people are very jealous, even heads of department may not like you to progress that much.

Maybe, I had some role models. Like, I could see that if it was a position for the rector, I wouldn't apply for it just because I am a woman. I would feel that I'm still young, I need experience, all those things. The perception has changed; it has changed since 1992. Some of the positions like to be a rector of an institution. Like Mamphela Ramphele. After her lot of women followed. I think, so for women at large, not just black women she did become a role model.

Another thing is if I get support I don't want to disappoint the person who supports me. One of the conditions of the university is that you have to embark on research at least most of time. I started a five-year goal but I have to produce something to be at the top level. I felt as an academic I must not exist in the calendar but people should feel that I'm around I should do something positive and I feel if I am in a certain position I should do things in a right way and I like to excel but because although I cannot excel all the time I enjoy doing something different, positive and different.

I can say fortunately I'm single and can draw a program for myself. I know when I should embark on my academic issues and when to take care off myself. Although sometimes I felt that I don't give my daughter enough attention but if I finished what I'm doing I take some time to focus on her.

I do have a relationship but sometimes I feel that when I have my boyfriend for a week it is so strenuous for me. I have to take care of him, I have to wash and cook. Sometimes I become very short tempered because I have to do all those and I don't have time... I need time for myself. When I was doing my studies I used to give him some of the stuff... he couldn't even read it. He is an academic but he would say, that this is rubbish. It's that he has been socialised in that way, he can't see life in another direction.

I know which role I should play and which role not to play and he has made his role clear, although he hasn't articulated it but that's how it goes. It is a burden. Sometimes I

complain. You know it is nature, that's what I always tell my students. Although we read about these things but in implementation, it could be different and he is very good in other aspects. I allow him to do whatever he pleases. So he has his own duties and there are my duties and I fulfil whatever I have to fulfil, although he is an extra burden if he stays for more than a week. The second week I get used to it all over again. I feel it when he is around but also when I have my family, my mother, sisters and kids, sometimes its difficult to adjust because I'm living alone. I have to focus on them now and I forget whatever I was doing but after two weeks, then I gain the momentum.

Although I know he is unfair, I feel I have to negotiate it in a proper way. I can't impose because that's how he sees it.

Freud calls it repression. I express my concerns in jokes or casually and see how he responds. Sometimes he doesn't, so if he responds positively that's my bonus. He enjoys encouraging me and he is proud if I obtain something, he becomes part of it but the gender role, it's where we differ.

I think it should start down there, socialising the young one's but you can't change an old man of 35,36,37. You can in a very subtle way, slowly but surely but you can't change the person totally, that's what I've discovered because I've tried to give him the material to read but it means nothing to him. It also depends on the person. He is a hard worker and he enjoys doing things. If he hates doing it, you can't do anything about it.

He doesn't perceive it as a lower status but perceives it as my domain, not his domain. I feel positively that it's my duty not his duty. If the African man loves you, they will ask you how do you do it. The basic of this whole notion of them being the head of the house, that still stands. If they see themselves as the head of the household, we still treat them as head. He must show that he is responsible and he is responsible doing his role as a man and then I do mine as a woman. I've learned a lot from him especially on goal setting. If he is a father at home, I do support him if he needs support. Like, if I visit him or he comes here he must spend the whole day just writing. We share ideas and ask for an opinion and I do really support him and making his life easier. But it's difficult, it depends on his mood.

I'm an Africanist. Sometime, in an Afro-centric context, I have to try not to be much assertive because I would find myself being isolated. I must be diplomatic in approach and tactic. I think the person should be tactful although you have all these ideas but where you implement it, you have to be tactful and diplomatic otherwise you will find yourself not liked by many people because we are social beings and live in this social context, where some of those things cannot change. So if you can change people's perceptions, you don't have to come head on collision

I've told my daughter that marriage must be carefully considered, because when I was socialised - whatever I was doing when my father wanted to reprimand, he would say you won't get married because you are doing this, you won't be a good wife. So I tell her all the time that my father said my husband would be my degree. He said your husband is your gown he used to say so. I usually tell her that also marriage is not important but I don't say it shouldn't be her ultimate goal.

I managed to conscientize her that education is important and she knows that when she wants to please me, she has to do what's good. I tell her when we are driving or I take her to a restaurant or to a hotel and say this is my education.

Although I feel my pace is becoming slower in terms of research, I haven't focused much on research.

I haven't done much research. What I can say is that working at this university has given me exposure and more confidence because I got educated here. When I started to teach at the other university, that gave me confidence and exposure and I can see what other people are doing and I can see how far behind our university was and so on. So instead of focusing on research, I was focusing on the social part of my academic work.

What motivates people to do research? You know, I think it differs. When I discover something, I really discover joy. So it will become a success and I learn something. I don't know how some people, they do not derive joy when doing research but it is how I feel when I finish an article. I become very happy and also my social life is not that packed. I have a friend of mine who told me last year, I wasn't aware of my behaviour. He said, you know, if you are not in the office, you are at home with your daughter.

Fortunately, my head of department was flexible. If I go maybe overseas or I go somewhere and then I pick up certain ideas and I suggest that we should change the curriculum or something like that, he would agree. So in going out to conferences and so on, I take all those experiences so as to shape the way I view knowledge and how I should present it. I don't see myself as feminist or as an anticommunist but I try by all means to be objective. Even when I'm in class I forget that I'm a woman I just relate to students because I think when I put that in mind then it could be an obstacle.

Knowledge is socially-constructed-what you get from books is persons' perspective on certain issues. When I read, I get the main idea out of whatever and then integrate it with the knowledge I have and also don't forget about the context, that is, context of my students and within which I operate and I take it as holistic as I can say so. Why I say most of the time I try and be tactful and dynamic before I can present it, I have to think them how are they going to perceive them because they can get misconception of whatever I'm trying to say.

The problem with research is, if you think of starting a research, its difficult but when you start doing it even the first sentence and second sentence you become or feel free, then you can continue. So sometimes there are a lot of obstacles. You have to do this and this, I'll see it later but what I have to say is, when you start you have to start, you can do it. Another thing you have to be patient. Like, when I finished my masters I wanted to do departmental research but there was a lot of petty politics. I drew up a proposal and sent it to that committee. It was sent back. I took it back. You know, the comments were not that much constructive, so I was discouraged at the end. So I never conducted departmental research. So instead of conducting that, I started another project.

Like I felt there was not much support. Okay I wrote it, there was these comments. I sent it back because the committee belongs to the faculty. I said give us an example as to how to go about if a person submits for the third time. The broader university structures were not there to support you on your research. I could do that but I was so discouraged.

I've just received the new computer this year. I've been an academic for a long time but I didn't have the computer and if I need to type I have to queue for typing articles and personal things. I have to pay if I need to e-mail I have to go to a certain office and

sometimes you can't do it regularly. My phone was through the switchboard. I was easily exhausted like you get R200 for official call before you pay. You know sometimes you get used to it because if I really want to work. I don't care. I'll rather pay and continue doing research.

I didn't register and I was not even thinking of my masters, which I talked to my professor about. Because of waking up early in the morning and then going back at five. I was very exhausted and then when I got into the university, I was challenged by the culture you know, the academic culture and then I had to make much time. I was challenged by all these males and some of the white women. I felt that if they can do it, so can I. I felt also that as an academic you can organise your time to work and to conduct research like my white colleagues were doing, but I was wrong. I was given so much teaching to free others to do research. I just felt it was so unjust.

There is no space in the environment especially if you spend a lot of time going to the schools, you arrive there tired and going back home, what you need is a good bed. So it depends. Where its nearer, you can but I'm teaching part-time students here and I can emphasise now that because I'm doing this part-time psychology 1 and 2. I can emphasise you know, my days started about six o'clock in the morning and then the last lecture is quarter to ten in the evening and I have to wake up the following day. I have a child and so on and as a woman you have an extra baggage because you have to take care of your family.

I was never active in politics. The broader issues like the boycotts and the violence like that. It did affect us like my home town. When the university was closed we started the boycott - after 3 days they closed down the university. We had to drive back home- the parents were not ready to pay for the transport. Many university students had to die, several of them, go to prison. You know all those things they did have an effect or impact on my life - but my focus was getting that degree. So most of the time I couldn't involve myself in those things although some of the issues that we were fighting for were justified. It was a tough choice to make because the problems were so near to my heart. But I have learnt to live with my choices. Remember I had a child and then I had to finish my studies -so that was my goal. I had to face this dilemma. I was not just a student or lecturer – I

was a mother and a daughter to a family that was so determined that I would become someone in life and make them proud.

About writing research proposals. I'd write a proposal, I send it, they say no. I write another one. I send it again, again they say no. I couldn't get funds. I tried but I couldn't. So I never despair. I've started writing a lot of proposals for next year. So at least I tell myself that once a year, I had to go and read a paper internationally and nationally and organise a seminar or workshop. I keep on trying on that kind. Like, organising the workshop, I had to go and negotiate for the funds. So I go outside to insurances and sometimes I get money outside and from the university but our university can be unfair sometimes. I've tried joint projects with some of the white women colleagues -they didn't work. I wanted to be respected for myself and that did not happen. I was treated like the "girl" only good to do what I was told to do. I tried to make a contribution but felt like I was talking and nobody could hear me.

6.9 Making research and academia a 'fairer' place

In this phase of the study that spanned 12 hours of interviewing, there were many issues upon which I could focus. Choosing those that seem to be of most interest to the study, have most heuristic value, and which can be extrapolated from the data at hand, was the challenge. These narratives represent rich sources of data, because they serve to illuminate the processes as well as lay bare the logic of individual courses of action within particular contexts and identities such as gender and race contained in the women's own analyses of their testimonies. The testimonies also provide us with sorely needed evidence of the interplay between the social, the political, the economic, the cultural and the historical. The dynamics of each of these women's lives are never devoid of the issue of sexism and racism. Their critical moments that they lay bare reveal deliberate courses of action that in turn have had the potential to undermine or perpetuate their conditions and relationships within the arena of research and academia.

In some ways the stories are ephemeral. Memories of anger, drudgery, of helplessness, of delight, fade away with time. What may have been extremely important to them in earlier

years may not have been so later. The personal journey of seeing their tasks to completion receded in importance as new challenges arose to confront them.

It allowed them to relive anger, pride, frustration and wonderment in the company of a fellow [me] who has traversed that route. But more than that it grants permission for that memory to be a means by which further understanding of one's motives and one's dreams and one's aspirations may be understood as social items - items that are inter-related with other journeys simultaneously embarked upon.

These related journeys were sometimes in terms of one's feelings about the body, about oneself as a sexual being as illustrated so aptly by Zinzi's story, about one's self in relation to significant males or females as exemplified by Thandeka, about juggling routines and about economic imperatives as highlighted in the testimonies of Saras, Shakti, Mandiswa and Thandeka. To divorce the personal value of the research journey from the other inner journeys is to somehow sterilise it, sanitise it. There is the need to challenge those artificial divides. It is in recognition that learning involves emotions (Arnold, 1997) that we can better understand or name the processes and layers of the journey, and better prepare the way for those that follow.

The interconnected processes of, for example, race, class and gender function in concert with historical, social and political, cultural contexts. Saras, Mandiswa, Phumzile, Shakti, Zinzi and Thandeka unpack what it means to be black academics and researchers, as females adopting middle class values, although having roots in mainly working class backgrounds. Race, class and gender effects and how they are personally perceived, are interwoven into how each woman defines her reality, names her identity and assesses her truth and charts her trajectories.

Recurrent themes are those of social pressures and personal prejudices limiting access to research and thus further constraining their achievements. Although these women came from a variety of backgrounds, they all had to confront the same stereotypes associated with being women and being black in their bid to break into academia and research. These women had to overcome not just obstacles because they were women, but obstacles because they were women of colour. They believed that because of their colour they were seen as non-performers, that there was and still is a failure to recognise their potential and

accomplishments because of their colour. All the women in the interviews found it extremely frustrating to endure the negative, condescending and patronising attitudes of their fellow white male and female colleagues. This has resulted in their perception of being cut off from the club and subsequently not receiving the benefits and rewards that accompany such membership. They have had to endure lower pay, slower advancement, under utilisation of their talents, fewer rewards, less recognition and diminished job security. In addition they felt that it was because of their colour that they were frequently overloaded with administrative duties which were often couched in terms of affirming them but seldom taking them seriously. There was also the feeling that it suited white women to appropriate feminism for themselves choosing not to dirty their hands with the murkier issues of race because it did not serve their own interests.

They found that often the agendas were defined and shaped by white women. It was in these very subtle forms that the racism came through. It would have been much easier had the prejudicial behaviour been overt. It is in its ordinariness, its normalisation that it was believed to be most potent. The subtle forms were felt by the way in which they felt ignored or overlooked; the way in which they observed white women continually speak for them as though they were unable to articulate their own struggles. It is in the seemingly unintentional, patronising attitude that white women brought with them to discussions and meetings that inflicted the deepest hurt and humiliation.

White race privilege was believed to have assisted white women academics and researchers in gaining employment and conducting research. They revealed through their testimonies how the concept of merit is defined as being a white concept. They described how selection panels were usually white, how white people make other white people feel comfortable, how white academics are aware of what is considered good, appropriate communication and techniques for whites and use them for the white interview panels. These women have sounded their concern about the fact that white women do not need to be aware of any cultural bias in giving information, in what is seen as acceptable behaviour and can therefore fit very easily into the white workplace. They also highlighted the issue of white women being taught skills and knowledge in an education system that was established by white people, for white people, about white people. Mandiswa captures this with her testimony of :

“...they seem as though they were born for this role – it is all so natural to them – it is almost as though they know that their world and the world of research are one and the same”

This type of racism and discrimination has existed and was believed to still exist thus creating the circumstances that ensure that black women are seldom seen as meritorious.

Those who wanted promotion, others who had been passed over in job interviews but also sticking to something worthwhile over a sustained period of time not only generated a certain stamina or inner strength for themselves but also gained in terms of knowledge growth, expansion and enrichment. Shakti provides evidence of this pressure when she states that:

“I didn’t have my masters, so I was told that if I didn’t get my masters I would have a problem...”

They were highly cognisant of the fact that there was work that needed to be done in order that the world might be a ‘fairer’ place - and that knowledge was powerful and that the two were integrally linked. This again flowed back to the personal. At times it generated greater self-confidence, pride in achievement and determination to keep producing. At other times, the frustration was intense and opting out was seen as the saner course of action. From a policy-making perspective, one might question the nature of this ‘rite of passage’ demanded by academia, when the rite itself generates so much pain so beautifully expressed by Thandeka when she “felt like I was talking and nobody could hear me”.

And yet all the women felt it important not to throw the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. There was something of value out of all the pain and it is that which they wanted to retain.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has captured through the conversations, the process of women doing and ‘undoing’ research, of the struggle and satisfaction of rising to the intellectual challenge and of the complexity and conflicts in balancing the private role of support person (wife, mother, partner, sister, friend) with the public roles as workers, earners and researchers.

Each story is unique. There is no blueprint for how to succeed nor what sequence to follow. These confessions that arose out of their conversations are tapestries woven from moments of critical reflection, sometimes bitter, and yet amazingly forgiving, innovative, creative and compassionate. These are personal reflections on key aspects of the research process, the relationship with the supervisor, the politics involved in the choice of research paradigm, the nature of the research inquiry, the response of the institution, the stages of research, and the dynamics involved in physically managing research while concurrently being responsible for a range of other activities, generally unrelated, on a daily basis.

As women, we understand and make sense of our lives in different ways to that of men. Whilst it is crucial to recognise and acknowledge the plurality of women’s experiences, each of the experiences tells us more about the social, historical and cultural location of women and how they negotiate the terrain. Within personal narrative, Gergen and Gergen (1993) have argued that male accounts are frequently that of the “monomyth” - the heroic trajectory of progress, whereas the personal narratives of women are typically multiple, recursive and intertwined with others. When as women we do not find resonance with the male monomyth, we are compelled to turn our (re)search inward, to the personal, to make sense of our own experiences. Chapter Seven engages this “to make sense of our own experiences” through an inward journey into my own life as an academic and researcher.

Restor(y)ing my Life in Academia, presents ‘disrupted’ snapshots of my own experiences and engagements in academia, taking up the challenge to provide further evidence and insights that demonstrate how my personal and professional journey became a struggle against the phallogentric, patriarchal and sexist discourses of the academy.

Chapter Seven

Restor(y)ing My Life In Academia

“I found a place of sanctuary in “theorising”, in making sense out of what was happening. I found a place where I could imagine possible futures, a place where life could be lived differently. This “lived” experience of critical thinking, of reflection and analysis, became a place where I worked at explaining the hurt and making it go away” (hooks, 1994).

7.1 Introduction

Feminist autobiographical accounts in particular, with their aim of articulating “a self-consciousness about women’s identity both as an inherited fact and a process of historical construction” (Heilbrun 1989:18) offer specific and consciously political perspectives on women’s lives. But this raises another important dynamic. Autobiography-as-knowledge can be highly problematic. It is not simply the writing of one’s own history, it is clearly more complex. Autobiography is necessarily a selection, an ordering, a shaping; a complex interplay between the present self and the self recalled at the various stages of personal history. So the following autobiographical account needs to be read as a conscious selection written for a particular purpose, which can be challenged on the grounds of interpretation and meaning rather than on the basis of falsification of a fixed ‘truth’

Autobiographical accounts such as that which follows can be helpful in furthering understanding about how socio-political, cultural and historical events are played out. I utilise the narrative structure of biography, as it helps to understand the changes in my historical perspective and social conditions at the same time offering frameworks within which my personal choices and apparently serendipitous events can be located, understood and positioned. Goodson (1981: 69) has argued for this approach to be adopted in understanding the work of teachers:

“We have to reconnect our studies of schooling with investigations of personal biography and historical background: above all we are arguing for the reintegration of situational with biographical and historical analysis”.

Maclure uses the term 'biographical attitude' to describe recent interest in 'person-oriented genres' for educational research. Biographical attitude, according to Maclure (1993:331) "describes a 'slant' or posture towards issues of research, policy or development which places the biographical subject, in this instance, the researcher, and her or his lived experiences at the centre of the analytic frame."

However, Maclure warns that autobiographical accounts are concerned with 'claiming identity' rather than describing experience and that people use them to defend attitudes and conduct, to make sense of themselves and their actions, to work out where they stand in relation to others. What is important is that they cannot be treated as revelations of the honest or unbiased 'self'. Perhaps, as Grumet (Woods 1993:462) suggests, autobiography signifies a wish to ground experience in the personal, as a 'process of restitution.

7.2 Research as Me-Search

Now that the moment has finally arrived for me to capture on paper - it seems as though I have been rehearsing these stories all my life and waiting for this moment all my life. I have raised the issues so many times with so many different audiences. I have told my story so many times to so many people across so many countries over the years. I identify and isolate key moments, key events, key experiences, that highlight the double standards of the 'system', that expose an insensitivity to issues of inequality and redress, that expose deeper and more dangerous generic qualities of envy, spite, jealousy, couched in and repackaged in 'acceptable ways' and 'acceptable arguments' so that they appear totally logical and not open to scrutiny. I have often wondered about the people that constitute 'the system' - did they really act out of ignorance, out of not knowing any better or were their actions deliberate, well thought out attempts to stifle and snuff out any notions of ambition. Feminism has alerted me to the dangers of believing in the myth of "special individuals" operating in a cosy apolitical sphere, especially when those individuals are actually working within powerful institutions whose ideologies intersect, inscribe and determine the paradigms within which individuals operate. As a feminist, a lecturer, researcher and social activist, I present some reflections on my academic life that have had an impact on my research trajectory, on my practice and the way it intertwines with my feminist consciousness. My testimonies written in similar vein to the testimonies of the

six black women academics from KwaZulu-Natal, also moves between confession, analysis and theorising. This conscious decision not to separate out the strands was again motivated by the desire to keep the stories and theorising of the stories intact. This testimony does not attempt any chronology or sequence. There is no deliberate attempt to make smooth transitions from one critical moment to the next – my life in academia did not unfold that way! I have consciously moved from one significant experience to another, capturing the disruptions, yet pulling the threads together through each of the critical moments reflected here. I do not attempt at the end of this chapter, to summarise or ‘stand back and reflect’, this occurs throughout the testimony and would be out of place in terms of what I have been trying to achieve with my autobiographical representation. This type of practice, whilst it signals a challenge to male-stream conventions and practices in research, is informed yet again by the broad, generic understandings of feminism that I have referred to as my feminist gaze throughout this study.

My journey in search of my research-self may at times, read something like a travelogue but so it has been - touched by the many people in various parts of the world that have helped me in ways that they may never fully understand. A fleeting comment here, a suggestion there and that is how it all came together for me. Yet my story also enables me to preserve events, to hold them constant and study them. Through autobiography, I can examine past events and impressions as if they were current, reflect on different contexts, or even anticipate future courses of action as if they have already occurred. “The accomplishment of story thus always involves both the creation of a coherent meaning and the successful resolution of whatever conflict threatens meaning” (Elbaz, 1991: 95)

This restor(y)ing communicates powerful emotions and offers my personal interpretation of my experiences in the academy. However, the purpose is not to tell readers what to think but to invite them into my experiential world and draw them into the story, to explore its problems and possibilities and thus attain greater insight into the world of women as knowledge producers in academia. As Brady (1990) suggests:

“Memory is more than the recollection of past events; it is a critical element in the search for and construction of meaning in human experiences in that it provides a “conscious consciousness of experience.”

It expresses what they believe themselves to have been and to be. Let me tell you my story and argue my thesis as part of my testimony.

I begin with a restorying of the early years of my life because I believe some of the critical events throw light on and helps to make meaning of my concerns with issues of social justice. Whether they are played out in my work with rural women in KwaZulu-Natal, my voluntary support counselling work in the historically disadvantaged areas of Durban, my engagements with women in research, gender and education, science as culture, my developing a masters programme on Social Justice Education, or my concerns with epistemology, world views, teaching and learning, the early years provide a context, which explains the development of my particular psyche. Those turbulent times provide a 'place' for me to ground my attitudes, feelings and views when I reflect on my present engagements and interactions.

7.3 The Dust Bowl Activists

My life as a student was never devoid of the political undertones that prevailed at the time. My final year at secondary school was just one of the many disrupted years I would experience as a student. The year 1980 was a particularly volatile year in South Africa, especially for those of us that schooled in the 'Warwick Triangle'¹ which contained the famous Sastri College (where my brother schooled), Gandhi Desai (where my sister and I schooled), St. Anthonys, St. Augustines (which was the school for coloureds), Mansfield High (the school for whites), Orient Islamic School and Durban Indian Girl's High. The area was a constant reminder of the disparities that existed through apartheid. We were constantly reminded that we were not only different but also inferior. The reminders came in the form of the frame of reference that Mansfield High provided for us. Here was a school with four rugby fields that were always immaculately maintained, plenty of green grass everywhere, classrooms with curtains and air-conditioning. Whilst anyone familiar with Gandhi Desai (now converted to a cultural centre) would know that we probably were the only school in the world that had an 'L' shaped soccer field. This L-shaped ground was a dust bowl of red sand and patches of 'almost' green grass here and there. From one end of the field you could see only one goalpost at a time unless you moved towards the middle to find that ideal spot where both the goalposts could be seen. This sea of red sand gradually drifted into the Orient Islamic school next door – so there were

¹ This area is on the 'other side' of Old Dutch Road in Durban. It is one of the areas that was historically designated for black people i.e. Indians, Coloureds and Africans.

no real boundaries; the two schools played together on common territory and at the back of all of this stood the 'majestic' Curries Fountain sports ground. The only fence that separated us from this stadium had some strategically removed panels that enabled us to squeeze through every time something was happening there, usually sporting events, but mainly political rallies.

We were a highly politicised group of students at these schools – even though at times we were not quite sure of the 'whats', the 'whys' and 'wherefores'.

At the end of each day we would, together with all the other Indian and Coloured children from the surrounding schools, make our way to the bus rank and board our respective buses to our respective destinations, conscious of the fact that those white neighbours of ours, who were so near yet never to be seen, were clinically separate from our realities. We passed each other on the freeway and were reminded of the discomfort of the overcrowded, dilapidated, stuffy buses we were in when they would ride by in spacious, air-conditioned, modern school buses destined for the elite suburbs. They always appeared so cool and clean whilst we were always covered in perspiration and grime from our playing in the red dust bowl

The year 1980 saw us lose three months of schooling. The education boycotts were intensifying throughout the country. My friends at Rylands High in Cape Town were being arrested for placard demonstrations, detained for not giving the Special Branch names that were behind the organisation of these boycotts. It was only a matter of time before Gandhi-Desai and the surrounding schools would be sucked into this frenzy.

It was almost miraculous, the way we all came to the understanding that things could not proceed as usual and on that one particular day, all the Warwick Triangle schools (with the exception of Mansfield High School!) decided to go on a boycott of lessons. We were threatened at the morning assembly and the riot act was literally read out to us. Prefects, we were warned, would lose their badges. And suddenly it sounded so insignificant to me when just a year before it meant so much to me. I knew that we had all felt the same way – we felt nothing as we removed our badges and handed them in at the morning assembly, never to wear them again. We then moved to the red dust bowl and the rest of the schools followed. Once there we hadn't quite figured out what we were going to do. We just

screamed out all the protest songs, knowing deep down that it was to help ease the deep pain and shame we felt about being different. It was to begin a process of reclaiming our identities, ridding ourselves of our shame and accepting ourselves in the spirit of pride and dignity.

If I paint a picture of bravado then it is false, because underlying all of our actions was the real fear and concern about the consequences of our actions. We heard all the stories about what was happening to our friends in other parts of the country, we heard about the mysterious disappearances, we heard about the unexplained deaths in detention, we woke up some mornings to hear that so and so has 'skipped' the country, and these thoughts were never far away from our actions.

We consoled each other, because our school was private property, the riot police could not enter our school property. So we believed. But this was not the case. We learnt how rules can mean nothing in a society based on the violation of human rights. The riot police did come that day wearing battle fatigue, accompanied by their dogs, rubber bullets and tear gas. We were armed with our slogans and songs and nothing else, wearing our white uniforms and black blazers. Mini battles ensued until we were brought under control and made to sit on the tarmac of the assembly area whilst the dogs kept guard. For many of us it was the first time we tasted tear gas, and felt the sharp pain of bird-shot and rubber bullets; but for some of us it would not be the last!

The year 1981 at the University of Durban-Westville was no different if not worse than anything I could have ever imagined. The constant running battles with the riot police on the campus was just 'another day in paradise' for us. It was bizarre how we accepted that this was to be our way of life, trying to attend lectures and our practicals, trying to write tests and exams whilst vigilant of the hostile climate that was being created. These running battles saw us hide in toilets, the mosque, the surrounding nature reserve as well as surrounding homes. We were learning very different lessons at this tertiary institution where the academic component appeared incidental to the main programme of the liberation struggle.

It was during these chaotic years of the early eighties that were characterised by tension and volatility on most South African campuses that I came to realise that the personal is

political, that being a black person in this country would forever shape and define my actions, would forever impact on my dreams and aspirations.

I began teaching in 1985 at a school in the Phoenix area, north of Durban, after graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree and University Higher Diploma in Education (UHDE) at the University of Durban-Westville (UDW). I taught Biology, Physical science, General Science and Computer Literacy. I had all these grandiose ideas about being an excellent teacher, opening up new worlds for these children with all the training I had been through but I was to meet face to face with those who were suffering the most under these apartheid conditions. I witnessed poverty, hunger, exploitation, homelessness, gangsterism and a host of other social problems.

I became so involved in that community and its problems that I was devastated when the so-called Inanda² riots broke out later that year in KwaZulu-Natal. I found it impossible to continue as usual with my teaching, encouraged by others not to get involved. But it was not easy to stay uninvolved when on a daily basis one witnessed dark smoke billowing in the distance, when one heard gunfire followed by shrieks and screams in the distance.

On the day that the riots began, I together with another colleague decided that it was not going to be school as usual and drove straight into the trouble-torn Bambayi area. I felt as though I was watching a movie. This could not be happening here in South Africa in the 1980s.

All this while my social engagement with issues was being heightened. A very special sensitisation was taking place within me, showing me, convincing me that nothing is apolitical, nothing is innocent, everything has to do with power, oppression, control; everything was coloured and emancipation was the only way out of this. I remain forever indebted to my 'children' who taught me more than they will ever realise. I learnt about the ravages of apartheid, about poverty, about hardship, pain and suffering. I was constantly being sensitised through my interaction with them, to issues of social justice, power, greed, discrimination, human dignity and respect. It was I who was on a steep

² Inanda is a historically black area north of Durban that includes the poverty-ridden Bambayi section.

learning curve at that school, and these children and their community were my finest teachers!

I resigned from teaching in 1987 and took up a contract post of associate lecturer in the Faculty of Education at UDW in January 1988. I taught courses in Sociology of Education, Philosophy of Education, Science Education, Gender and Education and Research Methodology at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

7.4 Hell is only a State of Mind!

My years as an associate lecturer were marked by the extremely high teaching loads that I carried as well as the high student numbers that I had in my classes. This translated into much of my time being taken up with student consultations. There were times when all I would be doing was attending to student queries. Students also sensed that I was someone who would listen to their problems and placed my students as my priority. It was not unusual to find me walking around like a bear with a sore head. I constantly compared my teaching and administrative commitments with others in the Faculty of Education, as well as colleagues in other departments. The picture was alarmingly similar for women academics who were employed on a contract – there was this collective feeling of helplessness.

Despite the rhetoric that teaching excellence was an equal criterion to research, the reality was that, in order to gain permanency and /or promotion I had to have a keen research profile. Obtaining the master's degree became a necessity!

When I took up my appointment in 1988, I was aware that to gain tenure, I would be required to make progress towards a masters degree. I had been appointed to a full-time, junior lectureship, as it was then called. I was lacking in direction at the time, not too sure whether I needed to begin a masters degree. The contractual nature of my employment created a culture of uncertainty for me. The contract was renewed at the end of the first 6 months and then renewed at the end of that year but only for another year. This contract then went on to be renewed for a record eight years before I was given the opportunity to become a permanent member of staff. In that time I was always

autocratically assigned an unreasonably heavy teaching load with large class numbers that was physically and mentally exhausting, especially since my teaching style is and has always been highly interactive. It was not unusual for me to see my name appear on the timetable next to new courses, without my being consulted on the matter. Our student numbers were extremely high at the time. For many years I was lecturing to over 1000 students in total, all of whom would be beating a path to my office for some query or the other. I found all my spare time being taken up with marking of assignments, tests and research reports and attending to student queries. The pattern was consistently similar throughout my years in academia. I would be lecturing throughout the year with absolutely no space for any kind of research activity. This meant that I was marking assignments from term one to term four. No sooner had the marking ended, than the processing of all the year marks had to be carried out. Again because I was lecturing at all levels, this task was an onerous one for me in particular. Once this was accomplished the final examination would begin. I would be required to invigilate as well as mark all my scripts and process all these marks in time for the results to be released. Co-ordinating some of the papers came with the territory as there was never any assistance in the form of support staff. They had clearly defined briefs, I was often told, such as typing which in my opinion was a waste of time. I have always done all the work that the secretarial support staff was employed to carry out. It was just faster that way. But I gradually came to the realisation that my work was not being supported in ways that would have given me time to attend to my academic work.

I was also expected to participate in all the administrative tasks that faculty required of me. Back then we had no faculty officer, teaching practice co-ordinator, curriculum officer, research officer, staff that would have relieved lecturers from a number of routine tasks to a large extent.

I was involved in course co-ordination, chairing the faculty Restructuring Task Group, departmental secretarial duties from time to time and area co-ordinator for our school-based teaching practice programme.

My passion for research saw my being nominated as the faculty representative on the UDW Research Ethics Committee. My role here was to grant ethical clearance to research proposals that came before this committee. Although I must admit that I found

the task highly stimulating and a wonderful learning experience, it was exhausting. I pick up discussion on my activities on this committee later on.

I was to fit my research into all of this. All in a faculty within a university that was an important terrain for political activity in those turbulent apartheid days.

I recall the humiliation at one meeting when a fellow member of staff was being congratulated on having a paper accepted for presentation at an international conference. My head of department looked at me with an air of condescension saying that maybe some day I 'might' have a paper accepted for presentation at a conference. It was a tone that was meant to make me know my place in the institution.

My particular department was characterised by deep divisions between some members of staff. These divisions always played themselves out in personal vendettas, whatever the occasion. It was not a climate in which one could ever begin to work constructively. No sooner had you made progress on one matter, than another altercation arose. This was so prevalent that it came to be accepted as the norm in our department. To this day those tensions still play themselves out in the form of factions. If a person is perceived to support a particular individual, she or he would be targeted by the opposing group. Then there was also the issue of preferential treatment for those who 'toed the line' and didn't rock the boat. Well that certainly left me out in the cold. I have watched, with disdain, some women in my department use manipulative tactics to get on in academia, so much for furthering the rights of women.

The dawn of the post-apartheid era coincided with the most turbulent period that the university was going through trying to find an identity, trying to map out its role in the new South Africa. Student uprisings and unrest on campus, staff struggles with senior management, all led to a very unstable, highly volatile university climate within which we valiantly tried to carry out 'normal' activities.

I tried desperately to stay 'non-aligned' but this did not turn out the way I anticipated. Each 'camp' saw me as identifying with the other, not understanding my need for impartiality at certain stages of the political upheavals on the campus. Because of the nature of my work I was forced to liaise with individuals that I did not personally agree

with or support. But this was often perceived as my 'collaborating' with the enemies. I couldn't believe the immaturity that existed in the reactions of people on the campus. In retrospect, it is understandable since we had no culture of democracy – apartheid had ensured this. We didn't know how to agree to disagree; it was all or nothing, you were either friend or foe. It was difficult because my confidence had eroded considerably. Even if I felt strongly about certain issues I was just too exhausted to care or fight anymore. Everyday was a new battle. We developed a culture of working from one crisis to another!

My own pathway was not untouched by the turmoil and internal and external strife on campus as indicated above. The larger political issues spilled over into the Faculty and the Department and manifested itself in debates about curriculum development to staff development to academic development. All debates had a subtext.

I don't remember exactly when it was that I came to the realisation that I had fallen into an insidious trap. I was unaware that I was playing the game by exactly the rules the 'enemy' expected me to play. I became so despondent that I remained unfocused and hence could not make any progress. It took me a while to realise that no matter how much I tried I would never be able to change the ways in which some individuals viewed me. So I grew up! Life was not a bed of roses. You cannot expect to go through life having everyone like you: welcome to the real world!

As a result I went through what I would describe as a highly spiritual phase. I began to do a lot of reflecting and introspection, searching for meaning, for purpose, and realised that I had to break the cycle of events that now characterised my life as an academic.

I recall once talking to a colleague 'in the corridor' where most of the critical issues were discussed, constructed, deconstructed and packaged. I described my life to him as a fishing line that had gotten so horribly tangled that I didn't know where and how to begin to unravel it. And then I said the strangest thing that was to mark a turning point in my whole engagement with my life in academia. I didn't really want to unravel it. I just wanted to snip the tangled mess and cast a new line into the water! This was the psychological breakthrough that I had waited for all those years. But I would not have come to this point without the help of a few key individuals whose presence, interventions

and involvement at strategic moments in my life provided the impetus I needed to finally 'cut loose'. I make mention of them where appropriate but one such individual was Professor Christine Keitel, a high profile academic and researcher from the Free University in Berlin, Germany.

7.5 The Long Distance Mentor

I first met Christine at the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics and Science Education Conference held at the University of Durban-Westville in January 1994. My colleague, Renuka Vithal persuaded me into submitting an abstract reporting on the preliminary findings relating to gender and science, one aspect of the study I had undertaken for my masters degree. My confidence was at an all time low. I had stopped believing in my research mainly because of the hostile environment that prevailed at my place of work. Renuka convinced me to write an abstract reporting on my preliminary findings of my study. I couldn't! I was so demoralised. She sat down with me and pushed my thinking until I was able to crystallise some form of an abstract.

My masters research was often criticised by some for not being 'politically correct' at the time, with its focus on South African Indian women. I on the other hand, came into that study from a mainly sociological perspective. It was not an issue to study groups in society, ethnic or otherwise. My study was constantly chastised for focusing on the success stories of achievement by women of Indian origin. But the very critics felt that they occupied the high moral ground when they conducted studies on the African community. Whilst I did not deny the need for research highlighting the African situation, their arguments and uninformed reasoning reeked, of contradiction and a lack of understanding of what doing research really meant. However, I can't say that I blame many of them for this view. During the apartheid years it was considered kosher for Indians to conduct research on Indians and Indian issues, coloureds to conduct research on coloured people and coloured issues, whilst whites chose to conduct research on whichever group of people they pleased. It was to do with the personal dilemmas of many academics who struggled with their Indian identity and Indian heritage in a South Africa striving for unity. But the saddest for me was the realisation that some were trying to deny, even erase their identities.

It is ironic that at present it is not uncommon for researchers to conduct research on the Indian community. It has, in fact, become rather popular to conduct studies that explore issues of ethnicity, identity and difference.

As members of a community that has a reputation for being conservative, Indian female students were not experiencing problems gaining access to university. They were also performing surprisingly well in the matriculation examinations. I did not see anything wrong with trying to explore this success story because it was clearly contrary to the trends that were prevalent among women of colour. I wanted to understand the reasons for such differential performances. That was the one concern. But problems arose, as they so often did. Some of my colleagues had reservations about my doing research in what they regarded as conservative research topics. It was considered progressive to research particular issues and not others. The discouraging part about this was that very few actually took the time to talk to me about my research, to understand where I was coming from and what my engagement really was. I was often told that I should have included African women in my study only because it would make it politically correct. This in my opinion did not make sense in terms of what it was that I was trying to do.

I was already captivated by the great writings of Apple, Bhabha, Freie, Giroux, hooks, Mohanty, Shiva and Spivak. I was engaging their debates of power, hegemony, race, class, ethnicity and culture. I was fascinated by the postcolonialists and women of colour debates. I felt my academic environment to be extremely hostile and this slowly began to wear me down. Coupled with the turbulent time that the university and the country was going through at the time, the power struggles that emerged provided the backdrop against all that I was experiencing in my short postgraduate life. My research, teaching, supervision, promotion, teaching load, administrative workload, were all contaminated by these external factors.

Christine's research and publications were different from conventional, 'accepted' research.. I recall reading some of her papers and was impressed by her attempts at "border crossing", blending, infusing the fields and disciplines that were traditionally thought to be sacred and constantly foregrounding the social. I was extremely impressed

with her keynote address³ where she foregrounded the social in the study of mathematics education. But our paths were to cross in more profound ways over the years that were to follow.

I studied the programme of the referred to earlier conference and realised that Christine was to chair my paper presentation. I was in awe of her and panicked. I tried desperately to make some programme changes. I was so nervous about her listening to me. This was my first presentation at a national conference, what a baptism of fire! What could I do? Well, I certainly prayed with great fervour. In retrospect perhaps there was 'divine intervention' that day.

I began my paper rather nervously, reading directly from the notes for the first five minutes or so. I clearly remember looking into the audience and spotting some of my colleagues from faculty affirming me with their supportive nods and smiles. I then began to feel constrained by my reading and slowly began to talk to the audience. I recall the momentum pick up. I began to speak with a passion that drove me and motivated my work. The audience got caught up in the excitement that came through from me. I was talking and people were smiling, nodding approval, interested in what I had to say. Then came the discussion time. Christine was actually smiling. She was impressed with what I was saying. She told the audience how important my work was to emerging forms of research, discourse and identity theories, the construction of knowledge, and so on.

I hadn't realised that because of all the negative criticism of my work I had turned into such a defensive person, so paranoid, constantly looking over my shoulder expecting to see the knife sticking out of my back.

It was amazing how the news spread at that conference. People were talking about my presentation. High profile delegates (in my opinion anyway!) came up to me to ask for copies of my paper. Christine announced at the closing ceremony that in her opinion my presentation was the best at that conference. By then I was beginning to feel embarrassed because my written paper was not in the same league as others. Many of the papers were

³ Presentation at the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics and Science Education (SAARMSE) Conference held at the University of Durban-Westville in January 1994.

so well written to the exacting standards of scientific writing, mine was well, conversational. I simply told the story about my research. When I mentioned this to Christine she replied in her matter-of-fact way that this was work in progress. She was not looking for literary gems but focusing on ideas and that she strongly advocated challenging the conventional styles of writing that were considered scientific. What she said to me then, I have now come to observe for myself, years later. There are different types of papers and one must be careful not to fall into traps when judging the quality of a paper. Often substance is overlooked when a paper is written in a literary perfect way. She cautioned me to look for substance, not to get caught and fooled by wordy, dramatic writing styles that detract from substance through sensationalism. Don't get caught up in the style, she warned, look for substantive issues.

*The paper that I presented was later developed to eventually appear in a book called *Social Justice and Mathematics Education* published in 1998 - four years later.*

And that was how I was launched into the wider world of research. I realised that I had to work around the gatekeepers in my workplace. By networking with people with similar interests outside my institution I was beginning to feel affirmed and grew in confidence. I still believed that my paper was rather a straightforward one but Christine had other plans! So began a mentorship/friendship that was to play a pivotal role in my life. We struck up a long distance email dialogue that exists to this day.

I felt I could unburden myself with her. She somehow understood, she never questioned my judgement. She never assumed that I was the problem in any situation. She believed in me. She gave coping strategies. She was the 'cyber shoulder' that I could cry on.

I told her how my masters research work was being ripped to pieces at my institution. She suggested that I mail my work to her. She perused my earlier drafts of my masters study and made comments and suggestions in affirming ways. I would then take this to my supervision sessions armed with the fact that Christine had seen my drafts. I would wait to hear what my supervisor had to say. As usual, it was found to be unsatisfactory. When I eventually mentioned that this work had already received the nod of approval from Christine, the response from my supervisor was that she was German and lived outside of South Africa and was, therefore, not qualified to comment on my work, which was a study

conducted in South Africa. I couldn't believe that these were comments coming from senior academics at the university. Eventually Christine tried to take over as either my supervisor or co-supervisor. Again this was turned down for a whole host of reasons. The first was that she was not in the field of sociology of education but mathematics education. She then faxed a letter to the faculty stating her qualifications and why she was competent to supervise my work. I was told that a decision was taken that Christine was not an appropriate supervisor because she "did not understand the South African situation". I recall how furious Christine became when I conveyed that to her. When I decided to challenge that at a meeting the response was that this was "some woman" I had met at the conference that became "my friend" and was going to try to push my masters through! Christine was constantly supportive and we strategised on how to beat this problem.

7.6 Subjective Scientist – an un(reason)able amalgamation?

Over the years I have been asked what my 'field' is. I usually respond by saying that my interests straddle a number of intellectual activities that include a study of disciplines such as science education, philosophy, sociology, and research with an emphasis on gender-related issues. The general response is "can't quite decide where you belong." or " why did you jump from one extreme to the other". All these responses really tell me is how little people really understand science and philosophy upon which modern science is based. In my mind it made perfect sense to look to the social sciences to try to understand the field of science as power, as knowledge and as hegemony.

It is now almost two decades ago that I was engaged in my work as a natural scientist. I believed wholeheartedly in the laws of science and the place it was accorded at the apex of the knowledge pyramid. Somewhere towards the end of my B. Sc studies, I began to question what I was doing. I began to explore the relation between philosophy and science. This led me to develop a special interest in the sociology of education, philosophy of education, history of education and research methodology.

When I began to lecture at the undergraduate level, I relied on the advice and lecture notes of my predecessor. I was asked to teach a particular set of courses. Outlines were given to me and I was expected to deliver the goods. Very unsure about striking out, I

faithfully took the notes offered to me and taught it to the classes. Not having much confidence, I pretty much clung to the notes throughout the lecture. When I began to interrogate the content I was teaching, I felt totally frustrated. It was not what I thought would be relevant for the students going through a particular historical moment at UDW. The courses were very much in the traditional mould of Fundamental Pedagogics that gave operational context to the philosophy of Christian National Education, the ideological apparatus of the apartheid state. For the very first time I felt tainted, an accomplice in this dastardly mission.

I slowly began to move away from what I was given to teach. I had to be creative and politically astute. How could I begin to offer a more relevant course to my students - one that matched the reality that we were immersed in. I decided to not tamper with the broad framework of the course outlines, but radically changed what I was to do in the actual lecture itself. It was when I had embarked on this 'hidden curriculum' that I really felt I was coming into my own. I had cut loose, even if it was a little tentatively but at least I could live with myself, and how I wanted to be viewed as an academic. I introduced a critical edge to everything I taught. I employed the language of interrogation, contestation and education for liberation. Education for me is a liberatory practice.

I like to believe that it was my disavowal of the traditional notions of the academic identity that has made me more willing to question and interrogate my role. It's made me willing to be critical of my own pedagogy and to accept criticism from my students and other people without feeling that to question how I teach is somehow to question my right to exist on the planet. I feel that one of the things blocking many academics from interrogating their own pedagogical practices is the belief that "this in my supposed identity, I have to live up to it", and consequently a fear to question that identity.

I believe that the study of gender and science is not a study about women only. Both gender and science are socially constructed categories, just as philosophy, sociology and research are. I am however, interested in how the making or constructing of men and women has affected the making of science, philosophy, sociology, gender and research, to investigate the development of research for example, locating it in its social and political context.

I believe that the change in the way society or culture constructs women leads to a change in the way research, science, philosophy, sociology, for example are constructed. Research, science, philosophy especially have become male endeavours as a consequence of cultural, social and political dynamics. My feminist engagement with the natural sciences was driven by the deeply rooted popular mythology that casts objectivity, reason and mind as male and subjectivity, feeling and nature as female. In this division of emotional and intellectual labour, women have been the guarantors and protectors of the personal, the emotional, the particular, whereas science - the province of the impersonal, the rational and the general, has been the preserve of men. My feminist consciousness leads me to proceed quite differently. It leads me to challenge these artificially created divisions that are central to the basic structure of modern science and society.

My own examination of my subjectivity lead me to an exploration of the internal dynamics that foster the development of the particular concepts of self and other, subject and object, and masculine and feminine that are characteristic of our time. All three pairs of concepts have through an interaction with each other, in a context of cultural ideals shared by society at large. The internalisation of these social norms was mediated through my education, school, family and my socio-political engagements.

The connections between my subjectivity and my 'science' are subtle and complex, but a central part of my argument is that they are crucially mediated (and maintained) by the ideology that denies their existence. Accordingly the articulation of these connections itself effectively loosens the hold of that ideology. These times represent my earliest attempt to explore the emotional substructure underlying the conjunction of science with masculinity, to understand the culturally pervasive association between objectivity and masculinity. Objectivity, a human goal becomes construed as objectivism, a masculine goal whereas subjectivity becomes construed as subjectivism, a feminine prerogative.

7.7 The Conference Funding Blues

After having a successful first paper presented at the Southern African Association for Research in Mathematics and Science Education conference referred to earlier, I was given the programme of the Women, Work and Computerisation conference in Manchester and encouraged by a friend to submit an abstract, which I did and it was accepted. Then came the next tedious phase of applying for funding. I submitted the necessary documentation and it did its bureaucratic rounds, first in Faculty and then to the university research committee. Then I received this letter telling me that my application was turned down on the basis that I had no prior experience of presenting at an international conference. It also questioned my lack of publications, my poor research track record! Yet again it never mattered that I was carrying an extremely high teaching load with extremely high student numbers.

By this time I was so furious. Members in faculty who I thought understood these issues said to me that I should use my own money until such time that I had built up a respectable track record. Betty Govinden, who was Dean of the Faculty of Education at the time, encouraged me to write to senior management. She would support my request.

I wrote a letter to the senior management of the university outlining my situation and stating just how unconscionable the arguments were. I pointed out that I was always reminded how invaluable a staff member I was. My contract was always renewed without any problems, so why the disjuncture? I queried how one ever builds up a research track record/conference track record/publications track record if one is never given a chance to do so or if the system works against one. By this time I was beginning to get used to having to fight for everything. My letter highlighted a few home truths about the dissonance between the principles embodied in the university mission statement and their translation into practice. To my surprise the decision was revoked by senior management and I received my very first grant to present a paper at an international conference. It became a lot easier once this initial breakthrough was made. It turned out to be very useful for me because I met with the Swedish delegation that was very impressed and interested in what I was saying and trying to do. This culminated in my being awarded an

academic exchange scholarship to Sweden, two years later, that enabled me to establish a vital network of people with similar interests.

7.8 Jansen's Arrival

Prior to embarking on my masters degree I had often heard that there comes a time when you find yourself in violent disagreement with your supervisor: a time when you are able to claim your thesis/knowledge as your own, a time when you no longer wish to be subject to 'his' directives. It is a point of no return after which you finish virtually on your own, or under sufferance and never be on cordial terms again. It sounded like an initiation rite. I found that while supervisors agreed that it was important to be clear about the supervisory relationship, in practice there was lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities. This remains a cause for concern. Whilst this story of conflict, isolation, trauma and fraught discipleship is deeply unappealing, I have come to realise that it is not uncommon. There are some who regard it as the norm..

I was now allocated my next masters supervisor who had studied under the mentorship of Henry Giroux and Paulo Friere. Thus began another devastating chapter in my life as a researcher and academic. She found that she could empathise with me, having gone through similar trying times in her own academic trajectory. She was brilliant, always at the cutting edge of the debates and having a strong grounding in the issues that I was investigating. This refreshing liaison was short-lived. She became embroiled in the tensions that were playing themselves out at the institution and was eventually forced to leave UDW because of the hostile climate. But she opened up ways in which I could further develop my research into a doctoral level study. Her advice to me when she eventually left was to place my research interests above everything else. If my work is not supported, she suggested I join another institution where I would find academic fulfilment. She was a brilliant supervisor in many ways, helping me make links where previously I could see none. She pushed my thinking, adopting the attitude that we were sisters in this 'struggle' and needed to support each other. I had and continue to have tremendous respect for her and her achievements. Her sudden departure left me with the dilemma of finding another supervisor. This was not easy as there were very few people with the expertise and skills to supervise the type of research I was engaged in.

Then Professor Jonathan Jansen arrived to take up a post in the Department of Curriculum Studies in the former Faculty of Education. I recall vividly, my first meeting with him. I had become so paranoid and pretty hostile by then. He could not understand why I was filled with so much anger. Years later he reflected on the fact that I had become a completely different person from the one that he met when he first arrived in the faculty. He, on the other hand, was already surrounded by his fan club, each vying desperately for his attention. I was most impressed by his compassionate approach. He made every attempt to relate to me without any sense of the history of my study or the historical baggage that I had accumulated by then. Despite attempts by some to dissuade him from supervising my work, Jonathan's interactions with me were in true spirit of professionalism at all times. I was utterly exhausted by this stage. I had just completed approximately 120 interviews with my sample for the masters research. They were all unstructured, open-ended type interviews to support the grounded theory approach to my study. I simply heaped all the drafts, the drafts of drafts, the transcripts and field-notes on his desk confessing that I had absolutely no idea where I was going and what I was doing. He took the drafts home and the next day I found a single page from him in my mailbox. All he did was take all the writing I had done and suggest a coherent framework. It may sound trivial and uneventful but it marked a turning point in my life. Suddenly everything was back on track. There was meaning and relevance for me again. It was a truly liberating experience for me. I felt as though the "albatross" was released from around my neck.

More than that he wanted to use my work as required reading for the faculty masters programme the following year. I was terribly embarrassed about my work being used as a reference. This had to do with my lack of confidence in myself, and my research. But Jonathan was reassuring and I slowly began to build my confidence. I must confess though that it helped my career and research tremendously to have someone of Jonathan's status proclaim that my study was important. It changed many an individual's perception of my work. Having Jonathan frame the criticism of my work had tremendous spin-offs. His was the voice of authority and power - this I never doubted when I observed the ways in which people swarmed around him, adjusted their behaviour when he was around, changed their discourse when he was around. Such was the power of 'JJ'. So much for

the 'critical thinkers' in the environment who till this day find it very hard to be truly critical and continue to trash personalities rather than address substantive issues!

Having Jonathan as my supervisor and the dean of faculty marked an important turning point for me personally. He constantly rewrote the rules on what it meant to 'work' as an academic. His energy, drive and motivation, was truly inspirational. But most of all I believe he has, in my opinion, a bigger task of being a role model. I really do wish that more people could emulate him. He is able to engage issues with such a down to earth forthright manner. No affected accents here, no academic verbiage that I continue to witness, in my opinion, in those who really have no idea what they are talking about or alternatively are very insecure about themselves. He calls a spade a spade. He is so clear in his thinking at all times yet he manages to remain compassionate. He is one that always acknowledges everyone and everything - and this makes him so special - because he makes others feel special - he gave me a sense of worth. With his famous last words to me: "Sue, you are a close relative of God, what do you think?"

When I embarked on my doctoral journey, I had no hesitation at all that I wanted Jonathan as my supervisor. When I presented my doctoral work to him midway through the process, he looked and he listened to everything that I had to say. Then his remarks went something like this: " Sue, you are an extremely bright, talented person but what I see here today is ordinary. It is enough to get you a doctoral degree but is it different from the run-of-the-mill dissertations we see being churned out all over this country? How can you take the same stuff and turn it into something fresh and new?"

I was a little concerned because I really thought that I had broken the back of my study at this point. I said to him that I found it easier to report this study in an autobiographical style of writing. His challenge to me was to take the plunge, go all the way and make my own autobiography a part of the data rather than simply a writing style or technique in the dissertation. I was really thrown by that. I came to this study out of my own experiences as a woman academic and researcher yet I was not willing, at the time, to confess my own lived history. I told him that it would not be easy as I still have to work in this institution and still interact with some of the people that may be identified by inference from this study. His advice was to just pour my heart out and he would help me to decide whether it could be done in a sensitive way taking the above concerns into consideration.

In this narrative I did take a conscious decision to leave out certain 'disclosures' that are yet to heal or still too deep but I am far more confident about what I am doing. So my data moved from the broad baseline study to the conversations with the women academics and researchers, culminating in my own testimony.

7.9 On 'dead-wood' Dilemmas

The year 1996 saw me interview for my post and secure permanent employment. Once I had completed my masters degree I was promoted to lecturer. Having convinced myself of my capabilities, I was soon offered the opportunity to test my abilities before an interview panel for a permanent position. I had mentioned on my application form my feminist commitments and activities, and I was given the chance to discuss them at the interview. I was in a reckless frame of mind when I attended my interview or interrogation as it turned out to be. I was asked about my strengths and weaknesses, and I offered as one of these weaknesses, my gender. The rejoinder was that the institution was committed to equal opportunities. I remarked that the commitment was not self-evident from the constitution of the interview panel there being more males than females there, as well as my personal experiences at the university. I quickly realised that this repartee was very risky and might cost me the post, but fortunately (or unfortunately) it did not. The humiliation of having to be subjected to such a process when I had lectured for eight years by then in that department without any complaints about my competency. By this point in my life I didn't seem to care. I was certain that I would not get the job, not because I did not qualify for the position, but because I chose to be an independent thinker and not align myself with those in authority. I responded confidently to the questions, some of which bordered on the idiotic and inane to say the least. And then came the inevitable – why did I have such a weak research and publication track record?

It was suggested to me by the woman who was supposed to be the 'gender representative' on this panel that it was not good to have only lectured at one higher education institution in my life and that I should try to teach at as many institutions to gain experience - which in my opinion was laughable. I couldn't make sense of the relevance of this at this point in time. I really thought that she was there to ensure that I was not going to be violated by

way of any gender -related insensitivities/harassment by the predominantly male panel but she was quiet throughout my ordeal and when she did speak she was ludicrous. I was told that in the rare possibility that I get the appointment, I would have to be on probation for a year. Later I was to learn that the panel member from the staff association expressed how appalled he was at my heavy-handed treatment by this panel. In his words, I was given a ‘grilling’, arguably reserved for professorships. The university, I was told, had to be careful because it was trying hard to remove some of the ‘dead-wood’ from the institution. In spite of the fact that at that point in my life, besides not having journal publications to my credit (I did have 6 conference publications and reports to my credit!). I knew I had a stronger research profile than a certain male colleague who was being considered for an associate professorship, simply because he had published two journal articles and absolutely nothing else. At this point in his career he had not even presented a paper at a national conference, let alone an international one! I, in the meantime, had presented two international papers and one national paper at conferences of great repute and was already asked to consider being a keynote speaker at an upcoming conference. I was beginning to establish myself in international circles with key researchers and academics in my fields of interest. I was being affirmed and treated with much respect and dignity outside of my faculty but was constantly subjected to demeaning behaviour within the institution.

Such were my times of apprenticeship at UDW.

7.10 I Was Not Born a Woman of Colour but became a Woman of Colour

A number of my earlier attempts to raise the issue of race were thwarted most vociferously by women, all women, not just white women but women of colour who had so readily turned their backs on their own “coloured” identities, dismissed in a manner that lead me to believe that I was being obstructionist, divisive. For me this was hard to comprehend. It was and still is an uphill battle to point out that such thinking comes from a particular ideology – an ideology of division, which is but one way of engaging the race issue. My fear reminded me of the times I found myself in feminist settings posing questions about theory and practice, particularly about issues of race and racism that were seen as potentially disruptive of sisterhood and solidarity. Again and again, we women of colour

find our efforts to speak, to break silence and engage in radical progressive political debates, opposed, ironically at times by other women.

In my attempts to come to terms with what I was experiencing I was on a steep learning curve. I did not consciously construct myself as being a woman of colour but my experiences and my environment constantly told me that I was. I recall my engagements with one particular white woman academic who had established herself as a researcher in her field. It was never easy to get her to relate to me as an equal. I say this because from my observations, even when we had other white lecturers join the staff, they were treated differently by her. One could almost smell the camaraderie. It served to underscore my feelings about being an outsider. Many would dismiss this as being overly sensitive but women of colour know the feeling of invisibility and hypervisibility. It was the assumptions that she made about my status and purpose in the workplace that was particularly hurtful. But not being one to back down, I continually challenged and contested these dynamics to the extent that she labelled me troublesome. Its quite interesting how this label surfaced from time to time from context to context, being disruptive, being arrogant, when their authority was challenged.

At a meeting to discuss the planning of the lectures she monopolised the meeting (with the support of the white professor who was chairing the meeting). She presented a plan that so obviously worked in her favour, giving herself all the comfortable teaching time slots and sufficient space to do her research. I objected strongly when I realised that if I accepted this plan I would be committing academic suicide. My academic year would be murderous with the way the plan unfolded. I tried to give voice to my concerns and was told by her that the 'nice Indian' lecturer who had taught the course prior to my arrival had had no complaints. Well one thing rang true that day – all those 'nice' Indian lecturers tried desperately to be accepted by the white academics even if it meant selling their identity to achieve this. It was so apparent when one observed the way in which they changed their style of talking when in the presence of the white lecturers. None of them in my opinion had the courage to stand up and be counted. It was almost as though they were ashamed of their identities and in a state of denial. Coming back to the meeting my objections were ruled out of order by the white professor who was so blind to his own racism and colonialist thinking. He would always remark when he saw me dressed in

traditional eastern attire that I was 'going ethnic' that day. When I looked at his western attire and remarked: "so have you", he never quite understood!

This particular woman tried unsuccessfully to bully me into submission. I recall one particular encounter over the telephone when she demanded to see me in her office. I explained to her that I was in the midst of something that I could not leave at that moment. I suggested that she come to my office instead. She was flabbergasted at my suggestion. I stood my ground and told her that I would only be able to come up at such and such a time and not immediately. She came barging into my office talking to me in a raised voice. I asked her to sit down and tried to force some sort of respect and dignity into this interaction. It was my constant refusal to back down that seemed to infuriate her. Eventually she said something that made me suddenly understand what was going on. She said to me that I was 'just' a junior lecturer at the institution. She reminded me that I was employed specifically to do her 'donkey-work' and should not aspire to be anything more. I was shocked but surprisingly in control of myself and actually began responding in a way to make her understand how racist her actions and thoughts were. I told her about how I felt about the way she spoke to me and the way she spoke to the other white lecturers, some in the same 'junior' category as myself. I tried to tell her that nothing she could say or do would make me submit to her will. I may be mistaken but I did feel that somehow I reached her that day. Many years later we were to meet at a workshop to decide on a research team for a national project. She arrived there and faced an even more confident me. We were all equals at this meeting – the chair ensured that. I spoke freely and responded without any fear about black women's concerns. She took one look at me and decided that she would not be available to work on this project!

I came to experience what racism meant as an act of oppression at the level of the individual within my feminist context. This was not something 'out there' but was produced and reproduced by individuals and individual behaviour. The deeper paradigm shifts had not taken place. I was to be proven right by subsequent events that led to this individual leaving the university. But it sensitised me to the issue of racism that we black women are faced with. It is not always possible to truly enter into interactions on an equal footing. Some white women honestly and innocently believe that it is their duty to help us black people who don't know how to liberate ourselves. Unfortunately I have seen many black women buy into this type of relationship. Perhaps they have not freed their

minds from the white 'baaskaap' mentality. Sadder still is that they are not able to see, understand and critique their own behaviour.

I have often been labelled as communist or a black consciousness (BC) supporter, for having strong political views as well as my stand on the rights of people of colour, concerns about who speaks and for whom, whose voice is heard and how it is heard. The crucial difference to me, as it now becomes clear, is that it has nothing to do with committee structures or forms of decision-making, but rather with how power and authority are exercised and experienced.

This led me to believe that I was drawing a blank in every direction I pursued and I rapidly became disheartened. There were times when I felt like a stranger in a foreign land, not understanding the language, habits or culture of the people of whom I was an integral part. Initially, I found little support or help in coming to terms with these issues from the rest of faculty. There were of course different reasons for each individual's inability to understand the issues I was raising. Many of them were too deeply embedded in this culture and could not see its special characteristics.

I grappled daily with the nuances of the interconnectedness of my feminist struggles, within the context of our particular brand of South African racism and its constricted boundaries of race. The challenge of negotiating these politics of racial fragmentation sensitised me to issues of social justice and equity. I was beginning to understand how power, phallogentrism and patriarchy manifested themselves at the micro and macro levels.

The institutionalisation and acceptance of a particular brand of feminism in the academy highlighted another set of contradictions in my own life as feminist. There was always a sense of alienation, dislocation and marginalization that accompanied my ascribed racialized location within white dominated academia. I was never the right colour, gender or age. On many occasions I experienced the contradictions of invisibility and hypervisibility. In fact, the experience of these contradictions is, in the main, responsible for my particular reading of injustice and my visions for social transformation. However, my strong intellectual and political commitment to feminism enabled me to remain committed to the creation of feminist communities, founded on the abovementioned

grounds, than those that I had experienced in many so-called liberal white academic circles.

My efforts as a woman of colour, to challenge and deconstruct the category “woman” - the insistence on recognition that gender is not the sole factor determining constructions of femaleness, was a critical revelation for me, one which led to a profound revolution in my feminist thinking, which truly interrogated and disrupted the hegemonic feminist theory and feminist identity that was being produced primarily by white, academic women.

I turn now to aspects of the journey that marked the development of my doctoral studies.

7.11 The Birth of an Idea

I was in Sweden, on an academic exchange program with Lulea University in 1996 when I was invited to reflect on my experiences in academia as a participant in the Women’s Forum Doctoral Studies Programme. I began to develop tentatively an issue that could be explored further for doctoral studies. My ‘whining’ in the focus group discussions were about grappling with theoretical frameworks in education, my concerns and debates about methodology, and my passion for issues of social justice. The focus group discussions were like therapy; how I felt about what I was experiencing as an academic, as a researcher, as a woman, was gradually crystallising into something. I still wasn’t quite sure what that was, though! My conversations with friends and colleagues, further refined my thinking and served to give the direction I so desperately needed.

Anita Westerstrom, my Swedish counterpart in the exchange programme, whom I had met at the Women, Work and Computerisation Conference in Manchester in 1994, had often shared our views about what it meant to do research in the diverse contexts of South Africa and Sweden. My dislocation from the South African context and immersion in the Swedish environment brought home to me the glaring disparities. Being an academic and researcher in Sweden made me realise how I had come to accept certain bizarre practices and behaviours as the norm in my country when it didn’t have to be so.

I learnt very quickly how an abundance of wealth could influence research productivity. Resources were plentiful, support was precisely that, but most of all the high level of professionalism, the respect and trust were phenomenal. I was an outsider looking in but it didn't feel that way. The super-efficient international office was an extremely well oiled machine, ensuring that my every need was satisfied.

The department I worked in had a weekly seminar series where members of staff presented research in progress, preliminary findings, theories, etc. I was amazed at the emphasis and constant foregrounding of what constituted professional conduct at seminars, such as what it meant to be genuinely critical, how to engage in points of contention, etc. This for me was a tremendous learning experience. My discussions with Prof. Henning Johanssen who had developed a world-class doctoral programme in education, were most inspiring. One of the key aspects of his programme, was the deliberate, focused component on professional conduct, a concern which resonated with my own. These were in contrast to what I had observed over the years. There were particular cultures emerging and being affirmed in academia, and the inability by some academics and researchers to understand what it really meant to critique. Often I have witnessed downright obnoxious behaviour accepted as critique. Raising hell, passing insults, camouflaging vindictiveness in the guise of critique, etc. Just having the ability to tell people off, irrespective of substance, has in many cases been affirmed as critique by others. It is not uncommon to observe how the dominant voice in a setting automatically becomes accepted as the dominant view irrespective of its content.

My participation in the doctoral programmes focus group discussions in Sweden in 1996, helped to identify niche interest areas: women in higher education, educational theory, feminist theory at the academic level and my engagement with women's struggles at the grassroots or activist level. It also forced me to engage with what it meant to be a doctoral student. My meeting with Sandra Harding at Lulea University in Sweden opened up an interest in her work and for the first time a real engagement with her writing. Sandra Harding directed my thinking to the issues of knowledge, where it comes from and its role in creating an unjust society.

Looking back on the various versions of the research proposals that I produced, it came as a pleasant surprise to me to realise how much personal growth had taken place during

that time. Christina Mortberg, Lena Troya, Sandra Harding and Elisabeth Gulbrandson of the Norwegian Women's Forum all contributed in focusing my interests in higher education, women academics, their careers and to examine the problem from the perspective of knowledge production, identity and subjectivity and power relations in the research arena.

7.12 The Women in Research Project

Arriving back in South Africa in 1996, with a file of very ambitious research proposals and some poorly focused questions, I received an invitation to participate in a workshop on Research Capacity Building hosted by the former Centre for Science Development (CSD). This initiative emanated from a meeting at which the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, had expressed concern and alarm at the under-representation of women in academia and research. My colleagues Renuka Vithal, Betty Govinden and I were the only women from UDW that responded to the invitation. Campus co-ordinators were drawn from this meeting. I was encouraged by Renuka and Betty to agree to co-ordinate the process for UDW. I was very wary of this as I had no experience in this regard. I was also aware of the politics of the campus at the time. There was so much tension everywhere that I was loathe to begin to co-ordinate a project in this hostile climate. Renuka assured me that I would not be in this venture alone and that she would alternate with me in the co-ordination process. I was still very dubious about all of this. I was concerned about the issue of representation and wanted desperately to be a legitimate co-ordinator for UDW. Renuka and I decided to approach the Women's Forum to ensure that we had the support of the women of UDW to continue with this project as their representatives. The Women's Forum gave us the go ahead only after initial misunderstandings about the priorities of the Forum were ironed out. Until then the Forum had only concerned itself with matters like sexual harassment and abuse. They found it difficult at first to understand how this research project would be relevant and not just another esoteric exercise. It was at this point that Renuka and I began to view this project as a tool for women's emancipation on campus at the various levels. We thought it would be a good way to mobilise women around feminist issues. This was easier said than done because of the political undertones prevailing on the campus. People were packaged according to their affiliations to a particular staff association. Here was a way to get

women academics in particular to begin to construct their identities in other ways. This was difficult. Due to the volatile climate that existed, everyone was suspicious about our intentions. Some senior women were not comfortable with the fact that we were two nonentities who were now featuring prominently in the university research ethos. Their response to us was that this project was not necessary. After all, “there was no problem with women in research”.

At this point I wished I had not so valiantly agreed to be the project co-ordinator because all of this was being done in addition to my normal lectures and administrative duties. I tried to get some relief explaining that if I did not participate, our institution would be left out of the project. This fell on deaf ears partly for the reason that there was so much instability on campus that no-one was prepared to take responsibility for any such decision. So I continued, feeling the strain because of the lack of support from the institution, the lack of resource and the lack of infrastructure. Yet this project would benefit the institution. Ironically when the messy phase of the project was over, a number of women began to query our participation in this project, asking why we and not others were representing UDW. By then we had had enough and simply responded by saying that it was an open invitation initially and we were the only ones to take the issues seriously. So began my involvement in the Women In Research Project. Then the really difficult work began, of attending meetings, participating in workshops, obtaining feedback from our constituency, meeting deadlines, etc.

7.13 Wickham’s Workshops - Back to Basics.

My participation in the UDW Introduction to Research workshops surprised most of my colleagues and students. I was ridiculed for sitting at such a basic workshop designed mainly with masters students in mind, but the experience was a breakthrough for me and provided further impetus for my research.

This workshop was aimed mainly at the postgraduate masters level students in the humanities and social sciences, many of whom were my students. When I signed up for the entire series of workshops the organisers expressed surprise. This was aimed at novice researchers, so why would I want to attend. It was going to be held during our

winter vacation, I could be doing so much else with my time. They suggested that it was going to be extremely basic in nature and I would be bored to death. My response was that I was so muddled that I couldn't make sense hammering out a doctoral research proposal. I was so caught up in the psyche of being an academic, a teacher rather than a learner. I was desperately seeking something and perhaps just attending these workshops as a learner, as one of the students, together with my students, I thought would create the breakthrough I would need to get me on my way with my studies. Everyone was convinced that I was wasting my time going back to basics. But in my mind I felt that that was exactly where I needed to be - back to the basics.

It felt good to sit there and free my mind for that week of all that constituted my life as an academic. I was a student kick-starting my research - as the workshops were aptly named⁴. Wickham's⁵ professional, calm, nurturing manner was just what I needed. She took us through a process of unpacking our minds through a whole series of questions. But some others did not have the same experience as I did. I guess I was ready and at the right place at the right time.

I even had one of my students work with me as a partner for one of the sessions, asking me questions that slowly but surely helped to hammer out a research question, a design, a proposal. By the end of that week I had a "Eureka" experience. Everything had been so near, yet so far. These workshops helped me make the links with my personal interests and motivations and to reshape them into a viable doctoral proposal.

I learnt one valuable lesson that week; that sometimes what you need may be something that you think you don't need. I have since realised the value of attending workshops. The learning is developmental. These workshops helped me to pull together all the focus group material from Sweden, into a 'do-able' researchable topic for my doctoral work.

Linda Shepherd (1993) describes a range of researchers and their projects and traces the subjectivity in their choices of research focus. "Kick-Starting Research" did achieve precisely that. As Wickham (1997) states:

⁴ Kick-Starting Research: A workshop conducted by Dr. S. Wickham.

⁵ Sharman Wickham is a consultant with Research and Academic Development (RAD)

“In workshops I encourage participants to think of research as involving ‘me-search’ and argue that the psychic energy created by these linkages fuels and drives the project and, indeed, the researcher him/herself”

I had concerns and ideas but did not have the language to express myself, lacking the tools. I recall expressing this concern to a colleague whose response was simply: “Develop your own language, develop your own tools!”

I turn next to my eventful work on the UDW Research Ethics Committee

7.14 I Like your ism but is it Art?

As vice –chair I was not taken seriously at first. They thought I would just toe the line and fulfil bureaucratic requirements pertaining to representativity and gender correctness. This was even mentioned at a meeting where they ticked off that they now had a woman representative so they still needed a medical practitioner and a legal practitioner! They were almost relieved that my presence made the committee more representative. They had satisfied the criterion of representation and from then on it would be business as usual. I was at pains to point out that I had qualifications that enabled me to comment on the various fields of study. Though I was regarded by the committee as the social scientist (their label for me!) I did in fact have a Bachelor of Science degree to my credit. Matters pertaining to the sciences were not readily referred to me. I always had to make a point of having my comments taken seriously. At first they were not but as time passed by the committee realised that I did appear to know what I was talking about. But I must mention that there were a few male colleagues on the committee who were very supportive especially since they realised that the comments and recommendations I was making were relevant, important, substantive, informed and insightful.

The chair of the committee, in my opinion, was a good manager. The moment he sensed that I was competent to conduct meetings and hold my own, he suggested that I be appointed as the vice-chair of this really ‘prestigious’ committee. For me, it was my commitment to ethical issues in education and research that kept me motivated and driven

and abreast of things. It didn't feel like an onerous task at the time because I quite enjoyed being in a position to read everybody's research proposals and reflect on the research. I did help to streamline some of the activities of this committee. I even spent much time with two male colleagues preparing the draft document on a code of ethics that would govern research at UDW. I approached the task seriously and surfed the 'net' and made useful international links on research and ethics. I took these draft documents back to the Faculty of Education and we successfully work-shopped the issues. I enjoyed the experience because my colleagues raised many pertinent issues and made useful suggestions on how to proceed. It was quite a pity that there was no follow through on the issues and documents. I was then caught up in much travelling, presenting papers, conducting research, workshops and seminars, delivering lectures; I was also involved in institutional visits to India, Sweden, and South East Asia. The university was yet again going through some extremely turbulent times. I recall colleagues in the department where I worked in Sweden, downloading news about UDW and pinning it up on the notice boards of the institution. They were terribly concerned because their colleague, Anita, was at UDW on an academic exchange programme and was in the midst of this turbulence.

Things never really took off from where we had left it. The committee chair was constantly changing as the politics on the campus changed and we were never able to restore the momentum again. Because of my visits abroad, new vice-chairs were elected and my involvement with this committee became more marginal as different approaches were used and different mechanisms set up to deal with the reviewing of the research protocols. But for me the important outcome was the growth and development that came through reading and reviewing other peoples' research. I also benefited tremendously from the insightful and rich debates and input of a few of the other members on this committee and the affirmation and support that I eventually received from them.

I was becoming sensitised to aspects of research, ethics and matters of social justice. These issues seemed to underscore everything that I felt passionately about, everything that stirred me, moved me, had to do with restoring human dignity and pride, and fairness and justice.

It was in this frame of mind that I embarked on organising the Faculty of Education weekly research seminar series. This unfortunately, turned out to be a time-consuming thankless task.

7.15 On a Wing and a Prayer

Setting up a programme is not easy when one has to deal with highly frustrated, unfulfilled academics who snap at the slightest problem. I was encouraged to take on this task by Jonathan who promised that he would be there to support and assist me. He dutifully did this by way of securing high profile regional, national and international speakers for my programme. The seminars were very popular and attracted a large number of academics, postgraduate students, NGOs⁶ and CBOs⁷. Initially the process was simple. I set up the programme, sent out the invitations and publicised the seminars with the help of Shakila Thakurpersad, a programme administrator in the research unit. At three o' clock every Friday afternoon, I would heave a sigh of relief as I handed over to Jonathan who would chair the sessions, field the questions and summarise the proceedings. I did not mind this because it left me free to really take in the presentations and reflect and deliberate on the issues raised in the debates. I had also to admit that I did not feel comfortable at all with the task of chairing. It made me nervous and I was not too sure how to conduct the proceedings. I always admired the ease with which Jonathan did this, creating an atmosphere that was so congenial.

Then on one particular Friday we had some important people coming to speak. The Senate Chamber was packed to capacity. Shakila then informs me that Jonathan was unable to chair this session as something really urgent had come up. I was frantic. I begged some of my colleagues to do me the honours. To my disbelief they were quite surprised at the fact that I thought I was going to make a mess of things. They reassured me, telling me wonderful things about my abilities and then left me to chair the seminar.

⁶ non-governmental organisations

⁷ community-based organisations

I recall how nervous I was that I even read something out incorrectly from the programme. I misread the title of the presentation. A colleague quietly prompted me through the introductions. It did get easier after that initial bout of nerves. I was so upset with Jonathan when I did meet him. I told him how he had inadvertently thrown me in at the deep end to sink or swim. He was totally surprised at my response saying that he had no doubts at all about my ability to chair a seminar.

I must confess that the experience of chairing all the Friday afternoon seminars for a period of two years was a learning experience in many ways. Whilst I continued to develop my chairing skills, I also was being kept abreast of research in education, innovations and cutting edge debates. Today I don't find it a problem to chair meetings, seminars and paper presentations. In fact, I was invited by the CSD to chair a session of their national workshop on Women in Research in 1998, to which I agreed without any hesitation. I was even lauded for the successful way in which it was done.

More recently I was asked to chair a session on gender issues at the Ninth Symposium of the International Organisation for Science and Technology at UDW in July 1999, which I did with such gusto that some people came up to me at the end to congratulate me on the way I conducted the proceedings. One of the participants did not turn up for the round table paper presentations, which presented a slight time-related problem. I would have too much time to allow for a discussion of only two papers. When I mentioned this to Margaret Keogh, the organiser, her reply was: 'just wing it with your own stuff'. So I did just that. No problem at all!

7.16 As I write....

As I begin writing up my dissertation there are tremendous upheavals at the university. The financial situation is bleak with the real possibility of redeployment and retrenchment. We are asked to restructure our entire academic programme to attract more students, by creating more market related courses. The implication of all of this is that I was obliged to attend an increased number of meetings and workshops concurrently with my teaching and research programmes. The restructuring has meant tight time frames, more research

to restructure, more co-ordination of module development and programme development and more administrative duties such as those related to the strategic planning committee.

I am still mulling over the very same thoughts and issues that have plagued me my entire life in academia. I feel that this period at the university is the most unsettling it has ever been. So many have adopted a wait-and-see attitude, resulting in staff morale being at an all time low because of this uncertainty. The strenuous process of curriculum restructuring which has occupied us for the major part of 1999 has reached yet another critical moment, approval by the university management. It could not have come at a worse time. I really did need to keep focused on my research but it became harder all the time. I am being pulled in so many directions at the same time. I am struggling yet again to come to terms with aspects of human nature that I find so disillusioning: the backstabbing, treachery, dishonesty and deviousness displayed by academics in a bid to prove themselves as academics of worth, so as to avoid retrenchment.

It hasn't been easy. My HOD passed away at the beginning of 1999 and I was expected to take over all his postgraduate supervision. I also had to take on his entire teaching load because the faculty has no money to pay for more staff. This meant having a totally new lecture load with little time for preparation and no resources available. So it was a scramble to prepare myself for the entire year. My concerns about the lack of proper planning when it came to module allocations, falls on deaf ears – it is a rat race, a first-come-first-serve basis and nothing changed.

I still have no computer in my office and have to work in the staff laboratory, which is not always readily available to staff members. I refuse to bring my own computer to my office because of the number of burglaries we have had. The faculty staff computer laboratory has an obsolete email and internet system so it can take anything between a day to a week to try to download an email document. To receive the expertise one desires means having to go to an Academic Computer Services centre in the Engineering building where the technology exists but this is in another building physically removed from my office complex. You have to bring your own paper for printing and sufficient disks for your work.. If you run out you have to go back to your office and so the day goes. This is a serious concern for me especially with regard to my time analysis.

Come mid-year I am quite unexpectedly asked to repeat my entire lecture load at what was to be a newly established satellite campus in a remote part of KZN. I repeatedly raise the issue that it is the same individuals who are already carrying heavy lecture-loads that were now required to teach again. No-one seems to care yet there are individuals in the faculty carrying low teaching loads or no teaching loads and being paid just so they can get on with their own research, attend conferences and write papers for publication. I felt at times as though I was subsidising them, creating this space for them to be really productive whilst I did the 'donkey work'. I say this because when the viability of the faculties was being assessed, it was based on a staff-student ratio. My own internal audit of faculty revealed that the individual staff student-ratio varied greatly from individual to individual. Although this placed a tremendous burden on those of us that had these high student ratios, nothing was done to alleviate the position. We were all treated equally whenever there were duties to be allocated. I could not believe that even my requests to have fewer students to supervise on teaching practice because of my heavy teaching load was turned down. Everybody would be treated equally I was told. When I asked why this was not the case when teaching loads were determined, it was suggested to me that my queries were destabilising the faculty. I thought I would go crazy. It seemed as if everyone I was interacting with had 'lost it'. I felt like Alice in Wonderland trying to communicate with the Mad Hatter.

My participation in all of this has meant that I am left with fewer and fewer hours to spend on my studies. It was alarming that whilst some members of faculty took unilateral decisions not to attend meetings and workshops, no action was taken against them. They spent the time writing papers for publications whilst I was engaged in a process of job creation through the development of new programmes. This restructuring process came to be a little club eventually, with the same faces doing all the work all the time!

My July 1999 vacation was taken up with marking and the processing of these marks and examination results. I was chairing a session at a conference and so another week was taken up. This led straight into the masters module that I was to teach during this vacation. I asked yet again for some relief from some of the teaching load that I carry, not an unrealistic request considering that others have had this kind of space created for them so that they could complete their masters or doctorates or research projects, in the past. No response. Instead I receive a questionnaire from the deputy dean requesting

information concerning my publications, conference participation, and research activities. No questions are asked about my teaching commitments. It is never brought up. Yet it makes serious inroads into the time at my disposal.

I walk to the staff laboratory again to try to download supervision documents. No success. I have 43 email messages to respond to so I try to print some out and save some so that they don't get erased, then realise that I have a meeting with a colleague to finalise an honours programme offering from our division. I get back to the office and try to refocus. The meeting begins but we find it difficult to continue with the discussions because of information that now places retrenchments firmly on the cards. How do we plan what to teach and who will teach if we are not sure whether we have a job or not? We also discuss the lack of coherency in the way in which the institution is operating. All the while we are trying to continue with the current years programme as though nothing else is happening. It is 1.00pm. There is another meeting at 1.15pm. I have not had anything to eat or drink and will not have time to do so. I am completely burnt out by now and ask my colleague to convey my apologies to the meeting.

I am also busy with school-based supervision of my final year students. I have to travel to schools and still return to campus for my evening lectures. I am still marking assignments for the purpose of generating yearmarks.

I try to fit in some doctoral work at the end of such a typical day!

The setting of examination papers takes much out of me. I have to set approximately six papers comprising about 25 different questions. This is not an easy task. I am also aware that I have to visit schools to supervise my student teachers.

I look through the masters programme in Social Justice that I have developed. There are so many possibilities but if only I had the time, the support of people I could rely on and follow up some of the issues that need to be explored. I ask the graduate assistant to do a literature search for some of the modules for the year 2000. I give her an internet site to surf and download information concerning these programmes. She comes back a day later saying that this was not her job, as she understood it. She was working for the head of department and was very busy marking his assignments. I consulted with the dean and his

response is favourable. I try to locate the assistant and am utterly frustrated in the process.

7.17 As sand slips through the hour-glass, so do the days of my life!

All exciting new possibilities are often on the brink of being eclipsed by the difficult milieu in which I am required to operate. Just as I am beginning to realise quite how innovative I might be, through my experimentation and investigations, the hostile climate begins to throw shadows over my achievements. With the benefit of both distance and hindsight it may now be important to record that for me personally the realisation of my goals were inextricably linked to the political, the social and the cultural.

In the autobiographical accounts analysed here, I have concentrated on the interplay of the issues of race and gender as it unfolded within the phallogentric culture of the university. This required a selection of what I perceived to be significant events and tried to relive them through my testimony. Only this time around, my testimony incorporates the many ways in which I grappled to theorise or make sense of what was happening. This reliving of the events has provided me with the opportunity to reshape my relationships and engagements through a validation of my past and reveals a meaningful whole that may not have been apparent as I journeyed through the events.

The qualitative issues of phallogentricism are seldom unpacked such as the inequalities that existed in terms of teaching loads and workloads. Issues of redress, whilst they come up ad nauseum , in policy documents and mission statements, see very little translation into the day to day experiences of women and black women in particular. The amazing part is that whilst many are able to theorise such issues, they continue with the day to day planning and their everyday lives, gender-blind and race-blind. When it suits them they talk about all things being equal such as the number of schools to supervise and the number of students to supervise. But attempts to extend this reasoning into issues of the teaching load evoke the most ludicrous, absurd responses imaginable.

Although I am a little more self-assured in my knowledge that my new ways of working or feminist gaze in teaching and research are of value to other such scholars and students, I

could not avoid the regular bruises to my confidence as the institution assiduously seemed to ignore me all these years. The opportunities for career advancement within the institution begin to recede into the dim distance. Gradually, I amongst others, recognise the reality of this, its effects on our daily lives, on our ambitions and on our teaching and research. For the very first time I contemplate the possibility of looking elsewhere to realise my ambitions to transform the nature of research in the humanities and social sciences, still confident in the belief that I could be an academic leader and that I have something distinctive and creative to present that students and scholars alike seem to appreciate.

*There are so many exciting intellectual pursuits that I would rather be engaged in. But the minutes and hours slip by. And before you know it - “**when Sleeping Beauty finally woke up, she was 50 years old**”.*

7.18 Conclusion

Through the testimony contained in this chapter, I have opened a window into what would generally have been considered the subtext of any research process. My personal autobiographical accounts of my life in the academy serves to unravel and demonstrate the lived reality of a woman trying to do research. Not only does it throw light on the day-to-day experiences of women in research but it also provides an example of how the researcher-researched dialectic and the subject-object dualism can be engaged within the context that the personal is indeed political.

In the final chapter that follows, I restate the research dilemmas that framed the study, the basic themes that underpinned the dilemmas, the implications for methodology as well as make suggestions to address the impasse that has been made explicit by the three data strands that I have used to support my thesis.

Chapter Eight

In Between The 'No Longer' And The 'Not Yet'

What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from...
A people without history
Is not redeemed from time, for history is a pattern
Of timeless moments...
We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
(Eliot, 1970)

8.1 The Project never really ends

The 8th October 1999 saw the culmination of the Women in Research Project at a celebratory function at the University of Natal. It was a conference that celebrated the women who initiated, struggled and sustained a project from naught to success. It was a proud moment for those of us that had survived. For survive we did! We had entered into the initiative as novice women researchers and already one could see the difference in that group, including myself. We had certainly come a long way. We were no longer the unsure, insecure group of women that had begun the project. We, the women in this collaborative project presented papers, reflecting on our findings for our institutions. My colleague Renuka Vithal and I deliberated much over our presentation. Since our institution UDW, made up the largest proportion of the KZN respondents, much of the findings for KZN were applicable to UDW. I had already made a presentation earlier at the CSD regional conference, reflecting on the KZN findings. I had also presented a paper at the Women in Science Conference in India in 1998, analysing the WIR Project within the context of feminist theory as praxis (Singh, 1998). What could we say that would be different and stimulating? We decided to theorise the process and focus instead on how the survey, an inherently quantitative method, was brought into conversation with feminist organising principles. We demonstrated how the questionnaire, the biographies of the researchers as well as the process, all constituted data and how the biographies brought

more depth to the analysis than a survey would have. We are now working on developing this presentation into a paper for publication (Singh and Vithal, 1999).

Almost on cue, a male member attending the conference stood up and began to offer an extremely sexist, arrogant and patronising assessment of the project highlighting what, in his opinion, was the reason why women were not the knowledge producers in this country. His tirade was immediately engaged by the group of women academics and researchers in the audience. His outburst served only to further endorse the fact that the struggle continues - the 'project' never really ends! To my feminist ear his utterances were nothing new. What listening to him did, was bring home for me, the degree to which women in South Africa, as elsewhere, whether rural, urban, middle-class, working-class, educated or illiterate have experienced gross and fundamental damage to their humanity and human dignity as a result of the enforced split between the "domestic" and the "real workplace", the "personal" and the "public/professional/political".

In my role as researcher, I have tried to conduct a very different kind of study; that which was intertwined with the story of my 'research project', my personal and professional trajectories. This consideration at the end of the research process brings me full circle to the beginnings of this study. My commitment to my broad feminist gaze made it imperative that I acknowledge the centrality of my own research experience: the tellings, livings, relivings, and retellings. My starting point in this study has been my own experience that was subsequently translated into a doctoral research problem. I tried to gain experience of my experience through constructing narratives of that experience. I constantly dwelt on the questions of who I was in the field and who I was in the text that I was constructing whilst I was writing about what was essentially my experience of the experience. It became apparent that many of the ways in which I came in touch with my own experience and came to know what I know of my experience were through relating my story and my subjectivities that constituted my feminist gaze. This has been the marked difference from the male-stream research that constitutes the norm in the humanities and social sciences. Although I employed various methods of data collection, I have tried to keep the 'story' of the research central to each.

I had tested and developed many of the arguments that I presented in this study at various stages of the research process, by way of conference presentations, workshops and

seminars in South Africa. My travels have taken me from Germany to India, Sweden to Norway and back to India, culminating in a highly productive conference presentation and academic programme at the Moscow State University in November 1999. I was afforded the opportunity to test my ideas and helped to further refine the study. I have come into contact with intellectuals, activists, politicians and ordinary citizens, all of whom have played a role in the ongoing process of crystallising my thinking. All of this feedback, was continually worked back into the study.

8.2 Storming the Tower

That gender discrimination occurs in the research arena has been proved in many studies, but as e.g. Hawkings and Schultz (1990, 47) point out, the scarce empirical information on the character and nature, form of discrimination and the supporting mechanisms is scarce. With the gender sensitive statistics that I have provided in this study, it is now possible to answer the questions of macro level structural inequalities in academia. But qualitative methods were needed to reveal the invisible and hidden mechanisms and obstacles that affect women's successes and failures. Thus I have demonstrated through the perspectives of the six women's own conceptual and theoretical framing of their experiences encountered as black women in academia, that women are still treading on foreign and often hostile territory of the male domain. I have shown through the testimonies of Saras, Shakti, Phumzile, Mandiswa, Thandeka, Zinzi, as well as my own, that our academic, political, social and cultural struggles tend to be quite different from those men engage in. The fact that we may have a stronger presence in the research community these days does not mean that the subtle forms of exclusion or mistreatment have vanished. There are no formal obstacles that prevent women's access to academia and research but as (Caplan 1993, 17) argues:

“Typically, when one form of prejudice (such as sexism or racism) is labelled as unacceptable, it does not simply vanish; rather it tends to take an increasingly subtler forms (Caplan 1993, 17)”

I have argued throughout that knowledge production always occurs in specific sites, historical trajectories and socio-cultural contexts. Unlike many of the rationalist, objectivist and positivist master discourses, my focus on a broadly feminist epistemology

has highlighted knowledge as contextual and political. I have considered it important not to divorce “experience” from theoretical knowledge, but to foreground the conditions and relations of production within which women researchers’ work is generated. Hence much of the theorising is contained within the testimonies of Saras, Shakti, Thandeka, Phumzile, Zinzi, Mandiswa and my own in the form of ‘making sense’ of our lived experiences. This was done with the intention of breaking the ‘mould’ of what it means to theorise in research. The act of theorising is not only that which is constructed in the formal language of the traditionally accepted paradigms and perspectives – it can also be contained within the common sense, everyday language of individuals.

The challenge I faced was to identify and describe the activities, processes, norms, values and attitudes that collectively accomplish the undermining of women’s involvement in knowledge production. I have been cognisant of significant achievements in terms of policy interventions and even legislative change which have had their origin in women identifying, describing, analysing and naming behaviours and experiences which have defined and controlled our access to research.

The structural and systemic barriers to women in academia in South Africa have been documented to some extent (summarised in de la Rey & Quinlan, 1997); but studies documenting women academics participation and experiences in research are virtually non-existent. Drawing on the research literature on gender and higher education (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Nicolson, 1996; Brooks, 1997), literature on career development and women (e.g. Apfelbaum, 1993; Harris, 1995) and lastly various studies on women and work (e.g. Sheppard, 1992; White, Cox & Cooper, 1992), I noted from my statistical data that the proportion of women in research had increased only at the margins and only relatively temporarily. Despite these accretions to the profession, the effect has not succeeded in essentially altering the identity of research in the humanities and social sciences as is evident from the data generated from the WIR Project. It has not even gone so far as to constituting a relatively minor change of ‘adding on’ a feminist touch. The essential structures and patterns revealed by the Audit, creating the identity of academia and research in South Africa, remains a case of ‘business-as-usual’.

The enterprise of research, especially for those in positions of authority and control, has changed to a more business-like style. In other words, the rare instances where women

have entered academia in greater numbers and proportionately more have risen in the academic hierarchy, have not, in themselves, altered the characteristics of academia and research. Insofar as a small number of those women promoted have had feminist inclinations, this has not, sadly, had a distinctive effect on the general characteristics of the profession or its academic programme. It has not entailed any significant paradigmatic shift. I do not wish to suggest any indictment of the women themselves nor of the growth of feminist scholarship. This is merely to point to the tremendous difficulties entailed in such a task of trying to deconstruct and redefine a now well established male-stream academic and research tradition. But this is not to dissuade from the pursuit of my mission of attempting, in some ways, to feminize, democratise or humanise the endeavour of research, through those involved in teaching and research.

Summers (1993) has spoken of the significance of the work done by women in naming phenomena like sexual harassment, date rape and domestic violence, phenomena 'that have probably always existed, but which we did not fully understand until we saw them. And we did not see them properly until we named them'. Eveline (1994) also draws attention to the impact of the generation of terms such as 'sexual harassment' and 'paid work' in publicly rolling back and exposing to scrutiny, analysis and challenge, some of the constitutive advantages of men. Using the examples of sexism and sexual harassment, Spender (1980) explains that prior to the availability of these terms, it was the reaction of the women that was problematic, if they objected to men's behaviour, it was women's behaviour that had to be explained as anything from neurotic to ridiculous. With the generation of these terms, and more especially, with the value shift that has accompanied them, it is men's behaviour that demands justification and not women's objections to that behaviour. Spender concludes that these women-generated meanings offer a way of measuring male behaviour against something other than their own standards and in the process that behaviour is recognised as unreasonable and unacceptable.

Throughout the duration of my study, I was constantly subjected to the view that this was just a feminist intellectual exercise about women in research, which did not really have any relevance for the real world, as it did not directly benefit women or girls. hooks (1994) in her argument about the role of the intellectual endeavour makes the strong claim that practice is ultimately linked to theories of the subject, the social, learning and teaching. With this study it is hoped that one derives a clearer understanding of the links and

implications of women's position in academia and research within their social, political and cultural world.

8.3 Looking back, Moving forward

In my introduction entitled "The Story Began Long Ago", I tried to achieve many things. Firstly I tried to set the tone of the dissertation by deploying a conscious and deliberate autobiographical, narrative style of writing. In setting the research context, identifying the problems and expanding on the methodological and theoretical aspects, I alluded to the dilemmas I faced with respect to my adopting a feminist gaze in the planning, decisions and outcomes of my study. The questions that I constantly engaged were; what did it mean to conduct a critical analysis of women academics and researchers in the humanities and social sciences with respect to their roles as knowledge producers? How did my own strong feminist leanings shape what I was doing both in the field and in the text? How did these feminist concerns play themselves out in the way in which I chose to write? At this point it is hoped that the study did in fact serve to be an exemplar of how to translate the 'personal is political' into action.

In Chapter Two I critically analysed the position of women as knowledge producers in the academy by presenting a snapshot of trends, outcomes and findings of various studies in South Africa as well as trans-nationally. I concluded that to a large degree, the trends were similar despite some of the interventions that have focused mainly on increasing the number of women in the academy. Stanley (1997:5) aptly sums up the situation thus:

"the greater the status and monetary reward, the less likely there are to be women in organisational positions; and the greater the intellectual approbation, the less likely it is that what women do will be included within it".

My own belief that I had a distinctive approach came from several different sources. I presented a theoretical framework for this study in Chapter Three, arising from a growing maturity based not only on chronological age but also on personal research knowledge and experience. Inevitably as a feminist and researcher I am familiar with different theories of feminism, oppression and organisations and their cultures but more than that, I have tried to address my schizophrenic research tendencies of the past by framing my research within

my feminist gaze. Within this framework I argued that interventions that focused only on increasing the number of women in the academy were inadequate unless they were seriously linked to the concept of climate or culture of the universities. The hostile, male-stream climate has to be interrogated and challenged in order for real change to occur. I have argued that this particular historical moment offers an ideal opportunity in our transformational endeavours to move away from portraying women as the 'problem' and addressing the culture of higher education in a bid to creating a socially just academic and research environment.

In Chapter Four I reflected on methodological issues through the feminist gaze that I had developed over the years. Indeed, in my own case, and presumably that of other women academics and researchers, I believed and still believe that I have something qualitatively different to present as a woman academic and researcher. Besides describing the fieldwork, I also theorised it within some of the generic issues of a broad feminist framework such as issues of empowerment, capacity development, the subjective and the 'othering' of women of colour in particular.

I have always wanted to go further than trying to just 'add on' a feminist approach to the conventional, mainstream one, and argued in that chapter as well as throughout this study for the development of an alternative research perspective or an explicitly non-sexist strategy for research in the humanities and social sciences, which takes seriously the variety of feminist critiques and their potential for democratising and driving emancipatory research practices. Eichler's approach (David, 1989), for instance can also be applied to my own situation.

Through the growing network of feminist scholars I realised that inter-personal skills could not be used without the recognition of gender relationships, too, and the purpose for which they would be applied. It was this network that began to develop a sound basis for the assumption that, as a feminist, academic and researcher, I had more than a set of critiques of the disciplines to offer. I also had the personal qualities thought necessary to try to transform research through my own activities, for instance, my participation in the Women in Research Project, the analysis and findings of which I presented in Chapter Five. This growing assurance, however, was not born of arrogance but pain, derived partly from the developments in my own teaching and research.

Our particular racialised arrangements in South Africa have also resulted in particular consequences for black women academics especially. The effects of the ravages of apartheid are still being played out in academia today, as the statistical data of the Audit has shown. My analysis of women in research focused on the demographic profile of the province of KwaZulu-Natal in relation to the national trends. In Chapter Five, I questioned and unpacked the statistical data within the historically designated race groups showing that whilst the situation may have improved slightly for white women, black women were not even making an impact on the employment trends at universities.

In order to arrive at a deeper understanding of why black women in particular were not gaining access into academia, I pursued, in Chapter Six, a strategy of excavating the reasons for the problems women face as knowledge producers but through the eyes of six black women academics and researchers from the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It is now widely accepted that much of the research on women and women's issues is seen mainly through the lens of white women and is about the white experience. Race does not feature as an issue in these studies because it is seldom considered relevant. This type of research also serves to further entrench the 'normalisation' of the white experience. My deliberate attempt to use a 'tinted' lens to gain a different perspective of the problems clearly demonstrated why the category of gender cannot be viewed as being unitary in nature. This does not automatically imply a fracturing of the initiatives to end women's oppression and sexist practices because the generic aspects will always be common across the category 'women'. However, what it does signal is the way in which women's colour serves to further complicate their gendered experiences. The findings of the Women in Research Project and the coupled with the conversations with the six black women academics, revealed more layers of the problems women face in the academy. I took up the challenge by Weiland (1995) for more research on career biography to reveal how academic lives are constructed, whilst allowing all the testimonies to further the theoretical developments alluded to by Nicolson (1996) of how women experience academia and research.

I also considered it vital to demystify my own textual identity as a feminist signifier together with the six women academics in the study. As women our research identity is eminently tied to the conditions and relations of production in which we work. It made

sense to me, to analyse how for example, power and knowledge relations are structured in the university as well as in other contexts, by analysing how we live them and how they inform and politicise our work. Thus in Chapter Seven I relived, explored and revealed critical moments in the construction of my own identity as a black woman academic, one who is both researcher and other, by way of a restor(y)ing of my academic and research life.

In this the final chapter I try to “pull things together” by revisiting some of the issues with the intention of charting a way forward and making suggestions and recommendations.

8.4 Pulling things together

The data that I chose to present supports my thesis that knowledge production does not occur within innocent spaces devoid of the personal, political, social, economic and cultural contexts. I identified a range of behaviours, patterns of interaction, habits, values and day-to-day ways of being as the means by which this male-stream climate for women academics is achieved. While the cumulative effect was experienced at the individual level and its institutional impact is apparent at the collective level, these excluding and marginalising behaviours and activity patterns are so often very difficult for women to expose, object to or resist. For male-stream culture is expressed through a multitude of apparently harmless, neutral and long-sanctioned actions and activities which are in themselves embedded in the institutional climate, and which collectively make up its culture.

Women’s choices in these circumstances appear to be limited to the following two: to leave, which many do, whether prematurely or simply by not progressing as expected to higher levels of study or work, or to try to cope with, adjust and accommodate, and so accept as an unproblematic given this climate and culture which excludes, marginalises and at times demeans us. Neither approach offers any potential for change or progress, either for the individual woman facing these choices, or for the institutions themselves, or indeed for the nature and directions of higher education as a whole.

My interviews and statistics clearly suggest that the discrimination has not vanished. Similar kinds of experiences were reported not only by novice but experienced academics as well. Whilst it was important to analyse the ways and forms of hidden discrimination and make them visible, it is even more important to understand how academic women react to these incidents and to find out the kind of survival strategies they have developed. Since discrimination is understood as a process, both short-term reactions and long term reactions are important to take into account. By reactions I refer broadly here to feelings, actions, changes in self-image or changes in how the respondents related to research and academia.

In research and academia, career progress is often dependent on the opinions of a relatively few gatekeepers. Many women fear being labelled as “difficult” by complaining or opposing discriminatory practices or behaviours, believing that such behaviour might endanger a career in a highly competitive and often closed labour market. This certainly becomes an effective way to keep discrimination invisible.

Some of the observations can be summarised as follows. Women reported not only long-term depression, paralysing feelings, self-doubt but also rage as reactions to the discrimination they have experienced. On a cognitive level, these experiences have shattered fundamentally the illusions many women entering academia had of universities as a mentally and spiritually highly developed ‘temple of knowledge’. Some women have reported that their awareness of gender inequality in a broader sense has increased (cf. Wager 1997). This can also lead either to action or to a certain kind of resignation: “this is how things are, I see them, but it’s a man’s world and there is nothing much one can do”. Several studies reported elsewhere help to corroborate this.

Caplan (1993) summarises several USA studies on factors that make women feel themselves less welcome in academia than their male colleagues. These are lack of encouragement, sexist joking and sexist use of language, belittling women and their work, sexual harassment, even greater harassment of women of non-dominant groups such as ethnic minorities and feminists, double standards and stereotypic expectations, and finally, the general masculinity, racism and heterosexism of the academic environment (ibid, 30-31). These are all phenomena related to institutional and organisational culture and interaction.

Bagilhole's (1993, 433) recent research on women in academia in the UK suggests that the strongest forms of discrimination are hidden and unintentional. These experiences convey to women a message that they are not, and can never be, full members of the research community (ibid.). Her study revealed that women encounter many forms of hidden discrimination from isolation and exclusion to open hostility.

"The continuum of outsidership" was common to American academic women studied by Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) both in the group that had left the university and those who had received tenure. They did not use the concept of hidden discrimination but their results actually deal extensively with this phenomenon. Professional marginality and exclusion from the centres of professional authority were repeated in the experiences of both the groups studied.

Although the national Department of Education does not offer figures cross-tabulated by race and gender, it is evident from the Women-in-Research survey that women of colour are even more seriously under-represented at the higher ranks in universities. To focus too narrowly on the gap between white women and women of colour would, however, obscure the greater disparities between women academics of all races and male academics. Despite the diversity of women's experiences in the academy it is valid to speak, with caution, of "women academics" as a group, both in South Africa and internationally.

Male-dominated norms of knowledge production, the nature of universities as organisations, promotion systems which tend to value men's contributions more highly than women's, the multiple roles which women play at home and at work - all of these factors contribute to women's under-representation in the upper echelons of the university hierarchy. While similar problems can be seen around the world, women often interpret their situations differently, giving different weight to issues such as sexism.

Women-in-Research respondents were surprisingly positive about their situations and about the support they were receiving, and were not widely inclined to identify sexism as a barrier to their research. While three-quarters of respondents saw job commitments as a significant obstacle to their research, only a quarter regarded higher workloads than male colleagues as a significant problem. Because terms such as "sexism" and "support" were

not defined, however, and because only women were surveyed, many questions remain unanswered. Further analysis on the Women-in-Research data set will give additional insight into the issues under consideration, but it is clear that a considerable amount of research, particularly qualitative research, is needed. This is particularly important if the gender dimensions of women's experiences are to be separated from the context of higher education in general. The WIR Project is one step closer to helping to create an enabling environment for women to participate equally in research and contribute to meeting the needs of society in the production of new and relevant knowledge. It should also help to redress any equalities and imbalances in this field.

I investigated the position of women academics through an analysis of patterns of exclusion, segregation and differentiation. These patterns were investigated in part through an analysis of the statistical data drawn from the WIR Project. With this statistical profile I generated and constructed a contextual framework within which we begin to understand how women academics are positioned especially in relation to their research trajectories. I intimated at an early point in my dissertation that my focus was on those data strands that demonstrated points of contrast, conflict and interest (most certainly for me the researcher) from the national findings. Once I identified those issues I focused on them for further explication. For a more comprehensive and detailed account of the national and regional findings, see the Women in Research National Report (1999) and Singh (1998). Direct comparison of the general trends and trends by race group between the national and the regional data showed that there were parallels, similarities and differences in patterns of women in research. Academic women understood their under-representation in research and academia to be the result of power, patronage and prejudice, as well as the more systemic context of the phallogentric, patriarchal and sexist power-relations of higher education. It becomes apparent from the research findings that academic women's perceptions and experiences are varied and reflect issues of identity and difference across a range of factors such as age, race, marital status, class, caregiving, academic status and productivity.

The recognition of a range of seemingly parallel issues and problems for the women of colour does not mean that there were no specific social, cultural or political dimensions that altered the position and experiences of women academics of colour within academia. It is important to mark the point of departure for women of colour in understanding their

position in academia. The conversations with women academics and researchers of colour presented a snapshot of how their experiences were infused with the cultural, social and the political. My own testimony revealed further layers of what it meant to be woman, researcher and academic of colour

At the end of this study I am faced with the question of what are some of the things that can be done to increase women's participation in and active production of research?

There is a dire need for structural and attitudinal change towards women academics and researchers. Higher education and universities in particular, need to prioritise the development of new sets of criteria and practices that challenge the status quo. I try to deal with some of these issues in the following way. I revisit the WIR Project to establish what has developed since the culmination of the audit of women academics and researchers. I examine some of the implications of what I have learnt from the audit, the conversations with the women of colour as well as my own confessional narratives, for improving the climate of academia and research; lastly I focus on the theoretical issues and their implications for developing democratic, emancipatory research practices for the creation of a socially just academic climate.

8.6. Women in Research - where are they now?

The WIR Project has ended but I focus on what this has meant for the CSD, now a division of the new National Research Foundation. The information is drawn primarily from Natasha Primo who was the project leader. Primo (1999)¹ has stated that the establishment of the NRF presented an opportunity to explore how programmes and activities of the former CSD and FRD could be aligned to more effectively serve the research community. One of the recommendations from the preliminary task teams, and included in the business plan submitted to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, was that the mandate of Women in Research (WIR) be expanded to include women researchers in domains of science other than the social sciences and humanities.

¹ Newsletter of the National Research Foundation. No 1 October 1999. page 6

To date, the WIR project continues to have two main focuses: an equity-orientation, and a transformation-orientation. It has seriously sought to address the need to develop research capacity among all women researchers and academics in the social sciences and humanities in order to raise their participation in the production and application of knowledge. Its second broad focus has been to develop the capacity to conduct gender aware research and increase research and understanding of how gender inequality is maintained and reproduced in various spheres, including the higher education sector, so that the status quo may be challenged. To a large extent, the WIR project achieved its objectives by providing research development support to individuals, and collectives of women researchers throughout the research cycle, as well as working with gender studies programmes and related activities that seek to help strengthen analytical and research capacity for gender-aware research.

“The expansion of the WIR’s mandate is necessary and logical given the under-representation of women in the natural and mathematical sciences, engineering and technology. There is indeed need for a systematic NRF strategy (rather than disparate, ad hoc attempts) to develop research capacity among women scientists.”

This led to a new grant category being developed in the agency budget. Through this grant, the WIR project seeks to encourage collaboration between experienced and early career researchers and women postgraduate students across different institutions and in different disciplines.

One of the key tasks of the WIR Project is to provide ongoing support to the researchers who successfully applied for the grant. As part of its research capacity development objectives, the WIR Project will also encourage unsuccessful applicants to resubmit research proposals and will provide them with the necessary support.

The WIR Project has also developed a database of women academics and researchers at universities and technikons. It is hoped that women researchers will actively use the database as a mechanism for facilitating collaboration. Information about her position within the institution, research skills and expertise, areas of research interest, and areas where research support is needed is provided for each researcher and academic on the

database. This directory is available on the Internet. A total of 1 150 women researchers in the social sciences and humanities are listed in the database.

While the focus of the WIR Project has been on increasing the number of women who access research funds, and thus increasing their profiles within the academic and research environments, it is equally important that we examine and revisit the kinds of research and knowledge production in which women researchers and academics are involved. To that effect, WIR plans to direct its attention towards finding ways to support existing and emerging women's and gender studies programmes at South African universities and technikon, exploring the possibilities of establishing and supporting collaborative relationships at the international level, involving South African women academics and researchers and women abroad. It will also encourage the use of data gathered through the audit of women researchers and academics for further analysis. There is considerable scope for interested women researchers to establish user-groups that would pursue more in-depth analysis of the data set. The data set has been archived and made available through the South African Data Archive (SADA) in the NRF.

8.6 Issues and Recommendations

Capacity building for research has to be grounded in the reality that the process of gendering, in most contexts radically skews access to self-worth. For men, a group in one cultural context that may mean that self-worth is rarely questioned. For women, in another cultural context, it may mean that speaking one's mind, with a sense of its value, is an act of arrogance. Research capacity building programmes for women need to consider carefully the implications of connections between self-esteem and the readiness to identify research questions, appropriate methodologies, analyse data and to write.

The discussion that follows, focuses on issues that need to be addressed in order for the phallogocentric discourse of the academy to be seriously challenged. It may appear to be a 'shopping basket' but the issues have arisen out of the various strands and concerns of the study.

8.6.1 Critical Mass

Borne out of my experiences participating in the WIR Project I have come to realise how critically important it is to identify a substantial core of individuals within each institution who are willing and able to provide leadership and a consistent focus on women's research capacity building. Together with my colleagues I have tried to support and institutionalise these efforts, mobilising key people at different levels of the organisational hierarchy, such as chairs of research committees responsible for allocating funds, developing and implementing policy, and setting institutional priorities. This becomes vital in efforts to transform the academy, as it can become mentally and physically exhausting to try to sustain the process without such support.

Preceding this is the question of local leadership. It was evident throughout the WIR Project that our local transformation efforts to develop women's research capacity, depended on the tireless and consistent efforts of dedicated individuals, who quickly came to have an understanding of specific institutional structures and cultures. However, the constant reality of over-extension and all the problems that flow from it, were ever present aspects of the process, especially since Renuka Vithal and I felt that we had to serve on as many committees as possible in order to give voice to and protect the interests of women in research. This underscores the fact that for strategies to be effective, one cannot rely on the informal or volunteer work of a few committed people. Groups have to be established that would play a role of providing leadership to support of women's research. Whatever their constitution, they need administrative support and recognition in order to function optimally. This has to be an institutionalised, rather than an ad hoc arrangement in order to attract people with a sense of commitment.

8.6.2 Mobilisation

Our efforts to seek legitimisation for the WIR Project saw us having to negotiate and mobilise the existing UDW Women's Forum that was set up specifically to prevent discrimination and improve the university climate for women. Our input broadened the scope and functions of the existing forum by our insistence on focusing on challenges or obstacles inhibiting women's research capacities. Prior to this, the forum made no effort

to increase women's research capacity. It is therefore important to mobilise such structures with the purpose of increasing the number of women and monitoring things like pay equity, hiring, promotion and tenure processes, these efforts ultimately contribute to an improved climate. Those who are able to demonstrate salary discrimination through a process of comparing our salaries with those of men of similar rank, tenure and scholarly productivity, should receive increases to match those of the "comparable" male colleagues.

Thus calls for the establishment of an office on campus specifically focused on improving the campus climate for women, must be initiated. This would serve to identify hostile aspects of the environment for groups of women (taking into account race, sexuality, disability and position within the institutional hierarchy) and to propose pro-active strategies for improving the climate at all levels of the institution.

8.6.3 Networks and Support systems for Women Researchers

It is important to establish and maintain a number of networks for women to significantly increase or enhance their research efforts. Some of these could be organised as part of Women's Studies programmes, others can be created through for example the Commission for Gender Equality. Some could form networks through collaborative grants specifically designed to provide women to focus on their research endeavours, such as the Women in Research grant. An important first step in organising such groups is to inventory the interests, expertise and strengths of women in the institution. The WIR Project has developed such an inventory and now has available an audit of women researchers, teaching activities and existing activities and existing infrastructures and support services which serve each institution.

Advanced feminist studies centres, not commonplace in South Africa, would facilitate faculty research groups around themes of common interest. These groups would promote the reading of key articles or books together and discuss a range of research issues and problems, such as feminist theory or qualitative analysis. These groups would enable women to become sufficiently well versed with issues to incorporate it in their own work. This would enable them to become acquainted with new approaches to research, but more

importantly these groups would provide safe havens for women to present, for instance, early drafts of papers they were writing, obtain feedback and gain expertise.

There are many different kinds of support systems that can be and have been organised to strengthen women's research capacities. The Women in Science and Engineering Initiative (WISE) that provides mentoring for graduate students and junior academics, also has an internet site for job and funding announcements, sponsored research seminars for people with shared interests. There is also a focus on improving the overall climate for women in science departments. Similar groups exist internationally for women in law and public policy

From my years spent in an untenured position, I believe that it is important to organise programs for untenured women where they could learn about university policies and practices from key administrators in a supportive environment and come together to set clear priorities for action and work to implement their goals.

These networks and support structures could apply for funding to offer a series of faculty development seminars designed to help people integrate research on race, class and gender into their courses. Participating faculties should for instance, be given a one course teaching load reduction. Although the formal goal of these seminars could be curriculum transformation, the course reduction and the supportive collegial relationships formed would help many get more research done while they were participants in this program than they had before.

There are many different kinds of groups that can be established to support and nurture research productivity and skills development. Some may rely on institutional support whilst others could be organised on an informal basis to provide the kind of intellectual community women need to thrive on their campuses.

While internal support groups are important for women, regional and national networks for scholarly exchange and mutual support have been extremely important for me professionally. Most professional organisations now have women's caucuses. Their goals should include undertaking a range of projects including curriculum transformation, developing bibliographies and directories, planning conference sessions to ensure

participation of women in these organisations, collecting data about women in the disciplines and making sure that women are represented on conference panels and within the leadership structure of the organisation. Participation in such groups would enable women find potential mentors and research colleagues, learn about job or funding opportunities and about the “culture of their discipline”. In addition they would develop leadership skills and gain visibility and the recognition of their research (through organising conference sessions, for example.), experience that they may not necessarily get in their own institutions. Such experiences are especially important for junior faculty to help them become mature scholars.

8.6.4 Establishing Concrete Priorities

It is essential to identify some clear and “do-able” priorities for increasing women’s research capacities, together with some kind of a timetable for accomplishing them. This can and should be done both on an institution-wide basis and at more local levels e.g. departments. There is a need to identify ways in which a consensus can be built around priorities. As our modus operandi in the WIR Project had shown, interviewing and meeting with women is a useful way in which to establish priorities. This could take the form of key questions to which women academics can respond. They could be asked to identify from their own experience or observations what obstacles or barriers existed for women: things that undermined their confidence or job satisfaction; what efforts that had improved conditions for women; what their image or vision was of the transformed institution, that is, what it would be like once all the changes needed to improve the environment were in place. Their responses to these questions could form the framework for establishing priorities and a plan of action.

Another useful way to establish priorities, is to bring interested women together to brainstorm ideas in response to key questions concerning research, as was the case with the women in the former Faculty of Education at UDW. Once this brainstorming session is over, women can share their ideas with the group and then the group votes on what they think are important and feasible. After this process, a group can be called together to formulate an “action agenda”. For each priority they will need to identify concrete steps entailed in organising the activity; a timetable for completing the steps, who should be

responsible; what resources are needed and how they might be acquired; what campus allies can be counted on for support and finally what obstacles or barriers need to be addressed before implementing the priorities. If the ideas are generated by the very people most likely to benefit from them, the process itself tends to build community and consensus and identify potential leadership for implementing plans.

It is important to set clear priorities and specific timetables so that women don't get overwhelmed. There is a need to recognise differences among women depending on their specific disciplines or fields of study, their career cycle, family circumstances or age. One should not assume that any one set of strategies can be applied for everyone in a "one size fits all" manner. It is necessary to address the particular needs and circumstances of categories of women (not individual researchers) e.g. information regarding grants opportunities to participate in conferences seminars, available to all women. But it is imperative to look carefully at which category of women is able to take advantage of such opportunities and which category is not able to do so. Priorities and action plans for implementation need to be established.

8.6.5 Institutional Initiatives

The institutions need to focus particularly on trying to establish an egalitarian research culture by way of developing an institutional research policy and plan which would focus the development of women in research against short- and long-term goals. Whilst it is imperative that in-house journals be created to provide opportunities for publication especially among women researchers, greater attention needs to be directed towards increasing the incentives for research. This could take the form of more time allocated to research, monetary rewards, recognition of research, and the possibilities for secondments and internships at research institutions.

Research forums need to be established that actively maintain and support democratic, emancipatory research principles, at the faculty level. These forums would then play a role in establishing research as a priority within schools, units, etc. Innovative planning of staff research mentorship programmes, employment of teaching assistants, and creative timetabling should then release more time for research.

Whilst it is important for the institutions to plan, co-ordinate and implement research training and support across the university including research workshops, seminars, internet training and facilities, there is a need to consider the appointment of a specific women in research co-ordinator to stimulate research production and take up the issues concerning women researchers.

It is important to understand that many of the issues are interrelated without becoming overwhelmed by the complexity of the issue and the problem is a good place to start. Again, collaboration and mutual support should be the framing principles.

8.6.6 Challenging the ‘invisibility’ of whiteness

White women academics and researchers need to understand that in purporting to express the concerns of women they are implicated in their own ethnocentrism by way of marginalizing the concerns of women of colour. Dominant white middle-class women in higher education have firmly placed the power struggle as one between women and men and has “enabled white women to ignore that black women are just as (if not more so) oppressed by racism” (Stephen, 1994:23). It also allows white women to ignore the fact that “white women historically have exercised and still do in some circumstances, power over black men, as well as black women” (Joseph, 1981; Barret and McIntosh, 1985).

Intervention programmes and equity initiatives in South Africa are under an obligation to include the issue of race and in the process acknowledge the impact of racial oppression on women of colour by white men and women throughout the apartheid era. It would be counter to the equity mission if attention is focused on “women” when what this really means is “white women” (Spelman, 1990:169).

The invisibility of whiteness came through quite strongly in the WIR project however what I have tried to show in my study was how the silence was deafening. By drawing attention to the fact that few women of colour responded to the audit, I revealed the situation of women of colour being virtually non-existent in academia and research, whilst for many of

the white respondents it was simply the case of not being represented at the higher levels of academia and research.

One of the recommendations that come out of my study is the urgent need to have initiatives that focus on both race and gender.

“Affirmative action programs need to address the complexities of society. They currently assume sharp distinction between black and white, male and female rather than recognising the layering of these categories” (Behrendt & Kennedy, 1997:110).

I argue strongly for the active targeting and recruitment of women identified as having the potential to fill certain positions, in tandem with a support network to ensure that women are not set up to fail!

If we are really serious about challenging the status quo in academia and research, then the issue of race has to be dealt with in a mature, professional and constructive manner by all stakeholders. This would require serious introspection by white women academics and researchers to examine their own attitudes and beliefs not only in regards to women of colour but to themselves as well.

The issues that I have raised have serious implications for the broader women’s project of ending sexist and oppressive behaviour towards all women. I firmly believe that once the issues of race have been engaged with, interrogated and unpacked, this can only lead to a far more strengthened women’s caucus.

8.6.7 Implications for Theory

Work in this area has done much to extend the range of feminist theoretical models in the analysis of the operation of power within the state and institutional structures. Feminist theorists have moved feminist theoretical models away from the traditional socialist, radical and liberal feminist framework analysis of state power. As Arnot (1993: 190) remarks: ‘The result has been seen in the more sophisticated reinterpretations of the relationship between patriarchy as a political power structure and state formation.’ Similar

work has been undertaken by Walby (1990) and Witz (1990, 1992) in the UK. The emerging theoretical frameworks within which feminism is operating in the 1990s has led to a deconstruction of monolithic conceptions of power. Feminist theoretical debates have moved increasingly to a position where a critique of state and institutional frameworks and practices is framed within a broader analysis of 'gendered concepts of citizenship and male defined notions of democracy' (Arnot 1993: 191)

Many feminist theorists have drawn on poststructuralist and postmodernist frameworks to facilitate a broader based analysis of power. Yates (1993) examines the role of the Australian state in relation to feminism and policy formation. She explores the links between feminist discourses and policy debates and considers how the articulation of policy is sometimes a reflection of shifts in feminist educational theorising in Australia. Yates (1993) outlines the historical shifts from a policy discourse around equality to that of difference (Arnot 1993:7). She also considers the ways in which feminist theory has been used and reinterpreted to construct new policy agendas by the Australian government. Yates goes on to show how feminist debates are managed or contained by the state

The failure of the state to deliver equality of opportunity has led to a shift in emphasis in feminist theorising from equality to 'difference'. In this context, Weiler provides an interesting analysis of the links between feminism, postmodernism, postcolonialism and theories of social justice. Her claim that:

“Writing in the early 1990s, feminist scholars have been influenced in varying degrees by the challenges of postmodernist feminist theory and by postcolonial critiques of racist and Eurocentric ideology and forms of domination. These theories have raised serious questions about the unexamined voice of authority in Western modernist theory, claims to universal truths set forth by a small and privileged group of theorists and the possibility of formulating theory or policy around concepts such as freedom, social justice or truth.” (Weiler, 1993: 212).

This shift in emphasis has been described as the cultural politics of difference (West, 1990) and has been incorporated into feminist, postcolonialist and anti-racist writing in the 1990s. It emphasises the need to embrace multiplicity, heterogeneity and diversity. Weiler points out that it is an important part of the feminist project to highlight the fact that male theorists continue to ignore or sideline gender in their analysis. However, the “challenge for feminist theorists is to try to take account of and comprehend the complexity of all

forces of identity formation acting upon women in relation to educational institutions and policies in a rapidly changing world” (Weiler, 1993). There has been a rethinking of feminist models with the emergence of more reflexive feminist theory and models that acknowledge and address the realities of women in different sites and with different histories.

It is in this context that I adopted a more reflexive feminist theoretical framework that acknowledges historical and cultural specificity in its analysis of women academics and researchers. This study has also been framed by a focal interest in signification, in power-relationships, in the harm done by master-narratives, and in the way institutional structures are controlled. In emphasising the centrality of subjectivity, identity and knowledge in academia and research, I urge a re-thinking and re-vision of subjectivity, identity politics and formation, and knowledge from the standpoint of feminist educators. I argue for a break with the kinds of discourse and theory-building that have remained under the control of men. . Men, particularly in the academy, still claim discursive authority; women are still expected to identify their positions with theoretical signifiers that are fundamentally paternal.

I signalled my intention to challenge this throughout this study by engaging in practical ways, a redefinition of “subject” and subjectivity, of science and scientific, and argued for an emancipatory research of possibilities. I have tried to interweave the issues of the diffusion of power and the ambiguities of “empowerment”. I have demonstrated a commitment to identifying democratic, emancipatory feminist praxis, illustrating what it signifies to “empower” and what, given the institutions in which women academics try to do research, what empowerment may imply in specific contexts. Feminist principles demand a critical examination of what lies below the surface. They demand confrontations with discontinuities, particularities and the narratives that embody actual life stories. They compel renewed attentiveness to the construction of knowledge and the meaning of life.

I have sought to argue for the politicisation and democratisation of research in the humanities and social sciences. I believe that such a democratic, broad based approach is imperative if we are committed to addressing the transformation of research in a meaningful way.

It is important that a range of strategies is adopted to address issues of discrimination and gender imbalance that face academic women. But in order to confront these inequalities a change at the level of policy making is required. In countries such as Australia and New Zealand, feminist educational theorists have had a greater impact on the articulation of policy by national government and in their analysis of the relationship between feminism and the state more generally (see, for instance Brooks, 1997).

Relational, practice-centred, contextualised, open-ended, this study has been developed in accordance with the feminist gaze that I advocate which incorporates the generic principles of feminism. It provides an exemplar for what it means to go in search of new emancipatory modes of research that refute the old authorities and undermine old institutional controls.

8.6.8 Emergent Issues

I intimated in my introduction as well as in my theoretical framework, my engagements with Jansen's earlier attempts to critique the scenario of knowledge production in South Africa. I make a (re)turn to that issue.

The white, male researcher in South Africa still remains very entrenched in the spaces of power that remains extremely conservative. The issues are really about the status of knowledge production and the kinds of engagements that have to occur. The terrain is a rocky one and has to be negotiated strategically. We need to urgently begin to raise the issues of the sexist and racialised character of knowledge production in South Africa and the role and the participation of women researchers as well as researchers of colour in the knowledge production process.

The engagement about the place and role of white male researchers and academics has to be more focused. It is imperative to establish and broaden the conditions where researchers of colour can participate much more forcefully in this arena in South Africa. This would serve to give added elaboration to the effects of the absence of indigenisation of intellectual research and output. Such an approach would ensure that those who wish to

play a gate-keeping role in the field of research, become more reflective and critical about their own roles as researchers in a highly racialised society. It would also begin to make tangible the African Renaissance that is much talked about but never unpacked. These issues have three components that are interrelated: problems of democracy, problems of human rights and the problems of poverty. They define Africa's place in the global economic, political and social universe. By not challenging the hegemony of whiteness within research and academia, we as researchers often end up bolstering inherited regimes of race and Eurocentrism.

I want to suggest a rethinking of the links between the positions of power held by white women in research, the subject of their theorising and the kinds of analytic tools they deploy. In addition, serious intellectual, analytic and political engagement with the theorisation's of women of colour has to occur. Instead of this work being largely appropriated and often erased, it needs to feature in the institutional memory or canonical formulations of knowledge. The token inclusion of our texts without reconceptualizing the whole white, middle-class, gendered knowledge base effectively absorbs and silences us. We need to say that as women firstly and as women of colour in particular, our theories are plausible and carry explanatory weight not only in relation to our specific experiences but have value in relation in a much wider arena.

Much of the current research in the humanities and social sciences has been cast in the mould of postmodernism. But postmodernist theory, in its haste to dissociate itself from all forms of essentialism, has generated a series of epistemological confusions regarding the interconnections between location, identity, and the construction of knowledge. Thus, for instance, localised questions of experience, identity, culture and history, which enable us to understand specific processes of domination and subordination, are often dismissed by post-modern theories as reiterations of cultural "essence" or unified, stable identity. Postmodernist discourse attempts to move beyond essentialism by pluralizing and dissolving the stability and analytic utility of the categories of race, class and gender. But this strategy often forecloses any valid recuperation of these categories or the social relations through which they are constituted.

The danger is that if we dissolve the category of gender for instance, it becomes impossible to claim the experience of sexism. Likewise if we erase the category of race, it

becomes difficult to claim the experience of racism. But the relations of domination and subordination that are named and articulated through the processes of sexism, racism and racialization still exist, and they still require analytic and political specification and engagement. Epistemologies of colour will need to proliferate, building on Afrocentric, Asian, Third World (Spivak), and other marginal group perspectives. More elaborated epistemologies of gender and class, and feminisms of colour need to emerge. These interpretative communities need to draw on their marginal group experiences as the basis of the texts they write, and seek texts that speak to the logic and cultures of such communities.

There is a dire need for these race, ethnicity, and gender-specific interpretative research communities to fashion interpretative criteria out of their interactions with the post-positivist, constructivist, critical theory and post-structural sensibilities. These criteria will necessitate an emic, existential, political and emotional approach. They will require that the personal be brought to the forefront of the political, where the social text becomes the vehicle for the expression of politics. The first reflects the belief that the world of human experience must be studied from the point of view of the historically and culturally situated individual. Researchers will need to consider what it means to work from their own biographies, projecting into the worlds of experience that surround them. They would also need to learn to value and seek to produce works that speak clearly and powerfully about these worlds. For feminism, then, the structuring of new modes of research consciousness through praxis becomes both politically and socially necessary.

8.7 Work in Progress

The theories, concepts and practices in research, have rendered women invisible or marginal, positioning man as subject and woman as 'other'. As a result we as women have become alienated from the arena of research and academia. To recover ourselves as sociological, human subjects, we women must begin to theorise from our own experience and make our actual practices visible so that we locate our inquiry in an everyday world. Then only can we create a climate that is authentic for women's lives such that a woman's direct experience becomes the ground of her knowledge.

I have analysed my direct experience in so far as I understand it to shape or have shaped my feminist practices. My direct experience by its very nature has always undergone interpretation. What I chose to include was inevitably shaped by conventions of the discourses within which my work is conducted. My sense of relevance is structured by the feminist theories that my personal account seeks to explain. I have made these 'theories' explicit throughout the study through my praxis rather than formally constituted theory. I have provided a historical and social context, as well as a set of theoretical tools to assist my autobiographical approach. My approach is also structured by what I perceive as formative of my feminisms and pedagogy.

The realisation that I have a stake in producing emancipatory knowledge was always self-evident but never easy. It required struggles, risk-taking and a commitment to learning. I continue to learn how to have a stake in thinking this way, and the ethical risks and commitments that accompany this kind of thinking and working. Although much has been accomplished, it is still a situation of 'work in progress' and will continue to be work in progress for women committed to ending all forms of oppression and creating a fair and just society. As a feminist researcher, I will continue to use research as a site of struggle and intend taking this struggle to the next level through my participation in the formation of a Reference Group for Women in Science and Technology².

On the basis of these research findings, I do believe that there is a dire need for more research that unpacks each of the many issues highlighted in my study at the levels of theoretical frameworks and new models to understand women's position in academia and research, research methodologies, policy initiatives, intervention programmes and research capacity development strategies, to mention but a few.

I still continue on my very own "long walk to freedom", conscious of the fact that I, as well as many women researchers and academics still find ourselves "in between the no longer and the not yet".

² Following on the first Conference for Women in Science and Technology, held in Rustenburg in September 1998, and the presentation of its outcomes at the 1999 Conference of the Third World Organisation for Women in Science, Deputy Minister Mabandla of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology is in the process of initiating a Reference Group for Women in Science and Technology.

APPENDIX 1

The questionnaire which forms the basis of the Women-in-Research survey was developed by a group of women in KwaZulu-Natal under the leadership of Vijay Reddy, in conjunction with the eastern seaboard Association of Tertiary Institutions (esATI) and the Centre for Science Development (CSD). The following people were involved in its design:

Kwa-Zulu Natal

V Reddy	(University of Durban-Westville)
SP Mngadi	(University of Zululand)
N Chalufu	(University of Zululand)
J Adams	(University of Zululand)
R Pillay	(University of Zululand - Umlazi)
PM Tengeni	(University of Zululand - Umlazi)
S Singh	(University of Durban-Westville)
R Vithal	(University of Durban-Westville)
PT Ngwenya	(Mangosuthu Technikon)
A Farren	(Mangosuthu Technikon)
N Ngobese	(Natal Technikon)
T Magwaza	(Edgewood College of Education)
H Vahed	(ML Sultan Technikon)
S Qono	(ML Sultan Technikon)
J Parle	(University of Natal)

Centre for Science Development

T Mpumlwana	(Research Capacity Development)
A Tothill	(Research Capacity Development)
SM Tyeku	(Research Capacity Development)
R Ramabulana	(Research Capacity Development)
M Lesaoana	(South African Data Archive)
T Mohoto	(South African Data Archive)

Comments on the questionnaire were also received from a number of individuals at other institutions.

CENTRE FOR SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT AUDIT OF WOMEN RESEARCHERS AND ACADEMICS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Dear Respondent

In its commitment to equity and redress, the Research Capacity Development Directorate of the Centre for Science Development (CSD) has launched a project that targets women academics and researchers. The main aim of the project, called Women-in-Research, is to increase the number of women in post-graduate studies and in research in the human sciences.

The development of partnerships and co-operation with organizations with similar objectives is a strong principle that underpins this project. Such partnerships have been sought in regional structures, such as the eastern seaboard Association of Tertiary Institutions (esATI), as well as national organizations such as the Forum for African Women Educationalists South Africa (FAWESA).

A major activity of this project is an audit to establish the position, levels of skills and expertise, and needs of women researchers in the human sciences in South Africa.

The study is intended to contribute towards the establishment of baseline data that could inform policy makers, lobbyists and advocates of institutional transformation. But most importantly the findings of this study will inform CSD and its partners in the development of strategic interventions.

The core of this questionnaire was developed by a group of twenty women researchers and academics from esATI member institutions.

This study targets all women who are employed by universities and technikons¹ as academics and researchers, and includes women in support services such as libraries who are engaged in research. Information about postgraduate students is being gathered from the institutions' information systems; full-time post-graduate students are therefore excluded from this survey.

The information gathered through this study will be available for use by other researchers, institutions and organizations from, for example, the South African Data Archive. The findings of this study will be disseminated in reports and in workshops/conferences by the CSD or jointly with its partners. A database and directory of women researchers will also be developed; it is hoped that such information will increase the visibility of women researchers and academics.

Your participation in this study, by completing the questionnaire and encouraging other women researchers to do the same, will contribute to the development of more comprehensive and appropriate strategies to increase the level of participation of women as producers of knowledge.

Sheila Tyeku
Director: Research Capacity Building

¹ An exception to this has been made in KwaZulu-Natal where a college of education is being audited. This is an internal agreement in the group.

Explanatory notes:

This survey questionnaire is to be completed by all women academics and researchers in the **Social Sciences and Humanities**, inclusive of **Commerce, Education and Law** faculties.

Please return the completed questionnaire to the audit co-ordinator at your institution by **13 AUGUST, 1997**. If you do not know who the co-ordinator is or have any questions relating to this survey, contact

Ann Tohill: (012) 302 2672, e-mail aat@silwane.hsrc.ac.za

or

Paddy Hyde: (012) 302 2661, e-mail vph@silwane.hsrc.ac.za.

We are also compiling a directory and database of women researchers in the human sciences, which will be made available in print form and on the World Wide Web. If you would like to be included in this directory, please complete the loose form entitled "Directory of Women Researchers" and return it to your audit co-ordinator with your questionnaire, or send it directly to

**Ann Tohill
Centre for Science Development
Private Bag X270
Pretoria 0001.**

INSTRUCTIONS:

Circle ONE response to each question unless otherwise specified.

LEAVE BLANK any questions/sections which do not apply to you.

If you would like to expand on any of your answers please use the blank page at the end of the questionnaire.

SECTION A: EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

For office use

1
<i>respondent number</i>
1-4

1. Type of institution at which you are employed

University	1	
Technikon	2	
College of education	3	5

2. Name of institution at which you are currently employed

..... 6-7

3. Faculty 8-9

4. Department/programme group..... 10-11

5. Discipline 12-13

6. Rank/position **(mark as many as apply)**

Tutor	01	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14-15
Junior/Associate Lecturer	02	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16-17
Lecturer/Researcher	03	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18-19
Senior Lecturer/Senior Researcher	04	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20-21
Associate Professor	05	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22-23
Professor	06	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24-25
Head of Department/Director	07	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	26-27
Dean	08	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	28-29
Other (specify)	09	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30-31
.....				
.....				

7. **Number of years** you have occupied this rank

Less than 1	1	
1-3	2	
4-6	3	
7-9	4	
10 or more	5	32

8. Nature of your employment

For office use

Permanent	1
Contract - 2 year and above	2
Contract - below 2 years (specify)	3
.....	
Ad hoc (specify)	4
.....	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 33

9. Indicate whether your position is full-time or part time

Full-time	1
Part-time	2
	<input type="checkbox"/> 34

10. Number of years you have worked in higher education

Less than 1	1
1-3	2
4-6	3
7-9	4
10 or more	5
	<input type="checkbox"/> 35

SECTION B: PERSONAL DETAILS

11. Age in years

25 and under	1
26-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-59	5
60 and over	6
	<input type="checkbox"/> 36

12. Population group

African	1
Indian	2
Coloured	3
White	4
Other (specify)	5
.....	
.....	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 37

13. Nationality

South African	1
Other African	2
Other (specify)	3
.....	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 38

For office use

14. Qualifications

Please complete the following tables. If the qualification was obtained in South Africa give the name of the **institution** under "where obtained." If it was obtained outside South Africa indicate the **country only**.

14.1 Highest Qualification

Qualification	Where Obtained	Year				
						39-41

14.2 All other post-secondary qualifications

Qualification	Where Obtained	Year				
						42-44
						45-47
						48-50
						51-53

15. Employment history: please list **all** positions you have occupied, whether in tertiary institutions or other types of organization

Position	Institution/Organisation	No of years				
						54-56
						57-59
						60-62
						63-65
						66-68
						69-71
						72-74
						75-77

16. Marital status

Single (never married)	1	
Divorced/widowed/separated	2	
Married/living with partner	3	
Other (specify)	4	
.....		
.....		1

17. Do you have any children?

Yes	1	
No	2	2

If "No" proceed to Question 18.

If "Yes" complete the following table

For office use

17.1	5 years and under	6-12	13-18	Over 18						
No. of Children										3-6

18. Total number of dependants

None	1	
1-2	2	
3-4	3	
5-6	4	
More than 6	5	7

SECTION C: TEACHING ACTIVITIES

19. Are you involved in teaching students?

Yes	1	
No	2	8

If "No" proceed to Section D.

If "Yes"

19.1 Indicate the **total number of students** you taught (or will have taught) during the 1996 and 1997 academic years.

Level	1996	1997		
Certificate				9-10
Diploma				11-12
Undergraduate				13-14
Honours/LLB/BEd/BTech				15-16
Masters				17-18
Doctoral/Laureatus				19-20
Other (specify)				21-22
.....				

19.2 Indicate the **total number of periods** you taught (or will have taught) during the 1996 and 1997 academic years.

Level	1996	1997		
Certificate				23-24
Diploma				25-26
Undergraduate				27-28
Honours/LLB/BEd/BTech				29-30
Masters				31-32
Doctoral/Laureatus				33-34
Other (specify)				35-36
.....				

19.3 Indicate the **total number of courses** you taught (or will have taught) during the 1996 and 1997 academic years.

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Level	1996	1997			
Certificate					37-38
Diploma					39-40
Undergraduate					41-42
Honours/LLB/BEd/BTech					43-44
Masters					45-46
Doctoral/Laureatus					47-48
Other (specify)					49-50
.....					

20. Are you supervising any graduate students in research projects this year?

Yes	1		
No	2		51

If "No" proceed to Question 21

If "Yes"

20.1 Indicate the **number** of female and male students supervised in each category in the following table

	Honours	Masters	Doctoral	Other				
Female								52-55
Male								56-59

3 For office use

21. Please **estimate** what percentage of your time in your present job you spend on each of the following activities.

Activity	% of time				
Formal contact with students (lectures, tutorials etc)					1-3
Preparation of lectures/materials development					4-6
Marking					7-9
Consultation & student counselling					10-12
Research supervision					13-15
General administration					16-18
Committee work					19-21
Own research					22-24
Other (specify)					25-27
.....					
TOTAL:		100%			

SECTION D: CURRENT STUDIES

For office use

22. Are you currently enrolled for a higher degree/diploma?

Yes	1	
No	2	28

If "Yes" proceed to Question 23.

If "No"

22.1 Do you intend to register for a higher degree/diploma in the next 2 years?

Yes	1	
No	2	29

Proceed to Section E.

*Questions 23 - 35.1 apply only to **higher degrees/diplomas for which you are currently registered.***

23. Name of degree/diploma (eg PhD, M SocSci) for which you are registered

..... 30

24. Discipline

31-32

25. Institution at which you are registered

33-34

26. Indicate whether full-time or part-time

Full-time	1	
Part-time	2	35

27. When did you register for this degree/diploma?

Month	Year	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	36-39

28. When do you hope to complete the degree/diploma?

Month	Year	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	40-43

29. Who is financing your studies?

(mark as many as apply)

For office use

Self	1		44
Own Institution	2		45
CSD	3		46
FRD	4		47
MRC	5		48
Other (specify)	6		49
.....			
.....			
.....			

29.1 Please offer any comments you would like to make about the financing of your studies

.....

30. Are you or have you been supervised by more than one person?

Yes	1		
No	2		50

If "No" proceed to Question 31

If "Yes"

30.1 Have you been supervised by more than one person *sequentially* (i.e. changed supervisors) or *simultaneously* (eg co-supervisors or a panel of supervisors)?

Sequentially	1		
Simultaneously	2		51

31. What is the gender of your (principal) supervisor?

Female	1		
Male	2		52

32. What is your (principal) supervisor's rank?

(mark as many as apply)

Lecturer	1		53
Senior Lecturer	2		54
Associate Professor	3		55
Professor	4		56
Head of Department/Director	5		57
Other (specify)	6		58
.....			
.....			

33. What is your (principal) supervisor's highest qualification? *For office use*

Honours degree	1	
Masters degree	2	
Doctoral degree	3	
Other (specify)	4	
.....		59

34. How satisfied are you with the overall level and quality of the supervision you are receiving?

Highly dissatisfied	1	
Dissatisfied	2	
Satisfied	3	
Highly satisfied	4	60

34.1 Please offer any comments you would like to make about your supervision

.....

.....

.....

SECTION E: GENERAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

35. Are you involved in research other than for degree purposes at the moment?

Yes	1	
No	2	61

If "No"

35.1 Do you intend to undertake research other than for degree purposes in the next two years?

Yes	1	
No	2	62

Proceed to Question 39

If "Yes"

36. How many research projects are you involved in?

1	1	
2	2	
3	3	
4	4	
5 or more	5	63

*Questions 37-38.2: If you are involved in more than one research project please give details relating to what you regard as your **main research project***

For office use

37. How long do you expect the research project to take from start to finish?

Under 6 months	1	
6 months - 1 year	2	
1 - 2 years	3	
More than 2 years	4	
Other (specify)	5	
.....		
.....		
		64

38. Nature of the research project

Collaborative	1	
Individual	2	65

If "Individual" proceed to Question 39

If "Collaborative"

38.1 Are you the leader of the research project?

Yes	1	
No	2	66

If "No"

38.1.1 What is the project leader's gender?

Female	1	
Male	2	67

38.2 Please indicate the total **number** of female and male researchers in the project

	Number	
Female		68
Male		69

39. Are you involved in any of the following? (mark as many as apply)

Your institution's research structure/s	1	70
Local/regional research association/s	2	71
National research association/s	3	72
International research association/s	4	73
Journal editorial board/s	5	74

40. Please indicate **how many** of each of the following you have achieved during the past **five** years For office use
4

Achievement in past 5 years	Number		
Papers in South African journal (sole author)			1-2
Papers in South African journal (joint author)			3-4
Papers in international journal (sole author)			5-6
Papers in international journal (joint author)			7-8
Monographs or books (sole author)			9-10
Monographs or books (joint author)			11-12
Chapters in books (sole author)			13-14
Chapters in books (joint author)			15-16
Conference proceedings (sole editor)			17-18
Conference proceedings (joint editor)			19-20
Commissioned reports (sole author)			21-22
Commissioned reports (joint author)			23-24
Papers presented at South African conferences (sole author)			25-26
Papers presented at South African conferences (joint author)			27-28
Papers presented at conferences in other countries (sole author)			29-30
Papers presented at conferences in other countries (joint author)			31-32
Conferences attended in South Africa (paper not presented)			33-34
Conferences attended in other countries (paper not presented)			35-36
Research network meetings attended			37-38
Collaborative research projects (as leader)			39-40
Collaborative research projects (as team member)			41-42
Curriculum development projects			43-44
Other (specify)			45-46
.....			
.....			

SECTION F: SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR RESEARCH

41. Level of support you receive from your family (including extended family)

	Not at all supportive	Fairly supportive	Supportive	Strongly supportive	
Housework	1	2	3	4	47
Childcare	1	2	3	4	48
Emotional support	1	2	3	4	49
Financial support	1	2	3	4	50

42. Encouragement for research at your institution

	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	
From your head of department	1	2	3	4	51
From others in your department	1	2	3	4	52
From your faculty	1	2	3	4	53
From your institution	1	2	3	4	54

For office use

43. How would you rate the general level of support and encouragement for **your type or field of research** within your department?

Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	
1	2	3	4	

55

43.1 Please offer any comments you would like to make about the support you receive for **your type or field of research**

.....

.....

.....

44. Indicate to what extent the following factors are a problem in relation to your research

	Major problem	Problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	
Time	1	2	3	4	56
Academic/job commitments	1	2	3	4	57
Family commitments	1	2	3	4	58
Finance	1	2	3	4	59
Experience in research	1	2	3	4	60
Research skills and techniques	1	2	3	4	61
Community commitments	1	2	3	4	62
Sexism at my institution	1	2	3	4	63
Racism at my institution	1	2	3	4	64
Different roles that women have	1	2	3	4	65
Have young children	1	2	3	4	66
Lack commitment	1	2	3	4	67
Higher teaching load than male counterparts	1	2	3	4	68
Higher administrative load than male counterparts	1	2	3	4	69
Do not have same opportunity to do research as male counterparts	1	2	3	4	70

45. Do you have or have you had a **particular** mentor in the development of your research career?

Yes	1	
No	2	71

If "No" proceed to Question 46.

If "Yes"

For office use

45.1 Position of mentor

Supervisor	1
Head of department	2
Colleague in department	3
Colleague in own institution	4
Colleague at other institution	5
Other (specify)	6

.....		72
-------	--	----

45.2 Gender of mentor

Female	1
Male	2

		73
--	--	----

45.3 Please offer any comments you would like to make about the mentoring you have received

.....

46. Do you have or have you had a **particular** role model in the development of your research career?

Yes	1
No	2

		74
--	--	----

If "No" proceed to Section G.

If "Yes"

46.1 Position of role model

Supervisor	1
Head of department	2
Colleague in department	3
Colleague in institution	4
Colleague at other institution	5
Other (specify)	6

.....		75
-------	--	----

46.2 Gender of role model

Female	1
Male	2

		76
--	--	----

46.3 Please offer any comments you would like to make about your role model

.....

.....

SECTION G: CHILDCARE & MATERNITY LEAVE

For office use

5

If this section is not relevant to your past or present needs please proceed to Section H.

47. Does your institution provide child care facilities?

Yes	1	
No	2	1

If "No" proceed to Question 48.

If "Yes"

47.1 How would you rate the adequacy of your institution's child care facilities?

Highly inadequate	1	
Inadequate	2	
Adequate	3	
Highly adequate	4	2

47.2 Please offer any comments you would like to make about the adequacy of your institution's child care facilities

.....

48. How would you rate your institution's provision of maternity leave?

Highly inadequate	1	
Inadequate	2	
Adequate	3	
Highly adequate	4	3

48.1 Please offer any comments you would like to make about the adequacy of your institution's maternity leave

.....

SECTION H: INFRASTRUCTURE, SUPPORT SERVICES AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

For office use

49. Office space

I have an office to myself	1	
I share an office with one other person	2	
I share an office with more than one other person	3	
Other (specify)	4	
.....		4

50. Telephone

I have a telephone for my sole use	1	
I share a telephone in my office	2	
I use the secretary's telephone	3	
I have no access to a telephone at work	4	
Other (specify)	5	
.....		
.....		5

51. Library facilities

Please rate the library resources and support available for **YOUR** research.

	Not available	Poor	Good	Very good	
Journals	1	2	3	4	6
Books	1	2	3	4	7
Inter-library loan facility	1	2	3	4	8
Assistance from library staff	1	2	3	4	9
Computer searches	1	2	3	4	10

52. Computer facilities (mark as many as apply)

I have a computer in my office for my sole use	1		11
I share a computer in my office	2		12
I use a central departmental computer	3		13
I use a computer on campus (eg in a central lab)	4		14
I have no access to a computer	5		15
I have a computer at home	6		16
Other (specify)	7		17
.....			
.....			

52.1 How would you rate the **overall adequacy of your access to computers**, taking into account both **proximity** and **quality of equipment**?

For office use

Highly inadequate	1	
Inadequate	2	
Adequate	3	
Highly adequate	4	18

53. Computer usage and skills

53.1 Which of the following do you use at present ? (mark as many as apply)

E-mail	01		19-20
Word processor	02		21-22

Database	03			23-24
Spreadsheet	04			25-26
Presentation software	05			27-28
World Wide Web	06			29-30
Statistical package	07			31-32
Qualitative analysis package	08			33-34
Geographical Information System	09			35-36
Graphics package	10			37-38
Other (specify)	11			39-40
.....				

53.2 Please rate your **skills** in using each of the following

	None	Inadequate	Adequate	Highly Adequate	
E-mail	1	2	3	4	41
Word processor	1	2	3	4	42
Database	1	2	3	4	43
Spreadsheet	1	2	3	4	44
Presentation software	1	2	3	4	45
World Wide Web	1	2	3	4	46
Statistical package	1	2	3	4	47
Qualitative analysis package	1	2	3	4	48
Geographical Information System	1	2	3	4	49
Graphics package	1	2	3	4	50
Other (specify)					
.....	1	2	3	4	51

SECTION I: TRAINING IN RESEARCH-RELATED SKILLS

For office use

54. Would you like further training in research-related skills (including computer skills)?

Yes	1	
No	2	52

If "No" proceed to Section J.

If "Yes"

55. Please indicate how interested you would be in receiving training in each of the following areas:

55.1 Formulating a research proposal

not interested	1	2	3	4	very interested	53
----------------	---	---	---	---	-----------------	----

56.9 Geographical Information System						70
not interested	1	2	3	4	very interested	

56.10 Graphics package						71
not interested	1	2	3	4	very interested	

56.11 Other (specify)						72
not interested	1	2	3	4	very interested	

57. Please indicate any other areas in which you would like training to improve your

research skills

.....

SECTION J: ATTITUDES TOWARDS RESEARCH

58. For each of the following questions **circle** the number on a scale of 1-4 that best captures your response.

58.1 How interested are you in conducting research?

not interested	1	2	3	4	very interested	73
----------------	---	---	---	---	-----------------	----

58.2 How confident do you feel in your ability to conduct research?

not confident	1	2	3	4	very confident	74
---------------	---	---	---	---	----------------	----

58.3 How important do you think conducting research is for you to be effective in performing your job?

not important	1	2	3	4	very important	75
---------------	---	---	---	---	----------------	----

58.4 How anxious are you about being required to conduct research as a condition for promotion?

very anxious	1	2	3	4	not at all anxious	76
--------------	---	---	---	---	--------------------	----

For office use

59. Please **circle** the number which best captures your attitude to the following statements about why you do research

6

I do research because...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
...I want a formal qualification	1	2	3	4	1
...I want personal fulfilment	1	2	3	4	2
...I like research	1	2	3	4	3
...of a chance of financial gain	1	2	3	4	4
...I want to publish	1	2	3	4	5
...I want promotion	1	2	3	4	6

...it contributes to job security	1	2	3	4		7
...of professional interest	1	2	3	4		8
...of pressure from my department	1	2	3	4		9
...of pressure from my institution	1	2	3	4		10
...of social interest	1	2	3	4		11
...of community interest	1	2	3	4		12
...of academic status	1	2	3	4		13
...I seek empowerment	1	2	3	4		14
...I want to be an agent of change	1	2	3	4		15
...I see myself as a producer of knowledge	1	2	3	4		16
...of other reasons (specify)						
.....	1	2	3	4		17

SECTION K: GENERAL

60. What do you think could be done to facilitate your research, and by whom?

.....

.....

.....

.....

61. What obstacles or challenges do you think face women researchers in particular?

.....

.....

.....

PLEASE USE THIS SPACE FOR GENERAL COMMENT AND TO EXPAND ON ANY OF YOUR ANSWERS, INDICATING THE RELEVANT QUESTION NUMBER

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

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