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Assessing Gender Inequality in South Africa: A Case Study of Women in Sports Management

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Abstract

The arrival of democracy in South Africa brought with it challenges that needed to be addressed to overcome the inequalities of the past. To a significant degree, the discrimination against not only race groups but also against women in general had to be tackled. Against this background, policies and legislation on achieving employment equity emerged. Despite this, a gender disparity still exists in the area of sports management. Regardless of efforts made by government and other sporting bodies to eliminate gender inequality, hurdles still remain at all levels.

The aim of this study is to explore the reasons for this gender disparity, identifying the constraints on women's advancement and the challenges that they face in advancing in sport as managers (in various capacities). It also identifies appropriate policy interventions. This serves as a case study for broader issues of equity within a South African context and probes the situation more generally with regards to the position of women in sport management in South Africa.

The study presents the views of a selection of women in sport management and themes that were identified. These themes provides the basis for assessment and recommendations. The approach taken in order to complete the research was phenomenological as it has roots in epistemology. This approach provided rich information with the small sample size required and is ideal for the short time frame for the completion of this dissertation and exploration of the research problem. The research methods used in this research was qualitative. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with women in sport management.

The results of the study were captured in four broad areas which indicated the challenges that women currently face. In general, respondents felt that in order to address the current challenges women need to find a niche in sport management and pursue it; women already holding management positions must become mentors of the next generation of women managers; and a career in sport management required women to balance their roles with their personal life.

The recommendations drawn provided opportunities to fast track the progress of gender equity in sports management: to educate a patriarchal society with changing roles for the girl child; to encourage women to equip themselves with knowledge and become vocal in their work environment; to overcome male domination and improve the communication gap between older and newer generations in sport management.

Keywords: Gender Inequality; Sports Management; Affirmative Action; Employment Equity; Gender Stereotyping.

1. Introduction

Since the 20th century, the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) were instruments used to stop gender discrimination and many generations across the globe benefited, however women in South Africa continued to endure the indignity of gender discrimination (Motshekga, n.d.) "Gender oppression was particularly inhuman during apartheid, where women suffered a triple oppression of race, class and gender" (Motshekga, n.d.). Despite this women continued to be part of the resistance effort through organisations and underground structures. In 1990 the National Party government unbanned the main liberation movements, while the African National Congress (ANC) signalled its commitment to a negotiated settlement (Desai & Vahed, 2010). In a heady four years Nelson Mandela was released from prison and assumed the presidency of South Africa on 10th May 1994. In 1996, a new constitution that made provision for women's rights, was introduced along with a Commission for Gender Equality (SAHO, 2015a). Central to the period of transition was South Africa's return to the international playing fields of sport. The ANC saw this as crucial to normalising social relations in the country and building a sense of national unity. This drive reached its acme when Nelson Mandela donned the Springbok rugby jersey on the eve of South Africa's victory in the 1995 Rugby World Cup (Desai, 2010). It was not long before the euphoria gave way to searching questions about racial representation in rugby and cricket teams. Less emphasised but equally important was the question of women's sport and the importance given to it in the new South Africa. The role of women in sport, their positions in management, overcoming the challenges they face in their careers and upward mobility have largely been met with silence or ignored.

There is a strong emphasis in the post-1994 South African government through policies and legislation on achieving employment equity, including gender parity and in rectifying past imbalances. Legislation was seen as a key instrument to do this however despite the implementation of legislation, sports management in particular appears to have a gender disparity, even though an increased number of women now participate in sport at all levels. Increasing the role of women in management and leadership positions in South Africa's democracy has been focal to many of the broader discussions in society. The ways in which women are positioned and position themselves, has been the focus of considerable research in South Africa and elsewhere and sets the agenda for the enquiry into how institutions in society as well as personal attributes contribute to gender inequality in sport management.

This article seeks to fill this gap by looking at the representation of women in the management of sport. In particular this research is about the views of women who hold management positions in sport. The focus is on their experiences of what facilitates their work and advancement and what are the impediments to the advancement of women. Their views will be analysed and themes will be identified. These will then provide the basis for assessment and recommendations.

2. Review of Literature

This section is where you will be providing all the relevant readings from previous works. Provide brief summaries or descriptions of the works of other authors. Make sure that your research materials are from credible sources such as academic books and peer-reviewed journals. Also, make sure that your reading materials are directly relevant to the topic of your research paper. The literature review typically includes the names of the authors, the titles of their works and the year of the publication of these works.

The year, 2015 marked the launch of "The Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it up for Gender Equality" by the UN Women's organization at the Beijing+20 event. This initiative called on governments to make solid commitments towards advancing gender equality and women empowerment. "…2015 must mark the beginning of the end of gender inequality, with 2030 as the expiry date…" – Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director (UN Women, 2015).

To set the context for this study there is a need to examine existing legislative and institutional structures. The Constitution of South Africa; the Bill of Rights that complements the Constitution; the Employment Equity Act, (Act no. 55 of 1998) and other policy documents makes provision for gender equality in the country (Mello & Phago, 1997:147). Section 9 of the Constitution of South Africa under the heading "Equality", states:

    i)   Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.

    ii)   Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

    iii)   The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social

origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

iv) No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.

v) Discrimination on one or more of the grounds listed in subsection (3) is unfair unless it is established that the discrimination is fair"

Apart from democracy, the equality clause in the Constitution was one of the triumphs of the establishment of democratic South Africa in 1994. However just as it has proven difficult to redress the legacy of apartheid, so too the difficulty exists to redress the under-representation of women. Affirmative action and quota systems are one of the corrective measures put in place to address this issue and ensure fair representation and equal participation of all races, genders and people with disabilities and therefore is discussed in this study. The three White Papers that affirm women to managerial roles in sport; the National Charter for Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA), Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport and the Transformation Charter for South African Sport form part of the policy reviews.

Discussions examine gender inequality, women in management positions and women in sport management. Lastly the barriers and challenges that influence under representation of women in sport management will be explored.

2.1 Legal Impact of Policy/Frameworks for Women to Advance in Sports Management

Mello and Phago (2007:146) state that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) and the White Papers (which will be discussed under 2.4 Other Legislation), can steer women in the direction of higher management positions in South Africa.

2.1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The 1996 Constitution is the supreme law in South Africa. The Bill of Rights as part of the Constitution clearly outlaws any discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, pregnancy and marital status. Section 9(2) of the Constitution:

> **"Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken."**

This section protects women amongst others from being disadvantaged from any managerial positions in South Africa due to gender and is used as a constitutional mandate to ensure women progress to management positions (Mello & Phago, 2007:146).

2.1.2 Employment Equity Act, (Act no. 55 of 1998)

The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (55 of 1998) regulates affirmative action legislation in South Africa to ensure equal representation of designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities).

> **"The Act is intended to achieve equity in the workplace, by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and implementing affirmative action measures to mitigate the disadvantages in employment experiences by designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities), to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace" (Employment Equity Act, 1998).**

2.1.3 Affirmative Action and Quotas in Countries across the World

Shemla and Kreienberg (2014) states that a gender quota is used when a specific percentage of leadership positions are set aside for female employees in an organisation. In the Employment Equity Act (1998), affirmative action is defined as "measures designed to ensure that suitable, qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer." According to Roberts et al., (2010) affirmative action has turned out to be a controversial policy that addresses labour market inequalities in the country. Affirmative action aims to achieve social justice and equity and to make the state efficient, effective and inclusive (Edigheji, 2007:2).

Structural, cultural and historic factors influence the progress of women in business (Daisley & Studer, 2014). For countries intending legal quotas for women in senior positions, the expectation is that by mandating this structural element, the cultural and historic factors will adapt and follow (Smedley, 2015). Implementing quota systems force the issue, as evident in France and Spain where the number of women in senior roles increased from 21 percent to

33 percent and 14 percent to 26 percent respectively (Lagerberg, 2015). Norway, the first country to introduce the quota system now boasts 42 percent female non-executive directors of listed companies (Lagerberg, 2015). Russia's success of women in leadership roles further bolsters the quota argument given that the Russian culture transformed to a new "gender conscious" culture. The changes occurring in these countries is certainly a question of politics intervening in daily life (Gudgeon et al., 2014).

Lee (2014) acknowledges progress in the implementation of gender quotas yet argues that a quota system is not a global solution and quotas must fit within the country's cultural expectations of authority. Toh and Leonardelli (2014) provide an argument on quotas stating that the promotion of gender equity will be successful in "tight" cultures as opposed to "loose cultures. The degree to which a culture supports social norms, submits to authority structures and endures deviations from them explains "tightness" or "looseness" (Toh & Leonardelli, 2014). In Toh and Leonardelli's (2012) "Cultural constraints on the emergence of women as leaders" research, Norway, South Korea, China, Germany and Pakistan were found to have lower tolerance for deviation from cultural norms and it was noted that these countries could impose severe sanctions if deviation to norms occurred. Therefore these countries were described as having "tight" cultures. Toh and Leonardelli's (2012) investigated the percentage of female representation in different leadership positions and found that in tight cultures, authorities strictly enforce policies and demand higher levels of compliance and therefore tight cultures are more likely to adhere to the top-down approach to institute policies such as gender quotas. The researchers further stated that within loose cultures like the United States (US), quotas go against the American cultural norms and Americans are therefore less likely to enforce egalitarian policies even though the country has a belief in equality.

Gerson (2010) states that "…arguing in favour of quotas goes against the notion that everyone has an equal opportunity to be represented as an individual rather than as a member of a group…" Lee (2014) further elaborates how the US's "loose culture" opposes Affirmative Action. The US believes that the implementation of gender quotas poses a risk of gender based preferences which could lead to the hiring of less competent female candidates instead of highly competent male candidates (Lee, 2014). Outside of such cultural questions, significant scepticism prevails on whether gender quotas make a difference in increasing the percentage of women in senior positions. According to Lee (2014), the scepticism is strengthened, when comparing Norway and the US. In Norway, where strict quota systems are implemented, only three percent of Norway's large companies have female CEOs. In the US, where no quota system exists, statistics showed five percent of U.S Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs (Lee, 2014). Lee (2014) stated that although the strict gender quota system increased the percentage of women in senior positions in Norway, this system triggered "…the golden skirt…" phenomenon. Lee (2014) explained that the "golden skirt" phenomenon is when certain women hold multiple board positions which prohibit other women from entering the boardroom.

2.1.4 Other Legislation

2.1.4.1 White Papers

In order to place women in managerial positions in the public service, legislation such as the White Papers is used in the transformation of the public sector (Mello & Phago, 1997:147). Whereas the Employment Equity Act of 1998 places emphasis on all employment sectors, the 1998 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public sector places the focus on the public service and sets mandatory requirements and guidelines to implement gender equity (Mello & Phago, 1997:147). In order to advance women in managerial positions, and ensure proper procedures are followed in the public sector, this White Paper identifies the role players who are expected to enable these policies and their responsibilities such as accountability, monitoring, reporting and coordination (Mello & Phago, 1997:147). The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997) focuses on recruitment as the prime instrument to achieve equity which offers opportunities for people of all races and women in particular and provides for diversity management strategies and education. According to Mello and Phago (1997:148), diversity management education is crucial for gender differences to be valued by male employees and allow for appreciation of women who can make a difference in the workplace. The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997: 4–16) emphasises two important aspects relating to the promotion of women to managerial positions:

"Recruitment is regarded as the prime instrument for achieving equity by opening up the public service to people of all races, and to women, in particular; Provision is made for diversity management in the public service. Diversity management implies that male employees should value gender differences and appreciate the important contribution that women can make in the workplace" (Moumakoe, 2013).

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995:41–43) set out guidelines for affirmative action programmes and aims to denounce tokenism and reverse discrimination against men. The White Paper (1995) predicted that, within four years of the implementation of an affirmative action programme, at least 30% of senior management in the public service should be women.

2.1.4.2 National Charter for Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA)

The charter calls on the decision makers (government, non-governmental organisations, all sport organisations and individuals) to commit to equality and set up policies, structures and mechanisms to achieve the aim of: "…developing a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport and recreation…" (WASSA, 2011). This charter has been developed to result in women being treated equal to men in all aspects of sport management, including career management, salary, opportunities and respect.

2.1.4.3 Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport

The first International Conference on women and sport took place in Brighton, United Kingdom (UK) in 1994 and was supported by the International Olympic Committee. The conference sought to address and fast track the process of change to redress the imbalances of women participating in sport. The Brighton Declaration provides the principles that guide action intended to increase the involvement of women in sport at all levels and in all functions and roles. The objectives of the Brighton Declaration was also shared by the International Working Group (IWG) World Conference on women and sport which was attended by decision-makers politicians, researchers, educators and students, coaches and athletes, in total 250 signatories. The aims of the IWG on Women in Sport was to create positive change and enhance dialogue around women in sports (UN, 2007). Kluka (1998) identifies the Brighton Declaration as ground-breaking work and further noted that gender imbalance still exists despite years of campaigning, development of policies, legislation and world conferences in women and sport. Kluka's (1998) research found that the declaration did not include a clear process to translate strategic intent into quality management process in order to achieve the goals and successful implementation of the principles of the Brighton Declaration but depended on quality internal organisational processes and standards.

2.1.4.4 Transformation Charter of South African Sport

According to the Transformation Charter of South African Sport (2011):

> **"…transformation is defined as a process of holistically changing the delivery of sport through the actions of individuals and organisations that comprise the sport sector to ensure: increased access and opportunities for all South Africans, including women, persons with disabilities, youth, children and the elderly to sport and recreation opportunities, the socio-economic benefits of sport are harnessed and the constitutional right to sport is recognised…"**

In 2012, the Eminent Persons Group on Sport Transformation in South Africa was appointed to among other things guide the transformation and a status report was released in 2013 (South African Transformation Status Report, 2013:4). For effective transformation in sport, a complete change in how governance structures function, work and are designed is required. There needs to be a recognition that moral and strategic considerations, which are often in conflict in society, are key driving forces to facilitate successful change (South African Transformation Status Report, 2013:16) The moral transformation driver is followed because "…it's the right thing to do…" while strategic transformation drivers are followed because transformation is regarded as a strategic imperative (South African Transformation Status Report, 2013:17).

A call for the amendment of legislation that deals with transformation of sport and recreation was made by Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Sport and Recreation in 2013. The committee chairperson Richard Mdakane stated that transformation in sport remains painfully slow and the way to solve this issue is for intervention from parliament and government (Kwaza, 2013). According to Roberts (2014) "…transformation is not only about colour, it's about eliminating gender, class and colour inequalities and discrimination..."

The controlling body of all high performance sport in South Africa is the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC). SASCOC's transformation strategy (Kwaza, 2013:39) states:

> **"…For trans-formation to be effective, a fundamental shift [is needed] in the way the organisation is structured and managed, how it deals with its members, how leadership conduct themselves, how the game is marketed and promoted, how sport's image and reputation is managed and how all component structures collectively act and think..."**

2.2 Gender Inequality

According to Palvic (2005:5) "…gender equality, equality between men and woman, entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles and prejudices..."

The head of the UN agency promoting equality for women stated that a girl born today will be an 81 year old grandmother before she can enjoy the privileges that men have to be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a company (Lederer, 2015). Mlambo-Ngcuka further highlighted that a girl child will have to wait to be 50 years old

before having an equal chance as male counterparts to lead a country. Former US first lady stated that "human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights" (Lederer, 2015). For women to be truly equal, men and boys should give up the privileges of patriarchy that they are born with and become champions of the "He for She" campaign which calls on the world's leaders, fathers, sons, husbands and brothers to stand up and support equality for women in all areas of life (Associated Press, 2015).

During the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing, (1995), a key term and proposed strategy that evolved as a possible way to curb inequalities between men and women was "…gender mainstreaming..." Pavlic (2000:5) advocates that "…gender mainstreaming, known also as mainstreaming a gender perspective, is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action including legislation, policies and programmes, in any area and at all levels..."
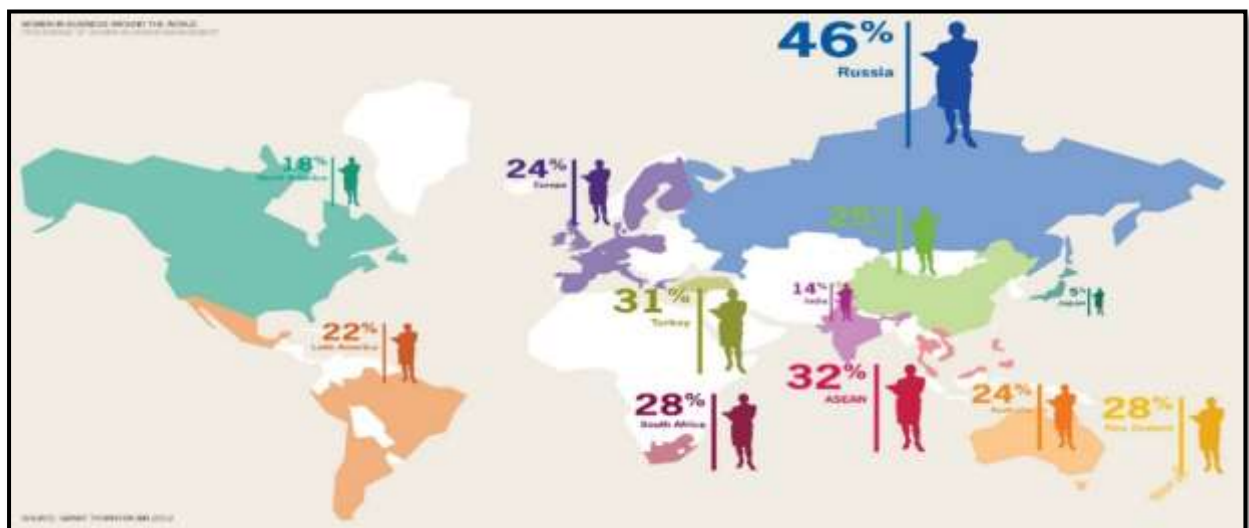
2.3 Women in Management Positions

The Grant Thornton International business report (2012) indicated that women in South Africa constituted 28% of senior management positions as compared to a global 21% average (IBR, 2012). The head of corporate finance at Grant Thornton, Ms Jeanette Hern stated, "…the fact that South Africa outperforms the global average can be attributed to the emphasis placed by government on gender equality and employment equity…" (South Africa.info, 2012). "In terms of political engagement, South Africa ranks eighth in gender equality," (Wessels, 2014). According to Wessels (2014), the equal representation of female members in parliament shows the gradual shift towards increased representation of women in the public sector and a more equal distribution of power. South Africa ranked 18 out of 142 countries has managed to close more than 70 percent of the gender gap (Dlamini, 2015). Female senior management has crept up from 19 per cent globally in 2004 to 22 per cent in 2015 but South Africa remained ahead even though it experienced a drop from 28% in 2012 to 27% in 2015 (IBR, 2015).

Lagerberg (2015) states "…the dial has barely moved and there is a sense of 'Haven't we done well!' when it should be 'We have a lot further to go'…" Smedley (2015) also acknowledges the change in gender balance at the top levels of business but describes the change as happening at a glacial pace. Women account for 45.1 percent of the working population however only 2.4 percent of chief executives of Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed companies are women and only 8.79 percent of the companies have 25 percent or more women directors (Dlamini, 2015). Dlamini's (2015) research also referred to race stating that women hold 29.3 percent of executive management positions and 64 percent of these women are white.

Schein's (2001) research "think manager – think male" traces gender management employment patterns across time and borders. In more recent years Schein stated that "over the last three decades corporate males in the USA continue to see women as less qualified than men for managerial positions" (Schein, 2007:6).

Figure 4.1: Women in Power - A Global View


Source: Adapted from IBR (2012)

The illustration above, depicts the 2012 global percentage of women in senior management positions drawn from the 2012 Grant Thornton International Business report into women in management around the world (IBR, 2012).

Russia which was traditionally viewed as a chauvinistic culture, had the highest proportion of women in senior positions at 46% (IBR, 2012). Although this figure dropped to 40% in 2015, Russia is still leading in the percentage of women holding management positions (IBR, 2015).

2.4 Women in Sport Management

The slow pace of gender transformation in the executive ranks of sports administration matches that of women reaching senior management roles in the private sector. City Press (2013) announced that a glance into the gender representation of sports administrators, in the three most popular sports in the country, Rugby, Cricket and Soccer, is reflective of a sad state of affairs in South Africa. Figure 2.2 depicts the number of women in top sporting bodies.

Figure 4.2: Women Representation in Sporting Bodies
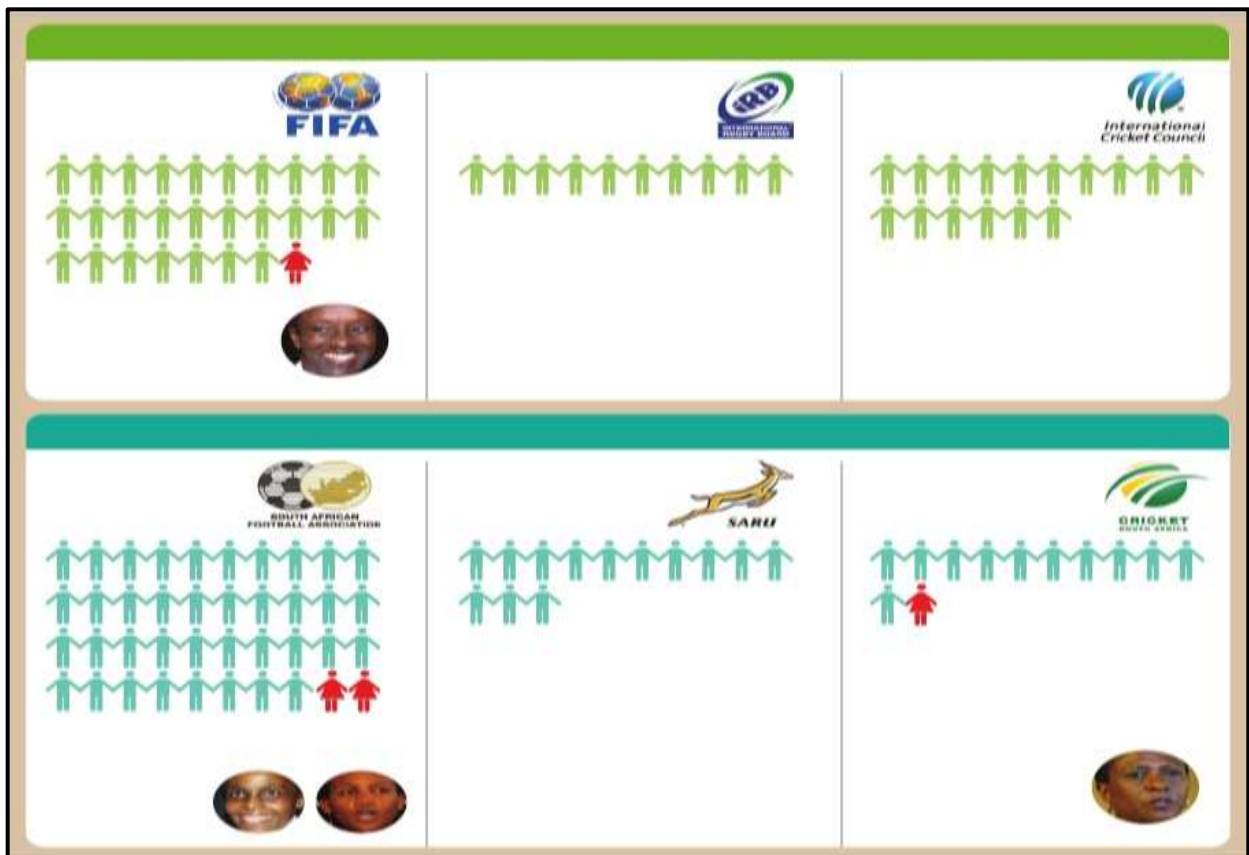
Source: City Press (2013)

The South African Football Association executive committee has two women serving namely, Ms Mato Madlala and Ms Nomsa Mahlangu. In Cricket South Africa there is one women serving on the executive committee namely, Ms Dawn Makhobo. And there are no women serving on the South Africa Rugby Union executive committee (City Press, 2013). Although this case study will not be limited to any specific sport or sector, it must be noted it took 109 years for a women to form part of the Federation International Football Association executive (Gassesse, 2014).

The European Commission presented a proposal for strategic action 2014-2020 on Gender Equality in Sport in 2014. The proposal highlighted statistics of the imbalance in gender equity in European sports federations and pointed out that only six out of twenty-eight ministers responsible for sport are female (European Commission, 2014).

2.5 Factors That Influence Under Representation of Woman in Sport Management

The Kwazulu-Natal Sport and Recreation Department recently held its second Women in Sport Symposium which adopted a strategy to improve gender equality in sport structures in the province. The 2015 strategic roadmap provides a way forward for delivery of women sport in the province and aims to address many challenges facing females participating at different levels of sport (Department of Sport & Recreation KwaZulu-Natal, 2015).

This conference highlighted a number of challenges that require addressing urgently. These themes include identifying barriers, problems of participation, ensuring transformation takes place at all levels (race, gender, demographics, and sporting codes), ensuring mentorship and enabling change in cultural perceptions (Department of Sport & Recreation KwaZulu-Natal, 2015).

2.5.1 Gender Stereotyping

The Great Man Theory is originally associated with masculine attributes in leadership. Leadership has been synonymous with being male for centuries and this notion has not had much change in recent years. Further stereotypes with regards to sport is that women's sports are inferior to men's sports (Martinez & Block, 2013). Berthoin and Izraeli (1993:63) cited in Schein (2007:7) state that the continuous stereotype that associated management as being male is one of the most single important barriers for woman to advance in management.

According to Schein (2001), there is a perception that women as compared to men lack the stereotypical characteristics that makes successful managers. The study also showed that females salaries and career mentoring was at a lower level than that afforded to their male counterparts. Society develops certain expectations and enforces a "gender order" of what males and females should follow, should believe, and should achieve and have embedded these stereotypes within the core of each generation. Hogg (2014) states that the biggest challenge in changing the stereotypes, lies in addressing the assumptions and biases of what is required for leadership success, therefore it is critical to "…fix the industry not the women..."

Through gender stereotypes, femininity is associated with traits such as being nurturing, gentle, compassionate, and graceful. Hence sports associated with being feminine are those that are less aggressive and emphasize aesthetics (Koivula, 2001; Methany, 1965) (Cited in Royce et al., 2003). Women who do succeed at the aggressive sports are often called butch, lesbians or manly as opposed to just being women in sport. Wilde (2007) relates the increase of women participating in sport to their ability to challenge the sexist barriers and stereotypes about physical appearance, athletic ability and participation in sports.

Baxter (2015) placed the stereotypical words associated with men and women in the following context: "…this is why a man is assertive when a woman is bossy; while an impassioned speech by a man becomes a hysterical rant by a woman; why men are dedicated and single-minded but women are crazy and "obsessive..."

According to Simmons (2011) a double-bind is considered a behavioural norm which formulates a situation which does not allow a person to win no matter what they do. Ibarra, et al., (2013) states that the mismatch between the conservatively feminine qualities and the qualities perceived to be necessary for leadership places female leaders in a double bind. Oakley (2000) explained a double-bind for women in leadership positions is that women must be tough and authoritative (like men) in order to be taken seriously, however women are said to be "bitches" if women act too aggressive. In most cultures masculinity and leadership are closely linked: the ideal leader, like the ideal man, is decisive, assertive, and independent, in contrast, women are expected to be nice, caretaking, and unselfish (Ibarra, et al., 2013).

2.5.2 Glass Ceiling

Reinhold (2005) defines the "glass ceiling" as an artificial barrier that prevents qualified individuals advancing within their organization and reaching their full potential. The glass ceiling is described as the hard-to-see informal barriers that block women from promotions, higher salaries and further opportunities (Lewis, 2014). Wirth's (1998) research acknowledges the existence of the glass ceiling and advocates that in order for women to break the glass ceiling, significant transformation is needed for the organisation itself, its work structures and management approaches.

Tennis star Venus Williams is one of the first global promoters of gender equality and stated that the goal is to ensure women and girls throughout the world know that there are no glass ceilings and women and girls should be provided with opportunities to succeed (UN, 2007:24). As stated by Wirth (1998), the goal of gender equality will only be achieved in an organisation.

2.5.3 Disparity in Pay

Investigating gender egalitarianism in terms of gender pay gap in sports, studies have shown that there is a long way to go before women can earn as much or equal pay to men in sports. Molelekoa (2015) as cited in Pillay (2015) revealed that the sports industry is mired in "ignorance, discrimination, patriarchy and institutionalised sexism." The Forbes List of the world's highest-paid female and male athletes of 2015 respectively can be found in Appendix B. The difference between the world's highest-paid Male and Female athlete namely Mayweather and Sharapova is $270.8million (Forbes List, 2015). According to Mabela (2013) Statistics SA manager, women in

South Africa are not as well off as male counterparts, as women with tertiary education earn approximately 82% of what their male counterparts do.

2.5.4 Conflicting Roles

Positive changes have been brought about with the shifting demographics of women in the 21st century however this social change has led to another phenomenon termed role conflict. Society in previous years have considered only men to be breadwinners and set certain boundaries in for behavior of men and women. Role conflict is said to occur when women attempt to fulfil roles of family responsibilities and work responsibilities at the same time. However a change in societal norms has given rise to new legitimacy for women's work in the 21st century. Nevertheless prejudices still persist.

A contributing factor to gender differences as stated by Lewis (2001) is the traditional view of a woman's career being discontinuous or part-time due to domestic responsibilities. Sports organisations are rarely organised to incorporate family responsibilities of decision-makers and the operations and structures of these organisations are not often questioned (European Commission, 2014). Runte and Mills (2004:240) as cited in Morely (2013:122) claimed that it is women who invariably have to seek a balance between parental and employee duties and therefore it is women who pay the "toll" for crossing the boundaries between work and family. The study conducted by Naidoo (2012) elaborates on how women have continued to juggle their roles as mothers, parents, and caregivers. The study also reflected that having a family support structure at home allowed the athletes to manage their time more productively (Naidoo, 2012). Naidoo (2012) also made another important observation which is relevant to this study that an exposure to western culture changed the family's mind-set on traditional dress attire which then allowed the female runners that were interviewed to adapt to the general running attire of shorts.

A traditional path to leadership has been through formal rotations in sales or operations, and men are more likely than women to have held these jobs previously. However requirements like these may be outdated in respect of preparing a person to lead (Ibarra, et al., 2013). Ibarra, et al., 2013 stated that enhancing careers through international posts is easier for men than for women as it is often assumed that the "trailing spouse" who has no career can easily move and the spouse in this instance is expected to be a woman. According to Ibarra, et al., (2013) these traditional organisational practices were not designed to be discriminatory, but their cumulative effect disadvantages women.

2.5.5 Insufficient Role Models

Robert K. Merton coined the term role model, which means a person whose example, success or behaviour can be emulated especially by young people (Lowell, 2015). According to Lyle (2009:26), a sporting hero is a person one can admire and is defined by a visible personification of certain traits such as perseverance, social responsibility and modesty. The term sporting celebrity is given to a person by the level of recognition, media attention and visibility (Lyle, 2009). Common to the discussion on role model, sporting hero or sports celebrity, is how the individual is portrayed in the media. Despite waiting eight years to meet Nelson Mandela, players of the National Soccer Female team described this moment as a dream come true (Naidoo & Muholi, 2010). This moment with such a role model created much more media coverage for the team, than they ever received (Naidoo & Muholi, 2010). Ambitious leaders require role models whose styles and behaviours can be modelled, experimented with and evaluated against (Ibarra, et al., 2013). The lack of female leadership as role models suggests to young would-be leaders that being a woman is a liability and can discourage them from viewing senior women as credible sources of advice and support (Ibarra, et al., 2013).

2.5.6 Culture

Archer (1996) cited in Savigny (2014:6) explained that sociological theory draws on the interaction of individuals with structural contexts and the way in which culture shapes this interaction. According to Ibarra, et al., (2013) "second generation" gender bias that exists in organisations and in society disrupts the learning cycle at the heart of a women becoming a leader. Women are expected to establish credibility in a culture that is deeply conflicted about whether, when, and how they should exercise authority (Ibarra, et al., 2013). Ibarra, et al., (2013) further states that practices within organisations equate leadership with behaviours common in men and therefore women seem not to be cut out to be leaders and it is a common practice to gravitate to people who are like oneself and therefore for powerful men to sponsor and advocate for other men to become leaders. Ibarra, et al., (2013) advocates that the focus of research has moved away from the deliberate exclusion of women and towards investigating the "second-generation" forms of gender bias as a cause for under-representation of women in leadership roles.

2.5.7 Education

The 2014, UK admissions data from Universities and Colleges Admissions shows a turnaround, as women accepted to study at university now outnumber men by record levels (Adams, 2015). In South Africa, gender differences are

less noticeable between persons with a tertiary (university) education however the number of employed women with a tertiary qualification is 10% lower than men on an equivalent education level (Mabela, 2013).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Saunders et al., (2012) stated that findings within the qualitative approach often have greater validity and less artificiality and allow the researcher to develop a more accurate understanding of the phenomena under investigation. In order to understand complex social processes and to capture essential aspects of the phenomenon of gender inequality of women in sport management, qualitative methods was best suited for this study. Welman et al., (2012:14) states that exploratory design does not start with a problem, but rather seeks to identify problems. Despite many females entering the sporting arena, and anecdotal evidence attesting to ingrained discrimination, academic studies into the gender inequality of women in sport management are rare, and it is in this regard that the exploratory design was chosen. Through the use of the exploratory research design, data was analysed to capture the experiences of women in sport management, describing their journey and encounters with gender inequality.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Explore the positions achieved by women in sports management;

- Examine gender specific challenges that women face in becoming managers;

- Explore women's perceptions of affirmative action policies as a way to address gender parity issues;

- Explore possible solutions to optimise women representation in sports management.

3.2 Research Paradigm and Philosophy

In order to collect data in an effective and appropriate manner, the research paradigm and philosophy plays a pivotal role in research methodology (Williams, 2011:1). Johnson and Christensen (2005) point out that the research paradigm is a perspective that is based on a set of shared assumptions, values, concepts and practices. Samuel (2012:40) simplified the research paradigms by stating that positivism is analysed deductively and deemed quantitative research, whereas phenomenology is analysed inductively and considered qualitative research.

3.3 Research Philosophy Adopted for Research Strategy

To investigate gender inequality in sport management, an in-depth understanding of the challenges and barriers facing women needed to be researched. The approach taken in order to complete the research was phenomenological as it has roots in epistemology. Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge (Fisher et al., 2007). Samuel (2012:40) states the phenomenological approach analyses information inductively which means that the gathering of qualitative data in small samples sizes can generate themes and be generalized from one setting to another. This approach provides rich information with a small sample size requirement and is therefore ideal for the short time frame of the completion of this dissertation and exploration of the research problem.

3.4 Research Strategy

It has been noted in the previous section that the research paradigm most suited for this study is that of a phenomenological paradigm and the research method followed is that of a qualitative study. Yin (2011:17) stated that action research, case study, ethnography, ethnomethodology, feminist theory, grounded theory, life history, participant-observer study and phenomenological study are variations in qualitative research. Case study research designs include observing a small group, project, institution or company and are intensive investigations of the factors contributing to the characteristics of the case under investigation (Study Guide, 2015:58). The case study therefore has proven to be the best suited research strategy as it provides for a holistic view of a phenomenon, giving the theories formulated through this approach more credibility.

3.5 Target Population

3.5.1 Sampling

The sample for this research is known as non-probability as the sampling is based on prior knowledge and judgement on women in sport management. The initial group of women were chosen for the sample because of their knowledge and experience in the sports management field. These women then identified other suitable women to be part of the research which grew the sample size. This is called snowballing. According to Mack et al., (2005) "snowballing is considered a type of purposive sampling method where participants or informants with whom contact has already been made use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study."

Qualitative research, exploratory in nature, is used to understand underlying reasons, opinions and motivations and provides understanding into problems and helps to construct ideas (Wyse, 2011). The qualitative research approach was used and sampling was obtained through purposive and convenience sampling which allowed for interviews to be conducted with an initial group of participants who then referred others holding positions in sports management.

In this study the target population was women in management from the private and public sector within the sports fraternity in South Africa. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten women in sport management though the process of purposive, convenience and snowballing sampling.

3.6 Research Instruments and Data Collection

Literature was reviewed to gain insight into the different aspects of the inequality of women in sport management which provided data on existing disparities and strategies that are currently being proposed or implemented to redress these inequalities. The information obtained helped the design and analysis of the interviews. Harrell et al., (2009:6) defined interviews as being discussions between individuals, usually one-on-one, which allows for the interviewer to gather information on a definite topic. Harrell et al., (2009:7) pointed out that semi-structured interviews allow some discretion about the order of the questions posed and probes provided which allows the researcher to cover the right information or material. As the qualitative research approach was considered most appropriate for a study of this nature, the data collection method chosen was semi-structured interviews. This was thought to provide a richer tool to assess respondents' experience of gender inequality in sport management. Respondents were able to react freely to questions posed and were not restricted when responding. The open-endedness of the questions provided a wide degree of responses which increased the depth of the information gathered.

All data was captured by audio recordings and transcribed to a database for analysis. The venue for the interviews was chosen by the participants and the interviews on average lasted 120 minutes.

3.7 Pilot Study

The present study was a case study and by its very nature is a small-scale study and therefore a pilot study was not considered necessary. Notwithstanding this, a pilot study was conducted with two participants who did not make up part of the original sample. The results of this pilot study showed that the questions were free of any ambiguity and easily understood.

3.8 Data Analysis

This case study used thematic analysis as a method in identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data (Braun & Clark, 2006:79). This type of analysis provided the opportunity for the researcher to generate deep insights and understanding of how individuals make sense of the phenomenon studied, including the significances and perceptions they place on particular experiences (Smith et al., 1999). Themes were identified and generated from the respondents' accounts and links made between themes to group them in a meaningful way.

4. Results

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is firstly to present the study's results and secondly, to discuss and interpret the findings. Due to the nature of this study, this chapter explores and analyses the qualitative interview data which culminates in the discussion of findings in relation to the research objectives. The primary aim of this study is to determine and explore to what extent gender equality with regards to women in sport management has been achieved. The study utilised qualitative research to present a case study of the involvement of women holding positions in sport management in South Africa. In order to do this, this study made use of thematic analysis that was briefly discussed in Chapter three.

To validate the findings, secondary data in the literature review and primary data from the interviews will be used. The literature review was conducted to justify the research, to provide context for the study, to show where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge, and to enable the researcher to study from the previous theory on the subject (Malimela, 2013:52). Semi-structured interviews were done to confirm the secondary data and contribute a new facet to the body of literature on the topic.

Presently, while numerous studies have been undertaken of the role of women in society, very few have been conducted with women in sport management in South Africa. This study will enhance the understanding of the inequalities faced by women who are in sport management. The recommendations derived from this study will contribute to addressing some of the challenges encountered by women in sport in South Africa.

Despite the inequality and the gender barrier not being breeched, women have made strides to ascend in their sport management career. The views of a selection of ten women holding management positions in the area of sport management are included in these findings. In order to achieve the aim of the study, the study delves into what path these women followed and what challenges and barriers they faced. Respondents in this study also provided optimised solutions for women representation in sport.

4.2 Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

4.2.1 Theme Identification

The themes identified from the interviews will be discussed hereunder. The objectives of the study focused on establishing a broad presentation of the women in leadership positions. Specifically, career development discusses the respondents' career path taken to date. Gender challenges explores issues encountered by the respondents as women in the sport industry. Affirmative action perceptions provides details of the respondents encounters with men since the inception of the employment equity act, with special attention given to the implementation of the affirmative action policy. In the Employment Equity Act (1998), affirmative action is defined as "measures designed to ensure that suitable, qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer." Affirmative action aims to achieve social justice and equity and to make the state efficient, effective and inclusive (Edigheji, 2007:2).The last objective reviews the respondents' advice to other women wanting to pursue a career in sport management.

4.2.2 Interpretation and Discussion of Themes

4.2.2.1 Career Advancement

The majority of the respondents attribute their career commencement to the influence of a male mentor. The respondents stated these influences included motivation to participate in sports, volunteer in federations and taking up management roles. All respondents made mention of the gender discrimination experienced during their careers. This will be discussed further under the gender challenges. Two of the respondents (of executive management positions) stated that they were the first occupants of their positions. They noted that the path to the top was not easy and with every step, there were challenges met but they agreed that it was worth it. City Press (2013) announced that a glance into the gender representation of sports administrators, in the three most popular sports in the country, Rugby, Cricket and Soccer, is reflective of a sad state of affairs in South Africa. The respondents in this study stated that they have no regrets as they were determined and took calculated risks to attain their achievements. The respondents mention that it was important to pave the way and build a legacy so that no other women would have to bear their challenges. It is evident in these findings that the glass ceiling had to be broken by determined women who were eager to transform the organisation which links to Wirth's (1998) research which acknowledges the existence of the glass ceiling and advocates that in order for women to break the glass ceiling, significant transformation is needed for the organisation itself, its work structures and management approaches. On the other hand, respondents from a junior level indicated that they are seeking support from the women in senior management to facilitate women growth into leadership positions. There was a perception amongst "junior" women in management positions that their senior counterparts held on to opportunities that could have been passed on to them as a learning opportunity. This perception was made reference to by Lee (2014) who referred to the "golden skirt" phenomena which occurs when certain women hold multiple board positions which prohibits other women from entering the boardroom.

4.2.2.2 Gender Challenges

The most common challenge expressed by all respondents was the cultural barriers that were faced throughout their careers. The majority of the respondents recalled experiences of discrimination where their ability to do the job was questioned. Alarmingly, all respondents said that they were input into decisions however they never felt discouraged from presenting ideas as they believed in their ideas and giving in to the discrimination was not an option. The discrimination was taken one step further, when ideas were acknowledged but never taken up for implementation and thus "diplomatically shelved". This findings ties up to Ibarra, et al., (2013) research that the "second generation" gender bias that exists in organisations and in society disrupts the learning cycle at the heart of a women becoming a leader. Women are expected to establish credibility in a culture that is deeply conflicted about whether, when, and how they should exercise authority (Ibarra, et al., 2013). Ibarra, et al., (2013) further states that practices within organisations equate leadership with behaviours common in men and therefore women seem not to be cut out to be leaders and it is a common practice to gravitate to people who are like oneself and therefore for powerful men to sponsor and advocate for other men to become leaders. Respondent 2 stated during official sport events, she was unable to complete her responsibilities as the men denied her access to the team bus. The men were practising traditional medicine (muti) and believed that she (as a women) would dilute the power of the muti.

Respondent 2 recalled the passing comments that she would encounter. The astounding stigma of being "dirty" because women menstruate left her ineffective in her position.

All respondents indicated that they had equal opportunity for promotion. The Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) in South Africa which regulates affirmative action legislation in South Africa to ensure equal representation of designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities) has impacted on the equal opportunity given to women for promotion. Respondents referred to skills they had acquired and experienced which will equip them for the higher position. All respondents were of the view that a women could reach the role of Minister of Sports and Recreation as many provincial MEC's are women. Respondents were also of the view that the massive imbalance does exist in the female to male ratio in sport management but believe as more women take up leadership roles, the ratio will change.

Studies have shown that there is a long way to go before women can earn as much or equal pay to men in sports. Molelekoa (2015) as cited in Pillay (2015) revealed that the sports industry is mired in "ignorance, discrimination, patriarchy and institutionalised sexism." All respondents believe that there is a misrepresented perception that because there is a pay gap where women athletes are not on par with men athletes, that the same would apply to sport management. Respondents from the public sector further explained that the gender pay gap exists at a participant level due to sports previously being male dominant and referred to the years men athletes took to build up the brand.

4.2.2.3 Affirmative Action Perceptions

All respondents indicated that although there is the affirmative action policy, there has been no implementation of this policy as these discriminations still exist. All women spoke of the cultural barriers and patriarchal attitudes within their working environments. These women recall the uneasy interactions, especially the older generations of men whose traditional beliefs set a disrespectful tone. Respondent 2 stated that due to strong cultural roots, she understood this cultural background and chose to work around the personal disrespect to achieve her higher purpose. This finding links to the literature review which explained that society develops certain expectations and enforces a "gender order" of what males and females should follow, should believe, and should achieve and have embedded these stereotypes within the core of each generation. Hogg (2014) states that the biggest challenge in changing the stereotypes, lies in addressing the assumptions and biases of what is required for leadership success, therefore it is critical to "…fix the industry not the women..."

Although progress is noted, respondents suggested to the pace being very slow. With the newer generation, a paradigm shift has been noted in the traditional thinking of a women's role and responsibilities. The environment has changed with a noticeable lessening of hostility from the time women first got in to date.

While this breakthrough is commended, a high profile sportsman recently made this comment "…woman and football, it's not such a good combination…" (Thomas-Mason, 2015). Respondent 2 stated that this comment negatively impacts gender equity. It is key for the progress of gender equity to adopt an inclusive method which entails including men in decision making roles in the process of gender mainstreaming.

Token appointments were never an objective of the respondents and all women stated that each position occupied was earned. They believe that if men wanted women to progress into leadership positions the grooming should begin from early stages. This speaks to the principles and character of good leaders to have vision to mentor talented and eager individuals. The respondents also suggested to the choice being an individual, that is, if you know that you did not earn the opportunity, do not pursue the position. This process will ensure that the stigma of women being token appointments or using inappropriate means to get to the top will be dismissed from society. Respondents echoed the sentiments that an individual should progress from a point of knowledge and stated that when one debates from a point of knowledge, it is difficult not to be taken seriously.

4.2.2.4 Optimised Solutions for Women Representations

The last objective summaries some solutions identified by the respondents for attaining leadership roles in sport management:

- Find your niche: respondents agreed that sport management is vast and one should chose a path and focus on a field you can specialise in. Respondent 5 stated that sport psychology is a good field to specialise in as it is under-represented as it is understated.

- Mentorship: All women advise resonated that women must not be their own obstacles and should support each other. Women should think out of the box and approach challenges holistically.

- Respect: All women agreed to attaining respect if given respect and transparency aids in accomplishing respect. Once respect and trust are gained, opportunities become available

- Personal vs Professional: Respondents stated that besides facing discrimination, women faced additional difficulties of juggling roles in their personal lives (Naidoo, 2012). They attribute their success to having understanding families whose constant support aided their accomplishment

4.3 Findings from the Study

4.3.1 Findings from the Literature Review

Despite the implementation of legislation, sports management in particular appears to have a gender disparity, even though an increased number of women who participated in sport at all levels. The conclusions are based on the responses to the four questions that were formulated at the beginning of the study in order to answer the research question. These questions were as follows:

What are the current levels of involvement of women in sports management?

The global trend as shown in the literature review has been a concern that the gender equity is not happening fast enough. Smedley (2015) acknowledges the change in gender balance at the top of levels of business but describes change at a glacial pace. Female senior management has crept up from 19 per cent globally in 2004 to 22 per cent today (IBR, 2015).

The review found that the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995: 44) which predicted that, within four years of the implementation of an affirmative action programme, at least 30% of senior management in the public service should be women and this has been accounted for more especially within women in parliament. As Wessels (2014) points out, that the higher percentage of female members in parliament shows the gradual shift towards increased representation of women in the public sector and a more equal distribution of power. Even on a global context, Lagerberg (2015) shared the same sentiments and stated "The dial has barely moved,"…"There is a sense of 'Haven't we done well!' when it should be 'We have a lot further to go'."

What are the gender specific challenges that women face in becoming managers?

There are various challenges that women face in order to rise to higher management positions. The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997) focused on recruitment as the prime instrument to achieve equity and offered opportunities for people of all races and women in particular, despite this intervention the challenges still exist. Many women stated that conflicting roles between personal and professional life hamper growth of women in management roles. As Ibarra, et al., 2013 stated that a barrier for women to attain leadership roles is gendered career paths and gendered work. Naidoo (2012) in his research, stated that women in their everyday lives have multiple roles which they have to act out just by being born a woman. In most cases they are first mother, wife, parent, taxi-driver and caregiver. These roles are in addition to the challenges in the workplace.

What are women's perceptions of affirmative action policies as a way of addressing gender parity issues?

Toh and Leonardelli (2012) as referenced in chapter two previews the concepts of tight and loose cultures in implementing gender equity. In countries that have tight cultures, there is a lower tolerance to deviate from cultural norms and it was noted that these countries could impose severe sanctions if deviation to norms occurred. These countries adopt a top down approach in its implementation strategy. In countries with loose cultures quotas go against that country's cultural norms and are less likely to enforce egalitarian practices even though the country has a belief in equality. Within South Africa while this top down approach alluded to by Toh and Leonardelli (2012) has allowed progression of women in senior leadership roles has however raised the issue of tokenism.

What are the possible solutions for optimising women representation in sports management domain?

The review found that National Soccer Female Team waited 8 years to be afforded the opportunity to meet Nelson Mandela and it was only after this incident did the team receive recognition in the media (Pillay & Muholi, 2010). All respondents alluded to the fact that mentorship is key for growth however how do we attain this mentorship from a few women holding these senior management roles. Therefore more women leaders are required so more role models are visible. The study revealed that more needs to be done to increase the number of women occupying sport management positions.

4.3.2 Findings from the Primary Research

What are the current levels of involvement of women in sports management?

The responses from this study concurs with that of the literature review noted above. The respondents while noting that some of them were the pioneers in their position but in general the pace of change with regard to gender equity in sport management has been slow. The women interviewed were as a collective in one voice when they all echoed the same sentiments that more has to be done to increase the numbers of women in sport but more especially women holding management positions.

What are the gender specific challenges that women face in becoming managers?

The responses in this study again identified with that of the literature highlighted above. Respondents pointed to the fact that as women they had to fight to be heard. Often they had to prove their worth. They had to work harder in order to get to where they are today. They seldom got any favours from men and needed to show firmness and intelligence in order to be respected. They also pointed to the multiple roles they had to play, adjusting to the demands of family life and meeting the challenges in the workplace was a hard act to follow. Of note in this regard, the respondents pointed out that although there were policies in place to address the gender equality it was limited in its success. Another pertinent issue that arose amongst the respondents was the cultural and societal roles that women have to face and which they felt needed a re-think before any sizeable gains can be obtained in the fight towards gender equality. Societal pressures stemming from a patriarchal society has been showcased as a big challenge and need to be challenged.

What are women's perceptions of affirmative action policies as a way of addressing gender parity issues?

The respondents in this study shared the views of the authors mentioned above. While supporting the advent of legislation to address gender equity the respondents were of the view that all the positive work done could come to zero if women are given token appointments. In addition, if women who are placed in management positions without them actually having the capabilities to do the job, then all women no matter how capable the others are will have the same stigma that is associated with the application of affirmative action. In order to overcome this stigma and to promote gender equity and women in management positions the respondents were unanimous in their view by stating that women must strive to be the best at what they do. They must assume their position with authority and responsibility and be a role model to others striving to pursue their careers in sport management.

The respondents shared the call for the amendment of legislation that deals with transformation of sport and recreation made by Parliament's Portfolio Committee Chairperson on Sport and recreation in 2013 (Kwaza, 2013). The chairperson stated that transformation in sport remains painfully slow and the way to solve this issue is for the intervention from parliament and government (Kwaza, 2013).

What are the possible solutions for optimising women representation in sports management domain?

The respondents believed that this could be done as a multipronged approach which amongst others included career advancement; addressing the challenges facing women; and implementation of affirmative action policies. Attracting women to take up careers in sport management and by making this an exciting career option would entice women to make this a career choice. Sport management jobs needed to consider the multiple and challenging roles of women and need to accommodate this in the structure of these positions. The legislation addressing gender equity while it existed and sounds good to have must be enforced if there is to be meaningful change.

4.4 Conclusions

In summary, for those who want to get involved in sport management, the important message is to plot their career path and know where they would like to be. The respondents highlighted the importance of having a clear goal as obstacles still exist. Having acknowledged the obstacles, the respondents have noted that the environment is changing and thus there should be no excuse not to take up the opportunity as the path has been created. Being knowledgeable in management is important, as one should speak from a point of knowledge, having the right information at the right time enables one to ensure that they are taken seriously. The respondents spoke in detail about the affirmative action policy, emphasizing the minimal implementation of this policy in the sport management department. These encounters detailed in the analysis should not have been experienced considering that the inception of this policy is close to twenty years old. These respondents spoke to the challenges faced in having made many personal sacrifices in the pursuit to gain the leadership goals attained. Some alluded to having a good support structure however they acknowledge that the juggling roles is difficult. As noted in the discussion, communication plays a pivotal role in the pursuit to curb assumptions of opportunities taken up by women in leadership roles. This communication allows for transparency between the different levels which stems from the respect given to each other within departments. Respect, as noted under the solutions, for one's self and others within the department speaks volumes to one's character and thus in turn shows true leadership capabilities.

The research questions aimed to address the gender inequality experienced in Sport management. The literature reviewed underlined the gender inequality on a global platform and highlighted the approaches taken by different countries and as well emphasized the progress made by South Africa in its new democracy. Findings from the primary research concluded that there are still many challenges to date and more needs to be done.

4.5 Recommendations

South Africa, in the quest to eliminate the inequality of the past has established policies and acts to address this. However the implementation has not been optimal and the essence of these policies and acts has not materialised to

the level that was initially intended. The culture in society that is required is respect and support for women in sport, then only will more woman want to participate and elevate careers to senior roles in Sport management. To fast track the process, the researcher was informed of the Women in Sport policy that had been developed and that included definite methods to address gender equity for women in sport. The intention of this policy was to address the gender imbalance that exists in sport management. Besides providing the opportunity to increase the number of females in coaching and technical officials, the increase in participation of the number of children both boys and girls was targeted. A core intention of this policy was to increase the number of women in management positions by providing realistic opportunities for women to make sport management a career

Societal demands together with cultural barriers have placed unrealistic expectations on women. The patriarchal society needs to be educated with the changing roles for the girl child. As roles and responsibilities for women are constantly changing and increases in demand as promotions occur, the supportive structure in the background needs to exist. It is important to nurture the girl child to be independent while the boy child must respect and accept the girl child as his equal. Lack of this fostering in the generations to come will be an injustice to society and would not help in overcoming the challenges that women presently face. Women have the opportunity to make their presence felt by being active in sports positions, showing leadership and equipping themselves with knowledge. If more women take up to the opportunities and work to achieve leadership roles, half the battle is won as the mind-set of society will evolve. Innovative thinking should be the catalyst to create a paradigm shift within our evolving country. There is a communication barrier between senior and junior management and this poses a challenge for growth and mentorship. The work that is being done to facilitate the growth of the younger generation and the development plans that are currently being designed need to be communicated. It is also important for the path taken by our female leaders to be recorded in history so that they can be seen as role models for future generations. Media is the connection to society and social media is the biggest platform to communicate, engage and nurture this society. Therefore media locally and globally must form partnerships to change the thinking in society.

The 21st century has been noted for technological advancement and technology is bridging the gap between generational, genders, age and cultural differences therefore it is recommended that social media platforms are included to bridge the communication barrier between older and newer generations in sport. Social media platforms can be used to spread messages of motivation, sport development for women, career pathways and challenges experienced by women in sport.

The success stories of leadership roles and the drive in sport development need to be readily available so that the message of sport and sport management can be conveyed to the masses. One way in which this can be accomplished is by uploading success stories onto the various social media channels. Due to technology advancements, the timelines of social media will be in existence for future generations therefore this method should be used as a form of mentorship. It is very important to make books and magazines available so that sport management can become a career of choice. In addition online references should also become available so that targeted audiences can be reached in a quick, cheap and effective manner.

In the 21st century, the cultural norms need to be more adaptive to a working women, and empower women to think beyond their domestic responsibilities. New societal perspectives need to be nurtured to ensure gender equality is standardised in the working environment. Due to the numerous roles women naturally have, there should be more support afforded to them. Opportunities need to be provided to women to become knowledgeable and authoritative in their work environment to overcome male domination and improve the communication gap between older and newer generations in sport management. The fostering of the boy child to accept the girl child as an equal counterpart will pave the way to gender mainstreaming.

In the initial stage of this case study, it appeared as though there were no equal opportunities for women due to the gender inequality experiences however the evidence presented and discussed shows that some opportunities are available and although there still needs to be considerable work done to overcome intrinsic barriers some accountability is on the individual to pursue any prospective opportunity. As newer policies are adopted and implemented, the opportunity to participate and manage in sport will be imminent.

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