



**Constructing a development  
approach for female managers in  
the local sphere of government: The  
case of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District  
Municipality**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Josephine Eghonghon Ahiente, do solemnly declare that this thesis entitled Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: The case of the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality is my own work and all sources cited throughout the thesis have been well acknowledged by means of complete references and that this thesis has not been submitted in part or in its entirety by me or any other person for the award of any academic degree at this or any other university.

Signature

Date

## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated particularly to my darling mother Mrs Mary Ahiente and my sister Dr. Blessing Ahiente who played crucial roles in ensuring that this thesis was a success

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|        |                                                                            |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AAUW   | American Association of University women                                   |
| AGDI   | Africa Gender and Development Index                                        |
| AU     | African Union                                                              |
| BPFA   | Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action                                |
| BWA    | Business Women Association                                                 |
| CTWL   | CareerTech Women in leadership                                             |
| CDC    | Centre for Diseases Control and Prevention                                 |
| CEDAW  | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CGE    | Commission for Gender Equality                                             |
| CoCTA  | National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs      |
| CPMD   | Certificate in Municipal Financial Management                              |
| CSW    | Commission on the Status of Women                                          |
| DKKDM  | Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality                                    |
| ECOSOC | Economic and Social Council                                                |
| EEA    | Employment Equity Act                                                      |
| EIGE   | European Institute for Gender Equality,                                    |
| GAD    | Gender and development                                                     |
| GIBS   | Gordon Institute of Business School                                        |
| HESA   | Higher Education South African                                             |
| HSRC   | Human Science Research Council                                             |
| ILO:   | International labour organisation                                          |
| JSE    | Johannesburg Stock Exchange                                                |



|         |                                                                        |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LGSETA  | Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority               |
| MFMP    | Municipal Financial Management Programme                               |
| NCBF    | National Capacity Building Framework for Local Government              |
| NCPE    | National Commission for the Promotion of Equality                      |
| NGM     | National Gender Machinery                                              |
| NSG     | National School of Governance                                          |
| PEPUDA  | Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination          |
| RSA     | Republic of South Africa,                                              |
| SADC    | Southern African Development Community                                 |
| SAHRC   | South African Human Right Commission                                   |
| SALGA   | South African Local Government Association                             |
| SASCWR  | Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region                       |
| SDGs    | Sustainable Development Goals                                          |
| SACAP   | South African College of Applied Psychology                            |
| STIWA   | Social Transformation including Women of Africa,                       |
| SPSS    | Statistical Packages for Social Science                                |
| UDHR    | Universal Declaration on Human Rights                                  |
| UN      | United Nations                                                         |
| UNDP    | United Nations Development Programme                                   |
| UNEGEEW | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women |
| SDGEA   | Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa                        |
| UNESCO  | United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural organisation         |
| UNGA    | United Nation General Assembly                                         |
| UNIDO   | United Nations Industrial Development Organisation                     |

|        |                                                     |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| UNIFEM | United Nation Development Fund for Women            |
| USAID  | United State Agency for International Development   |
| WEGE   | Women Empowerment and Gender Equality               |
| WHO    | World Health Organisation                           |
| WID    | Women in Development                                |
| WPTPS  | White paper on the transformation of public service |

## **ABSTRACT**

The benefits of women's active public participation and representation in all spectrum of public sector leadership are countless. Some of the benefits include the achievement of social transformation, human and societal development, economic growth, poverty reduction, good governance, and better care for children and an improved standard of living. Women's active public participation in public sector leadership requires but is not limited to an enforceable public policy framework that will enable them equal access and opportunity to reach strategic public management levels where they can contribute and influence public policy. The South African public sector/service has several impressive equality public policy frameworks to eradicate unfair and discriminatory labour practices, promote women's human rights and ensure their equal public participation in the public leadership and public policy formulation realms. Despite the existence of the public policy frameworks towards ensuring a democratic and a representative public sector/service (including the local government sphere), women continue to be discriminated against in their attempts to gain access to senior public positions. This reality is reflected in women's' under-representation in top and professional positions in public institutions including in the local sphere of government. The local sphere of government, which is the first call point for all South African citizens, is the sphere of government where women are mostly disproportionately represented in directorship and senior public management positions.

To establish the current situation regarding gender issues and the challenges on women's' public empowerment and public leadership training and development in the local sphere of government, a mixed research method where both the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms were used to ascertain the views, perceptions and experiences of female public managers. A triangulation method was used for the data collection, comprising various gender theories and feminist theoretical frameworks, literature study, application of semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Twenty-three (23) women in professional public positions and senior management service, and four (4) HR personnel within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality participated in the semi-structured personal interviews. The semi-structured questionnaire was completed by forty-one (41) women in middle

management service and senior management service across the different local municipalities under the Dr Kenneth Kaunda district.

The findings revealed that the DKKDM does not have any developed public policy or framework for the public leadership training and skills development of all public managers. The DKKDM relies primarily on formal education in the realisation of the skills development of its public officials in key strategic management positions. The study findings show that gender equality policies, legislation and the framework of government (local sphere) pertaining to the promotion of gender equality and for the empowerment of women are not implemented by the Dr KKDM. From the findings on paper, both men and women are equal. Nevertheless, reality shows that women are not equal to men; women face intense discrimination during recruitment and promotion into directorship and senior public management positions. The study further revealed that, although there is an improvement in women's' public leadership participation when compared with the last two decades, women are mostly considered for middle management public positions. Other impediments deterring women's public leadership and advancement was summarised into four categories: structural challenges, institutional mindset, individual mindset, and life style choices. An empowerment approach was further proposed to accelerate women's' public leadership goals, uncover public gender leadership bias and to mitigate against the identified barriers hindering women public leadership inclusion and advancement in the local sphere of government.

**Key terms:** gender, leadership equality, social change, career development, skills development and public leadership training, women's empowerment, local government sphere, senior public management service, gender equality.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION**

Gender equality through women's empowerment and development constitutes a crucial issue both globally (Joshi *et al.*, 2015:1456; Lawal *et al.*, 2016:354) and in South Africa (Maseko, 2013:2; Masango & Mfene, 2015:624; Matoane, 2015:1; Stevens & Ntlama, 2016:47). The exigency of gender mainstreaming through women's empowerment and development in the public service/sector and in the local government sphere cannot be overemphasised. It is critically important for the inclusion of women into senior executive and leadership positions in the public service/sector and in the local government sphere and this is the focus of this study. The motive for such inclusion is also germane for effective service delivery, human development, (Azuh *et al.*, 2015:106; Azuh *et al.*, 2017:1-2), a strong, inclusive and transformative economy (Gakiya, 2016:20), good governance, as well as sustainable growth and economic development (Lawal *et al.*, 2016:354; United Nations Industrial Development Organisation{UNIDO}, 2015).

On a global perspective, the United Nations (UN) ratified gender equality and women's empowerment as the fifth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on 25 September 2016 at the UN's General Assembly (UNGA) (UN, 2015). The fifth goal of SDGs seeks to end all forms of marginalisation, segregation, discrimination and harmful traditional practices against women and girls (Esquivel, 2016:15). The goal further aims to ensure women's active participation in decision-making processes and the achievements of equal opportunities in occupying leadership positions in the political, economic, and public sector environments (Esquivel, 2016:15). Ali, *et al.*, (2011:14640). Brieger *et al.*, (2019:495) respectively observed that, in comparison to a decade ago, globally, a significant number of women are joining the corporate environment and the public sector/service and the local government sphere and there is a noticeable and substantial increase in gender diversity in the workforce. However, in spite of the progress achieved in the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment, women around the world, including South Africa, continue to face severe discrimination, marginalisation and sexual harassment in the workplace (Thobejane & Thobejane 2017:8858; McKeown 2016:156). These gender

discrepancies remain visible in the areas of active participation such as planning and decision-making processes within management structures both in private and public institutions (UN, 2015; Latchanah & Singh, 2016:37; Madsen *et al.*, 2017:3; Hingston 2017).

According to Hoyt *et al.*, (2011:375), women encounter more intense challenges than men in attaining positions of leadership, power, and authority in the workplace. This study agrees with the assertion of Hoyt *et al.*, (2011:375) because women are more affected by negative leadership stereotypes and prejudices (Kark *et al.*, 2012:621). For example, the notion of “think managers - think male” aggravates women’s challenges in their efforts to access strategic management positions in both private and public organisations (Kark *et al.*, 2012:621). Women’s interest in participating actively in public decision-making and leadership are not entirely dependent on their demonstration of zeal and efforts (Goetz & Jenkins, 2016:212-213). Rather, their participation is mostly dependent on having effective and quality access to equal resources and opportunities (Maseko, 2013:2; Goetz & Jenkins, 2016:212-213; Esquivel, 2016:15). Using this premise as a point of departure, this argues that developmental tools such as education in the form of specialised training and supported by enforceable legislation and adequate public policies among others, will serve as a catalyst for the development of women particularly towards their full participation in positions of management and leadership (Durojaye & Adebaj, 2014:6169; Goetz & Jenkins, 2016:212-213). Thus, to ensure women’s full participation in public leadership, the training and development of women must be sustained by sound policies and legislative initiatives, initiated and implemented by government. For the purpose of this study, the focus on this will be directed specifically on the local sphere of government.

### **1.1.1 Background on women’s empowerment and development in South Africa**

The transition of the political system in South Africa from the apartheid regime to liberal democracy in 1994 led to the reversal of many policy frameworks and government structures that formally overlooked women’s participation and representation (Maseko, 2013:6; Adejumo & Archibong, 2013:1-2; Mansango & Mfene, 2015:623). The present democratic dispensation and the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of

South Africa, (hereafter referred to as the Constitution, 1996) provide a legislative framework and mechanisms for gender equality (Republic of South Africa, 1996-5-6). For example, the South African government enshrines *gender equality* as an important component in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution, 1996, which aims to ensure women's rights in both their treatment and their opportunities to participate in government and legislature (RSA, 1995:5).

Furthermore, the government of South Africa has various other gender-friendly policies and structures such as the National Policy Guidelines on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2000), the Gender Equality Strategic Framework (2008), the Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, Broad-based Economic Empowerment Act no 53 of 2003 and the South Africa Women and Gender Equality Bills (2014). In addition to these policies, the South African government subscribes to, and endorses, the principle of various international, continental and regional conventions and gender instruments that support the development of women into management positions. Some of the instruments to which the South Africa government is a signatory include the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), 1995, SDGs (UN, 2016), the UN's Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNEGEEW), 2011,) The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), 2004, the African Union (AU) Declaration of June 2015, and the Southern Gender Protocol, (1997), which underwent amendment in 2008 and for which South Africa deposited its instruments and the Africa Gender and Development Index(AGDI), 2011.

In a similar vein, in the local sphere of government, several legislative measures have been designed to achieve gender mainstreaming (Penceliah, 2011:869-872). These include the creation of committees that address gender issues and the development of gender policy frameworks within different municipalities and to ensure women's active participation in planning and decision-making (Van Dijk, 2012:158). Nonetheless, these programmes have not translated into a substantial increase in the number of women in leadership positions, especially in the local sphere of government. This is in spite of the existing opportunities given to women for their self-development through leadership development programmes, especially in the local sphere of government (Van Dijk, 2012:158).

Evidently, since the new democratic era, the South African government recognises the importance of women's empowerment and the pertinence of including women in top decision making and leadership positions. This stance is specifically deduced from the ratification of progressive policies, and legislative frameworks (some mentioned above) that are designed to enhance advocacy and interventions for the development and empowerment of women leaders in South Africa. Unfortunately, the reality contradicts government's aspirations in relation to women's empowerment in the South African public service/sector and the local government sphere. This is because the implementation of these impressive legislative initiatives is yet to translate into any significant increase in the number of women occupying key strategic management positions as would be expected (Hingston, 2016:75-76a; Mathur-Helm, 2016:341; Stevens & Ntlama, 2016:48). Many scholars continue to accentuate the pervasiveness of women's under-representation, marginalisation, and discrimination with regard to active participation in top leadership and decision making positions in comparison to men (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4951; Businesswomen's Association of South Africa (BWASA), 2015; Matoane 2015:1; Hingston, 2016:76a; Hicks & Myeni, 2016:109; Statistics South Africa, 2016). For instance, Masango & Mfene (2015:628), Hills (2015:158), and Martin and Bernard (2016:1-2), identify historical factors such as patriarchy, related societal norms, male domination, lack of access to education, and cultural stereotypes as the barriers that impede women's advancement to leadership positions in the various spheres of governance in South Africa.

As alluded to above, the application and execution of various policies and frameworks propagated towards the protection of women and their human rights remains an issue of severe challenge (Municipal Focus, 2015). Since most governmental entities and departments are yet to implement the country's large-scale law reforms and policies safeguarding women and their rights (Mokhele, 2016:13, Municipal focus, 2015). In a nutshell, all arms of the South Africa government, including the local sphere of government as the sphere where this study is focused, must aim and work towards the eradication of gender inequality.

### **1.1.2 Conceptualisation of gender and gender inequality**

Miller *et al.*, (2016:114) and the World Health Organisation {WHO} (2017) described gender as a social construct with attributes that have cultural and economic



significance and consequences, created in the social context through socialisation and interpersonal relations. Gender is associated with features such as the behaviours, responsibilities and opportunities that differentiate men from women and involves biological and sexual perspectives (Azuh *et al.*, 2015:106; Azuh *et al.*, 2017:1). Although, the term *gender* is generally used in reference to both male and female sexes (Azuh *et al.*, 2015:107; Wood & Eagly, 2015:461; Azuh *et al.*, 2017:1-2), for the purpose of this study the focus will be on its applicability on women in the local sphere of government, specifically in the Dr KKDM

The concepts *gender identities* and *gender roles* can be explained in social, cultural, and political contexts that favour men more than women (Azuh *et al.*, 2015:1; Masango & Mfene, 2015:628). For instance, in African societies and culture, different gender roles and responsibilities are assigned to men and women (Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:373). Occupations in the public spheres (including the local government sphere) such as public sector leadership were delineated as men's roles. Women's roles are mostly tied to family responsibility, reproductive activities, and domesticity, whereas qualities such as corporate efficiency and perfect leadership are linked to masculinity (Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616-617; Wood & Eagly, 2012:57). Specific roles such as childbearing, nurturing, and all forms of domestic chores are often regarded as the exclusive responsibility of women while men are expected to engage in corporate jobs outside their homes (Hingston, 2016: 39b, Wood & Eagly, 2012:57). Women usually wake up early to prepare breakfast for their husbands and children, prepare the children for school, fetch water, clean the compound, arrange the home, and perform the bulk of domestic chores. According to Hingston (2016:39), women remain busy until late at night beleaguered by the stress of executing diverse domestic roles. Furthermore, even women who take jobs outside their homes and those who engage in various small businesses were still expected to perform domestic chores in their homes (Hingston 2016:39; Mahasha 2016:1). In confirming these theoretical assumptions, findings from this thesis show that, even when husband and wife undertake jobs in the public sphere, female managers are expected to nurture their children, cook for their husbands as well as perform other domestic responsibilities (see Sections 6.2.2, 7.2.4 and 7.12).

Due to these societal gender constructs and stereotypes, women were and are still often relegated and displaced from decision-making responsibilities both in their homes and in the public sphere (Maseko, 2013:3). It was traditionally believed that women are more efficient and industrious as wives and mothers, than as decision makers and leaders (Andibo, 2012:280, Maseko, 2013:3). Thus, women were regarded as homemakers and not decision makers (Durojaye & Adebajo, 2014:6169). These traditional gender roles and expectations linked with women's identity create internal barriers in their progression into leadership positions (Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:373; Andibo, 2012:280). Consequently, because of decades of internalising these negative stereotypes, some women suffer low self-image (Wendy & Eaggly, 2015:462) which prevents them from aspiring to leadership positions, as they fear it might conflict with their domestic and reproductive roles. Masango & Mfene (2015:628) support this statement by asserting that these stereotypical gender expectations contribute additional difficulties to their performance of leadership roles in the workplace. This study concurs with these authors observations (Masango & Mfene 2015:628; Wendy & Eaggly, 2015:462) because leadership roles are complex (Northouse, 2010:1), time consuming and also require many sacrifices. Findings from this thesis support the perspective that female managers experience intense difficulty combining their leadership roles and household responsibilities (see Sections 6.2.5 and 7.12). Therefore, combining gender roles with leadership roles would ultimately obstruct and interrupt female manager's performance. Female managers working in the public sector/service encounter the challenge of juggling motherhood and their professional career, as they are traditionally expected to bear, raise, and nurture their children (Mahasha 2016:4-5; Moyo *et al.*, 2020:15690).

The researcher is of the opinion that a woman who is placed in a top management position in the public service/sector and in a municipality is saddled with dual responsibilities and she is expected not only to be fully committed to both domestic and professional roles, but also to prove her proficiency as a manager. This is not the case with men occupying management positions (Huisman *et al.*, 2011:96). Findings from this thesis support the assumption that female managers are evaluated both as leaders and mothers, this is not the case for male managers as they hardly perform house roles such as cooking and child nurturing due to cultural beliefs (see Sections 7.4, and 7.12). In this regard, most women in management positions in the public

service/sector including municipalities are left with the painful decision of choosing between a successful career and family, most or some women registering their preference towards their families. (Jacobs & Schain 2009:10). Jacobs & Schain (2009:10) argue that the complexities of balancing numerous gender roles and work life cause most women managers either to resign their jobs or choose not to aspire to higher leadership roles. Empirical evidence from the qualitative data of this thesis confirm the argument of Jacobs and Schain (2009:10) that female managers who feel that pressure from their leadership roles intersects with their family responsibilities may not aspire for higher leadership roles (see Section 7.12). On the contrary, the quantitative study shows that, even when female managers demonstrated that they encounter challenges balancing their leadership responsibilities and domestic responsibilities they still choose to aspire into higher leadership position (see section 6.2.6). However, one can safely say that the gender roles' expectations constitute obstacles to female manager's active participation in the decision-making processes of the public sector (Ford & Rohini, 2011:7; Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:373) and keep women in disadvantaged positions. This situation is further aggravated by the paucity of gender-specific support mechanisms to assist in the development of women managers (Andibo, 2012:284; Cho *et al.*, 2016:466). Scholars like Ely *et al* (2011:475) and Brue (2016:46) emphasised that the traditional leadership development programmes of public organisations do not fully accommodate and support the developmental needs of women. This explains why women need specialised support systems to accelerate their development, especially the development of their management skills and competencies. In confirming the theoretical assertions of these scholars, the empirical evidence of this thesis revealed that municipalities lack an adequate support system to assist female managers with their motherly and with their professional development as managers (see Sections 6.2.14, 6.2.15, 6.2.16, 7.12, 7.13, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3, 7.13.4 and 7.14). Therefore, this study argues that any measure that will assist in the development of women with regard to their managerial skills and techniques is imperative for their leadership inclusion and participation, especially in the public sector.

In addition to this, in patriarchal societies to which South Africa belongs, there is a common belief that specific character traits and abilities make men and women well-suited for specific professions and careers (Moloto *et al.*, 2014:2, Wood & Eagly,

2015:462). This gender stereotyping perception tends to prescribe and describe the jobs options available to men and women in the public sector (Moloto *et al.*, 2014:2; Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55; Wood & Eagly, 2015:462). Andibo (2012:285) and Samuel and Mokoali (2017:55) respectively stated that, in advancing into leadership positions, gender stereotypes undermine women more than men. Men are regarded as possessing perfect leadership competencies and abilities and it is traditionally believed that men are more suitable and proficient in handling leadership roles than their female counterparts (Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55). Findings from this thesis support the claim that women are undermined by gender role stereotyping (see Sections 6.2.3, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.8, and 7.12). The managerial skills and capacities of women are often disregarded and underestimated, as well as regularly evaluated as below standard in relation to the perceived skills of their male counterparts (Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55; Moloto, *et al.*, 2014:3). The empirical evidence confirms the theoretical assumption that, in the workplace, some people underestimate and misjudge female managers due to societal expectations of gender roles. This unnecessary and seemingly superficial association of managerial effectiveness and corporate excellence with masculinity is inconsiderate to women and unethical (Syed & Tariq, 2017:13). The attribution of management excellence to masculinity has made leadership career progression more difficult and challenging for women aspiring to top decision-making and executive positions in the public sector/service (and in the local government sphere) (Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55) and has placed them in disadvantaged positions to cope with existing discrepancies (Kark *et al.*, 2012:621-622) due to management and gender stereotypes (Cho *et al.*, 2016:465:466; Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55).

It can be argued that managerial competencies and skills should not be determined by a person's gender but by their skills, knowledge, capacities, and leadership experiences (De Mascia, 2015:2). Therefore, the linking of leadership qualities with masculinity or femininity is baseless. This is because, according to the findings of this thesis, leadership skills can be acquired and developed regardless of a person's gender and there is also the possibility that women can acquire better leadership skills more than their male peers (see Sections 7.7 and 7.13). By using gender as a determinant of professional suitability, the best-suited person for the position may be

overlooked or even ignored (Niennaber & Moraka, 2016:143). Liberal feminists argue that women's capacity to reason is equal to that of men and biological sex differences are irrelevant in the assessment of intellectual capabilities (Lorber, 2010:26, Niennaber & Moraka, 2016:145-146). Azuh *et al.*, (2015:107) argue that women are perceived as intellectually inferior due to the low quality education they receive, which is rooted in cultural and legal constraints and is not a justification for their intellectual capacities. As Evans (2013:874-877), and Botting (2016:122-125) aptly suggest, leadership or management skills are taught and education in the form of training could be a fundamental tool to the empowerment and development of women for senior management positions. The findings from this thesis confirm the liberal feminist theory that men and women have equal rational capacities, and that women's leadership competencies and capacities can be developed through various leadership training and empowerment approaches, as claimed by liberal feminism (see Sections 6.2.17, 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3, 7.13.4 and 7.14).

The empowerment of women for management positions as a strategy for development may assist in diminishing inequality in the public sector/service (including the local government sphere) in the workplace (Duflo 2012:1053, Lawal *et al.*, 2016:354). According to Duflo (2012:1051), "empowering women may benefit development". This study concurs with view of Duflo, (2012:1053) because women's empowerment has a strong connection with increases in economic productivity, human development and environmental sustainability (Tembon & Fort, 2008: xix; Bayeh 2016:37). The empirical evidence from this study supports the argument that women's empowerment through their inclusion into senior leadership positions contributes to community growth, improved standard of living, enhanced organisational productivity and increases in income within households (see Section 7.11). According to McGinn & Oh, (2017:84) and Wahid *et al.*, (2017:1362), women's empowerment leads to poverty reduction, changes in personal incomes and increased powers to access resource and decision making. The researcher is of the opinion that development cannot be realised when women's human capacities are not expanded for their inclusion in all human endeavours including the public sector and the local sphere of government. From the human development perspective, development refers to the process of expanding and extending human intellectual capabilities, increasing their freedom to choose from a

range of choices and improving the quality and living standards of people (Alkire, 2010:2; Shuaibu & Oladayo, 2016:524).

Human development encompasses the process of creating a conducive environment that promotes or fosters individual's power and self-esteem to realise their potentials through the establishment of public and private institutions that support human rights (Alkire, 2010:2). Ozoemena and Hansungule (2014:224-225) explains that, despite the fact that development is a constitutional right in Africa, women are still unable to exercise their human development right because of their social placement and the manner in which they view themselves in relation to societal gender expectations and beliefs. This study argues that creating opportunities for women through leadership empowerment will consequently help them realise their full human rights and potentials and to participate meaningfully in the development of themselves and the society at large (Shama, 2016:24) (see Section 6.2.17, 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3, 7.13.4 and 7.14).

### **1.1.2 Training and education to support women development**

Training, education and development comprise tools and techniques that are frequently used for building and improving human capacities and competencies in public organisations. Training is an organised and systematic procedure for attaining both behavioural and attitudinal change in an individual with the aim of bringing about the achievement of set goals within a public organisation (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009:451-452). Training is a systematic process designed for the transformation of people's behaviour and thinking patterns to enable them to carry out their jobs effectively (Jahenzeb & Bashir 2013:244-245). Training constitutes a crucial strategic aspect of human resource development (HRD) practices for the enhancement of individuals' skills, knowledge, abilities and competencies to perform more effectively in a public organisation (Mengistu, 2016:2). Similarly, Nel *et al.*, (2011:357-358) assert that training is a powerful transformative tool for the improvement of skills, attitudes, knowledge, and ideas of employees in public organisations towards effective work performance. Furthermore, Elnaga & Imran (2013:139), and Niazi (2011:43), argue that training constitutes an essential part of an organisation (including the public

organisation) and is a management tool for raising awareness and educating employees in senior management positions. Leadership training is specifically designed for increasing and equipping public managers' competencies, skills, and social behaviour concerning their managerial responsibilities and functions (Mengistu, 2016:10).

Training and development have become essential in qualifying and enhancing employee's performance on the job for maximum productivity (AL-Hadi, 2013:2). Goetsh (2014:21-30) observes that effective training and development programmes are efficient strategies targeted at remodelling human capacities in organisations, including the public sector/service. More precisely, training programmes assist in sharpening employees' thinking abilities and creativity to take strategic decisions promptly and in a more productive manner (Mengistu, 2016:26-27). This is a must for women to fill senior management positions in the public service/sector and to become effective public leaders. According to MIŠIĆ, (2013:23), HRD training programmes focusing on leadership skills development are vital instruments for the inclusion of previously marginalised employees such as women and other minority groups through training and career development efforts. In support of the assertion of MIŠIĆ, (2013:23), the findings from the thesis revealed that HRD training programmes such as mentoring, coaching and succession planning are germane to equip women, as the previously marginalised, with relevant skills to ensure leadership gender equality and prepare ambitious women for future advancement (see Sections 6.2.17, 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3, 7.13.4).

Alternatively, personnel development is a continuous activity and is focused on the expansion of skills, knowledge, and abilities of a person for long-term growth and for personal advancement (Nda & Fard 2013:91). Management development programmes such the Municipal Financial Management Programme (MFMP) may include competency-based training to enhance and improve the leadership capacities, skills and knowledge of a person (Vermeulen 2011:79). According to Onichakwe (2013:257) (personnel) development is an ongoing process by which public managers (and employees) acquire new skills, knowledge and competencies that will qualify for future administrative engagements. With reference to South Africa, the National School of Governance (NSG) provides personnel development and training to public

managers within the national, provincial, and local government sphere to equip them with skills for professionalism within their job specifications. In addition, society's abilities to achieve equality are anchored on the acquisition of skills through effective training and personnel development. Therefore, with reference to the focus of this study, training and development programmes are paramount for upgrading and increasing the managerial competencies of women in management for effective work performance.

Education can be described as an instrument for building the knowledge, moral principles and understanding that are required in all spheres of life (Buckley & Caple, 2008:6-7). Education is a comprehensive concept and includes training and development (Mcguire, 2014:1-6). According to England *et al.* (2012:2-4), gender inequality is extreme among women with a lower education, more so than those that are highly educated. Women who are well educated are more likely to gain promotion to top leadership positions than those with lesser education and qualifications (Mabokele & Mlambo, 2015:84). Education is vital for the eradication of inequalities between men and women in the work environment and the advancement of women's active participation in political and management positions. Furthermore, it can be argued that educating women to qualify for senior management positions in the public sector/service as well as at local government sphere will inevitably lead to their participation in decision making.

The construction of an approach that will educate and train women for, or in, senior management positions in the public service as well as at the local government sphere can make a significant difference in terms of expanding their creativity and achieving stronger teamwork in the public organisation (Brue & Brue 2016:77). Management education for women can lead to the effective and efficient use of women's leadership abilities and styles which is considered imperative in today's unpredictable work environment (Kelinsky & Anderson 2016:162). Women's leadership styles have generally been associated with the transformational leadership style, which is characterised by higher public organisational performance (Eagly 2007:1-6; De Mascia, 2015:1-3; Lee 2014:19). The theoretical assumptions that female managers tend to display transformational leadership style is confirmed by this study, however, this study also revealed that women can display other leadership styles depending on



the situation (see Section 7.9). The transformational leadership style emphasises the empowerment, motivation and development of the skills and capacities of followers to enhance their values and exceed their expectations (Lacerda, 2010:19; Cossine & Caballero, 2013:6; Susan, 2016:35). Essentially, transformational leadership is the type of leadership style that incorporates teamwork, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, and individualised consideration as core strategic values within an organisation (Lacerda, 2010:19; De Mascia, 2015:1) (see Section 7.9). According to Cossine and Caballero (2013:7), transformative leadership seeks positive change for individuals whilst achieving collective goals through public organisational strategies and structures rather than concentrating solely on attaining immediate personal interest or gains. This implies that it is a people-oriented style of public leadership in which interactions and relationships between interested individuals are organised around their collective interest in a manner that will motivate, transform, and enhance the skills and ethical aspirations of individuals (employees) (Wang & Howell, 2011:1135; Simola *et al.*, 2012:230).

Women managers are perceived as having an advantage over their male counterparts with regard to the demonstration of transformational leadership skills (De Mascia, 2015:1). The empirical findings confirm the assumption that female manager's display more of transformational leadership styles (see Section 7.9). This is because women possess particular behaviours that are communal in nature such as collaboration, humanness and their innate concerns for the development of others (Stempel *et al.*, 2015:272). Since female public managers demonstrate transformational leadership styles (Eagly, 2007:1-6; De Mascia, 2015:1-3; Stempel *et al.*, 2015:272), It becomes important to endorse and develop an approach to training as a practical measure for the acceleration of women into leadership positions in the local sphere of government. This is because it would indisputably lead to the projection of the concerns and common interests of individuals in the municipality and lead to their growth and development.

The late arrival of women not just into the professional public service/sector space but also into top management in public service/sector positions is attributable to their lack of access to education (Mavundla, 2010:20; Hills, 2015:158; O'manique & Fourie, 2016:98). This assumption is true because in the past, say, two decades women and

girls have been denied opportunities to access quality education because of gender role beliefs and expectations. As a result they have lesser education than men (Nomlomo, *et al.*, 2012:41; Nhlapo, 2019:2). The study findings support the presumption that women, unlike their male counterparts, had no access to quality education in the past because of cultural values and gender norms. In the case of South Africa, this is due to colonialism and apartheid (see Section 7.5). Therefore, to eradicate the limiting factor of minimal education and accelerate women into public management positions it is crucial to take into consideration strategic measures such as an approach to the training and development of women. Since this study focuses specifically on the training and development of women for public management positions in the Dr KKDM, the next section provides a brief overview of the local government municipality in South Africa.

### **1.1.3 Local government as a sphere of government**

The Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality serves as the case study for this research. The Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality (hereafter referred to as the DKKDM) is among the four districts of the North West province of South Africa. The boundaries of the DKKDM are between the Gauteng and Free State Provinces (Municipal Demarcation Board 2012). The DKKDM is categorised as a category C municipality in the ranking of local municipalities as prescribed by Section 155 of the RSA Constitution, 1996. With a category C municipality, there is a sharing of administrative powers and functions between the local municipalities and the district municipalities. The DKKDM is the smallest district in the North West province and serves as an umbrella to three distinct local municipalities, which include the Matlosona Local Municipality (a.k.a City of Matlosona), the Maquassi Hills Municipality (MHLM) and the new JB Mark local Municipality (Diedericks, 2013:2). The seat of the DKKDM is located in Klerksdorp.

*Local government* refers to the sphere of government that is situated closest to citizens and, as such, is efficiently positioned to respond adequately to local needs, interests, and the expectations local communities (Koma, 2010:110-120). Peneceliah (2011:867) supports this notion by stating that local government is often the first point of contact and the closest governmental institution to the people. Evidently, as the first point of contact and the most intimate governmental institution (Matoane, 2015:2),

local government has a substantial role to play in the attainment and realisation of the country's goals and "a better life for all" (South Africa Local Government, 2011:foreword; Madumo, 2015:153). Sebola (2015:1) and Koma (2010:120) concur with this statement, and add that the local sphere of government remains indispensable for the survival of any form of government.

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA, 2011: foreword) and Statistics South Africa (2017) indicate that women dominate the population of South Africa. Therefore, as the dominant population, if empowered for leadership positions, women may possibly serve as a powerful force in the development of their communities, societies and the nation at large. The construction of a gendered approach to the development of women for senior management positions may result in societal change<sup>1</sup> (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950; South Africa Local Government 2011: foreword). Firstly, the development of women may help to deconstruct patriarchal structures and misogynistic beliefs entrenched in culture that promotes gender equality and gender-based violence against women. According to the United Nations (2014) in relation to the empowerment and development of women, women can be agents of change for economic and social development of society and security around world. Without the empowerment of women for gender equality there can't be societal change, consequently, socio-economic development and social security might be difficult to achieve. The researcher is of the opinion that societal change will occur only if the status of women is improved and boosted through their access to education and training opportunities. Secondly, women's leadership style is considered as transformational, which brings the concerns of impoverished people into the decision-making table (Gakiya, 2016: 41-42). Therefore, meeting needs of the impoverished people and those who lack support is an indication of societal change. Coincidentally, women are the poorest and most disadvantaged social group in local communities (UN Women 2017) and the primary users of basic facilities (Bentley, 2004:5-6). Women, when performing their traditional roles in their homes and communities as mothers and caregivers, depend largely on basic facilities for example, water,

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<sup>1</sup> The construction of a gendered approach to the development of women for decision-making and senior management positions may result in societal change (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950; South Africa Local Government 2011: foreword).

electricity and a rural dispensary (Bentley, 2004:5-6). 42). This present study will focus on the construction of a gendered approach to the training and development of women in management positions in the local sphere of government specifically, the DKKDM (see Section 8.2.1).

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Sustainable development and gender equality are paramount for the socio-political and economic advancement of any country, state, or society (Sharma, 2016:23-24). Gender equality guarantees human development, societal development, fundamental human rights, improved standards of living, economic development, and equal decision-making opportunities among men and women (Sharma, 2016:23-24; Lawal *et al.*, 2016:354). According to Sudershan and Pathania (2017: 72), the empowerment and development of women is fundamental to the realisation of sustainable development imperatives. Similarly, sustainable development cannot be realised without the empowerment of women for their full participation in the political, social, economic and environmental sphere and for gender equality (Bayeh, 2016:37). In this regard, the pillars of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) have to be restructured and rechannelled to accommodate women, because without women's empowerment for active participation, the achievement of gender equality and sustainable development might not be realised (Lawal *et al.*, 2016:356; Sudershan and Pathania, 2017: 72).

Currently, several factors hinder women from advancing into top managerial positions (Cho *et al.*, 2016:466; Mahasha, 2016:1-2). Some examples of these "glass ceilings" include the lack of effective leadership skills (Hills, 2015:161; Cho *et al.*, 2016:466), family-work conflicts (Mahasha, 2016:1-2), a lack of self-confidence due to internalised marginalisation (Hills, 2015: 164; Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616-617), low investment in the empowerment of women, together with their reduced access to leadership development programmes (Ely *et al.*, 2011:478; Brue & Brue 2016:75). Others include internalised bias, beliefs on female gender characteristics and the requirements of a leader (Hills, 2015:164), gender bias in leadership recruitment by male evaluators (Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:374), gendered organisational culture and structures. The empirical evidence from this study confirms that internalised bias on gender roles,

expectations and traditional norms are used against women managers as they strive to advance into higher roles (see Section 6.2.3, 6.2.4 7.10). More so, scholars have cited that misogynistic tendencies in culture that are manifest through hostility, hate speech, incivility, patriarchy, and sexual violence discourage women's leadership acceleration (Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2007:1254). This study argues that women's education in the form of effective training and development is of the utmost importance because it improves self-confidence, skills development and professional competence and sharpens human capacities and abilities (Sharma, 2016:2-4). The findings from this thesis support that training and development interventions can assist in improving the self-confidence, skills and competencies of female managers, including challenging unconscious leadership gender bias that they have internalised (see Sections 6.2.17 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4).

Training and development constitutes an indispensable component of the South African local governance process (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2015). This could be based on the realisation that training and skills development is germane to building more skilled and expert public administrators for an effective and efferent local sphere of government (Sebola 2014:633). The development of a highly skilled workforce in the local sphere of government is pertinent since the sphere is constitutionally mandated to serve local communities' interests through the delivery of effective services. The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) in conjunction with the National Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoCTA), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), and a wide spectrum of other relevant stakeholders, are responsible for human capacity building in the local sphere of government (Patterson, 2008:19-20). In particular, SALGA is mandated with the responsibility of ensuring that municipalities achieve their developmental objective, mostly through effective training and skills development of municipal staff (Sebola 2014:633). In addition to building a skilled municipal workforce, SALGA also carries the mandate of ensuring the effective and full participation of women in all spectra of leadership in the local sphere of government (Sebola 2014:633). Despite the efforts by SALGA through skills building to equalise the public sector, several studies reveal that the local government sphere is the most

unequal sphere of government since women are still underrepresented in senior management structures (Matone, 2015:1, Osituyo, 2017).

This study questions the effectiveness of the training received by women since such training has not resulted in their leadership advancement and development. One benefit of public service/sector training is that it equips employees with the skills for advancement, leadership advancement in this context (Swanopoel 2016:32). In the local sphere of government training initiatives are designed to capacitate all employees irrespective of their gender (Sebola 2014:633). This therefore means that men and women are exposed to the same learning conditions. This could be a training error, considering women's social realities and identity and the supposition that men and women acquire skills and knowledge differently (Noe *et al.*, 2014:153). Scholars have argued that such traditional training is ineffective in the advancement of women because it does not accommodate the unique developmental needs of women (Brue & Brue 2016:75; Ely *et al* 2011: 475; Vinnicombe & Singh 2002:294). Bierema (2016:119) theorised that most public organisations are confronted with the challenge of how best to train and prepare women for leadership advancement, most through inadequate learning and training approaches. Therefore, addressing this challenge gives impetus to this study, which is to develop an approach for the empowerment of women for their career progression and leadership advancement in municipalities. Apart from the recognition that gendered training is unresponsive to women's developmental needs, the White Paper on the Local Government observed that current training practices in municipalities do not cater for the unique training needs of the local government (Sebola 2014:635).

Since the inauguration of the new democratic municipal dispensation in December 2000, the local sphere of government in South Africa has contributed immensely to the achievement and actualisation of a significant number of social and economic development processes. For example, considerable majorities of people residing in the jurisdiction of these municipalities such as Maquassi Hills and the City of Matlosana, have increased access to a wide range of basic services and more opportunities have been created for their participation in the economy (COGTA, 2009:1-3). The government implemented the National Gender Policy Framework, nationally and provincially in 2000 to improve the status of women. One of the major

objectives of the National Gender Policy Framework is to ensure the active participation of women in economic development (2017:1-2). The framework also focuses on breaking the barriers (direct and indirect in both the public and private sector) which hinder gender equality in the access and control of the economy (National Gender Policy Framework, 2017:1-4).

Furthermore, the framework recognises active public participation and educational careers through democratisation and skills development as the crucial instrument for the actualisation of public sector objectives (National Gender Policy Framework, 2017:1-4). Despite the notable legislations and great strides towards the attainment of gender equality, there is no policy or framework that is endorsed specifically towards the training and development of women for their equal leadership involvement in the local sphere of government. This study therefore implicates the absence of the construction and the implementation of policies and frameworks which are geared towards the empowerment of women for management positions, as the predominant cause of the persistence of inequality in senior leadership positions in the DKKDM. In principle, the provision of gender equality by government for previously marginalised social groups, for example women, does not guarantee them automatic jobs by virtue of being marginalised, rather their employment is based on their demonstration of the right skills, expertise and knowledge that is required on the job, especially those that demand professional knowledge and competencies (Mavundla 2009:46). This implies that the training and development of women is imperative for gender equality in leadership regardless of equality legislation if any. Therefore, to achieve gender equality, all government institutions, including the local sphere of government must be practical in ensuring gender equality in management, especially through women's empowerment and development.

The efficacy of the local sphere of government towards human capacity building for management positions for women in municipalities must be actualised through the implementation of appropriate and effective strategies or approaches (Mokhele, 2016:13; Maseko, 2013:2). Likewise, there is a necessity for the creation and implementation of additional strategies that will specifically assist in the promotion and development of women, especially those aspiring to management positions (Gakiya, 2016:41-42). A specific framework constructed toward the empowerment of women could be a measure to compensate for the time lag with regards to women's exclusion

in leadership and a developmental strategy for shaping and moulding the abilities of women in management positions in the local sphere of government.

According to Osituyo (2017:81) the scarcity of statistics on women's leadership participation from past investigations show that there is no empirical investigation that is focused on gender injustices in the managerial echelons within the South African public service. The researcher acknowledges that there are no known studies concerning the construction of a gendered approach to training and development for women's empowerment and development for leadership positions in the DKKDM and in the local sphere of government. Thus, this research aims to fill this gap through the construction of a development approach that could be adopted for the development of women for, and in, management positions within the local sphere of government. This study acknowledges the strides taken by the government through training and skills development to bring about work effectiveness in the local sphere of government. However, it is argued that the construction of a training approach specifically for the development of women for senior management positions in the local sphere of government is necessary. Such a training approach should be developed to ensure that gender equality and women's elevation for sustainable growth and development in the DKKDM is realised. The assumption that the lack of leadership experience (municipal leadership skills) and self-confidence identified as preventing women's leadership participation can be examined and improved through training and development is therefore argued.

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of this study is to construct an empowerment approach for the leadership development and advancement of female managers in the DKKDM, and the local sphere of government in South Africa. In this regard, the ensuing research objectives are detailed below.

- to establish a theoretical framework for gender and gender equality
- to determine the local-based and national (including possible international) statutory and regulatory framework for gender equality and women's empowerment in RSA
- to establish a theoretical framework for the training and development of women with specific reference to the local sphere of government in RSA;



- to empirically determine the statutory and regulatory framework for training and development, specifically in the local sphere of government in the RSA; and
- to construct a gendered approach to the training and development of women into positions of leadership in the Dr.KKDM and the local sphere of government in general.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Taking into account the nature of the study, the research problems described in Section 1.2 and the situation of gender inequality and skills development practices in the the local sphere of government, specifically the DKKDM, the study collects theoretical and empirical evidence towards providing sufficient answers to the following research questions:

- What are the established theoretical frameworks to gender and gender inequality, especially in public administration?
- What are the local-based and national (including possible international) statutory and regulatory framework for gender equality and women's empowerment in the RSA?
- What are the established theoretical frameworks for training and development with specific reference to the local sphere of government in relation to the training and development of women?
- Which statutory and regulatory frameworks pertaining to gender training and development of women managers exist at local government level in South Africa?
- What gendered approach to development may be constructed for the development of women into leadership positions in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality and in the local sphere of government in general?

## 1.5 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

This thesis intends to use the Liberal Feminist Theory and African Feminist Theory (see Sections 2.4.1.2, and 2.4.1.8) to explain the need for gender equality and the empowerment of women, where these theories advocate the empowerment and advancement of women to enhance and extend their participation in top decision-making and executive positions. The following Section includes a brief discussion of Liberal Feminist Theory and African Feminist Theory.

- **Liberal Feminist Theory**

The pervasiveness and persistence of gender inequality and the oppression of women and their lived experiences necessitated the emergence and development of various strands of feminist activism. Generally, feminist theorists agree that women undergo a myriad of challenges such as oppression, discrimination, and repression in societies, which differ from the experiences of men (Atanga *et al.*, 2013:302). Therefore, feminists strive towards the elimination of this socially constructed injustice against women by interrogating traditional structures that legitimatise the subjugation of women and developing measures aimed at the full actualisation of women's rights and potentials (Ahikire, 2014:7). Donadey (2016:2) defines feminism as a political theory and practice that strives to free women from all systems of gender subordination and oppression, such as sexism, patriarchy and domestic violence. This is regardless of their race, colour, religion, ethnicity, class, education, and other social determinants. As a political movement, argument and practice, feminism challenges the prominence of large-scale unequal gender relations that is deep-rooted in societal institutions and focuses on the achievement of women's equality and rights in society (Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASCWR), 2004:1; Lorber, 2010:1-2).

Liberal Feminism is a strand of feminist theory that places emphasis on the advancement of equality in individual rights and opportunities between men and women in all public spheres (Munson *et al.*, 2014:9). Liberal Feminists believe that the oppression and domination of women exist because of biological sex differences and they contend that gender differences should not be a justification for the exclusion of women from participating in all spheres of life. The core of their argument is that the

common humanities of women and men supersedes their biological sex differences, which is merely a representation of their procreative capabilities (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016: 145). Similarly, Liberal Feminists maintain that men and women are equal in their abilities to reason (Munson *et al.*, 2014:11). Therefore, if men and women are the same, they should be treated equally under the law. Liberal Feminism strives for women's equal access to education, employment opportunities, development opportunities, equal pay, as well as better working conditions (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016:145; Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8188). Liberal Feminism insists on equal human rights and autonomy for both men and women in society and entirely repudiates discrimination based on biological sex differences. Following this line of thinking, it seeks to protect the equal rationality between male and female sexes and stressed the significance of constructing societal roles in a manner that will accelerate women's rights and independence for self-fulfilment.

According to Nienaber and Moraka (2016:145), Liberal Feminists are concerned with diminishing gender inequality, specifically in the job market. To achieve their objectives, Liberal Feminists adopt important policy advocacy tools of the civil rights movement such as the anti-discrimination legislation and Affirmative Action Policy, such as preference for women in job applications. The implication of adopting the anti-discrimination legislation and affirmative action's framework is that only qualified women are required to redress the ethnic and gender disparities in the work environment. This, in turn, implies supporting and encouraging the training and development of women for jobs and positions such as leadership, which were previously, and traditionally, a male preserve (Samuel & Mokoaleli, 2017:55). Additionally, Liberal Feminism seeks to expand and extend women's opportunities through training and education as a strategy for building their confidence and developing their skills towards dismantling societal practices that strengthen and perpetuate gender disparities (Deepta & Muller, 2016:20; Chopara & Muller, 2016:2). The crux of Liberal Feminism is not a struggle for women to take over power. Instead, it is a call for a paradigm shift in harnessing and using women's collective potentials and abilities towards achieving their common goals without discrimination or oppression (UN Training Centre, 2001). Therefore, this study corroborates the tenets of Liberal Feminism and emphasises the dire urgency for the construction of a gendered approach to the training and development of women in management and

for management positions (see Section 8.2.1). This is because women's relegation from positions of management and professional leadership has negative impacts on socio-economic development, sustainable society and good governance.

- **African Feminist Theory**

The second theoretical framework utilised for this study is African Feminist Theory. African Feminism is a political movement initiated by African women within the continent and the diaspora (Ahikire, 2014:7), who recognise the collective efforts of African men in their struggles in upsetting foreign exploitation and domination against women (Guy-Sheftall, 2003:31; Coulibaly, 2015:1-2). Although African Feminism acknowledges patriarchy as a fundamental source of women's subjugation, unlike Western Feminism, it does not perceive African men as implacable opponents (Coulibaly, 2015:1-2). Rather, it challenges men towards positive change, by illuminating certain salient aspects of contemporary patriarchies that limit women and prevent them from actualising their personal goals other than their familiar conservative roles (Guy-Sheftall, 2003:31; Atanga, 2013:308).

African Feminists claim that women's oppression and subjugation in the economic, political, social, cultural, and legal systems are legitimised in patriarchal social relations (Coulibaly, 2015:2). This study agrees with Coulibaly's (2015:2) claim because, in patriarchal societies, feminine qualities are devalued, women are seen as lower beings and men's subjects (Sultana (2010:1-2), thus stripping women of their rights to self-determination. The subservient and lower level positions predominantly occupied by women in the public sector find expression in a typical patriarchal society, such as South Africa. Sultana (2010:1-2) defines patriarchy as a system of domination and exploitation whereby political and socio-economic powers are unjustly distributed between men and women, to the detriment of women and the favour of men. African Feminists argue that the patriarchal social relations, structures, and systems in society encourage and strengthen men's dominance and denial of female access, power and control over resources within the private and public sphere (Fainos *et al.*, 2016:53). Furthermore, these authors are of the opinion that patriarchy informs and shapes the interactions and relationships that exist between classes, groups, and race. This affirms the assertion that every aspect of human living is structured by and legitimised

within the framework of patriarchal ideology that validates men's supremacy over women (Fainos *et al.*, 2016:53). Therefore, by fighting against the unequal gender relations and the widespread violence frustrating the rights of African women, African Feminism sheds light on the underlying causes of gender inequality and its consequences in African society. African Feminism strives to destabilise and eradicate the existing matrix of exploitation and domination with the aim improving the situation of African women through the transformation of gender relationships in African societies.

Noteworthy is the fact that African Feminism theorists struggle to eradicate all forms of patriarchal exploitation and oppression. African Feminists explore individual and collective energies rather than fighting individual men as the identified enemy (Ntseane, 2011:314). African Feminists view the collaborative and complementary efforts of men as crucial in eliminating the gender barriers inhibiting the progress of women in Africa. Therefore, these theorists acknowledge the fact that we are all 'trapped in a patriarchal system', which is detrimental not only to women but also to men (Reed, 2001:169). Hence, African Feminists recognise that the fight against gender inequality in African societies cannot be won by women alone; since men discriminate against women, but by the collaborative efforts of both men and women. The empirical evidence of this thesis confirms the theoretical assumption of the African Feminist theorists that the fight against gender inequality cannot be won in isolation of African men especially as they are the major perpetrators of inequality against women (see Section 7.14). This inclusive stance highlights the necessity for compromise and cooperation rather than emphasising on the present conflict between African men and women (Ntseane, 2011:314). As Faino *et al.* (2016:53) aptly observes, African Feminism, as a political ideology, promotes a cordial relationship between Africa men and women rather than creating a rift between them. This is so because African Feminism stresses the fact that both men and women have complementary roles to play (Ntseane, 2011:314) in the development of their societies. Ultimately, African feminists contend that if women are not actively involved in the different social spheres, the process of development can never be achieved (Coulibaly, 2015:4-5). Therefore, the thrust of this theory is to ensure the full participation of African women in the socio-economic and political spheres of African societies to bring about wholesome growth and development (Atanga, 2013:308-309; Coulibaly, 2015:2). This

discussion makes the African Feminist Theory and the Liberal Feminist Theory to be best suited as the theoretical frameworks for this study (see Section 2.4.1.2). Additionally, this study seeks to redress existing gender discrepancies through training and development of women so that African women will attain the same professional value as African men and enjoy equal rights and opportunities in different spheres of development (Atanga, 2013:308; Coulibaly, 2015:2). In this regard, to bridge the gap of unequal representation between men and women, this research aims to construct a gendered approach of training and development of women in management positions in the DKKDM.

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology refers to a researcher's choice regarding cases, conceptual frameworks of ideas, methods and concepts with the sole aim of achieving truth, objectivity and validity (Stokes & Wall, 2014:867; Brynard & Hanekom, 2013:28, 36). It is a strategy of enquiry that maps out the research techniques (Petty *et al.*, 2012:378) and includes the decisions, approaches, strategies, principles, and tools used by researchers in the process of executing a research project (Stokes & Wall, 2014:134). In this study, the research methodology is constructed with the aim of exploring and describing the experiences, opinions and feelings of women managers pertaining to gender inequality in the DKKDM. As part of the research methodology for this study, the following Sections will discuss the research approach, research design; research instrumentation; data collection techniques; population and sampling; and data analysis.

### **1.6.1 Research approach**

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, which is commonly known as a mixed method approach or a third research paradigm (Teddlie, & Tashakkori, 2009:4). According to Tashakkori and Creswell, (2007:3) mixed method research represents a research approach in which a researcher collects and analyses data, combines or merges research findings, and draws conclusions using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies in a single research project (see Section 5.2). A key feature of combining both a qualitative and quantitative approach

in a study is that the researcher has the opportunity of hearing, seeing and understanding social problems or issues in multiple ways (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:436).

According to Edmonds & Kennedy, (2012:112), Leedy and Ormrod (2001:158), qualitative research is a type of research conducted in social sciences that involves the use of literature review, face-to face personal interviews, open-ended and closed ended surveys, focus groups, data sampling and scientific analysis of raw data. In a qualitative research the researcher is interested in understanding actors' perspectives from their natural environment and acquiring in-depth understanding of actions and event that shape actors' behaviours (De Vos *et al.*, 2012:308). The purpose is not to make generalisations to some hypothetical population but for making critical deductions which would add to the existing body of knowledge and/or the generation of a new theory (Mouton & Babbie, 2002:270; Diedericks 2013:12). Diedericks (2013:12) mentioned that the researcher is the primary instrument in a qualitative research process.

Quantitative research is typically based on concrete measurement and statistical analysis, probably because it creates a linkage between empirical observations and numerical expression (Sauders *et al.*, 2012:472). In quantitative research, concepts or ideas are examined by the researcher through the use of statistical tools, to measure the relationships between variables (causal, independent, and dependent among others) (Muijs 2011-2). A distinguishing feature of the quantitative research method is that results can be generalised beyond the limit of the study sample, which allows for the applicability of the research findings to broader populations or any context.

### **1.6.2 Research design**

According to Baxter and Jack (2008:545-550), a qualitative case study design is a research technique that assists in exploring a specific phenomenon in a natural setting and from a wide variety of information. Similarly, Duminy *et al.* (2014:21) argues that a case study method is important because of the need to comprehend and intervene in complex environmental and social phenomena. A case can represent an individual, organisation, event, or group of people, programme/process, sub-group of the population, and even a town or city (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015:289). In this study, the

case used was the DKKDM and the unit of analysis was women in management. Women in middle management and senior management service positions participated in this study.

The researcher's choice for selecting this research strategy was supported by the essence and objectives of the study (see Section 1.3), which require acquiring an in-depth description, analysis and understanding of a case, identifying prevailing gender issues that limit women's advancement, as well as training and development challenges experienced by women or female employees at the DKKDM.

### **1.6.3 Literature review**

To achieve the set objectives of this study (see Section 1.3), the researcher engaged in an extensive review of existing literature on the issue under investigation. This study used primary literature as the foundation of the research, which provided a theoretical background to the study. The literature reviews included findings from public organisations such as the UN; legislation, policies, local government frameworks such as SALGA, SA Institute of Race Relations and official government reports; research reports; online literature; articles in accredited academic journals; reports of NGOs such as Sonke Gender and academic conference proceedings with particular reference to the topic. The study also consulted the following databases with the aim of ascertaining the availability of materials for a detailed literature review: SA e-publications, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Catalogues of Books at the Ferdinand Postma Library at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The librarian in charge of the faculty of humanities at the Ferdinand Postma Library was helpful in search for relevant government documents and other literature during the study period.

### **1.6.4 Data collection Instruments**

The data collection instruments used in this study are the semi-structured personal interviews, the semi-structured questionnaire and direct observation.



#### **1.6.4.1 Semi-structured interview**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four human resource personnel at the DKKDM. Interviews were also conducted with 23 female managers within senior management and middle positions at the DKKDM (see Section 5.5).

#### **1.6.4.2 Self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire**

The questionnaire was completed by 41 women in middle management and senior management positions with the DKKDM (see annexure 6). Some of the female managers who participated in the semi-structured interview also completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire investigated the actual reasons for the gender gaps in top decision-making and leadership positions within the case study (see annexure 6). The collated reasons provide vital information that assisted the researcher in the development of an approach for the training and development of women in management positions.

#### **1.6.5 Population and sampling**

Welman *et al.* (2011:52) describe population as the examination of an object, which comprises individuals, organisations, groups, human products or events, and the environment in which they are exposed. The population represents all the persons from which a sample is drawn or selected (Bhattacharjee, 2012:65), all the players currently working in the DKKDM is the total population. The total number of women occupying management positions in the DKKDM is approximately 60, although the exact number cannot be ascertained due to the lack of proper documentation by the municipalities. The target sample for the study was 45 women in middle management and senior management position. The target sample was considered suitable for this study because women are underrepresented in managerial positions within the DKKDM and also because the target participants represents more than 25% of the entire population.

The purposive sampling research design was used to select participants for the study. Purposive sampling is regarded as the most vital non-probability sampling technique (Welman *et al.*, 2005:69). As Grinnell and Unrau (2008:153) observe, with purposive

sampling the researcher has the opportunity of employing his/her experience and expertise in selecting units of analysis in such a way that the samples obtained represent the relevant population. With purposive sampling, participants are selected because they illustrate certain features that are of interest to the researcher for a particular study (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:150). For the semi-structured interview, the purposive sampling included four HR managers at the DKKDM and 23 women in middle management and senior management position, as alluded in Section 1.6.4. For the questionnaire, the purposive sampling was done according to gender. As outlined in the previous Section, 41 female managers in middle management and senior management positions completed the questionnaire.

### **1.6.6 Data collection techniques**

This study used the triangulation method. Triangulation involves the combination and use of more than one research methods, mainly qualitative and quantitative approaches, in the process of data collection in a single study (Atkinson, 2011:217; Flick, 2014:183). Triangulation is a strategy for the validation of research information (Flick, 2014:183), that strengthens the quality of the data for better research results. According to King and Horrocks (2010:164), triangulation enhances the validity and reliability of information through the process of verification from different complementary sources. In a mixed method research, the triangulation method is usually considered to be the best way of improving the validity and reliability of results (Noble & Heale 2019:67-68).

In this study, the triangulation research methods were achieved through the use of the qualitative and quantitative research design, different methods of data collection, different methods of data analysis and the use of various gender theories and relevant literature. Existing international and national legislative policies addressing gender issues and the empowerment of women as well as the annual reports from the various local municipalities under the DKKDM were consulted. In addition, the semi-structured interviews with the identified stakeholders were held to ascertain measures put in place to promote gender equality and the acceleration of women's leadership by the municipalities of the DKKDM.

### **1.6.7 Data analysis**

In this study, the data analysis was done in two stages. The first stage comprised qualitative data analysis and the second comprised quantitative data analysis. The qualitative data was analysed using the inductive and deductive thematic analysis. The qualitative data analysis began with a proper organisation, preparation and transcription of the collected data from the semi-structured interviews. This process was followed by the development of themes and codes, what Cresswell and Poth (2018:189) describe as the core of qualitative data analysis. Each theme developed has different codes which describe the idea that are linked to the reference variable. Both deductive and indicative themes were developed from gender theories, literature and from the respondents' responses. This method was very suitable for the study objective because the research technique was sufficiently flexible and could allow the researcher to make social and psychological interpretation of secondary and primary data and could result in the formulation of an empowerment scheme for women's development (Henry 2017:274). Whilst the quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

### **1.6.8 Validity and reliability**

The objectivity of quantitative and qualitative research can be realised through the measurement of validity and reliability (Heale & Twycross, 2015:66). Bearing this in mind, the researcher endeavoured to ensure the quality, exactness and appropriateness of the study through the use of triangulation methods. In addition, an appropriate sample size was used, and the researcher was very careful to avoid any form of biases in the study.

Validity and reliability are important tools for achieving consistency and credibility in qualitative research. A research study is considered valid and reliable if the results generated from the study can be replicated from occasion to occasion and from research to research (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:119). However, social researchers do not investigate a stable social world or a static reality (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2009:93). Rather, they are concerned with understanding a world (social reality) that is shaped with certain aspects of behaviours and knowledge (Leavy, 2014:28). It will therefore be difficult for the researcher to anticipate that the results that will be

gathered from this study through the use of interviews and a questionnaire can be replicated under similar conditions. Therefore, because this study is an interpretive research, dependability was adopted as a criterion in place of reliability.

The interpretative paradigm is premised on the subjective interpretation of social actions and human behaviours, and the behaviours, opinions and experiences of an individual or groups of individuals fluctuate in varying social contexts (Van der Riet and Durrheim, 2009:93; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25). Dependability is important for trustworthiness, and an aspect of trustworthiness includes the transferability of research findings to other social groups, people and organisations (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110). Therefore, to ensure trustworthiness, the triangulation research approach was used for data collection and data analysis. The researcher endeavoured to report the research processes accurately and in detail, so that future researchers in the field can successfully repeat the work.

## **1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to De Vos *et al.* (2011:114), ethics are the rules, values and laws that control behaviour in human relations and the standard of conduct, good and bad, that guides an individual, a given profession or a group. To ensure that this study adheres to the ethical guidelines and standards set for research at the North-West University (NWU), authorisation was obtained from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, NWU. Permission was also obtained from the municipal managers of the local municipalities that reside under the DKKDM. The purpose of the research was communicated to the participants, as well as the voluntary nature of the research and their right to withdraw their participation at any given time during the study. The respondents who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study signed a consent form. The researcher ensured the participants of their confidentiality, explaining that the data will not be made available to any third party, except through the reporting in the thesis. The researcher verbally requested the respondent's consent for their voices to be recorded before commencing the interview section. This was done to ensure that the study adhered to the ethical guidelines of the North-West University, which state that respondents must be protected from any form of psychological or physical harm.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Fundamentally, the significance of a study is in constant relation to its influences on the expansion of an already existing body of scholarly knowledge in a specific discipline or policy and practice of government. Furthermore, the stakeholders or social groups who are going to derive benefits from the research findings are also specified in the significance of a study. Social scientists are interested in proposing alternative policy or frameworks that could be reviewed and possibly adopted by the government. The significance of this study will be in two phases.

Firstly, the existing body of scholarly literature (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4) focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment. However, there is paucity of studies regarding the construction of a gendered model for the training and development of women into decision-making and executive positions in the local sphere of government. In light of the above, the study seeks to expand the existing body of academic knowledge in public administration. Promoting a gendered approach to the development and empowerment of women in management positions will add to the body of knowledge in the discipline/discourse, and to science in general. Public Management and Leadership are sub-fields under Public Human Resource Management as a sub-discipline of Public Administration. Therefore, this study can contribute to expanding the theory in Public Management and Leadership and add practical realities and experiences to theories and concepts

Secondly, recognising the fact that South Africa is a democratic developmental state, the advancement of more women into leadership positions may assist in reinforcing democracy. Based on the provisions of the Bill of Rights as the most important part of the constitution, full democracy cannot be reached without the presence of men and women in the policy and decision-making processes. Therefore, the representation of women in senior management is paramount for the realisation of the human rights as enshrined in the Bill of Rights in the RSA Constitution, 1996. Furthermore, an approach, created specifically for women's empowerment, may assist in advancing more women into decision-making and leadership positions in the public sector. The training and development of women will assist in strengthening societal cooperation in the public service, where men and women will be actively involved in administrative

processes, bringing a variety of ideas, innovations and knowledge into a decision-making table towards more efficient service delivery. Overall, constructing a gendered approach for the empowerment and development of women will benefit women, men, societies and the nation at large.

## **1.9 PROVISIONAL CHAPTER LAYOUT**

### **Chapter one: Introduction to the study**

Chapter one will comprise of the orientation of the study, the problem statement, and the central theoretical statements. This will be followed by the presentation of the research objectives and research questions. The chapter will also cover the research methodology that will be used in the study. Furthermore, the introductory chapter will include the explanation of terminology such as, the delimitation and limitation of the study, ethical considerations, the significance of the study and the provisional chapter layout.

### **Chapter two: Theoretical framework for gender, gender equality and gender approaches**

This chapter presents various feminist theories and other gender theories to explain and validate the lived experienced of women in society. This will be from the central theoretical framework of the study. Chapter two will discuss and analyse in detail, through the review of literature, gender, gender equality and gender approaches. The chapter will also discuss the current trends in gender and leadership both globally and in South Africa. The chapter will also investigate the challenges preventing women's leadership acceleration in the public sector.

### **Chapter three: Statutory and regulatory framework**

The chapter reports on the various national and international statutory and regulatory frameworks for gender equality. These statutory frameworks are critical to this study because they support gender equality and the development of women for their inclusion in all human endeavours. In South Africa, gender equality policy is enshrined in the RSA Constitution, 1996 and the government is a signatory to numerous international policies supporting women and their human right

## **Chapter four: Theoretical framework for the training and development in the local sphere of government**

The chapter presents a scholarly literature review on training and development. The chapter will include a review of different types of learning theories that can be adopted for the development of women. Human resource development strategies (HRD) and strategies such as training, development and education will be discussed. The chapter will also cover additional proactive approaches to human capacity building, for example, career development, mentoring, coaching and succession planning. The chapter will also discuss training and development in the local government and skills challenges in South Africa.

## **Chapter five: Research Methodology**

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted in this study. The research approach, research design; research instrumentation; data collection techniques; population and sampling; data analysis is discussed. The chapter explains the rationale for selecting the research design and ways to ensure the validity and reliability of the methods. The chapter concludes with a discussion on biographic information of the study respondents, the limitation of the study and the challenges experienced by the researcher during the data collection phase.

## **Chapter six and seven: Empirical chapters**

Chapters six and seven report on the analysis of the research findings. The chapters specifically discuss gender issues including the leadership training and development challenges inhibiting women's professional advancement and acceleration into senior management positions in the local sphere of government. Overall, the analysis of the many gender issues and the training and development challenges experienced by women in municipalities points towards the generation of dependable, accurate and comprehensive information for the consumption of different audiences targeted by this study. As stated in Section 5.9 of the methodology chapter of this thesis, the analysis was done in phases, the qualitative data analysis and the quantitative data analysis. The qualitative primary data was analysed through the use of the inductive thematic

analysis and the deductive thematic analysis. While the quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The empirical findings from both the qualitative and quantitative analysis in chapter six and seven serve as the starting point for the development of an approach for the career advancement and leadership acceleration of women in the local government sphere specially the DKKDM.

### **Chapter eight. Contribution chapter: A proposed approach for the leadership development and advancement of women in and senior management position**

Informed by the quantitatively and qualitatively analysed primary data and the various gender theories and feminist theoretical frameworks used in the study, this chapter presents a new theoretical contribution on a development approach to be adopted for women's empowerment and advancement into directorship and senior management positions in the local sphere of government. For this reason, Chapter eight becomes the core of this study since it constructs a development approach to empower and liberate women from social injustice, prejudice, sexism, and inequality widespread in the South African local sphere of government.

### **Chapter nine: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

As the final chapter of this thesis, Chapter nine provides a summary, conclusion and implementable recommendations designed to develop and advance female managers including women with leadership ambition currently in lower level positions into senior public management positions in the local government sphere, specially the DKKDM. In Chapter 9, recommendations were offered in two phases. First, the chapter recommends proactive strategies that complement the elements contained in the constructed development approach set out in Chapter 8. Second, insight was given into potential areas for further research.

## **1.10 CONCLUSION**

Since the adoption of a democratic constitution in the Republic of South Africa in 1996, the South African government has shown its clear intention to empower and advance women into all spectrum of leadership in the public sector/service including in the local



government sphere. Chapter II of the 1996 Constitution contains the Bill of Rights, which enshrines women's rights both in treatment and opportunities to participate in governance and public administration. The ideals of constitutional democracy include equality, non-sexism, citizen's participation, inclusive governance, effective rendering of basic public services, pluralism, individual's enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and freedom. Nevertheless, despite the gender-friendly constitution, female employees still experience sex discrimination, hostility and uncivil treatment, which negatively impact their professional career and leadership development and advancement in public institutions including in the local government sphere. Female managers undergo sexual discrimination especially during recruitment, promotion and in the identification of leaders for senior public leadership positions due to the gendered and patriarchal organisational culture, inherited from societal traditional norms and cultural beliefs. In this regard, the study sought the empowerment of female managers to increase their active public sector leadership participation and representation in the local sphere of government, specially the DKKDM. Overall, the empowerment approach proposed in this study seeks to resolve women's gender issues and career development and leadership training challenges discussed in the problem statement, which affects the leadership advancement of female managers in the local sphere of government, specially the DKKDM.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER AND GENDER EQUALITY**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to construct a gendered approach to the training and development of women in management positions at the local government level. The previous chapter consisted of the introduction to the study, the research problems that inform the research objectives and the research questions, the central theoretical framework, and the research methodology used for the study. The same chapter discussed the empowerment of women public managers as a prerequisite for reducing gender inequality, increasing women's participation in public leadership positions, increasing the confidence of women public managers, and building professional public leadership competencies for maximum performance in the public service/sector in relation to the local government sphere.

Therefore, this chapter begins with the conceptualisation of "gender" and an overview of relevant theoretical frameworks, which include the various strands of feminism to explain and analyse the problems identified in the study. In addition, this chapter offers an exposition into the lived conditions and experiences of women public managers. The chapter further engages in the examination of some gender theories to validate the psychological and structural causes of gender inequality including how language promotes discrimination. Through an extensive review of existing literature, the study examines gender sensitive approaches and gender public policies that are pertinent to diminishing gender inequality and ensuring the equal participation of men and women in public sector leadership. Furthermore, the chapter conceptualises "public leadership" as an essential function of public administration and discusses current trends in gender and public leadership discourse. Finally, focusing on South Africa, this chapter evaluates the issue of gender inequality in public sector leadership and investigates the factors sustaining women's under-representation in top public decision-making and public management positions.

## 2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF GENDER

The term *gender* describes the state of being either a man or a woman, especially with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological facts (Ayeni & Ajibogun 2013:118; Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014:10). *Gender* is a socio-cultural construction that explains how societies regulate sex categories. Gender acts as a social marker of roles, identity, and personality, and has psychological, economic, social, political, and cultural connotations for masculinity and femininity. Daymon and Demetrious (2010:1) add that *gender* is crucial in understanding voice, behaviours and social aspiration. Various academic scholars and researchers define the concept of “gender” differently, however, this study adopts the definitions used in developmental circles. *Gender* refers to categories that are socio-culturally developed, and over time, form the basis for distinguishing responsibilities, personality, economic and political characteristics for one’s sex (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014:10; Mukhopadhyay *et al.*, 2017:2; Bradley, 2013:7). Behaviours displayed by men and women in any social setting suggest the gender expectations of that community. *Gender* defines wide-ranging and multifaceted relationships between men and women, which includes their gendered division of labour, social location, and society’s definition of maleness and femaleness (Bradley, 2013:1; Ayeni & Ajibogun, 2013:118; Rahman & Jackson, 2010:51). Logically, gender becomes meaningful when we consider the social meanings, implications, and significances in the relationships existing between men and women in society (Ayeni & Ajibogun 2013:118; Mukhopadhyay *et al.*, 2017:2; Robinson & Gottlieb 2019:3).

Regarding the social meanings attached to *gender*, Borgatta and Montgomery argue that different communities have preconceptions of what defines a “typical” man and a “typical” woman (2000:1057). Franklin II (2012:2) and Gray *et al.*, (2013:82) define *gender* as an achieved status created and reconstituted by a society as appropriate for its males and females. Arguably, gender is perceived as an analytical variable (Akin-Aina, 2011:69) for understanding social meanings and structures. This study contends that the notion of gender is not a dichotomous classified category, but a set of deeply rooted traditional norms and values in social institutions and social actions (Gray *et al.*, 2013:82; Strong & Cohen, 2016:115). Judith Butler (cited Morgenroth, *et al.*, 2018:1-2) concurs with this statement. She suggests that gender is experienced

through the process of embodying cultural norms, beliefs and values, and not based on the essential characteristics of biological sex (see Sections 6.2 and 7.4).

Gender norms as a phenomenon that regulate the relationship between men and women are not based on biological traits alone. They are also determined by the political, economic, and social circumstances of a given society (Ayeni & Ajibogun, 2013:118; Daymon and Demetrious (2010:1); Bradley, 2013:7). Additionally, as a social practice (Gray *et al.*, 2013:82), *gender* relates dialectically to components such as physiological distinction, psychological orientation, and social differentiation (Methuselah, 2014:6136; Bradley, 2013:7). Paradoxically, despite its perception as a socio-cultural construct, *gender* is often sexually determined (Collins, 2015:3-4).

Despite the difference in meanings, *sex* is often mistaken for *gender* and both terms are used interchangeably (Collins, 2015:3-4). This misconception is understandable because the distinction between *sex* and *gender* is, indeed, narrow, (Mushibwe, 2014:78), *sex* refers to biological configuration and describes the reproductive behaviours of males and females; the physical difference in genitalia and the interrelated differences in their reproductive capacities (Pelletier *et al.*, 2016:128; Miller, 2014:781; Oakley, 2015:10). Although the notion of *sex* as a social construct is hotly contested (Bradley 2013:2; Peterson *et al.*, 2010:2), *sex* and *gender* are social constructs (Elder-Vass, 2012:133; Mukhopadhyay *et al.*, 2017:4). *Sex* and *gender* as a phenomenon form a fundamental aspect of human life (Oliffe & Greaves, 2011:4), because all individuals are inevitably defined by their *sex* and *gender* (Enarson & Chaskrabarti, 2009:1; Prokhavink, 2001:118); this in turn sustains the societal differences between men and women (Elder-Vass, 2012:133). Arguably, *gender* and *sex* as social constructs divide the world into the unequal binary categories of male and female, which places men on top of the social ladder and women at the bottom. As a result, women are more vulnerable to domestic violence and sexual assault, and more susceptible to unproductive jobs, they lack fundamental values and chances, and are less able to secure opportunities for professional training (Snodgrass, 2016:58; Dhaske, 2016:4). In agreement with the assertion on women's disadvantaged positions and horrible experience because of societal expectations of their gender, the empirical findings of this thesis, analysed in Sections 6.2.2 6.2.7, 7.8 and 7.12 showed that women's leadership challenges are mostly due to societal gender systems and traditional roles attributed to women's gender and sex.

Evidently, women's biological configuration, which defines women's status, subjects them to gender-based intense discrimination and disadvantaged positions in society especially (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014:11; Bisong *et al.*, 2014:36; Dhaske, 2016:4). For example, the biological fact that women reproduce and nurture children devalues their capacities. According to Bisong *et al.* (2014:36), if the "female sex continues to carry these chains around" (pregnancy, child rearing, childbirth) she is bound to remain unequal to their male counterparts. This study strongly disagrees with the assertions of these authors. This is because, as liberal feminists argue, both men and women are human by nature; moreover, the equality between men and women is ratified in the United Nations (UN) charter of 1945 as a fundamental human right (King, 2019:1). This means that all individuals are born free and equal and, as such, they deserve to exercise their full human rights regardless of their social categorisation.

Women's equality, especially their right to equal employment opportunities and their participation in top decision-making positions is legitimately conferred by government actions and values (RSA 1996, King, 2019:1). Therefore, one could rightly argue that women willingly accept the servitude and subjugation foisted on them by society due to ignorance of their rights to equality. However, irrespective of the provision of equal rights, most organisations are still male-centred. This study argues that the successful eradication of discrimination against women can only occur when women recognise their fundamental rights and develop their capacities, and organisations must be re-structured to accommodate women. In agreement with the alluded argument, the empirical findings indicated that women's understanding of their human/workplace rights, the development of their leadership skills and the deconstruction of patriarchal structures are indispensable in assisting more women to advance into senior public sector leadership positions (see Sections 6.2.17, 7.5, 7.12 and 7.13). The subordinate positions occupied by women in societies and workplaces, which is confirmed by the findings of this study (see Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12) have made the issue of gender a social, political, and developmental concern.

According to Dagar (2015:207) and Oliffe and Greaves (2011:7), in political discourse, especially as echoed in contending political parties, gender issues are regarded as women's issues alone. This is a rather unfortunate misperception, because although women are the principal victims of the historically constructed arrangements of gender differentiation, the consequences of gender involve both men and women extensively

(MacGregor, 2017:403). Ashraf and Azad (2015:136) contend that gender as a phenomenon is not all about women; rather it entails an effort to develop roles including responsibility for both men and women. The aim is, therefore, to achieve a safe way of co-ordinating and organising cultural life and actions in social contexts (Enarson & Chakrabarti, 2009:1). More so, this study points out that, since gender involves both men and women, it is important to examine maleness and femaleness through the same lens. However, as previously mentioned in Chapter 1, the application of gender in the context of this study specifically relates to women's experiences in society.

Gender attributes and ideal behaviours vary from community to community and are learnt both communally and individually through the process of socialisation (Franklin II, 2012:2; Braun & Davidson, 2017:16-17). Socialisation is the process of learning and internalising social norms, values, behaviour patterns, and motivation required for competent functioning in a specific culture. Gendered personality traits are acquired socialisation experiences whereby certain salient characteristics and qualities are attached with femininity and masculinity (Ogunniran, 2015:116). Traditionally, masculinity is associated with maleness and femininity identified with femaleness. Furthermore, according to Franklin II (2012:2), men and women conform to the existing societal norms prescribed by a given society. Masculinity describes the sets of culturally constructed characteristics attributed to men, while femininity contrasts those traits and qualities attributed to men in each community.

| MALE                                              | FEMALE                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Independence---Adventurous, Courageous, Audacious | Weak-gentle, emotional and inferior.                                           |
| Objective---Act as leaders, domineering           | Talkative ---Neat in habits.                                                   |
| Competitive--- Not conceited about appearance.    | Collaborative---enjoy working with groups, prefer consultation and cooperation |
| Dominant---High self-confidence and self-esteem   | Tactful---Quiet                                                                |
| Aggressive---feeling not easily hurt              | Conscious of the feelings of others---people-centred                           |
| Hide emotions---make decision easily              | Gentle---strong need for security.                                             |
| Active--- not dependent                           | Religious---express tender feelings                                            |
| Skilled---Have experience and competent           | Avoids harsh language---interested in own appearance.                          |

**Table 2.1 Stereotypes for masculinity and femininity**

**Source: Adopted from Franklin 2012:5**

Table 2.1 depicts the salient socially constructed attributes and qualities associated with femininity and masculinity. The attributes culturally connected with men include personality traits such as leadership, power, self-confidence, courage, rationality, and bravery. Contrarily, traits such as weakness, gentleness, supportiveness, humility, and intuitiveness are associated with women. This reiterates the notion that gender constitutes a powerful marker of personality traits and behaviour around which cultural life spins.

From delineation of the cultural gendered traits assigned to or expected of men and women, it is evident that opportunities in the political, economic, and social systems may not be the same for men and women. This explains why Strong and Cohen (2016:115) suggest that one's gender either broadens or narrows their access to a wide array of opportunities. In this sense, gender becomes a source of differentiation and undue discrimination. The socially constructed attributes of men provide them with varieties of opportunity and power much more so than the traits linked with women (Nagoshi & Nagoshi, 2013:6). As Ridgeway (2013:12) aptly observes, the structural

power relations of a given community determine the opportunities and resources that are available to men and women. In a similar vein, Brym and Lie (2012:203) aver that social power structure places men above women in the hierarchies of power and authority. This is not because women are less capable to handle positions of authority, rather it is because of the institutionalisation of gender stratification, which allocates power, resources and access to opportunities in a manner that maintain the dominance of men.

Disch and Hawkesworth (2016:228) opine that the social construction of meaning attributed to femininity forces women to occupy the subject position unlike men, who society recognises as superior human subjects. *Similarly, most individuals strongly believe that men and not women should occupy positions of power such as leadership positions* (Murrell & Blake-Beard, 2017:112). They claim, based on societal misconceptions, that women lack the capacity to lead and hold positions of power. This is because women are regarded as subjective beings in society (O'Brien, 2009:413; Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8181). The gendered differences created by socio-cultural norms have negative consequences for women. This explains why, even in modern society, women still undergo various forms of subjugation and occupy a secondary status in different spheres of life (Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8181). For example, women are scarcely represented in directorial and top professional domains of organisations in South African public service/sector including the local government sphere.

One of the structures/systems that maintain the subjugation of women is hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity refers to the traditional conceptualisation of beliefs, attitudes, and practices that legitimise men's domineering powers, authority, and control over women as a group (Connell cited in Harris III *et al.*, 2011:49; Jewkes & Morrell, 2017:3). Gorman-Murray and Hopkins (2016:7) define hegemonic masculinity as the normative prototype with the highest rank in social gender order, channelling powers, and designing the masculinity model that men must strive to achieve, by doing so, hegemonic masculinity promotes the cultural domination and subjugation of women by men. Men learn the contents of their gender identity at the initial stages of child development through adulthood. This internal socialisation is imbued through the "patrolling of masculinity in the gender transgression precinct amongst males and females in a social arena" (Ryle, 2014:217). Harris III and Struve



(2009:3) suggest that the inherent hegemonic masculinity pattern of society pressurises men into higher-level positions, thereby preserving male dominance and perpetuating the exclusion of women (Braun & Davidson, 2017:17; Strong & Cohen, 2016:115). Masculinity and femininity are the end results of gender identity, gender roles and behavioural patterns ingrained in social constructionism (Bertrand *et al.*, 2015:572). Figure 2.1 shows how gender roles are evolved in society.

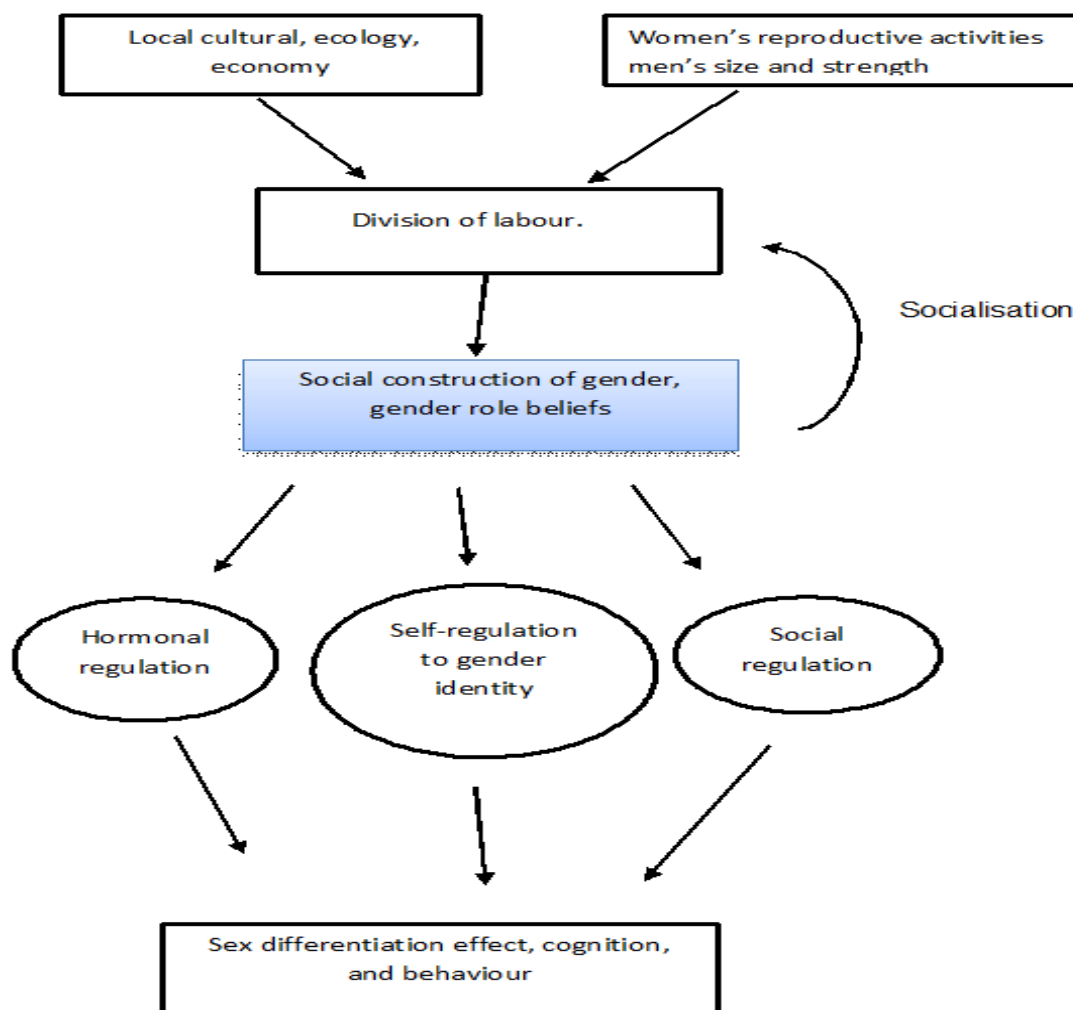


**Figure 2.1 The Biosocial construction model**

**Source: Wood and Eagly, (2012:57).**

In Figure 2.1 the biosocial construction model illustrates how gender roles evolve in society. It reveals that cultural norms, economies, ecology and the reproductive behaviour of men and women inform how gender roles are distributed in society. For instance, the reproductive activities of women such as childbearing and nurturing of

infants earns women the gender role of care and grooming. Traditionally, motherhood defines women's natural role and destiny. However, this gender role interferes with other activities performed outside the home, especially those that require intense and specialised training, for example, public leadership. The social construction of gender strongly influences the societal division of labour. As Figure 2.1 demonstrates, the divide between the gender roles performed by men and women are passed through socialisation, which precedes gender role beliefs. Similarly, an individual's belief regarding their gender roles arises from observing the behaviours of their group members performing typical social roles and their own repetition of such roles. Gender role belief forms a crucial aspect of individual's identity, hormonal regulation, and social regulation. Therefore, women's behaviours are a result of their gender role (Seo & Huang, 2017:619). This entire process forms the sex differentiation practices, cognition, and behaviours that are evident in both developing and industrialised societies.

Traditional divisions of labour, specifically the subservient roles delegated to women by society have deleterious effects on women and disparages their capacities and potentials in all sectors of the economy (Cook & Cusack, 2010:1). Specific roles such as caregiving, grooming, nurturing and domesticity, which relate to family life, together with household, and unrewarded labour are labelled women's domain (Croft *et al.*, 2019:808; Valentova, 2016:154). Conversely, public sphere/institutions, including the local sphere of government, are considered as men's territory. For example, paid labour, politics, and leadership. Men's role is instrumental (Lee *et al.*, 2017:3) and contributory to the society. Gender role differences between men and women are amplified consciously and unconsciously in all aspects of society.

Women's participation in senior public leadership positions is often overlooked in traditional patriarchal societies. This is because of societal perception that women's reproductive capacities incapacitate them from participating in rigorous jobs such as positions of public leadership (Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014:11; Cook & Cusack, 2010:1). Similarly, society views women as less competent and inefficient in handling leadership positions on the basis of their physiological make-up (Croft *et al.*, 2015:348). For example, Freud (cited in Owoyemi & Olusanya, 2014:11), asserts that the female reproductive sex organ inhibits women by making them naturally unstable, dependent, emotional, passive, and intellectually devoid of creative ideas. This

explains why most traditional societies relegate women to domestic roles. This study argues that the cultural values, belief systems, and practices regulating the distribution of gender roles amongst men and women, promote the marginalisation and oppression of women (see Sections 6.2.2, and 7.4). Several socio-cultural practices infringe on women's rights and intensify the discrimination against women in all aspects of the society. Stereotypes for males and females are rooted in traditional gender roles (Rice & Barth, 2017:87). This assumption correlated with the finding in this thesis that stereotypes for femininity and masculinity are caused by societal gender role expectations and behaviours (Section 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.4). For instance, occupational fields such as the sciences, mathematics, technology, and engineering are predominantly occupied by men (Croft *et al.*, 2015:344), with few or no women (Rice & Barth, 2017:87). Consistent with this theoretical assumption, this thesis found that technical departments, such as electrical engineering, fire service, traffic and technical services are mostly headed by men due to gender roles beliefs (see Section 7.6). The under-representation of women in these fields is largely attributed to leadership stereotypes and schemas as it creates barriers for women pursuing career advancements into these professions (Rice & Barth, 2017:87; Seo & Huang 2017:619). This is because the biased stereotypical assumptions that women are devoid of creative and managerial abilities diminishes their reputation and denies them access to leadership promotion and advancement including in the public service. In addition to gender stereotypes and prejudice, the findings of this thesis also showed that women's under-representation as managers in technical departments is also because women have not yet ventured into those fields (see Section 7.6).

## **2.3 GENDER EQUALITY**

In a simple term, gender equality is the polar opposite of gender inequality. According to Aikman Halai & Rubagiza 2011;45) and Fredman (2016:712) gender equality refers to a situation where employees can freely make decisions and choice regardless of their race, ethnicity and sexuality, especially with regards to their skills development, economic participation, professional career and occupational choices, without being restricted by enforced gender norms and roles. From a legal perspective, the concept "equality" can be thought of in two senses, formal gender equality and substantive

gender equality. According to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) (2017:9) in practice, formal gender equality refers to a situation where men and women are treated equally within an established law, without necessarily alternating unequal structures. For example, in the public services, male managers and female managers within the same positions get equal remuneration. Scholars argue that equality before the law does not change unequal power relationship and unequal structures that perpetuate discrimination against a social group (Fredman 2016:712). Brodsky and Day (2002:185), assert that, even if countries such as South Africa, have laws to promote equality, discrimination and marginalisation continue. Additionally, discrimination persists among groups with particular status, for example women and all those who were considered to be the previously marginalised groups, such as black professionals before 1994. The fact that discrimination persisted amidst established equality law before 1994 necessitated the movement away from an idea that focused on just formal understanding, to a more substantive idea (Fredman 2016:712).

Substantive equality is a trend that is echoed in the international community; both the Supreme Court in Canada and South African Constitutional Court adopted the principle of substantive equality in the interpretation of rights to gender equality, amongst other human rights, since the era of country's new democracy (Sangiuliana 2015:601; Fredman 2016:713). During the drafting of the new constitution in South Africa in the early 1990s, the concern of women activists was that the constitutional right to equality should be built on substantial equality. They based their argument on the recognition that the exploitation of women was a structural part of the system in which women, as a group, could not be equal with men. Conversely, there is no single acceptable definition of substantive equality, as the meaning of the concept is contested by academics, legislators, judges and other legal practitioners (Fredman 2016:712). According to Brodsky and Day (2002:185), substantive equality defines those steps, actions and special measures taken by the government to address discrimination and prejudices limiting social groups. For example, in South Africa, the Affirmative Action Policy was specifically set up to bring about substantive equality by giving preferential treatment to women as the historically disadvantaged, particularly in leading positions in the public sector. The purpose is to achieve equality of outcome or results by treating previously marginalised groups differently to achieve equal results on human right laws (SAHRC 2017). Fredman (2016:712) argues that the

meaning of substantive equality should not be shrunk into a particular formula or perspective, for example equality in the workplace. This study concurs with the assertion of Fredman (2016:712) because, apart from the paid workplace, women also encounter gender-based discrimination, harassment and exploitation with social organisations, such as religious groups, communities, families and other social congregations (Garutsa & Nekhwevha 2016:107). A case in point is the incessant rate of abuse and all forms of domestic violence against women and young girls in South African communities. Fredman (2016:713) provided a broader meaning of the concept “substantive equality” by proposing four dimensional areas where “substantive equality” should be established, which include to:

- address disadvantages;
- challenge stigmatisation; prejudice, stereotyping and gender violence;
- enhance voice and participation in all social spheres
- accommodate gender/social differences; and
- achieve structural/systemic change.

This principle reflects that the right to equality should be responsive to individuals and social groups who are disadvantaged, demeaned and social excluded.

The achievement of gender equality is indispensable for modern society. McCloskey and Zaller (1984:1-2) contend that gender equality is a vital component of democratic tradition. Agreeing with the assertion of McCloskey and Zaller (1984:1-2), Ban-Ki moon, the former UN secretary general, mentioned that the experience of democratic tenets such as inclusiveness and equality cannot be achieved in insolation of established equality laws, programmes and practices to advance women (UN-Women, 2013:15). However, the postulations of McCloskey and Zaller (1984:1-3), clash with the real world because most democratic states, for example South Africa, are yet to achieve gender equality in the public sector leadership domain. Furthermore, several other researchers demonstrate that good governance, democracy, inclusive bureaucracies, social justices, heathy well-being and societal development will be impossible with the achievement of gender equality (Bayeh 2016:38, Dhatt *et al*, 2017:2). Bayeh (2016:39) add that gender inequality would result in the retardation of country’s economic growth and development. For example, women’s inequality can have adverse effects on their human capacity development,

their health, life expectancy and adequate care for their children; these are some of the factors used in measuring a country's economic growth and development. In line with this thought, Stevens (2010:1) in his examination of several empirical studies found that "gender inequality is extracting high economic costs and leading to social inequities and environmental degradations around the world". In reality, not only women suffer from the damages caused by discrimination and deprivation based on gender, but gender inequalities also inflict huge costs on their societies, families and the economy as a whole. As alluded to in Section 1.1 of this thesis, gender equality through the empowerment and development of women is expedient for countries' economic growth and organisations' productivity, community and human development as well as for the achievement of a sustainable society.

Despite the fact that gender equality is a core value of the South African constitution, some scholars reiterate that it might be difficult to achieve gender equality in the public sector/service leadership. This is because, firstly, public administration and leadership is both gendered and patriarchal (Osituyo, 2018:81a; Amupanda 2019:73). Secondly, gender equality policy frameworks and legislation prevail amidst biased cultural practices and traditional beliefs (Pillay & Teleki 2018:41). The South African government promotes cultural diversity and individuals' religious beliefs. In most cases, these cultures are highly patriarchal and detrimental to women's careers. Thirdly, behavioural patterns of public administration that define employment and promotion in leadership makes one gender (which is often men) more likely to emerge as leaders (Osituyo 2018:174b). From this, it is very clear that the passage towards the achievement of gender equality is complex and goes beyond just enacting legislation, since the equality framework is unable to close gender gaps in the public sector/service and the local government leadership domain.

## **2.4 GENDER THEORIES**

To comprehend the concept of gender theories, it is imperative to begin with the definition of the word theory. A theory represents a mental view of perceived reality that promotes better understanding of a certain phenomenon including the explanation of the characteristics of observed issues and making predication of further outcomes (Thornhill & Van Dijk, 2010:96). According to Thornberg and Charmaz (2012:14), a

theory states the “relationships between abstract concepts and may aim for explanation or understanding”. Theories, for example gender theories, are apparatus that promote our understanding of phenomena by explaining, challenging, and extending prevailing knowledge within the critical boundaries of a given theoretical postulation. In the context of this study, gender theories are employed to comprehend and provide a detailed examination of the persistent injustice and oppression against women in the local sphere of government. Gender theories provide a theoretical backdrop against which the unequal structural institutions of society perpetuating discrimination and discrepancies between men and women can be addressed and challenged. This is achievable because gender theory seeks to analyse, evaluate, and validate the lived experiences of women managers with regard to their participation in leadership positions of the public service including in the local sphere of government. The gender theories used in this study are illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

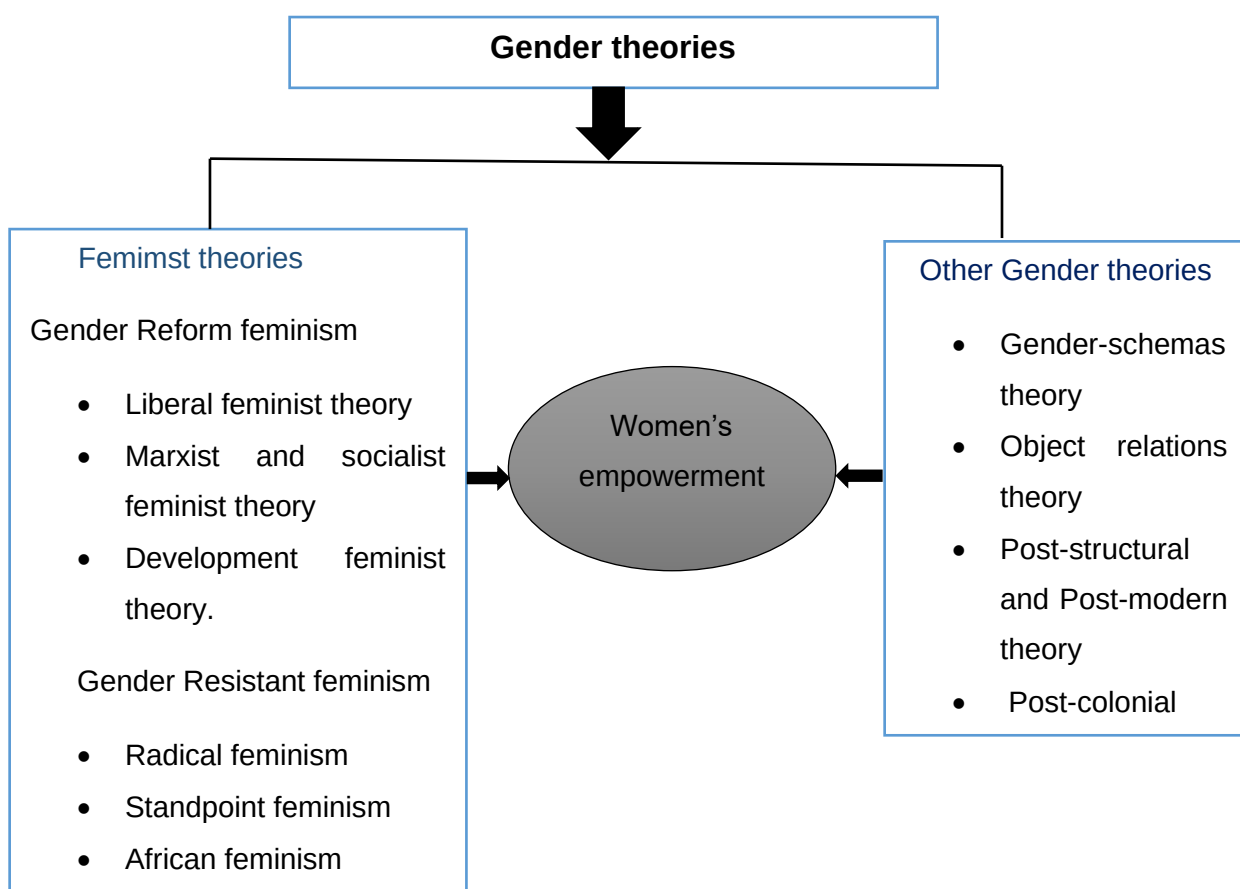


**Figure 2.2 Synopsis of Gender theories**

**Source: Authors Compliation (2018)**

### 2.4.1 Feminist theory

Since the last few decades, feminism as an aspect of gender theory has become an influential discourse within various field of studies, including public administration. Feminism is neither a homogeneous discourse nor a unitary body of knowledge. Feminism is a body of knowledge that is not associated with only one academic field. When the concept of feminism is used within an academic discipline, it is used to illustrate the standpoints of scholars or those involved in a conversation. For example, within the discipline of public administration, the concept of feminism is adopted by scholars in the same field of study to explain unequal power structures, being that women are underrepresented in top public sector/service (and local government) leadership structures (Potokri 2014:358; Katila & Eriksson 2013:72). Miller and McTavish (2011:687) observed that empirical investigation on gender and feminism is lacking in the discipline of public administration.

The origin of feminism can be traced back to France and Netherlands (Bisong *et al.*, 2014:34), as a social and political movement established in the year 1837 (Motta *et al.*, 2011:1) in defence of the cause of and for women. Historically, no precise definition exists as to the actual meaning of feminism (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016:139), therefore, the word has been synonymous with controversial responses from both its adherents and opponents alike (McCann & Kim, 2013:1; Bryson, 2016:1). Regardless of its limitations, ambiguities, and boundaries, feminism remains a powerful struggle for the emancipation of women in all facets of human endeavours.

Feminist activism agitates for the eradication of gender inequality, sexist exploitation, and all forms of oppression against women and children in society (Hook, 2000:1). Ussher (1999:99) asserts that feminist theorists and researchers concentrate on the “critical analysis of gender relationships in research and theory [...] and the recognition of the need for social change to improve the lives of women”, as change can only be achieved when men and women have equal social relationships. Feminist theories are predicated on certain principles, which include:

- (a) Women, as an oppressed group, are unable to achieve their potential, improve their skills, receive rewards, and even participate fully in the society. Feminist



theorists aim at the emancipation of women from the domestic domain so that they can fully participate in the public arena (for instance in local government leadership) and gain better access to training, education, and political representation (Walby, 2011:4).

- (b) Women have skills and capacities that are valuable and contributory to every aspect of the society. Feminists seek to amplify the potentials and skills of women in every aspect of the society (Gabizon, 2016:100) and to improve the lives of women.
- (c) Dismantling the oppressive chains of patriarchy through the institutionalisation of law for women's liberation, (Haak, 2020:177) aimed towards the promotion of gender equality.

Considering this, feminist theory questioned the long-term unequal orthodoxies practiced between men and women, which are deep-rooted in social and public institutions and structures. According to the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASCWR, 2004:1), feminist theorists challenge women's unequal status and positions and espouse that both men and women should be valued equally in all spheres of human interaction. This study finds that the feminist praxis of agitating for equal rights and public justice aims at the elimination of unequal social structures, and gender bias cultural norms supporting the domination, subjugation, exploitation, and marginalisation of women (see Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.7, 7.4, 7.8 and 7.13). Therefore, the crux of feminist theorising is the protection of the rights and interests of women and propelling adequate representation of those interests in the political, economic, and social domains of society.

Feminist theorising emanated as a means of investigating and addressing the pervasive gender differences and inequalities in society. Feminist theory provides a framework for understanding the nature of women's marginalisation, unequal power relations between men and women, and gender politics (Gökarıksel, & Smith, 2017:629, Abbott *et al.*, 2005:16). The prevalent situation of women's subjugation is central to the political essence of feminist theorising (Bryson, 2016:1). The argument is that the issue of gender inequality hinges more on the political practice of power in human relationships rather than biological differences (McCann & Kim, 2013:1; Bryson, 2016:1). For example, the unequal power relationship between men and

women in the workplace is due to gendered structures. Therefore, feminist theorists ask questions such as, why do men wield more power than women? How can women resist oppression? How can women work to improve their lives? On which areas should women focus to achieve change? What sort of social, economic, and political transformation is desired? In addition, as McCann and Kim (2013:1) suggest, the answers to these questions are supported by some concept of ontology (theories of being and reality), epistemology (theories on how knowledge is shaped and justified), and politics (political power relation). Feminist theories provide the answers to these questions through a detailed description and investigation of women's lived experiences. They do this by making sense of women's lived experiences, accounting for women's prevailing situation, and devising effective strategies for changing the silencing of women's voices and distortion of their image (Woodward & Woodward, 2009:8; Motta *et al.*, 2011:2). As viable tools for social change, feminist theories provide an intellectual framework for examining the underlying sources of the historical injustices against women, highlighting the implications of this subordination and oppression, and developing arguments to support their quest for social change. Furthermore, feminist theories propose advocacy and intervention actions to eliminate gender discrimination and decelerate the infringement of the rights of women in society (Ryle, 2015:23).

The importance of feminist activism cannot be underestimated, as Robnett & Anderson (2017:134) aptly observe, its successes are evident in the expansions in women's rights and freedom, and the increasing opportunities for women in diverse domains. For example, in South Africa, there have been reasonable advancements made by women in areas such as family organisation, politics, education, paid labour force, women's health and in business. Similarly, noticeable successes have been achieved in the legitimization of legislation against domestic violence, job discrimination and sexual assaults. Feminist theorists have also inspired some positive attainment of women's rights in the corporate world, especially in their struggles for maternity leaves and the fight against workplace discrimination (Bisong *et al.*, 2014:23). Apparently, women's political participation and representation in public and private organisations has improved in the last few decades. However, despite these significant achievements, women remain grossly underrepresented in the top

decision-making and leadership positions of most public organisations and at the local government sphere in particular.

From the foregoing, feminism focuses on challenging and dismantling existing traditional structures of human exploitation and male domination. In fact, without intense feminist theoretical intervention, the expansion and advancement of women in political, economic, and legal rights would have been impossible. This is because breaking down traditional patriarchal structures and prejudicial social norms can only be achieved through the resilience and persistence that feminist activism embodies. Therefore, this study acknowledges that women's empowerment towards gender equality with specific reference to leadership has its foundation in the feminist struggle. There are diverse types of feminist theories. However, although they share an ideological stance against all forms of gender inequality, they differ in their approaches of tackling discrimination against women. The next Section examines the different feminist approaches dealing with gender inequality and the subordination of women.

#### **2.4.1.1 Gender Reform Feminism**

Gender reform feminism emerged between the 1960s and 1970s in the global north; the movement was rooted in liberal political philosophy of the eighteenth and nineteenth century and founded on the idea of individual human rights. Gender reform feminism comprises the liberal feminist, the Marxist theories of capitalism, concepts of class-consciousness, the post-colonial/Asian feminism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the idea of national development and economic globalisation. Gender reform feminism is concerned with the equal treatment of the genders in the application of laws, the categorisation of individuals with respect to their economic positions and advocacy for the adherence of universal human rights (Lorber, 2010:21). The main goal of the movement is the achievement of gender equality in all spheres of society. The following Section provides a detailed explanation of the liberal feminist theory, Marxism and socialist feminism, and development feminism.

#### **2.4.1.2 Liberal feminism**

Liberal feminism is an individualistic strand of feminism that focuses on women's attainment of equal rights and equal opportunities through their abilities and demonstration of their actions and choices (Tong, 2009:16; Enyew & Mihrete 2018:60). Liberal feminist theory is driven by an emancipatory vision for women; to

liberate women in contemporary society from the primordial, retrogressive, and patriarchal status quo in legislation and culture (Motta, *et al.*, 2011:5). These objectives are achieved through the transformation of existing cultural practices and investigation of legal, educational, and social strategies, as well as lobbying for the legitimisation of formal equity practices within all sectors of the society (Motta, *et al.*, 2011:5; Rahman & Jackson, 2010:27). It proposes the development of society based on social justice and equality because its activists believe in the equality of human capacity for rationality. In South Africa, the liberal ideology entails a tolerance of others regardless of gender, an attempt to comprehend others, strict commitment to the rule of law, a high ideal of the worth and dignity of man, a repulsion for authoritarian rule, sexism, racism, undue inequality and a love for self-determination (RSA 1996). To give credence to this thought, the South African human rights-based constitution, promulgated in 1996, guarantees equality for all men and women in all legal institutions (Cold-Ravnkilde 2019:212).

Based on this, liberal feminism is germane to this study because it seeks to construct a gendered approach aimed at the development of women for management positions in the DKKDM. This objective corresponds with the ideals of liberal feminism, as it aims to build women's professional leadership capacities through the training and capacity development and advance of women in the DKKDM into top decision-making positions (see Sections 6.2.17 and 7.13). This is relevant, as remodelling women's managerial competencies for their advancement into public leadership would translate into sustainable growth and societal development (see Sections 6.2.11, 7.11). Therefore, this thesis contends that there are similarities between the theoretical tenets of liberal feminism and the number of initiatives introduced by the South Africa government since 1994, toward ensuring equality and women's empowerment.

Liberal theorists recognise the denial of women's rights and equality as a medium for perpetuating gender oppression and preserving injustice (Schwartzman, 2007:2). As a result, they pursue women's equality as their key political goal. Liberal feminism argues that gender inequality is maintained through the restriction of women's access to gainful employment, training and development opportunities and social resources (Samkange, 2015:1173). This implies that women's lack of access to gainful employment, education, civil rights, and political representation stems from artificial barriers created by the social structures that discriminate against women (Potokri,

2014:356). Therefore, liberal feminists advocate the redesigning of social arrangements in a manner that maintains equality between men and women (Baehr, 2017:2). Liberal feminism is often referred to as reformative or equality feminism (Lorber, 2010:7; Potokri, 2014:356), this is because of its concentration on the improvement of human rights and liberty.

According to Schwartzman (2007:2), contemporary liberal theorisation hinges on three defining features. These features will be explained in the paragraphs that follow to provide a better understanding of the crux of liberal feminism.

Firstly, in this case of this study, liberal theorists uphold the notion that individuals have an essential interest in defining their lives in accordance with their personal beliefs of what is valuable and conscience of perceived good. Liberal theorists interrogate the extent to which government institutions such as the D KKM (as an outsider) (McCann Kim, 2010:18) must remain entirely neutral and objective arbiters between an individual's self-conception of good, but they argue that individuals must comply with some forms of state neutrality. In addition, liberal philosophers contend that one's life is best defined "from the inside". That is, in accordance to one's own perceptions and views about values. This means that they uphold individualism, autonomy, equality, self-interest, self-determination, and privacy of individuals. Fundamentally, women's autonomy (freedom of choice and actions) constitutes a core concern for liberal feminists (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016:141). From the liberal perspective, autonomy implies an individual's capacity for self-actualisation and self-governance regardless of their gender, class, ethnicity, colour, and sexual orientation. Liberal feminism espouses the ability of individuals (women) to pursue a course of action without being affected by gendered social expectations, particularly, with regard to independence, justice, and the acknowledgement of humans as liberal beings (Hook, 2000; Hekman, 2015:139). Simply put, the argument is that women's autonomy lies in their freedom to choose for themselves and to stand with men on an equal footing in professional, political, and leadership domains (Potokri, 2014:356).

Secondly, liberal feminists are opining that since an individual possesses the abilities of leading their life based on their own perception of what is good, human beings "have an interest in the freedom and liberties that are essential to develop their perception

of good and to deliberate about questions of values and principles”. Liberal theorists emphasise civil rights, freedom of expression and liberty as a means to self-fulfilment

The liberal feminist ideals of social justice have been adopted by public organisations and institutions as well as mainstream organisations, private institutions, government institutions such as municipalities, and policy makers as a framework for legitimising and implementing policies aimed at the empowerment of women and gender equality (Potokri, 2014:356). Liberal feminism is employed in an array of activities and programmes such as education and training to accelerate women’s empowerment and development (Samkange, 2015:1174.) As a theoretical approach, it is crucial for expanding and extending opportunities in development and making strategic decisions to include those whose abilities and capacities have been formerly overlooked. From a liberal feminist perspective, the empowerment and development of women for management positions is instrumental in achieving social transformation in leadership. Equality and social justice in leadership can be achieved through collaborative leadership styles. This is realisable through the involvement of women and men in management positions as autonomous and rational individuals who can make strategic decisions and transform those decisions into developmental outcomes for societal growth and transformation. The centrality of liberal feminist activism is that women’s empowerment through training is a viable strategy for confidence-building and skills development among women to eliminate societal practices that strengthen and perpetuate gender disparities. Liberal feminists do not agitate for women to take over power, instead they require a paradigm shift in the harnessing and use of collective potentials towards achieving a common goal without dominance or oppression. Despite its significant achievements in promoting women’s emancipation, liberal feminist theory has been subjected to various criticisms. For example, liberal feminism has been criticised for its failure to acknowledge and recognise the essential differences between the male and female sexes. Also, the failure by the liberal feminist theory to address women’s exploitation in the public sphere led to the emergence of Marxist feminism and socialist feminism.

#### **2.4.1.3 Marxist and socialist feminism**

Marxist and socialist feminism attribute the underlying causes of gender inequality to economic structures and material aspects of life (Lorber, 2010:47). This explains why

Marxist and socialist feminist perspectives are often referred to as materialist feminisms. These feminist perspectives focus on the structural aspects of social organisations (including municipalities such as the DKKM), especially those relating to gendered division of labour and family obligations (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:36; Rahman & Jackson, 2010:36). In this context, the two arising intersecting issues include gendered division of labour and family organisation (Wood and Eagly, 2012:57). Gender division of labour and the structuring of the family are crucial to the claims and theorisation of women's condition and exploitations by Marxist feminists.

Marxists and socialists are theorists for social change, fighting for gender equality and women's rights, with the aim of promoting development in societies (Rahman & Jackson, 2010:36). However, in praxis these theories pose severe challenges because of their emphasis on class exploitation rather than the question of sex/gender (Potokri, 2014:356). Marxist theory is defined as the grouping of those who own the means of production as belonging to the capitalist class (the ruling class) and those who sold wages as members of the proletariat (workers/oppressed class). Marx's analysis of capitalist social structure would have been true for women, however, in the capitalist states, women were disallowed from possessing properties in their own names until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. All the while, the profits and wages earned from their business transactions were considered as rightfully belonging to their fathers or husbands (Lorber, 2010:47). This shows the extent of male domination in the capitalist system.

The capitalist system consists of two types of labour, the first entails productive labour, where individuals receive monetary values for their goods and services in the form of paid wages. The second involves reproductive labour, which is associated with the private sphere, where individuals perform roles without economic values. Women, those performing unwaged reproductive jobs, which is unrecognised in the capitalist system, were at lowest rung of economic ladder.

According to Abbott *et al.*, (2005:36), Marxist and socialist feminists view capitalism as the defining features of modern society that subject women to specialised forms of subjugation. This is achieved through systems of class-consciousness that sustain the exclusion of women from paid labour and maintains their relegation to domestic domains, thereby reproducing capitalist modes of production. Marxist and socialist

feminism places women and mothers at the forefront of their analysis of sexual structure of capitalism. These theorists argue that mothers and homemakers' unrewarded labour are indispensable to capitalism and industrial economy in diverse ways:

- (a) Women carry out roles that are defined outside capitalism (unpaid domestic labour), provide care and maintain current bosses and workers
- (b) Women are biological producers of the new bosses and workers
- (c) Women use the goods and commodities produced by capitalism. (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:36; Lorber, 2010:46).

Furthermore, Marxist and socialist feminists criticise Marx's theory for its neglect of the position of women in capitalist society. This is because Marx pays less attention to the notion of equality, social justice, and morality-like bourgeois idea, but focuses more on scientific theories that explain the oppression of the working class under a capitalist system. Nienaber and Moraka (2016:146) assert that Marx's theory of capitalism fails to consider homemakers and caregivers who perform domestic roles and cater for children. Women's unwaged care and domestic labour constitutes the fundamental reason for women's economic dependence and reliance on their men and government subsidies for the survival of their children. In addition, women who take up jobs outside their homes remain responsible for full-time household work such as cleaning, washing, cooking and caring for children and the elderly. Consequently, women work twice as hard as men with little compensation. Even within the workforce, women suffer the double burden of family responsibilities and wage slavery caused by patriarchy.

Women are vulnerable to unproductive jobs, they are more likely to be employed when the economy needs more workers, and they are usually the first to be fired when unemployment arises. Marxist and socialist feminisms contend that, in the family and in the workplace, the exploitation of women's work constitutes the underlying source of gender inequality. Therefore, they severely condemn the family and the workforce as the prime causes of women's exploitation and oppression.

Marxist feminists argue that women's emancipation from economic oppression and exploitation in society would only be achieved if economic organisations and public institutions are restructured in such a way that women can develop their capacities.



One way of attaining this is through the upsurges of socialism (classless state) where women's choices, access, and opportunities to engage in formal and productive labour will be guaranteed (York College of Pennsylvania, 2015:7). Marxist feminism contends that socialism will be beneficial to women, and the attendant dismantling of the class struggle would transform women's lives and result in a classless society where fairness rules. Marxist and socialist feminism believe that full time employment outside the homes and the involvement in productive labour are viable solutions to diminishing women's economic dependence on their marriages or state provided welfare. Since the crux of Marxist and socialist feminism is geared towards the emancipation of more women in the public world, especially in the economic spheres of life, it is relevant to the goals of this study. This study contends that equality in productive public employment opportunities especially jobs performed outside the home such as public leadership roles should be accepted and embraced if any improvement is to be achieved in the quest for women's advancement to organisational public leadership positions especially in the DKKM.

#### **2.4.1.3 Development feminism**

Development feminism addresses the economic exploitation of women to advance women's opportunities and grant them better access and control of economic resources as a way of diminishing gender inequality. Development feminism argues that the patriarchal structure of society sustains women's low economic situations in families and the public sphere. In traditional societies, women engaged in diverse jobs in the informal sector to support their families by contributing their "slavery wages" (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016:147). In recent times, women continue to be marginalised and exploited as low-skilled workers. England and Folbra (2005:4) observe that social and economic systems are structured by gender which is, in turn, dictated by patriarchy. Patriarchal systems deny women the opportunity of engaging in jobs that could give them access to better financial resources and control.

Some scholars have argued that workers are paid according to their productivity, women are paid less because of their lowered productivity and poor market value. The labour imperfections of women could stem from low levels of public education, training, and job experiences that men possess as women spend valuable time performing biological and social reproductive roles. For example, childbearing, child grooming,

homekeeping and caregiving roles. This study argues that even with equal professional qualifications, women are still paid less than their human capital dictates, because the presence of patriarchy in contemporary public organisations maintains the exploitation of women and prevents their access to economic control.

An important aspect of theorisation by development feminism is that it equates women's economic status to the amount of economic resource they control as the main producers of household labour. Therefore, it strives to uphold women's rights as intrinsic to national and traditional rights, which is also the mark of the Beijing conference of 1995. Remarkably, the slogan of the conference was "human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights" (Lorber, 1997:13-14). The highlight of the Beijing action platform was the call for action to end the discrimination and exploitation of women, especially in training, employment opportunities, political participation, and education. These objectives for action resonate with those advocated by development feminists and the aims of this study.

Developmental feminists posit that society should adhere to the stipulations of universal human rights, emphasising education for girls, adequate access to maternity, and child healthcare, as well as women's control of economic resources. This study argues that the training and development of women managers for higher leadership positions will significantly result in an increase of women's access to, and financial control of, economic resources. The control of economic resources by women would lead to economic empowerment, and enable women to contribute meaningfully to development of the families, and most importantly, it will diminish women's economic dependence upon their husbands for survival.

#### **2.4.1.4. Gender Resistant Feminism**

Gender resistant feminism developed in the 1970s, when women increasingly started to gain access into originally male-dominated works and domains. There was a significant improvement in women's working condition, since women had the opportunity of working outside their homes at jobs previously reserved for men. However, their participation in the public sphere was limited and women were still regarded as unequal to their male counterparts. Women experienced consistent oppression from men. Lorber (2010:118) asserts that, during this period, women became constantly aware of the gender inequalities that manifested in the form of

abuse and humiliation from male colleagues at work, bosses, professors and schoolmates, fellow organisers of political movements, worst of all, from boyfriends and even from husbands at home. These instances of abuse and harassment against women exist in the form of non-compensation for outstanding performance, receiving lesser pay than men for executing the same jobs, being overlooked for jobs that require skill such as leadership positions, being relegated in workplaces, and being interrupted whilst speaking.

Gender resistant feminism maintains that patriarchy is prevalent in all societies - in the workplace, within family structures and in socio-cultural and political spheres. The realisation of women's constant harassment and vulnerabilities gave rise to the emergence of gender resistant feminism, which encapsulates radical feminism, lesbian feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, and standpoint feminism (Lorber, 1997:15-16). The Sections that follow discuss radical feminism and standpoint feminism as they espouse ideals that are pertinent to this study

#### **2.4.1.5. Radical feminism**

Radical feminism focuses on challenging and subverting patriarchy, which it identifies as the underlying cause of gender inequality in society. Radical feminists argue that economic, social, and political systems oppress women whilst privileging men; therefore, they focus on contesting patriarchy as a social system rather than men as individuals. Radical feminism vehemently rejects the notion that men perpetuate the oppression and marginalisation of women through the falsification or degradation of their capacities. Rather, it recognises women's oppression as the reduction and cancellation of women's rights by cultural practices, which enable and legitimise male domination (Patriarchy) (Hekman, 2014:3). For example, masculine values such as objectivity, strength, and individual achievement are held in high esteem while feminine values such as nurturance, compassion, and care for others are usually devalued and downplayed by society. Abbott *et al.*, (2005:33-34) affirms that radical feminism is premised on women's rights rather than equalising the distribution of powers and emphasises (rather than pursues to overcome) the biological inborn differences between male and female sexual behaviours. Stemming from this fact, radical feminism is also referred to as gynocentric feminism.

The term “gynocentrism” refers to an ideology or practice that centres exclusively on women’s daily activities to the detriment of men. Abbott *et al.*, (2005:33) describes gynocentrism as a conscious historical norm, which was established to maintain the existence of women, and demands the constant efforts of men to uphold women at the centre. Gynocentrism as a phenomenon aims to uphold and maintain the existence of sisterhood that has been historically distorted in the traditional male institution; one that seeks to liberate the superiority of values deeply rooted in the traditional female experience.

Radical feminism contends that all forms of domination in the society emanate from the oppression against women - an autonomous system of patriarchy (Jóhannsdóttir, 2009:9). Therefore, radical feminism argues that women’s oppression should constitute the fundamental concern of all individuals and societies. The justification for radical feminist ideals is because no individual exists outside of their social realities. As such, people live together in social groups within social structures governed through gender norms. Radical feminism as a political movement pinpoints the prime causes of women’s inequality in male dominated systems, contrasting the legal systems (liberal feminism) or conflict based on social class (upheld by socialist feminism and Marxist feminism). Conversely, Mbatha (2011:31) argues, “radical feminism, like liberal feminism, contends that women’s power is removed from them” due to patriarchal systems. The empirical findings of this thesis in Sections 6.2.3, 6.2.8, 6.2.7, 7.8, 7and 7.12) confirm this theoretical perspective that women are denied leadership power due to patriarchal beliefs and biased organisational culture. Similarly, Potokri (2014:358) posits that theories of gender oppression extend beyond the investigation of gender-based behavioural differences and gender balance. Instead, he argues that women are not only different from or unequal to men, but that women are actively manipulated, subordinated, devalued, and intentionally abused by men. Consistent with the statement of Potokri (2014:358), the empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12 of this study indicated that male managers show misogynistic behaviour towards female managers and women in general. This line of argument affirms the social domination of women by men whereby they assume the position of oppressors while women remain oppressed (Mukhuba, 2016:7235). The hostile treatments and uncivil behaviour of men towards women, as identified in the empirical finding of this thesis in Sections 6.2.9, 7.12 and 7.14, is consistent with the

claim that men assume the position of the oppressor while women remain the oppressed.

Radical feminists postulate that patriarchal domination pervades virtually all aspects of social and cultural life (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:33) thereby inhibiting women's development (Potokri, 2014:358), the questioning of their moral values (Haak 2020:177) and maintaining the exclusion of women from gaining access to education and productive jobs in public spheres (Chauhan, 2014:133). Patriarchy refers to the socio-cultural and political structure of society that legitimises male supremacy and female subordination that is prevalent in gender relations in both public and private spheres. Patriarchy employs women's reproductive abilities, gender roles, and domestic modes of production, as well as male-dominated occupations in government, law, religion, and sexual violence [...] to gain control and dominance over women (Zastrow & Kirst-Asham, 2016:125; Oerton, 2013:45). In this regard, as Mukhuba (2016:7235) observes, women's sexual roles of maintaining the family become an enabling and stimulating factor used by men to oppress and socially control and disempower women.

Radical feminists suggest that the inequality in leadership stems from the pervasiveness of organisational laws that support and promote male domination. Similarly, radical feminists consider sexual violence and assault against women as a "continuum from sexual harassment to rape to sexual murder" (Lorber, 2010:122). They suggest that the fear created by constant occurrences of sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and battering constitute powerful means of keeping "women in their place". This implies that sexual objectification enables men to use women's bodies to fulfil their own pleasures and desires including in the workplace. In addition, women's intellectual and leadership capacities may become redundant and even disappear if men consider them as sex objects. Jóhannsdóttir (2009:9) describes sexual practices as those that are culturally fashioned around male rather than female notions of desire. According to Tong (2009:4) and Vashon Island School District (2015:Online), the constant questioning and challenging of patriarchy may result in the dismantling of existing standards of gender roles and exploitation of women. The argument, therefore, is that all women, irrespective of their race, colour, age, culture, and ethnic differences are subjugated under strict patriarchal control and this necessitates the radical feminist emphasis on sisterhood.

An example of patriarchal control is the master-subject relationship between husband and wife manifested through the material and sexual obligations of family life. Society expects working mothers to feel guilty for what is perceived their parental incapacities and to bear the brunt of their children's misdeeds. Additionally, patriarchy is independent of other social structures and exists separately beyond the capitalist mode of production. Although Jóhannsdóttir (2009:3) states that the rise of capitalism led to the development of a distinct and new form of patriarchy, the new patriarchal system did not affect the basic social structure, because men are still at the top the gender strata. Consequently, this common oppression causes women to engage as a common group that must fight in unison to dismantle and overthrow patriarchal practices and change existing practices of oppression and exploitation against women.

Radical feminists argue that, because patriarchy is a total system, a separatist (Naidoo & Patel, 2009:81) or a radical restructuring of the political systems is needed to free women from the robust grip of patriarchy.-.this idea is referred to as *patriarchy overthrow*. In addition, radical feminism engages in direct action and programmes such as the protection of sexually assaulted victims, excoriating the trafficking of women and girls (including prostitution and pornography) through the development of women-centred groups and organisations to eliminate patriarchy. The request by the participants for the institutionalisation of women-only development programmes where women can come together to discuss female gender issues including the way forward for their leadership advancement correlates with the theoretical postulation of radical feminists (Section 6.2.18 and 7.14). According to Lorber (1997:18), these programmes offer women some “breathing space” and opportunities to liaise and exchange ideas towards gender equality, developing and organising women's programmes both in colleges and universities, the production of knowledge, science, religion and health care, while waging war against patriarchy. Lorbers' (1997:18) assumption is consistent with the empirical data analysed in Section 6.2.18 and 7.14 of this thesis that the women-only development programme will offer women the opportunity of coming together as people sharing similar identity to discuss issues relating to their workplace realities. In addition, to exchange ideas on gender issues for which their male colleagues may not have correct answers.

Furthermore, radical feminism equips women to use their inner qualities, intellects, and common experiences in combating the powers and politics behind gender inequalities (Bridgeman, 2011:290). As Randall (2002:111) indicates, radical feminist activism celebrates the gender differences, particularly, feminine maternal qualities such as childbearing and child nurturing. However, radical feminism has not been without criticism. One major criticism against radical feminism hinges on its celebration of motherhood over the axes of inequality such as patriarchal societal practices that define and orchestrate the feminine qualities used to oppress women (Mukhuba, 2016:7235). Furthermore, the separatist approach advocated by radical feminists has been criticised for its strict emphasis on gender at the cost of other intersectional ties (Rojek, 2012:106). For example, neglecting how intersectionality such as social class, nationality, ethnicity, economic status, and race could create multiple and distinct forms of oppression and marginalisation against women.

#### **2.4.1.6 Feminist standpoint theory**

Feminist standpoint theory is a feminist perspective that argues that true knowledge stems from the standpoint and common experiences of a specific group based on their social location (Hess-Biber & Leavy, 2007:56). For example, knowledge derived from the standpoint of women as the marginalised group within public institutions, including the local government sphere. Women suffer distinct forms of oppression, mistreatment, and marginalisation in all gendered relationships. Their condition is almost invisible, unrecognised, and unproblematic to their “oppressors” - men (Wylie & Sismondo, 2015:1). As the oppressed, women possess authentic understanding of being marginalised and non-marginalised. In line with the standpoint theory, the empirical data analysed in Sections 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.12 and 7.14 showed that women are well informed and conscious of their marginalised experiences and they have accurate knowledge on the privileges enjoyed by their men as the non-marginalised group. This is because the marginalised are better positioned to understand and describe (Wylie & Sismondo 2015:1) the social relations, including the standpoint of the dominant group (Jaggar, 2004:57). The feminist standpoint is predicated on three principal claims:

- Justified knowledge is socially situated

- Marginalised groups are socially situated in such a way that they understand oppression better than the privileged
- Research, with special emphasis on those concerned with power relations should begin with the lives of marginalised groups in the society.

According to Davidson *et al.*, (2010:106), feminist standpoint theorists contend that women's social location and their distinctive experience in society provide a rich source for the generation of knowledge. Feminist standpoint theory views women's lives as those which are symmetrically and structurally different from those of men. The social location explains why men and women produce completely different knowledge that is significant from a feminist standpoint. Women's location provides a framework for an understanding of social reality that is less distorted and less partial than that of the ruling class (Jaggar, 2004:57). This is true because just as in the general saying *experience is the best teacher*, women are in the best position to explain how their subjective identity and inferior position affects their leadership acceleration and inclusion in the paid workplace. Women's standpoint is less distorted and less partial because it encompasses and includes the interest of the entire society. Contrasting the standpoints of the ruling class, which represent only one aspect of the entire population, as the privileged group. Therefore, the feminist standpoint regards women's lives from their perspective as the necessitating factor for their political activism (Wylie & Sismondo, 2015:1). However, critics such as Thompson (2001:20) contend that being a woman does not necessarily guarantee one's comprehensive understanding of the social world. Rather, the struggle against marginalisation that makes it possible to understand the injustice of the philosophically rationalised condition of women's lives (Wylie & Sismondo, 2015:1). For example, women fight against inequality and power discrepancies because it underpins their oppression and discrimination. The empirical evidence from this study confirms that women are fighting against the pervasiveness of gender inequality because it hampers their career and leadership advancement and also puts strain on their capacities as effective leaders (see Sections 7.12 and 7.14)

Furthermore, feminist standpoint theory strongly rejects the notion that traditional knowledge is objective, universal, general, or neutral. They argue that knowledge considered useful for marginalised and oppressed groups cannot be universalised from the standpoint of the ruling class (non-marginalised) - "the man, the God, whose



eye produces, appropriates, and orders all difference” (Cockburn, 2015:5). In a similar vein, Anderson (2017:1) suggests that the universal conceptions and cultural practices of gaining knowledge not only exploits women, but it also disadvantages them by:

- Excluding women’s views from scientific analysis.
- Depriving and silencing women of epistemological authorities.
- Disparaging and relegating feminine cognitive style including their methods of knowledge production.
- Producing theories of women that describe them as less capable, subordinate, deviant, inferior, and insignificant except when they serve men’s interest.
- Producing knowledge that strengthens existing gender relations and other social hierarchies (Anderson, 2017:1).

The feminist standpoint’s emphasis on experience resonates with the Marxist theory’s concern with the intrinsic oppression of the proletariat by the bourgeois. Standpoint feminists employ the same ontology in the analysis of gender relations. The feminist standpoint investigates how patriarchy naturalises the division between men and women, thereby normalising it and making women’s subservience to men acceptable. Marxist theory claims that the concrete activities in which an individual engages shapes their personalities and self-consciousness and, by extension, their behaviours and understanding of themselves. Feminist standpoint stresses the material conditions of women’s lives; that is, how women’s skills and knowledge are developed through their performance of stereotypical female activities such as cooking, childbearing, nurturing and other caring roles in the home. The empirical evidence of this thesis confirms the theoretical assumption of the feminist standpoint theorists that women’s behaviour, personality and experience are developed or shaped from the repetitive performance of stereotypical gender roles as attributed to them by society (Section 7.2, 7.8).

The works of scholars such as Simone de Beauvoir (1949), Dorothy E. Smith (1987), Nancy Hartsock (1983), Raywean Connell, Patricia Collins (1986), Betty Friedan and Sandra Harding (1991) form the touchstones of standpoint feminist theory. According to Lorber (1997:21), standpoint theory converges the radical, lesbian, and psychoanalytical feminist theories of women’s oppression, and makes a shift from the resistance of, to a confrontation of, the dominant producers of knowledge and values.

These theorists seek to project women's voice through the production of knowledge that presents the uniqueness of women's voices, which seem lacking in professional leadership in the South African public sector (Ramohai, 2019:217)

#### **2.4.1.7 African feminism**

African feminism is an ideology promulgated by African women including those living in a diaspora to dismantle male dominance, and resist foreign domination and its legacy within African cultures. African feminism is a theoretical paradigm and a form of rhetoric that has instigated arguments, which validate the lived experiences and struggles of African women and women of African origin in the diaspora against different dynamics of global feminist discourse (Goredma, 2010:34). It seeks African indigenous ways of acquiring knowledge which are holistic and not "compartmentalised into neat piles" such as the everyday experiences of women that are knitted together (Wane, 2011:7). The African feminist movement is characterised by the following:

- A continuous practice for self-definition and re-definition.
- A broad-based membership movement.
- An activism towards the resistance of western feminist distortions and misrepresentation of the African situation.
- It is a feminism of negotiation and compromise.
- It is a mechanism for reconciling power dynamics within the African continent and in the African diaspora (Akin-Aina 2011:66; Nnaemeka 1998:155).

African feminism is an important political movement for African women, not only for crafting new identities (Turshen, 2010:162), but also for its consciousness in recognising and challenging a myriad of issues pertaining to the social, economic, political, and historical realities of African women (Mushibwe, 2009:66). As a social movement, African feminism aims at creating a noticeable difference between African women who were colonised as well as those considered as the colonisers (Goredma, 2010:34). African feminism also seeks to resist the matrix of colonialism, which not only exploits and represses African women, but also promotes their dependence on their colonisers and men. As Wane (2011:7) explains, African feminism is all about decolonisation through the participation of both African men and women.

Kaitesi (2013:107) points out that the prevalent state of gender inequality in contemporary African societies is an offshoot of colonial processes. He further argues that African women in pre-colonial Africa were included into society's structural arrangement and organisations that were destabilised by colonial social institutions. This argument is contestable because African societies have always been structured around gendered power hierarchies, where men occupy the highest positions in the hierarchy. Nonetheless, African feminists seek to redress social constructions of gender, without excluding or overthrowing men (Rwabyoma, 2014:72). Furthermore, although African feminism shares the anti-patriarchal ideology of the western feminism, African feminist discourse is specified to the interests, concerns, and realities of African women (Odhiambo, 2011:673)

The concept "African feminism" is articulated by African intellectuals who claim that western feminism does not represent realities of social categories and structures in African societies (Ngunjiri, 2010:757; Mushibwe, 2014:56). This is so because the interpretation of the African situation outside of its realities will result in the distortion, obfuscation, and misrepresentation of African situations and experiences. Mushibwe (2009:65) extends this argument by pointing out that such interpretations do not portray the social categories and structures of African societies. African feminists resist elements of western feminism that do not address African realities and experiences (Akin-Aina, 2011:69). African women do not see performing works in the public sector as an obstacle to procreation and in the running of family errands, which is contrary to the belief of western feminists (Kaboré, 2017:413). Similarly, African feminists regard and respect African culture, therefore, they engage in constant negotiations with cultural norms and customs (Bordo, *et al.*, 2015:525), whilst striving for the emancipation of women (Akin-Aina, 2011:169). As Acholonu (1995:103) contends, "it is impracticable, almost suicidal, for African women to adopt western feminist ideology without regards for the basic and fundamental historical, cultural, and ideological differences in the experience of world views and reason of both cultures" In line with this theoretical assumption of the African feminist theory, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.12 indicated that female managers appreciate and value their cultural gender roles, for example providing care for their children and running family errands, which is a significant constituent of the realities of African women.

African feminism strongly opposes the western feminist dichotomy of sexual relationships that turns women against men and the inherent individualism and competitiveness that is fundamental in western feminist theorisation (Ngunjiri, 2010:757, Nnaemeka, 2003:357-358). Ngunjiri (2010:757) discloses that African feminist scholars “recognise that African women’s realities demand a more holistic perspective that does not pit men against women; instead such a perspective must root out the unjust social arrangements between men and women”. Another African feminist scholar, Ekpa (2000:28-30) argues that the anti-male-authorised texts and attitudes espoused by some western and American gynocritics are aimed at further gendered segregation and are therefore detrimental to the cause of feminism. Acholonu (1995:107) argues that “feminism from Africa must define its priorities” and work towards dismantling the belief of gendered warfare introduced and forced upon it by Eurocentrics. This is because men and women are created simultaneously, and both genders need to work together to achieve gender equality for the benefit of everyone. According to Davies, (1986:121) a genuine African feminism movement recognises the necessity of a collective and complementary struggle with African men in the development of the African continent. African feminism does not consider men as competitors or enemies, it challenges men by conscientising them of certain salient aspects of the domination and subordination of women, which can be resolved by both African men and women through negotiation and compromise. The temper of African feminism postulates unity, solidarity, cooperation and complementarity between African men and women.

African feminist ideology advocates the tenets of negotiation, compromise, collectivism, and collaboration between genders (Bordo *et al.*, 2015:525; Wane, 2011:7; Mbakogu *et al.*, 2013:20). The idea of negotiation in this regard replaces the radical approach of western feminisms. This is because the African societies are stiffly patriarchal and, because African women have several factors such as poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment to deal with, they learn to navigate around and silently subvert the patriarchal values and practices that subjugate and oppress them. Patriarchy is evident in African culture and provides recourse for African feminists to deal with their gender issues. African feminists identify patriarchal ideology, for example the male normed workplace practices, as the socio-cultural framework that legitimise male’s supremacy. Therefore they seek to understand patriarchal systems

and operations with the aim of dismantling them (Turshen, 2010:162). However, in their struggle against patriarchy, African feminists recognise men as their partners and seek collaborative efforts on their part (Therborn, 2004:94) to topple gender inequality. Ogundipe-Leslie (1994:1) developed the concept of STIWA (Social Transformation Including Women of Africa), she emphasises the need for African men and women to cooperate in bringing about social transformation in African societies. The general tenet of all strands of African feminism is the recognition that aggressive retaliation or reversal of roles would be counterproductive to the process of gender transformation and creation of harmonious societies (for example, forcing women to swap roles with men or trying to take revenge against men). The transformation of African society demands a cooperative responsibility of both African men and women. According to Coulibaly (2015:4-5), social transformation cannot be realistic if women are not given equal opportunities to participate in the different social spheres. Therefore, to achieve social transformation, African men and women must work hand in hand without antagonising each other. In agreement with the assertion of the African feminist viewpoints, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.14 indicated that respondents' views on collaborating with their male colleagues is important in the fight against gender inequality in the workplace.

## **2.4.2 Other Gender Theories**

Some other gender theories that are important in understanding women's experiences and behaviours in gendered social relations include gender schemas, post-structural and post-modern theory and the post-colonial theory. This section discusses these gender theories that validate the lived experiences of women and are, therefore, pertinent to this study.

### **2.4.2.1 Gender-schema theory**

Gender-schema theory refers to the non-conscious hypotheses that individuals hold about the differences between the male and female sexes and how people self-identity according to sex-defined characteristics (Canevello, 2017:1). For example, personality traits, behaviours, attitudes, likes, self-reports and skills that conform to their ascribed gender. A schema describes a collection of mental processes, psyches, motivations, personal ideologies, actions, and responses that build the coherent behavioural pattern of an individual. According to Starr and Zurbrigeen (2017:567), gender schema

theory is a social cognitive theory that explains how individuals unconsciously become gendered and the consequences of the acceptance of this gendering on their thought processes throughout their life span. Different schematics exist for masculinity and femininity in every social formation and vary from society to society. Men and women form schemas based on identified behaviours and personality expectations associated with their sex by the society including in the public sector.

Similarly, individuals learn the preconceived schemas of masculinity and femininity through repeated social experiences, cultural observation, and interaction with others. Eklund *et al.*, (2017:131) explains that it is acquired from the earliest stage of an infant's social development through schooling, familial interactions and from religious environments. Individuals use the ideas (schemas) learnt to process information, make decisions, and direct their values. Gender schemas influence how people organise information about themselves and their external world based on society's gender norms. For example, an individual born into a typical traditional culture may perceive women as domesticators, nurturers, and caregivers for families and communities. Concurrent with this perspective, the empirical data indicated that, due to the highly conservative nature of the local sphere of government, municipal employees, especially men, perceive women as people who are exceptionally good with domestic chores, but not technical fields and public leadership roles because of internalised gender-schemas (see Sections 6.2.2, 7.4, 7.7 and 7.12). The schemas learnt and adopted by men and women influence their attitudes, perceptives and beliefs in tune with the expected appropriate behaviours of their communities.

According to gender-schema theory, men and women possess the strong will to develop and self-regulate the behaviours and personality traits of their gender-based attitudes on the society's prescribed expectations better than gender-aschematic individuals. Gender-aschematic individuals consider sexual classification as less important (Starr & Zurbrigeen, 2017:567). As such, they strive towards resisting influences that may arise through gender discrepancies (Spencer, 1993:624). Furthermore, the consequences of gender schemas on the professional leadership domain is that women are constantly undervalued and unappreciated while men are overvalued and extremely acknowledged. Gender, in this respect, becomes a benchmark for better opportunities and access to powerful positions and resources for men while women face devaluation and biases for their gender. Even when women

are most qualified for leadership positions, men are preferred and head-hunted. The empirical evidence confirms the assertion even when a woman is more qualified than a man, in most cases the man is preferred for directorship positions (see Section 6.2.1, 6.2.7 and 7.5, 7.8 and 7.12). For example, an average American believes that men have better chances of being selected for top professional and senior executive positions in business and politics than women (Pew Research Centre 2015: Online). This is not because women are not capable of leading as effectively as men; rather it shows the pervasiveness of patriarchal culture that promotes women's exclusion. Cultural stereotypes depict women as lacking the prerequisite characteristics to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities (Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616).

Bem's gender-schema theory provides an explanation on how culture promotes gender stereotypes and prejudice in societies through the categorisation of individuals into sexual groups (masculinity and femininity), thus making it possible to assign stereotypic roles to men and women together with their hypothetical continuum. The empirical evidence in this thesis is consistent with the supposition that the gender binary created by the society is the underlying cause of bias against women in the public sector (see Sections 6.2.2, 7.4 and 7.12). Eklund, *et al.*, (2017:131) indicate that individuals conform quickly to culturally defined expectations of male and female because stereotypical norms are easily assimilated, social groups are formed on the bases of intersectional ties such as gender, sexual orientation, class, race and religion.

The schemas people ascribe to perfect leaders match with the schemas attributed to masculinity (Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616; Stoker, *et al.*, 2012:31) rather than the schema associated with femininity. For example, a woman who decides to pursue career development in traditional culture may be considered as unfeminine and disrespectful. The empirical data analysed in Section 7.12 of this thesis is consistent with the assumption that bright female managers in male dominated organisations are proud, arrogant and bad mannered. This study argues that societal schemas about women personalities significantly contribute to the challenges women encounter in attaining leadership positions and performing efficiently in those roles. Indeed, gender-schemas contribute to underrating of women's professional leadership capacities and the overrating of men's capacities. Gender inequality in leadership is perpetuated through the underestimation of women's leadership efficiency and the acceptance and overvaluing of men's leadership. Therefore, using this theory as a lens, it is easier to

understand why women are scarcely represented in leadership (see Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.7, 6.2.9, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.12).

#### **2.4.2.2. Object Relations Theory**

Object relations theory is a contemporary expansion of the psychoanalytic theory that proposes systematic efforts to account for the complex relationships of “self and others” (internal and external). The theory explores how women’s personalities of selfhood are organised and how the forged personalities influence their relationships with members of their organisation (Flanagan, 2011:123). Corey (2013:80) describes object relation theory as a process whereby women unconsciously internalise experiences that affect their relationship with others and the mental representation of others within themselves. That is, how individuals come to understand themselves as distinct independent beings, while recognising the significance of establishing profound relationships with others. Klein (1952:53) summarises the crux of this theory by stating that “there is no instinctual urge, no anxiety situation, no mental process that does not involves object, external or internal; in other words, object relation is at the centre of emotional life”

The basic argument of this theory is that the inner psychic is profoundly affected by a person’s experiences with others during their psycho-social development and the assumption that an individual’s psychologies and emotional conflicts are premised on unconsciously internalised experiences (Flanagan, 2011:123; Corey 2013:80). Deducing from the object relations theory, women’s personalities and self-concept are acquired from childhood experiences coupled with their interaction with objects (their mothers), that are formulated and maintained through self-representation and object-representation. In relation to the research question of this thesis, object relation theory associates women’s developmental issues to sexual differentiation, sexual orientation and gender identity. Freud specified that sexual orientation and teachings on gender role expectations that women received from their mothers since childhood development relegate them to subservient household roles (Lorber 2010:160). In confirming this theoretical stance, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.4 of this thesis indicated that, in society, women are raised especially to perform domestic roles such as child rearing, cooking, cleaning of the home and in the running of other family errands, without any leadership experience and exposure.



The Freudian conceptualisation of object suggests one's instincts, feelings or drive and anything that satisfies a need (Corey, 2013:80) that captures a significant interpersonal relationship with others with whom an individual develops personal profound affection from childhood to adulthood. Objects are unconsciously internalised images acquired from actions, perceptions, and emotional experiences with others (Kernberg, 2015:41). For example, the affective experience with mother, father, or primary caregivers can be cited as a prime example. It is argued that infants form their first object (emotional attachment) with their mothers, and the internalised objects during childhood development are powerful and exert compelling influences on adult life. Men and women use the unconscious in organising their personalities and predicting the behaviours of others in their social relationships and interactions.

The object relations theory deviates from the classical psychoanalytic (Summers, 2014:2) and theorises that individuals are primarily motivated to seek contact with external objects rather than to discharge drives. For example, object relations theories adopt the concepts of "ego and superego" as postulated by psychoanalytic theorists, however, they consider ego to be object, as ego cannot be produced without contact with an object since the objects appear when the individual experiences them as images in their subconscious. Deductively, the central focus of this theory is neither on self nor objects but on mental representation, as the internalisation of significant interpersonal relationship and the experiences with others forms the bases of mental representations. The empirical data analysed in Section 7.4 in this thesis indicated that the stereotypes on gender roles internalised by women from their childhood affects their career preference and leadership drive, especially in technical fields.

Hinging on psychodynamic theory, object relations theory argues that the way a person (public employee) forms attachment with others and how they relate with situations in adulthood is shaped by their internalised childhood experiences. According to Zosky (1999:55), an adult (public employee) with internalised negative childhood experiences would likely carry those images as the "basic template for their world, significant object and for the self". For example, an adult female (public employee) who experienced sexual abuse as a child would probably expect similar behaviour from other men. In a similar vein, gender differences such as men's desire for leadership and women's proclivity for domestic tasks are attributable to different childhood experiences, and the continuous internalisation of gender roles. In line with

this argument, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.4 and 7.12 of this thesis indicates that some women might opt out of senior leadership roles because of their gender roles, such as parenting; girls grew up internalising parenting as one of the core responsibilities of a woman.

In essence, an adult's capacities for high self-esteem, self-confidence, and independence are determined by the level of affective experience in their encoded internalised object relations during their early development. Inferring from this context, women's low self-confidence, low self-esteem (Merchant, 2012:18), and their withdrawal attitudes from leadership are encoded from their mothers during early childhood. This is because the attachment women obtain through mother-daughter relationships in adolescence is fundamental in the development of the daughters' psyches and sense of self (Chodorow, 2000:339), including their professional choices and aspirations. Arguably, most daughters emulate the professions of their mothers. Therefore, due to the prevalent inequities in society, daughters automatically inherit the subservient position occupied by their mothers. Daughters believe in their mothers; they consider them their role models and therefore tend to become replicas of their mothers. Women's psychologies are configured differently from those of their male counterparts. For example, their value systems and sense of judgement, their communication styles (Merchant, 2012:16), their sense of identity and perception of selfhood and others, their sexual fantasies (Wilson, 1997:27), and their fictional creativity. Undeniably, women's life experiences, beginning from early childhood development to adulthood or old age, differ from those of men. Gender differences and early childhood experiences have a significant implication on stereotyping of the leader's skills and abilities of women managers.

For instance, Carrim (2012:169) point outs that women that identify more with their mothers during early development are often less efficient in the corporate work environment, because organisational culture is structured in a manner that reflects men's proficiency or developmental experiences. However, this is misleading as women's leadership styles are acknowledged best suited for contemporary work organisations (Eagly, 2007:1-6; De Mascia, 2015:1-3; American Association of University Women, 2016:5) (hereafter referred to as AAUW). Although the lack confidence displayed by most female managers in male dominated organisations stems from biased organisational culture, which acknowledge men's gender qualities

in leadership more highly than women's gender characteristics (Helgesen and Johnson 2010:7).

#### **2.4.2.3 Post-structural and Post-modern theory**

Post-structural theory is both a cultural movement and a philosophical epistemology that took a discursive turn beyond its predecessor ontologies (structuralist) of the social world including, Marxist theory, structural anthropology, humanist psychology, and the philosophy of culture (Seidman & Alexander 2004:69; Jones *et al.*, 2011:127). Post-structural theory explicitly rejects the notion that social, cultural, material, and psychological structures are essential in determining individual's manifestations in social life, based on its belief that human beings create social structures which have nothing to do with reality (Turner 2000:165). Poststructuralists argue that cultural norms and values embedded in social structures shape peoples lived experiences and that language influences all human reasoning. Although, post-structuralism retains the constitutive power discourse of structuralism, it places more emphasis on the roles of knowledge and textual analysis in supporting and maintaining unequal power relations between individuals and society (Fox 2014:1855).

Textual analysis constitutes a central assumption of post-structuralism. Premised on post-structural theory, textual analysis involves the understanding and interpretation of fundamental philosophical ideology and cultural assumptions in text and discourses. For example, an interpretation of how written words (in newspapers, books, files, and other publications) and spoken words (conservations, television shows) in culture are used to exploit and oppress women. The idea of text as used by these theorists encompasses more than mere conventional writing and verbal fact. Rather, the aim is specially to describe and extract possible meanings engraved in text. For example linguistic patterns that maintain men's dominance and control over women within a particular culture. The text is to provide room or allow other micro-text, for example "capitalism (Marxism, humanism, feminism, post-modernism), as well as to allow text beyond familiar "micro-level text", for example written or spoken words (Hesse-Biber, 2012:65).

A basic assumption of post-structuralism is that humans do not exist independently of their social environment. An individual's notions of what they know about themselves, and their perception of who others are, are drawn from discourses rather than facts of

reality (Watson, 2017:79). Discourse, according to Foucault (1973 cited in Whisnant 2012:6) signifies human means of knowing about truth, which shapes our perception, knowledge, and thinking about the world around us. Post-structuralism as a concept is closely related and connected to postmodernism; however, they are not synonymous.

Post-modernism is a broad set of ideas. It can also be seen as an uncertain belief system connected with theoretical and cultural movement that reacts against conventions and ideologies of modernism (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2010:109). It questions claims of modernism (that truth is universal) that fundamental truth about social relationships and practices can be uncovered beyond reality. Post-modern theorists begin by refuting that words can actually represent things and claimed that linguistics, not words, form reality (Hatch & Cunliffe 2013: 13) in that reality cannot be interpreted outside the context of language. Post-modernism presupposes that claims to truth and knowledge are produced through social, historical, cultural and political discourses in spoken words or language. Post-modernism argues that reality is ultimately inaccessible through independent human examinations and investigations, as presumed by modernists (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013:13). Post-modernism is “targeted for demolition of the centrality of individualised human subject and the dominance of rationality as the mode of knowing. The realist claims that language can adequately describe the real world” (Hesse-Biber, 2012:65), since truth and knowledge cannot be based on rationality but on existing reality, generated through rigorous studies and empirical research. For example, the empirical findings and literature of this thesis revealed that women are marginalised and disrespected in the public sector (see Sections, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7.6, 6.2.7 and 7.12). This study’s finding is considered factual because it is based on empirical investigation (fact) rather than on conventional wisdom or by mere human reasoning.

Post-structuralism and post-modernism are often used interchangeably; however, some scholars have attempted to differentiate between the two concepts. In trying to distinguish between these concepts, Marshall (1994 cited in Pilcher & Whelehan, 2010:109) defines post-structural theory as a theory of language and knowledge, and describes post-modern theory as concerned with theories relating to society, culture and history. Watson (2017:76) further explains that one organisational theory book agrees that it may be difficult to demarcate boundaries between both concepts.

Nonetheless an indisputable fact remains that both approaches are focused on “language, subjectivity and knowledge”. The relevance of the post-structural and post-modern theory in the study is towards the emancipation of women from biased social and cultural practices and in the interpretation of language used to promote the inferiority of women (see Sections 6.2.2, 7.4, 7.8 and 7.12).

The theoretical perspective of post-modernism is that human thinking is influenced by power relations that are traditionally and socially constructed (Hesse-Biber 2012:368). Post-modernism asserts that reality is a subjective construction of human reasoning. Therefore, post-modernism denies that universal human values and the preconception of the enlightenment projects such as social scientific realism, religion, rationality and logical knowledge (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2010:109) must be observed. Post-modernism is the “political wing” of post-structuralism, seeking to attempt to challenge and correct narratives of modernist social institutions and power domination such as, global capitalism, neoliberalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. Cultures are subjective and form the culmination of exploitation and patriarchy. Unequal power relationships between men and women are sustained and maintained through existing institutions and cultural structures of societies. The empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.4, and 7.12 is consistent with the assumption that women’s inequality in leadership positions is maintained by biased organisational structures and culture and societal gender arrangement. In this sense (post-structuralism and post-modernism), the exploitation and marginalisation of women is considered as socially and culturally constructed, through universalised human reasoning and rational thoughts. Biases are inherent in the social, cultural and material structures of societies and in our interpretation of language.

Language promotes sexism and discrimination in the sense that language produces negative connotations for women (Sone, 2016: 41). Women’s sense of self and others cannot be separated from the influences of patriarchy and the existing languages or verbal data, which mirrors male-centered ideologies, rationalities and theoretical formations and expositions (Mukhuba 2016:7235), in that language assumes positive implication and interpretations for men in virtually all aspects. Language is practiced through the enactment of male dominance and control over women. For example, sexist and patriarchal language (for example men are confident), used to raise up the

hands of men whilst bring down the hands of women. Therefore, one could argue that language is partial, exploitative, manipulative, and subjective.

Language is very powerful, language serves numerous functions, for example, how meanings are communicated, it reflects what we think, and shapes social relationships (Sone, 2016:40; Menegatti & Rubin 2017: online). Undoubtedly, language can open doors to diverse leadership opportunities in the public space or close them. Language is a tool for communicating opinions, feelings or ideas of traditionally constructed symbols, which are biased against women (Sone, 2016: 41). This bias tends to interfere with women's dignity, creating a situation of inferior position for women. Women's inferior rank is worsened by men's feelings, beliefs and judgments of women as inferior beings by nature (Mukhuba 2016:7235). Men are consistently the anchors and reference point in daily application of language in leadership discourse. This notion reinforces and sustains beliefs that men are more competent and capable than women. When women appear in leadership discourse, the spoken and written words about them are undesirable and demeaning, for example less skilled and incapable. Importantly, the participation or exclusion of an individual is promoted by language. Language has a significant influence on gender bias and leadership stereotypes. Women's under-representation and exclusion from top management and leadership positions are consequent on linguistic practices in culture that treat women unequally to men. The empirical evidence from this thesis supports the assumption that the language used on female managers is cruel, disrespectful, and demeaning and language is also used to demote women in the workplace (see Section 6.2.2 and 7.12)

To remedy and liberate women from linguistically induced discrimination and exploitation, gender awareness is imperative for understanding how linguistics in leadership discourse produces reality. Through gendered awareness, women would be trained and empowered on how to navigate patriarchal social structures. The empowerment and development of women managers is an important step in liberating women from structural injustice, which excludes and discriminates against women in leadership discourse in organisations. The negative effects of linguistics on women's leadership have resulted in gender inequality and discrepancies on leadership roles between men and women. Therefore, to promote women's participation in leadership discourse, awareness through training and development are critical components for women's liberation in organisations. In the proposed approach constructed in this

thesis for the leadership empowerment of women in the local sphere of government, gender education to raise awareness on how linguistic patterns promote discrimination against public female managers is included in the empowerment approach (see Sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.1.7.5).

#### **2.4.2.4 Post-colonial theory**

Post-colonialism is both a theoretical and a critical theory that seeks to transform and restructure colonised societies away from colonialist ideological legacies and their contemporary forms of subjectivity and marginality (McEwan 2009:25; Childs and Williams,2014:4). Post-colonial theorists adopt metaphysical, moral and radical theory and literature/language theory in resistance to imperial rules (McEwan 2009:25). Childs and Williams (2014:4) explain that postcolonial theory analysed literature/writings that are developed in countries or regions that were previously, or now, colonies of Europe. Post-colonial theory uncovers writing/literature dating from the point of colonial contact from once-colonised regions or states to challenge artificial practices in history and culture.

In a general sense, the post-colonial era suggests periods of independence for previously colonised states, which is in sharp contrast to colonialism. This means that imperialism is over; therefore, the world may be perceived as anti-colonial or post-colonial. This study argues that the effects of colonialism are still alive and felt in contemporary times, especially through the marginalisation and mistreatment of women (Section 2.2, 6.2.7 7.10)

Colonialism is a form of domination and exploitation whereby strong nations hijack the powers of less powerful countries and used their economic resources for the advancement of their wealth and powers. Examples of marginalised countries include African countries, Asian countries and many Islamic states. Aside from having effects on these countries, colonialism inflicted various challenges and negative impacts on women. The impact of colonialism played a pivotal role in shaping women's inferior identities and subordinate positions in all social spheres, even in post-colonial society. Colonisation and European infiltration in Africa altered women's occupation and family patterns (Wiesner-Hank 2011:39). For example, in South Africa during colonialism, women were driven from their occupations (i.e. agriculture) and were conscripted into procreative and domestic servitude. Colonised women were barred from participating

in economic, social and political power, this greatly affected women's development and diminished their capacities (Bulhan 2015:240). However, McClintock (1995:6) wrote that, before the advent of colonialism, colonised women, for example African women were, in every case, disadvantaged within their various cultures. That which gave colonial masters the platforms for reordering their social life, especially sexual and economic labour, in matters that are separate from those of the colonised men. On the contrary, other scholars argued that the subjugation of women in colonised countries was the after effect of colonisation experiences. The stance of this thesis is that, prior to colonialism in Africa, although there are some women who occupied very powerful and authoritative positions, women never shared equivalent political powers with men. Just as Ogbomo (1993:431) observed, women were victims of male-dominated social environment. However, colonialism intensified women's oppression such that black women suffered different forms of oppression, that of being a member of the weaker sex, social class and race.

The case was different for European women residing in the colonies, as they enjoyed especial privileges because of their race, but their capabilities were weakened because to their gender identification (Ghosh 2004:739). Moreover, arguing from postcolonial theory, gender inequality in leadership is a result of the combination of patriarchy and colonisation experiences (Akala 2018:228; Ngomane 2017:394). Consistent with this philosophical assumption, the findings from the empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.7, 7.5 and 7.12 indicated that the participants connect gender inequality to colonialism and patriarchy among other factors. Postcolonial theory attempts an investigation into patriarchy, traditional structures promoting imperialism and neo-colonialism. Post-colonial theory is a tool for explaining the scanty representation of women in leadership due to pre-existing hierarchies of powers in organisations which are male-centred (Section 6.2.9; 7.4). Sawant (2011:2) explains that postcolonial theory proposed to redefine, reshape and to recreate the physical, psychological, and social effects of colonial self. The purpose is to bring to visibility the voice of women, which was previously unrepresented and excluded from social life. One of the proposed outcomes of this thesis is to give a voice to women in the local sphere of government through the advancement of more women into strategic management positions and governance.



## 2.5 GENDER SENSITIVE APPROACH

Gender sensitivity proffers an approach for the recognition and identification of gender issues with specific reference to the historical roots of injustice, discrimination, and sexism. Theobald (2014:12) asserts that “gender sensitivity is the ability to recognise gender issues and especially the ability to recognise women’s different perception and interests arising from their different social location and different gender roles”. This implies that gender sensitivity approach is sensitive to the needs, concerns, aspirations, and issues peculiar to both men and women. Logically, the existence of gender issues is an indication of discrimination, injustices, and differential treatments that require intervention through a sensitive approach.

According to the United State Agency for International Development (USAID) (2014), the gender sensitivity approach highlights pervasive cultural dynamics and identifies priorities in accessing opportunities, balance of powers, influences, and resources that are disorganised by gender bias. The approach uncovers information on the issues affecting the acceleration of women and provides a deeper understanding of how gender disparities can be addressed. Furthermore, the gender sensitive approach reveals that gender injustice is not shaped only by cultural norms (USAID 2014, Hamamra 2020:216), but also by structural arrangements, organisational cultures, programmes, and policies which do not give women equal opportunities to men (Stamarski and Son Hing 2015:1; Sam *et al* ., 2019:1877). The hypothesis that structural arrangements, organisational culture, and practices hinder women’s leadership advancement is supported by the empirical data of this thesis analysed in Sections 6.2.8 and 7.12.

With reference to this study, issues of the gender sensitivity approach in leadership include gender discrimination in recruitment processes, gender stereotypes, and unequal access to leadership opportunities (Sections 6.2.7 6.2.10, 7.6 and 7.10). Women often experience discrimination and injustice in the corporate world through gender stereotypes and biased decisions (Jayatilake, 2016, cited in Cho, *et al.*, 2017:149). Historically, organisational culture has often treated women as subjects and deprived them of top positions. Current research reveals that women are paid less than men (Soklaridis, 2017:254), have fewer opportunities of moving upwards on the leadership career ladder (Cho, *et al.*, 2017:148) and possess fewer chances of being

promoted. Consequently, women continue to form the majority in the lower ranks of organisations (DPSA cited by Nhlapo & Vya-Doorgapersad 2016:171) and hardly enjoy their fundamental human rights (Hicks & Myeni, 2016:109; Burkinshaw & White, 2017:1). Gender inequality in leadership will be covered in detail in a later section (Section 2.4.4) of the study. In line with this assumption, the empirical findings from this thesis show that women are undermined by societal and cultural systems that treat women as inferior to their male counterparts (Section 6.2.2, 6.2.3 7.4). The prejudice and stereotypes attached to women's gender are brought into the workplace, and deprive women of their inalienable rights to participate as equal citizens in senior management positions (see Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.5, 7.8 and 7.12).

The gender sensitive approach is a policy tool to help achieve gender equality including for raising awareness on gender inequality in top and senior management positions (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural organisation (UNESCO), 2020). The awareness is not to fight against men or sowing seeds of discord between men and women, but a pointer to strive towards putting an end to sexism in the workplace, where men and women will have equal opportunities and access to leadership roles and responsibilities. The gender sensitive approach advocates equal participation of men and women in all areas of society, including the labour market such as the public sector. This will be ensured through the development of gender-friendly policies, which will incorporate the concerns and aspiration of both men and women and transform existing structures that sustain inequality in leadership.

## **2.6 GENDER AND POLICY**

The pervasiveness of discrimination against women in workplaces, the disparities in structural power arrangements and unequal access to opportunities inspired the establishment of gender-related approaches and policies as intervention strategies to gender equality (Common Wealth, 2015:12). These complex and wide-ranging approaches and policies focus on the empowerment of women and girls (Republic of Zimbabwe, 2013:1; McBride & Parry, and 2016:4), for example the Affirmative Action Policy and, in some cases, the transformation of unequal social structures and deep-rooted causes of gender inequalities. This totality of process is usually referred to as gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is a global strategy aimed at the

achievement of equal participation of men and women by factoring gender into every stage of policy development (European Institute for Gender Equality, (EIGE) 2017; Bock, 2015:732). The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (1997) defines gender mainstreaming as:

the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned actions including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's, as well as men's, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic, and societal spheres so that men and women benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

The purpose is to promote gender equality by combating exploitation and discrimination. Gender mainstreaming involves the integration of the concerns, experiences, and knowledge of women and men in public policies and programmes. Addressing issues of equal participation reflects the representation of men and women as policy beneficiaries and their equal representation in top decision-making and leadership positions. Bock (2015:732) argues that effective mainstreaming of gender equality must ensure the decolonisation of prioritised goals of specific policies arena that may unintentionally disallow the equal participation of men and women in leadership. This study postulates that women's equality should not just be signified by mere numerical increase, but it should rather be substantiated by women's meaningful engagement and participation in critical decision-making processes and management functions in organisations. In line with this study, the under-representation of women in senior leadership positions as indicated in Section 6.2.9 7.4 of this thesis calls for a need for the decolonisation of existing organisational policies, practices and structures that implicitly constrain women's career progression and advancement into elite positions in the local sphere of government.

Gender equality goals and policies between men and women have been deliberated and recognised both by various governments and international organisations. In 2012 the US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, in her statement asserts that "gender equality is both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do". This is because gender equality contributes significantly to environmental management, global prosperity, and security (USAID, 2012; Kabeer, 2016:295). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2017) further argues that achieving gender equality through the equal participation of men and women coupled with their representations in policies

and programmes are prerequisites for achieving inclusive and democratic governance. In line with the foregoing, this study argues that gender equality through the empowerment of women managers, including those aspiring for leadership, is the “smartest economic” strategy for organisations (including public sector organisations) to adopt in contemporary times, as it has proven to be a driver of economic growth and developmental progress (UNDP, 2017). However, the pathways to achieving gender equality require significant transformation at all levels of government including changes in policy frameworks, legal systems, economic and political structures, and government decision-making processes. Women’s equality should be stimulated and promoted by government-initiated policies and programmes in the forms of professional training and education, for example in DKKDM.

Globally, since the early 1990s, several gender programmes and approaches have been set up by feminists to expedite women’s empowerment and gender equality. Some of these approaches include the Women in Development (WID) (Jaquette & Kathleen, 2006:17-18) which helped to integrate women in the United States of America to participate in economic development, and Gender and Development (GAD). GAD put into consideration the concept of gender equality and also their relations (Momsen, 2008: 2-5), the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS goal 5), the promulgation of laws that eradicate discrimination, the Office of the Status of Women, the Commission on Gender Equality, and the Women’s Budget Initiative (involving civil society and government) were established (Penceliah, 2011: 869-872). As noted, several gender-related policies were established to address the issue of gender inequality and the marginalisation of women in all spheres of society. Since this section discusses gender and policy, it is imperative to conceptualise the word policy.

Policies are rules, administrative actions, and government (national, provincial, or local) (McBride & Parry, 2016:4) statements of intent, developed to achieve goals and objectives proposed for societal change and development (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2015; Vargas-Hernandez, 2011:287; Birkland, 2014:4). From this definition, policies are actions taken by governments to solve social problems, for example, inequalities, welfare, and poverty. With reference to its use in this study, gender policies are guidelines and administrative actions designed to reduce gender-

based inequalities and provide evidence-based investment in gender parity and women's empowerment. According to the USAID (2014), gender policy incorporates government actions and the intervention strategies directed towards the advancement of women's rights and opportunities to guarantee their contributions and maximum participation, including benefits derived from the development of their communities. Logically speaking, gender policies and programmes are critically important for the empowerment and development of women and securing their space in leadership and their participation both in private and public institutions. Some examples of gender-related policies and legislations supporting women's improvement include equal employment opportunity policy, social welfare policy, reproductive rights, and domestic violence policy.

Gender mainstreaming policies on equal employment opportunities are recognised and adopted by progressive countries all over the world, including South Africa where this study is focused. The endorsement of the equal employment policy among other policies in South Africa is guided by the vision of rights, which is accompanied by the recognition and acceptance of equality and inalienable rights of all citizens. From a South African perspective, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, through the Bill of Rights, was the first to address inequalities and the discrimination of the past. It did this through the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of persons or categories of persons who has been historically discriminated through unfair treatment. The Bill of Rights enshrined in the constitution, 1996, has been a catalyst towards women's leadership and political participation in the public sector. For example, the Bill of Rights as one of the regulations governing the activities of the public sector and the local sphere of government reaffirms egalitarian principles, which cover women's development and equal rights to participate in all leadership structures (Constitutional Court of South Africa 2020).

Women's access to leadership opportunities in the South African public sector and in the local government sphere can be traced back as far as the dawn of the democratic dispensation in 1994, when the government introduced policies and administrative actions that sought to make the work environment more democratic and inclusive (Archibong & Adejumo, 2013:1; Maseko, 2013:27). Additionally, as an intervention strategy to eliminate the historical legacy of discrimination and injustice against marginalised groups on the grounds of sex, race, and gender. Some examples of

these policies and frameworks that promote women's employment opportunities include Affirmative Action, the Employment Equity Act (EEA), the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) and the Gender Equality Bills among others. These policy frameworks and legislation will be discussed extensively in the next chapter.

## **2.7 LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is a complex and dynamic social phenomenon with multiple dimensions (Clampitt & Dekoch, 2011: xi; Northouse, 2015:1). Leadership is studied in different situations and inevitably nested within several disciplines such as politics, organisation and systems, management, public administration, and motivation. What works in a situation may be inappropriate in another situation. Similarly, what works for one person may not be applicable to the next. Another aspect of its complexity is its use of indefinite languages (words, terms, concepts etc.) for example, *power, influence management, administration, authority, and supervision* to explain phenomena under similar contexts (Yukl, 2013:18).

Leadership pervades every aspect of human and social life ranging from family, business, social, religious, and community organisations (Yukl, 2013:17). Leadership forms an integral part of human existence since individuals cannot function outside their social groups. Indeed, the success behind any human endeavours, especially within groups, cannot be separated from its leadership. Leadership is an interesting subject among researchers, academics and the public, and ordinary individuals are becoming more interested in occupying positions of leadership. As Northouse (2010:1) notes, leadership is a highly sought-after and highly valued phenomenon among ordinary individuals. Peoples' thinking around leadership has changed and what makes a good leader in contemporary times differs from what was obtainable in ancient times. For example, the association of leadership effectiveness to a person's physical characteristics is fast changing (McShane & Glinow 2000:436) and recently a good leader is seen as a person who focuses on workers engagement, team building and collaborative learning above private interest (Eagly & Carli 2003:809).

As the curiosity around leadership continues to peak, certain questions arise such as, who is a leader, what makes an effective leader, how can one become an effective leader, why do some leaders have obedient followers while others are despised by

their followers? As a result, countless tomes about leadership deluge the shelves of bookstores, providing advice on becoming an effective leader. Most individuals believe that leadership is a means to better enhance their social, economic, and political status as well as their professional skills (Northouse 2010:1-2). This study agrees with this perspective, for example, a leader plays an essential role in enhancing and nurturing employee's professional skills for the achievement of both organisational objectives and personal goals. However, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.13.1 of this thesis shows that, in the local government sphere, senior managers do not adequately support women's career and leadership skills development.

Organisations (including public organisations such as municipalities) are in urgent need of high-quality leaders because they bring innovative skills and assets to the same organisation, which lead to high competitive advantage and improvement. Globally, academic institutions are beginning to create programmes in leadership studies, for example, the Gordon Institute of Business School (GIBS) established by the University of Pretoria.

### **2.7.1 Leadership as a concept**

Leadership is an intriguing field of study that forms a critical aspect of an organisation. It is the brainbox behind the quality performance of any organisation (including public organisations and municipalities) whether large or small (Wiehahn, 2016:1). However, despite the collective agreement by scholars on the importance of leadership for organisational performance both in public and private institutions, and the vast research generated on the concept of leadership, "the field of leadership studies has not succeeded in articulating a coherent, paradigm-shifting model or approach that both scholars and practitioners can accept and work with" (Jones, 2005:259). There is no universally acceptable definition of leadership. Some scholars assert that the concept of leadership came into existence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, whereas others contend that it was adopted from the Greeks and Romans (Wibra, 2017:3). Early research on leadership concentrated on power and influence and reflected the periods of Machiavelli and Plato. During this period, the *great person theory* was the most popular theory on leadership. *The great person theory* theorised that great leaders have inherent traits and personalities that were inherited. This personality trait enables them to lead effectively. Thus, leaders are born and not made. These innate

personality traits include brevity, self-confidence, and intelligence. Men and boys are always presumed to possess these personality traits.

Isaacs (2016:66) argues that the concept of leadership has been (and is still) theorised differently by researchers working in the field of Management, Organisational Studies, Psychology, and other related disciplines, including Public Administration. Similarly, leadership is likened to concepts such as *belief, love, values, trustworthiness, faith*, and *democracy* (Wibra, 2017:3). Irrespective of the different meanings attributed to the concept *leadership*, it is possible to identify common components that are fundamental to its definition (Jex & Britt, 2014:372; Northouse, 2015:2-3). These components include:

- Leadership is a process;
- Leadership revolves around influences, power and authority;
- Leadership does not exist in isolation (it involves a leader or group of leaders and followers)
- Leadership is geared towards achieving collective goals rather than individual interests.

This study uses these listed components in defining the concept of leadership. Leadership is a process that involves an influencing relationship between the leader and the followers who intend initiating real changes that reflect collective purposes. A leader is an individual holding a formal position of leadership, for example public sector managers. Followers consist of individuals who are guided for change and development, for example, public servants in lower level positions. According to Yukl (2013:18), both the leader and the followers intentionally crave for significant changes, and the changes are connected to the goals shared by leader and followers. Sharma & Jain (2013:310) define leadership as a process by which a leader influences other individuals towards actualising a shared objective and directs the organisation in a manner that makes it cohesive and coherent. Figure 2.3 shows the salient attributes in the definitions of leadership.



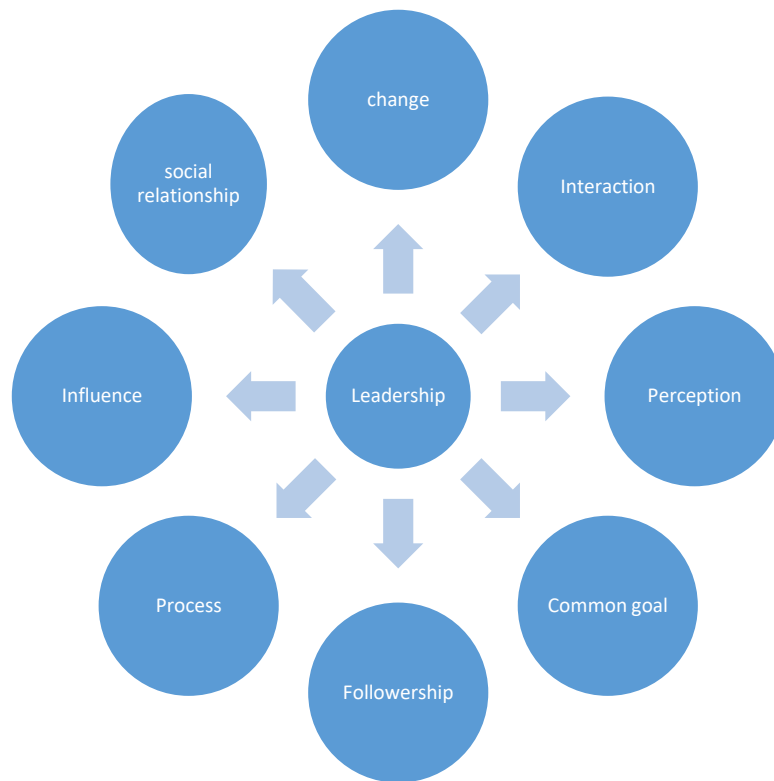


**Figure 2.3 Element of leadership**

**Source: Author's compilation (2019)**

This figure presents the key elements that coalesce in the definition of leadership. As the diagram shows, leadership involves a process; this means that it is not an inherent personality trait. Rather, a phenomenon that evolves out of the interplay and relationship between the leader and the followers. For example, in the DKKDM, the relationship existing between managers within the different leadership levels and lower level employees, who are their followers. The very fact that leadership is conceptualised as a process suggests that it is not an innate characteristic with which a selected few are endowed. Leadership does not exist in isolation; a group is required for leadership to occur. The relationship is reciprocal, where the leader influences the group and is also influenced by the group resulting in significant changes. This further explains that leadership is not a linear, one-way dimensional event but an interactive activity that engages both the leader and the led. The essence of the interaction and communication is to develop the capacities and adoptability of followers to navigate complexities as well as to collaborate or to bring different ideas together (Ospina 2017:281). Leadership is an interactive process in which leaders influence the actions of their followers, moulding their perceptions and directing their efforts towards

achieving collective goals and objectives. Leadership is all about influence - “nothing more and nothing less”; without influence there is no leadership. With regards to this study, influence has to do with the ability of public managers to successfully gain the cooperation of their subordinates towards the achievement of the constitutional mandate of the local sphere of government. Furthermore, individuals consider themselves to be more prototypical and influential to their groups than other group members in a social context.

Some researchers argue that some people are born with natural leadership talents and gifts. Leadership scholars suggest that high quality leaders are made and not born (Lussier & Achua, 2016:9; Tracy 2010:13). Similarly, Tudela, (2011; 23) and Daft (2014:23) explain that it may be possible that some people possess innate qualities and characteristics that are fundamental to becoming a good leader. However, most people can learn to be effective leaders no matter their personality and inborn traits. In addition, Druker (cited in Tracy, 2010:13) states that, “there may be such a thing as a natural leader, but there are so few of them that they make no difference in the great scheme of things”. Even when a person is born with certain talents and innate traits, without the careful and continuous practise (Byron, 2015:6) of those skills, that individual cannot become an expert in leadership skills, as it they are not mystical qualities dominant in certain privileged individuals.

According to Palestini (2011:2), leadership skills are learned behaviours that are acquired through intense consistent practice, and training. Thus, in the local sphere of government with reference to the DKKDM where this study is focused, leadership skills are developed through pragmatic activities of self-development, training, education, and the accumulation of needed skills and capacities. This is achievable through dedication and persistence on the part of the leader. The different forms of leadership include political, autocratic, public, and democratic leadership; however, this study focusses on public sector leadership.

### **2.7.2 Leadership as a public administration function**

Public administration in its broadest sense has two meanings: Firstly, a specialised academic discipline that studies the implementation and professional training for the

preparation of civil servants for working in the public service (Denhardt et al 2013:2; Milakovich & Gordon 2013:2). Secondly, public administration is concerned with the formulation and implementation of government policies (Denhardt *et al* 2013:2; Pommer & Van Houwelingen 2016:34). However, as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry, Thornhill and van Dijk (2010:54) argue that public administration depends on other related disciplines for problem solving, such as administrative law, leadership, political sciences, sociology, organisational studies, business management, anthropology, and physics. To Thornhill, *et al.*, (2014:15) “public administration concerns the study of the system required to ensure that a policy framework exists; that a system is established to acquire human resource to perform the function assigned to the institution; that a public organisational structure is constructed to enable every employee to have certainty regarding his or her duties; that the procedures are in place to facilitate effective and efficient services; that sufficient funds are allocated to perform the duties assigned to the institution; and that control measures are put in place to call every official to account if he or she has not performed the assigned duties”. Public administration embraces the formation and management of all government ministries, agencies and departments, the interrelationship between government institutions and other relevant stakeholders (civil society, private sector, non-profit organisations) and the dynamics involved in the pursuits of public good for citizen.

Leadership constitutes a critical component in public administration, including the local sphere of government. It plays pivotal roles in ensuring societal change and development, democratic government, creating public values and good governance (Eliogu-Anenih, 2017:1, Bairaktarova *et al*, 2011:588-589). In government, the place and need for leadership cannot be overemphasised, since it constitutes a vital component for social development and good governance. Good governance cannot be realised without an effective and public sector leadership. Lambright and Quinn (2011:782) argue that nothing is more fascinating, significant, and mysterious to the discipline and praxis of public administration than leadership. More importantly, government may not function adequately, realise its goals, or manage its activities efficiently and effectively outside the domain of effective leadership. To emphasise the need for effective leadership, Holmes (2009:255), argues that leadership is critical to

all spheres of government: national, state and local. Leadership will help government maintain sustainable society and the country's development.

Public administrative leadership is a different form of leadership. Scholars drew this conclusion after extensively researching leadership forms (Crosby & Bryson, 2017:4). For example, Van Wart (2013:522) asserts, "administrative leadership encompasses people (at all levels) and the accompanying processes and networks that lead, manage, and guide government and non-profit agencies". Similarly, Ospina (2017:273) writes that the "public leadership domain" includes political elites (officials in political positions), elected administrators and formal administrative staff in government agencies. According to Getha-Taylor *et al.*, (2011:88-89) special responsibilities and duties for public leaders include the development, implementation and monitoring of public policy, recognition of the long-term effect of public policy actions, and support towards the attainment of sustainable strategic management. This study agrees with the classification of public administration leadership as a separate kind of leadership. This is because public leaders are concerned with typical real-life issues such as poverty, health, education, housing, and the environment. In addition to these, public administrators serve and represent the public interest, while "respecting the constitution/law, demonstrating personal integrity, promoting ethical organisation, and striving for professional excellence are at the heart of values-based leadership for public managers" (Getha-Taylor *et al.*, 2011:89).

Public administration, just like other large business and non-business organisations has its unique and distinct environment in which government operations and "business" are carried out. The environment of public administration is changing not only with the changing demand of citizens, but also with regards to meeting international demands on gender equality, social justice and responsiveness to achieve sustainable development (Ansell & Torfing, 2016:2). For example, one of the priorities of the South African government is to achieve gender equality in higher public administration within all spheres of government. Administrative duties in public sector/service and at the local government sphere are organised through clearly defined structures and employees (both men and women) who implement those functions (for example management functions) hail from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. For example, there are various divisions and departments with

different functions in the local sphere of government managed by both female managers and male managers who hail from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Regardless of employees' diverse cultural backgrounds, beliefs, gender and religious affiliations, the public administrative environment influences employees either positively or negatively and employees' perception of their work environment will ultimately influence how they respond to it (Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2007:1255). As Grissom *et al* (2012:651) observed, employees' negative feelings about their working environment heightens their intention to leave. For example, it has been empirically proven that women's view of their organisational climate or environment as being unfavourable increases labour turnover, decreases motivation for leadership, women's well-being, work engagement and job satisfaction (Miner-Rubino & Cortina 2007:1254; Hoyt & Murphy 2016:387; Miner & Cortina 2016:482).

### **2.7.3 Gender and leadership**

In recent times, there has been a significant surge of research and works on gender and leadership in almost all disciplines, for example in academic medicine, theology, educational leadership, psychology, engineering, organisational leadership and in the social sciences, under which public administration falls (Pololi *et al* 2013:201; Bøsterud, 2019:5; Miller & McTavish 2011:687; Fulton *et al.*, 2019:255; Wood 2019:1, Moorosi, 2019:184). According to Eagly and Heilman (2016:349), a web search of scientific articles on the subject of gender and leadership discloses approximately 300 published journal articles since the early 1970s, in which 38% of the published articles are dated above 2010 or later. The growth across many disciplines indicates an increasing interest among scholars and researchers in women's leadership, which is accompanied by an increased agitation from members of the public and their organisations for women's inclusion into the highest levels of decision-making positions. Evidence from some research shows that business organisations are advocating the presence of women on their corporate boards (Eagly & Heilman 2016:349), as women's leadership introduces a distinctive perspective and approach into business that enhances organisational growth potential (Seo & Huange, 2017:619), financial successes, and better work performance. Public institutions are not left out, for in the local government sphere, women's participation in leadership roles has also received increasing attention from academics and policy makers as a

critical issue, because of its positive impacts on governance (Minolelelti, 2014:1), citizens, service delivery, state reputation, and economic growth. Bart and McQueen (2013:93) mention that the positive correlation attributed to women's presence in boardrooms and high corporate productivity suggest that women make better leaders than their male peers.

Some scholars argue that there is a gendered difference in the "typical" leadership approach of male and female managers (O'Neil *et al.*, 2015:253; Nash *et al.*, 2017:1; Muraya *et al.*, 2019:249). According to the American Association of University Women {AAUW} (2016:5), investigating whether men's and women's approaches to leadership differ, forms the main concern of studies and literature on gender and leadership. AAUW (2016:5) interrogate how gendered behaviours and capacities contribute to leadership effectiveness and companies' growth. Based on the results from the findings, women tend to demonstrate the transformational leadership style (Eagly, 2007:1-6; De Mascia, 2015:1-3; AAUW, 2016:5), which motivates subordinates through intellectual stimulation, cooperation, and concern for individual's improvement. However, some scholars have continued to contest the effectiveness of female managers' transformational leadership style (Eagly & Carli, 2003:818; Ayman *et al* 2009:852). Wolfram and Gratton (2014:338) argue that the transformational leadership style displayed by female managers in the corporate sphere is as effective and equivalent to the transformational leadership style displayed by male managers. This study argues that, even if male and female managers display transformational leadership styles, men and women differ in their leadership approach, for example in their communication style, strong interpersonal relationship, collaboration and emotive behaviours (Gipson *et al.*, 2017:44) (Section 1.1.3, 7.7). Recent findings demonstrated that female managers in corporate organisations are better at employee development, mentoring and motivating subordinates, strong interpersonal relationships and teamwork more than their male colleagues (Gipson 2017:44; Funk 2019:2). Bart and McQueen (2013:97) add that female managers in the public sector, when making decisions, apply "complex moral reason" in that they consider multiple opinions, suggestions and perspectives from subordinates before reaching or making their decisions.

According to Bosak & Sczesny (2011:234), "the intellectual, social, and economic contributions of women are vital to organisational and economic progress in general,

as well as to our communities”. In support of this statement, Gakiya, (2016:41-42) opines that women’s style of leadership has the tendency to focus on community development and cooperation, which is usually accompanied with the high priority of meeting the needs and concerns of the disadvantaged and improvised members of society. Therefore, this study argues that the advancement of women into top decision-making and leadership positions in the public sector, including in the local sphere of government, goes beyond just fulfilling the promise of gender equality. This is because scholars have accentuated the suitability of women’s leadership styles for contemporary organisational needs, people’s development, maximum performances, and community growth (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016:388; Kim *et al.*, 2016:5776). These scholarly affirmations raise another pertinent question: if women’s leadership styles are proven to be favourable, why are women still vastly underrepresented in the corridors of powers and leadership, especially in the local government sphere in South Africa? To answer this question, the following section examines the reasons for the persistence of gender inequality in leadership positions in the private and public sectors.

#### **2.7.4 Gender inequality in leadership**

Gender inequality in leadership is a devastating reality in both private and public organisations (Soklaridis, *et al.*, 2017:254; Byron 2015:1). This is despite the fundamental changes and transformation that have taken place in the political, economic, and legal context in South Africa in recent times including policies and laws that have been established to ensure gender equality and equal access to leadership opportunities. Inequality in leadership (in both the public and private sectors) is reflected in the prevalent unequal access to opportunities between men and women (Platt, 2011:1-2; Adamma, 2017:8344; Dormehl 2012:11) to rise into positions of leadership. Women are disadvantaged and discriminated against when it comes to senior management positions (Steyn & SCM, 2015:6608). The boardrooms of organisations in both the public and private sectors are monopolised and hijacked by men in a clear majority. The manifestation of gender inequality in leadership is responsible for the dearth of women in the upper echelons of most organisations (Ramaite, 2013:2-3; Bangani, & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2020:2), and even disparities in

opportunities for leadership advancement (Rockefeller Foundation, 2016:2; Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2016:170).

According to the Conference Board of Canada (cited in Soklaridis, 2017:254), in Canada, men have two to three more chances of being selected into senior executive positions than women. In the United States, recent statistics show that women occupy only 6.4% of the CEOs in the S&P 500 companies (Catalyst, 2020). With no exception to South Africa, both the private and public sectors are plagued with a high level of gender inequality in boardroom and elite positions (see Sections 1.1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7.6, 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2, 2.7.6.3 and 2.7.6.4). The claim that men dominate senior management positions in the public sector is also supported by the empirical findings of this thesis (see Sections 6.2.9, 7.6, 7.12) “Are male leaders better than female managers in the management of an organisation? This question stems from organisational culture, practices and stereotypic perceptions held by individuals on leadership, which suggest that men are more competent and talented in handling managerial roles than women (Samuel & Mokoaleli, 2017:55). Sadly, the notion that perfect public managers are masculine and not feminine still exists today, in fact, some leadership scholars argue that “leadership is conventionally constructed in masculine terms” (Kyriakidou, 2012:4a; Heilman 2015:73-74). Consistent with this perspective, the empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.6 and 7.10 of this thesis confirmed that women’s gender characteristics are perceived as atypical to the qualities of a leader. This situation is best explained by the cliché, “Think managers, think men”, as postulated by Schein (cited in Paustian-underdahl *et al.*, 2014:1). The association of leadership with masculinity has marred the context of leadership in all countries of the world, including South Africa, thus promoting the disbelief in women’s effectiveness in handling managerial roles and responsibilities (Paustian-Ubderdahl *et al.*, 2014:4-5; Bierema, 2016:121). Because of these false assumptions, women lose confidence in their abilities and potential as leaders, including women who are extremely talented and intelligent.

Traditional conceptions of leadership effectiveness restrict and retard women’s capacities and competencies, women are less likely to be hired than men or selected into leadership positions (Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35). These leadership gaps are not confined to business organisations and politics alone; but also within family organisations (Lorber, 2010:6); sports (Singh & Naidoo, 2017:1407); academic



institutions, Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017:76); the legal profession (Rikleen, 2015; the health sector (Chisholm-Burns *et al.*, 2017:312); and other areas of human endeavour.

Gender inequality is a prevalent social phenomenon that is deep-rooted in social institutions and the work environment (Mabelane 2016:57; Lorber 2010:6; Ramaita, 2013:2-3). This study argues that gender inequality is built into the belief-system and political ideology that regulates the relationship between men and women in the cooperate world. This argument is deduced from the significantly unequal leadership opportunities that are available to women in the public world, with men occupying the highest levels positions in public and local government organisations (Hoyt, 2010:484; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017:76; Bangani, & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2020:1-2). Workplace culture and practices, for example employment practices, mirror and strengthen male dominance (Bosch, 2017:4; Ely *et al.*, 2011:475). Interestingly, most public and local government organisations lack the willingness and readiness to hire female leaders (Pew Research Centre, 2015), even in countries such as the U,S that prides itself in promoting and supporting gender equality in the public sphere (Allen, 2016:5). Even when some women try to force their way into leadership positions, they often encounter more intense challenges than men (Hoyt, 2010: 375). The empirical evidence of this thesis confirms that talented women face intense resistance, for example through patriarchy and lack of access to leadership opportunities, when they try to advance into higher leadership roles in the local sphere of government (Sections 6.2.7, 7.6 and 7.10). In addition, it is almost impossible for women to be considered for leadership positions in extremely male-dominated work environments and careers, for example in engineering, traffic and security departments ([AAUW, 2016:8). However, there is still this perception that women have less leadership experience and skills to qualify for certain leadership positions (Singh *et al.*, 2008:53; Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35).

In respect of this study, disparities exist in top decision-making and leadership positions in the local sphere of government (Matoane 2015:1; Vundla, 2016:26). In line with this study, the empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.10, 7.6 and 7.10 show that disparities exist in the access to leadership positions and in hiring and promotion of public leaders. This study argues that women's exclusion from participation in leadership hampers women's opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of their communities (1.1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 6.2.10, 7.11, 7.12). This is

simply because leadership positions are sensitive, influential, and powerful positions (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2014:506) that give the incumbent the privilege of influencing developmental legislative policies and decisions. The AAUW (2016:2) affirms that leaders, including those in public sector/service and local government, are powerful. Consequently, sidelining women from leadership positions automatically deprives them of powers that could bring about significant differences in their development and the world in general.

Leadership opens doors to varieties of opportunities and power for the incumbent. Women's leadership matters in any social setting because having female "leaders in positions of influence to serve as role models is not only critical to the career advancement of other women, but stands to generate broader societal impacts on equality, changing workforce policies", leads to quality decision-making (Minoletti, 2016:1), good governance and inclusive government with diverse leadership capacities. This theoretical assumption is well supported by the empirical data analysed in Section 7.9 that women's leadership advancement will benefit their families, societies, the working environment, and the nation at large. However, men's stronghold remains firm in the leadership positions of all corporate organisations, while women continue to be unjustly underrepresented in the leading positions of organisations

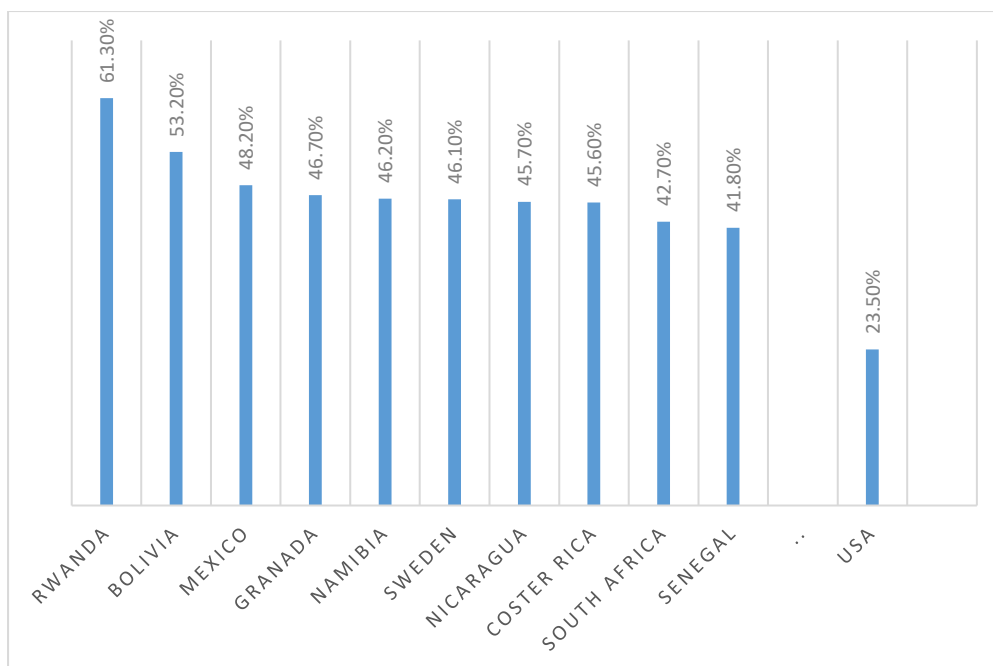


**Figure 2.4 Representation of countries with the highest number of women in parliament**

**Source: Adapted from the World Economic Forum (WEF), 2018**

Figure 2.4 depicts the global representation of women in parliament in 2018, showing countries with the highest number of women in parliament. From Figure 4.2, Rwanda (61.3%) has the highest number of female representatives in parliament, followed by Cuba (53.2%). South Africa occupies 10<sup>th</sup> position. The under-representation of women in senior management levels of public organisations exists at a remarkably similar degree across different countries of the world (Macis, 2017:1). This elucidates the fact that gender inequality in leadership is, indeed, a global issue, (refer to figure 2.4). However, globally, women have made remarkable progress in breaking into professional and managerial positions in recent times (Macis, 2017:1; Madsen & Scriber, 2017:232). For example, in South Africa, when compared with the past 25 years, women's access to leadership opportunities in the public sector has improved. However, this improvement and progress is especially evident at the lower and mid-level management cadres (Bombuwela & Alwis, 2013:3; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017:76; Seo & Huang, 2017:619) of organisations.

Despite this mild success in the advancement of women, globally and in South Africa, women's representation in top professional, directorial, and senior executive positions and at all levels of government and companies remains insignificant in comparison to

their male counterparts. The existing gender gaps in leadership are still gaping and the chasm is wide. Several researchers give credence to this statement by providing evidence of women's under-representation in top management positions in many countries. For example, the USA (Lennon, 2013:7; Pew Research Centre, 2015; Allen, 2016:5); Australia (Australia Government, 2016:6); Canada (Soklaridis, 2017:254); Sweden (Scholten & Witmer, 2017:48); and the United Kingdom (Kuhlmann *et al.*, 2017:2). The situation is noticeable in both developing and developed countries across the world and South Africa is no exception. The next section investigates women's leadership positions in South Africa.

### **2.7.5 Women in top decision-making and leadership positions in South Africa**

Women are disproportionately represented in top decision-making and leadership positions in South Africa, including in the local sphere of government (Bangani, & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2020:2). During the recently concluded 2020 international women's day celebrations, Selekisho (2020) mentioned that South Africa is not doing well when it comes to women's representation in executive positions. Even though women surpass men in terms of population and, recently, in educational achievements, almost all positions of influence and power in all spheres of South Africa are predominantly occupied by men. The discrimination against women leaders remains rife in the South African workforce and in all arms of government (Ramaite, 2013:3-4; Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2016:170). Traditional concepts of gender continue to affect the country's leadership, directorial, professional executive positions, and career development. The Business Women's Association {BWA} (2016 cited in Osituyo 2017:79) reports that women hold only 38.2% of public leadership positions.

The Grant Thornton International Business Report surveys business organisations in different economies, and indicates that over 31% of companies in South Africa have no female representatives at all levels of senior management (Grant Thornton International Business Report, 2017). Similarly, the Businesswomen's Association of South Africa (BWASA) reports that "only 20.7% of local directors and 29.4% of executive directors are women, with just 11.8% holding chairperson positions" (Selekisho 2020). A careful look at the list of companies on the Johannesburg Stock

Exchange (JSE), shows that the number of women CEOs dropped to about 2.2% overall, and “South Africa is slightly ahead of the global average of 25% of senior management roles held by women (SA; 28%) and better than the global average of 34% businesses with no women in senior management positions”. The under-representation of women in senior management positions has repercussions for public administration encompassing citizens’ loss of confidence in government institutions, impeding good governance and efficient service delivery. In addition, gender inequality in leadership takes away the voice and concern of women in public administration, which poses a very serious question concerning the democratic values that are an essential component of public administration.

From these figures, South Africa is on par with both developing and developed countries in ensuring the progression of women into leadership (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950). The South African government has performed better than some industrialised countries of the world in accelerating women’s representation into senior management positions (Fajardo and Erasmus, 2017; Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950). For example, the UK presently has 19% and Australia 23% representation. The percentage of women occupying CEO positions in South Africa (10%) is less than the global average of 12%. Nonetheless, at a global level, South Africa has made outstanding efforts in the advancement of women into top decision-making and leadership positions. This is evident from the increasing number of women in top decision-making and senior management positions, in comparison to the pre-1994 dispensation (Mokhele, 2016:1). However, the 50:50 representations of men and women in top decision-making boards as proposed by the South African government is yet to be achieved as several factors such as those discussed in the next section prevent the acceleration of women into senior management positions. The empirical data analysed in Section 6.2.9 and 7.6 is consistent with the assumption that the 50% target on women’s representation in senior management structures is yet to be achieved due to several factors presented in Section 2.7.6.

### **2.7.6 Barriers preventing the advancement of women into leadership positions**

There is no gainsaying that women encounter far more intense barriers than their male counterparts in climbing leadership ladders in most work environments, including the

local government sphere. Regardless of their qualitative achievement in education (Allen, 2016:5), skills acquisition and professional achievements, women continue to face many leadership difficulties and much discrimination in the corporate world (Selekisho. 2020) (including at local government level). The empirical evidence from this thesis supports the assumption that qualified women encounter all forms of gender-based discrimination in the local sphere of government (see Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.8, 7.12). These barriers preventing the acceleration of women into top executive and leadership positions on par with men are metaphorically referred to as “glass ceilings”. Glass ceilings are powerful yet invisible barriers (Ely *et al.*, 2011:475) that block and limit women’s progression into the top echelons of organisations. The barrier seems visible only in top-level positions of organisations, for example, in directorship and senior management ranks. According to April, *et al.*, (2007:54), glass ceiling describes the “frustration of working women at every level who can see where they want to go but find themselves blocked by an invisible barrier”. These barriers occur regardless of women’s skills, educational qualifications, and achievements (Ngomane, 2017:390; Chisholm-Burns, 2017:312; Allen 2016:5). As an informal invisible “upward mobility barrier” (Ely *et al.*, 2011:475; Seo & Huang 2017:619), that only becomes evident when women try to ascend into top-level leadership positions in large corporations and public organisations, glass ceilings are detrimental to women’s development. This demotivates and discourages women’s active leadership participation in organisations, which has led to a women’s majority in the lowest level positions in hierarchies of powers and authority both in the private and public sector. The assumption that the barriers limiting the advancement of women become apparent as they seek higher leadership roles is consistent with the empirical evidence of this thesis. The finding indicated that women have more access to middle management and lower positions, not section 56 and 57 managers, which are the highest leadership positions (see Sections 6.16, 7.8 and 7.12)

Worthy of note is the fact that the glass ceiling makes women less likely to hold higher level positions in professional life (Mahasha, 2016:19), have less opportunity for promotions (Uwizeyimana *et al.*, 2014:354), and remunerated less even when they perform the same jobs as men (Soklaridis, *et al.*, 2017:254). Similarly, it makes women less likely to become parts of the networks and support systems of organisations (Lyness & Thompson, 2000:86). Glass ceilings prevent women and organisations from

attaining their full potential and denies society the maximum benefits that can be generated through gender-diverse leadership. In confirming the assumption that glass ceilings prevent organisations from achieving their goals, the empirical evidence of this study indicated that poor service delivery by municipalities and the high level of corruption is a repercussion for gender inequality in municipal leadership (see Section 7.10). In addition, the glass ceiling thwarts women's acceleration into senior management ranks. Nonetheless, few women have managed to transcend these boundaries and occupy top leading positions in large corporations. Salient barriers fuelling the under-representation of women in senior management positions are discussed below:

#### **2.7.6.1 Societal/cultural barriers**

Paustrian-Underdahl *et al.*, (2014:1) postulate that a major explanation for the under-representation of women in executive and management positions of government is due to the underestimation and devaluation of women's leadership effectiveness. Accumulating empirical evidence demonstrates that the underestimation of women's leadership is due to the system of gender role division of society which portrays women being mostly industrious as homemakers rather than as excellent decision-makers (Eagly & Wood 2012:56-57). Singh and Tejesen (2008:55) states that the pervasiveness of leadership inequality manifested through the under-representation of women in top structures of public organisation is a result of gender role division. The authors further argue that gender roles in the corporate world, including in the local government sphere are deeply entrenched in historically established societal division of labour between men and women. The assertions by Sing and Tejesen is supported by D'Agostino (2017:10), who argued that administrative functions in the public sector (and at the local government level/sphere) are organised in line with societal gender role expectations and the implicit bias of social perceivers concerning gender roles. Eagly and Karau (2002:574) argue that, because female gender characteristics are socially perceived as incongruent with the requirements of a leader, women are more likely than men to receive disapproval when trying to access leadership roles. The supposition of Eagly and Karau (2002:574) that females' sex characteristics are socially perceived as being inconsistent with the management positions is confirmed by the findings of this thesis (see Sections 6.2.2 6.2.3, 7.4 and

7.12). In contrast, Muraya *et al.*, (2019:249) argue that female reproductive activities and their ascribed gender roles can increase women's chances of being selected and appointed into leadership positions. More so, Funk (2019:8) argues that female perceived role incongruity may negatively affect women in a masculine work environment, but such role incongruity will be favorable to women in a feminine work environment with female evaluators.

Ample studies suggest that the stereotypical lack of fit between females' characteristics and those deemed as critically important for effective leadership influences the psychologies of those considered fit (men) and stigmatised (women) (Hoyt & Murphy 2016:387). Many studies found that men and women have a less positive attitude towards female managers (Addai 2017:1; Koca, *et al.*, 2011:592), and female managers are seen as less qualified and incompetent, especially by males (Funk 2019:8). Von Hippel *et al* (2011:156) found that women who experience persistent stereotypes have less self-confidence to advance their career, have more intentions of leaving the organisation and a less positive attitude to their jobs. Researchers suggest that women who internalise negative gender leadership stereotypes demonstrate decreased performance (Bergerson, *et al*, 2006:151) and self-select out of challenging jobs and performance-oriented tasks. Similarly related research demonstrates that even when a woman has better leadership skills, abilities and experiences than a man, she might select the man as more fit for higher positions, (Hoyt & Murphy 2016:338; Rink *et al* 2019:1; Elsesser & Lever 2011:1555). The empirical data analysed in Section 7.10 of this study confirmed the assumption that female managers, regardless of their skills, prefer men for higher positions. Deductively, the acceptance that leadership effectiveness is perceived as inherent in men puts a big question mark on women's leadership effectiveness and stifles female leadership ambition. The findings of Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12 of this thesis confirmed that preference for men puts a strain on women's leadership in that it promotes the belief that men are better leaders than women.

#### **2.7.6.2 Bias culture of public organisations**

Jaga *et al* (2018:438) posit that "nothing has changed" in the new South Africa, since the white and male dominated public sector (including the local government sphere)



have not delivered on the non-racist and non-sexist agenda of the newly democratic state. Just as under the Apartheid system of sexist workplace culture, practices and structures, women in the new dispensation are still restricted by male hegemonic practices and male-normed work culture. Ayman and Korabik (2010:157) posit that gender and organisational culture coexist in a symbiotic relationship, affecting employee's behaviour and access to opportunities, power, resources, and other work-related benefits. O'Neil *et al* (2008:730) and Ayman and Korabik (2010:157) respectively argue that public organisational cultures are gendered. This implies that assumptions and beliefs about professional suitability and contributors to effective leadership and behaviours are skewed towards males. The empirical findings of this thesis confirmed that the organisational culture of the public sector is gendered, which affects women's access and opportunities during employment and promotion to senior management roles (see Sections 6.2.10, 6.2.7, 7.8, and 7.12). Male-normed organisational culture does not only promote gender stereotypes in access to leadership and HR resource development opportunities, but it also frustrates gender equality policies and frameworks of government and women's education (Stamarski & Son Hing 2015:1). The empirical data analysed in Sections 6.2.9 and 7.8 is consistent with the perspective that gendered organisational culture frustrates gender equality policies, in this case on the achievement of women's equality through their equal representation in top and senior leadership positions as stipulated in gender equality regulations.

Helgesen and Johnson (2010:7) argued an explanation for some women managers abandoning their career and highly paying jobs for other causes is because organisational culture and structures were specifically designed to suit the realities of an all-male workplace whose constituents are beleaguered with few domestic tasks, if any, beyond acting as guardians or providing support to their family. One can argue that male-centred organisational structures and culture are a primary cause of mental mismatch held by the general public, including employers, on management appropriateness. A male-normed organisational culture significantly influences the development of work environment that is not supportive of women's leadership to an extent that it thwarts the career ambitions of female managers, leading to their withdrawal of work services and the lack of enthusiasm to participate in management positions (Ngomane 2017:392; Terjesen *et al.*, 2009: 332-333). The empirical

evidence of this thesis confirmed the assumption that the public sector is not supportive of women's leadership development and family responsibilities, which affect their drive for advancement into higher positions (see Section 6.2.14, 7.12, 7.13, and 7.13.1). The culture of public service (and local government sphere) fuels discrimination, hostility, sexism, abuse, incivility and leadership stereotypes (Kim *et al.*, 2014; Stamarski & Son Hing 2015:1). Gendered organisational culture is the major cause of discrimination manifest in various divisions and subdivisions of an organisation, for example in HR policies in selection (Stamarski & Son Hing 2015:1).

### **2.7.6.3 Discriminatory hiring and promotion practices of public organisations**

Empirical investigations have demonstrated that human resource practices in public organisations (including the local government sphere) promote gender-based discrimination and discrepancies because males seem to be favoured in jobs with higher status (Osituyo 2018:79; Player *et al.*, 2019:1 Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35; Glass and Cook 2016:51; Stamarski and Son Hing 2015:1). McKinsey and Company (2018: online) posit that the two predictors in ensuring social inclusion and leadership diversity is hiring and promotion, and public organisations (including municipalities) have often disadvantaged women in those areas from time immemorial up until now. As a result, women are less likely than men to be employed in senior leadership positions, and they are far less likely to be selected as potential candidates for promotion in public sector organisations (including at the local government sphere).

According to Stamarski and Son Hing (2015:1), many of the harmful practices inhibiting the leadership advancement of most women in the workplace, including the local sphere of government, are endorsed within human resource (HR) practices and policies. This is because HR decisions, policies and practices regarding the internal and external recruitment, promotion into leadership and other career advancement opportunities affect women and their career advancement. Following this line of argument, the slow rate noticed in women's professional advancement, the high rate of unemployment among women (Statistics South Africa 2018, D'Agostino 2017:9), and their inability to access leadership training and career development opportunities (Kossek & Buzzanell 2018:813, Ely *et al.*, 2011:478) can largely be attributed to discriminatory HR policies and HR-related decision making.

#### **2.7.6.4 Patriarchy**

Within the context of South Africa, patriarchy accounts for the major barriers hampering and thwarting women's professional and leadership advancement in the public sector (see Sections 1.1.1 and 1.2). Although this is not only a South African problem, as literature reiterates that public sector leadership across different countries of the world are gendered and patriarchal (Miller & Mctavish 2011:683, Stamarski and Son Hing 2015:1, Kossek & Buzzanell 2018: 813, D'Agostino 2017:9). In the work environment, the patriarchy is manifested through men's authority, power and control over their female counterparts. The empirical evidence of this thesis is consistent with the supposition that patriarchy take shape in the public sector through men's control over women as their superiors (see Section 7.12). The extent to which men occupy the highest positions demonstrates the degree to which patriarchy is prevalent in public or private organisations (Sultana, 2010:1-2). Thus, it is reasonable to say that women's occupational and leadership progression will be higher in a non-patriarchal work environment.

Women's capacities to introduce innovation and change in legislation is often restricted by their under-representation in government, including in municipal leadership, which is result of patriarchy. Adisa *et al* (2019:146-147) maintain that patriarchy promotes the preference for males in leadership, overvaluation and overestimation of the men's societal attributes above those attributed to women, ascribes more favours to men in organisational practices (public and private), and puts men in control of women's labour power and access. Women, as portrayed in institutionalised patriarchal work environment, have been reduced to inferior beings, "secondary citizens" less capable, dependent and powerless (De Beauvoir, 1974:11). Patriarchy deprives women of their legal rights and opportunities, creates disbelief in women's capacities to lead, causes lack of self-confidence and reduced ambitions to aspire to higher leadership roles (De Beauvoir, 1974:11; Walby 1990:21; Sultana, 2010:6-10). A patriarchal work environment dictates that access to senior leadership opportunities are not based a person's skills and competencies. This could explain why women with educational and relevant skills are unable to access senior management. (Rawat 2014:43-44; Funk 2019:1). Consistent with alluded assumptions, the findings of this thesis confirmed that patriarchy earns bright women

subordinate positions, women are perceived as incompetent when it comes to the handling of technical and professional positions (see Sections 7.7 and 7.12). The empirical evidence also revealed that women with relevant skills and educational qualifications are undermined in access to high-ranking positions owing to the deeply entrenched patriarchal and conservative nature of the local sphere of government (see Sections 7.8 and 7.12)

In the workplace, men are more likely to advance into executive and management positions, which is one of the consequences of patriarchy. Men have organised network systems in the organisation (both public and private). In most cases, they believe in themselves regardless of their status or class and they tend to promote each other (Ngomane 2017:394). Because men are predominant in all important structures of the organisation (both public and private), men are mostly evaluators of organisations (both public and private) and their evaluation matters for women's occupational and career advancement (Funk, 2019:8). Male managers reproduce and socialise patriarchy through preference for males, which may not be intentional, but because of their cultural and religious background. Funk (2019:1) argues that men prefer to give their fellow men opportunities to advance because of their internalised incongruity between female characteristics and leadership roles. The internalisation of patriarchal ideologies affects the thinking of both men and women, although such thinking is fast changing with the women of their generation, which could be seen in most women's quest for leadership participation. Even today, men are still struggling to accept that men and women have equal intellectual capacities (Funk 2019:1). This study argues that, until there is a training intervention to deconstruct and overcome deeply engrained patriarchal beliefs in the minds of people, leadership equality may never be achieved in the public sector. The findings of this thesis are consistent with the assumption that men socialise patriarchy by privileging men in senior positions, and that the mindset of both men and women on management fitness has been affected by the patriarchal beliefs that they inherit from society (see Section 6.2.2, 7.4 and 7.12).

#### **2.7.6.5 Conflict in balancing family roles and work responsibilities**

Society defines women in relation to motherhood. This is regardless of their leadership portfolios. Women remain the primary caregivers for their children and families (Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8182). In almost all homes, working mothers are responsible for household chores such as child nurturing, cleaning, and cooking, as their indispensable traditional responsibilities. The stress of handling and balancing unwaged domestic roles and work life diminishes some women's leadership interest and participation. For professional women, especially those in senior management positions, role conflicts arise as they attempt to perform and fulfil domesticities and complex leadership responsibilities (Singh & Naidoo, 2017:1415). The findings from this thesis confirm that women in professional leadership positions experience conflict between their maternal roles and their leadership responsibilities (see Sections 6.2.5 and 7.12). According to Tabassum *et al.*, (2017:341) and Miller and Alderman (2014:1), balancing household duties and work responsibilities is the most challenging aspect of working-class adults. The majority of non-working-class women blame domestic chores as a critical reason for their exclusion in public spheres. Women are expected to take care of their household, children and husbands as well as the elderly in their immediate environment (Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8182). The empirical data analysed in Section 7.2 and 7.10 indicated female managers, regardless of their leadership levels, are still the main primary caregivers for their children, husbands and the entire household.

The situation is much more difficult for women managers pursuing their leadership career advancement. This is because leadership positions are characterised with heavy workloads, for example, long working hours, traveling long distances, attending series of meetings, conferences, or workshops (Mahasha, 2016:1). As a result, the moment a woman starts bearing children, she becomes less enthusiastic about working long hours and attending workshops that demand traveling long distances thereby neglecting her family responsibilities. Because of the withdrawal attitude by women of childbearing age, most employers hold the perspective that women's priority is motherhood. Consistent with this assumption, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.12 of this thesis indicated that female managers, especially those with children going to crèche, are more beleaguered with work-life balance. As a result, most of them are

less enthusiastic to aspire to higher relationship roles. However, there is inconsistency between the qualitative and quantitative data analysed on female managers' desire to aspire to higher leadership roles (see Sections 6.2.6 and 7.12).

In addition to their leadership roles in an organisation (both public and private), women managers maintain the role of primary caregivers to their families (Christiansen *et al.*, 2019:25). Women managers today (including in the public sector/service and at local government sphere) are saddled with the dual responsibilities of performing managerial roles and home/family duties regardless of their ranks in the organisation. Family duties significantly interrupt women's professional leadership careers to an extent. For example, the maternity roles of women managers not only interrupt their managerial roles, but also create an additional difficulty to their performance. In addition, as their leadership roles become more demanding and time consuming, some women managers are left with the arduous option of choosing between their domestic engagements and their jobs. This is due to the complexities inherent in balancing numerous gender roles and work functions (Jacobs & Schain, 2009:10). The trouble with balancing family and women's lives contributes to the uneven representation of women in leadership. The empirical data confirms that the under-representation of women in senior management positions can also be attributed to the fear among some women in combining numerous family responsibilities and time-consuming leadership roles (see Section 7.12)

Furthermore, promotion to a higher leadership responsibility forces most women managers to choose between their management career and their family (Elmuti *et al.*, 2009:171). In most cases, women lose interest in their jobs (Okafor *et al.*, 2011:6719). From this observation, most women place higher interest and value on their traditional roles of maintaining their children over their job consideration. In addition, women develop a greater sense of uniqueness and self-fulfilment from their feminine responsibilities than from their leadership roles. Literature on the subject reveals that women with children and those within childbearing age, particularly those in top decision-making and leadership positions, are more likely to leave their jobs for their family (Jacobs & Schain, 2009:10; Miller & Alderman, 2014:7). Consistent with this assumption, the findings from this thesis support the supposition that women value their maternal roles above leadership advancement (see Section 7.12). In contrast,

Jaga *et al* (2018:431) observed that an increasing number of black South African women are abandoning their traditional roles for higher jobs to achieve economic independence as well as to be able to meet the daily basic needs of their family.

#### **2.7.6.6 Lack of confidence**

Self-confidence is a fundamental element of leadership (García-Vidal, *et al* 2019:317). Self-confidence is one of the essential skills sought by employers during hiring and promotion into elite and professional positions in the workplace. In support, Powney and Weinne (1993:9 cited in Mathipa & Tsoka 2001:326) argue that self-confidence is the only gateway to becoming and remaining a leader. In the workplace, women are portrayed as having less self-confidence than men, which is mostly used as an explanation for gender leadership gaps (Guillen, *et al.*, 2017:839). Organisations (both public and private) use women's reduced interest to apply for higher positions, reluctance to compete with men in higher leadership roles and failure to speak out in board meetings and to showcase their competences as signs of women's lack of confidence (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001:326). The empirical data analysed in Section 7.12 of this thesis is consistent with the assumption that women's lack of self-confidence is reflected in their reluctance to apply for senior leadership roles, their inability to freely express themselves during boardroom meeting and to make decisive and popular decisions without depending on others. The study conducted by the Institute of Leadership and Management (2011 ed:2) in the UK found that, compared to male managers, most female managers have doubt and disbelief in their leadership abilities (Institute of Leadership and Management 2011ed:2). The study also found that women with low self-confidence are more likely not to reach senior management positions and are less likely to achieve their career ambitions. Consistent with this assumption, the empirical data analysed in Section 6.2.7 and 7.12 indicated lack of self-confidence as one of the reasons women are not applying for leadership positions, which automatically affect their movement into senior management positions.

Guillén *et al* (2018:839) mention that little is known about what increases or decreases a person's self-confidence in the workplace. However, some scholars have argued that women's lack of self-confidence stems from age-long internalisation of marginalisation (Hills, 2015:164; Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616-617), lack of training support

and the undervaluation of women's leadership capacities by society (Paustian-underdahl, 2014:2). The assumption that women's lack of confidence is linked to the social perception of gender roles, internalisation of leadership stereotypes and lack of career development intervention is consistent with the findings of this thesis (see Sections 7.4, 7.12, 7.13). Bias/sexist organisational, cultural, practices and a male-dominated work environment kill women's self-confidence. Mathipa and Tsoka (2001:326) argue that a person who believes (has confidence) in his/herself can produce desired results and outcome only if he or she is unhindered. In other words women's fears of being judged negatively (because of society's perception of leadership suitability conforming to their male counterparts) reduces their self-confidence. The assumption that a male-dominated working environment kills and reduces women's confidence and that female managers fear negative judgement by other employees is consistent with the findings of this thesis (see Section 7.12). Helgesen and Johnson (2010:7) argues that, because the public sector/service environment is not necessarily constructed in line with women's subjective observation, there is the likelihood that women will lose confidence in the quality of what they have to offer. The empirical data analysed in Section 7.10 is consistent with the assumption that because of the male-normed and conservative nature of the local sphere of government, female managers lost confidence in their capabilities to make decisions. An unfavourable working environment can make female managers lose their confidence because it could create the feeling that they are unwanted or the feeling that the position they occupy does not suit them. Furthermore, Mathipa & Tsoka (2001:326) state that self-confidence can be acquired when a person is exposed and schooled with relevant skills and experiences.

Similarly, some women disbelieve and doubt their leadership competencies and skills and those of their fellow women (Ngara & Ayabam, 2013:53). In other words women are their own enemies to the advancement of their fellow women's interests and personal development goals. In most cases, instead of enhancing and supporting their fellow women, some women choose to antagonise other women. Although other factors such as strife, jealousy, and other social or interpersonal issues may be responsible for such attitudes, the fact remains that, due to patriarchal indoctrination, most women would assist men in advancing professionally rather than their fellow women. This internal strife among women provides men with the immunity to acquire



leadership opportunities in both government institutions (including in municipalities) and private companies.

## **2.8 CHAPTER CONCLUSION**

The literature review explains how social meanings of gender and expectations from male and female sexes divide the world into two unequal categories with men on top of the social ladder and women at the bottom. Societal gender expectations and demarcation of gender roles and responsibilities between men and women constitute a crucial factor in making employment-related decisions. As a result, discrepancies exist in the hiring, promotion and retention of men and women into decision-making and senior management positions. The empirical evidence indicated that hiring and promotion into leadership in the local sphere of government favours men (see Sections 6.2.7, 7.8 and 7.12). Women's leadership capacities are devalued, and they are often discriminated against and relegated from participating in leadership because of their reproductive activities. The biological configuration of women subjects them to domestic violence, sexual assaults, and marginalisation and limits their access to influential positions (leadership) and development opportunities. The theoretical assumption that women's gender characteristics expose them to all forms of gender-based discrimination and in the devaluation of their capabilities to lead is consistent with the findings of this thesis and is presented in Section 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.4 and 7.12.

This study strongly disagrees with the statement by Bisong *et al.*, (2014:36) that, because of women's reproductive behaviours (pregnancy, childbirth and child rearing) they will remain unequal to men. Gender equality and women's rights to equal employment opportunities and participation in leadership positions is ratified internationally in the UN charter of 1945 and in South Africa through the Bill of Rights. (Section 2.2). However, irrespective of the equality provisions, most organisations (both public and private) are still male-centred, and women are still deprived of leadership and development opportunities.

The chapter laid the theoretical foundation, using feminist theories and some other gender theories to understand and explain gender inequality and women's lived experiences in society (Sections 2.4.1, 2.4.11, 2.4.1.2, 2.4.1.3, 2.4.1.4, 2.4.1.5,

2.4.1.6, 2.4.1.7, 2.4.21, 2.4.2.2 and 2.4.2.3). Feminist theories and other gender theories serve as a framework for expanding and extending the capacities of women for their leadership inclusion in all management levels of an organisation. Furthermore, the study argued on the premise that gender theories can significantly help in the empowerment of women and for promoting leadership transformation and societal development in the DKKDM.

Recently, there has been a growing interest by researchers, certain government agencies and the general public in women's inclusion into senior leadership positions and the boardrooms of private business organisations as well as in the public sector (including municipalities). The literature review revealed that women's leadership brings distinctive perspective into business and organisations that promote organisational growth, teamwork, financial success and collaboration. Women demonstrate the transformational leadership style which is considered as fundamental for contemporary organisational needs, people's development and for maximum performance. (Section 2.7.3) Bosak & Sczesny (2011:234) emphasise that women's intellectual, social and economic contributions are necessary for organisational growth and for economic progress of our communities. Gakiya (2016:41-42), in support of this statement, states that women's leadership has the tendency to focus on community development and cooperation, which is accompanied by the high priority of meeting the needs and concerns of the disadvantaged members of society (See Section 2.7.3). Despite the advantages that have been associated with women's leadership styles, women are underrepresented in the corridors of power and leadership. The underrepresentation of women in management positions is confirmed in the empirical evidence of this thesis (see Sections 6.2.9 and 7.6). However, progress has been made in the advancement of women into middle management positions globally.

The study further outlined barriers preventing the acceleration of women into positions of leadership in the public sector. This chapter revealed that invisible and structural barriers prevent women's leadership advancement. Also socio-cultural expectations, lack of institutional and political supports, lack of skills and exposure as well as the withdrawal attitude of women are causes of women's under-representation in leadership positions (see Section 2.7.6).

The next chapter will discuss both the national and international statutory and regulatory framework for gender equality as applied at the local government sphere. These frameworks are discussed in the context of establishing a work environment that promotes the empowerment and development of women for their leadership inclusion in the DKKM and other government institutions in South Africa.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter conceptualised gender as a social construct used to perpetuate gender inequality against women and used various feminist theories and some other gender theories as a theoretical lens to understand and validate the lived experience of women in society. The battle against inequality and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women requires legal frameworks, programmes, structures and policies through which patriarchal social structures can be addressed within all levels of government and society at large (*UN Women, 2018, Eagly & Heilman 2016:352*). Against this backdrop, international and national human rights law have been established to guarantee the equal rights of both men and women for the achievement of sustainable growth and human development.

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of global legislative frameworks supporting and promoting the advancement of gender equality, social justice, human rights and women's emancipation. The chapter further examines various mechanisms ratified and implemented by the South African government for safeguarding the human rights of women and to counter deep-rooted gender-based discriminations and discrepancies that often result from patriarchal social structures and related societal gender norms.

#### **3.2 Statutory and regulatory framework for gender equality: global context**

International organisations have shown great commitments towards the eradication of gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination against women to ensure an inclusive and sustainable society (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018). *UN-Women* (2018) argues that the implementation of gender equality laws and policy frameworks are necessary steps for challenging harmful practices usurping the political, economic, and social powers of women in society. In this regard, the following sub sections extensively discuss gender equality legislation, policies and mechanisms promulgated by various international organisations for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

### **3.2.1 UN Commission on the Status of Women (OSW), 1946**

Created by the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSCO) on its resolution 11 (11) of 21 June 1946, the Commission on the Status of Women (hereafter referred to as the CSW) is an important intergovernmental institution within the UN system for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment globally (UN Women, 2018). Charlesworth and Chinkine (2013:6) describe the commission as the first international body entrusted with the mandate of making recommendations on "urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights". The CSW is a functional commission of ECOSCO, vested with the mandate to give reports, submit proposals, and make recommendations to ECOSCO on problems relating to women's concerns and gender inequality. The commission is aimed at the promotion and advancement of women's rights in education, social, political and civil spheres as well as for promoting the implementation of the principle that men and women must be treated equally in relation to access to opportunities, power and employment. At the time of its adoption, the commission consisted of 15 female government representatives who protested against the reference to men as a synonym for humanity and phrases such as men are brothers (UN-Women, 2016).

The commission works with UN specialised agencies such as the UN-Women, civil society and non-governmental organisations in conducting extensive research and provides detailed information, painting the reality of women's lives, which is necessary for the codification of women's rights laws and evidence-based policymaking (Eden & Wagstaff 2020:1). Several studies were conducted to collect data on the legal status of women, their access to decent jobs in the workplace, education and civil rights. According to *UN-Women* (2016) the thorough analysis produced a detailed information of the political and legal status of women across countries, which has become a base for designing other human rights laws. The researcher is of the opinion that a thorough investigation of gender inequality in individual countries is necessary because, over time, it can become a foundation for the ratification of other human rights instruments as new gender issues emerge. Various international gendered laws and policies have been formulated and implemented by the commission for dismantling discriminatory laws and social practices, and for promoting comprehensive awareness on gender inequality and women's issues.

The commission made a substantial contribution in the drafting of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) established in 1948, raising awareness on disproportionate and disadvantaged positions of women globally and introduced gender-sensitive language into intergovernmental policy discussion (Farrior, 2009:2). Up to now, the commission organises an annual conference that brings member states together in discussion on emerging social issues deterring the realisation of gender equality and women's empowerment. Member states also present their reports on the progress achieved and barriers to the implementation of fundamental international policy documents (for example the Beijing platform for Action), deliberations are also discussed on the way forward to promoting women's advancement (Commission on the Status of women 2019). *UN-Women* (2019) adds that the commission is making a significant contribution through a thorough investigation on the 2020 Agenda to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. The commission participated in the drafting of early human rights treaties for protecting women's full rights, such as the the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1953), the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, (DAW) (1967), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979). Furthermore, the commission continues to play a significant role in integrating gender concerns into the UN's specialised entities, holding international and national leaders responsible to their covenant entered at the Beijing Platform for Action (Farrior, 2009:2). Even until this present day, the commission plays a principal role in promoting and strengthening gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender issues into the post-2015 development agenda, by prioritising women's rights and empowerment as means for achieving sustainable development.

### **3.2.2 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) established in 1948 represents a milestone document since the evolution of human rights laws and reflects on humanity claims that social injustice and inequalities impede fundamental human rights, social justice, peace and human dignity (Brown, 2016:13). As the foundation for all human rights laws, UDHR represents the first broad international agreement that regurgitates rights and freedom to which everybody is equally and inalienably entitled at all times, and in all spheres of society (Kaci, 2015: iii). The declaration was adopted and stressed by UN's General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 as a response to

the clarion call by nations for the establishment of a more exhaustive and explicit rights charter (Hensley, 2011:1; Kaci, 2015: iii). Donnelly (2013:28) comments that UDHR acknowledged that the foundation of peace, freedom, security, and justice is based on a person's enjoyment of universal/inalienable rights, inherent dignity, and social equality. Bentley (2004:252), suggest that the central tenets of UDHR is that the rights and the freedom of humans are informed by the principle of equality and universality. The equality principle is hinged on the notion that human rights are normatively those of all individuals, and all individuals, as human beings, are born free and equal in worth and dignity; and the principle of universality rests on the assertion of a "common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations". In principle, UDHR, as one of the core international bills of rights, forms a valuable element for achieving sustainable gender equality, with over 190 nation-states as signatories due to its primary goal of advancing equality and the achievement of the identical civil rights for men and women (see Section 7.5).

The provisions of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) (RSA, 1996:) commensurate with *Articles 2 and 7* of the UDHR; both take an incontestable stance towards eliminating all forms of discrimination, such as unequal employment treatment, patriarchy, sexism, sexual harassment and incivility, which are manifested in the contemporary South African workplace including the local sphere of government (see Sections 2.7.6, 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2, 2.7.6.3 and 2.7.6.4). Gender inequality and the prohibition of discriminatory practices are addressed by these human rights laws. *Article 2* of the UDHR provides rights to anti-discriminatory practices, attaching these to other human rights provisions of UDHR. "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (Global Institute for Advanced Study, 2016:2). The UDHR has clearly and repeatedly stressed the right to non-discrimination, stating that everybody is born free (*Article 1*) and, as such, sex and gender should not be used as criteria for discrimination or denial of inherent human rights. Deductively therefore, one can say that the UDHR does not tolerate unfair discrimination based on sex because it believes that it strips a person of his/her inherent human rights to equality, freedom and human dignity.

The United Nations Human Rights (2014:4) emphasises that the declaration made use of specific terms, for example “everyone and everybody” including minority groups such as LGBT, in order not to leave any uncertainty that the Declaration is meant for everybody-all humans. Butterfield (2012:12) further expounds that the UDHR is grounded on the doctrine of liberal ideology based on its preamble inclusion of equal rights. This implies that it envisioned the advancement of the equal rights of all human beings regardless of their political, socio-economic, gender and cultural systems. Viewing the UDHR provisions from the perspective of women’s standpoint globally, Babatunde, (2014:8), mentions that the incessant violation of women’s human rights through physical and sexual abuse can be interpreted as forbidden under *Article 5* of the UDHR. *Article 5* explicitly stipulates that no individual should be subjected to torture, brutal, unjustified imprisonment and other humiliating treatments and punishment (UN Human Rights Office of the High Commission 2020). It outlaws sex discrimination and inspires us to strive to ensure an equitable environment where men and women can access equality, freedom and dignity (Kaci 2015:3). Hellum and Aasen (2013:623) suggest that equality for example, in employment and conditions of employment such as compensation, work benefits, training opportunities and leave entitlement should be implemented progressively in everyday life. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016) argues that people need to be empowered so that they can know their rights and demand those rights, especially in cases of gender discrimination. This study concurs with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016) for the empowerment of women to expose them to their human rights in the paid workplace. From the study conducted by Thobejane and Thobejane 2017:8858), it seems as though, in the South African public sector, women are still not aware of their human rights and how to claim them when there is an occurrence of gender-based discrimination. Consistent with the claim of Thobejane and Thobejane (2017:8858), the findings analysed in Sections 6.2.13 and 7.15 showed that women are not aware of key gender equality policy such as Affirmative Action policies promulgated to promote their human rights to their equal leadership access. To achieve genuine equality, both the marginalised group (women) and privileged group (men) need to be exposed to human rights education and training. Kaci (2015:3) argues that, through continued training and re-training, people of member states, including those people of territories under their influence, can promote respect for fundamental rights and freedom.



Based on *Articles 1, 2, 5 and 7* of the Declaration which reaffirms equality, freedom and non-discrimination, men and women have the right to equal employment, education, to participate in positions of power and leadership, to fair and equal remuneration, to live free from domestic violence, slavery and all forms of discrimination as well as the right to participate in the development of communities. However, the provision of *Articles 1, 2, and 5* does not hold true in South Africa, since women do not have the same access as men to employment opportunities in certain management positions in the public sector (Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgapersad 2016:170; Osituyo, 2018:79; Player, *et al.*, 2019:1). The empirical findings of this study confirmed that bright women lack equal opportunities in access to professional and senior management positions in the local government sphere (see Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.3 7.8 and 7.12). Furthermore, women's leadership inclusion and participation is also deterred by gender-based discrimination, for example in employment that deprived them of the opportunity to participate in the development of their communities (see Section 2.7.6). Recently, South Africa has become one of the most unsafe countries for women and young girls because of the growing rate of domestic violence, sexual harassment and cases of femicide (South African Human Rights Commission [SAHR] 2018:3; Statistics South Africa, 2018:6). This stance is acknowledged by the UN special Rapporteur on the violence against women, that South Africa is still highly characterised by sexism, inherited from apartheid systems and colonialism (SAHRC 2018:3). This study agrees with the violence report of UN special Rapporteur because of the continued oppression and marginalisation of women, which shows that women are still seen as inferior to men as they were during the Apartheid administration and colonial period (see Sections 2.4.2.4, 6.2.7 and 7.12).

### **3.2.3 Beijing Declaration and Platforms for Action (BPFA), 1995**

The fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China from 4 to 5 September 1995 led to the creation of the Beijing Declaration and Platforms for Action (hereafter referred to as BPFA). The BPFA is an international programme launched by the UN for upholding gender equality and the empowerment of women in all human endeavours through their equal participation in the economic, social, and political decision-making process (The Declaration on BPFA 1995:2). Debusscher (2015:8) mentions that the Beijing conference represents a turning point in the development of

gender equality policy frameworks, not only because it resulted in the formation of a democratic model for gender mainstreaming, but also because it produces the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing the realisation of women's full human rights and gender equality globally. The conference can be distinguished from earlier women's rights conventions as it was the first to introduce the concept *women's empowerment* as a guiding framework for the international development community. Gallagher (2011:454) points out that the conference moves its focus from the idea of promoting gender equality to women's empowerment (the possibilities of transforming existing gender structures). The Gallagher study inferred that *Platforms for Action's* focus on women's empowerment is essential for the development of the capabilities and abilities of women to promote their equal participation in decision-making positions and for increasing their access to decent jobs and for gender equality. Women's empowerment is a necessary requirement for the achievement of sustainable gender equality and human rights (Hendrick & Bachan, 2015:896). However, Hunt (2015:109) posits that a precondition for advancing gender equality and women's professional careers require radical transformation in social structures and biased organisational structures. For example, a complete modification in HRD and organisations' recruiters' gender biased recruitment and promotion practices (see Section 2.7.6.3 and 7.12)

The Beijing conference of 1995 affirms that "women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of the society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace; thus women's rights are human rights" (Unterhalter, 2007:67). *UN-Women* (2018), states that the platform for action represents a defining policy framework for boosting social transformation. *The Platform for Action* made comprehensive commitments to 12 areas regarding social life, and indicated the causalities underlying the marginalisation of women worldwide (Cornwall & Edwards, 2015:1). Also the *Platform for Action* appealed to governments, international communities, and NGOs to commit to the empowerment of women whilst reaffirming that the rights of women and girls are an inalienable, basic and undividable part of universal human rights (United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), 2014:1). As indicated above, the areas of concern include:

- women and poverty

- women's unequal access to education and training opportunities
- violence against women
- fundamental human rights and women
- effects of armed conflicts on women
- women's human rights
- institutional mechanism the advancement of human rights
- women and health
- women and the economy
- the girl child
- women and communication systems
- women and environmental resources

Deductively, therefore, promoting the fundamental rights of women, increasing their access to professional education, employment, management opportunities and health facilities as well as guaranteeing their protection against gender-based violence and sexual assaults, is a step toward achieving social justice. Accordingly, the *Platform for Action* commits government and non-government organisations to take proactive, immediate and concrete action to build a world founded on human rights, fundamental freedom and equality for all regardless of their sexual category. And acknowledging that broad-based and sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development are important means of achieving social development and social justice.

### **3.2.4 The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979**

The UN's General Assembly adopted the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* in 1979 in resolution 340/180 that came into force in September 1981 as one of the key international instruments for eliminating discrimination (Šimonović 2014:591). According to SS (2014:519), the provisions in CEDAW are outcomes from the combination of earlier international conventions (six) that protect human rights. CEDAW is both an equality and non-discriminatory international convention (Chinkin, 2016:148; Shivdas & Coleman, 2010:17), and it is globally recognised as the first international treaty to advance the full rights of women (Cho, 2014:720). Apart from being recognised as the first international convention with the potential for defending women's rights and combating unfair discrimination (Hellum

& Aasen, 2013:5), CEDAW is also one of the nine core human rights treaties in which international human rights laws are cautiously followed (SS, 2014:519; Vohra-Gupta, 2009:7). Vohra-Gupta (2009:7) explains that CEDAW is the only international human rights treaty that pays close attention to the social rights of women whilst pointing to cultural norms and established traditional practices as influential elements that continuously promote perpetual *de facto* inequality. Accordingly, it stresses on the social aspects of women's human rights, addressing deep-rooted traditions and social practices of discrimination, given that the social fields are the places where women experience sex discrimination in their everyday activities (Cho, 2014:720). *UN Women*, (2009) explains that CEDAW particularly acknowledged women's persistent experience of gender-based discrimination and accentuates that the discrimination against women is a violation of the principle of equity and human dignity as enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights and the UN Charter. Laryea (2012:17) argues that the continuous discrimination encountered by women as stated in Section 2.7.6 of this thesis is an infringement on their human rights and constitutes a serious barrier to their leadership participation.

Therefore, the overriding goal of the CEDAW is the eradication of all antisocial practices, prejudice, segregation, prohibitions and preferences on the basis of gender with the aim of achieving *de jure* and *de facto* equality, and the advancement of women's full human rights (Cook & Cusack, 2017:1; Chinkin, 2016:146). CEDAW describes what discrimination against women signifies and maps out principles for national action so that all forms of discrimination against women can be eradicated (UN Women 2009). CEDAW also concentrates on women-specific experiences of discrimination as women and put CEDAW constraints on state parties to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women to lead to the achievement of substantive equality between men and women (Cook & Cusack, 2017:1). Furthermore, CEDAW places great emphasis on the pertinence of the fundamental human rights of women and defends the rights of those on the basis of specific experience of discrimination, subjective needs and circumstances (Compbell, 2018:15; Cook & Cusack, 2017:1).

Through the establishment of CEDAW, nation-states and governments across the world (including the Republic of South Africa) have been provided with a universal standard for promoting social transformation and the equal treatment of both men and women in all fields (Vohra-Gupta, 2009:7). CEDAW has transformed most nation's

constitutions and laws away from orthodox biased practices and thus has provided protection against gender-based discrimination restricting women's rights and fundamental freedoms (Alhmoudi, 2017:104). The convention does so by requiring states to comply with various duties. Firstly, countries including the RSA are under obligation to take concrete actions to combat all forms of discrimination against women in all social spheres, for example in the workplaces (Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2018:1). Secondly, member states are under an obligation to guarantee the full development and advancement of women so that they can be on par with men in the enjoyment of equal human rights (Alhmoudi, 2017:104). Thirdly, member states are also required to ensure that women are granted equal leadership access just as their male peers as well as to ensure their full participation in decision making and governance (Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2018:1). This study argues that the obligations of CEDAW by state parties are particularly relevant today given the unfavourable situations faced by women in workplaces, and biased organisational structures that restrict women's access into positions of power, training and leadership, as indicated in Section 2.7.6 of this thesis. Moreover, the obligations, in which state parties are to duly perform, clearly demonstrate that the convention proposed the achievement of substantial equality between men and women both in the exercise and enjoyment of all human rights (Simonovic, 2009:1).

CEDAW remains one of the comprehensive international mechanisms for addressing sexual discrimination and marginalisation of women, including the patriarchal organisational structures, legal restrictions and related social norms that create both internal and external barriers for women in the corporate world. *Article 2* of CEDAW requires state parties to include the principle of gender equality in their constitution. State parties are required to examine and evaluate their legal systems to eradicate those laws that promote any form of discrimination against women and ratify laws that accelerate women's rights and promote the principle of non-discrimination in all fields (Shivdas & Coleman, 2010:10). *Article 3* of CEDAW obliges state parties to advance all the human rights of women through expanding and extending their participation in all social spheres. The same article stipulates that "state parties should take in all fields, in particular the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of

women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercises and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom on the basis of equality with men” (Alhmoudi, 2017:106). With regards to this study, state parties (members of United Nations) are required to engender legislation, affirmative action and laws for the empowerment of women to guarantee their exercise and participation in planning and decision making both in the private and public sectors. Under *Article 4* of CEDAW, state parties are obligated to implement temporary measures that will not only benefit women, but also accelerate the achievement of *de facto* and *de jure* equality for women (Chinkin,2016:146). The temporary measures are corrective or remedial approaches that could be discontinued if the 50-50 representation of men and women is realised in the public service. Laryea, (2012:36) suggests that the temporary measure could mean reserving positions exclusively for women in areas where gender equality is high or is yet to be achieved. An example of special corrective approach for bridging gender inequalities in South Africa is the affirmative action measure. However, this special measure is unable to close gender gaps in leadership in South Africa (see Section1.3 and 2.7.6 of this thesis).

Furthermore, *Article 7* of CEDAW covers the rights of women against discriminatory practices within political and public life (Alhmoudi, 2017:104). State parties are obligated to ensure the equal participation of men and women in the political and public spheres, including the rights to hold administrative offices, to execute government purposes, to participate in the formulation and implementation of government policies and to be fully involved in all electoral processes (rights to vote and participate in the running of elections). With regards to the findings of this study, CEDAW is one of the global policies that informed gender policy legislations such as EEA and the Affirmative Action Policy in the RSA. The 1996 constitution mandates government institutions, in this case the local sphere, to design their operational activities based on gender equality polices. For example, to increase women’s representation in employment and participation in senior management positions (see Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.13 and 7.15). *Article 8* of the convention stipulates that states should ensure that women represent their countries at the international level and participate in the work of international organisations (UN-Women 2009). Women’s rights to equal education is covered under *Article10* of the CEDAW. The convention compelled state parties to grant women access to education and vocational training. *Article 11* of the convention

deals with gender equality in employment (Laryea, 2012:36). All state parties are required to guarantee the equality of men and women with regard to professional training, recruitment, promotion, remuneration, job security and safe work conditions. CEDAW commits states to provide protection for women so that factors such as pregnancy, child rearing, reproductive responsibilities and gender role beliefs will not be reasons to deprive women the choice of choosing a particular occupation or field of study (Alhmoudi, 2017:104; Laryea, 2012:36). More so, the gender equality provisions of CEDAW go hand-in-hand with various national legislation promulgated by the government of South Africa for promoting gender equality and women's rights. For example, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, the Gender Equality Act, the Employment Equality Act, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996:5) among others that will be deliberated in subsequent sections in this chapter

### **3.2.5 Protocol to African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003)**

The protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (African Women Protocol) was established in Maputo, Mozambique on 11 July 2003, and it became the first treaty framework on human rights to be adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now the AU (Stefiszyn, & Prezanti, 2009:vii). The protocol came into force after the required number of African Governments (15) had ratified the treaty on 25 November 2005. According to Olowu (2006:78), the desire to draft the African Women's Protocol was born out of the necessity to establish a workable treaty framework that will address the challenges and socio-cultural idiosyncrasies encountered by African women. Stefiszyn, & Prezanti, (2009:1) and Budoo (2018:59) states that the African Women's Protocol was created primarily to compensate for failure of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter) to adequately protect the inalienable rights of African women, just like CEDAW, that concentrate on foreign values. Although the African Charter focused on non-discrimination and equality clauses, it does not articulate the plights of women which emanate from cultural, political, social and religious as well as economic discrimination (Manjoo, 2012:147). Accordingly, the African Women's Protocol was formulated for supplementing not only the provisions of women's rights in the African Charter under article 66, but also for reinforcing the implementation of

existing norms that promote the human rights of women such as the CEDAW (Budoo 2018:59). For example, calling for women's empowerment and the equal participation of men and women in all levels of decision making will, or ought to, help to strengthen CEDAW, improve on the 50% target on women's leadership representation and political participation set by the SADC protocol and the government of the Republic of South Africa. Deductively, this protocol is significant not only because it speaks with much specificity to the peculiar situations, circumstances and experiences encountered by African women, but also seeks to improve the enactment of norms that promote human rights. The adoption of the African Women's Protocol marks a recognition by the African governments that global human rights legislation does not always address the peculiar needs of Africans. Thus, the African Women's Protocol was established as a supplementary legal framework to cater for the unique experiences and needs of Africans and to promote Africans' cultural values (Camara 2015:64). Principally, promoting gender equality and ensuring the equal participation of women with men in the development of the society is a principal goal of the African Women's Protocol.

Camara (2015:64) refers to the African Women's Protocol as a groundbreaking and viable instrument for the protection and reinforcement of women's rights. Furthermore, scholars such as Gawaya and Mukasa (2005:42) and Budoo (2018:59) observe that the African Women's Protocol is substantial in that it considered gender-based discrimination at the institutional level and strengthened the status of women's rights within the African continent. It is a legally binding instrument that assists African women to tackle problems not addressed in CEDAW, as a key international bill of rights and the African Charter (Gawaya & Mukasa 2005:42). The problems of women cut across the political, economic and social life which, in the major part, result from patriarchy and harmful traditional practices. Important to note is that the African women's protocols, developed by Africans for the African continent, call for the protection of African women's rights and for the elimination of harmful practices and discrimination against them (article 5). *Article 2* of the protocol outlaws prejudicial practices and discrimination on many grounds, including gender. It provides women with rights to equality in the legal, political, economic and social sphere. Because the African Women's Protocol embraces numerous rights to equality for African women, Budoo (2018:59) refers to it as the "bill of rights for African women", nonetheless it is



not entirely perfect. It affirms numerous rights to women which include (Gawaya & Mukasa 2005:42):

- rights to participate with men in political and decision-making processes
- rights to education and training
- reproductive rights to medical abortion for unexpected pregnancy owing to rape or incest
- rights to live in positive cultural environments
- rights to greater participation in the determination of cultural norms and policies
- the abolition of female genital mutilation
- rights to economic and social welfare
- rights to dignity inherent in human beings
- rights to peace and social security
- consent to marriage

From this, there is a clear sense that the African government (i.e the South African government) considers the human rights of women as fundamental. The African Women's Protocol can be of the utmost importance in solving legal problems concerning the rights and fundamental freedoms of women, and upon which governments within the African continent can base their legislative frameworks in supporting gender equality and women's development. Discriminatory practices and policies that hamper women's leadership participation is strictly prohibited by the protocol. *Article 2* provides for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Under this article, state parties are required to eliminate discrimination against women through the effective implementation of relevant legislative, regulatory, and other official measures. It is expected that such measures promote the principle of equality between women and men in the workplace, and outlaw harmful practices that would endanger the well-being of women. State parties are obligated to integrate the principle of equality between men and women into their national constitution or statutes, especially state parties who have yet to do so. Apart from delineating legislative and institutional measures for combating violence against women, the African Women's Protocol also recommends other special measures to reduce gender equality, such as the economic and social measures encompassing gender

awareness-raising, public education and adequate financial resources (Stefiszyn & Prezanti, 2009:1).

### **3.2.6 AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa**

The *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)* was adopted on 5-6 July, 2004 by the heads of state and government ministers at the AU summit meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The declaration is a valuable legislative instrument adored in Africa for accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment. It represents another milestone for women's effective participation in leadership and decision-making positions (African AU's Gender Policy, 2009:1). Haastrup (2014:103) explains that the declaration is the first concise policy adopted by the African states for the implementation of gender equality. As a policy document, the declaration claims to reiterate member state commitments to promoting the principle of gender equality and women's empowerment as enshrined in the various international, continental and regional instruments that promote women's rights and fundamental freedom (AU, 2004; African AU's Gender Policy, 2009). For example, the CEDAW, the UN Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Constitutive Act, the Dakar Platform for Action, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women and *Article 4(L)* of the Constructive Act of the AU. It acknowledges the precedence on the gender equality set by the UN, and seeks to build on the progress achieved in addressing gender concerns in Africa.

The declaration also shows the AU's reaffirmation on its commitments to ensure continued efforts in accelerating gender equality and gender equity at national, regional and continental level (AU, 2004). In its preamble, it recognised that there are significant challenges and obstacles to achieving gender equality, and obligates AU member states to initiate, develop and adopt, within the time frame of two years, sustainable public campaigns to prohibit violence against women and the trafficking of women and girls (AU, 2004). In its determination to improve the status of women and to tackle all the negative problems affecting women, such as poverty, harmful traditional practices and women's exclusion from participating in policies and decision making, member states of the union are provided with a framework to report on the

progress made in the implementation of agreement in the declaration. Member states are to ensure:

- the full participation of women in leadership and decision-making
- the effective participation and representation of women in conflict management, resolution, prevention as well as post-conflict reconstruction creativity in Africa
- the prevention of trafficking of women and girls
- the protection of women at the national level through legal frameworks
- continuous promotion and expansion of gender parity at all levels
- the elimination of harmful practices and discrimination against women including those living with HIV/AIDS
- the promotion and protection of women's human rights including the rights to development through education, training and public awareness

### **3.2.7 The SADC protocol on Gender and Development**

While the international community, for example the UN, has adopted several instruments for promoting gender equality and for combating all forms of violence against women, regional organisations follow suit in the promulgation of frameworks for promoting gender equality. The SADC protocol on Gender and Development (hereafter referred to as the SADC protocol), adopted on 17 August 2008, is a typical example of regional effort promulgated for promoting the human rights of all individuals in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region (SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2016:6). Forere and Stone (2009:438), citing various scholars, explain that the objectives of the SADC protocol include the elimination of gender discrimination, the realisation of gender equality, addressing emerging gender issues within the region and to fill gaps where existing human rights laws seems insufficient or inadequate. Munalula, (2011:190) also mentions that a rationale for establishing the SADC Protocol is to move the SADC countries away from giving lip service on their regional obligations into one in which they would be required to perform through a mandatory, action-oriented framework. In other words, all countries in the SADC region are under a binding obligation to adopt the protocol to meet their regional commitments on promoting gender equality. It can be submitted that the SADC protocol laid a good foundation for promoting human rights and gender justice in the

region by making it compulsory for all member states in the region to adopt and implement its provisions, regardless of their different customary laws. Munalula, (2011:190) further states that the legally binding agreement creates an imperative for instantaneous action on the promotion of gender equality and equity, which will result in sustainable change and development in the region.

In an attempt to eliminate discrimination and social violence against women, the SADC Protocol draws out six objectives, which are delineated in *Article 3* (Munalula, 2011:189; Namibia, 2017:26). These objectives are to:

- promote the empowerment of women, to end all forms of discrimination and to achieve gender equity and social justice through the establishment, implementation and strengthening of gender responsive legislation, agendas, policies and projects
- harmonise the international, continental and regional instruments on gender equality and equity that SADC member nations have assented or acceded to, such as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which replaced the Millennium Development Goals(MDGs).
- tackle evolving and emergent gender issues and concern;
- strengthen, monitor and evaluate the progress achieved by member nations in the implementation of the target objective set out by the SADC protocol;
- “set realistic, measurable targets, time frames and indicators for achieving gender equality and equity”
- deepen regional integration with the view to promoting sustainable development and for the strengthening of community building. This study's findings support that the provisions in *Article 3* of SADC protocol are essential for promoting women's leadership development and advancement in the DKKDM (see Sections 7.5, 7.15).

The SADC protocol “commit to the integration and mainstreaming of gender issues into SADC Programme of Action and Community Building Initiatives, as key to the sustainable development of the SADC region, noting that the member states undertook in the SADC Treaty, *Article 6(2)*, not to discriminate against any person on

the grounds of sex or gender” (Namibia, 2017:26). The preamble to the protocol states that the commitments of all SADC member nations to gender equality is a fundamental human right ensuing from several international human rights instruments, to which they have acceded, for example the SDGs and CEDAW. As established in the previous sections, both place emphasis on gender equality and women’s empowerment as an important factor for attaining the sustainable development goals. It can be argued that the SADC protocol intends to consolidate and build collaborations between all instruments that protect women’s rights and empowerment into one comprehensive regional instrument for the improvement of the region’s capabilities in the planning, implementation and monitoring of a gender equality agenda. Munalula, (2011:190) argues that the SADC protocol should be able to increase member states’ responsibility on gender considerations, both domestically and regionally.

The SADC protocol, as a legal binding treaty, contains concrete timeframe commitments and targets that are aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and for ensuring equality between men and women in their representation and participation in all spheres (SADC Gender and Development Monitor, 2016:6; Forere & Stone 2009:434; Southern African Community Development, 2012). To achieve this, the protocol obligates member countries to:

- incorporate gender equality and equity into their domestic constitutions and ensure that human rights are not compromised by any policies, programmes and provisions by 2015
- abolish the minority status of women by 2015
- dismantle all discriminatory practices that negatively affect the fundamental rights and freedom of all human beings and to achieve 50% representation of women in decision-making positions by the end of 2015
- adopt and enforce legislation and policies that prohibit and officially persecute gender-based violence against women by 2015
- ensure gender equality in economic policy making and implementation by 2015
- adopt affirmative action measures and laws to increase women’s access to economic resources and to eradicate all the barriers that prevent their involvement in all spheres of life by 2015

- adopt and implement special legislation for preventing human trafficking and to provide remedial measures for survivors by 2015
- develop institutional measures to promote women's access to and their representation in important decision-making positions in conflict resolution and peacekeeping. The findings from this thesis support that the policy objectives of SADC protocol are fundamental to deconstruct biased gender practices, sexism and patriarchal organisational culture prevalent in the local sphere of government (see Sections 6.2.7, 7.8 and 7.12)

Additionally, the SADC protocol specifies regional goals that cover “constitutional and legal rights; governance; education and training, productive resources and employment, gender-based violence, health; HIV and AIDS, peace building and conflict resolution as well as the media” (Yaliwe *et al.*, 2013:5180). Member states are to ensure that women gain access to employment, training and development opportunities just as their male counterparts. *Article 16* of the SADC protocol states that state members should use time studies by 2015 and implement legislation to relieve women from the multiple roles that distressed them.

### **3.2.8 The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNEGEEW) 2011**

In July 2010, the *United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)* was created by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/289 on “system-wide coherence” as a composite entity. The mandate of this entity is to help member states and the United Nations Systems in advancing their goals towards reaching gender equality between men and women, and for promoting women's rights and empowerment (*UN-Women*, 2011:4). The *UN-women* vision is driven by the principle of gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights enshrined in the UN's Charter. It envisioned a society free from gender-based violence, sexual segregation and discrimination, where women can access equal employment opportunities to men, where the economic and social development of all women is guaranteed. In this instance, substantial gender equity is achieved and women's empowerment is maintained at all levels and where women's human rights are protected to ensure further development, sustainable peace and an equitable society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Denmark 2018:3; *UN-Women* 2013). In principle, the

organisation is completely dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's rights and empowerment, not only as an integral part of human rights but as a fundamental principle for achieving economic, social and human development (*UN-Women*, 2015a). Arguably, the establishment of the *UN-Women* among several other measures and platforms, symbolises efforts by the UN to end gender inequity and to promote women's full human rights and empowerment at the international, continental and domestic levels and this vision aligns with SDG 5, which is aimed at the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. To achieve sustainable development by 2030 as envisioned by the organisation, the *UN Women* focused on five priority areas, which include:

- the elimination of gender-based discrimination against all women
- promoting women's leadership and participation in governance
- strengthening women's participation in peace building processes and resilience and to ensure that they benefit just as men in the prevention of natural disaster, conflict and humanitarian actions
- to ensure that a comprehensive and dynamic set of global policies and standards on gender equality and women's empowerment are promoted, reinforced, implemented and applied through government undertakings, civil society and non-governmental organisations
- promoting women's access to decent jobs and economic independence. The findings of this thesis support the priority areas mentioned in provisions on UNEGEEW that are critically indispensable for promoting women's human rights and their equal participation in leadership (see Section 6.2.4, 6.2.7, 7.5, 7.8, 7.12).

The institutionalisation of *UN Women* can be understood as a turning point in the women's empowerment agenda globally and in the UN member states countries. The entity establishes global norms, policies and standards to promote women's rights and empowerment and it creates women's empowerment principles to integrate women into economic life in member nations. This is aimed at the promotion of women's economic empowerment, access to productive jobs and economic independence, which is acknowledged as essential for the achievement of sustainable development. In explaining the benefits of women's empowerment, Duflo (2012:10) mentions that

the empowerment of women may benefit development, while Bhoganadam *et al.*, (2014:100) and Doepke & Tertilti, 2018:1) state that there is a significant relationship between women's empowerment, organisational growth, fertility control, and country's economic development. Several scholars have accentuated that women's empowerment promotes both economic and human development leading to poverty reduction, financial independence, access to education and leadership opportunities as well as the elimination of harmful practices and discrimination against women in society (Doepke & Tertilti, 2018:1; Doepke *et al.*, 2011:1b; Banerjee *et al.*, 2019:277). This study's findings confirmed the theoretical assertions that women's leadership acceleration and active participation in governance would assist in reducing poverty levels, increase organisations' productivity and family income, which would inform better care for children and societal development as well as advancing gender equality (see Sections 7.10 and 7.11). In this regard, the *UN-women* view women's empowerment as a means of bridging gender equality gaps between men and women in access to opportunities and resources and for promoting the rights of women for achievement of the vision 2030 Agenda

Therefore, to fast-track the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, the *UN Women* have been entrusted with a threefold mandate involving the normative, operational and coordinating functions. The normative mandate of *UN-Women* encompasses supporting and strengthening the formation of international norms, policies and standards for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (*UN Women*, 2018; *UN-Women*, 2015b). As part of its operational activities, *UN-Women* has assisted the UN's member countries in the implementation of these standards. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Denmark (2018:4), *UN Women* also coordinates the activities of UN system to ensure more efficient and effective delivery on their commitments to equality and women's empowerment. In addition to coordinating the activities of UN systems and holding them accountable, the *UN Women* partner with other advocacy institutions such as government and civil society in scheming laws, policies and programmes for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (*UN Women* 2018). For example, in Algeria, *UN Women* supported in the institutionalisation of electoral gender quota systems, which has resulted in the acceleration of the percentage of women representatives holding political position at the national assembly (*UN Women Progress Report*, 2012). It can



therefore be submitted that the *UN Women* as a gender entity of the UN is endowed with the unique mandate of investigating and evaluating crosscutting developmental challenges at country, regional and global levels regarding gender issues.

### **3.2.9 Sustainable Development Goals**

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an international goal-setting development agenda envisioned for the eradication of poverty, the advancement of human rights, fundamental freedom and a sustainable, peaceful, equitable and just society by 2030. The 2030 agenda was adopted by the UN on 25 September 2015 as a global commitment to tackle the fundamental causes of structural inequalities experienced by women, and for human and social development (Stevens & Ntlama, 2016:53). The 2030 agenda is considered by many as opportunities for accelerating equality, women's rights and empowerment as well as for societal transformation and development. This may be because it is more inclusive in scope than its predecessor (MGDs), is anchored in the principle of equality and human rights and pays close attention to key structural constraints restricting women from enjoying their basic rights and freedom (Razavi 2016:25). Stevens and Ntlama, (2016:53) assert that the 2030 agenda places emphasis on the rights to development, which include all human rights involving political, economic, social and civil rights. And also for the effective participation of women in the mainstream of development, whilst demanding collaboration and thus instilling responsibility on all UN member states to embrace human-centred development policies. It focuses on 17 key goals aimed at the realisation of full human rights, and for the economic empowerment and development of women (Stevens & Ntlama, 2016:53)

Included among its ambitious key 17 objectives is the goal of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. SDGs 5 is explicitly dedicated to the attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment; it serves as an instrument for the achievement of all other SDGs. For example, the achievements of equitable education, poverty reduction, sustainable peace, improved living standards and inclusive governance and society (which is SGD 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10 (Goetz & Jenkin, 2016:127; Esquivel 2016:10) may be impossible and difficult without gender equality and the empowerment of women (Pathania 2017:72). The target of achieving gender

equality and women's empowerment does not only feature as a stand-alone target goal, but is also integrated into many other SDGs (Ewerling *et al.*, 2017:916). This is a clear indication that the framework recognises gender equality and women's empowerment as not just a target objective in itself, but as critically important for the realisation of sustainable development in the economic, environmental and social domains (UN Women 2013:10). In this study, emphasis is placed on goal 5. The target objectives of SDG 5 are to: (Goetz & Jenkin, 206:127; Association for Women Rights in Development, 2015)

- eliminate all forms of discrimination against all categories of women and girls
- eliminate all forms of societal violence and abuses against all women and girls in the public and private spheres
- promote women's active and operative participation and equal opportunities in the leadership and decision-making processes of government institutions and public spheres
- adopt sound policies, programmes and enforceable legislation to support and promote women's equality and empowerment at all levels
- obliterate all harmful practices, such as early child marriage, forceful marriage and female genital mutilation
- recognise and value women's unwaged caregiving and domestic chores through the provision of social protection policies, public services and infrastructure
- encourage the use of information and communication technology to empower and develop all women, for example through online education
- to eliminate discrepancies in women's access to training and education
- progress women's economic opportunities and access to financial resources

From this, it is not an exaggeration to conclude that Goal 5 contains a target toward promoting women's role in leadership and decision-making positions - not only in formal institutions of governance, but in all public domains (Miotto *et al.*, 2019:4). It specifies three targets delineating the means of execution, such as the use of information and communication technology and the enforcement of enabling policies and legislation necessary to facilitate women's empowerment for gender equality at all levels (Goetz and Jenkin, 206:127). Goal 5 seeks to redress the

imbalance in all management levels and call for the full and effective participation of women, including their equal opportunities, in the leadership of the economy, communities and the political decision-making process.

A considerable amount of research discloses that gender equality contributes to democratic justice, good governance, economic growth, sustainable peace and poverty reduction (Goetz & Jenkin, 2006:127; UN Women, 2013:11). Nonetheless, this does not necessarily lead to the advancement of women's rights and empowerment (UN Women, 2013:11). In a similar vein, Goetz and Jenkin, (2006:127) state that increasing the numbers of women in formal institutions of governance may not be mechanically meaningful in accelerating gender equality. Using this premise as a departure point, the realisation of equality, women rights and empowerment requires the institutionalisation of sound policies, as alluded to in Chapter 1, Section 1.2. Women's leadership participation is, to an extent, dependent on policies and legislation that promotes their empowerment and access to developmental opportunities such as education and vocational training. SGD goal 5 addresses organisational structural constraints affecting women and the need to promote women's empowerment and development as well as their access to economic resources. The achievement of the envisioned target objectives is left to each of the UN's member states to decide on the basis of their individual circumstances. South Africa, as a UN member nation, implemented interventions to end structural inequalities. Nevertheless women's leadership advancement continues to be deterred by structural inequalities (see Section 2.7.6).

### **3.3 STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK: NATIONAL CONTEXT**

Since the institutionalisation of democracy in South Africa in 1994, considerable efforts have been made by government to transform the life trajectory of all women to improve their standard of living, situations, and positions in society. Emphasis was placed on the need to build an equitable and fair society that will promote the human dignity and human rights of all citizens and meet their political and socio-economic needs. The gender concerns and needs of women were particularly targeted, based on their historical exclusion from participating in the mainstream of society. The government of South Africa developed an abundance of legislative reforms within all government agencies, ministries, and departments to eliminate previous discriminatory laws in the

pursuit of the achievement of a peaceful, equal, non-sexist and democratic state. According to the African National Congress {ANC} (2014:2), the enactment of a plethora of legislation to advance gender equality is a clear indication of the political will and commitment by government to positively influence and transform the lives of all women under its jurisdiction. It is important to note that South Africa, as member state of international human rights treaties, is obligated by international laws and its constitution to promote women's rights and empowerment (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2009:6). The following section focuses on legislation enacted for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in South Africa.

### **3.3.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**

Government political commitments towards equality and the protection of fundamental human rights is enshrined in the South African Constitution and in the Bill of Rights. The Constitution as the supreme law of South Africa pays serious attention to the pursuit of gender equality, the advancement of fundamental human rights, human dignity, and freedom (RSA 1996:3). The nation's objectives toward achieving gender parity and social change are guided by the notion of rights which integrate acceptance of equal inalienable human rights for men and women alike. While the constitutional system of America is founded on the principle of liberty, in South Africa, the founding principle is equality (Afro Barometer, 2019:2; Krüger, 2011:27). In 1994, Mandela, the first democratic president of South Africa, in his inaugural address stated that it will be difficult to attain genuine liberation "unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed for the better and that they have been empowered to intervene in all spheres of life as equals with any members of our society" (DPSA, 2015:3). The transformation of society into a non-discriminatory, non-sexist and egalitarian society where women can access the same developmental opportunities as men for their inclusion and active participation in all spheres becomes a prerequisite for the achievement of genuine liberation and equality. The findings of this thesis show that the achievement of genuine democracy is still very far away in the local sphere of government, especially within senior management structures due to gender discrimination in access to strategic management positions, patriarchy and sexism, which disempower women (see

Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.10, 7.8, and 7.12). Masango and Mfene, (2014:623) posit that gender equality, as an essential concerns of the equality clause in the South African constitution is a core mechanism for empowering and developing women, following the historical discrimination that placed them in disadvantaged positions.

The obligation for promoting gender equality and justice in the republic is reinforced through its provisions on various sections of the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. For example, section 1(c) of the Constitution states that the “Republic of South Africa is one sovereign, democratic state founded on the value of non-racialism and non-sexism” (Masango & Mfene, 2014:624). The establishment of an egalitarian, non-racial, and non-sexist state, as the founding principle of the constitution include the advancement of gender equality, human rights, dignity and freedom for everyone in South Africa. The 1996 Constitution of South Africa is among the few in the world that accord women equal socio-economic rights, political rights, and protection under the law, and rights to equal treatment in the public spheres (Brockhoff, 2013:11). The RSA Constitution, 1996 is described as gender-natural and “women friendly” due its emphasis on the protection of women’s equal and inalienable rights and its vision to achieve gender equality in South African society (Van Der Byl, 2014:10). This is an indication that the constitution does not condone gender-based discrimination. However, to uphold the democratic values, equality, social justice and freedom that have been reaffirmed by the constitution, there is a need to deconstruct patriarchal structures and gender role beliefs in the workplace (Steyn & Jackson, 2014:63), which still limit women’s advancement in the contemporary South African public sector (Jaga *et al.*, 2017:435; Ngomane, 2017:394; SAHRC, 2018:3-4; Bangani & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2020:2).

Chapter two of the same Constitution (1996) contains the Bill of Rights, which is accented as the cornerstone of the country’s democracy (RSA 1996:3). According to Brockhoff, (2013:11) the integration of a comprehensive Bill of Rights consequently leads to the constitution “being heralded as one of the most progressive constitutions in the entire world”. Underpinning the bill of rights are principles of equality, human dignity, and freedom, which runs throughout like a golden thread for the protection of equal and inalienable human rights (Mokgoro, 2003:566). The RSA Constitution, (1996) stipulates that state institutions such as the local sphere of government must strictly adhere to and promote the objectives enshrined in the Bill of Rights and fulfil

the principles that it espouses (RSA, 1996:5). The Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) makes provisions for the socio-economic and political rights of all women, particularly with regards to education, food and health, which they were previously denied (Mokgoro, 2003:568). Although the Bill of Rights protects women's full enjoyment of their rights, freedom and dignity, the protection of specific human rights is guaranteed in section 9(3). Section 9(3) proclaims that the "state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, religion, conscience, belief culture, language and birth" (RSA, 1996:5). Only unfair discrimination is emphasised as forbidden and, for example it would not be unfair discrimination if an organisation decides to refrain from employing women who do not have the right skills and mental capacities to render effective and efficient services. However, section 9(5) states that discrimination *per se* is unfair only when it is recognised by the court that such discrimination is unfair.

Section 9 also states that national government must implement legislation to prevent or outlaw unfair discrimination and establish affirmative action measures to equalise the public sector. With regards to this study, the constitution strives to make sure that women are not only unfairly discriminated against, but also that measures are enacted to for the empowerment of women to close gender gaps caused by apartheid and colonialism. Furthermore, section 9(4) of the constitution commits state institutions to forbid direct and indirect unfair discrimination under any condition. Accordingly, women's equal rights to skill development, employment and promotion and leadership participation in public administration is supported by the constitution. However, in the South African public sector, women's career and professional advancement is deterred by stereotypes and discrimination, especially through recruitment, training, and promotion, as alluded to in Section 2.4.5 of this thesis.

In addition, public administration is obligated by the constitution to be impartial, fair, equitable and without prejudice in employment practices (section 195(1)(d), whilst it must also respond to public needs, and encourage people to participate in government policy formulation (section 195(1)(e)). Section 195(1)(i) of the RSA Constitution further stipulates that public administration should reflect the broader representation of South African people, through the enactment of employment and management practices that are founded upon ability, objectivity, fairness and the need to redress previous

injustices to achieve broad representation. Although the constitution seeks to promote a representative democracy where all social groups, including those that were previously marginalised, can participate in government. It also stipulates that a high standard of professionalism is required throughout the public service (RSA, 1996:116). Deductively, therefore, the skills training and development of women for their participation/representation in management is imperative because the constitution emphasises that only capable people from previously marginalised groups have equal opportunity to participate in the workplace.

Apart from individual's constitutional rights to choose any trade, career or profession of choice (section 22) and the prohibition of unfair discrimination, the South African Constitution can be regarded as exceptional in so far as section 23(1) guaranteeing and protecting equal rights to fair labour practices by all citizens in the South African community. To promote fair labour practices, the RSA Constitution, (1996) commits organisations and employers, both in the private and public sectors, to ensure non-sexism and non-racialism in the workplace and in the society at large (DPSA, 2015:3).

### **3.3.2 Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 4 of 2000**

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination (PEPUDA) is an Equality Act that was *inter alia* endorsed to give effect to the equality provisions of the constitution and for the fulfilment of South Africa's international commitments under the CEDAW (Pityana, 2002:2; Kok, 2017:26). According to Kok, (2017:26), since 1994, the Equality Act is one of the most important acts sanctioned to liberate South African society from the effects of colonialism and the legacy of Apartheid, which are characterised by discrimination and extremely unequal distribution of powers. The "*Equality Act*" is described as "anti-discrimination legislation": it focuses on the injustice and discrimination of the past, which is arguably the primary cause of inequality and vast differences in the socio-economic status of men and women in South Africa. In another study, Kok (2008:) states that anti-discrimination legislation is passed for several reasons, one of which is to ensure realignment in the allocation of power, wealth and unemployment rates of previously marginalised social groups (women), so that these statistics can be comparable to the most privileged groups (men). Importantly, the "Equality Act" prohibits only discrimination that is unfair. With regards to this study, the realignment of unemployment rates could be the employment

of more women into leadership positions so that the figures for men and women can become proportionally equivalent. Designing employment conditions in favour of women for accelerating more women into decision-making and management positions can be regarded as fair discrimination. This is because, according to the act, it is not an unfair discrimination to take measures to advance groups or persons that were previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination (Kok, 2017:31; SAHRC, 2017:6 DPSA, 2016:18). The purpose of the Equality Act is to:

- prevent and prohibit all forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, race.....
- advance equality in all spheres
- eliminate unfair discrimination against all individuals in all spheres of society; (Holness & Rule 2014:1908)
- prevent and prohibit hate speech and harassment
- transform south Africa into an egalitarian society where social exclusion and socio-economic differences are eliminated (Anton, 2008:445; Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2008:2; Brand, 2011:40)

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, (2008:2) explains that the purpose of *PEPUDA* is to facilitate the transition of South African society into a “democratic society that is united in diversity, marked by human relations that reflect a caring and compassionate citizenry, and guided by the principles of equality, fairness, equality, social justice, human dignity and freedom for all”. As a legislative measure, *PEPUDA* promises to promote individual rights to equality, justice and to eliminate all forms of unfair discrimination against women and other vulnerable social groups, that have had trouble, suffering and anguish inflicted on them and the systemic inequalities entrenched in social arrangements and practices (Gutto, 2001:328). The provision for the prohibition and prevention of all unfair discrimination and treatment on the ground of gender include; gender-based violence, women’s access to social services such as health, job training, education, profession and professional bodies and employment. It can therefore be submitted that *PEPUDA* touches on the socio-economic aspects of the lives of all women in society. Although the act might not explicitly cater for workplace relationships, the author argues that it is applicable in employment, particularly in labour issues relating to gender exclusion. The rights to fair treatment and equal opportunities for men and women within the



corporate world is linked to the concept of prevention and prohibition of unfair discrimination. In fact, the degrading of women's leadership capacities and strength in the workplace because of their gender is hate speech, which *PEPUDA* describes as unfair discrimination. The study of Kruger, (2011:27) and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, (2008:2) respectively indicate that *PEPUDA* does not apply in areas of employment matters where the "Employment Equity Act" made special provisions, but organisation and employers can apply the Act in areas of difference that are not covered by the "Employment Equity Act", for example hate speech. However, considering that *PEPUDA* was enacted to give effect to the equality provisions in the constitution, and listed in the constitution, among others, is women's rights to equality treatment and justice in all spheres with no exception. One can argue that *PEPUDA* also caters for women's rights to equal employment opportunities, fair treatment and equal benefits in the workplace.

### **3.3.3 The Employment Equity Act of 55 of 1998**

The Employment Equity Act (hereafter referred to as EEA) No. 55 of 1988 was promulgated in the year 1999 by the democratic government of South Africa as a reaction to Apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices that create discrepancies in employment, occupation, promotion and other work-related benefits in the workforce (Jooste, 2014:32; Thalosi, 2010:1). The concern of the act includes the eradication of direct and indirect unfair discrimination in employment, income and promotion, and the equitable representations of all South Africans in all occupational categories and positions of the workforce (Marumoagaue, 2012:4). In South Africa, women are victims of Apartheid systems and discriminatory labour laws. The EEA was established to correct the social injustice and unfair discrimination of the past in the workplace by privileging designated groups (women) in selection and recruitment, training, education and promotion (Thalosi, 2010:1). It envisaged that the development of the designated group (women) to increase their numbers in decision making and leadership in the workplace to the extent that their proportion mirrors the economically active population in South Africa. Both EEA and 1996 the Constitution view women as equal in society, they prohibit unfair discrimination in employment, promotion, remuneration, training and in the workforce. Mhambi, (2014:6) argues that the EEA accomplishes the functions outlined in section 9(2) of constitution in promoting and

supporting justices and formal and substantive equality by eliminating unfair discrimination in the work environment. Deductively therefore, EEA can be credited as a key legislation that guarantees women's rights to equal employment opportunities in the workplace including their advancement into public administration

Section 6(1) of the act prohibits unfair discrimination against any employee in any employment practice and extends the grounds to include pregnancy, HIV, and gender amongst others. The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants, (2017), argues that the act seeks to promote equality in the workplace through equal employment opportunities, eliminating unfair discrimination and the implementation of affirmative action measures to transform unfair labour practices especially during selection, retention, training, promotion and retrenchment in the public sector. According to Naidoo and Kongolo, (2004:131) EEA was aimed at breaking the barriers in the workplace that have prevented women from accessing positions of leadership and jobs that were previously reserved for men. It was enacted to eliminate gender-based discrimination in employment and to assist in the empowerment and development of women.

Nevertheless, the elimination of discriminatory policies and practices in the workplace would not be enough to guarantee and promote equality in practice (Marumoagaue, 2012:4), special measures are to be designed to promote equal opportunities for designated people, such as women. The eradication of discriminatory labour practices and the enactment of employment equality are created to match each other such that the historically disadvantaged groups can benefit from a fair employment environment. Similarly, the South African Board for People Practices mention in their reports that the EEA alone would not be sufficient to achieve substantive equality in employment and suggested that the Skills Development Act (Act 97 of 1998) should be used side by side with the EEA to boost the potential outcomes (Ryklief, 2017:24). EEA is aimed at the transformation and reconstruction of employment practices and to promote the accessibility and job opportunities of designed groups, for example women, in all professions and levels of the workforce. Fundamentally, EEA is a vehicle through which women's rights to equal employment and participation in decision-making positions, which they were previously denied, are promoted in the workplace.

Apart from regulating unfair discriminatory practices and policies, the EEA also provides guidelines for the implementation of affirmative action which is a remedial and corrective measures aimed at advancing equality and fair treatment in labour practices (Dupper & Garber, 2012:224). The central purpose of affirmative action is to the promotion of equality and fair treatments in the workplace especially for historically disadvantaged groups so that they can benefit from the privileges enjoyed by the advantaged groups. Notably, the equal employment opportunities promised to previously marginalised groups through the EEA and other legal frameworks do not guarantee them automatic jobs by virtue of being previously unfairly disadvantaged. Rather their chances of securing a job in the positions they seek to occupy is largely dependent on the relevant skills and competences they possess for that job (Chitsamatanga *et al.*, 2020:171; Mavundla, 2009:46). Section 15 of the EEA states that affirmative action policies are guidelines designed to ensure that equal employment opportunities are offered only to suitably qualified candidates from among designated groups (Mavundla, 2009:46). This implies that only individuals who are fully trained and skilled can be considered for any positions within the public service regardless of the equality provisions. One of the reasons women's leadership skills are being doubted in the labour force is because of lack of training and professional upgrading of their skills and capacities. This study confirmed women inadequate access to professional training and leadership development programmes in the local sphere of government (see Section 6.2.15, 6.2.17, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4). The EEA requires employers in both private and public organisations to develop appropriate measures and procedures for the improvement and development of women's work capacities and to promote equal employment opportunities in the workplace (Marumoagaue, 2012:4). However, the Affirmative Action Policy is not without criticism.

Johnson and Luiz (cited in Fernandez *et al.*, 2018:535) and Edigheji (2007:2) are some of the critics of Affirmative Action Policy who asserted that transformation involves sacrificing state capacities and performance for the equal representation of previously marginalised groups. Johnson stated that the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy is the "*greatest single disaster*" since the end of the Apartheid administration in the RSA (Fernandez *et al.*, 2018:535). Although as alluded to, the employment of less qualified members from the previously marginalised groups is strictly prohibited under

the Affirmative Action Policy. The study conducted by Fernandez *et al.*, (2017:549), demonstrated that state capacity and employees' performance has improved since the institutionalisation of the Affirmative Action Policy and not diminished as reiterated by its critics. The researcher disagrees with this argument because of the deficiencies in service delivery that have culminated in continuous protests across South Africa's by aggrieved citizens (see Section 4.7). Failure to provide basic public services is a sign of administrative inefficiency and municipal employees' lack of the required capacities in their jobs. The claim by Fernandez *et al.*, (2017: 549) on the improvement of institutional capacity due to the implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy cannot be ascertained by this present study, because the Affirmative Action Policy is not implemented in the local sphere of government (see Sections 6.2.13 and 7.15).

### **3.3.4 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995**

Since the institutionalisation of democracy in the Republic, the South African government has taken remarkable steps to transform the public service from Apartheid practices. Following the dismantling of Apartheid and other discriminatory practices in the South African public service, the new government established the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (hereafter referred to as WPTPS) in 1995. WPTPS was created to provide a conceptual framework for the transformation of the structures, organisational culture, attitudes of public servants and gender composition in the public service and to offer guidelines to reshape, drive and manage the transformation process of the public service (WPTPS, 1995). Because of the inequality along sexual lines in the public service, "WPTPS identified the need to create a genuinely representative public service that reflects the major characteristics of the South African demography, without eroding efficiency and competencies" (WPTPS cited by DPSA, 2018). WPTPS recognised that the broad representation of South Africans in the public service, including the local sphere of government, is a precursor to restoring legitimacy and credibility in the public service and for effective, as well as equitable, service delivery. In addition, Section 10 of WPTPS speaks on the establishment of an affirmative action plan by individual departments in the public service, such as those in the local sphere of government, to accelerate gender equality and the achievement of representativeness (WPTPS, 1995). Deductively, it is evident that WPTPS derives its objectives from section 195(1) of the 1996 constitution which

stipulates that public administration must be guided by the principle of equality and representivity

According to Van der Westhuizen and Wessel, (2010:176), WPTPS can be regarded as the first government authorised policy document on affirmative action, which is intended to bring about transformation in the public service. Chapter 5(c) of WPTPS indicates that affirmative action and representation, among other things, are priority target areas of the South African government. Since affirmative action programmes are corrective and revolutionary measures to liberate and emancipate previously marginalised groups, it therefore means that gender equality and women's representation at all levels are priority target areas of government. To achieve true equality, WPTPS commits government departments and provincial administrations including the local sphere of government to design affirmative action programmes to meet the distinct concerns and practical needs of women and other previously marginalised groups (Van der Westhuizen & Wessel, 2010:176) in the public service. The affirmative action programme is to create a public administration that reflects the representation of all genders and social groups.

### **3.3.5 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 1998**

According the Department of public service and Administration (1998), the White Paper on Affirmative Action (here after referred to as the white paper) was aimed at the transformation of the South African public service into an institution whose employment practices are guided by principles of equality. Government commitment to transform the public service is reaffirmed in section 195(1) of the Constitution, which states that public administration must be regulated by democratic values and must be representative of the population (RSA, 1996). It is expected that employment and management practices are guided by democratic values to redress the unjust employment practices of the past and ensure the broad representation of the whole population in the public service. According to Von Maravic *et al.*, (2013:175), the White paper is a policy framework that explicitly addresses affirmative action and the concept of representative bureaucracy in the public service. Representative bureaucracy entails a public service that reflects the composition of the whole population of the country (Cameron & Milne, 2011:19). The White paper spelt out guidelines for the

creation of a representative public service in South Africa stating that a more representative public administration would lead to a more responsive and effective public service, diversity of interest in policy formulation and a good relationship between government and its citizens (Von Maravic *et al.*, 2013:175). For example, increasing the number of women in leadership and decision-making positions would lead to the projection of the concerns of women in policy formulation, greater awareness and understanding of gender issues in the workplace as well as a more responsive service delivery to women.

The white paper is recognised as the most significant and comprehensive policy document in terms of the implementation of affirmative action in the public service in South Africa (Van der Westhuizen, 2011:180). The purpose of the white paper is to provide policy framework that spells out the mandatory requirements and standards that national departments and provincial administrations must follow in the implementation and development of their affirmative action programme for the benefit of women and other designated groups (Mello & Phago, 2007:147; Van der Westhuizen 2011:180). The national department and provincial administration are required to develop and manage their own affirmative action policies to reflect their particular situations, and must be in line with the provisions of the white paper. Furthermore, the white paper outlines the accountability, monitoring, reporting and co-ordinating responsibilities of various players within the affirmative action policies and programme (Van der Westhuizen, 2011:180). These responsibilities are formulated to ensure compliance with the appropriate procedures identified by the white paper in advancing women into management positions in the public service (Mello & Phago, 2007:147). It can therefore be deduced that the white paper on affirmative action is to promote broad representation in the public service and for the advancement of the status of all categories of women and those who have been unfairly discriminated against.

According to the Department of Public Service and Administration, (1998), the purpose of the public service affirmative action programmes within the structures of relevant labour laws and public services legislations include:

- improving the capacities of all those who have been previously unfairly dispossessed through the development of practical intervention measures to support and promote their advancement within the public spheres
- inculcating the culture of diversity into the workplace and supporting the affirmation of designated groups in the public service
- achieving numerical targets (qualified women) as spelled out in the white paper on the transformation of public service
- promoting democratic values in the public service by enabling previously discriminated groups to progress into leadership positions (SAHRC, 2018:29)

Furthermore, the Department of Public Service and Administration, (1998) suggests that it is important for government departments and provincial administrations to develop and implement their affirmative action programmes in accordance with certain key principles so as to align them with other transformation goals. The local sphere of government was not specifically mentioned in the white paper on the Affirmative Action Policy. However, under Chapter 1, the white paper stipulates the application of the policy to a wider spectrum of state-owned institutions, of which the local government sphere is part (DPSA, 1998). The core principles of the Affirmative Action Policy, according to the white paper on the transformation of public service are:

- **Integration with human resource management and development**

Affirmative action measures should be combined with other human resource management and development practices, particularly those on leadership diversity

- **Participation**

Affirmative action measures must be developed to increase the active participation of all employees in all spheres of government, and with the representation of well-planned labour

- **Communication**

The aim of affirmation actions policies and programmes must be effectively communicated to all employees in all levels of government

- **Reasonable accommodation**

The affirmative action policies must strive to eliminate barriers and discrepancies in labour practices and provide support for the advancement of all members of target group

- **Relative disadvantage**

Affirmative action programmes must take into consideration the relative disadvantaged status of groups, the practical concerns of target groups and the needs of the organisation (DPSA, 1998). Contrary to the establishment of affirmative action as one of the vital policy requirements by the public sector, including the local sphere of government, for promoting equality, the findings of this thesis show that the DKKDM has no established Affirmative Action Policy (see Sections 6. 2.13, 7.13).

- **Cost effectiveness**

The affirmative action policies and programmes must provide special procedures to develop human capital of women and optimise financial resources

From this, the pertinence of affirmative action programmes in the public service, including local government as a sphere of governance, cannot be underestimated with regards to the good intentions of the South African government as reaffirmed in the Constitution in promoting democracy, equality and representation in the public service. This is because, without special measures to improve the capacities of those who have been disadvantaged, the numerical targets set out by the white paper on the transformation of the public service and other legislation will not be achieved. In fact, all those who have been previously marginalised will continue to be marginalised and still occupy minority positions in the workforce if special measures are not initiated to develop and qualify them into positions that they were previously denied. The main purpose of affirmative action is to take radical measures to ensure that designated groups enjoy the same opportunities as the privileged groups in access to education, training, remuneration and career advancement. Notably, affirmative action is key and has been instrumental in promoting women's human rights to education, training, equal employment opportunities, and their representation in the public service (Naidoo & Kongolo, 2004:123). Accordingly, the success achieved in women's leadership emancipation, when compared to previous generations may be impossible without the introduction of affirmative action and other legislation in the public service. However, gender equality in directorship and executive positions is still far from being achieved in South Africa. The researcher is of the opinion that eliminating affirmative action policies from the public service will not only halt the progress of women's development,



but will also lead to colossal backwardness in the country's journey toward promoting and archiving representation and substantive gender equality in the public service.

### **3.3.6 The National Policy framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2000)**

The political commitment by the South African government to build an egalitarian society free of gender discrimination and racism led to the creation of the National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (hereafter referred to as the Gender Policy Framework) which sketches the country's vision of gender equality and how it intends to achieve the idea (RSA Office on the Status of Women, 2013). It provides mainstreaming guidelines and principles for the formulation and development of laws and procedures, including practices, to give clear directions concerning the equal rights and opportunities of all categories of men and women in the national departments and provincial administration. The guidelines and principles are meant to address gender considerations which must inform the practices, programmes and policies of government for the implementation of gender equality. According to Golddlaltt and McLean, (2011:217), the Gender Policy Framework provides guidelines for interaction among individuals and groups as well as the development of special measures to promote objectivity, fairness and gender equality in organisations. It recommends institutional strategies to ensure the equal rights and opportunities of men and women in access to basic resources, decision-making powers, employment opportunities and equal treatment in the organisation. According to the Gender Policy Framework, equal treatment does not mean treating men and women equally or in an identical way, because it will further help to preserve and maintain existing inequality. Rather, equality of treatment entails meeting the distinct needs of all categories of men and women (RSA OSW, 2013). This may involve the development of special measures and the commitment of extra resources, for instance, in the case of women, for their empowerment as a means towards achieving gender equality in the workforce. In formulating and implementing effective programmes and measures to achieve gender equality, it is imperative that such programmes or interventions be based on a systematic examination and understanding of the specific needs of women. This is because unless the distinctive and practical needs of women are addressed through corrective or remedial

procedures, for example the affirmative action as provided in section 9(2) of the 1996 Constitution, it will be impossible to have an equal competing ground for men and women for the achievement of substantive gender equality in the workplace.

The Gender Policy Framework deals with gender; it pays close attention to women's issues and their empowerment in order to place them on an equal footing with men. The objectives of the Gender Policy Framework are to:

- establish an enabling environment for translating government political commitments on gender equality into reality
- ensure the integration of gender concerns into government policies, laws, programmes and activities
- create policies, programmes and structures for the empowerment and development of women and to change existing gender relations in the workplace and within all spheres of government
- create an institution framework for the achievement of equity and gender parity as well for improving the status of women in society
- promote new behaviours, values and a culture of respect for all individuals in society in line with the new policy

The Gender Policy Framework is premised on the idea that gender equality cannot be realised if women are not given equal opportunities and empowered to participate all areas of government. Accordingly, it advocates for the implementation of special measures for the empowerment of women as it is a means for the achievement of effective gender equality. The policy requires all government institutions to use their constitutional powers to legitimise the values of gender equality and to ensure that employers comply with the principle of equality and non-sexism as stipulated in the 1996 Constitution.

### **3.3.7 Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill**

The existence of national legislation in South Africa seems insufficient in liberating women from cultural ideologies and patriarchal practices that continue to subject them to unfair treatment and unequal opportunities in the workplace. As such, the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (hereafter referred to as WEGE Bill) was established in March 2014 by the national assembly to reinforce the rights and opportunities in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment (WEGE Bill,

2013:2). The WEGE Bill was adopted as a tool for addressing the prevalent gender inequality that is manifest in the South African workforce and for the achievement of the genuine emancipation of women for their meaningful participation and representation in echelons of decision making (WEGE Bill, 2013:2). It focuses on promoting gender equality and the employment of women by pushing for 50% representation of women in decision-making levels in the private and public sectors in the country. The 50% representation of women in decision-making structures as envisioned by WEGE is a point of departure away from the 30% specified by B-BBEE legislation. The Bill calls on public and private institutions in South Africa to ensure women's equal participation in the economy and also to ensure 50% representation of women in senior decision-making positions. The WEGE Bill reinforces the function in section 9 of the 1994 constitution pertaining to the promotion of non-sexism, freedom and the achievement of gender equality through the establishment of legislation designed to promote women's full rights and their empowerment. It obliges both private and public organisations to mainstream gender into their practices and policies, to comply with the country's international commitments on gender equality, and prohibit all unfair discrimination on the ground of sex as stipulated in section 8 of the PEPUA (Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities 2012:3). Designated bodies, persons, private and public sectors are required to formulate and implement special measures for the empowerment of women as the social groups previously marginalised through unfair discrimination. Furthermore, it seeks to advance women's access to training and educational opportunities. It can be submitted that the WEGE Bill is a key legislative instrument for social transformation and for promoting equal opportunities for men and women in the South African corporate world.

### **3.3.8 National Gender Machinery (NGM), 2009**

South African's National Gender Machinery (hereafter referred to as the NGM) is hailed as the one most comprehensive statutory frameworks in Africa and even among the most developed countries in the world. Driven by human rights international organisations, the NGM vision was to create policy structures, mechanisms and frameworks to address inequalities and to achieve the twofold goals of gender equality and women's empowerment (Manjoo, 2005:234). Gouws, (2006:143) writes that the

NGM provides pathways through which women would exercise policy influence with respect to women's concerns and needs as well as to guarantee women's active participation in policymaking. Figure 3.1 illustrate the structure of the South African NGM

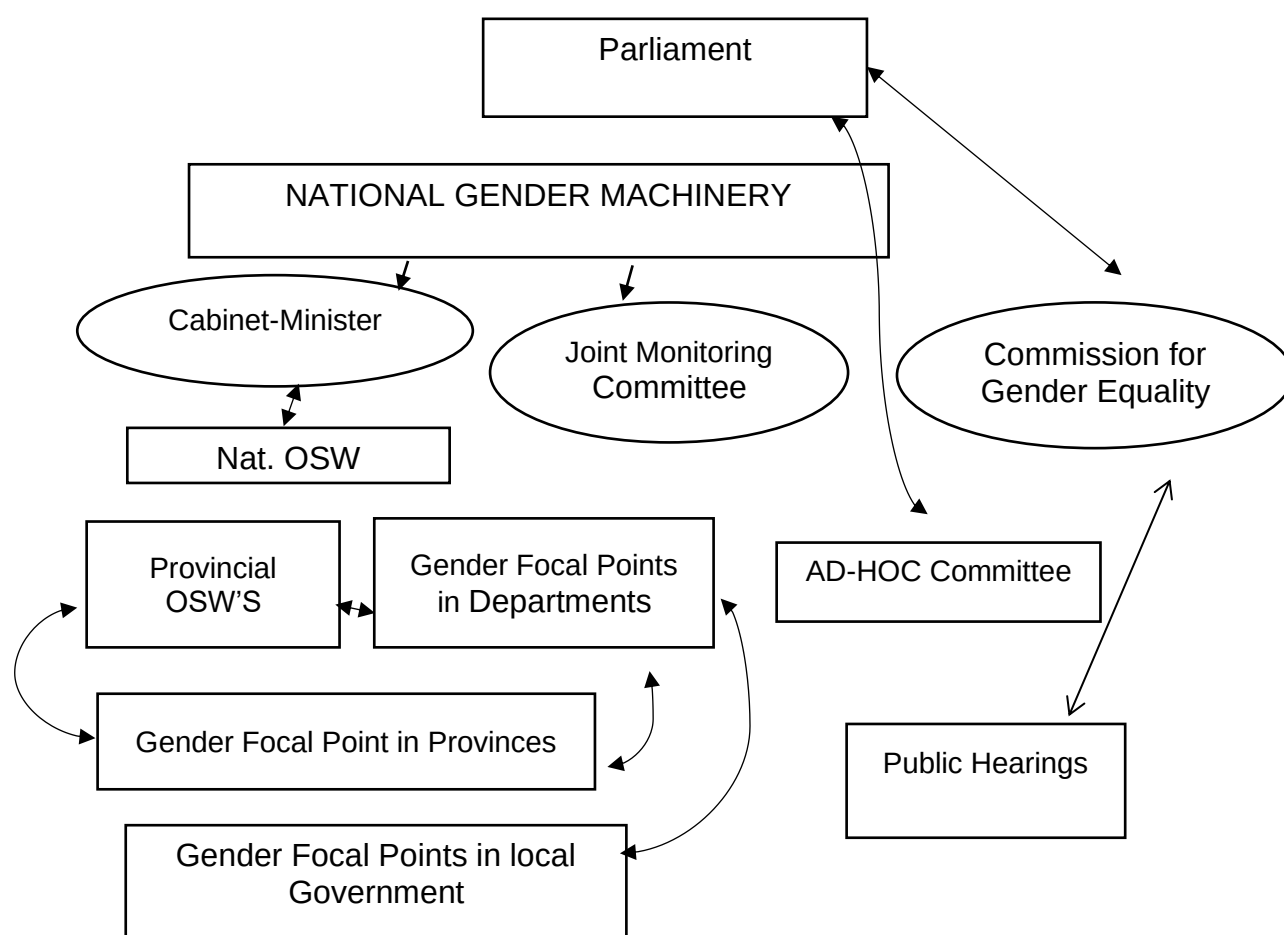


**Figure 3.1 National gender machinery**

**Source: Gouws 2006:143**

As presented above, the NGM includes parliament, government structures, the legislature, non-governmental organisations, and legislative bodies that address women's inequalities. The legislative framework consists of Office of the Status of Women (OSW), the Gender Focal Points (GFP), the Parliamentary Joint Monitoring Committee on the Improvement of Quality of life and the Status for Women (JMC) and the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE). The NGM is credited as an essential milestone in the quest to accelerate and promote gender equality, women's rights and

empowerment as well for the achievement of genuine democracy in South Africa (Sadie, 2014:112). Deductively, the Constitution recognises that gender inequality and unfair discrimination could be detrimental to the achievement of genuine democracy and render democratic provisions unreachable for most disadvantaged groups on the grounds of gender. According to the Background Paper: Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (Van Der Byl, 2014:4), the establishment of the NGM gave clear direction and guidance on the initiation and development of gendered programmes to concurrently influence government policies and activities at all state levels. The 1996 Constitution presented the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) as the NGM to strengthen equality, women's emancipation and democracy.

### **3.3.9 Commission for Gender Equality (CGE)**

The commission for Gender Equality (hereafter referred to as CGE) is one of South Africa's NGMs for promoting women's rights and equality in all spheres. This government machinery was inaugurated in accordance with the Gender Equality Act 39 of 1996 (Viviers *et al.*, 2017:1), and entrusted with constitutional mandate of monitoring, appraising as well as assessing the gender equality practices, activities and policies of all national departments and provincial administrations as well as non-governmental institutions and enterprises in South Africa (African Development Bank 2009:20; Commission for Gender Equality, 2017). The commission is an independent statutory body created in accordance with Chapter 9 of the 1996 Constitution to promote gender equality, human rights, and constitutional democracy (Commission for Gender Equality, 2011:9; Sadie, 2014:117). According to Hick, (2010:126-127), the CGE fulfils an indispensable role in ensuring government accountability and delivery on its constitutional promises to promote gender equality, equity, social justice and social transformation, especially for women as the most marginalised social group, so that their political, civil, economic, social rights and freedom can become their lived experience. The CGE is constitutional mandated to:

- promote respect for gender equality and the protection, development and achievement of gender equality in South Africa.
- monitor government regulations and policies, assessing its effects on gender equality and the status of women in the country

- provide education and information programmes to increase the understanding of the general public on issues relating the promotion of gender equality and the functions and actions of the commission (The Presidency RSA, 2019; Commission for Gender Equality, 2011:9)
- make recommendations to government for the adoption of new or additional legislation that could promote gender equality and the status of women in the country
- resolve disputes through negotiation and reconciliation, investigate gender related issues and commission research
- prepare and present reports to parliament on issues pertaining to human rights and gender equality
- maintain close relationships with other institutions, bodies and authorities with equal objectives to the commission so as to promote gender equality within all facets of society
- monitor and evaluate compliance to various international conventions, declaration, treaties that the south African government has acceded to or ratified in terms of section 231-233 of the constitution (Commission for Gender Equality, 2011:9; African Development Bank, 2009:20; Sadie, 2014:117)

A core objective of the CGC is the transformation of society by revealing gender-based discrimination in policies and laws both in the private and public sector: advocating gender transformation, the elimination of all gender stereotypes from the past and establishing laws to promote respect for all women's rights as human rights (Commission for Gender Equality, 2017:19). Since its creation, the concern of CGC has been to develop women in South Africa even though it accommodates the gender issues and worries of both men and women. Thus, it can be argued that CGE aims to correct the effect of sexism, discrimination and male chauvinism that are noticeable in existing social structures and in organisational practices that maintain women's marginalisation in the workplace. From this, the CGE is charged with the mandate of promoting and maintaining an egalitarian society free of gender discrimination and oppression. This statutory body is constitutionally mandated to monitor organisational policies, cultures and laws and to transform those laws that continue to discriminate against women in the workplace. In this situation, the CGC could monitor and evaluate

organisational practices that facilitate gender-based discrimination and make recommendations to parliament on ways to eliminate such discrimination. Through research, reports, collaboration and liaison with other organisations with similar objectives to the commission, the CGE can advise parliament on practical strategies to advance equality and women's participation in the workplace. It can also provide women with training, education, and information to foster their understanding of human rights to free them from social practices that continue to oppress them.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The tireless quest by various international organisations to promote gender equality and women's inclusion in all human endeavours, including public sector leadership, is premised on the perspective that all human beings are born free and are equal in worth and dignity. International conventions and regulations aimed at safeguarding and promoting women's human rights and for challenging the longstanding inequality between men and women cause by patriarchy and biased social norms were discussed in this chapter. A common thread among the various international gender conventions is the promotion of women's equality and the liberation of women from insensitive traditional norms and cultural practices that promote their marginalisation and exclusion from participation in both political and administrative leadership. To achieve this, all state members are required to ensure the equal treatment of men and women, for example in hiring, leadership training and in other work-related benefits. In addition, member states are obligated to develop special measures and policies for the empowerment of women for the achievement of substantial gender equality in all sector of the economy including in the local sphere of government.

South Africa, as a member state of various international conventions, has shown its commitment towards promoting gender equality and advancing women's human rights through the promulgation of broad gender regulatory and policy frameworks and special programmes. The gender policy framework does not necessarily mean treating both men and women equally because it may further preserve and maintain unequal power structures in the public sector. The development of special measures is not only to maintain a balance in leadership structures but also to assist in the skilling of women to equip them with appropriate skills to function to their maximum. To be effective, the special measures must take cognizance of women's specific and developmental

needs. Affirmative action is a special measure developed by the South African government for meeting women's developmental needs and for equalising public sector leadership.

South Africa is one of the progressive countries in the world with various anti-discriminatory labour laws and policy-frameworks promoting and protecting the equal employment rights of both men and women in the corporate world. The South African Constitution was founded on the principles of equality, freedom, and social justice for the previously disadvantaged, and women's human rights are imprinted in black and white in the Constitution as the highest law in South Africa. Gender discriminatory practices are still pervasive in the public sector; women are still being denied their equal human rights through discriminatory practices, sexism, and sexual harassment. The organisational culture of public institutions is still perceived as gendered and highly patriarchal amidst the constitutional democracy of the Republic of South Africa (see Sections 2.7.6.1 and 2.7.6.4). Moreover, the gender policy framework in South Africa is bedevilled with loopholes, such as the lack of implementation, monitoring and evaluation and the failure by public managers to include gender equality provisions as stipulated by the policy frameworks into their departmental plans and programmes (Van Dikj & Morwamohube, 2015:21). These gaps need to be corrected if a sustainable pool of women is to advance into professional senior management positions in public entities, including the local government sphere where gender inequality and women's under-representation in senior municipal management is at its peak.

As reported in Chapter 3, in Section 3.3.3, equality policy frameworks do not automatically guarantee the inclusion and leadership advancement of women without women possessing the right job-related skills and experience for the positions they seek to undertake. The next chapter focuses on the training and development of women in an endeavour to promote their career and leadership advancement in the local sphere of government.



## **CHAPTER FOUR.**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter discussed the international and national laws for promoting women's leadership equality and inclusion in the public sector/service, including the local government sphere. Chapter three indicated that women's empowerment through education and leadership training is germane to their leadership acceptance and to equip them with necessary skills for maximum performance. Against this backdrop, this chapter begins with the general conceptualisation of training and development, using scholarly discussion on learning theories to training and skills development as a theoretical stance to explain how women's managerial capacities and talent can be cultured for effective leadership. Because the Human Resource Development (HRD) is the department having the sole mandate for employees' training and development, the chapter builds on the main dissertation by examining the definitions and viewpoints of HRD from scholars and practitioners in the field, focusing on how the human capital of women can be improved for leadership progression. Furthermore, proactive procedures for capacity building such as employees' training, education, succession planning, career development, mentoring, and coaching will be examined as a means to accelerate and advance women's professional and leadership careers within the local sphere of government. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion on capacity building in the local sphere of government and the concomitant challenges thereof.

#### **4.2 Conceptualisation of training and development**

Recently, employee training and development occupies frontline position in organisational planning both in developed and developing countries. This is evident in the significant amount of funds that are been allocated to employees' capacity building through skills development and training interventions. For example, the US public organisations allocate approximately \$164.2 billion per annual on employees' formal training and development (Noe *et al.*, 2014:247). In Asia, the Global Talent Index Report of Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU 2012 cited by Jagannathan & Geronino, 2013:1) reveals that about 60% of employers of labour are devoting considerable

amount of funds towards modification and unleashing employees' talents for improved performances. A highly skilled workforce that can drive professionalism, sustainability and, ensure efficient use of government resources, including adapting to the growing demands of citizens and the private sector are some significant policy consequences of investing in the professional training of public servants. Similarly, the South African government is not left out, as the government has since the democratic dispensation of 1994 made tremendous efforts by disbursing a significant amount of money through funding policies to the empowerment of public servants for efficient and effective rendering of public services (Tshilongamulenzhe & Coetzee, 2013:2-3; Sekgala & Holtzhausen, 2016:45). Conventionally, today's competitive knowledge-based economy in combination with the impact of globalisation on domestic economies, business, employment and the expansion in the workplace have placed the question of training and development at the front position of policies and development interventions (Tshilongamulenzhe & Coetzee, 2013:2). Consequently, most contemporary (public and private) organisations are recognising the competitive advantages associated with producing high-skilled employees, and thus focus training and development interventions to be easily accessible by their workforce (Bell *et al.*, 2017:305).

Training and development refer to a formal, ongoing, and systematic effort by organisations for upgrading and enhancing employees' skills and performances, for self-fulfilment and better organisational results (Dhar, 2015:421). The exigency of the training and development of employees cannot be overemphasised. Grobler *et al.*, (2015:341) maintains that training and development forms one of the most important tasks for organisations (public and private) to compete in local and international market, and to meet with ever-shifting changes and irregular work demands of organisation. Through training and development, employees are equipped with the necessary capabilities; for example, creative skills, problem-solving skills and inventive and initiative skills to face competition and stay on top in the external world. According to Falola *et al.*, (2014:162), training and development is an essential and strategic tool for building an effective workforce towards greater organisational performances and employees' effectiveness. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century organisational environment, training and development is perceived not only as a prerequisite for enhancing employee's abilities, but also a pedal for advancing organisations (public

and private) competitive advantages over others and for meeting the operational needs of the organisation (Noe *et al.*, 2014:245). Apart from meeting the operational and strategic goals of (public and private) organisations, training and development is indispensable for meeting a country's macroeconomic goals. The ultimate consequences of training and development is a skilled workforce, which is the core of local and global competitiveness (Tshilongamulenzhe & Coetzee, 2013:19). The Department of Labour of South Africa (cited by Botha *et al.*, 2013:19) mentions that in developing countries like South Africa, skilled employees (in both public and private organisations) are an important means of improving the livelihood and social wellbeing of citizens, which is the core objective of good governance. In essence, training and development of the workforce is beneficial to government, private employers, individual employees and humanities. It is important that government (public sector/service and the local government sphere) and private organisations discover ways on how to enhance worker's capabilities through professional training and development interventions.

#### **4.3 Learning theories to training and development**

Learning theories are theoretical frameworks that explain how new skills and knowledge are developed, acquired, retained, and engaged by learners during learning experiences. Since the early 1960s, learning theory has shifted away from traditional approach to that which explores learning as an active human experience (Doloriert, 2017:9), where learning is practiced through observable (such as replicating new skills seen from the environment), unobservable (for example: applying different means of thinking using tactics or prior knowledge) and by actions (leaning by doing or practice) (Matthewman *et al.*, 2009:279). Kairaly, (2014:1), states that it has become a reality amongst educational psychologists that knowledge is actively constructed by learners rather than the teacher transmitting knowledge or skills onto the learners. The author reiterates the point that knowledge is correctly transmitted from an obsolete dependence on teacher's directives to self-directedness, where learners assume personal responsibilities and actions in the construction and acquisition of knowledge and skills. The approach is commonly referred to as *Andragogy*; learning that begins with a person (cognitive processes) that is self-managed, self-controlled, and self-directed (O'Flaherty & Everson, 2005:5). This type

of learning is based on personal involvement, self-initiation, cognitive processes, the learner's experiences, self-evaluation, and the learning environment (Knowles *et al.*, 2015:11). Learning is therefore dependent on the readiness to learn, the need to know, self-concept, environment, and the orientation of the learners.

*Andragogy* as a method of learning is an adult style of learning contrasting *Pedagogy* which is children's method of skills acquisition. Generally, Adults learn for specific reasons which may include the desire to know, for personal growth and development, to meet certain needs and for occupational achievement (Ward, 2013:86; Henschke, 2016:3). Adults are matured people with life experiences and knowledge that serves as a foundation for further learning. An adult's willingness to learn is associated with the need to acquire more knowledge and the orientation for knowledge is to solve an identified real-life problem (Fasokun *et al.*, 2005:46).

In the context of an organisation, Mclean, (2006:416) mentions that adult learning is in support of basic human resource development (HRD) concepts, for example organisational and individual learning, career development, skills improvement, capacities expansion, performance improvement, professional and vocational education. Adult learning is used to update and boost employee's skills for effective performances in the workplace (Kenner & Weineman, 2011:88). Adult learning is a self-motivated and self-determined, which could take the form of informal or informal learning, and the purpose is to acquire new skills, experience, and knowledge. Jenkin, (2018:243) mention that Adult learning play a role and can be used to address social inequality, all adult who dropped out of school or missed out from accredited qualifications because they could not afford it could be equipped and updated through adult learning. Deductively, the overcrowding of women in lower level positions in the workforce could be due to lack of appropriate leadership skills could be corrected through this type of learning. Although this type of learning completely dependent on the willingness and readiness to learn. The theoretical assertions that adult learning through continued leadership training and management education can help equip and upgrade women's skills to resolve systemic disparities is supported by the findings of this study (see Sections 6.2.17, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4).

Adult learning is premised on the philosophical assumption that adult can learn, they want to acquire knowledge and are ready to take personal responsibility for knowledge

acquisition, and that knowledge must be able to meet their personal needs. Hofer, (2008:3) explains that personal epistemological beliefs on knowledge construction has implication on learning and on an individual intellectual development, for example, personal believe on the nature of knowledge can influence a person's cognitive processing, understanding of how knowledge is created or constructed, schemes of skills acquisition and hypothetical change learning. Using William Perry's framework as a conceptual framework, unlike men, women learn by receiving and reproducing knowledge, believing and relying on personal construction of knowledge, self-determining knowledge and the application of objective procedures to develop and communicate knowledge (Aldegether, 2017:4). Women depend on connected ways of knowing, seeking understanding of opinions and viewpoints of others in their environment before evaluation. Because adult's (men and women) learn in different ways, for learning to be effective organisations must consider what developmental activities can facilitate women's learning method and the subjective and organisational idiosyncrasies that can shape the kind of training activities that will be effective for women's skills development (Noe *et al.*, 2014:153). Bierema, (2016:119) argues that our understanding of how best to invest and develop women for professional careers is constrained by inadequate learning and development strategies. In confirming the assertion of Bierema, (2016:119), the empirical findings of this thesis show that the training and learning interventions that is adopted by the local sphere of government are ineffective and inadequate in meeting women's unique career and developmental needs (see Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.14, 6.2.18, 7.13. 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4). Indeed, creating a conducive learning environment and developing effective learning strategic for women can go a long way in promoting their leadership skills. Madsen and Andrade, (2018:62) mentioned that to ensure that career development interventions are effective in the capacitation of women for leadership advancement, the designers of the learning strategy should be done by professional with the right expertise and education. Based on reviewed books and journal publications for this study, gender approaches to organisational learning and how learning occurs is an area that has received relatively little consideration from organisational learning scholars and researchers (Martin *et al.*, 2017:41). The following section discuss various learning theories which include the Behavioural theory, Social learning theory, Action learning theory and Experiential learning theory.

### **4.3.1 Behavioural theory**

Behaviourism is often introduced as an approach in psychology that focuses on measurable and objectively observable changes in behaviours as the manifestation of learning (Harasim, 2017:10). It is a theory of animal training and a tool for skills training in humans, and stresses that observable changes in behaviours are affected by external conditions (Picciano, 2017:167). Behaviourism provides a model to learning that discounts mental activities and concentrates on stimulus-responses as the most effective means of knowledge acquisition. A fundamental assumption amongst behavioural theorist is that measurable and objectively observable changes in learners' behaviours emanates from the externally controlled environment which is opposed to human feelings, cognitions, and personal intellect (Ertmer & Newby, 1993:55). Observable modifications in learners' behaviour are direct results of responding to conditioned environmental stimulus (Syafei & Ulfah, 2020:199-200). Learning occurs only when appropriate responses from the environment are successfully repeated by the learner. The central goal of behavioural learning theory is a modification in behaviour to bring about desired behaviour. Proponents of this school of thought include Skinner, (1904-1990); Ivan Pavlvo, (1849-1949); and John, B. Watson, (1878-1958).

Behaviourists define learning as acquisition of relatively permanent new behaviours through input, repeated practices, reinforcement and rewards (Biech, 2008; 203; Zhou and Brown, 2015:6; Syafei & Ulfah, 2020:200). From the behavioural perspective, learning is all about changes in behaviour. Their efforts have been to recommend strategies and techniques to learning that could be useful in strengthening and moulding stimulus-response associations, embracing the use of instructional clues, modelling, individual practices/experiences and feedbacks (Miller, 2009:1; Zhou & Brown, 2015:6-7). Instructional clues refer to the behaviour introduced by the trainer in which a learner is expected to participate and the conditioned environment where the reinforced behaviours is to occur (Mitenberger, 2008:73). The demonstration of wanted behaviours by the trainer in giving examples to their learners is referred to as modelling (Miller, 2009:1). According to Zhou and Brown, (2015:8), modelling is also called observational learning, learners observe the behaviour of the coaches or their instructor and attempt to demonstrate the observed behaviour. During learning practices, learners rehearse and repeat desired behaviours, while the trainer provide

feedback in the form of rewards to learners that effectively replicate desired behaviours and also provide corrections on areas that were not properly executed. Feedback, rewards and reinforcement are critical to behavioural theory of learning.

Behaviouralists believe that learners' behaviour is modified and influenced through positive or negative reinforcement. According to Wei and Yazdanifard, (2014:9) "Reinforcement is the process in which a behaviour is strengthened by the immediate consequences that reliably follow its occurrence". Positive reinforcement is a powerful strategy and technique for building additional skills and knowledge of learners. It encourages and strengthens new patterns of behaviours by promising rewards to learners when the correct conditioned behaviours are exhibited. However, behavioural approach to learning is criticised on many fronts. From the observational learning perspective, critics of behaviourism challenge the theory on the ground that by observation people can learn and acquire new skills and knowledge from their social environment (Schunk, 2004:83).

This study argues that, positive reinforcement can be used in the development of women into leadership positions. Since this study is on the development of women's leadership capacities and proficiencies, the behavioural theory is of utmost importance. Biech, (2008:203) explain that behavioural approach to learning is most suitable for trainings intended to cultivate the psychosomatic, intellectual and interpersonal knowledge and abilities of employees. Women can be trained on effective leadership skills through positive reinforcements. The training exercise should be repeated overtime until women gain confidence to apply learnt skills and knowledge without necessarily being encouraged by others. Women's constant practices of leadership skills is a precondition for effective learning and for achieving desired changes in their behaviours (i.e improvement in the confidence level of female managers). This is because according to Zhou and Brown, (2015:11), transformed and rehearsed behaviours have low tendencies of fading out completely or to be easily extinguished. Women's constant practices of management skills (on-the-job training) should be followed by feedbacks and adequate motivation. The more encouraged learners become through positive feedback, the more the tendency for them to learn faster and repeat appropriate behaviours. Incentives for women could be in the forms of providing female managers with good working conditions, equality remunerations, freedom at work and the deconstruction of existing organisational patriarchy

structures, to allow the promotion of more women into leadership positions. In supporting this theoretical assertion on women's career motivation, the findings of this study showed that the elimination of patriarchy, explicit and implicit bias, discriminatory attitude, and maintaining an equitable and conducive working environment, including a deliberate acceleration of qualified women into senior leadership roles wherein they have been previously overlooked will serve as a significant career motivation for female managers (see Sections, 6.2.2, 6.2.10, 7.8 and 7.12).

#### **4.3.2 Cognitive learning theory**

While behavioural theorist maintains that learning occurs primarily through externally induced influences, cognitive theorists argue that learners employ their internal mental association and structures in their acquisition of knowledge (Graduate student instructor teaching and resource centre {GSIS}, 2016:5). Psychologists such as Jean Piaget and Williams Perry in the 1950s, express dissatisfaction in behaviourist strict emphasis on observable learners' behaviours and proposed a theory to learning that pays close attention to mental processes. Simply put, it is a mechanical observation of activities and happenings taking place inside the human brain: how information is collected, absorbed, stored and transformed in the human brain. Cognitive theorists develop an approach to learning that focuses primarily on mental processes rather than on environmental circumstances that results in observable and measurable changes in behaviours (Doloriert, 2017:9). They see the brain as the information processor that transmit, appropriate and store any activities received from the external environment. The brain is the information management seat that collects, organises and restructures other related cognitive functions and external environmental events (Makany *et al.*, 2009:2). From a cognitive psychology perspective, the brain is the most essential part of learning, and it is used to make sense of the happenings of the external world. Changes in behaviours are observed, but are used to indicate what is going on inside the learner's head.

Cognitive learning theory (CLT) is a conceptual framework for understanding how the human brain collect, transform, retrieve and process information, which eventually leads to the production of knowledge (Harasim, 2012:4). Cognitive learning theory provides theoretical explanation to why the human brain is considered as the most implausible network of information processing and bodily interpretations as learners



acquire new skills. The theory argues that the human brain is the centre of learning, in that the human mind is the processor of information just like the computer. According to Harasim, (2012:11) cognitive psychologists sought to explore what was in the “black box” of the human brain with the view of emulating it computationally. The brain receives sensory information from the environment and transforms it into symbolic proposition that serves as compass and direction to further behaviour and action (Schunk, 2004:85). Common to cognitivist approach is the assumption that knowledge is something that is actively constructed by learners based on existing psychological experiences about environmental events. In other words, knowledge is self-organised and dependent on symbolic mental representations of the learner; for example, imagery proposition or sensory pictures (Halls, 2014:2). Learning involves using the memory to restructure and coordinate experiences from the environment, either by creating new insights or clarifying and modifying what is already known. According to this school of thought, knowledge and skills are acquired through learner’s application of their experiences, idea senses, perception and thought processes (Çeliköz, *et al.*, 2016:31). Cognition involves a reflective process that help to increase self-confidence, critical thinking, problem-solving skills /abilities and instils love for continuous leaning. It also helps learners gain a better understanding of the phenomena under study. However, the cognitive learning theory was criticised on the ground that learners rely solely on their own cognitive abilities and actions in trying to gain knowledge (Stewart, 2012:11). Agreeing with the critics of the cognitive learning theory, human beings do not exist in isolation, environment and cultural factors greatly impact and shape individual’s cognition and ways of perceiving the world. Social and cultural factors (i.e. parental upbringing and gender) which influence learning process and people cognitive abilities (Loh & Teo, 2017:194), was neglected by the cognitive learning theorist.

Note taking is a typical example of external cognitive techniques that can be applied to assist and optimise learning. Makany *et al.*, (2009:2) maintains that, “note taking is a central aspect of complex human behaviour related to information management that involves a range of underlying mental processes and their interactions with other cognitive functions”. Good notetaking does not only require a learner to understand and write down self-organised information, but also to engage their mental competence to sieve, re-structure and re-organise an existing knowledge and

importantly to be able to store and use freshly processed information. Engaging in group discussion that enables perspective-taking is also another powerful cognitive development strategy. Group discussion enables the learners to be actively involved in the learning process. Stewart, (2012:10) citing the empirical studies of scholars such as Dochy *et al.*, observes that when an active and constructivist learning approach were applied, the learner acquired more knowledge, and display durable retention of the learnt skills. Accordingly, women can be trained on how to improve their mental abilities and critical thinking skills through active discussion and participation in board room, which is critical to learning and in turn personal development. Group discussion, especially one that values gender diversity and perspective will help improve women leadership skills (Fujimoto & Hartel, 2017:1121) and amplify female managers unique voice, opinions and perception, which are often underutilised, constantly doubted and, suppressed at decision-making levels (Morak, 2018:2; Ferguson, 2020:81; Evans & Maley, 2020:13). In confirming the assertion of on the underutilisation and suppression of female managers during decision-making, the empirical findings of thesis showed that female managers, especially younger intelligent female directors, who try to speak-out and participate during boardroom meetings face intense intimidation especially from their male peers (those between the ages of 40 and 45), who try to overpower their ideas and innovation; male managers frequently underestimate and devalue females managers capacities because of their internalised parochial beliefs on gender roles (see Section 7.10). Since cognitive learning is based on personal application of constructed knowledge (Çeliköz, *et al.*, 2016:31), female managers may acquire skills for solving complex societal problems by applying their imaginations. Unfortunately the empirical findings of this thesis shows that female managers who try to use their imaginative thinking to bring about positive changes are often perceived rude, disrespectful and as deviating from the standard set by men (see Sections 7.11 and 7.12).

#### **4.3.3 Social learning theory**

Stewart (2002:13) explains social learning theory as the transformation of the behavioural and cognitive learning theories. Psychologist Albert Bandura, (1977) is the founder of the Social learning theory and proposed that learning occurs in reciprocal interactions between people in their environments. Bandura's, (1977) social

learning theory embraces the underlying assumption that people learn by observing and copying the behaviours of other people (Razieh, 2012:5). Thus, the theory explains how individuals (in the case of this study women public officials) learn new behaviour, attitudes, values and knowledge from their social interactions with others in the environment. According to this theorist, by observing the attitude and behaviour of others, a person can develop a similar or an identical behaviour to the observed (Smith & Berger, 2009:440). This is through watching, assimilating, emulating and then replicating the behaviours of the model. Smith and Berger, (2009:440) explain that people memorise, remember and emulate new behaviours, especially if they consider the observational experiences as positive or one that can elicit rewards. Learners are likely to imitate a behaviour if the new behaviour is seen to result in more valued outcomes than those they do not perceive as having favourable consequences. Social learning theory assists learners to observe the consequences of behaviours in others in a social environment before using such behaviours to guide future actions (Botha *et al.*, 2013:216). Social learning theory is also known as observational learning or modelling.

According to Groenendijk *et al.*, (2011:2) observational learning is a continuous interaction that occurs between cognition, behaviour and influences emanating from the environment. In other words, observational learning takes place when the actions, including the consequences for another person, are observed through the imagination of the observer in a social context, then serve as guidelines for future actions by the observer. This type of learning is contextual; it is based on the relationship and influence between social groups and institutions. Because human beings make choices, learning may occur without necessarily resulting in changes in behaviour (McGuire, 2014:24). This form of learning depends on social institutions and context to cultivate, broaden, and deepen learners' thinking skills and constructive/meaning-making processes. Social learning theory emphasises external social reinforcement, attention to mental processes and motivation. Although social learning theory has its origin in the basic concepts of behavioural approach, Bandura, (1977) argues that social reinforcement alone cannot sufficiently account for all forms of learning (Matthewman *et al.*, 2009:279). The social learning theory contributes a unique social element, which suggests that most human behaviour could be cultivated observationally through modelling of imitated behaviours.

The concept of a role model is initiated by social learning theory (Botha *et al.*, 2013:216). It proposes that people will seek to model the actions of others who they perceive as perfect or successful. In other words, an observer will try to replicate the behaviour of their role models. For example, most women believe and model the behaviours of professional women and, in most cases, the success of professional women dispel their doubt and instil self-confidence concerning a profession or career path. The assertion that the leadership achievement of professional women positively impacts the confidence level of women in lower positions is supported by this study (see Section 7.12). The concept of role models reinforces mentoring initiatives as ways of enhancing professional skills development and ensuring the success of a talented pool of employees within an organisation (Meyer, 2007:286). Through role modelling, women managers can be supported in making significant advances in knowledge to enhance their professional leadership skills and competencies. According to LeNir (2016:38) social learning is “based on the premise that our understanding of the content is socially constructed through conversations about that content and through grounded interactions, especially with others, around problems or actions”. Since leadership is contextual, women managers can develop leadership skills through their conversations with other managers. For example, through engaging in discussions with experienced managers or mentors on finding ways to solve current problems, women managers can develop critical problem-solving skills.

In the context of training and development, women (public) managers could participate in an organised work environment; this is in a form of a reciprocal relationship, where their behaviour influences the environment which, in turn, influences their modes of action and behaviour. Women (public) managers can learn and participate in group discussions, practising certain behaviours of groups of colleagues. There is a likelihood that through active participation, women can master new leadership skills as they continue to practise and interact with other managers within an organisational environment.

#### **4.3.4 Action learning theory**

The foundation of Action Learning Theory can be traced to different philosophies of knowledge. However, Revan (1998) is often cited as the father of the theory. Just as the name implies, action learning is learning by doing; involving critical reflections on

real life issues with the support of groups or sets of colleagues for the purpose of working out solutions to solve an identified problem (Vince *et al.*, 2018:87-88). Action learning proceeds from the underlying assumption that learning is the central goal, and that learners should be empowered, taking full personal responsibility for their learning, whilst getting support and encouragement from group members (Pedler, 2016:423). Action learning theory is a real-world, group-based, workplace social activity that draws together people with similar problems for the purpose of providing solutions to those problems. The theoretical assumptions of action learning theory confirm the empirical findings on the development of women-only leadership training, which could be used to bring female managers together as a social group sharing similar workplace challenges (see Sections 6.2.18 and 7.14). MuLaughlin and Thorpe (1993:19) describe action learning as an approach to leadership training and development where groups of managers' (public and private sectors) brainstorming, asking of questions, sharing knowledge, opinions and ideas for tackling complex problems. The idea is to help individual managers to expand on their management skills and competencies through the support from other managers, mutual respect for each other and without having to leave anyone behind in the overall progress and attainments of target goals. Marquardt and Bank, (2010:161) mention that, recently, the action learning theory is has been recognised as an important organisational tool not only for solving complex problems, but also for developing managers' skills and capacities for effective work operation as well as for building good teamwork.

Management learning and skills acquisition are the most practical and effective training measures through critical reflections and scenario-based discussions on real life problems with groups of managers. Individual managers learn through personal reflection on their work experiences, believing in other colleagues for gaining insight and new ways of resolving organisational problems. The exchange of thoughts, ideas, experiences and knowledge among and between senior leaders as colleagues is proved to promote women's leadership (Brue & Brue, 2016:84). The assertion that the exchange of leadership experiences and perception among women can improve women's leadership is supported by the empirical findings of this thesis (see Section 7.12). In applying action learning to the leadership development and empowerment of women, less experienced women can engage in discussions on leadership and management skills with highly experienced colleagues or a coach, who could act as a

partner, encouraging them to think, reflect and take actions in solving complex organisational problems. Learning by doing enhances continued learning cultures, promotes the acquisition of new skills and knowledge (Bessen, 2105:4), improves self-confidence and assertiveness, improves the problem-solving skills of individuals and teams, promotes emotional intelligence, encourages critical thinking, decision making and actions, and encourages learning from individual personal experiences and teams as well as enhancing group performance (World Institute for Action Learning {WIAL} (2018). Collaborative learning, critical thinking, and reflections through learning by doing is essential for leadership skills development, as leadership skills and competencies cannot be learnt by the mere reading of books.

One can argue that the practical experience from discussion and interaction among colleagues' form one of the most essential learning methods in the work environment. This is because participatory learning promotes a democratic approach to learning and also plays a significant role in encouraging collaborative organisational learning, including the assumption that people are able to learn skills relevant for meeting job demands from their team (Wood, 2020:65). In support of the argument, Van Velsor and Gurvis, (2007:308) report that leaders of organisations are of the strong opinion that the majority of their remarkable developmental experiences and achievements occur from their interactions with other colleagues, rather than from organised or formal classroom training and educational experiences.

#### **4.3.5 Experiential learning theory**

The experiential learning approach was popularised by David Kolb in the 1970s and 1980s, which suggests that experience is the basis for learning through reflective observation and actions (Walton & Valentin, 2014:33). The experiential learning approach concerns itself with learning that occurs through making sense of experiences, involving elements such as active engagements, conscious reflection, and transfer (McGuire, 2014:27). Experiential learning is a cyclical process by which learners create knowledge through the transformation of their own experiences. It is a human form of learning that begins with an action and the observation of the consequences of that action, an understanding of the outcomes of that action, the comprehension of that action and the transformation of that action to test whether it can lead to more efficient operations (Smith & Rosser, 2007:4; Walton & Valentin,

2014:33). According to Jordan *et al*, (2009:199), experience, as a concept, is difficult to define because it integrates inner and outsider actions, cognitions and perceptions and results in personal interpretations from the internal and external world. Walton & Valentin, (2014:33) describe experience as the interaction with the environment, of which the learner is both the controller and the significant player. Learners build upon prior experiences through cognition and set foundations for future experiences. Roberts, (2011:4) explains that learning occurs as learners consciously reflect on encountered experiences, and development of connections and links with previously acquired knowledge. This experience-based technique to learning requires the learners to understand, grasp and then transform experiences into meaningful knowledge. Dobos, (2014:5085) states that, for effective learning to occur, experience must be engaged in the right situations and, for learning to become successful, learners must be exposed to learning environments and experiences that will facilitate reflection and critical thinking. Experiential learning can also be described as learning by doing, just like the action learning theory.

According to Walton and Valentin, (2014:33), experiential learning is a model for adult learning, and explains how people acquire knowledge, grow and develop through direct associations and interactions with concrete experience. McGuire, (2014:27), explains that experiential learning theory is based on the preposition that learning can become more operative if it is based on the experiences and emotional context of the learner. McGuire (2014:27), believes that people can learn more easily through deeper involvement and active participation in real problem solving. Figure 3.1 presents the experiential learning cycle.

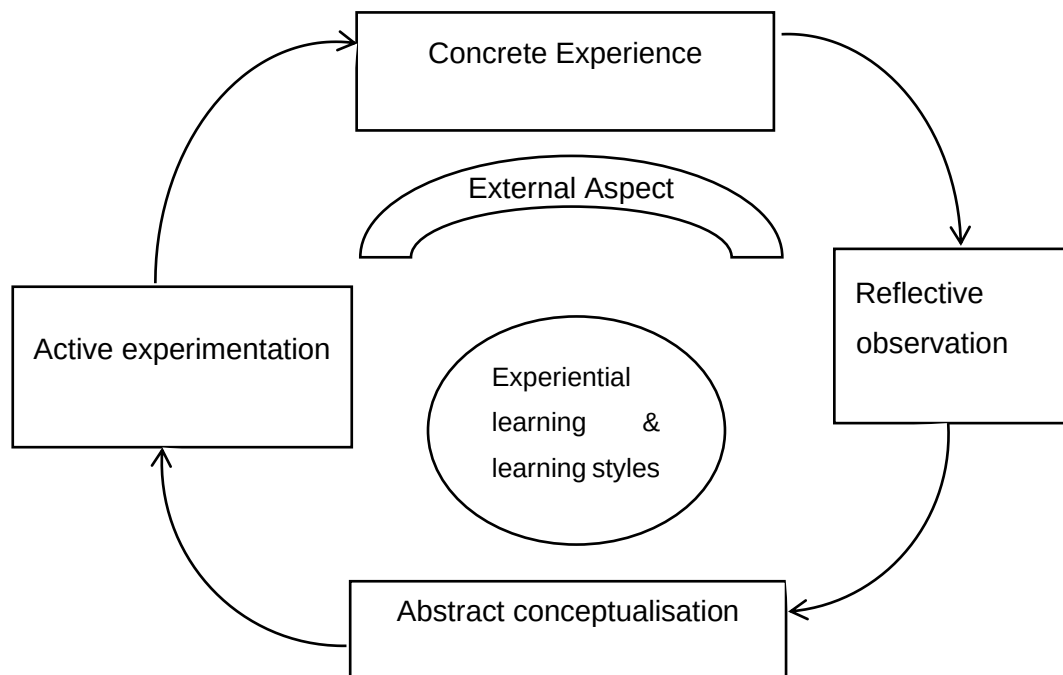


**Figure 4. 1 Experiential learning and learning styles model**

**Source: (McGuire 2014:28).**

Figure 4.1 shows the four stages of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, active experimentation, abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation. As shown in Figure 4.1, the process is cyclical, which means that the process is continuous; there is no start or end to the cycle. Concrete experience involves the individual actively participating in a new experience or a reinterpretation of an existing experience from which knowledge can be shaped. Women's exposure to outdoor experiences, organised workshops, transition to new job responsibilities, seminars, and off-job activities such as participating in community development. According to Jordan *et al*, (2009:199) concrete experience is observed through reflective observation; the process of analysing, watching other people and questioning events around them and/or reflecting on one's own experiences before drawing general conclusions. Women (public) managers can reflect on training experiences provided through executive coaching, mentoring, stretch assignments, feedback and succession planning. This process is followed by abstract conceptualisation by which the learner formulates concepts and theory to explain experienced actions and generate standards that could guide future experience and decisions. Women managers (especially in the public sector/service) will connect to



guided discussions and demonstrations from tutors to theories and abstract concepts as the engendered theories and concepts are verified through trial and error in new situations through active experimentation.

This study argues that an experiential learning model is essential for the empowerment and development of women, including those in management positions, because it involves critical reflection and doing. Dobos, (2014:5085) observes that conscious reflection is suitable for professional development because it facilitates deeper learning processes, links personal experiences with learning, and transforms learning into meaningful performance. Through a reflective practice of experienced activities, women managers (in the public sector/service and local government sphere) can be able to draw general conclusions and apply their newly acquired knowledge in real situations in subsequent performance if given the opportunity. Experiential learning as a basic problem-solving technique inspires the capacity for critical thinking, reflection and the operationalisation of acquired knowledge. It deepens learners understanding of the subject matter through the process of active experimentation (trial and error) and fosters their ability to participate in life-long learning. This holistic form of learning presents environments for practise and experience that result in profound, meaningful and continuing learning practices, and an action-oriented behavioural modification that is effective both at a personal and organisational level (Walton & Valentin, 2014:33; Roberts, 2011:10).

#### **4.4 Human Resource Development**

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a name that is often used to present the latest evolutionary phrase in the history of organisational training, education and development to help workers at personal, group and organisational levels for the purpose of enhancing their occupational abilities, knowledge, talents and proficiencies towards achieving organisational goals (Twyford, 2014:14; Wilson, 2005:9-10a). Tracing the history of HRD, Carbery and Cross, (2015:2) wrote that the term was first used by Harbison and Myers in 1964, within the purview of human capital development. Harbrison and Myers were both economists who believed that national growth and development were dependent on HRD. The human capital theory suggests that economic growth and productivity are achieved through employees'

skills and capacities, and that investments in employees' professional development are made through training and education (Carbery & Cross, 2015:2). The concept of adult learning and organisational learning are a critical component of HRD and they are indispensable for increasing the human capacities of adult employees and for higher organisational performances.

Although the theoretical foundation of HRD can be traced to adult learning, it is not necessarily a division of adult learning (Wilson, 2005:9(b); Swanson & Holton III, 2009:4-5a). While some people perceive HRD as a core component of HRM with one strategic function, others consider the concept as totally different, and use them interchangeably or even in conflicting perspectives (Richman, 2015:121). For example, some writers suggest that HRD is a department within an organisation that supports HRM functions to employees' training and development (Haslinda, 2009:183). Wilson, (2005:9) argues that, within an organisational framework, where HRD is considered as a function of HRM, it is concerned with the improvement of employees' proficiencies, but where it is seen as an element of adult learning, its efforts are primarily towards promoting human learning and development. Haslinda, (2009:183) points out that HRD as a field of practice is evolving into an independent discipline. Werner and DeSimone, (2012:9) accentuate that HRD is a primary function of HRM. However, HRD and HRM practices are targeted towards the development of human capacities for improvement to meet organisational goals and objectives.

The concept of HRD is defined in different ways by various academic scholars. Thus, there is no universal agreement among researchers, universities and human resource practitioners on a common identity of the term. This is because the concept is studied, and is still being studied from wide-ranging perspectives. Although various academic scholars have attempted to define the concept, controversies still exist as to what HRD is, including where the boundaries of the field lie (Hamlin & Stewart, 2010:200; Mateng'e, 2014:693). However, Hatcher and Bowles, (2006:5) contend that the strength of the discipline lies in its complexities and infinite boundaries and that, while a unidimensional approach may successfully solve an immediate problem, there is the possibility that it might have adverse effects on long-term needs. Wilson, (2005:9) notes that demarcating the boundaries of the field might have unfavourable effects on the discipline. Meanwhile, Swanson and Holton III, (2001:145-146b) explain what they

consider as the philosophies of the discipline which include; a belief on human learning as a channel for employee's growth and development; a belief that organisational performances and productivity are enhanced and improved through education and training and a commitment to individuals' advancement.

Although it is concerned with learning and skills training like some fields of study, HRD is critically distinct from occupational training. The concept is more into facilitating learning, education and training for developing organisational, societal and individual objectives (Meifert, 2013:4; Carbery & Cross, 2015:2). Haslinda, (2009:181) sees HRD as an organised organisational activity conducted within a specific time and intended to produce behavioural changes through learning processes. Werner and DeSimone, (2012:4) define HRD as a systematic and planned effort by organisations targeted at providing employees with opportunities to learn and acquire necessary skills that will be required to meet future and current job challenges. HRD is a planned organisational learning activity directed at improving skills, performance effectiveness and individual's growth for developing the organisation, individual, and groups and for improving employability (Tseng & McLean, 2008:419; Stewart & Sambrook, 2019:142). Swamson and Holton III, (2009:6-8a) identified 16 distinct definitions of HRD. After a study of those definitions, the following are key components of the definitions of HRD.

- improving human potential
- Adult learning and skills acquisition
- Behavioural transformation for effective functioning and improved performance
- Enhancement of organisational effectiveness
- Career development
- Organisations' growth and development
- Facilitating training and learning
- Developing, enriching and unleashing skills
- Talent management and development

Hamlin and Steward, (2011:203) provide a comprehensive definition of HRD, which states that:

“HRD encompasses planned activities, processes and/or interventions, designed to have an impact upon and enhance organisational and

individual learning, to develop human potential to improve or maximise effectiveness and performance at either the individual, group/team and/or organisational level, and/or to bring about effective, beneficial personal or organisational behaviour change and improvement within, across and beyond the boundaries (or borders) of private sector (for profit), public sector/governmental or third voluntary sector (not-for-profit) organisations, entities or any type of personal-based, work-based, community-based, society-based, culture-based, political-based or nation-based host system”.

Thus, at the heart of HRD is the enhancement of individual/group skills for effectiveness and the improvement of organisational performances and effectiveness to meet operational growth through the development of relevant skills, knowledge and competencies.

Strategic HRD is a framework for equipping managers and senior administrators with the right skills and knowledge necessary for operational performance in their strategic domains which are unpredictable and more emergent in nature (Garavan & Carbery, 1991:24; McClean & Collins, 2019:187). Meyer, (2012:3) argues that, owing to the dynamic and uncertain nature of leadership domains, strategic HRD must be sufficiently flexible to embrace more emergent changes in work organisations. The objectives of strategic HRD are towards the empowerment of human resource capacities to ensure that they possess the right proficiencies and competencies needed to meet performance expectations. Strategies HRD is aimed at supporting learning, people’s development and performance enhancement. Hale 1991 (cited in Tseng *et al.*, 2008:418; Stewart & Sasmbrook, 2019:142) argues that HRD professionals must strive towards encouraging and promoting organisational learning to generate performance results, address real problem-solving skills, and to provide a detailed account to societal issues. It is the central responsibility of strategic HRD practitioners to establish strategies for skills development and to create a learning organisational culture to boost employees’ continuous learning for development.

The significance is that employees, such as women managers in the public sector/service and the local government sphere may tend to be absolute, and

therefore see the need to accept continuous learning practices and the updating of their leadership skills, talents and knowledge invaluable due to the turbulent and disrupted work environment, thus, stimulating their interest and desire for active involvement and participation in the development of their human capacities and becoming more aligned with their career advancement in the workplace (Werner & DeSimone, 2012:8). Scholars such as Hale, (1991) (cited in Tseng *et al.*, 2008:418 and Frank (cited in Wilson, 2005:9a) linked HRD to learning activities that improve job performance, productivity and relatively permanent modifications in behaviour, which would be dependent on the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. In a similar vein, Gelletlies, (2008:20) reports that progressive organisations devote a significant amount of money to the investment in HRD to foster continuous learning and to create professional career structures to support workers' performance. HRD is at the heart of human capacity development and the furthering of leaning in the context of an organisation (Werner & DeSimone, 2012:8; Gelletlies, 2008:20), HRD could be relied upon to prepare women with work related skills, knowledge and behaviours to tackle current and future job demands. According to Bierema, (2016:119) HRD has a critical role to play in addressing the issues of diversity and sex inclusion in the corporate world, particularly through the creation of structures and cultures hospitable to women, and which accept and embrace women's leadership and styles. However, it is observed that current HRD theories do not address the unique challenges of female managers because most leadership theories are produced based on masculine traits and are highly essentialised (Bierema, 2016:119). Metcalfe, (2011:132) also adds that fundamental principles underlying the field of HRD have not adequately considered gender workplace issues such as sexism, workplace incivility, misogyny, recruitment and promotion bias and the prevailing power dynamic within organisations.

As alluded to in this section, HRD and HRM are linked and in, some situations, scholars use them interchangeably. In most organisations, both small and large, the HRM department is in charge of all issues relating to employee's recruitment, staffing, promotion, learning, compensation and benefits (Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgrapersad, 2016:166). According to Carrell *et al.*, (2018:190), the purpose of selection is both to identify and employ candidates with the best abilities and capacities for specific positions. However, this contradicts the findings of Gipson *et al.*, (2017:35), and Glass and Cook, (2016:51), who argue that, when it comes to selection into senior

management positions, men generally have distinct advantages over their female counterparts. Similarly Osituyo, (2018: 79) and Player *et al.*, (2019:1) respectively observed that the public service still does not recruit, promote and support the advancement of female workers on par with their male counterparts. Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgrapersad, (2016:170) mentioned that the South African public sector's discriminatory practices prevent intelligent women from accessing positions of power and influence, including their promotional opportunities. Stamarsk and Hings, (2015:1) support the finding of Osituyo, (2018: 79) and Player *et al.*, (2019:1) that the inequalities of women are mostly perpetuated and enacted through discriminatory HR practices (as alluded to in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6). Stamarsk and Hings, (2015:1) argue that discriminatory HR related decisions and practices are a product of biased organisational structures, practices, and cultures. The DPSA, cited by Bangani & Vyas-Doorgrapersad, (2020:2), noticed this recruitment bias, emphasising that women are mostly considered for positions with lower monetary values and less power to influence policy decisions.

Glass and Cook, (2016:51) found that women are more likely than men to be appointed into high-risk management positions, while Ryan and Haslam (2005: 81) asserted that women are mostly appointed into precarious leadership positions, what they label as the *glass cliff*. Organisations appoint women into leadership positions during crises due to the belief that women are good at calming riotous situations (Glass and Cook, (2016:51) by applying their feminine characteristics, which Bruckmuller and Branscomber, (2010:433) considered as valuable during times of tragedy.

#### **1.11 4.5 Human resource development process to training and development**

Training and development are HRD strategic tools designed to enhance individual, groups and organisational learning, to improve human potential, to develop work-related knowledge, expertise and to maximise performance. Training is an organised and systematic procedure for transforming the full talents, attitudes and behaviour of employees for the accomplishment of organisational goals (Vermeulen, 2011:76; Louw & Kahn, 2010:184). Training is a critical essential for developing the talents of both current and newly recruited employees with those capabilities that are required to perform organisational activities effectively. Any organisation that wants to excel must invest meaningfully in the training of its staff. Alternatively, development is a

systematic framework and an intervention that leads to the acquisition of knowledge, experiences and new skills for personal growth and advancement (Nda & Fard, 2013:91). Development is focusing on the expansion of human capabilities and talents through learning processes for effective performance on numerous job functions both now and in the future (Bell *et al.*, 2017:305). It is a broad term and more encompassing than training; it is future-oriented and encompasses some forms of training to make the best out of individuals through inspired personal learning (O'Toole, 2010:422). According to (Carbery and Cross, 2015:6), development is an ongoing process that leads to the acquisition skills for long-term career development purposes, rather than for immediate job performance. Onichakwe, (2013:257) states that development is an ongoing process by which leaders acquire new skills and competencies for future administrative jobs. Development is focused on individual self-learning for personal growth and capacity enhancement, rather than on the learning situations. Development opportunities offered by organisations to employees could be in the forms of mentoring, coaching, experiential learning, and action learning among others.

Employee development programmes are offered over a period of time by employers, usually planned to ensure that employees acquire the work related skills necessary to optimally carry out their responsibilities (Babio & Rodrigues, 2010:396). Vermeulen, (2011:79) maintains that, “employee development can include competency-based training to obtain knowledge of a peculiar skill with a view to enhancing an academic’s present job performance, to prepare employees for changing demands and to introduce new tools or technology in the work environment”. Specifically, in this era of innovation and knowledge-based economy, training and development has expanded further than normal, from improving adeptness on manual jobs to preparing and developing leaders with the skills necessary to approach and accomplish the complex and ever-shifting inevitable changes in leadership responsibilities (Noe *et al.*, 2014:). Swanepoel (2016:32) maintains that the most noticeable reasons to invest in the training and development of public managers is that it will enable them to become more efficient, experienced, innovative, and well-informed on their jobs.

Training and development provide managers with the opportunities to improve themselves in their current job and to prepare for future job promotions. Swanepoel, (2016:32) maintains that when employees (managers) are provided with opportunities

for self-improvement and career development, they tend to believe that their efforts and talents are recognised and appreciated by their organisation, consequently promoting employee job satisfaction, employee retention, employee commitment to work and outstanding performances (Terera & Ngirande, 2014:43). Unfortunately, women have been denied training and career development opportunities in almost all organisations (Ely *et al.*, 2011:478; Brue, 2017:46; Brue & Brue, 2016:75). Deducing from the study of Gipson *et al.*, (2017:39) on *Why is leader development important?* women's lack of interpersonal awareness (self-confidence) could be a result of inadequate leadership training and development. The lack of access to leadership development opportunities deprived women of the privileges of improving their skills for senior management positions. This study argues that, irrespective of the provisions for ensuring gender parity in leadership by the government locally, nationally and globally, without continuous investment in the training and development of women for senior management and leadership positions, the good intentions of government will be jeopardised. Osituyo, (2017) supports this assertion, arguing that challenging gender inequality in the public sector requires investing in women's career development and supporting their skills for contribution to higher productive activities (see Sections 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3, and 7.13.4).

#### **4.5.1 Employees training**

Training is one of the most important functions of HRM and a frequently encountered tool for employees' development either in small and large organisations (Cumbell & Kuncel, 2001:278). In fact, it is generally acknowledged that training programmes provide employers with the opportunity to strengthen and build the knowledge, behaviour and attitude that workers must improve and which they require to perform more efficiently and effectively (Buckley & Caple, 2008:6). Training is a learning exercise and experience that seeks to bring about permanent capacity change in a person through cultivating their full potential to achieve effective performance in ranges of organisational activities (De Cenzo & Robbins cited by Van Dyk *et al.*, 2004:426). Training is a short-term planned organisational activity to modify behaviour and competencies through learning practices, for example through formal learning and skills programmes (Buckley & Caple, 2009:6; Botha & Coetzee, 2017:7). Obi-Anike and Ekwe, (2014:66) define training as a course of diet and a learning process that is purposefully organised by organisations for developing the intellectual, interpersonal



and psychosomatic skills that will make employees qualified and to keep their employability. Organisations in the public sector/service and local government sphere organise internal employee training programmes to bring about speedy improvement on employees' job performance and effectiveness through skills development, capacity building and behaviour modifications (Botha & Coetzee, 2017:7; Obi-Anike and Ekwe, (2014:66). Contrary to this assertion by Obi-Anike and Ekwe, (2014:66) and Botha & Coetzee, (2017:7), the empirical findings from this study show that the DKKDM does not have any internally developed training programmes for the capacitation of public managers within their job specification (see Sections 6.2.14, 6.2.15, 7.10 and 7.11)

Training programmes help to facilitate skills, knowledge and experiences for the better use of human potential (Obisi, 2011:82). It prevents skills and knowledge obsolescence, especially for employees previously marginalised (for example women) and those who are unable to adjust to emerging changes in technology (Obisi, 2011:82). Employees' skills training helps to update skills and knowledge that will enable employees to be in tune with current work demands, advancement in technology and complexities attached to their jobs (Buckley & Caple, 2008:9). Training programmes prepared for the development of leaders equips them with the abilities and capacities to deal efficaciously with evolving complexities and changes that are inevitable in their job functions. Van der Westhuizen, (2016:4) reports that the proficiencies for government institutions to accomplish their constitutional mandate of effective and efficient service delivery is largely dependent on the competencies of the public service. Leadership skill development programmes are crucial in any government institution, especially in the local sphere of government as changes occur due to external and internal pressures, and the volatile nature of service delivery (Mpehle & Kanjere, 2013:764). Public administrators respond to those change only if they possess the needed skills and have already been trained with relevant skills indispensable to respond to public service delivery appropriately. Therefore, it becomes critically important that public administrators are exposed to training programmes that will equip them with the capabilities to cope with any modifications in modern public institutions. When leaders are fully developed to become well experienced in their job functions, either in large or small organisations, the outcome

is high-level productivity and effectiveness both at the individual and organisational level.

Ledlow and Copper, (2013:153) maintain that, for leadership and management training to be successful, it must be designed (1) to advance the conceptual and analytical capabilities of leaders, (2) tap personal developmental needs, agency, self-efficacy, and interest (3) cultivate and improve certain teachable skills (4) help leaders with directions on how to move far beyond interpersonal blocks. Most organisations (in the public and private sectors) recognise that leadership training and development programmes provided for leaders are an indispensable component for promoting both present and future operational growth (Smith-Doerr *et al.*, 2011; Dragoni *et al.*, 2014:66-67), hence they invest significantly in training programmes for culturing high potential. However, women do not benefit from the traditional leadership programmes as much as their male counterparts because they are less integrated into important organisational networks and development programmes, which are critically essential for leadership advancement (Ely *et al.*, 2011:478; Brue, 2017:46; Brue & Brue, 2016:75; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:294). The theoretical assertions on women's inability to access career mentors, coaches and their lack of integration into the leadership pipeline through succession planning is confirmed by the empirical findings of this thesis (see Sections 6.2.15, 7.13.2; 7.13.3 and 7.13.4).

Vinnicombe and Singh, (2003:294) argue that the manner in which contemporary organisations (public and private) approach management and leadership training needs to be changed to ensure that women are not only present, but fully participate in management and boardrooms of today and tomorrow. The traditional training programmes established by organisations (public and private) for leadership advancement do not meet the distinctive developmental needs of women (Brue & Brue, 2016:75; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:294; Brue, 2016:46). They have currently resulted in the reproduction of male leaders in almost all echelon positions of organisations, just as those of previous generations. Currently, women managers (public and private) face daunting leadership challenges in organisations (Al-Kayed, 2015:41-42), and their self-esteem, personal agency and instructional needs are neither improved nor met by customary leadership training initiatives (Brue & Brue, 2017:75; Hopkins *et al.*, 2008:351; Brue, 2016:46; Debebe, 2011:682). The leadership challenges faced by women are evident in the lack of self-confidence and skills that

continue to question women's leadership participation in all sectors of the economy. The male-centred traditional leadership training, produced by men, also expects women to act and lead like men (Brue, 2016:46) when they break gender role beliefs (Eagly & Carli 2007 cited in Debebe 2011:682). Brue (2017:46) contends that the dangerous leadership development situations faced by women managers, together with the expectations that they should lead like their male counterparts necessitate the creation of the CareerTech Women in leadership (CTWL) programme. CTWL is a women's-only leadership development (WOLD) approach established to empower women to develop their leadership tactics and to provide them with opportunities where they can freely relate with other women, share their leadership insights and experiences, and tackle unique organisational challenges threatening women's leadership advancement. One might question the pertinence of the purposive creation of WOLD. Vinnicombe and Singh, (2003 cited in Hopkins, 2008:349) accentuate that, because men and women are different, for example in personal achievement, value orientations, self-concept, self-development, self-concepts and learning approaches, they therefore require a different leadership training approach.

Scholars such as Brue and Brue, (2016:83-90), Mpehle and Kanjere, (2013:765) and Vinnicombe and Singh, (2003:294), argue that women face leadership development challenges that are unmet by conventional leadership training programmes. Therefore, they ratify and implement women's-only leadership development (WOLD), tailored to meeting the developmental needs of women. Findings from the programme were impressive. According to Brue and Brue, (2016:78), "WOLD programmes enhanced leadership development by providing a diverse framework involving personal assessment, formalised training, feedback opportunities, experiential learning, coaching, mentoring and network development, which were gender distinctive and provided gender-sensitive instructional strategies". Learning was based on group discussions and real-life situations. This process allows women the opportunity to learn from highly experienced female leaders, reflecting and reinterpreting their unique leadership experiences, challenges and perceptions of other women, and in a more conducive environment where they were free to ask questions relating to their jobs, particularly on areas not cleared without fear of evaluation (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:300). The empirical findings of this study confirmed that the women-only leadership development programme will provide female managers with the opportunities to learn from professional women with ground-breaking leadership records and, in the process, their confidence level is improved (see Sections 6.2.19 and 7.14). Aside from giving women the opportunity to share their unique career experiences with other women, the finding also indicated that female managers will have the opportunity of meeting face-to-face with professionals whom they aspire to emulate, asking them questions that affect their jobs and career advancement (see Sections 6.2.19 and 7.14). Reports from the finding indicate that women who participated in the programme perceived themselves as better equipped

and fit to undertake higher level positions. There was a noteworthy transformation in personal growth, development and in self-efficacy. It promoted women's self-confidence, self-discovery and authenticated leadership desires and approaches. The reports from other empirical studies that women-only leadership development programmes can help to boost women's confidence, personal growth and leadership skills acquisition is supported by the empirical findings of this thesis (see Section 7.14). Women's specific development programmes are adopted by organisations seeking to facilitate the emergence of women with the potential for top leadership. Brue and Brue (2016:75) state that women's leadership training initiatives deliver to organisations opportunities to value women managers as an indispensable business asset and resource.

#### **4.5.2 Education**

Education plays a pivotal role in the acceleration and enhancement of analytical and functional capabilities. It transforms experiences and practices, builds skills and knowledge and thereby unlocks access to numerous opportunities for individuals to take up gainful jobs and improved livelihoods (Buckley & Caple, 2008:6-7; Levchenko *et al.*, 2017:1). The correlation between gender equality, quality education, better livelihood, increase in family incomes and employability is widely documented. From a detailed review of literature, evidence indicates that education enhances productivity, reduces poverty and inequality, determines subjective well-being, sustains employability, increases earning capacity and ensures sustainable growth and development (Levchenlo *et al.*, 2017: 1; Somani, 2017:125; The World Bank, 2017; World Education, 2018; Efendi *et al.*, 2019:324; Segovia-Pérez, *et al.*, 2019:1). The findings of this thesis confirm that education through a deliberately planned leadership training and career development intervention such as coaching, mentoring and succession planning can enhance women's employability within all management structures (see Sections 6.2.17, 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4). This will subsequently lead to poverty reduction, improved personal and family well-being, equality and sustainable growth and development. From literature, better-educated women are likely to become gainfully employed, have access to quality health, good nutrition and be empowered to make effective contributions to the development of themselves and their communities (World Bank, 2017; World Education, 2018). In short, all these factors put together can support an individual, families, societies, nations and the entire humanity to break out of poverty.

There is a renowned proverb among African people that “if you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nations)” (Suen, 2013:61). Similarly, Aggrey (cited in Tembon & Fort, 2008: xvii) argues that the surest way to way to keep a person down is to educate the man and neglect the woman. “If you educate a man you simply educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate the family”. This is because it is widely believed that, when given the right opportunities, women play significant roles in the development of their families and communities, which form a nation. According to England *et al.* (2012:2-4), less educated women are less likely to be employed in productive jobs, hence, they are more exposed to poverty and sexual violence. Education is key for the advancement of women’s human rights and achieving gender equality. Greater investment in women’s education will lead to more women in leadership, reduction in poverty, societal growth, increases in economic productivity, gender equality, and health and well-being (Tembon & Fort, 2008: xix). Quality education accessible to women can transform them into ground-breaking, competent, innovative and inspirational leaders of tomorrow. A survey on women on MBA education in the US conducted Catalyst in 2000 found that most women believe that more female role models in leadership and management positions can stimulate more women to pursue management education (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:296). Therefore, women who have attained higher educational qualifications in management can help to stimulate the educational interest of other women in leadership. The assertion that professional female managers can help to encourage more women to pursue various management positions within government institutions is supported by the empirical findings analysed in Sections 6.2.18 and 7.14 of this thesis. Importantly, young girls and women must take personal responsibility for putting their educational careers first and taking their academic work seriously as it is a significant pathway to disentangle themselves from cultural domination, gender violence and social inequality (Skrbinjek, 2020:415-416).

Somani, (2017:125) argues that, women are disadvantaged when it comes to access to equal quality educational opportunities regardless of numerous global declarations, developmental interventions, equality frameworks and progressive efforts by the international societies to bring about equality in education. Sen, (2017:1) confirms this argument stating that men have more advantages in accessing quality higher

education than women. However, in the last few years, research investigating gender issues in education revealed that women's educational levels in almost all age categories has increased comparable to men in most developing countries around the world including South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2017:53; National Commission for the Promotion of Equality {NCPE}, 2015:4). For example, in South Africa, Statistics South Africa, (2017:53) reported that more females than males are graduating from tertiary institutions yearly in almost all disciplines.

Governments in most countries of the world, including the RSA, have taken proactive steps through policies, legislative initiatives and national student financial aid schemes to make education more attractive for young girls and boys. It can be argued that, although women are equipping themselves with educational qualifications, getting the majority of the degrees each academic year from colleges and universities such as bachelors, master's and doctoral (Jasko *et al.*, 2020:3; O' D'Agostino, 2017:10), employers still believe that men possess better leadership experience and technical skills than women overall (Thomas & Drake, 2016:178; Carli & Eargly, 2018:248), which is reflected in leadership preference. In African societies, educated women are suffering from unemployment and rejection in their professional careers, despite having same educational degrees as their male peers. One might question why the educational status and degree achieved by women is not proportionate to their representation in senior management roles. Although studies revealed that educational qualifications attained from colleges and tertiary institutions alone might be insufficient to equip prospective employees with the skills, competencies and experience needed to obtain and maintain employability in strategic management positions (Higher Education South African {HESA}, (2009:2) Dosunmu & Adeyemo 2018:193). Scholars argue that, in addition to acquiring a tertiary educational degree, leadership skills, knowledge and experience including people's occupational choices are crucial elements that determine professional status and progression in the corporate world (Thomas & Drake, 2016:178; Dosunmu & Adeyemo, 2018:193). Nonetheless, research demonstrates that high-potential women with educational degrees, work related skills and ambition to pursue leadership careers find it very difficult to access senior positions in public institutions due to gender prejudice (Gipson *et al.*, 2017:34; Bangani & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2020:1-2). The empirical findings of this thesis confirm the assertion that educated, highly intelligent, qualified and

experienced women face intense hurdles as they try to access directorship and senior management positions in the local sphere of government (see Sections 6.2.9, 6.2.7, 7.5, 7.8 and 7.12).

#### **4.5.3 Succession planning**

Succession planning is a necessary condition for talent management and for organisations (public and private) to survive successfully with any prearranged and unexpected surprises that might emanate from employees occupying top decision-making and leadership positions (Ganu & Boateng, 2012:70-71). According to Singer and Griffith, (2010:1), succession planning (in the public sector/service and local government sphere) is a deliberate and systematic effort designed by an organisation to identify, evaluate and develop talented employees for leadership continuity within the different departments, units and divisions of the organisation. Succession planning focuses on talent management, employees' performance, management and talent development in top positions to ensure continued success (Rothwell, 2010: xix; Islam, 2017:535). Succession planning is an internal organisational process where candidates with high potential to assume leadership position are identified, trained, nurtured and developed with the right skills, knowledge and experiences. From this, the recruitment and retention of the talent of women for critical decision-making positions, which Maroka, (2018:2) identified as a stubborn global challenge, could be addressed through conscious succession planning. Doyle-Morris (cited in Islam *et al.*, 2017:535) indicates that the implementation of effective succession planning could assist in bringing more women into senior leadership positions according to their qualifications, talent and experience. However, the recent study of Islam *et al.*, (2017:535), conducted in Bangladesh, shows that succession planning is not used by organisations to identify, retain, develop and advance women into senior leadership positions. In confirming the theoretical claim by Islam *et al.*, (2017:535) the findings of this thesis showed that there is no formally established succession planning in the DKKDM, which has resulted in some bright women leaving the municipality to organisations where they can advance their careers (see Sections 6.2.15 and 7.13.4).

The identification and development of high potential workers assists an organisation to prepare for present and future needs by ensuring that the right employees are occupying the right positions at the right times with the right capabilities to do the right

thing and to achieve the right results (Singer & Griffith, 2010:1; Kazen, 2014:29). Huynh, (2016:756) holds that, apart from the developmental opportunities to prepare identified successors, succession planning enables an organisation to carefully select, appraise talent pools, and play critical roles in motivating leaders to become more efficient and productive in performing their responsibilities. Succession planning encompasses leadership training programmes to nurture, broaden and deepen professional skills, expertise and the knowledge of employees. Kazen, (2014:29) states that the process of identifying, attracting, motivating and retirement of employees define an organisation's achievement in terms of building "talent pools". Due to an aging population, budget cuts, globalisation and a changing workforce (Jarrell & Pewitt, 2007:297), succession planning has become an essential HRD tool for developing leaders and for enhancing government performance and accountability (Kim, 2003:533). In world of unpredictable and continuous organisational change, developing leadership talents is crucial, and it is necessary for public institutions to have a long-term plan in place to ensure that functional activities will continue even when talented employees decide to leave the organisation.

The development and retention of the best talents promotes organisational sustainability, well experienced pools of talented leaders that will be available to assume leadership roles as they become vacant. By nurturing and grooming talent pools within the organisation, there is the assurance that reliable and consistent internal human resources are available within all departments and division and units, thus preserving institutional memories of the organisation. Succession planning assists employees to realise their potential and strengthens their career ambitions. Vinnicombe and Singh, (2003:294) maintain that the underdevelopment of women's potential by government institutions can be regarded as a severe waste in the battle of talents. Shepherd (2017:82) argues that the scarcity of women in decision-making positions is an indication of the failure by organisations to effectively maximise the talents of women, which could be due to poor or lack of implementation of succession planning as identified by scholars such as (Ngomane, 2017:3986, Islam *et al.*, 2017:535). Poor or inadequate implementation of succession planning means that some women face the challenge of remaining on one level, they are either developed or improved for the next level positions within the organisation. This implies that the failure by public institutions to adopt an effective succession plan as a strategy for



improving the managerial competencies of women contributes to inequality between men and women in leadership positions. However, women's career stalling and gender inequalities can also result from the problem of balancing family and work (see Section 2.7.6.3) and when they face discrepancies and prejudices in the workforce (see Section 2.7.6.3). Church, (2014:235-235) observed that most public managers show little concern for succession planning, which will eventually limit the impact on the development of a long-term pipeline of employees, in this case women.

According to Böhmer, and Schinnenburg, (2018:63) the talent pipeline for women in government institutions is both leaky and blocked. That is to say that, even if women comprise more than half of the world's human capital (Schwab, cited by Morak, 2018:2), they're rarely identified, and are blocked out from the pipeline of talented leaders; as a result their talents are neither recognised nor tapped. This study argues that the failure to fully harness the skills of women in the public sector, for example in the local sphere of government, could result in the wastage of talent and skills which Christo and Bussin, (2017:2), describe as indispensable for economic growth, community development, good governance, and human development. Morko, (2018:2) and Diversity Best practices {DBP}, (2017:2) suggests that Identifying, and investing in the development of women with outstanding performance, especially those with the potential and ambition to lead, is an obvious means of creating a sustainable pool of talented female managers that can assume senior management roles. As indicated in Sections 1.1 and 2.7.3 respectively, retaining and developing qualified women managers to undertake leadership responsibilities is critically important for the survival and success of contemporary organisations. The local sphere of government must create diversity talent strategies for the retention and advancement the next generation of competent female leaders. Talent pools of women managers can be cultivated, sustained and maintained across all levels and occupations in the public sector through career development planning, access to mentoring and coaching opportunities, networking and career sponsorship (Mavundla 2009:46; DBP 2017:2; Vermeulen 2015:489; Evans & Maley, 2020:16). The following section focuses on employees' career development.

#### **4.5.4 Employees' career development**

Many organisations are increasingly investing in the career growth and development of their employees in the pursuit of becoming an employer of choice (McGuire, 2014:54). In a similar vein, career-minded individuals are looking for organisations that are willing to invest in their career growth and skills development (Agba *et al.*, 2010:105; McGuire, 2014:54). Merchant, (2010:1) states that employees are persistently clamouring for their personal growth and development from employers through conscious determination to advance their careers with the purpose of updating their skills and knowledge. Employees view the constant updating of their skills as indispensable for sustaining their employability, greater commitment to their job responsibilities and to secure resilience and self-sufficiency in the labour market. According to Vermeulen, (2015:489) the meaning of career development has evolved from the mere focus on employees' acquisition of skills for their work progression to professional growth, attaining flexibility including continuous evaluation and nurturing of those skills for maintaining employability and content for a long period. In support of the assertion by Vermeulen, (2015:489), the working environment is not static. Citizen's demand is constantly changing. Hence, to sustain employability as well as maintain professionalism, public managers need career development interventions that will enable them adapt to the changing demands of society. Moreover, the recent survey conducted by Towers and Watson with over 32 000 employees from 26 countries across different types of businesses reveals that career development opportunities is one of the key reasons that prospective recruits choose to join and remain with an organisation (Timms, 2016:10). Creating opportunities for skills development in line with personal needs can attract potential employees to join and remain within an organisation.

According to Sinha and Sinha, (2012:149) career development is a formal approach taken by an organisation to ensure that employees with the appropriate qualifications and work-related experience are available when the organisation needs them. It suggests improving employees' skills, talents and employability to broaden access to a wide range of potential job opportunities and ways to retain talented employees for the more efficient functioning of an organisation. Career development is an ongoing, planned effort arranged by an organisation to improve and empower human resources in the light of both employees' personal needs and the organisation's strategic needs

and objectives (Agba *et al.*, 2010:105; Zacher *et al.*, 2019:357). As illustrated in Figure 4.2, career development is a well-structured and planned arrangement to match employees' developmental goals, performance potential and work preference with the goals and operational objectives of the organisation.

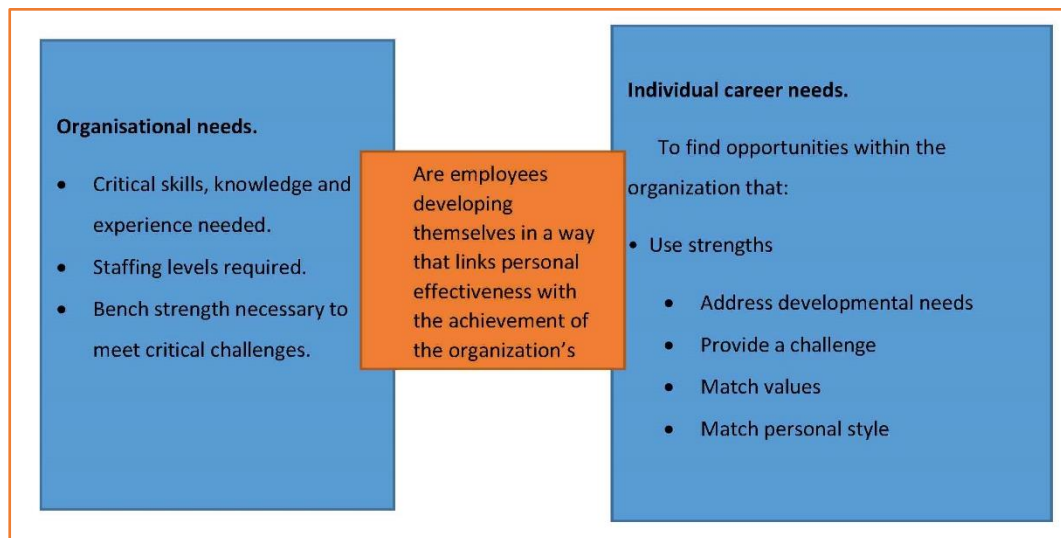


**Figure 4. 2 Career development system.**

**Source: Gutteriddge *et al.* (1993:2)**

**Figure 4.2** indicates that career development is the core responsibility of both the employees and the organisation. Organisations strive to accomplish objectives through employees' skills and experiences, whilst employees want to reach developmental goals through the organisation. Therefore, there must be cooperation between employees and the organisation, because it is impossible to achieve their separate goals unilaterally. Patrick and Kumar, (2011:24) argue that career development necessitates the initiatives of both the organisation and the employee if both are to achieve maximum goals and benefits. Burack, cited in Xiao *et al.*, (2018: 456) further explain that both the individual employee and the organisation will benefit wholesomely when there is cooperation and collaboration on career development. However, it is broadly documented that the ultimate responsibility for career growth and development lies with an individual employee (Vermeulen, 2015:486; Schreuder & Coetze, 2016:64; RSA, 1997:14; RSA, 2011:19).

Even if an organisation provides career training and development opportunities for self-advancement, employees can either reject or accept those offers. Individual career choices, which influence their career development and the specific professional

areas to be capacitated are gendered. Individual differences exist in self-construal and self-efficacy (Le Ber & Shapiro, 2017:165; Fritz & Knippenberg, 2017:591a; Sheppard, 2018:1-2). Scholars such as Grogor & O'Brien, (2015:1093-1094) and Hoobler *et al.*, (2014:703) state that, even with the same educational qualifications and skills, men are more likely to aspire to achieve higher leadership positions than their female counterparts (Grogor & O'Brien, 2015:1093-1094; Hoobler *et al.*, 2014:703). Grogor and O'Brien's argument lacks validity in light of the fact that women are not, in essence, passive but they are forcefully pushed out by a myriad of challenges (Fritz & Knippenberg, 2017:591a; Nie *et al.*, 2018:29). For example, most women managers lack support from their family and organisation to balance both family and a complex work life which would enable them to forge ahead in their chosen careers. Employed mothers deviate from their previously chosen career paths and ambitions for family causes, actions and decisions that mostly obstruct their leadership attainment and career advancement (see Section 2.7.6.5). Similarly, women lack equal access to career development opportunities within public organisation, for example, career counselling, sponsorships, and important leadership development programmes such as mentoring and coaching opportunities, succession planning and networking relationships (see Sections 4.5.3, 4.5.4 and 4.5.5). The study conducted on 3014 US women of which 2410 are professional working women and 604 are college women within the ages of 18-64 by Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler {KPMG}, (2018:2) on understanding how the ambition to lead is established and cultivated in women found that there is no shortage of leadership desires among the surveyed women. Evans and Maley, (2020:5) further explained that, at the start, women's leadership ambition is similar to that of men but, over time, women's zeal for professional career advancement diminishes due to their exposure to, and frequent experience of, glass ceilings in their working environment. Deductively, many women have the desire to pursue professional leadership careers (see Section 6.2.6). Nevertheless, their desires are often frustrated by circumstances beyond their control. For example role stereotyping, recruitment bias and expectations on their traditional gender roles. The assertion that bright women's leadership zeal is frustrated by factors such as the lack of access to career development opportunities, family responsibilities, biased recruitment and role stereotyping is supported by this study's findings analysed in Sections 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.5, 6.2.7, 7.8, 7.12, 7.13.1, 7.13.2 and 7.13.3).

Interestingly, irrespective of women managers' unavoidable dual responsibilities, women's leadership career advancement and ambitions can be stimulated through career development schemes and support from professional managers. Vermeulen (2015:486) mentions that managers within various departments of organisations can assist employees in advancing their careers through the following responsibilities:

- creating awareness on employee's career aspirations; managers can stimulate employees career consciousness by providing guidance and counselling
- providing employees with information on self-development materials and training and development opportunities that can be of immense assistance in meeting their career aspirations and, in turn, the functional objectives of the organisation
- making training and development opportunities available and readily accessible to individual employees

Based on the suggestions of Vermeulen, (2015:486), managers should be held accountable and constantly evaluated for the career development and advancement of talented women within government institutions, including local government as a sphere of governance. The empirical study conducted by Van Dijk and Morwamohube, (2015:21) in the *South African National School of Governance* (NSG) showed that public managers occupying strategic positions within various departmental levels do not support gender mainstreaming, with a focus on the leadership development and the advancement of women. In confirming the findings of Van Dijk and Morwamohube, (2015:21), the findings of this thesis analysed in Section 7.12 showed that most senior managers, especially male managers as those predominant in influential positions do not support women's professional career development and leadership advancement.

Career development processes/functions include; mentoring, coaching, sponsorship, work engagement and challenging work assignments (Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:228). Mentoring and coaching are discussed in the next section.

#### **4.5.5 Mentoring**

The pertinence of mentoring in both private and public organisations, including in the RSA, has received enormous attention during the past five years. In short, mentoring

is recognised globally as one the most powerful career development tools that assist a person to develop the talents and knowledge necessary to become successful in their chosen career (Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:225; Chong *et al.*, 2020:96). Mentoring is an effective strategy for accelerating organisational learning and personal career growth. Importantly, mentors are generally known as educators, counsellors, tutors, instructors, teachers, and coaches among others.

According to Eby *et al.*, (2013:441) mentoring is a developmental relationship between a highly experienced older individual (mentor) with an inexperienced individual (protégé) working in a related field through dialogues and guidance. Mentors provide directions, instructions and suggestions to protégés using their expertise, powers, experiences, knowledge and influence. Schreuder and Coetzee, (2016:301) view mentoring as a career development support aimed at enriching the skills, knowledge and capabilities of employees for further career growth. Within an organisational context, it is a dyadic relationship that takes place between a mentor and a less skilled employee, where the mentor provides guidelines and learning insights to the employee to enable them make significant improvements in their knowledge, visions and career experiences. Dzickowski, (2013:352) asserts that mentoring has emerged as a dynamic training and development scheme for cultivating talents, including the leadership capabilities of both current and newly employed leaders. Mentoring is a developmental and empowering tool. It helps to unlock and develop the potential of people, stimulates critical thinking abilities, increases decision making, emotional intelligence and reduced anxiety from work (McQuade *et al.*, 2015:324; NCPE, 2015:3). The relationship between the mentor and the protégé is established on the basis of learning, and both the mentor and protégé are positively influenced by the process.

The benefits of mentorship for both parties include greater professional competence, career mobility, personal growth, accelerated employability, enhanced work promotion, an increase in earning capacity and career achievements (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008:95; Dzickowski, 2013:352; Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:228). The theoretical claim that mentoring can assist in improving employees' capacities, personal development goals and professional growth was supported by the findings of this thesis analysed in Section 7.13.2. Mentoring relationships are of two types, formal mentoring and informal mentoring (Wasburn, 2007:58). An informal mentoring

relationship is believed to be more effective than a formal mentoring relationship. An informal mentorship relationship concentrates on work-related issues through interactions, sharing of personal goals, experience, values, information and professional advice. Mentors address work problems by providing encouragement, suggestions, friendly support and information to employees through pragmatic and objective counselling. Meyer, (2007:279) characterised a mentor's role as being twofold. Firstly, a mentor helps an employee to develop work behaviours and capabilities, for example through coaching, stretch assignments in the form of on the job training and development that will move employees away from their comfort zones. Secondly, a mentor provides psycho-social support through guidance, counselling and role modelling. Workplace mentoring can become more effective and efficient if the mentors are willing to transfer potential skills onto lower employees who have not yet developed or even discovered these skills.

A considerable volume of research on mentoring demonstrates that, when compared with non-mentored employees, those employees with mentoring experience have high levels of job satisfaction, positive career results and are more productive, less vulnerable to social stress and anxiety as well as being better accustomed to navigating organisations' values (Eby *et al.*, 2008:225; University of Wolverhampton Business School, 2009:3; Gordon & Melrose, 2011:14). Harvard Business School, cited in University of Wolverhampton Business School, (2009:3) and Meyer, (2007:279) report testimonials of a considerable number of professionals and specialists (CEOs of companies), attributing their career successes to mentoring activities. They also claim that their career progression was only possible through the help and support of mentors in their specific fields. These are obvious reasons. Meyer, (2007:279) describes mentoring as a valuable and powerful talent management strategy that can be used to enhance a person's career development and to guarantee the success of talented employees in an organisation. Additionally, Mitchell *et al.*, (2015:1) maintain that the existence of mentors in an organisation forecasts positive implications, not only on employees' work related attitudes, but also leads to good team relationships, decreases turnover intentions, improves job satisfaction and increases self-esteem. Similarly, the survey conducted by Working Mother Research Institute (DBP, 2017:12) reports that working class women with mentoring experiences were far more satisfied with their companies than those without mentoring

experiences. This assertion on the benefits of mentoring cannot be fully confirmed by this present study, due to the lack of an established formal mentoring system, which has culminated in women's lack of mentoring experience in the local government sphere (see Sections 6.2.15 and 7.13.2).

Ehrich and Kimber, (2016:228) indicate that the works of early researchers in the field of mentoring provided concrete support to the argument that mentoring activities are indispensable for women's career development. For example, Ehrich and Kimber, (2016:228), the in-depth experiment conducted on women directors and the surveys of Dodgson, (1986:28) carried out on Canadian women educational executives found established mentoring relationship to have positive consequences on women's career growth and enhancement. Additionally, contemporary writings and research by scholars in the field (DBP, 2017: 13; Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:228; Yokwana, 2016:1392) also reverberated this position that mentoring is significant for women's professional career development. For example, a recent study conducted by Feeney (cited in Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:229) on public servants in the United States found that access to mentoring programmes is most valuable for accelerating the career outcomes of male and female public managers.

Mentoring is an excellent way to nurture and cultivate the leadership abilities of both genders for professional career advancement, and to empower them to cope with constantly emerging work demands. Women managers with mentoring experience report the importance of mentors as an essential factor in their leadership achievements and personal development (Al Ariss, 2014:269). In spite of the benefits of mentoring as a catalyst for career progression and leadership capabilities enhancement, it becomes heartbreaking that women managers find it more difficult to identify mentors for career progression (DBP, 2017:13; Ragins & Cotton, 1999:542; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2002:296). Women do not have access to mentoring relationships in the same way as men, such that female protégés are often not selected by either male or female mentors (Yokwana, *et al.*, 2016:1399). The work of Washington, (2010:2) points out that women not only encounter intense problems locating a mentor, but it is also challenging for them to identify a mentor that is willing to help them grow their professional skills and provide accurate feedback on their leadership performance. Yokwana *et al.*, (2016:1399) states that women are unable to find mentors because it is believed that women are not serious with their career



progression. Yokwana, *et al.*, (2016:1399) and Mahasha, (2016:20) found that some people (men and women) are not willing to mentor women based on the presumption that women have numerous family responsibilities that might interrupt their participation in a mentoring relationship. The findings of this study confirm the assertion that women face difficulty in identifying career mentors, not necessarily because they are not serious about advancing their career as claimed by Yokwana *et al.*, (2016:1399), but owing to reasons such as (1) the limited number of professional women in senior leadership roles, (2) male managers are not driven to mentor women, (3) most female managers do not have the time due to the complexity of their leadership functions and (4) the lack of interest by few female managers to mentor other women (see Sections 6.2.15 and 7.13.2). Hansman, (2002:40) and Chandler, (1996:93) explain that the thought of sexual harassment is a noticeable reason why mentors prefer not to choose protégés of the opposite sex. The situation is that male mentors prefer to mentor male protégés and female mentors prefer to mentor only female protégés. Previous investigations by researchers like Blake-Beard, (2001:336), Hansman, (1998:66) and Hansman, (2002:40) confirm that effective mentorship relationships for women are influenced by the gender of their mentors. The research by Yokwana, *et al.*, (2016:1399) contradicts the works of Hansman, Hansman, and Blake-Beard, stating that gender does not influence the successful mentorship of both men and women, “as there are no gender differences between the mentorship functions provided by male and female mentors”. However, if an organisation is to match mentor and protégé of the same sex for leadership development, there will be scarcity of women mentors. This is due to the under-representation of women in senior management levels in organisations, and there are just too few women in leadership to successfully mentor other women for leadership (Al Ariss, 2014:269). Women mentors as role models are essential for women’s leadership and career development, as women generally believe that if other women can both achieve and succeed in top executive positions, they could also succeed (Brue & Brue, 2016:47).

#### **4.5.6 Coaching**

More recently, executive coaching is an approach that have been advocated by scholars as both powerful and effective for advancing senior managers’ professional career development and for performance enhancement (Gray, 2006:475; McNamara, 2014:6; DeRue & Myers, 2014:836; Roelof, 2019:49). Coaching is a professional

synergy and action-oriented form of learning for maximising the full potential of senior managers and to help them improve their job performance (McNamara, 2014:6; the South African College of Applied Psychology {SACAP}, 2018). It is a dynamic process, a dialogue and outcome driven type of learning that is organised to cultivate an individual's intellectual skills and abilities to enable them to reach their true potential both in personal life and in their occupation. Coaching is one of the powerful techniques for developing managers' capabilities and for the cultivation of skills for effective leadership. The coaching process involves closing skills gaps, the discovery of new information and the development of behaviour, ethics, attitude and values that can enhance competences (McNamara *et al.*, 2014:2537; King-Daniel, 2020:87). Executive coaching is a common scheme used by organisations to strengthen leadership training and skills development (Hopkins & O'Neil, 2008:348; Gan *et al.*, 2020:3-4). This study's findings confirm the assertion that coaching is a vital career development instrument for developing sound leadership skills and proficiencies in women for maximum performance in their job roles (see Section 7.13.3). However, coaching can be effective only if the relationship between the coach and client is founded on mutual trust and collaboration, coupled with the ability for the coach to be able to address the client's personal and professional needs (Boyce *et al.*, 2010:915). Respect, mutual trust and effective communication are necessary for successful coaching. Identifying a good match between the coach and clients in the form of compatibility is as valuable as the coaching itself and critical for effective coaching outcomes.

In leadership coaching, the coach is usually called a consultant; in a one-on-one partnership relationship with a manager who is confronted with complex leadership functions as thought partners for resolving work-related issues, promoting personal learning and professional development. According to Nigro, (2007:2) and Ely *et al.*, (2010:585), the essence of coaching is to realise the goals and needs of the managers, helping them resolve specific problems (personal or professional) and to consistently bring out the best in them and others around them (Nigro, 2007:2; Ely *et al.*, 2010:585; Yuan *et al.*, 2019:487). Coaching enables managers to consciously reflect, and take actions and personal responsibility in formulating their own responses, and not the coach providing managers with the answers or informing them on what to do. As such, clients learn through critical reflections on real life problem-

solving through the guidance suggested by the coach as accountability partners who support people to reach their objectives. A reflective process is critical for leadership skills development because it is through the reflective environments of leadership coaching that senior managers' capacities are most effectively cultivated and enhanced. Mankin, (2009:160) accentuates that a coach can be likened to a colleague or manager working with employees to motivate them in their jobs roles, help them develop work-related skills, attitudes and behaviour, and provide reinforcement and feedback on managers' performances. Scheeper, (2012:25) asserts that coaching typically involves feedback on the clients' strengths and weaknesses through observation, interactions, psychological assessment, 360-degree instruments, or personal interviews. The coach maps out the development of an action strategy to effect a change for the enhancement of clients' performance. According to Rosinski (2010:220), although coaching may contribute to an organisation in terms of improving workers' performances "at the end of the day, the coaching investment can only be sustained if it serves the organisation by adding value to its stakeholders".

Downey, (2003:16) opines that effective workplace coaching delivers achievement, satisfaction and joy that not only benefit an individual employee, but also advance the organisation itself. The author (Downey, 2003:16) argues that the achievements, such as skills modification, improved performance and expansion in knowledge and capabilities, will be sustained. This is because coaching is centred more on learning and development and because the self-confidence of employees is persistently improved through thought-provoking questions and assessments that challenge critical thinking. This leads to self-reflection and self-awareness, creative insights, new ways of thinking and improved decision making. Unlike a theory that one must first read from books and journals before applying, coaching is pragmatic and involves realities on occupational practices, and takes into consideration the personal needs of individuals (Mankin, 2009:160).

Hopkins *et al* (2008:348) articulate that coaching focused on women could be important for many reasons, especially due to their developmental concerns or needs. From existing literatures, the developmental needs or concerns of female managers include how to develop strong self-confidence, agency, genuineness (Hopkins *et al.*, 2008:348) and the development of confidence in the management of their maternal responsibilities (Ledge, *et al.*, (2017:883). Hopkins *et al.*, (2008:348) mention that

coaching aimed at integrating women's development with organisation's practices and policies that may never consider and recognise their desire to be communal, pursuing accurate feedback, acting unpretentiously and their bonding time with their family may be a vital for women. Despite the advantages of coaching for career success and advancement, O'Neil, *et al.*, (2015:254) argues that the under-representation of women in management roles accounts for the shortage of research on executive coaching for women managers. Laff, (2007:18) states that one fifth of over 3 000 surveyed human resource practitioners in the US suggest that women managers do not receive equal coaching to their male counterparts in leadership positions. Additionally, Ely *et al.* (2011:474), put forward that, generally, women receive less feedback on their leadership attitudes, behaviours and performance from their managers than men. Furthermore, O'Neil, *et al.*, (2015:254) argue that executive coaching is gender-friendly, however, to become more effective for the development of women, the executive coach must take into consideration gender differences, the potential impacts of women's leadership development and the organisational and social systems that make the overall content more problematic for women.

#### **4.6 Capacity building in the local sphere of government**

The local sphere of government in South Africa is extremely significant because of its position as the sphere of government closest to the public, and deals with endless varieties of services that affect both the economic, environmental and social well-being of all South Africans (Venter & Landsberg, 2013:134). According to Sebola, (2015:1) the local sphere of government in South Africa remains the foremost governmental institution for the delivering of municipal services within government dispensation. Siddle and Koelble, (2012:3) mention that, through the creation of different municipalities in the new democratic dispensation, the local sphere of government became the centre for municipal service delivery, and the first port of call to all individuals and communities to experience government and public administration. The local government is constitutionally authorised to provide wide-ranging basic, but essential, services that materially touch on the lives of all citizens dwelling within its area of jurisdiction, and deals with practical political, economic, environmental and social matters of the Republic (Sebola, 2015:1; Koma, 2010:113; Siddle & Koelble, 2012:3). Arguably, the achievement of the Constitutional mandate vested in the local sphere of government through various municipalities depends on the competence,

skills, attitude, and knowledge of municipal employees, which can be accumulated, trained and strengthened through various capacity building initiatives.

Capacity building is a term that lacks a common definition in practice, both internationally and in the South Africa public sector (Peters & Nieuwenhuyzen, 2014:275). Departments within the various spheres of government used the term in both a broad and loose fashion. Asha, (2014:803) states that the concept of capacity building within government institutions (including various municipalities) may be understood in different ways, and differently to just exposing employees to training and skills development. D. Ndou and Sebola, (2016:47) conceptualise capacity building within the context of the South African public sector/service (including the local government sphere) as an intervention strategy put together by the national government to improve and develop their organs' abilities for maximum performance in their strategic aspects of governance. Within the context of the local sphere of government, capacity building can be described as an action-based concept that entails an internally developed approach and the establishment of a partnership with external stakeholders (such as national and provincial government) with the aim of cultivating the specific skills and knowledge of municipal employees towards resolving policy problems and in meeting the needs of the local community they serve (Asha 2014:803; D. Ndou & Sebola, 2016:47; Van Niekerk & Taaibosch, 2017:14). This study defines capacity building as a continuous, incremental and a long-term process that involves the input of different stakeholders with the aim of developing, strengthening, and upgrading institutional and employee's skills needs to drive excellence and professionalism within the local sphere of government. From these definitions, the adoption of capacity building is contextual rather than generic. In support of the stated assertion on capacity building, the findings of this study showed that capacity building interventions are germane to developing municipal staff managers with sound skills needed to pursue and achieve the specific constitutional mandates of the local sphere of government (see Section 7.13). Therefore, for capacity building interventions to achieve the desired results, impact, and outcomes they must be designed based on the realities and diverse needs of the organisation. The 257 municipalities in the South African local government sphere vary in terms of their institutional needs and capacities, especially due to their geographical locations (Khambule, & Mtapuri, 2018:31). Their uniqueness requires them to develop their individual capacity building

interventions to suit their deficiencies, productivity, and specific performance. From this theoretical assumption, basing capacity development intervention on their institutional needs will help prevent irrelevant training and wastage of resources by municipalities, a complaint laid by COGTA during the briefing on capacity building in the local sphere of government (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015).

Similarly, capacity building in the South African local sphere of government, as described by Sipiwe and Sebola, (2016:47), is the extent to which municipal administrators and employees are able to apply their skills and abilities to produce required work where intervention needs stem from employees' inability to optimally deliver on their specific performance area because of the lack of skills. The National Capacity Building Framework for Local Government (NCBF, 2012:5-9) describes capacity as, "the potential for something to happen" and as a multidimensional concept consisting of three interrelated elements encompassing individual capacity, institutional capacity and environmental capacity.

**Individual capacity** refers to the potential and competence of an employee or members of an organisation (public and private) reflected through the display of technical skills, attitude and knowledge or lack thereof, which is required for the performance of their specific job responsibilities (Kroukamp & Cloete, 2018; Greyling, & Auriacombe, 2015:98; DGOG, 211). Within the local government context, this means assigning or appointing employees to positions that suit their specific capacity to be able to maximise their skills for better productivity. The number of vacancies (30 000) in the South Africa public sector, including the local sphere of government, as alluded to by (Kroukamp & Cloete, 2018:70) demonstrates the lack of individual capacity in the public sector. Individual capacity can be developed, improved and upgraded through Adult learning process encompassing education, vocational training and other career development initiatives such as networking, coaching, succession planning and mentoring (see Sections 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.4 and 4.5.5). Institutional capacity refers to the capability, or lack thereof, found with an institution. This includes "human resource, leadership, partnership, institutional orientation, institutional memory, internal confidence, intergovernmental relations, power and functions, resources and supports" (D. Ndou & Sebola, 2016:47). The institutional capacity of municipalities can be improved through receiving supports from external institutions such as the national and provincial government. As a matter of constitutional

requirement, the national and provincial governments are obligated to provide intergovernmental support to municipalities that may include the training of municipal officials and in building their institutional capacity (Green Paper on the Local Government cited by D Ndou & Sebola, 2016:47). Moreover, Environmental capacity is the capability found outside of an institution and, as such, municipalities have little influence and/or no direct control over them. They include socio-economic (e.g. tax base) legislation, politics, geography, ecology, minerals, environmental resources, non-municipal infrastructure, and demographic composition (Greýling, & Auriacombe, 2015:99; D. Ndou & Sebola, 2016:47). The effective functioning of the local sphere of government through meeting their constitutional mandate and those spelt out in local government legislations depends on the three dimensions of capacity.

Capacity building in the local sphere of government to ensure professionalism in the sphere is driven by legislation such as the Constitution 1996, the Municipal System Act of 2000, the Municipal Structure Act of 1998, the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) and the National Development Plan (IDP) amongst others. As identified in Section 1.2, the relevant stakeholders in charge of regulating and conducting capacity building in the local sphere of government include the South African Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA), the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). Moreover, SALGA established the Centre for Leadership and Governance (SCLG) to equip public managers and elected municipal officials with leadership and governance capacities to improve their functionality, leadership effectiveness, and to drive professionalism within the complex, dynamic and non-static municipal working environment (SALGA 2017).

The training of municipal employees has been prioritised by the South African local government sphere to build human capacities in local municipalities necessary for the achievement of a developmental state (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015). A huge amount of public resources has been invested towards human capacity building and skills development in the public sector, including in the local sphere of government, to ensure effectiveness with regards to their constitutional imperatives (Peters & Nieuwenhuyzen, 2014:275; Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015). The findings of this thesis analysed in Section 7.13.1 do not support the claim that huge

amounts of resources are spent on municipal employees' capacity building because limited funding was mentioned as one of the impediments to women's skills development within the local sphere of government. As indicated in Section 4.5 of this thesis, investment in women's professional training and capacity development in the local government sphere is recognised as a critical pathway for improving their leadership skills for their inclusion within all management structures for realisation of gender equality within the local government sphere. However, there is no constitutionally established platform that is specifically targeted towards women for their leadership training and skills development in the local sphere of government (see Section 1.2). Although the local sphere of government is under obligation to embrace all gender equality policies, for example in promotion, recruitment, and other related workplace benefits (see Chapter 3). As stated in the problem statement in Section 1.2 of this thesis, the one-size-fits-all training offered by the municipalities might not be effective in the leadership skills development of women, considering their social reality, identity, and unique approaches to learning in the local sphere of government.

#### **4.7 Skills development challenges in the local sphere of government**

Extensive research conducted by researchers together with government documents from the local sphere of government demonstrate that the amount of time, effort and resources spent on capacity development have not been able to resolve the competency and skill deficiencies of the local sphere of government (Peters & Nieuwenhuyzen, 2014:275; Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2015; Tshishonga, 2019:161). Most municipalities, especially those situated in rural communities have a very low level of administrative capacity and poorly trained municipal officials, which affects the effective delivery of basic public services to the communities they serve (Tshishonga, 2019:161). Service delivery, which entails the basic necessities needed by residents within municipalities to survive both socially and economically and to live a comfortable life, is one of the major challenges facing the local sphere of government (Van Baalen *et al.*, 2015:2; Van Antwerpen & Ferreira, 2016:82; De Juan & Wegner, 2019:32; Osah & Pade-Khene, 2020:1). Van Antwerpen and Ferreira, (2016:82) state that municipalities are underperforming on their constitutional obligation as provided for in section 152 of the 1996 democratic constitution, because they do not employ competent and highly skilled people. In agreement with the claim of Van Antwerpen



and Ferreira, (2016:82), the DPSA, (2015:4) states that the South African public service is beset by its inability to retain and attract highly competent and valuable employees. Scholars continue to accentuate that the local sphere of government lacks a skilled workforce and the structures required to effectively and efficiently realise their constitutional mandate of providing sustainable and satisfactory services to meet community needs (Sebola, 2015:5-10; Van Baalen *et al.*, 2015:2). Municipal challenges and failure to attract and employ competent and skilled administrative staff is attributed especially to, but not limited to, cadre deployment by the ruling party (Tshishonga 2019:161), who seek to protect their political interests while undermining excellence, professionalism and efficiency in the sphere. The underperformance of municipalities due to the lack of administrative capacity deprives South Africans access to basic public services, such as electricity, water, housing, and health care facilities. As stated in Section 1.1.4, the situation is mostly felt by women and other indigent members of the community (see Section 1.1.4).

The inability of South African households to gain access to basic services has led to the recent service delivery protests in South Africa. These violent and destructive protests, targeted at local municipalities for poor service delivery, have been prevalent in South Africa, just as in other countries of the world such as Brazil and Lebanon (De Juan & Wegner, 2019). South Africans have recurrently protested, expressing dissatisfaction on the underperformance and low standard municipal services provided by the different local municipalities in the country, as recurrently seen in the popular media. Sebola, (2015:10) states that the actualities in local government administration in South Africa shows that adequate measures still need to be put in place to enhance individual capacity levels so that service delivery can be properly carried out. Poor public service delivery by most municipalities in South Africa is an indication that there are challenges frustrating training and development in the local sphere of government.

Cloete *et al.*, (2017:1) stated that skills development in municipalities is in potential crisis not only because incompetent facilitators are employed to train employees but also due to the failure by municipalities to adhere to values guiding skills development. Sabola, (2014:633) posits that experts employed to teach municipal staff may not provide effective training because facilitators acquire skills from the public

administration curriculum in South Africa which do not sufficiently cover the main component of local government administration as a science and its practice. D. Ndou and Sebola, (2016:46) while acknowledging the stance of Cloete *et al.*, (2017:1) and Sabola, (2014:633) on the skills challenges faced by municipalities stated that the sphere's lack of conceptualising capacity building as a fundamental aspect of a local government strategic plan is also a challenge for skills development. Other challenges impeding capacity development within the local municipalities in South Africa include, but are not limited to:

;

- failure by municipalities to embrace the ethical guidelines and values supporting skills development as a core component of HRD strategy and policy frameworks
- the lack of knowledge by municipal actors (line managers, HR departments and employees) pertaining to principles supporting skill development
- employees' poor/weak understanding and awareness on HRD policies relating to skills development, talent management employment equity
- the lack of a well-constructed and agreed plan for carrying out training and skills development in most municipalities
- the lack of opportunities for employees to practise new skills learnt immediately after training
- the lack of adequate developmental and capacity building support from the national and provincial government
- the lack of an incremental tool to align employees' performance and training needs (Nkuna, 2013:65)
- the lack of accountability and transparency on the management of resources apportioned for employees capacity building (Ngobese, 2017:40)
- the lack of a holistic approach for the effective measuring, monitoring, and evaluation of capacity-building initiatives as well as the gain and loss of skills development initiatives
- the lack of established mentoring and coaching systems and guidelines
- the lack of performance incentives to address skills gaps and performance failures within municipalities

- under-investment in the skills development of employees, particularly with regards to technical and management skills
- Unaccredited service providers who do not align skills training with employees' Personal Development Plan, (PDP), Employees Performance Management and Development system (Ngobese, 2017:2; Presidential Local Government Submmmit, 2014:3-21, Municipal Demarcation Board Capacity Association Research Report, 2012:8, Cloete, 2016:1)

## **4.8 Conclusion**

Detailed in this chapter are the discussions on various adult learning theories that can be adopted to improve women's human capacity for their leadership inclusion and maximum performance. This chapter established that the effectiveness of adult learning theory is dependent on women's willingness and readiness to learn, self-concept, social orientation, cognitive process, and ensuring a conducive learning and working environment. In Section 4.3 of this chapter, it was revealed that women who lack certain technical skills and those who were deprived access to quality education because of social inequality can be groomed and nurtured with relevant skills through adult organisational learning intervention(s). Using Williams Perry's framework (see Section 4.3), this chapter indicated that there could be gendered differences in the way men and women acquire skills and construct knowledge. Therefore, for organisational learning strategy to achieve a desired outcome pertaining to the leadership skills and the development of women, public institutions, with specific reference to the local sphere of government, must find out the developmental approach that suits women's learning style. This is one of the challenges faced by most public organisations as they strive to advance women's skills and leadership diversity (see Sections 1.2 and 4.3).

In addition, the chapter gave a discussion on HRD and its components, however, HRD theories neglect the lived experiences of women because most leadership theories where framed based on masculine realities and traits. HRD practices for example, appointment and recruitment into senior positions still favour men, which is influenced by social gender norms as well as biased organisational culture and practices in the municipal working environment (see Sections 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2 and 2.7.6.3). Furthermore, the chapter also demonstrated that women do not have access to the

HRD interventions necessary for skills upgrading, nurturing and advancement into top positions, such as professional training, encompassing succession planning, coaching, mentoring, and networking opportunities. One thing is sure, without a conscious effort to invest in the leadership training and development of women for their leadership participation at local government sphere, the same local sphere of government may never benefit from women's leadership, which is proven to increase organisational productivity, community development, gender equality, and good governance, among others (see Sections 1.1 and 2.7.3).

## **CHAPTER FIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Legislation and frameworks for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment were analysed in the previous chapter. The foundation and policy intent of the various international frameworks ratified by the South African government, including the acts, statutes and regulations initiated for the inclusion of women in public sector and local government leadership was discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter was specifically framed to outline and examine the effects and impact of those policies on gender equality and the leadership advancement of women in the public sector and, specifically, the local government sphere. Although policy frameworks ought to open the door to women's active participation in public sector and, specifically, the local government sphere of leadership, those policies have failed to bridge gender discrepancies in senior management positions, as identified in the previous chapters (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4).

Based on this, the research methodology is constructed with the aim of exploring and describing the experiences, opinions, feelings and quantitative realities of women managers pertaining to gender inequality and leadership training and development in the DKKDM. Furthermore, this chapter provides a detailed description of the research approach, research design; research instrumentation; data collection techniques; population and sampling and data analysis. The rationale for using these methods is explained within the various sections of this chapter and the techniques adopted to mitigate against the possible biases associated with any of the chosen methods are also explained. Lastly, this chapter detailed the participants' biographical information. The limitations and challenges experienced by the researcher during the research process are also discussed.

### **5.2 Research approach**

As stated in Section 1.6.1 the study follows a qualitative and quantitative research approach, commonly known as a mixed method approach. A mixed method research is an emergent research approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative data within a single research project or programme of inquiry (Johnson *et al.*, 2007:123). Tashakkori and Creswell, (2007:3) argue that mixed method represents a research

approach in which a researcher collects and analyses data, combines or merges research findings, and draws conclusions using both qualitative and quantitative research methodology in a single research project. The mixed method research methodology is premised on the systematic integration of the viewpoints of both qualitative and quantitative paradigms.

In the mixed methods research design, meaningful integration of the quantitative and qualitative paradigm enables researchers to have a more complete interpretation of the research problems or challenges than either method only (Creswell, 2014:9; De Vos *et al.*, 2011:433). The integration of quantitative and qualitative data affords the researcher a stronger understanding of the research problems, or issues, and questions. A mixed method allows for the synergistic use of data rather than single quantitative or qualitative research methods (Creswell, 2014:215). Therefore, the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodology can produce the rich, complex, and more complete information necessary to inform the proposition of a model or theory (Clark & Creswell, 2008:6). The mixed method research is purposefully selected for this study because it assists the researcher to identify and determine gender issues in public sector leadership and, specifically, in the local government sphere relatable to women's empowerment and development for leadership in the DKKDM. The use of qualitative and quantitative research methods in this study may assist in reducing different kinds of bias and provide the valuable information necessary to inform the proposed training model for advancing women's leadership roles in senior management positions, specifically in the local government sphere.

A qualitative research methodology seeks to address the questions of why, how and what of human behaviour, opinions, experiences, realities and interactions with the aim of gaining an in-depth and holistic overview of an individual, group, or community (Gray, 2014:160; Creswell *et al.* 2014:51). According to De Vos *et al.*, (2011:308) qualitative research is an approach that assists the researcher(s) to understand people's experiences, through naturalistic observations and participant perceptions (personal experience, behaviour in-depth) rather than a mere explanation of these phenomena. Alternatively, a qualitative research method can be defined as a systematic investigation that involves the use of interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires to gain a detailed understanding of the perceptions, experiences, and

behaviour of individuals and the reason behind such behaviour (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013:112). Knowing women managers' opinions and perceptions pertaining to gender equalities and women's empowerment is relevant for constructing an approach for women's leadership elevation in the public sector and, specifically, in the local government sphere. In qualitative research, the researcher is concerned with understanding the social and cultural meanings that stimulate people's behavioural patterns as well as the meanings they attribute to texts, events, and relationships (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010:4). This means that the researcher is interested in extracting meaning from the phenomenon under investigation and, as such, concentrates on the understanding of people's everyday life experiences in their natural settings (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2013:112). The researcher aims to gain insight on gender and leadership issues in the DKKDM from women managers, as the units of analysis.

Generally, qualitative research places emphasis on words, values, understanding, and interpretations rather than on numbers, facts, measurements and information (Lune & Berg 2014:4). A feature of qualitative research method is its dependence on verbal response through which the researcher gathers detailed information to address the research questions and objectives (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010:4). There are several benefits associated with using a qualitative research approach in a study including the following (Auriacombe & Mouton, 2007:445; Silverman, 2013:113-120)

- the researcher has the advantage of hearing a participant's story with the sole aim of understanding complex social phenomena from their experiences and perspectives (see Chapter 7)
- it gives the participants the chance to personally explain their identities and ideas to the researcher
- it provides the opportunity for a systematic and in-depth evaluation of responses from participants (see Chapter 7)

However, a qualitative research approach is not without demerits. For example, the major disadvantage of engaging in qualitative research is that the findings may not be generalisable outside of the specified study area (O'Reilly & Kiuimba, 2015:32). In

research, generalisation refers to the process whereby the claims of a research, or the inferences drawn therefrom are applicable in all instances (Gomm, 2009:147).

From a theoretical perspective, qualitative research relies on the interpretive philosophical framework to make logical deductions about the social world (Ritchie, 2013:11-12). The interpretivist approach is a sociological research approach that assists the researcher to understand how participants make sense of a particular phenomenon by investigating their perceptions, opinions, belief systems, values, experiences, feelings, and attitudes in a specific context (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010:17, Pham, 2018:3). With regards to this study, the research goals could be best achieved through the application of inductive reasoning. In this case, the research findings were derived mainly from frequent, dominant, or significant themes, which are inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by a more theoretical approach. In this study, the understanding and interpretation of raw data is mostly grounded on induction, discovery, and exploration.

The qualitative research approach was selected for this study because the researcher aims to investigate and establish perceptions, attitudes, experiences, and desires of women with reference to their leadership development and women's empowerment. On the other hand, the quantitative research method of inquiry is useful for statistical, empirical, and numerical inference to a larger group or audience, with real world application. The aim is to inquire about abstract concepts or ideas, to test, evaluate and improve an existing theory, to create a new theory as well as generate causative explanations for social experiences both statistically and scientifically (Bless *et al.*, 2006:17; Neuman, 2014:203). One of the major advantages of the quantitative research paradigm is its ability to apply its findings universally (Rahman, 2017:106).

Quantitative research is typically based on concrete measurement and statistical analysis, probably because it creates a linkage between empirical observations and numerical expression (Sauders *et al.*, 2012:472). According to Thomas, (2010:303), in quantitative research, concepts or ideas are examined by the researcher to measure the relationships between variables (causal, independent, and dependent among others). To Leech and Onwuegbuzie, (2007:562) there are arrays of statistical instruments for analysing quantitative data as well as, statistical software for testing the relationship between variables. This may include but is not limited to the Statistical



Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Statistical R, and Python, among others (Sauders *et al.*, 2012:472). In this study, the motivation for the use of these statistical programmes is to validate the raw data that will be collected and analysed. It will also enable the researcher to make critical deductions concerning the issues under study (see Section 1.2), to support the hypothesis, and give credence to the training model proposed for the development of women in the DKKM in the North West Province.

### **5.3 Literature review**

A literature review is a logical process of understanding, identifying and appraising an already existing body of knowledge relating to a specific topic, produced by other researchers (Fink, 2013:3). A scholarly literature review is distinguished by its ability to identify the shortcomings of existing knowledge, and its contributions to a particular body of knowledge (Snieder & Iarner, 2009:133). Kumar, (2011:31) asserts that a literature review remains the most important component of any research. Similarly, De Vos *et al.*, (2011:133) agree with the preceding notion and state that a literature review is an ongoing practice that involves additional reviews as new information and issues emerge in the research process. In addition, Bhattacharjee, (2012:21) identifies the three purposes of a literature review in a study as:

- discovering the gaps in the body of knowledge and areas concerned
- discovering articles, books, authors, theories and findings in the area of interest
- identifying and reviewing the existing body of knowledge in an inquiry

As mentioned in Chapter 1 Section 1.6.3 of this thesis, the relevance of a literature review to this study includes the following (Monette *et al.*, 2008:81; Rubin & Babbie, 2009:52-53; De Vos *et al.*, 2011:134-135):

- to critically analyse and understand what research has already been done by other researchers with regard to the topic
- to provide the researcher with the opportunity of learning from the works of other researchers and possibly identify gaps in previous research on gender concerns, women empowerment and leadership in the public sector.

## 5.4 Semi-structured personal Interview

Interviewing is a common method of data collection in a qualitative research study with specific reference to those involving case study designs (Petty *et al.*, 2012:378; Creswell, 2013:173). A research interview is a systematic activity that involves a person-to-person meeting, in which the researcher seeks information from the interviewee (Marriam & Tisdell, 2016:107). The central essence of an interview in qualitative research is the asking of questions and exchange of information through face-to-face conversation between the researcher and the interviewee (Gray, 2014: 383). One basic advantage of the interview as a data collection instrument is that the researcher has the opportunity of interacting verbally with the interviewees who possess the information sought by the researcher (DePoy & Gilson, 2008:108). Adopting a qualitative research design in this study enabled the researcher to communicate physically with women managers in the DKKDM on issues pertaining to gender equality and the capacitation of women for effective leadership (see Section 1.2).

The semi-structured interviews consist of both open-ended and closed questions to elicit information from the interviewees. According to Edwards and Holland, (2013:3), a semi-structured interview is a method of data collection that involves a direct conversation and exchange of dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee concerning the research questions in a study. Researchers adopt the semi-structured interview in the research process with the aim of gaining detailed information regarding the interviewees' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes on the particular topic under investigation (Marriam & Tisdell, 2016:110). The semi-structured interview provides the researcher with the opportunity of probing and elaborating on the interviewees' responses and, in the process, gathering as much detailed information as possible, especially in cases where they may be required to provide clarity on what they have said (Gray, 2014:385-386). In this regard, although predetermined research questions are developed by the researcher to serve as a guide in the interview process, the semi-structured interview provides both the researcher and the interviewee with flexibility (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:352). For example, responses from respondents necessitated a follow-up question not contained in the interview guide. Semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to obtain the detailed and necessary

information required while giving the interviewees the liberty of elaborating and providing illustrative descriptions of concepts and responses where necessary.

The researcher spent a lot of time interacting with interviewees to clearly understand the research problems from participants' perspectives. The greatest time spent with participants during the interview section was two hours and the lowest was 55 minutes. The interviews were conducted in the offices of participants within the four municipalities in the Dr DKKDM. Before the interview, participants were asked to give their consent to be recorded and the interviews were audio-taped. The participants who refused to allow their voices to be recorded filled a qualitative questionnaire.

In this study, four human resource personnel and twenty-two (23) women in middle and senior management positions from JB Mark Local Municipality, Maquassi Hill Municipality and Matlosana local Municipality, under the DKKDM participated in the interview. HR managers and women in management positions were selected for the interview because they possess relevant information that can inform the research questions and increase the researcher's understanding of the social problems under investigation (see Section 5.6 for their demographic information).

#### **5.4.1 Self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a research instrument, usually in the form a printed list of questions that is used to gather information from respondents in a research process (Kumar, 2014:178). Using the questionnaire, participants are expected to read the questions, interpret them, and write down their responses or answers in their own tone or voice in any manner they choose (Rubin & Babbie, 2010:94). The purpose of using a questionnaire in qualitative research is to ascertain the thoughts, behaviour, opinions, beliefs and experiences of selected groups of participants concerning the research problems under investigation. Kumar, (2014:181) identifies one of the merits of using a questionnaire in research is that it does not require huge financial resources and offers greater anonymity.

According to Bryman, (2015:696), a self-administered questionnaire is designed to be answered by an individual research participant without the interference of the researcher. The use of a self-administrated questionnaire in a research project is

considered appropriate only if it is used by a population that is passably literate (Mouton & Babbie, 2001:258). Therefore, the self-administered questionnaire was used in this study because women managers possess adequate levels of education and literacy required for the completion of these questionnaires. The self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire was used to establish the experiences, perceptions, opinions, and views of women managers with regard to the training and development of women in leadership positions

The semi-structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview used in this study comprised both open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended questions are questions that are framed without expecting participants to respond in a particular way or using a particular range of words (David & Sutton, 2011:121). Rather, participants are expected to formulate their answers and give their responses using their own words (Kumar, 2011:151). A major benefit of using open-ended questions is that the responses of participants cannot be influenced by the researcher because the questions are fixed. In addition, open-ended questions give participants the freedom to express themselves and craft their answers (Kumar, 2011:151; Walliman, 2011:190). Since a qualitative research methodology is primarily to explore the perceptions, beliefs and experiences of a selected group of participants, open-ended question will allow women managers to provide more information on the social phenomenon under study. On the contrary, closed questions are commonly used in a quantitative research and require the participants to choose an answer from the list of answers provided by the researcher (Babbie, 2013:231). The questionnaire comprised two sections, which include the biographical information of respondents (see Section 5.7) and the open ended and closed questions.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were formulated using different Likert scale options. In other questions, the respondents were required to indicate their answers with a yes or no. The questions were compiled specifically to investigate the following:

- the study research questions
- municipalities' compliance with policy frameworks and government directives on gender equality and women's empowerment, such as the Affirmative Action Policy,

- whether the current leadership training and development programmes are sufficient for the leadership advancement of women
- to ascertain the availability of adequate training and development intervention for women's leadership acceleration in the DKKDM

The respondents indicated their answers in the following order:

1= strongly agreed

2= agreed

3 = neutral

4= disagreed

5= strongly disagreed

In the second Likert scale option, the respondents indicated their answers in the following order

1= very easy

2= easy

3 =difficult

4= very difficult

Furthermore, in the double-barrelled questions, the respondents were required to choose their answers by indicating a yes or no. To ensure an improved semi-structured questionnaire, the questionnaire was pre-tested by a quantitative expert in the statistical consultation services at the North-West University (Potchefstroom campus). Pre-testing of a questionnaire constitutes an essential stage in any survey development process in that it helps to identify questions which do not make sense as well as to prevent any mistake and vagueness (Babbie & Mouton, 2008:244-245). This process helps to ensure that participants understand the questions and are able to provide interpretation to the questions in the ways intended by the study. Few changes were made after the scheduled feedback meeting with the statistician where issues of concern regarding the questionnaire were mentioned. Pre-testing was one of the ways of ensuring the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to 50 respondents in the three local municipalities that resort under the DKKDM by the researcher. This information is reported in Section 5.6.

#### 5.4.2 Observation

This study used the direct observational data collection method during and after the personal interview, through extensive field notes. Direct observation is a systematic data collection method where the researcher collects detailed information from participants in their environment without having to alter that environment (Bernard, 2017: 413; Kawulieh, 2005:2). This *inter alia* includes the review of relevant literature and examination of archived documents and policies of the institutions, such as the Affirmative Action policy, EEA in the DKKDM. Observation is one best way of gathering detailed information on happenings and the way that people respond to happenings in their social environment. The use of observation in a research method enables a researcher to gather rich information on social behaviour, events and action in their immediate environment of occurrence (Ciesielska *et al.*, 2018:41-42). Moreover, the observation method allows for the collection of primary data from nonverbal behaviour (Bernard 2017:413) such as the expression of frustration and smiles, head nods and body language, which are important means of communication. According to Bernard, (2017: 413) and Kawulieh, (2005:2), observation is an exceptional research method for data gathering when a researcher is interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of events, culture, patterns of relationships and behaviour as well as how people are influenced by their usual environment (Bernard, 2017: 413; Kawulieh, 2005:2).

In this study, observation was used to give a true reflection of the behavioural patterns and actions of female managers pertaining to gender inequality and their leadership advancement in the DKKDM, as their usual environment. Moreover, the field notes compiled during the observation and interview section were valuable. The field notes provided the researcher with a reflection of what transpired during the interview section and the subjective impression of individual respondents on the content of the interview. Through the compiled field notes, the researcher was able to make comments on the environmental context and nonverbal behaviours. Also the field notes were a valuable source of a reminder on situational influences that were essential for data analysis (Sutton & Austin, 2015:227).

## 5.5 The case-study method

As stated in chapter 1 Section 1.6.2, a single case study design was used in this study, which involves an in-depth investigation into issues pertaining to gender inequality and leadership empowerment of women in the DKKDM (as the unit of analysis). Yin, (2014:4) defines a case study as a research method for investigating complex a social phenomenon within the environment in which something occurs. According to Baxter and Jack, (2008:545-550) and Leedy and Ormrod, (2001:149) a case study design is a research technique that allows the researcher to focus on a carefully selected group to collect in-depth information on problems relatable to the research focus. The purpose of conducting a case study research is based on the assumption that the researcher seeks to understand and obtain a real-world perspective pertaining to the unit of analysis (in this regard, DKKDM) in their natural setting (Yin, 2014:16). In this study, the single case design was used to:

- unveil the current state of training and development of women in the local sphere of government, particularly in the DKKDM
- to understand the extent to which the DKKDM has implemented the legislative framework regarding gender equality in management and development
- to identify the factors decelerating the promotion of a gendered approach to training and development in the local sphere of government

As stated in Chapter 5, Sections 5.5, 5.5.1 and 5.5.2, the single case study made use of different data collection methods encompassing the semi-structured self-administrated questionnaire, semi-structural personal interviews and direct observation methods Yin, (2014:4). The researcher spent an extended period in the field trying to gather rich and detailed information from the participants' perspective on gender inequality and its effects on women's leadership advancement in DKKDM. Through spending quality time in the real-work environment, the researcher had the opportunity of gaining detailed information and understanding on the leadership gendered culture, and structures within the DKKDM. Such understanding is critically important for the construction of a gendered framework for the skills development and empowerment of women for higher positions, within which they are scarcely represented.

## 5.6 Population and sampling

Welman *et al.*, (2011:52) describe population as the examination of an object, which comprises individuals, organisations, groups, human products or events, and the environment in which they are exposed. The population represents all the persons from which a sample is drawn or selected (Bhattacharjee, 2012:65), all the players currently working in the DKKDM constituted the total research population. The stipulated population for the purpose of this study was 50 women managers from the JB Marks Local Municipality, the Kenneth Kaunda Municipality, the Maquassi Hills Municipality and the Matlosona Local Municipality. The total number of women in management positions in the DKKDM could not be ascertained due to the researcher's inability to access relevant documents containing the staff membership in municipalities (this issue is detailed in the limitation section in Chapter 1 of this thesis).

Babbie, (2014:197) defines sampling as the process by which a researcher extracts and selects units of observation for the study. A sample is the subset of a total population, which serves as a representative of the entire population (Grinneil *et al.*, 2008:279). The aim of sampling in research is to have accurate information and understanding of the population from which the researcher aims to draw inferences (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:224). Therefore, human resource personnel were selected for the interviews because their perceptions and experiences with regard to training and development will prove invaluable to this study. In addition, women in middle management and senior management positions were chosen to complete the questionnaire. The purpose was to observe and assess their perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and experiences regarding gender inequality and the need to empower more women for leadership.

Creswell *et al.* (2014:79) indicate that qualitative research is commonly associated with purposive non-probability sampling. Riaza, (2016:194), asserts that in a mixed method research, purposive sampling can be used in both a qualitative and quantitative research design. With non-probability sampling, each element within the sample frame has an equal chance of being included in particular studies (Unrau, *et al.*, 2007:280). According to Welman *et al.* (2005:57), the main advantage of non-probability sampling is that it is not complicated and saves time and money.



Purposive sampling is regarded as the most vital non-probability sampling technique (Welman *et al.*, 2005:69). As Grinnell and Unrau, (2008:153) observe, with purposive sampling the researcher has the opportunity of employing his/her experience and expertise in selecting units of analysis in such a way that the samples obtained represent the relevant population. Thus, the researcher deliberately selected the sample for the study based on her subjective judgment rather than random selection. With purposive sampling, participants are selected because they illustrate certain features that are of interest to the researcher for a particular study (Rubin & Babbie, 2009:150). Therefore, the participants for this study were selected specifically because of the knowledge they possess on the training and development of women managers in the local sphere of government.

According to Baran, (2016:117), purposive non-probability sampling enables the research to focus on the population that is rich in information and will provide the best possible answers to the research questions. Another crucial characteristic of purposive sampling is that it enables the collection of in-depth information from a small portion of units selected as representative of the entire population (Polit & Beck, 2010:312). For the semi-structured interview, purposive sampling was used for 4 HR personnel at the DKKDM. Purposive sampling was selected for the semi-structured interview because the researcher trusted that the selected participants would be able to provide more complete information regarding gender inequality and the training and development of women for leadership roles, due to their positions and professions.

Furthermore, to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents, as one of the requirements of the ethical guidelines of the NWU (see Section 1.7). Pseudonyms names were used to identify respondents that participated in the interviews. The demographic information of the respondents is illustrated below.

| <b>Names</b> | <b>Pseudonym</b> | <b>Municipality</b> | <b>Current management position</b> | <b>Highest qualification</b> |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1            | Tinni            | Kenneth Kaunda      | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 2            | Chiko            | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 3            | Mago             | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 4            | Cigo             | City of Matlosana   | Assistant Director                 | Masters                      |
| 5            | Wava             | City of Mtlosana    | Middle Management                  | Honours                      |
| 6            | Zino             | City of mtlosana    | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 7            | Kizo             | City of Matlosana   | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 8            | Mzo              | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 9            | Hiho             | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 10           | Mpo              | City of Matlosana   | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 11           | Siso             | Kennth Kaunda       | Director                           | MBA                          |
| 12           | Gigo             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 13           | Jigo             | Maquask Hills       | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 14           | Vico             | Maquasi Hills       | Acting Director                    | Masters                      |
| 15           | Waza             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Maters                       |
| 16           | Kiko             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Bachelor's degree            |
| 17           | zizo             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 18           | Lilo             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 19           | Xifo             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 20           | Niko             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 21           | Zawa             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 22           | Hvo              | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Bachelor's degree            |
| 23           | Yivo             | JB Marks            | Assistant director                 | Honours                      |
| 24           | Moso             | JB Marks            | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 25           | Yemi             | City of Matlosana   | Middle Management                  | Honours                      |
| 26           | Xyo              | Kenneth Kaunda      | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 27           | Emabo            | City of Matlosana   | Director                           | Master                       |

**Table 5.1 Respondent demographic information for interviews**

As illustrated in table 5.1, the majority of the female managers who participated in the interview were from the City of Matlosana, followed by the JB Marks, Kenneth Kaunda District and Maquasi Hills. The leadership structure and size of the municipalities are not the same. Women's representation in leadership positions was less in smaller municipalities, situated in small towns.

For the questionnaire, the purposive sampling was done according to gender. In this aspect, the sampling unit included women in the middle management and senior management services of the DKKDM. From the 50 questionnaires distributed, 41

questionnaires were completed. As stated in Section 5.5.1, the questionnaire comprised the biographical information of respondents.

The demographic information took cognizance of women's educational qualifications, age, work situations, marital status, year of employment in their current leadership positions and the number of years they were employed within management, either top, senior or middle management levels. The respondents' descriptive and inferential statistics are reported in the following section.

### 5.6.1 Respondents' current management level

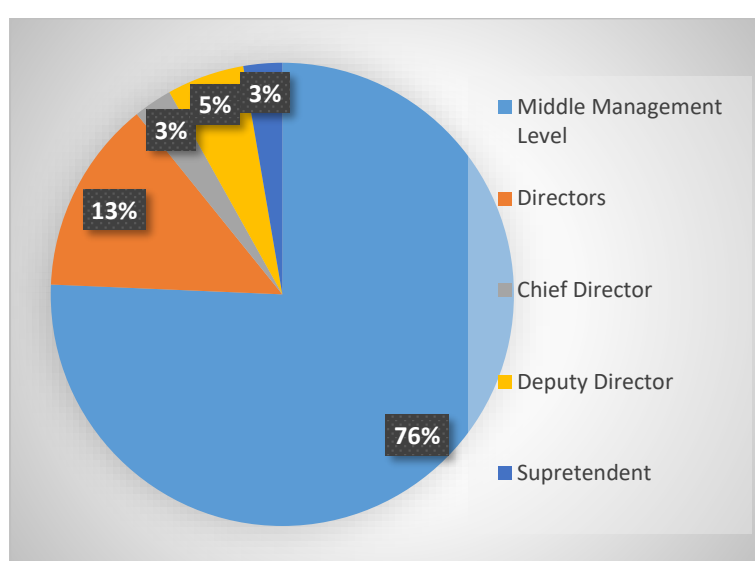


**Figure 5.1 Respondents' current management level**

Figure 5.1 reveals that 76% of women are in middle management levels, followed by 13% who are in the Director level and 5% in the Deputy Director level, and the lowest proportion of management positions occupied by women are Chief Director and Superintendent with 3% respectively. Four of the respondents failed to indicate their current management level in the questionnaire.

The result presented in Figure 5.1 illustrates that women are more represented in middle management levels which is consistent with the findings in literature that gender equality is fair especially in lower and middle management levels of public organisations (Bombuwela & Alwis, 2013:3; Seo & Huang, 2017:619; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017:76). Osituyo, (2017:81) mentioned that, although women are visible in middle management positions in the South African public sector, women still find it

difficult to reach higher management levels. This is an indication that, when it comes to directorship, top and senior management levels, women are still confronted by intense marginalisation. Considering this finding, it will not be wrong to say that several barriers, as alluded to in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6 obstruct women's advancement into senior management positions.

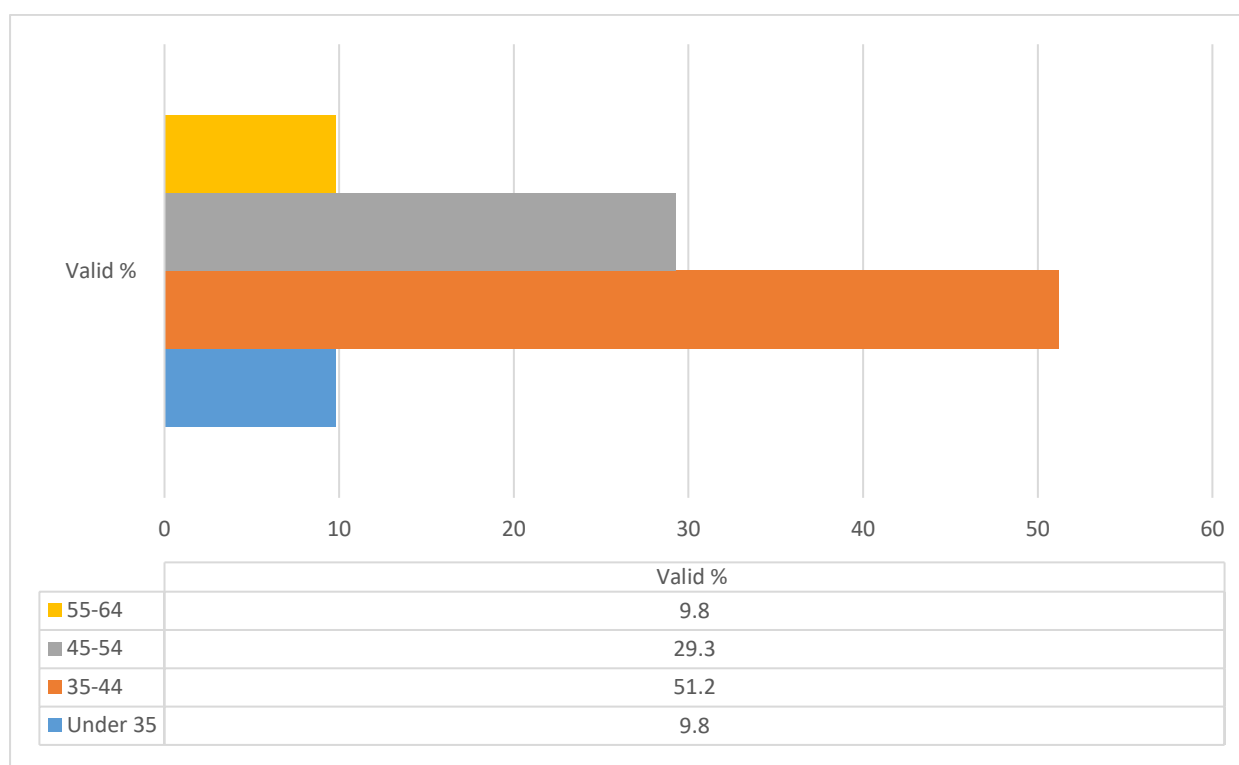


**Figure 5.2 Respondents age**

From figure 5.2, the age group between 35 and 44 comprises the highest number of women in leadership positions (51.2%), followed by the age group between 45 and 54 (29.3%) and the lowest population is the age groups between 55 and 64 and under 35 with 9.8% respectively. The over 65 age group was excluded because no respondent fell under that age group. From Figure 5.2, it seems that a younger generation of women are not employed into management structures in the local sphere of government. This has serious implications for the achievement of gender equality in leadership in municipalities both now and in the future. The study argues that failure to identify, develop, attract and hire the younger generation of talented women will add to the leaky pipeline of professional women, a situation where there are not enough women with the leadership experiences to select from to close the gender gap in the highest positions in municipalities (Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35). Importantly, future generations of effective leaders are nurtured, groomed, raised and developed today

through human resource development interventions. Therefore, to remedy the shortage of young talented women in all leadership positions, municipalities must make conscious efforts towards the advancement of young women into management roles.

### 5.6.3 Years of employment in current leadership positions

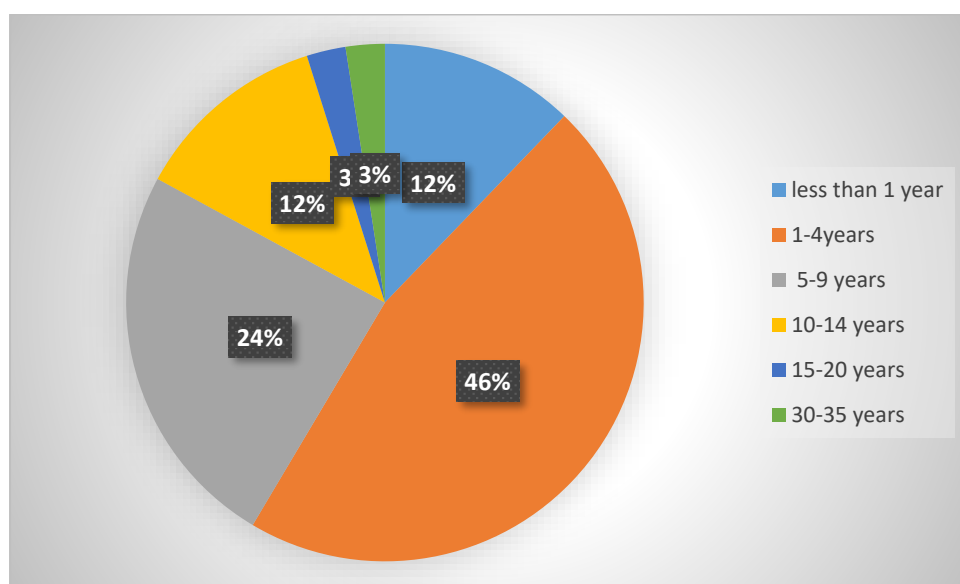


**Figure 5.3 Years of employment into current leadership positions**

Figure 5.3 shows that 46% of the respondents have served in their current leadership position for 1 to 4 years, 25% of the respondents for 5 to 9 years, and 12% for less than 1 year and for 10-14 years respectively. Moreover, Figure 5.3 also shows that 3% of the respondents have been employed in their current position for 15 to 20 and 30 to 35 years respectively. The result demonstrates that the number of women managers decreases as the years of employment increases. The majority of women (46%) have been employed as leaders in the municipality for less than five years. This is consistent with the suggestion of Atkinson *et al.*, (1993:223) that women are late comers to leadership in the public service and that South African women are gold that has yet to be mined. The results also correspond with the various feminist theories discussed in this study that women are besieged by traditional gender systems and biased cultures, which adversely affect their leadership and career advancement in the public space. Further, the result confirmed that municipalities have started to consider women for leadership positions, when compared with previous generations.

However, more work still needs to be done to facilitate the professional advancement of qualified women.

#### 5.6.4 Years employed within management levels in the municipality

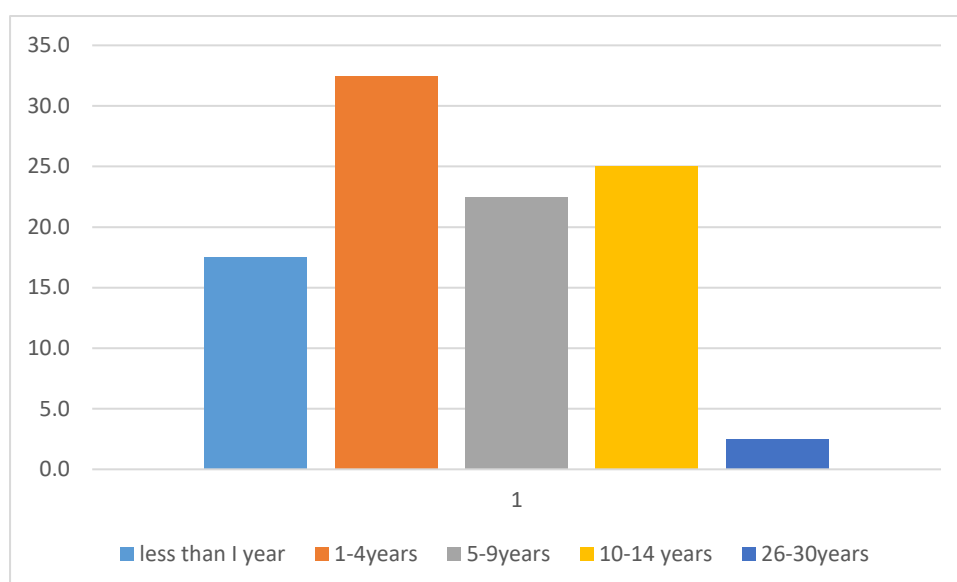


**Figure 5.4 Years employed within management levels in the municipality**

The results displayed in Figure 5.4 demonstrates that the respondents who are female managers were mostly (32.5%) employed at the municipality for 1-4 years, followed by 25.0% who have been employed for 10-14 years, 22.5% employed for 5-9 years. Further, 17.5% of women managers have been employed for less than a year, while 2.5% have been employed for 26-30 years. An employment period of 15-20 years is missing in Figure 5.4 because none of the respondents were employed in those years, and one of the respondents did not indicate the number of years employed in leadership within the DKKKM. The result reveals that more women are recently appointed in leadership structures in the municipality. The new appointment of women into leadership confirms scholars affirm that, because women are late comers to leadership roles in the public service (Atkinson *et al.*, (1993:223), they are less likely than men to possess adequate work experience in certain management positions, for example, in CEO and directorship positions (Gipson *et al.*, 2017; Singh *et al.*, 2008:53). As alluded to, municipalities still need to make conscious determination to facilitate the advancement of more women, especially into directorship and senior management positions.

### 5.6.5 Educational levels

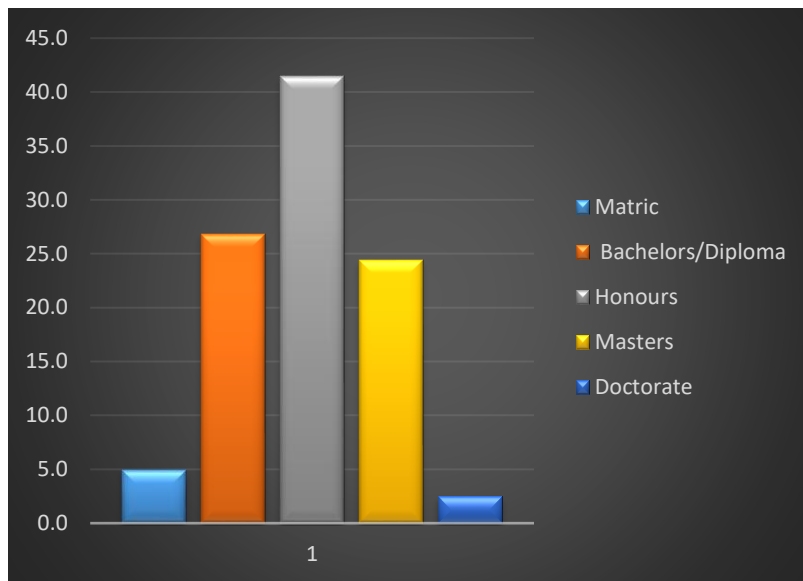


**Figure 5.5 Educational levels**

The result presented in Figure 5.5 illustrates that the majority of the respondents possess honours degrees (41.5%), followed by Bachelors/diploma (26.8%) and Master's degree (24.4%). While 4.9 % have matric and 2.4% have a Doctoral degree. The result reveals that women are acquiring advanced educational degrees necessary for gaining employment into leadership positions and for promotion. It is generally assumed that tertiary education is the first step toward securing professional and high paying jobs in the corporate world and, more specifically, the local government sphere for promotion into management positions. The result confirms the assertion of D'Agostino, (2017:10), that, in the past twenty years, women are now equipping themselves and they have acquired sufficient education to position them in management positions both in private and public organisations. Nevertheless, apart from educational qualifications, relevant skills, experiences and knowledge on the job are necessary for promotion into management positions (see Section 3.3.3).

### 5.7 Triangulation research method

Triangulation involves the combination and use of more than one research method mainly qualitative and quantitative approach in the process of data collection in a single study (Atkinson, 2011:217; Flick, 2014:183). Triangulation is a strategy for the validation of research information (Flick, 2014:183), which strengthens the quality of

data for better research results. According to King and Horrocks, (2010:164), triangulation enhances the validity and reliability of information through the process of verification from different complementary sources. The purpose of using triangulation in social science research is to increase the quality, credibility and validity of a study (Hussenin, 2015:5).

The combination of different methods of data collection and data analysis in this study produces a robust and comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Using triangulation research methods and findings from qualitative and quantitative approaches can be compared and verified (Thurmond, 2001:253). The use of triangulation in a mixed method research is considered advantageous because qualitative findings can be verified via quantitative investigation (Hussenin, 2015:5). This study used the triangulation research method by combining the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms for validation and completeness of the study. The triangulation methods employed for this study included the use of semi-structured interviews, semi-structured questionnaire, direct observation and the qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis, and reviews of literature and relevant government documents and legislation addressing gender equality and women's empowerment.

## **5.8 Data analysis**

Data analysis entails the systematic evaluation of collected raw data using various statistical instruments, for the purpose of generating answers to the research question or topic under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2012:57). Willis *et al.*, (2007:296) stated that the objective of research, to a certain degree, drives the data analysis procedure in a study. The data analysis method adopted in this study is suitable for achieving the objective of this study, which is to develop an approach for the development of women for higher administrative positions. As stated in Section 1.6.7 of this thesis, the data analysis was done in two phases. The first phase comprised the analysis of the qualitative data. The data analysis process began with the organisation, reading and re-reading of the field notes and the transcription of the audiotaped interviews to paper. Data generated in a qualitative research through recorded personal interviews and field notes are usually very large. To condense the large amount of data collected,



whilst maintaining and retaining participants' meaning, different codes were developed.

Sutton and Austin, (2015: 228) see coding as a way of identifying themes, concepts, similarities, and dissimilarities gathered from participants' descriptions and interpreted by the researcher. In developing the code, the field notes were used to complement the recording from the interviews. The researcher endeavoured to thoroughly read and re-read the perspectives of each participant to have a better understanding on their standpoints. Coding methods provide the researcher with the opportunity to see and make social and psychological judgement on shared meanings and experiences across the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012:57). The codes were organised into themes, to uncover what is common as far as it's related to the research questions and to the generation of meanings from those commonalities. The combination of the inductive and deductive thematic analysis was one of the measures adopted in the study to reduce biases associated with the use of either the indicative thematic method or the deductive thematic method.

Following the interpretivist research approach, the study analysed the qualitative data using both the inductive thematic data analysis and the deductive thematic data analysis approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The combination of the inductive thematic analysis and deductive thematic analysis methods was necessary for this study. Since the inductive approach allows the researcher to draw patterns of meanings (themes) from the content of the raw data (participant perspective), whilst in the deductive approach, meanings are generated from critical theoretical assumptions. Braun and Clarke, (2012:57) suggest that it is impossible to have a purely inductive study because researchers constantly introduce something to the collected raw data during data analysis, and seldom overlook the semantic content of the data when researchers form codes for a particular theoretical paradigm. This implies that raw data cannot be coded in isolation of epistemological and theoretical assumptions

### **5.8.1 Inductive and deductive thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis as a qualitative data analysis method emphasises the identification, analysing, reporting and the interpretation patterns of meaning discovered through the participants' narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). Inductive thematic analysis refers to the identification of emerging themes and concepts having strong relationships with the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79; Henry, 2017:275). Inductive themes, are also called data-driven themes. Such themes are especially developed from participants' responses rather than being influenced by the researcher. In this study, the data-driven themes give a true reflection of female managers' perceptions on gender inequality and issues surrounding the leadership development of women in the DKKDM. On the other hand, the deductive thematic data analyses are themes that were generated based on the theoretical frameworks employed in the study (see Section 2.4). Braun and Clarke, (2006:79) advise that it important for a qualitative researcher to acknowledge their theoretical frameworks in their research process, for example during data analysis and interpretation. Bearing this in mind, the researcher adopted various gender and feminist theoretical assumptions, as used in this study, in the generation of themes and in the interpretation of raw data.

The collected quantitative data was analysed by the use of Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS). It was analysed by Prof. Suria Ellis an expert at the statistical consultation service at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. T-test, nonparametric correction (spearman's rho, frequencies, descriptive statistics, reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha), Component matrix and multiple comparison were generated by the statistician. Due to the technicality associated with reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha), T-test, Component matrix and multiple comparison, they were not used by the researcher in the description and analysis of the quantitative data. Nonetheless, the descriptive and inferential statistics according to frequencies were presented, interpreted and reported. The collected quantitative data were presented using computer-generated charts and tables, which represented the standpoints, views and experiences of participants.

## 5.9 Validity and reliability

The validity of research refers to the degree to which a research instrument adequately measures the meaning of the concepts under study (Kumar, 2014:213). According to Bashir *et al.*, (2008:35) and Cypress (2017:254), in qualitative research, validity refers to the degree to which data collected by a researcher adequately reflects certain characteristics such as trustworthiness, authenticity, credibility, and plausibility and the ability to defend research claims if verified. The validity of research therefore reflects the credibility of the research instrument to measure what it is intended to measure and to enable the researcher to make accurate interpretations from the data on social phenomena (Silverman, 2013:284). Content validity is a qualitative type of validity that describes the extent to which a question included in the research instrument precisely represents the issue it is intended to measure, based on the judgement of the researcher (Kumar, 2014:214). In this study, the degree to which the research instrument efficiently measures and covers all the research variables, and performs what the researcher intends to perform, is known as validity (Thyer, 2010: 358-359). The objectivity of quantitative and qualitative research can be realised through the measurement of validity and reliability (Heale & Twycross, 2015:66). Bearing this in mind, the researcher endeavoured to ensure the quality, precision and appropriateness of the study through the use of triangulation methods. In addition, an appropriate sample size was used, and the researcher was careful to avoid any form of bias that may arise in the study.

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency of a research result over time when repeated under different situations, the integrity of the results as well as how accurately it represents the population under study (Nobel & Smith, 2015:34). The concepts of validity and reliability are important tools for achieving consistency and credibility in qualitative research (Taylor. 2013:2). A research study is considered valid and reliable if the results generated from the study can be replicated from occasion to occasion and from research to research (Heale & Twycross, 2015:66; Drost, 2011:106). However, social researchers do not investigate a stable social world or a static reality (Van der Riet & Durrheim, 2009:93). Rather, social researchers are mostly concerned with understanding the social context that influences people's behaviour, knowledge and experiences in the environment in which they reside. It will

therefore will be difficult for the researcher to anticipate that the results that would be gathered from this study through the use of interviews and a questionnaire can be replicated under similar conditions. Therefore, because this study is an interpretive research, it will adopt dependability as a criterion in place of reliability.

In interpretive research paradigms, the social problems under investigation are neither fixed nor stagnant. Therefore it becomes difficult to expect the same results repeatedly (Van der Riet and Durrheim, 2009:93). The interpretative paradigm is premised on the subjective interpretation of social actions and human behaviour, and the behaviour, opinions and experiences of an individual or group of individuals fluctuates in varying social contexts (Van der Riet and Durrheim, 2009:93; Thanh & Thanh, 2015:25). Dependability is important to trustworthiness, and an aspect of trustworthiness includes the transferability of research findings to other social groups, people and organisations (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110). Therefore, to ensure the trustworthiness of this study, the researcher used the triangulation research approach for data collection and data analysis. The researcher also endeavoured to report the research processes accurately and in detail, so that future researchers in the field can successfully repeat the work.

## **5.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to De Vos *et al.*, (2011:114), ethics are the rules, values and laws that control behaviour in human relations and the standard of conduct, good and bad, that guides an individual, a given profession or a group. Ethics offer the rules that influence researchers' behavioural patterns about the most preferred conduct towards stakeholders such as a sponsor, the subjects under investigation, the participants in a study, other scientists and assistants (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:144). In this study, ethical guidelines provided the basic standards and professionalism upon which the researcher could evaluate and assess her research conduct, a point also emphasised by Kumar, (2014:282). As such, the researcher must endeavour to internalise ethical principles in such a way as to ensure ethical decision making, as well as the humane and sensitive treatment of participants (Bless *et al.*, 2007:140; Welman *et al.*, 2012:201). The final responsibility of ethical decision-making in research is dependent on an individual researcher (De Vos *et al.*, 2011:129). This implies that the researcher will be liable for the consequences of his/her research decisions. Brynard

and Hanekom, (2013:6) add that it is necessary for a researcher to be ethically conscious, especially during data collection and to ensure that data is presented without prejudice.

Fox and Bayat, (2007:148-149) and De Vos *et al* (2011:113) state that care must be taken with regard to the protection of and maintenance of participants' identity. Anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation, informed consent and avoidance of harm (Tilley & Woodthorpe, 2011:198; De Vos *et al.*, 2011:113) are fundamental ethical aspects of social sciences research. According to Schwester, (2015:218), a researcher must endeavour to inform the participants that their participation is completely voluntary, notwithstanding the importance or purpose of the study. The author also stresses that the voluntary participation of participants in a research survey is arguably the most important principle of social sciences research ethics. Since participants are the primary source of information (Schwester, 2015:218), especially in research that seeks to understand social experiences, behaviour or problems, it becomes important to obtain permission from every respondent who may participate in the study.

Prior to the data collection, in March 2019, authorisation was obtained from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, NWU. Immediately after permission was given to conduct the study by the NWU, the researcher also obtained permission from the municipal managers of the local municipalities that resort under the DKKDM. The purpose and importance of this research was communicated to the participants, and participants were also informed that their participation in the research is voluntary. Furthermore the participants were informed on their right to withdraw their participation at any given time during the study. Participants who indicated interest to participate in the study signed a consent form, which signified their willingness to participate in the study (see annexure 4 and 5). The researcher ensured that the participants were not exposed to a situation or questions that might be embarrassing, insensitive or put them physically or psychologically at risk. The researcher respected the privacy of respondents and their confidentiality was safeguarded. The researcher endeavoured not to disclose participants' responses to any third party, except through reporting in the thesis, which was done anonymously and did not identify any participant by their

name, level and position. Furthermore, the researcher provided the study participants with correct information, without offering misleading or incorrect information.

### **5.11 Challenges experienced by the researcher**

Challenges are unavoidable during the data collection phase but vary depending on the purpose of the research or phenomenon under investigation. Bearing this in mind, the researcher encountered several challenges during the data collection phase of the study. Firstly, it was extremely difficult to get approval from some of the municipalities as some municipalities were hesitant to an issue approval letter to conduct the study. Obtaining permission or approval from the studied municipalities to conduct the study constituted a vital ethical guideline and requirement for the study. The problem was resolved through the intense intervention of SALGA. Nevertheless, after SALGA's intervention, in one of the municipality, the researcher was restricted to a certain number of participants by a female director who is actually supposed to be passionate about the empowerment of women. The behaviour demonstrated by the female director supports the common slogan that sometimes "women are their own enemies" (Afedo, 2013:130), and this will contribute to the scarcity of women in senior leadership positions. Other challenges experienced by the researcher are elaborated upon below:

- Most of the female managers were very busy, several appointments with some female managers, especially those in directorship levels were cancelled and re-scheduled more than four times. In some instances, the researcher had to wait for hours until their meetings were over to conduct the interviews
- Some of the female managers were hesitant to participant in the study after receiving an invitation from SALGA, but they decided to participate in the study after having a face to face conversation with the researcher, where the purpose and essence of the study was explained.
- Most of the municipalities do not have documentation conveying the actual number of women in management, for example the EEP, which made it difficult to know the exact number of females in management positions within the DKKDM
- Municipalities such as the JB Marks was under administration during the period of data collection. Also some employees in JB Marks were asked to evacuate

their buildings due to a crisis in the municipality. As such, it was difficult to locate female managers because most of them did not have a permanent office

- A few of the respondents were hesitant to fill in the questionnaire, they requested that they do the talking while the researcher filled the questionnaire. Furthermore, some of the questionnaires were not completed and returned.

Despite the challenges, most of the female managers were welcoming and willing to share their views and perspectives on the research questions.

## **5.12 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS**

According to Flamez *et al.*, (2017:166), in qualitative research, the quality of the research is predominantly dependent not only on the skills of the individual researcher, but it can also be influenced by the personal biases and idiosyncrasies of the researcher. In this respect, the use of purposive sampling techniques is a limitation in qualitative research. For instance, in most cases, respondents may not be readily available and the researcher might be forced by the circumstances to introduce unintended bias in the selection process (Flamez *et al.*, 2017:166). A further limitation of qualitative research is that claims from the research methods are not generalisable. However, the aim of this research is not to generalise results; rather, the researcher seeks to gain a contextual understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, emotions and challenges with regard to the training and development of women managers in the local sphere of government, specifically at the DKKDM. Although the study result is particular to the realities of female managers in the DKKDM, Diedericks, (2013:197) mentioned that lesson can be learnt from a case and the findings obtained can assist in taming possible shortcomings, where necessary.

The researcher mitigated against biases by adopting the following guidelines (Martella *et al.*, 2013:309):

- Reflexivity: This involves a critical self-reflection by the researcher in an attempt to control potential bias and its tendencies in the research (Gerrish & Iathlean, 2015:165). Through constant reflective processes, the researcher becomes more self-conscious and strives to reduce and avoid biases that may occur in the research (Dean, 2017:5).

- Descriptive validity: the researcher presented a factual account of descriptive information such as descriptive behaviours, expediciencies, perceptions, and events, and reported them accurately without prejudice
- Interpretive validity: This refers to the ability of a researcher to accurately portray the exact meaning participants attach to the subject under study (Martella *et al.*, 2013:309). The researcher employed the interpretive skills to accurately understand the thoughts, feelings, intentions, and experiences of participants and portray them meticulously in the research reports
- Theoretical frameworks: The use of critical theoretical assumptions relatable to the topic of interest help to strengthen findings from qualitative studies (Collins & Stockton, 2018:1). The various feminist theoretical frameworks used in this study guided the choice of literature, data coding and interpretation. Noteworthy is that the various feminist theories used did not stop the researcher from identifying and acknowledging emerging and new findings from the collected data relatable to the research problem (see Chapter 2)
  - Multiple research methods: The researcher used the triangulation method encompassing the qualitative and quantitative methods, multiple data collection and data analysis method. The triangulation methods also included the analysis of government policy frameworks, documents and guidelines as well as programmes regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women together with the annual reports of the DKKDM and other sub municipalities under the District.

### **5.13 Chapter Conclusion**

The chapter presented the research methodology used in the data collection, data analysis and in reporting of the study findings. This study followed the interpretive research paradigm, which allowed the use of qualitative single case study and different data collection and data analysis methods in a study. The chapter emphasised that mixed method research, consisting of both the qualitative and quantitative methods was selected as most suitable for the study. This is because mixed method research allows for the integration of the results gathered from the qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative and quantitative methods were valuable for gaining in-depth descriptions and detailed information from the subjective perspectives and



experiences of participants on the barriers they encounter because of their social identity. Although more descriptive and richer information was collected through the qualitative research method, the quantitative method was used to gather information from a larger number of respondents.

The chapter further outlined the research approach, the research instrument used for data collection, data analysis, sampling procedures and population as well as the methods adopted to ensure rigor and trustworthiness. The chapter also discussed the demographic information of the research participants, the limitation of the data and the challenges experienced by the researcher.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **QUANTITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research methodology adopted in this study was detailed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, the statistical analysis on the quantitative data is reported, analysed and presented. The findings obtained from the quantitative data is to confirm or refute scholarly assertions in the literature review on gender issues and leadership as presented in Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, and to add new depth and perspectives on barriers hindering women's leadership advancement and career progression in the public space and, more specifically, in the local government sphere.

As stated in Chapter 5 Section 5.5.1 the quantitative data was collected using the semi-structured questionnaire consisting of both the open ended and closed questions. Questions pertaining to gender inequality and the leadership advancement of women were posed in this section. The purpose of these questions was to understand, examine and critically analyse the challenges frustrating the good intentions of government in ensuring women's empowerment and active participation in public sector leadership, specifically in the DKKDM. The study hoped that the findings from the qualitative data would give a clearer picture of gender equality practices, women's leadership representation and the organisational culture of the DKKDM in relation to the promotion of women's leadership inclusion. In addition, to ascertain whether the municipalities constituting the DKKDM fully comply with equality guidelines and policy frameworks as authorised by government. The primary expectation of the findings presented in this chapter is that they will contribute to the approach that will be developed for the empowerment and leadership development of women to ensure their inclusion all spectra of public sector leadership in the DKKDM. The results from the quantitative data analysis is presented in the subsections below.

#### **6.2 The concept and meaning of gender**

Gender, as used in this study, transcends the physical characteristics of being either male or female, but encompasses the cultural norms and belief systems regulating the behaviour of men and women and their access to power, resources and opportunities in the social sphere (see Chapter 2 Section 2.2). The respondents' were asked to

highlight their understanding on the concept and meaning of gender. Figure 6.1 illustrates respondents understanding on the meaning of gender.

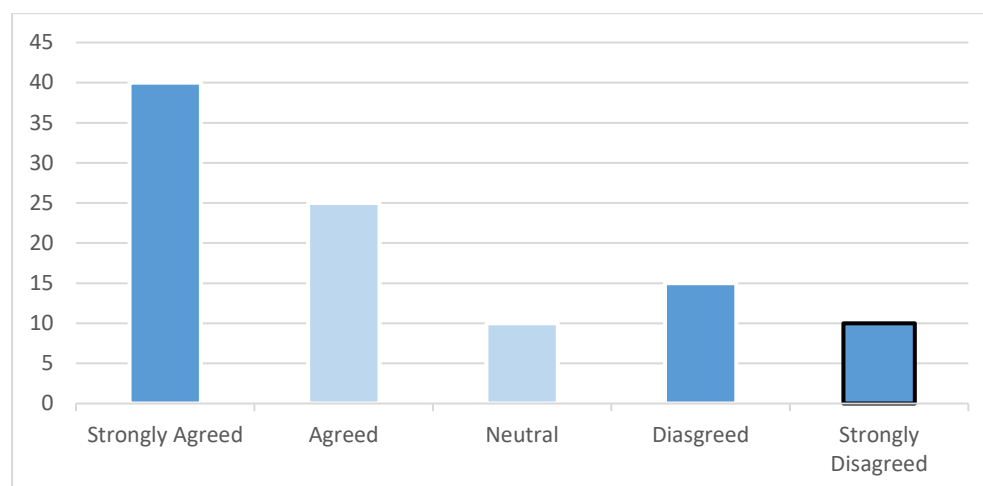


**Figure 6.1 The concept and meaning of gender**

The majority of the respondents (65%) agreed or strongly agreed that the behaviour displayed by men and women are learnt through social relationships and interactions and not as a result of their sexuality. Twenty-five percent of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that gender is learnt through social interactions, while 10% of the respondents were neutral. The fact that the majority of the respondents agreed to the meaning of gender as used in this study means that they fully understand the meaning of gender (see Section 2.2). Those respondents who disagree or strongly disagree or were neutral about the concept may be because there is a narrow distinction because sex and gender (Collins, 2015:3-4). As alluded to in Section 2.2 most people confuse the variable of “sex” for “gender” or vice versa (Mushibwe, 2014:78).

### **6.2.1 Gender and leadership competencies and effectiveness**

There is still the preference for men in professional and strategic management positions in public organisations, including municipalities at the local government sphere, regardless of women’s experiences and educational qualifications. Ample studies conducted on organisational leadership and gender alleged that women are secondary to men when it comes to the handling of management roles because the male gender characteristics are socially perceived as aligning more with the qualities

of excellent leaders (Mwala & Dodo, 2017: 107; Samuel & Mokoaleli 2017:55) and the stereotypes attributed by society to men reflect powerful and indispensable components of sound leadership, such as self-confidence, strength, independence and ambition (Koenig *et al.*, 2011: 616-617; Samuel & Mokoaleli, 2017:55; Eagly & Karua, 2002:574). The respondents were asked to indicate their perception and views on gender and leadership competencies and effectiveness. Figure 6.2 represents the respondents' perception on gender and leadership competencies and effectiveness.

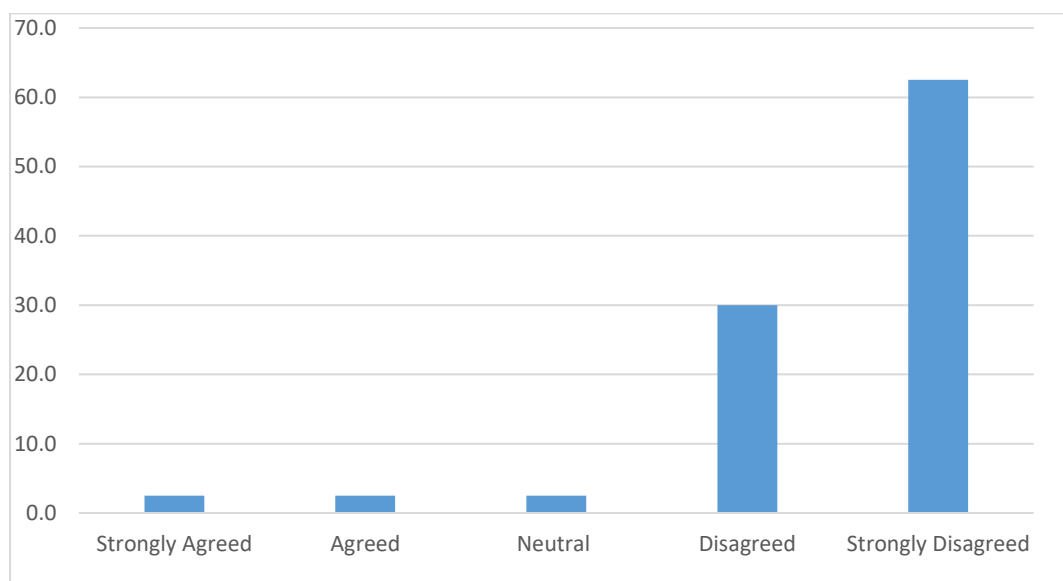


**Figure 6.2 Gender and leadership competencies and effectiveness**

The majority of the respondents (92%) disagree or strongly disagree that leadership competencies and effectiveness are determined by a person's gender. The result in Figure 6.2 demonstrates that an individual's biological configuration or sexuality have nothing to do with their intelligence and capacity to perform optimally in leadership roles. This finding is consistent with the postulation of the liberal feminist theory that both men and women have the same capacities and intelligence. Nevertheless women's active participation in leadership is limited because of parochial traditional and socio-cultural norms and beliefs which portray women as fit for leadership (Lorber, 2010:26, Niennaber & Moraka, 2016:145-146). Conversely, this is inconsistent with the recent debates from the popular press and findings from academic literature that women are better leaders (Smith cited by Paustian-Underdahl *et al.*, 2014:1129; Funk, 2015:2a). Proponents of this idea argue that female gender characteristics, for example collaboration, cooperation and their relational behaviours and inclination to empower others align with effective management practices (Funk, 2017:2b), what they

call “*female leadership advantages*”. Eagly, (2013:5) who is one of the top scholars in gender and leadership, mentioned that the unique behaviours displayed by female managers, such as team participation and collaboration, make female managers better leaders, although the simplicity of this perspective has been hotly contested by scholars. Eklund *et al.*, (2017:133) argue that the character of a leader is significant for that leader’s effectiveness and that the basic aspects of character necessary for sound leadership, such as trustworthiness, self-confidence and honesty are not gender-specific. This could be based on the extraversion versus introversion tendencies that happen to female and male in feminine and masculine gender which could be influenced by personal interest, principles and ethics. There seems to be a variation in literature reviews regarding whether gender determines management excellence or whether there is a gender difference between a male manager and a female manager (Faizan *et al.*, 2018:79; Funk, 2015:2a).

In the open-ended questions, the majority of the respondents stated that leadership effectiveness and competence is an individual characteristic, regardless of one’s gender. Effective management skills depend on a person’s personality, potential, qualifications, skills and acquired experiences. The respondents argued that there are some women in the DKKDM who have acquired better leadership skills than men, but those women are overlooked for leadership roles because of their gender. Niennaber and Moraka, (2016:145-146) suggest that it is dangerous to select and appoint a leader on the basis of their sexual categories because it might lead to the neglect of the best-suited candidate with the correct abilities, skills and competence for that job. Eklund *et al.*, (2017:130) warns that, to maximise the leadership potential and effectiveness of men and women, public organisations, including municipalities, must look beyond sexual characteristics and simple-minded generalisations that are attached to what make a male and a female successful leaders. Regardless of a person’s gender, leadership competence can be acquired through competence-based training (Vermeulen, 2011:79; Onichakwe, 2013:257), and exposure to career development interventions such as education, mentoring, coaching and succession planning (see Sections 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6). Eklund *et al.*, (2017:130) argue that organisations have to come to appreciate that both men and women should not be differentiated based on their biological sexual category in that gender is just a way of understanding individual differences. This suggests a clarion call for

municipalities to refrain from identifying, appointing, hiring and promoting candidates for leadership positions on the basis of their gender.

### 6.2.2 The impact of gender role expectations on female's leadership in public institutions including in the local government sphere

Women encounter multiple forms of discrimination in the corporate world, far more so than their male counterparts. It is alleged that, because of women's gender role as attributed to them by the society, women are seen as more industrious in domesticity and in performing reproductive activities rather than as decision makers (Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616-617; Wood & Eagly, 2012:57; Hingston, 2016: 39b). The purpose of this question was to determine whether traditional gender role expectations of society subject women to gender-based discrimination in the municipality. The respondents were requested to highlight their views and perception on how gender role expectation impact female leadership in public institutions including the local government sphere. The result to this question is shown in Figure 6.3 below.

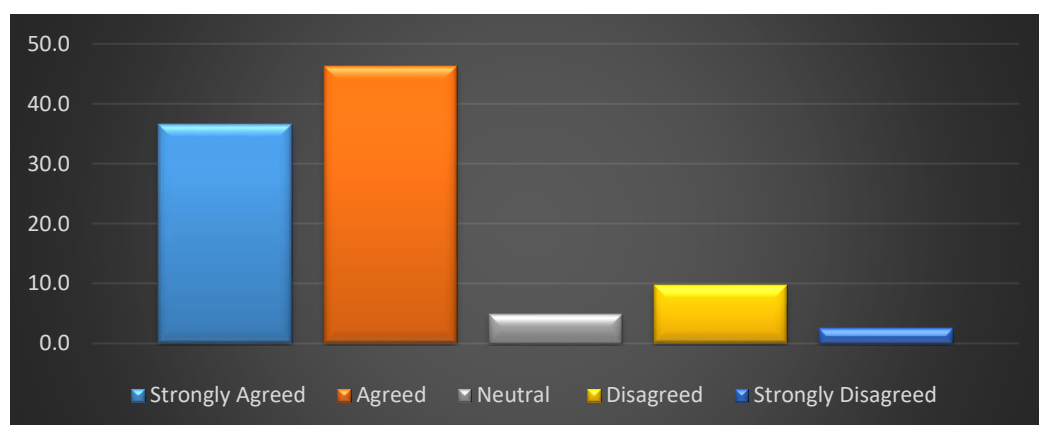


**Figure 6.3 The impact of gender role expectations on female's leadership in public institution including the local government sphere**

The majority of the respondents (83%) agreed or strongly agreed that societal gender role differentiation placed women in a disadvantaged position and subject to undue discrimination in the municipality. The result from Figure 6.3 illustrates that injustices and unfair treatments towards women in the corporate world has deep roots in societal gender roles and biased culture. This is consistent with the findings of ample research investigating challenges to women's leadership advancement in public organisations (and local municipalities) (Durojaye & Adebajo, 2014:6169; Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:373; Andibo, 2012:280). As alluded to Chapter 1, Section 1.1.2, gender role

division and the expectations associated with the female gender create internal barriers to women's professional advancement and also place constraints on their active participation in the public spheres throughout history (Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:373; Andibo, 2012:280; Masango & Mfene, 2015:628; Funk, 2019:1).

In the open-ended question, the majority of the respondents stated that there is still the general belief that women can't be effective leaders because of their attributed subservient gender roles. Consequently, people often undermine and devalue female managers' capabilities in the workplace. The quoted authors argued that women are still seen as unequal to men because of their societal norms and women's biological functions. To support this finding, the study participants in the recent research conducted by Jaga *et al.*, (2018:436) in South Africa stated that her "*boss thinks that children and family are a distraction*". Arguably, motherhood is a critical important component of African realities and is also a powerful, sacred and spiritual aspect of women's lives (Akujobi, 2011:1-2). Premised on the African feminist theory, regardless of women's indispensable traditional gender responsibilities such as motherhood, they should be given equal opportunities in the public space. This suggests that hiring and promotion in the public sector, including the local sphere of government, should not be based on the gender role expectations of society. This study argues that, to accelerate women's active and effective leadership participation in senior management positions, the DKKDM as a municipality must separate implicit preference and bias that goes along with society's gender role expectations from their operational activities and expectations. The result of figure 6.3 confirms the assertion in the literature review (see Sections 1.1.2, 1.2 and 2.7.6.1) that women's typical gender role subjects them to fierce discrimination and inequality in the workplace.

### **6.2.3 Societal gender role expectations and women's leadership access in the public sphere including in the local government sphere**

Literature reviews alleged that women are unable to access leadership opportunities, because of their ascribed traditional gender roles, which portray women as incompetent in handling leadership roles (see Chapter 2 Sections 2.2. and 2.4.5). The respondents were requested to indicate their opinions on gender roles and women's access to leadership opportunities in the local sphere of government. The answers to this question is presented in figure 6.4 below.

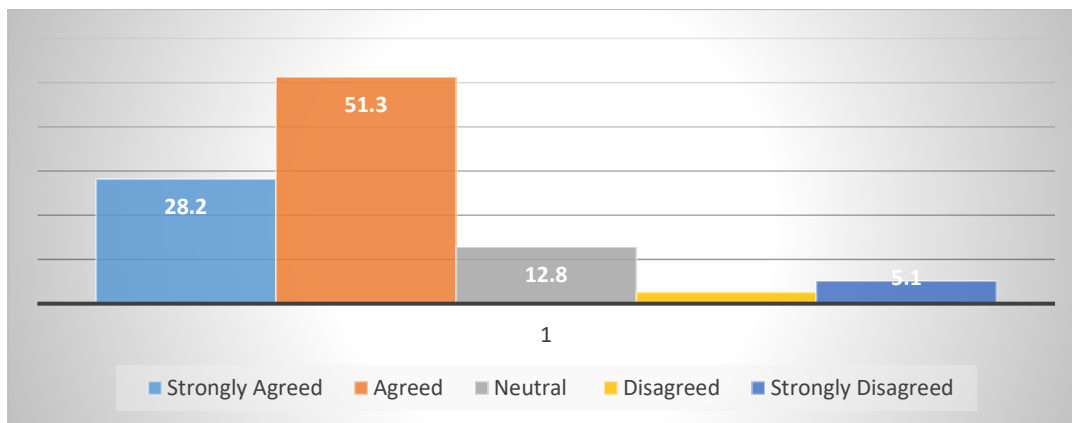


**Figure 6.4 Societal gender role expectations and womens' leadership access in the public sphere including the local government sphere.**

The majority of the respondents (79.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that women ascribe gender roles as deterrents to their access to leadership opportunities in the public service and the local government sphere in particular. The result shows that the respondents were of the opinion that women are discriminated against in access to leadership because of gender role beliefs. About 7.7% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 2.6% were neutral that women's gender roles promote discrimination in access to leadership. Notably, two of the respondents failed to indicate their choice of preference regarding the question.

The majority of the respondents stated that, because of women's gender roles, there is a general belief that women are less qualified and less capable of handling leadership roles as men. The respondents further stated that there is still a preference for men in leadership; women have to prove themselves and work twice as hard than their male counterparts when trying to access leadership roles. In support of the respondents, Samuel & Mokoali, 2017:55; Syed & Tariq, 2017:13) reasepectively observed that, because cultural norms and beliefs oppress women, women face unnecessary challeges when trying to attain employment in leadership roles. Furthermore, these women in management positions who manage to access leadership postions are judged negatively. This implies that women are judged negatively not necessarily because they are incompetent in handling management roles but because of societal beliefs on the requirements of a good leader, which is skewed towards masucline qualities. However, recent research such as the studies of Funk, (2019:2b) and Eagly, (2013:5) demonstrate that the attribution of perfect and effective leadership qualites is fast shifting from masculine qualities to feminine



qualities. Regardless of these recent findings, the DKKDM discriminates against women when they attempt to gain access to directorship and senior management positions. Such prejudice will continue to impede progress in achieving gender leadership equity.

#### **6.2.4 Using gender as a standard for recruitment into leadership positions and for advancement into directorship and senior public management levels in the local government sphere**

Literature alleged that men have more advantages over women in leadership because of their gender characteristics (see Sections 1.1.2, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7.4, 2.7.6.3 and 2.7.6.4). The respondents were asked to indicate whether gender should be used as a yardstick for employment and promotion in senior leadership roles in the DKKDM and in the local government sphere. Figure 6.5 illustrates the respondents' responses.

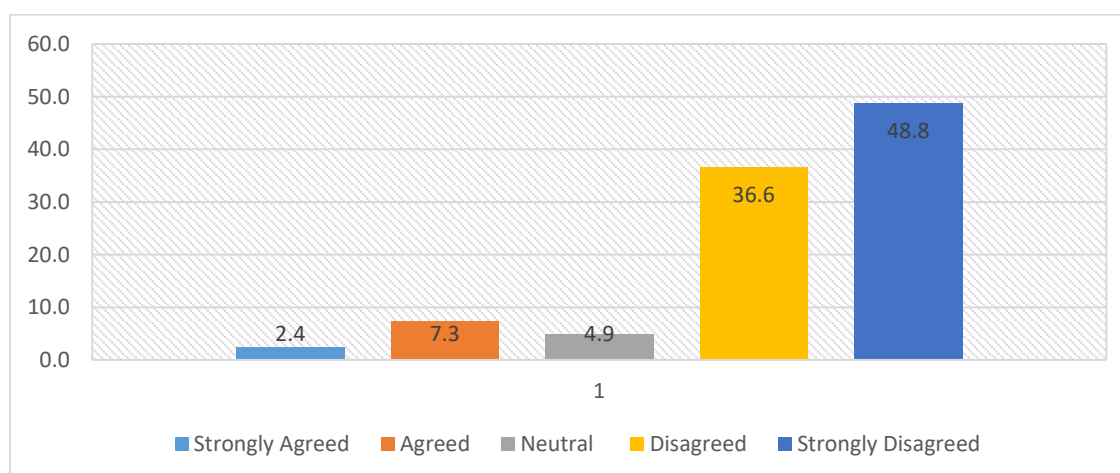


**Figure 6.5 using gender as a standard for recruitment into leadership positions and for advancement into directorship and senior public management levels in the local government sphere**

The majority of the respondents (85.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that gender should be used as a standard for recruitment into leadership, whereas 9.7% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed and 7.3% were neutral. The majority of the respondents (85.4%) argued that using gender as a standard for recruitment leads to discrimination against women. The respondents argued that men and women can be competent leaders, leadership recruitment should be based on the skills, experience and a person's know-how of that particular job rather than on gender. They stated that, unfortunately, this is the case in the DKKDM because men are mostly given leadership

positions not necessarily because they are more qualified than women but because of their gender.

As alluded to in Chapter 2, Section 2.7.6.3, discrimination against women is mostly perpetuated through discriminating HR practices, for example in recruitment, training and promotion into higher leadership position(s) (Osituyo, 2018:79; Player *et al.*, 2019:1; Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35; Glass and Cook, 2016:51; Stamarski and Son Hing, 2015:1). Stamarski and Son Hing, (2015:1) mentioned that gender discrimination in HR practices has its root in gender inequalities and discrepancies evident in the broader organisational practices, culture and structures. It can be inferred that, in an organisational environment and culture that believes in male leadership, there is a strong tendency that HR related decision making favours men and is biased against women. This further implies that biased organisational practices may promote unconscious or implicit bias because it will create the impression that such practices are the standard procedure, which would lead to the socialisation of hostile sexism for women and benevolent sexism for men.

### 6.2.5 Family and work-life balance

The difficulty in balancing family roles and leadership roles is identified as one of the reasons slowing down the acceleration of women into top and senior management roles in the public sector (Nordberg, 2019: 82; Kleven *et al.*, 2019:182). The respondents were requested to indicate whether they are faced with the challenge of balancing family and work-life. Figure 6.6 illustrates the respondent's views.

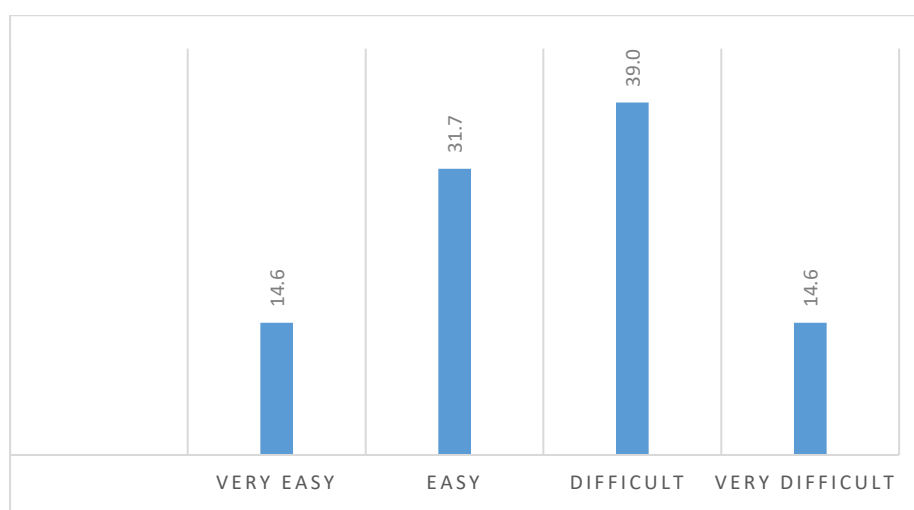


**Figure 6.6 Family and work-life balance**

From the result illustrated in Figure 6.6, 56.6% of the respondents indicated that balancing traditional gender roles and leadership roles is difficult, while 54.3% of the respondents find it easy in balancing family and leadership responsibilities.

The result shows that balancing management roles and gender roles is one of the challenging aspects of a female manager's life. The respondents mentioned that their leadership roles interfere with their private life. According to Sanchez and Dalmia, (2018:18) female managers who feel that their private interests are interrupted and find their leadership responsibilities competing with their family responsibilities may be discouraged in applying for higher leadership positions. Furthermore, the respondents stated that they do get support systems from the DKKDM that can assist them with their traditional gender roles, such as the provision of day care centres for their children. Assisting women with support systems in balancing family and work life conflict remains a major challenge in public organisations and, more specifically, for local government female workers. This finding is consistent with the assertions in literature reviews that balancing work-life and family responsibilities including the lack of support facilities and flexible working hours constitute a major obstacle for female managers and for obtaining higher leadership positions in the public service (Fritz & Van Knippenberg, 2017:591; Oyafunke-Omoniyi & Babatunde, 2017:8182; Tabassum *et al.*, 2017:440; Miller & Alderman, 2014:1)

#### **6.2.6 Women's ambition for professional leadership and career advancement in public institutions including in the local sphere of government.**

Leadership ambition and drive are a necessary predictor for leadership advancement (Fritz & Van Knippenberg, 2017:591). Some scholars suggest that one of the reasons for the slow leadership progression of women into senior leadership roles is because some women may choose not to pursue higher leadership positions (Sanchez & Dalmia, 2018:18; Sanchez & Lehnerk, 2019:182). This is regardless of the fact that they possess leadership qualifications and skills (Sánchez & Lehnent, 2019:182; Sanchez & Dalmia, 2018:18). Contrarily, the study conducted by KPMG, (2018:2) on understanding how the ambition to lead in women found that there is no shortage of leadership aspirations and desires among the women surveyed. This suggests inconsistency in literature reviews pertaining to the leadership aspirations of women. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they have the ambition to pursue professional leadership and career advancement in public institutions including in the

local sphere of government. Figure 6.7 represents the respondents' answers to this question.

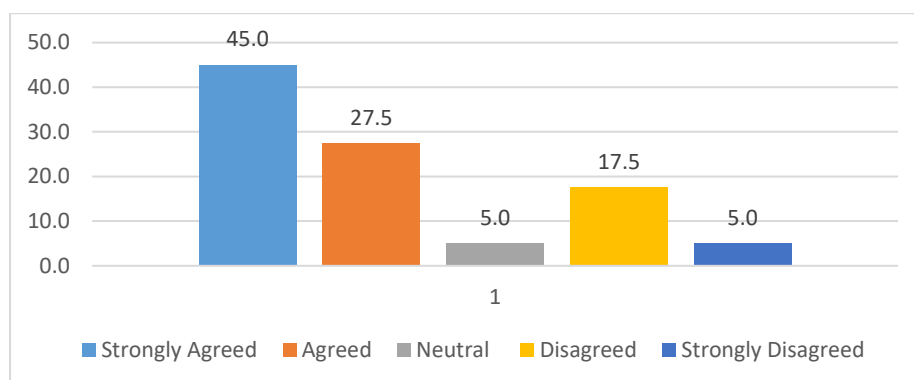


**Figure 6.7 Women's ambition for professional leadership and career advancement in public institutions including in the local sphere of government**

The result revealed that most of the respondents (72.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that they would love to aspire to higher positions, while 22.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 5.0% of the respondents were neutral about their leadership advancement into higher leadership roles.

Worthy of note is the fact that, although the respondents stated that they encounter difficulty in balancing family responsibilities and leadership responsibilities, they still choose to aspire to higher leadership roles. However, in contrast to the findings of Sanchez and Dalmia, (2018:18) and Sánchez, and Lehnent, (2019:182) that female managers may not pursue higher leadership positions. While the finding is consistent with the survey conducted by KPMG, (2018:2) that women show no shortage of interest in occupying management roles, but women's leadership interest is usually frustrated by circumstances beyond their control. The expectation of this question was not to get a favourable response but to gauge whether women at the DKKDM are actually interested in higher leadership positions in the local sphere of government.

### **6.2.7 Demotivating factors to women's leadership career and advancement in the local sphere of government**

The respondents were asked to indicate the demotivating factors or the barriers to women's careers and leadership advancement in the public sector with specific focus on the local government sphere. The different categories included are gender stereotypes and discrimination(s), the juggling of motherhood and complex leadership functions, lack of mechanisms to support women with their traditional gender roles

(e.g. day care facilities), lack of career development opportunities, insufficient leadership training and development opportunities, lack of family support, sexual harassment, preference for males and lack of self-confidence. The results are presented in table 6.1 below.

|                                                                     | <b>Strongly Agreed</b> | <b>Agreed</b> | <b>Neutral</b> | <b>Disagreed</b> | <b>Strongly Disagreed</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Gender stereotypes and discrimination                               | 63.4%                  | 22.0%         | 0%             | 7.5%             | 5.0%                      |
| Juggling motherhood and complex leadership function                 | 1.8%                   | 34.2%         | 26.3%          | 15.8%            | 5.3%                      |
| Lack of gender-specific mechanisms (e.g. child day care facilities) | 41.5%                  | 34.1%         | 4.9%           | 17.1%            | 2.4%                      |
| Lack of career development support                                  | 40.0%                  | 36.7%         | 3.3%           | 20.0%            | 0%                        |
| Insufficient leadership training and development opportunities      | 41.5%                  | 39.0%         | 0%             | 19.5%            | 20%                       |
| Lack of family support                                              | 29.7%                  | 29.7%         | 18.9%          | 18.9%            | 2.7%                      |
| Sexual harassment                                                   | 20.5%                  | 25.6%         | 35.9%          | 15.4%            | 2.6%                      |
| Preference for male's in top and senior management levels           | 63.4%                  | 22.0%         | 2.4%           | 12.2%            | 0%                        |
| Lack of self-confidence                                             | 34.1%                  | 24.4%         | 7.3%           | 26.8%            | 2.6%                      |

**Table 6.1 Demotivating factors to women's leadership career and advancement in the local sphere of government**

Overall, the respondents perceive gender stereotypes and discrimination (85.4%), preference for male leadership (85.4%), insufficient leadership training and development opportunities (80.5%), the lack of career development support (76.7%), lack of gender-specific support mechanism (75.6%), and lack of self-confidence (58.5%) as the major factors posing threats to their leadership advancement. Although other factors such as the juggling of motherhood and leadership functions (36%),

sexual harassment (46.1%) and lack of family support (46.1%) could also affect women leaders' advancement. The findings in Table 6.1 confirm the assertion in scholarly literature on the barriers demotivating women including those women with leadership ambitions and those in middle management from advancing into senior positions, as alluded to in Chapter 2, Sections 2.7.6, 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2, 2.7.6.3, 2.7.6.4, 2.7.6.5 and 2.7.6.6).

Regarding the juggling of motherhood and leadership functions, the result corresponds with the finding in Figure 6.13 that female managers face the challenges of balancing family and work-life. The result from Table 6.1 shows that women's leadership advancement is affected by sexual harassment. However, the number of the respondents who were neutral (35.9%) is worrisome because the respondents did not agree or strongly agree nor disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) in *their submission to the panel for the South African human rights commission hearing on unfair discrimination in the workplace* mentioned that sexual harassment accounts for one of the highest forms of unfair discrimination in the South African public service (SAHRC, 2017:13). McLaughlin *et al*, (2012:625) argued that, although men and women could be victims of sexual harassment, women are more affected especially in male-dominated work environments. Sexual harassment is far more than just satisfying sexual desires such as stroking and kissing but also includes derogatory and demeaning statements about people or social groups owing to their gender characteristics (McLaughlin *et al*, 2012:625, Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), 2019; Nana, 2008:246). From the alluded meaning of sexual harassment, the number of the respondents who were neutral suggests that some respondents do not fully understand the meaning of the concept and phenomenon. Moreover, all the respondents also stated in the open-ended question that political interference is a major barrier discouraging women's leadership and acceleration in the local sphere of government.

#### **6.2.8 Structural arrangement, practices and culture of DKKDM in relation to the promotion of gender equality.**

In Chapter 2, Section 2.7.6.2 it was alleged that organisational culture, practices and structures are both gendered and patriarchal, fuelling gender-based discrimination,

hostility, sexism, abuse and incivility against women (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015:1-2; D'Agostino, 2017:10; Miller &McTavish, 2011:683). D'Agostino, (2017:10) asserts that fundamental structures and systems in public administration are entrenched on the dominion and subjugation of women, and the traits and perspectives inherited from biased cultural environments rationalise them as perfect, thus continuing the socialisation of male-norm. In addition, the failure by organisational culture to fully accommodate women's values, worth and social placement (motherhood) including their subjective observation contributes to factors inhibiting women's career and leadership advancement (Helgesen & Johnson, 2010:7; Jaga *et al.*, 2017:436). Figure 6.8 illustrates the respondent's observation of the organisational culture and structural arrangement in the DKKDM with regards to gender equality.

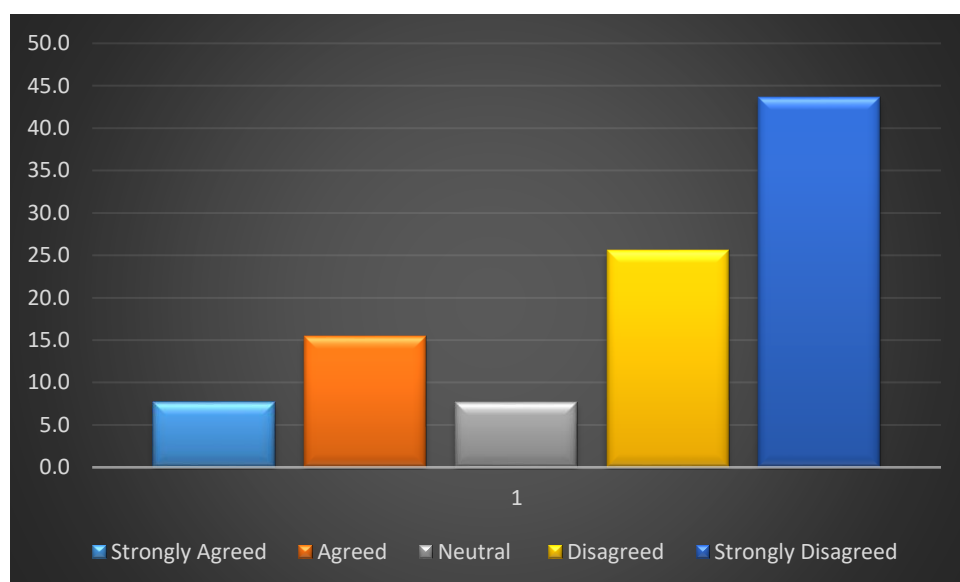


**Figure 6.8 Structural arrangement, practices and culture of the DKKDM in relation to the promotion of gender equality**

The majority of the respondents (70.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the structural arrangement and culture of the DKKDM promotes gender equality. Only 23.1% agreed or strongly agreed that the organisational structures and culture of the DKKDM promote gender equality, 7.7% of the respondents were neutral, while three of the respondents failed to indicate their preference.

We can deduce from these findings that organisational culture and practices in the DKKDM do not support women's career development and leadership advancement. This supports the finding in Table 6.1 that women's leadership advancement is

influenced by gender stereotypes and patriarchy evident in organisational structures and culture. Schein, (2010:6-7) mentioned some elements that inform organisational culture, for example traditional and historic events, in the South African context, Apartheid, patriarchal cultures and colonialism. However, one would expect that in this era of transformation, where equality and social justice is the order of the day, structural barriers inhibiting women's advancement would be eliminated as required by various international laws and national regulations (see Chapter 3). The result is in line with the problem statement of the study (see Section 1.2) that misogynistic tendencies manifested through biased organisational culture affect women's leadership advancement. This study argues that biased organisational culture forcefully pushes women away from an organisation, therefore leading to a decrease in women's leadership aspirations and unwillingness to pursue higher management responsibilities (Longman *et al.*, 2018:16). This suggests that there is a dire need for the deconstruction of the patriarchal structural arrangement and culture operative in the DKKDM, if a sustainable pool of women leaders is desired.

#### **6.2.9 Gender representation in directorship and senior management in the DKKDM and in the local sphere of government**

Both global and national documents report that South Africa is doing well when it comes to the promotion of gender equality and the leadership advancement of women (Fajardo & Erasmus, 2017:online; Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950). For example, South Africa occupied fourth position in the G20 index regarding the representation of women in public administration leadership, better than some industrialised nations (D'Agostino, 2017:10). The respondents were asked to indicate whether there is a gender balance in directorship and senior management structures in the DKKDM and in the local sphere of government. The answer to this question is illustrated in figure 6.9 below.



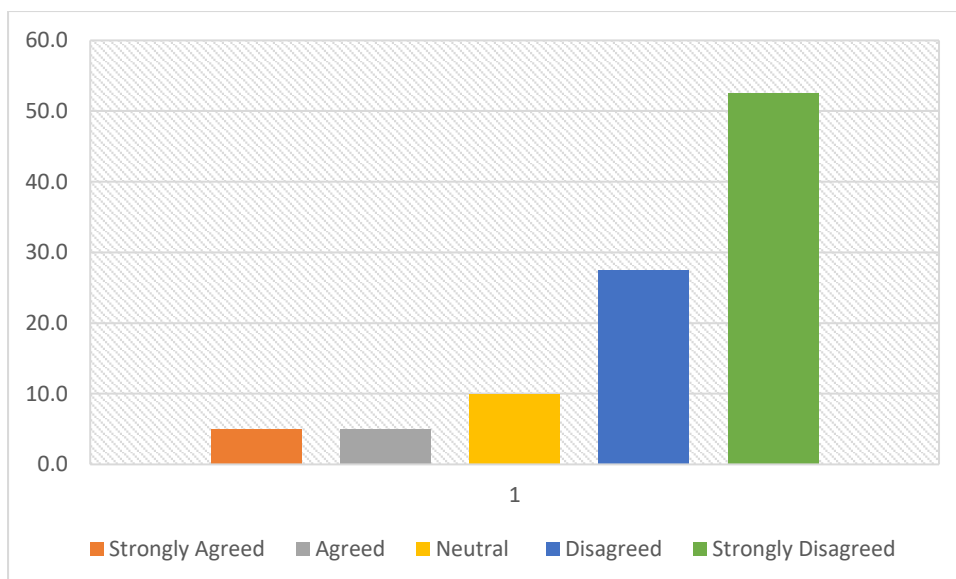


**Figure 6.9 Gender representation in senior management positions in the DKKDM and in the local sphere of government**

Figure 6.9 illustrates that the majority of the respondents (80%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the leadership structures in the DKKDM have equal representation of males and females in leadership, while 10% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed, and 10% of the respondents were neutral.

The respondents stated that there is the presence of both men and women in their leadership structures, however, men still predominate directorship and top positions. The respondent's responses were confirmed by the annual reports and statistics of the municipalities under the DKKDM (Maquassi Hills local Municipality, 2018: online; Annual Report Dr Kenneth Kunda, 2018:188-189; Annual Report of the City of Matlosana, 2019:275). Even if the country has seen improvement with regards to the social inclusion and the acceleration of women into leadership roles as claimed by literature (Fajardo and Erasmus, 2017; Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950), such progress is yet to be achieved with directorship and senior management positions in the DKKDM. The under-representation of women in the management structures of the DKKDM is cause for serious concern because issues regarding the everyday lives of women, and the formulation and practical implementation of government policy that affects women, are carried out by administrators in leadership positions.

### 6.2.10 Women and access to senior public leadership opportunities in the local sphere of government

It was alleged that men have more access to leadership opportunities in the public sector (Adamma, 2017:8344). Scholars argued that the manifestation of women's unequal access to leadership is evident in their under-representation in top and senior management positions in government institutions (Gabaldon *et al.*, 2016:372-374; Adamma, 2017:8344; Dormehl, 2012:11). Osituyo, (2018:79) reporting on gender leadership statistics, the Businesswomen's Association of South Africa stated that, although women can access leadership positions, only a few of them can access directorship and top positions. The respondents were asked to indicate whether women have adequate access to senior public leadership opportunities in the local sphere of government. The results of this question is presented in figure 6.10 below.

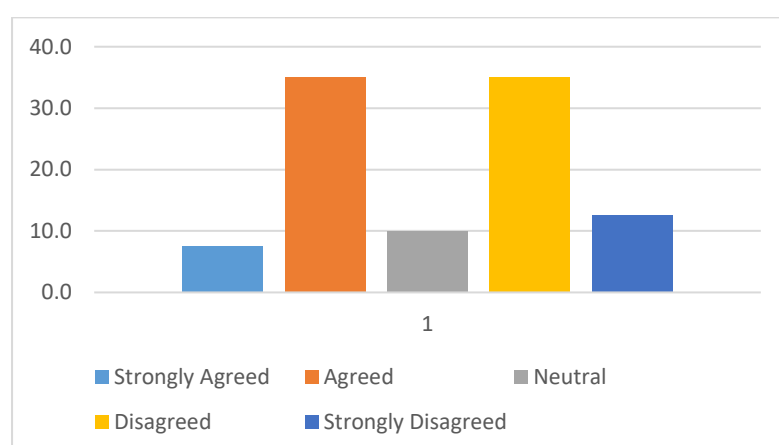


**Figure 6.10 Women and access to senior public leadership opportunities in the local sphere of government**

Figure 6.10 shows that 47% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that women have equal access to leadership opportunities as men, followed by 42.5% respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that both men and women have equal leadership access, while 10% of the respondent were neutral. Only one of the respondents failed to indicate her preference. The findings revealed that the percentage of the respondents who strongly disagreed to the statement was higher than those respondents who strongly agreed.

In the open-ended question, the respondents stated that women do not have equal access to leadership opportunities in the local sphere of government because of the

societal perception that men are better leaders than women. Respondents argued that, even if the government has equality provisions, men dominate in leadership, and most men prefer other men in certain leadership positions to women. Funk, (2019:1) suggests that preference for men for senior leadership positions by male managers may be because of the long internalisation of gender stereotypes associated with leadership qualities and women's gender characteristics. Qualified women with leadership skills are unable to access leadership positions because access to leadership positions is based on the explicit bias of society attached to femininity and masculinity (Funk, 2019:1; D'Agostino, 2017:10; Sanchez & Lehnert, 2019:182). This is regardless of the fact that the South African Constitution, 1996, as the supreme document stipulates that gender-based discrimination be prohibited in the public sector (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1). Interestingly, women still lack access to senior leadership opportunities regardless of the evidence that women's presence in leadership promotes the nation's economic growth, good/inclusive governance, organisations' productivity and societal development including reduction in poverty levels (see Sections 1.1, 1.1.2, 2.7.3 and 3.2.9).

#### **6.2.11 Female public managers influence on societal development and improvement in organisation's productivity and growth**

Ample research supports the perspective that women's presence in leadership brings about potential advantages for public organisations, and promotes sustainable societal development and economic growth (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012:4950; Eagly, 2016:199). Similarly, researchers have debated that women's leadership brings about community development and the concerns of disadvantaged social groups into formulation and government decision-making (see Section 2.7.3). The respondents were asked to indicate whether women's leadership significantly influence societal development and boost organisations productivity. The respondents' answer on this question are illustrated in Figure 6.11.

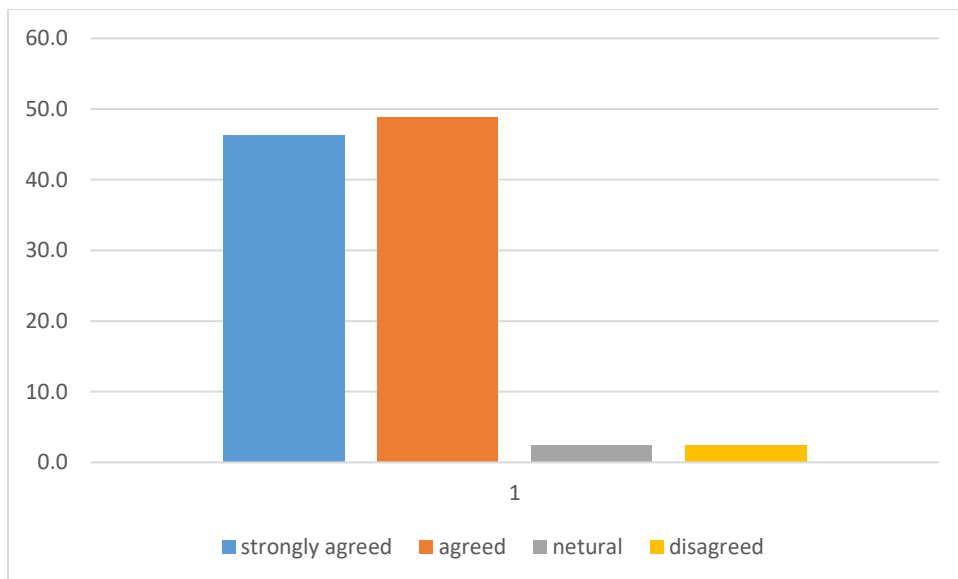


**Figure 6.11 Female public managers influence on societal development and organisations productivity and growth**

This result revealed that 95.1% of the respondents believed that women’s leadership can lead to societal development and improvement in organisational growth. The respondents argued in the open-ended question that women’s empowerment and leadership acceleration will not only benefit women but the entire society. The respondents further stated that women are more diplomatic, relate better with subordinates, are less corrupt and that women managers communicate better than male managers.

The qualities mentioned by respondents as demonstrated by female managers are supported by existing literature (see Sections 1.1.2, and 2.7.3). However, women employees (in public and private organisations) are still disadvantaged when it comes to accessing leadership opportunities through discriminatory hiring and promotion practices (McKinsey and Company, 2018:online; Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015; Osituyo, 2018:79; Player *et al.*, 2019:1; Gipson *et al.*, 2017:35; Glass and Cook, 2016:51). Failure to address discrimination in the hiring and promotion process may have repercussions, such that inequality could hinder organisational growth, effective public service delivery, countries’ economic development, the promotion of equality, the achievement of social transformation and insecurity, and may lead to reduced concern for community development (see Sections 1.1, 1.1.2, 2.7.3 and 3.2.9).

### 6.2.12 Implementatation of gender equality policy framework in the local sphere of government

In Chapter 3 (see Sections 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.3.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.8 and 3.2.9), several international and national policy frameworks ratified and promulgated by the South African government towards the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in the public sector with reference to the local government sphere were discussed. All spheres of government are constitutionally required and mandated to implement gender equality frameworks to achieve a representative public sector. However, it is alleged in literature that the local sphere of government is failing to implement government policies for promoting gender equality (Mokhele, 2016:13; Municipal focus, (2015: online); Surtee & Hall cited by Oosthuizen, *et al.*, 2019:2). The respondents were asked to indicate whether gender equality policies are implemented in the DKKDM. Figure 6.12 illustrates the respondents' answer to this question.

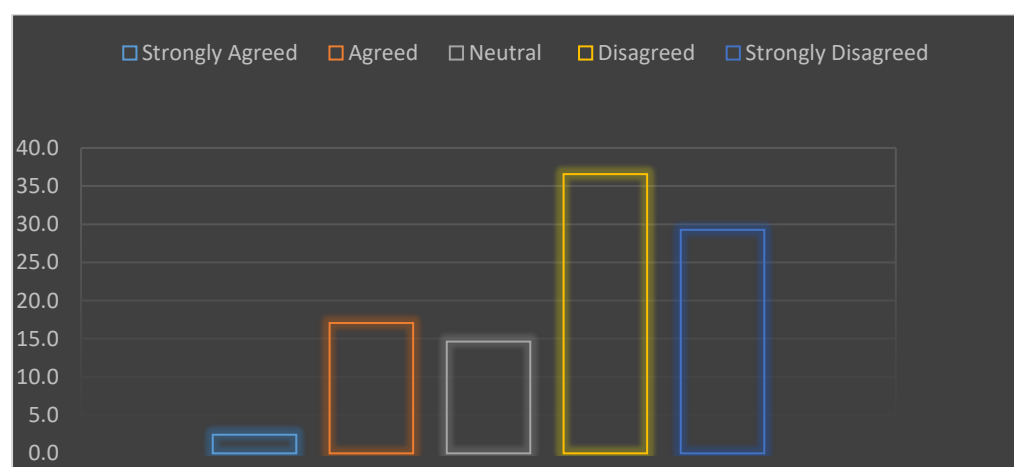


**Figure 6.12 Implementation of gender equality policy frameworks in the local sphere of government**

These results illustrate that 65.9% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that there are sufficient policy frameworks to bring about gender equality and women's leadership inclusion in the DKKDM. Of the respondents, 19.5% agreed or strongly agreed, while 14.6% were neutral.

The respondents argued that the municipality does not comply with government regulatory frameworks. They stated that they have the Employment Equality Act, but there is no policy developed from the EEA for the leadership advancement of women in the DKKDM, as required by government. The lack of implementation of gender

policy frameworks frustrate the good intention of government in ensuring an equal and egalitarian public service, and could account for a reason why women are still underrepresented in top and senior management positions in DKKDM. A primary reason for the establishment of the EEA is to increase women's participation in senior management levels, as the previously marginalised group. The result achieved on this front in the local sphere of government seems discouraging and disappointing. This suggests that leadership inequality will continue if the required proactive interventions are not put in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of gender equality policies and legislative frameworks in the municipality.

### 6.2.13 Implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy in the local sphere of government

One of the prominent ways of achieving substantial gender equality in the public service is the introduction of an Affirmative Action Policy (Nhlapo & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2016:167). The Affirmative Action Policy can be described as a remedial approach towards offsetting historical barriers and discrimination against women, in this context in public sector leadership. However, it was alleged that government institutions do not implement or comply with the provisions on the Affirmative Action Policy (Mokhele, 2016:13; Municipal Focus, 2015: online). The respondents were asked to indicate whether the Affirmative Action Policy is implemented in the DKKDM. Figure 6.13 illustrates the respondents' answer to this question.

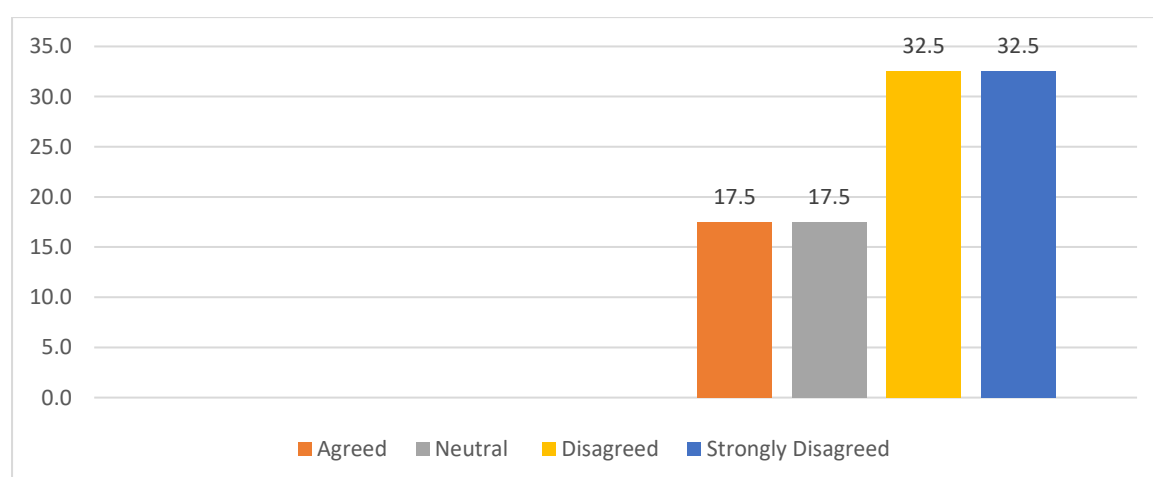


**Figure 6.13 Implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy in the local sphere of government**

Figure 6.13 shows that 65% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Affirmative Action Policy is effective in the leadership advancement of women in the DKKDM. The result also shows that the respondents who agreed and those who were neutral on the statement were 17.5% respectively. In the open-ended questions, the majority of the respondents mentioned that they are not aware of the existence of an Affirmative Action Policy and others mentioned that they have such a policy.

The percentage of the respondents who claim that they are unaware of the Affirmative Action Policy is troubling because the policy was specifically designed to promote the advancement of women and to offset the challenges identified by the respondents as inhibiting their career and leadership advancement (see Table 6.1). This study argues that women's unawareness on mechanisms and strategies meant for their liberation is the first important step towards their emancipation, as in the general saying "*when a purpose is not known abuse is inevitable*". The result from Figure 6.13 suggests two things. Firstly, the respondents' lack of awareness could be because the KKDM fails to implement the policy. This idea is confirmed by the Annual Report of the City of Matlosana, (2019:266) and, secondly, it could be that the municipality fails to disseminate the intent of the policy to employees. Worthy of note is that women find themselves in a work environment where they are denied access to leadership opportunities because of gender role expectation. Municipalities are constitutionally required to develop affirmative action programmes such as leadership training schemes for women's advancement and leadership inclusion (Osituyo, 2017:78). It is against this backdrop that the Human Resource Development department should regard the implementation of Affirmative Action Policy as a core government objective, and to ensure the effective communication of all human resource programmes intended for the development of women.

#### **6.2.14 Public policy framework on women's leadership advancement and development in the local sphere of government**

The respondents were asked whether there is any institutionalised policy frameworks and programmes in the local sphere of government and in the DKKDM for towards the empowerment and leadership development of women. The answers on this question are illustrated in Figure 6.14

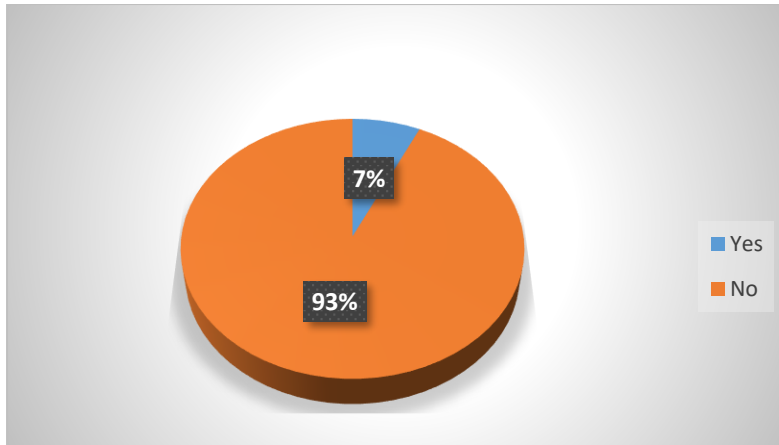


**Figure 6.14 Public policy framework on women's leadership development and advancement in the local sphere of government**

Figure 6.14 indicates that 93% of the respondents did not know about or agree that there any constitutionally developed programmes to assist women in their leadership development and advancement. Only a small percentage of the respondents claimed to be aware of an established policy for women's advancement in the local sphere of government. The results from Figures 6.13 and 6.14 speak to each other on the lack of awareness or acceptance by the majority of the respondents on the existence of an established policy framework for the achievement of gender equality in municipal leadership. This result suggests a reluctance by the municipality for empowerment and development of women employees. As alluded to, sustainable development, gender equality and societal growth will be impossible in the DKKDM if women are not empowered for their leadership acceleration.

#### **6.2.15 The effectiveness of the leadership training and skills development programmes in DKKDM pertaining to women's capacity building and leadership advancement**

Learning through continuous education, training and development is an instrumental tool for improving the effectiveness of public and private organisations and for building highly skilled employees. LGSETA, (2017: foreword) mentioned that a skilled workforce is needed in the municipality to enable the local sphere of government to accomplish its constitutional mandate of providing effective public services and goods to the citizenry on a daily basis. To produce high quality public managers who can deliver, leadership training and skills development must be effective and accessible to all public managers, regardless of gender. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the leadership training provided by the DKKDM is effective in relation to their



skills development and leadership advancement. The answer to this question is presented below in figure 6.15

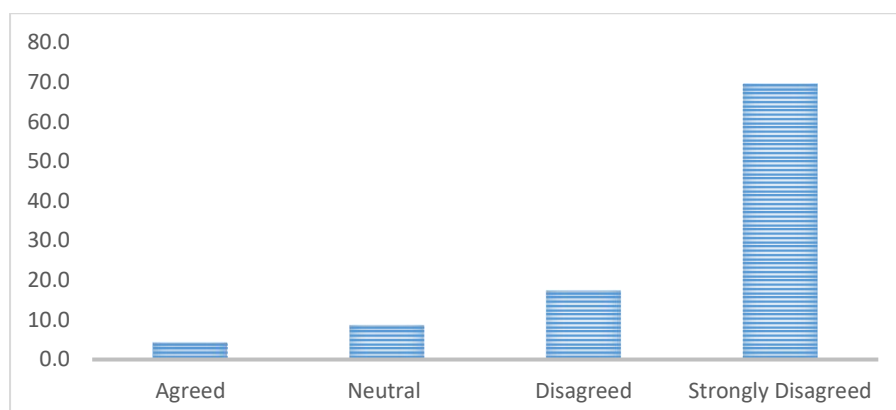


**Figure 6.15 The effectiveness of the leadership training and skills development programmes in DKKDM pertaining to women’s capacity building and leadership advancement**

Figure 6.15 indicates that the majority of the respondents (87%) are of the opinion that the training and development programmes in the Municipality are ineffective in relation to their skills and leadership development. This therefore suggests that the human capacity development programmes in the DKKDM do not capacitate women with the necessary skills and competencies to survive on their job and for future advancement. This finding is worrisome considering the importance of leadership training to women’s workplace performance and the advancement for the achievement of gender equality.

In Section 3.3.3 of this thesis, it was stated that women’s leadership advancement is dependent on them having appropriate job skills and experience, which are nurtured and cultivated through leadership training and capacity development interventions for example, management education, coaching, succession planning and mentoring (see Sections 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6). The high rate of labour turnover and the low morale displayed by most female managers could be a result of ineffective training and development.

Bierema (2016:119) argues that our understanding of how best to empower women for management positions is often constrained by inadequate organisational learning approaches and style. In Chapter 4, Section 4.3, it was mentioned that there are gender differences in the way men and women learn and acquire skills (Noe *et al.*, 2014:153). According to the Harvard Business Review, (2019), leadership training may continue to fail unless (public) organisations make an effort to develop new

methods of learning and employees' career development. This study suggests that, for leadership training and development to be effective in building and harnessing women's talents, HRD must understand women's learning preferences, and develop learning strategies that suit women's preferred ways of skills acquisition.

#### **6.2.16 Access to career development interventions in the local sphere of government**

Career development interventions such as mentoring, coaching, succession planning and networking are necessary to help women acquire leadership skills, achieve career satisfaction and to identify advancement opportunities in the workplace (Ehrich & Kimber, 2016:228; Vermeulen, 2015:486, Banwell *et al.*, 2019:704) as alluded to in Chapter 4, Sections 4.5.3 to 4.5.6. The respondents were required to indicate whether they have access to career development strategies such as coaching, mentoring, networking and succession planning in the local sphere of government and in DKKDM. The answers to this question is presented in table 6.2 below

| <b>Skills area</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|
| Mentoring           | 10%        | 90%       |
| Coaching            | 7.5%       | 90%       |
| Succession planning | 5%         | 95%       |
| Networking          | 20%        | 80%       |

**Table 6.2 Access to career development interventions in the local sphere of government**

Table 6.2 shows that 90% of the respondents do not have access to mentoring opportunities, while 10 % of the respondents claimed they have access to coaching opportunities. The result shows that 90 of the respondents mentioned that they have no access to coaching opportunities, while 7.5% of the respondents claimed that they have access to coaching. Furthermore, 95% of the respondents stated that they have no access to succession planning, while 5% stated that they have access to succession planning. 80% of the respondents stated that they don't have access to networking and 20% of the respondents claimed that they have access to networking. From the results, one can argue that there is no career development initiative

implemented in the DKKDM targeting the empowerment and leadership advancement of women to break the glass ceiling deterring women's leadership in the municipality.

The results illustrated in Table 6.2 have direct correlation with literature reviews. An unintended consequence of having a public organisational culture that favours men is the lack of, and women's limited access to, the career development support necessary for their professional career and leadership advancement. For example, due to the prevalence of patriarchy manifested through the preference for men in leadership roles and positions of responsibility, there are a limited number of women who are occupying powerful positions who can act as mentors and coaches to other women. According to Moodly and Toni, (2015:143), career development opportunities are powerful enablers to influential positions, and for challenging barriers obstructing women's active participation and equal representation in senior leadership positions. This study suggests that the implementation of long-term career development initiatives, consisting of mentoring, coaching, succession planning and networking opportunities is critically important for breaking both the visible and invisible barriers frustrating women's leadership at the DKKDM.

#### **6.2.17 The importance of leadership training and skill development of female public managers in the local sphere of government**

Women as latecomers to leadership, especially in male-dominated boardrooms, need to be exposed to continuous training to familiarise themselves with the working environment and to increase women's opportunities for leadership advancement. From the challenges deterring women's leadership advancement as stated in Sections 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2, 2.7.6.4, 2.7.6.5 and 2.7.6.6, female public managers need leadership training programmes for certain germane reasons. First, to improve their self-confidence. Second, to assist female managers in managing their family and work responsibilities. Third, because they undertake jobs in a working environment where they are subjected to tough recruitment standards and criteria due to the role congruity between female gender and leadership as prescribed by social norms. Also because of the perception that female managers need to possess qualifications and skills more than their male peers, including having to prove their competence, before they can be considered for higher positions in public institutions (Brieger *et al.*, 2019:496). The respondent's were requested to indicate whether training and skills development of

female public managers is important in the local sphere of government sphere. The answer to this question is illustrated in figure 6.16 below.

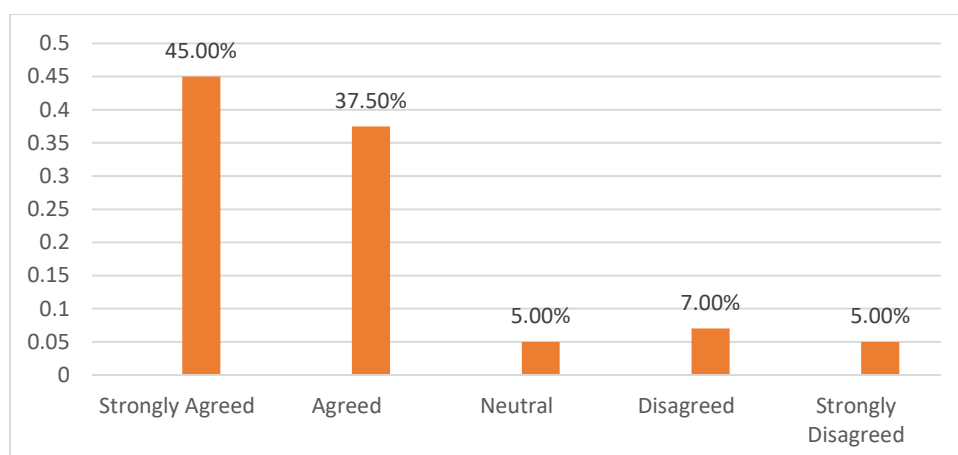


**Figure 6.16 The importance of leadership training and skill development of female public managers in the local government sphere**

Figure 6.16 shows that the majority of the respondents (82.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that leadership training and development of women is necessarily important for the empowerment of women and their promotion into leadership positions. This implies achieving substantial progress on gender leadership equality and is dependent on increasing the capacities of women to enable them to qualify for leadership positions. In support of this finding, Osituyo, (2017:78) suggests that dealing with the challenges of management diversity requires investing in the grooming and nurturing of people's skills and capabilities, in this context, women. However, as shown in Table 6.2, women lack access to the career development opportunities necessary for their advancement in the DKKDM. This finding is also consistent with the findings in literature that women lack access to leadership development opportunities that could enable them navigate prejudices and bias entrenched in organisational cultures.

#### **6.2.18 The lack of exposing female public managers to leadership training and management education would result in wastage of skills**

While we have seen more women in senior leadership positions than ever before. Women are still scarcely represented in the corridors of power in the local sphere of government. In Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3, literature reviews asserted that the talent pipeline of women is both leaky and blocked because women's skills are not identified and adequately tapped by public organisations. Christo and Bussin, (2017:33), posit

that the failure to fully harness women's talents will result in the wastage of skills and talents and impair women's opportunities to participate in leadership positions. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the failure to invest in the leadership skills development of female managers would result in the wastage of skills. The answers to this question are illustrated in Figure 6.17.

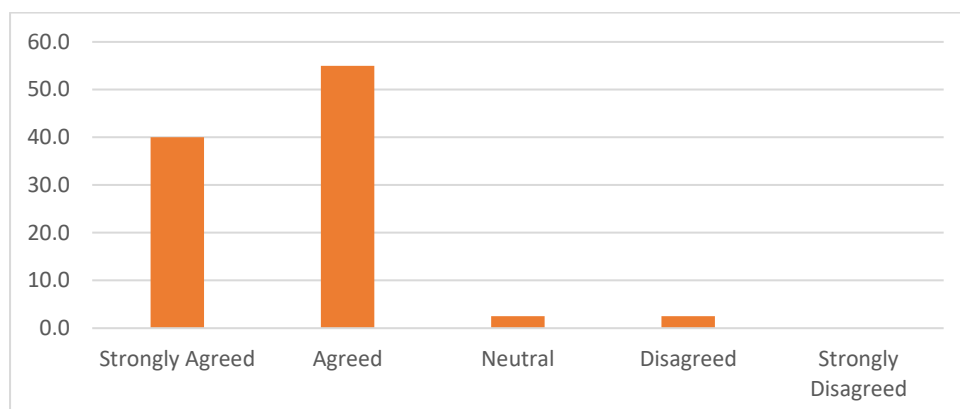


**Figure 6.17 The lack of exposing female public managers to leadership training and management education would result in the wastage of skills**

Figure 6.17 indicates that 95.5% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that failure to invest in the training and development of women will lead to wastage of skills and talents. The result demonstrates that the training and development of women is a key way of avoiding the wastage of women's skills and potential, especially in a male dominated work environment such as the DKKDM. Apart from skills wastage, failure to invest in women's training and development will result in the lack of talented female managers for leadership positions and advancement in the same municipality. However, women's talents are not harnessed through relevant training and career development interventions, as alluded in Table 6.2. This finding is consistent with the assertion in literature that women potentials are overlooked, leading to wastage of the skills and talents necessary for the achievement of SGD goal 5 and the nation's economic development targets.

### 6.2.19 Implementation of women-only leadership training programme in the local sphere of government

Some scholars suggested a modification in the way public organisations approach leadership training and development in that it has always resulted in the production of men and not women for powerful and influential positions (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:294; Brue & Brue, 2016:75). Scholars who held this perspective argued that traditional leadership development programmes do not adequately cater for women and their unique developmental needs and skills gaps (see Section 4.5.1). Hence, they advocated, and established, women only development programmes; an initiative to address women's skills gaps which they identified as unmet by the conventional leadership training and development programmes offered by most organisations. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the implementation of women-only leadership development programmes within the DKKDM is ideal in the local sphere of government. Figure 6.18 illustrates the respondents' answer to this question.

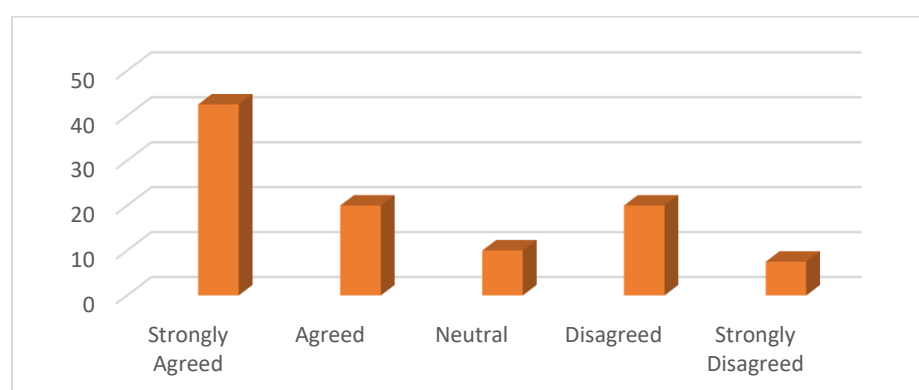


**Figure 6.18 implementation of women-only leadership training programme in the local sphere of government**

The finding illustrated in Figure 6.18 indicates that the percentage of the respondents (65.5%) who agreed or strongly agreed to the implementation of women only development leadership training programmes is higher than the respondents (27%) who disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 10% of the respondents were neutral on the implementation of the programmes. The quest for the implementation of women's leadership development programmes by the majority of the respondents could suggest that the all-inclusive training and skills development programmes in the municipality are deficient in addressing women's training and developmental needs (see Sections 1. 2 and 4.5.1).

In the open-ended questions, the respondents stated that initiating women-only leadership development programmes would make a significant difference in that they would enable women to develop a competitive mindset, improve women's confidence and also overcome explicit and hidden biases. They also argued that it would help to bring women within various management levels together to discuss gender issues relating to women's workplace realities, and deliberating on how to cope with the biased working environment. This finding is consistent with the assertion by scholars on the needs to establish women-only leadership development programmes (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.1). This study suggests that such programmes can be instrumental in establishing networking relationships amongst women, strengthening relationships among women and also assisting those women in lower positions to identify professional female mentors.

### **6.3 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the empirical findings acquired from the quantitative survey conducted with women in middle management and senior management in the DKKDM. Female managers in the DKKDM demonstrated that there is no intention by the local sphere of government to promote women's leadership development and advancement in real time. In line with existing literature on gender and leadership (see Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4) the findings revealed that women's leadership is hampered by challenges such as patriarchy, influence from culture, role stereotyping, discriminatory practices, lack of an enabling and supporting work environment, inadequate career development support, family responsibilities and the non-implementation of supportive regulatory frameworks. Important findings from the quantitative analysis are presented below.

In relation to gender and leadership competencies and skills, the quantitative finding revealed that an overwhelming majority of the respondents believe that leadership competencies and skills have nothing to do with gender. Rather, a leader's skills are a product of their personal beliefs, qualifications, experience, values, personality and their environmental influence (see Section 6.2.1). However, the chapter found that leadership effectiveness is attributed to gender, due to societal gender role expectations where women are seen as unequal to men, and incapable of leading in strategic positions (see Section 6.2.2). Some reported effects were the discrimination

against qualified women, the mental mismatch between females' gender characteristics and the ideal qualities of a leader, leadership role stereotyping, the devaluation and undermining of female manager's skills and competence, as observed in literature (See Sections 1.2, 2.7.4, 2.7.6 and 2.7.6.3).

With regards to recruitment, the chapter found that discrimination against women is done through biased hiring and the promotion of male leaders. Discrimination against women in HR practices are inherited from the broader engendered gender organisational culture of the DKKDM which do not support gender equality and women's empowerment (see Section 6.2.8). Eklund *et al.*, (2017:130) suggest that if government institutions are to maximise the leadership effectiveness of both men and women, they must look beyond their biological characteristics and ignore the general stereotypic beliefs on what makes a male manager or a female manager successful. If municipalities are to ensure gender leadership diversity, they must ensure that all HR decisions and related practices such as training, hiring and promotions are fair and even in favour of women to eliminate occupational segregation

One thing that stood out in the findings is that female managers are interested in and are willing to pursue higher leadership roles (see Section 6.2.6). However, the respondents stated that their leadership ambitions are frustrated by gender leadership stereotypes, gender-based discrimination, balancing family responsibilities and complex leadership roles, insufficient leadership training, political interference, preferences for males, lack of family and organisational support and lack of self-confidence. The findings further revealed that political interference was mentioned as the major demotivating factor to women's leadership advancement in the local sphere of government (see Section 6.2.7).

In relation to leadership training and development, the findings indicate that women do not have access to career development opportunities such as succession planning, mentoring, networking and coaching. This finding is troubling because career and leadership development opportunities are powerful enablers for securing leadership positions (Moodly & Toni, 2015:143). Furthermore, the respondents stated that the training and development programmes currently in place in the DKKDM are ineffective for their leadership skill development. This implies that "the one-size-fits-all" training approach used for the leadership development of all employees does not meet the



unique developmental needs of women. The respondents were in support of the implementation of women-only leadership development programmes within DKKDM, stating that such platforms would help addressing women's issues as they relate to their working environment.

The finding indicates that legislative frameworks for promoting gender equality and women's leadership advancement are not necessarily implemented in the DKKDM. The respondents mentioned that they have the EEA, but their municipalities do not have a plan developed from the act as authorised by the Department of Labour. Surprisingly, the study found that the majority of female managers are not aware of the Affirmative Action Policy, which was specifically enacted for women's empowerment and leadership development and advancement to destroy structural inequality in leadership. As stated in Section 3.2.2 of this thesis, women need to be schooled on the various laws promoting their advancement in the (toxic) masculine work environment so that when there is an occurrence of injustice and disparity, they will be able to fight for and lay claims to their human right. This study argues that without any measure to emancipate women, as stipulated in the Affirmative Action Policy, structural gender inequality will remain in the local sphere of government.

The next chapter presents the findings from the qualitative survey for the meaningful integration of the findings obtained from the quantitative survey presented in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The findings from the quantitative data analysis were reported in the previous chapter. This chapter reports, presents and interprets the qualitative data collected using research instruments such as the personal interview, direct observation, the researcher's reflective notes, and the review of government policies and documents promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The purpose of using the different qualitative data collection instruments is to gain an in-depth understanding of the research problem, for a meaningful combination of the qualitative findings with the quantitative findings (see Section 5.2). The researcher accessed female managers' understanding of gender, gender inequality, municipal skills development and capacity building structure and issues pertaining to women's leadership advancement and development in the local government sphere.

#### **7.2 Demographic profile of the participants in the qualitative research**

As stated in Section 5.6, the participants for the qualitative components of this study were purposefully selected because of the knowledge, skills and experience they possess on gender issues and the training and development of female managers. The research participants were women in directorship and senior management levels and HR personnel from the JB Marks Local Municipality, the Dr Kenneth Kaunda Municipality, the Maquassi Hills Municipality and the Matlosona Local Municipality. Four HR personnel and twenty-three female managers within the DKKDM participated in the semi structured personal interviews. As stated in Section 5.6 of this thesis, pseudonyms names were given to the participants to maintain their confidentiality and anonymity, promised before the commencement of the semi-structured one-on-one interview. The demographic profile of the participants' was detailed in Section 5.6. However, for the purpose of clarity, the participants' demographic is also represented in table 7.1.

| <b>Names</b> | <b>Pseudonym</b> | <b>Municipality</b> | <b>Current management position</b> | <b>Highest qualification</b> |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1            | Tinni            | Kenneth Kaunda      | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 2            | Chiko            | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 3            | Mago             | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 4            | Cigo             | City of Matlosana   | Assistant Director                 | Masters                      |
| 5            | Wava             | City of Mtlosana    | Middle Management                  | Honours                      |
| 6            | Zino             | City of mtlosana    | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 7            | Kizo             | City of Matlosona   | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 8            | Mzo              | City of Matlosana   | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 9            | Hiho             | City of Matlosona   | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 10           | Mpo              | City of Matlosona   | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 11           | Siso             | Kennth Kaunda       | Director                           | MBA                          |
| 12           | Gigo             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 13           | Jigo             | Maquask Hills       | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 14           | Vico             | Maquasi Hills       | Acting Director                    | Masters                      |
| 15           | Waza             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Maters                       |
| 16           | Kiko             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Bachelor's degree            |
| 17           | Zizo             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 18           | Lilo             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Masters                      |
| 19           | Xifo             | JB Marks            | Director                           | Masters                      |
| 20           | Niko             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 21           | Zawa             | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Honours                      |
| 22           | Hvo              | JB Marks            | Middle management                  | Bachelor's degree            |
| 23           | Yivo             | JB Marks            | Assistant director                 | Honours                      |
| 24           | Moso             | JB Marks            | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 25           | Yemi             | City of Matlosona   | Middle Management                  | Honours                      |
| 26           | Xyo              | Kenneth Kaunda      | HR personnel                       | Honours                      |
| 27           | Emabo            | City of Matlosona   | Director                           | Master                       |

**Table 7.1 Respondent's demographic information**

**(Source: Authour's compilation)**

### **7.3 Development of codes and thematic analysis**

As stated in Section 5.9 of this thesis, after the development of different codes, the qualitative data was further analysed using the deductive thematic analysis and the inductive thematic analysis methods (Section 5.9.1). The deductive analysis thematic guided the researcher in coming up with themes from the raw qualitative data having a strong link with the theoretical perspective adopted in the study (see Sections 2.4.1 to 2.4.2.4). Although not limited to the following, the different themes developed include:

- gender is driven by societal culture and traditions
- women are oppressed by cultural norms, beliefs and traditions
- society legitimises women's oppression,
- men's power and control over women is supported by culture
- gender roles promote women's oppression in the public space
- gender is a maker of social identity
- gender roles are formed by society
- social norms regulate the behaviour of men and women
- access to leadership positions is determined by gender.

After completing the deductive thematic analysis, the researcher adopted the inductive thematic analysis to identify new or emerging themes from the collected qualitative raw data. The data-driven, new or emerging themes were specifically developed from the respondent's perspectives and from the field notes compiled by the researcher during the data collection phase. Some of the data-driven or emerging themes developed using the inductive thematic analysis (but not limited to the following) include:

- gender determines your purpose and place in society
- some ascribed gender roles are innate in women
- women have different thinking
- women are better leaders because of their gender characteristics
- women's leadership starts from the home
- capacity building interventions are needed to empower women in leadership
- the implementation of women-only leadership development programmes

- women are more sensitive to social and community needs
- expose women to the real work environment after training
- patriarchy promotes lack of confidence in female managers
- preference for men tells society that women are incompetent
- gender stereotypes have psychological effects on both women and men
- departments run by women are more productive and effective
- women's skills are hardly acknowledged or recognised
- gender stereotypes are based on the positions that women apply for
- female managers are often manipulated by male managers,
- women are demotivated and frustrated by men's privileges in top positions
- men are yet to embrace women's leadership qualities and abilities
- workplace hostility and incivility weaken women's leadership interest

In this study, the use of both the inductive thematic analysis and deductive thematic analysis provides a cohesive narrative about respondent's perspectives and experience on the condition of gender inequality and women's empowerment in the DKKDM. In the final analysis, the themes were reduced, and linked to the objectives of the study (see Section 1.3). The findings represent a comprehensive description of the qualitative data and its themes. The study provides a detailed explanation on each of themes and the excerpts from the semi-structured personal interviews gives a true reflection of the themes. The findings from the collected qualitative data are presented in the following subsections.

#### **7.4 Conceptualisation of gender**

All respondents were required to share their understanding on the concept of gender. This study adopts the definition of gender as used in development circles (see Section 2.2), where gender is conceptualised as categories that are socio-culturally created and, over time, form the basis for distinguishing responsibilities, political, social and economic characteristics for one's sex. Nevertheless, the research respondents were given the opportunity to share their personal understanding and viewpoints on the concept beyond the limit of the working definition because they were not informed of the definition adopted by the study prior to their interview.

The respondents provided similar answers on the meaning of the concept gender. A synthesis from the answers provided demonstrates that gender transcends the

biological characteristics of being either a male or a female, but also includes the cultural norms that define access to power, resources, positions and opportunities for both men and women in society. Some respondents provided different perspectives and thinking on gender as encompassing all those groups previously marginalised in South Africa before the new democratic dispensation. Table 7.2 provides a summarised list of respondents' definitions of gender. These definitions were deduced after synthesising the different definitions from individual respondents to come up with a general definition without having to lose any respondent's meaning of the concept.

| No | Definition of gender                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Gender is used to represent male and female sexes in society                                                                                                                                  |
| 2  | Gender emerged as a construction of society and is not biologically determined                                                                                                                |
| 3  | Gender means your biological characteristics i.e. your sexuality                                                                                                                              |
| 4  | Society used gender to regulate the behaviour of men and women                                                                                                                                |
| 5  | Gender is all about the differences that identify the human species i.e. male and female, husband and wife, boys and girls                                                                    |
| 6  | Gender relates to traditional norms as to how men and women should behave                                                                                                                     |
| 7  | Gender means everyone that was previously disadvantaged in the previous dispensation, especial women in our context as South Africans                                                         |
| 8  | Gender means the differences between male and female sexes which promote the oppression of women in all spheres                                                                               |
| 9  | Gender defines your personal conception of yourself and other people, your purpose, your responsibilities within your community and your relationships with others including the opposite sex |
| 10 | Gender is more about the allocation of power, roles and responsibilities to the different sexes by society                                                                                    |

**Table 7.2. Respondent's perception on the meaning of gender**

**Source: (Authour's compilation) Field interview (2019)**

The respondents' understanding and conception of gender largely correspond to the definition of gender as adopted in this study (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2). Although

Mago, Vico and Hiho confuse gender and sex, the respondent's responses correspond with the observation of Collins (2015:3-4), that people may confuse or mistake gender for sex or vice versa because the distinction between the concepts is very thin. Mago and Vico argued that gender has more to do with a person's biological sex, and that our sexuality is determined by God and not by the society. Hiho mentioned that although our sexuality is determined by God, the roles performed by both men and women are dictated and regulated by society through cultural norms and beliefs. Siso and Mago stated that, although some of the traditional gender roles performed by women are ascribed to females by society, others are innate in women because of their sexual characteristics. This perspective is explained in the excerpt below.

Siso stated:

*"I am a woman because of my sexuality. I bear kids; a man doesn't have that because of his biological make-up in terms of his genes as a man. However, taking care of the kids, running family errands, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the kids and the raising of children are ascribed to women by society; a man can also do that".*

Mago stated:

*"Because of women's biology, they can carry a child for nine months, but the men cannot. However, our society tells women that they are responsible for cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the house".*

Deducing from the excerpt, the societal system of gender division of labour is done according to the biological characteristic and uniqueness of males' and females' gender. Siso and Mago are of the opinion that some of the roles ascribed to women by society can just as well be performed by men.

Tinni stated:

*"In this era of democracy, as women we can say that we are equal to men, but when the husband and wife return from work, it is expected that the woman enters the kitchen to prepare the food while the man sits in front of the television set with his legs on the table, without rendering any support to his wife".*

Hiho stated that, in her culture:

*“When you get married, you are told that the husband is the head of the home, you must cook for him, wash for him and respect him”.*

The responses of the respondents correspond with different scholars’ assertion that cultural gender roles system do not only create gender binary between men and women, but also promote inequalities (Shongwe, 2019:9; Mwale & Dodo, 2017:107; Snodgrass, 2016:61; Dhaske, 2016:4). The argument of the respondents is further supported by Rudman and Fetterof, (2014:219) who observed that, despite the increased participation and presence of women in the corporate world, including in the public service/sector and in the local government sphere, there is still disparity in the performance of household responsibilities that disadvantage women.

Mago stated:

*“Because of women’s biological characteristics in society, some people see women as people who can only bear kids and perform family roles, not as leaders”.*

In support of the respondent, social perceivers still view women as unfit for leadership positions as they believe that certain characteristic that are expected of a leader are not exhibited by women (Samuel & Mokoaleli, 2017:55-56; Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616). This stereotypical mentality follows all women into the workplace, frustrating women’s educational qualifications, experience, and knowledge (Rawat, 2014:42-43; Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018:813).

Cgio Zino, Wava, Siso and Lilo stated that society uses female gender characteristics to oppress by assigning subservient roles to women. Xifo mentioned that girls grow up seeing their mothers performing domestic roles and they are expected to join their mothers in the kitchen, unlike the boys. Mago stated that women grow up with the mentality that they are supposed to do the entire house chores, without any leadership mentality, and women’s lack of leadership exposure from early childhood still prevents some women from aspiring to leadership roles, although this has to do with age. Tinni stated that women between the ages of 45 and 50 still think that leadership positions are not meant for them due to the stereotypes associated with femininity that they have internalised from a young age. This therefore suggests that the lack of leadership exposure for young girls during the early stage of their development affects their career choices in adulthood, in particular their leadership drive. The respondents’ responses correlate with the theories of O’Neil *et al.*, (2015:3-5) and Olsson and Martiny, (2018:1)



that certain factors such as the early exposure to gender role training, social environment, family attitude and parental expectations contribute to women's occupational and career choices. O'Neil *et al.*, (2015:3-5) recommend that, to foster women's active participation in leadership and to boost their professional drive from an early stage, young girls should be exposed to leadership training. Fiarmen, (2016:2), suggests that continuous education, training, and modelling of desired behaviours are some of the ways to eliminate engrained cultural biases among adults, in this case women.

The respondents expressed frustration and deep concern on how they are constrained by traditional gender role expectations when trying to gain access to top and senior positions. These are illustrated in the following excerpts.

Wava stated:

*"When I think about the things that are done to women in societies especially in the various dispensation I come very very emotional and angry in the sense women could not be in leadership, women do not have access to quality education, women could not even get consent if they wanted to abort or sterilise, women are supposed to take permission from our husbands".*

Hiho said:

*"In my culture, when you get married you are told that a man is the head of the family and as a wife you are expected to accord your husband that respect as the head".*

The frustration demonstrated by respondents corresponds to the argument of liberal feminists that inequality is against women and is both perpetuated and sustained through biased traditional gender norms and cultural beliefs that regulate the activities of public organisations including the local sphere of government (Rahman & Jackson, 2010:27; D'Agostino, 2017:10). This comment indicates that traditional gender norms and culture give men power over women (Rahman & Jackson, 2010:27; Baehr, 2017:4-5; Murnen *et al.*, 2016:78-79). The legitimatisation of men's power and control over women through biased cultural norms is what African feminism, development feminism, racial feminism among others labelled as patriarchy (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:33; Haak, 2020:177). As stated in Chapter 2, Sections 2.2, 2:3 and 2.4.1, gender as a phenomenon is a source of social differentiation and an unjustified prejudice against

women. Scholars and practitioners in the field of gender and leadership accentuate that to challenge patriarchal ideology and insensitive cultural gender norms in paid workplaces, public organisations including the local government sphere should expose women to formal and informal education, human rights education and leadership training (O'Neil *et al.*, 2015:10; M'mbaha & Chepyator-Thomson, 2018:1). O'Neil *et al.* (2015:10) add that supporting women's personal and collective leadership is vital to address entrenched patriarchy and social injustice experienced by professional women.

### **7.5 Understanding of gender equality**

Respondents were asked about their understanding of the meaning of gender equality in the workplace. The study deduced that respondents held similar understanding on the meaning of gender equality. From respondents' responses, gender equality means that men and women should receive equal treatments in the workplace in terms of recruitment, access to benefits, remuneration and training and development. Positions in the workplace must be balanced between males and females. This is echoed in the following excerpts:

Mago stated that:

*"My belief is a Christian belief, we are the same, even before God we are the same. For me, gender equality means that we are the same, even if I carry a baby for nine months and the other does not, we are all the same. We have equal capabilities, equal abilities, and we have the same mind. The only difference is our sexuality. In terms of education, wisdom and intelligence men and women are the same and must be treated equally".*

Wava stated:

*"For me, gender equality means that, for example, if I have a degree in environmental management and my male colleague has a degree in environment management why should I be below that man because we've got the same qualification. Gender equality means that the perception that men are supposed to be on top in all structures of society must be totally eradicated because we are the same".*

Xyo said:

*“Gender equality means the fall of patriarchy. For example, we have always grown up with the concept that it’s a man’s world, especially in the corporate and business world. Gender equality means taking women into management positions and not to be biased against them”.*

Siso said:

*“Gender equality means that everything that the society has to offer for the survival of humankind has to be equal across all genders be it education, resources, health, and work related issues. In the workplace it means levelling the playing ground for men and women to compete”.*

Mzo said:

*“Gender equality is different from the old days where it is just the husband going to work and the wife was always neglecting herself and neglecting her education to look after the kids and to keep the home environment afloat. Today both husband and wife are working”.*

Hvo said:

*“In the work environment, gender equality means, for example, that if I want to be a firefighter regardless of my sexuality. I should be given equal opportunities when in the post it has always been seen as because of the strength that you need, you can apply for any position, and you are not limited.*

Siso adds an important insight to the meaning of gender equality. She mentioned that all human beings, regardless of their sex and the gender an individual decides to identify with, they should be given equal opportunities to make personal decisions on their career, personal development and occupation without any restrictions. The respondents stated that gender equality should be a national objective; the government must come to the local sphere of government to make this gender equality objective understandable to everyone.

Mago stated *that*:

*“Government should organise training workshops to teach employees the meaning of gender equality, where you allow men and women to speak. This can help to change*

*their mindset and perception that women are not meant to be in the kitchen. This training must be consistent because if something is spoken once you might forget”.*

From the human rights perspectives as emphasised throughout the discussion in Chapter 3, gender equality means the elimination of unfair and discriminatory practices including ensuring the equal access of men and women to opportunities in the social sphere. For example, in political and administrative leadership, governance, education, training and development (Subrahmanian, 2005:395-396; Aikman *et al.*, 2011:45). From the respondents' comments, the study deduced that women do not receive the same treatment and opportunities compared to men in the public sector. The respondents argued that the municipal environment is not equal because the principle of gender equality is not practiced in the delegation of leadership positions in the municipality. This finding validates the argument by different scholars and government documents that gender equality is yet to be achieved in the public sector, especially the local sphere of government (Ramaite, 2013:3-4; SHRC, 2017:9).

As alluded to in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, from the legal perspective, equality transcends just providing an equality policy, frameworks and regulations, but also includes the institutionalisation of special measures to equalise all social structures (Brodsky and Day, 2002:185; Fredman, 2016:712). In line with this view, the respondents stated that gender equality laws are important. However, measures should be taken to promote the advancement of women in departments where they are scarcely represented, as stated by Tinni:

*“Given where we come from, because I am a South African, there should be bias towards a certain gender maybe we could say, for example, from time immemorial we have not been having women in construction. We need to be biased by giving women more opportunity”.*

Kiko stated that:

*“When we see that gender is not balanced in certain positions, for example in terms of leadership, there has to be a measure to ensure that the groups that are not equally represented are trained for that management position”.*

By implication, identifying departments, divisions and positions in the local sphere of government where women have been previously disadvantaged and/or are scarcely

represented and giving them the opportunity to advance in those areas could lead to achievement of substantive gender equality. As Laryea, (2012:36) suggests, temporary measures could mean reserving positions exclusively for women in areas where gender inequality is high or is yet to be achieved. The Affirmative Action Policy is one of the special measures taken by the government for the achievement of substantive equality through equal representation of men and women in all spectra of the public service (see Sections 3.3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.4 and 3.3.5). However, the respondents echoed that gender inequality continues in the local sphere of government, particularly at directorship and senior management levels. Taking a conscious look at the South African environment and the public sector, including the local government sphere, that have been conventionally patriarchal, gender equality provisions are bound to suffer. Pillay and Teleki, (2018:40) and Ubink, (2016:30) respectively stated that the transformational provisions of government exist amidst multidimensional cultural and religious beliefs, some of which are against the principle of equality and good governance. To achieve leadership gender equality, cultural gender expectations, including the implicit bias attributed to femininity and masculinity, must be separated from the operations of public administration, local government and public sector leadership. There must be a total restructuring of the organisational unequal structures and a change in the normative model inherited from biased cultural gender norms, which have always been used to undermine women.

## **7.6 Gender and leadership representation in DKKDM**

All the respondents mentioned that there is no equal representation of men and women in their leadership structures, especially in the top and directorship positions. The respondents stated that gender equality is fair in non-management and mid-management levels. This is consistent with the findings in literature as stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6. Due to the researcher's inability to access documents on gender representation from the individual municipalities, gender statistics obtained on the directorship and top management positions during the interview section are presented in table 7.3 below.

|                   | Men | Women        |
|-------------------|-----|--------------|
| City of Matlosana | 5   | 2            |
| Kenneth Kaunda    | 3   | 2 (1 acting) |
| JB Marks          | 4   | 2            |
| Maquassi Hills    | 9   | 2 (1 acting) |

**Table 7.3 Gender representation in senior management postions in the DKKDM**

**Field source (2019)**

From Figure 7.3, it is not wrong to say that there is a lack of leadership diversity and inclusion in the DKKDM, as claimed in literature (Sánchez & Lehnert, 2019:183), and this will impact the diversity skills and talents that women bring into the public governance space (Morak, 2018:17). The study also found that women are underrepresented as municipal managers. The respondents mentioned that, since the inception of the DKKDM, women have never headed the position of the municipal manager in almost all the local municipalities in the District. It is only in recent times that the DKKDM is been headed by a woman. Furthermore, worthy of note is that even if this study considers the municipalities under study as a single case, when it comes to gender representation in leadership, some municipalities are doing better than the others. For example, Table 7.3 shows that Kenneth Kaunda is doing better on women's leadership representation in senior positions than other local municipalities in the district. In Kenneth Kaunda, one of the female managers is in an acting capacity, which does not guarantee her full employment in that position. As revealed in Table 7.3, the municipality is moving towards the achievement of equal representation in top management positions. However, the location of the municipalities determines the number of women in management positions. Vico stated that there are still leadership gender gaps because qualified women with the necessary leadership skills are not seeking employment in smaller towns, they prefer to live in bigger towns with their families where could find better schools for their children. However, Zino and Tinni mentioned that there are still gender gaps in top positions because women have not yet ventured into municipal leadership positions, especially in departments such as

municipal engineering and traffic services. The respondents also stated that women do not have the skills to qualify them for senior leadership positions in those departments. In line with the respondent's comments, Moraka, (2018:24) stated in her study that women's inadequate leadership experiences and exposure together with the unavailability of suitably qualified women to assume leadership positions are often used as an excuse for the under-representation of women in senior management positions. Contrarily, literature revealed that women have acquired experience (Funk, 2019:2) and educational qualifications (D'Agostino, 2017:10; Abel, 2019:2) to assume leadership roles as a universal reality. Zenger and Falkman, (2019) and (Funk, 2019:2) add that female managers have competence that is equivalent or just more than those possessed by male managers.

The Harvard Business Review, (2016) reported that the majority of women who studied engineering in higher education (tertiary) institutions and technical colleges end up leaving the engineering profession for other occupations. Several reasons could account for why women are leaving the profession, as stated by the Harvard Business review reports, (2016). Nevertheless, women leaving technical professions contributes to their under-representation in leadership, particularly in engineering departments and technical related fields in the DKKDM. This means that it might be difficult to achieve gender equality in the engineering and other technical departments unless appropriate measures are taken to make the engineering field more attractive and accessible to women. This supports the assertion by Motsoeneng and Kahn, (2014:1060) that men are predominantly employed in occupational and traditional positions considered as masculine domains because there are not enough qualified women to undertake such positions.

While an improvement is noticed in the gender composition of municipal leadership, this study found that black women are far more visible than white and coloured women in all management structures in the DKKDM. Nevertheless, the under-representation of women in top and senior management positions will cost the DKKDM a lot. This is not only concerning the failure of the municipality to meet the basic values of the new democratic constitution (equality), but will also leave the community impoverished as well as deteriorating the socioeconomic status and living standards of people residing within the DKKDM. The rationality behind this statement lies in the fact that women predominate the South African population (see Section 1.1.4 ) and their unemployment

in management positions, understood as having more financial value, will unequivocally increase poverty, thus affecting households' incomes and living standards, and the socio-economic status of communities within the DKKDM (Affum-Osei *et al.*, 2019:716; Moraka, 2018:3).

## **7.7 Gender as a key factor to consider for employment in leadership positions**

In Chapter 2, Section 2.7.4 this question was asked ...“are men better leaders than women”? This is because men have more access to leadership opportunities than women do in the public service and at local government sphere owing to the assumption that men are more competent and talented in handling management technical positions (Samuel & Mokoaleli, 2017:55; Kyriakidou, 2012:845-846b; Heilman, 2015:73-74; Paustian-Ubderdahl *et al.*, 2014:1129; Bierema, 2016:121). This question was asked to gauge participant perception on this issue.

Respondents had dissimilar views as to whether gender should be used as a key factor for accessing leadership roles. Some respondents posited that gender should not be used as a factor for accessing leadership role(s), while others believe that gender should be an important factor to consider before giving a person access to leadership roles. Respondents who held the view that gender should not to be used as a key factor for accessing leadership roles affirmed that leadership positions should be accessible to people based on their skills for that job, education, qualifications and experience rather than on their gender. Because both men and women have equal capabilities and skills, the only difference is our sexuality, all humans are created with the same brain cells, and the gene does not matter. This assertion is line with liberal feminist theory that men and women have equal capacity, reason, and their biological differences are irrelevant (Lorber, 2010:26, Niennaber & Moraka, 2016:145-146).

Chiko stated that:

*“I don’t think access to leadership opportunities should be based on gender. Men and women are the same when it comes to intellectual capabilities and abilities. What is important is that we must look at the person’s skills, qualifications and credentials, we must check if the person has the potential to manage an organisation like, say, for*



*example you appoint a man for a position and the man fails and we've a woman that is capable, available and ready to take that position".*

Siso stated that:

*"I don't think a person should have access to leadership opportunities because of their gender. I believe that what differentiate a woman from a man is just the biological organs and not my brain, not my functionality, not my capabilities and not my strength \*(sic). What a man can do according to his abilities and attributes I can do, not just me but any other woman. There are certain men who cannot lift up weight but there are women who can lift up weight, does that mean that the society that those men are stronger than women are. Whether I bear kids or not, my sexuality should not be used as a component of determining my role in society".*

Jiga posits that:

*"You don't have to be a man for you to be a good leader, a women \*(sic) can be a good leader. Leadership is for everyone; leadership depends on how you treat people, your personality and your abilities, you don't necessarily need to be a male or a female.*

According to Xifo:

*"Gender is not necessary for accessing leadership positions, but in our situation it looks like it does play a role because in every employment there is no percentage that is equal in terms of male and female especially in top management positions".*

Cigo stated that:

*"Leadership should be given because of your ability and not your gender. It cannot be that because I am a woman I must get that position without the correct capacities and skills. I have seen a department headed by a man in this municipality and it is a disaster, and I have also seen a woman heading a department and that department was very successful".*

Lilo stated that:

*“Gender should not be a determining factor for to access leadership positions, because all people are equal, you can’t be denied access just because you are a woman because you can have just as good leadership qualities that a man had”.*

Wava stated:

*“I have seen in the local sphere of government that because you are woman they believe that you can’t do this job, they don’t give you the opportunity to see that you can do that job. For example, women electricians are not given the opportunity to climb the stepladder and fix the bulbs; it is so unfortunate that women are denied access to certain positions because of their gender. There has to be a change management to change people’s perception in municipality”.*

Vico stated that:

*“I don’t think gender should be used as a yardstick for determining access to leadership positions because management competencies and skills are not determined by a person’s gender”.*

Vico argued that leadership skills can be acquired and developed, and it is possible that women acquire better leadership skills than men. The respondents’ responses are in line the assertion of scholars such as Lussier and Achua, (2016:9), Tracy (2010:13) and Kowalski, (2015:2), who stated that that creative and innovative leaders are made through intense training and development. Daft, (2014:23) and Hùng, (2016:65), support the argument that, through continuous on-the-job training, formal training and development and self-motivated people learn to become sound, good, courageous and effective leaders, regardless of their gender, personality and inborn qualities.

The majority of the respondents claim that gender is still used as a key factor for selection to top and senior management positions. The recent study of Gipson *et al.*, (2017:35) and Osituyo, (2018: 79) supports the respondents’ claims. They stated that men have more advantage when it comes to selection and promotion into leadership positions by virtue of their gender characteristic. Leadership selection based on a person’s gender is against the human capital theory, which states that leaders are appointed based on their acquired skills, experience and the knowledge they possess

for that job (Singh *et al.*, 2008:53; Carrell *et al.*, 2018:190). This study argues that, due to the discrimination evident in the selection and appointment of leaders in favour of men, it becomes apparent that men will advance into top and senior management positions far more than women; men will achieve greater career success and job satisfaction than women and men will continue to have more boardroom experience than women.

In contrast, some respondents held the view that gender should be a necessary or key factor for accessing certain positions.

Mzo stated:

*“I will find it strange if they place a woman for example as the director of electricity department because it is more of male’s field. Remember it doesn’t matter how you look at it a women do not have the physical strength in what a man has, there are certain things a man can do but us as women I don’t think we can do them”.*

Hiho said:

*“For me what matters is the skills but if it is a job that requires for example digging of holes then I will say that more access should be given to men than women”...*

The respondent’s perception contradicts the liberal feminist postulation that men and women can perform any job when given equal opportunity. However, this might reflect the gender-schemas theory assertion that schemas exist for both males and females in society (Starr and Zurbrigeen, 2017:567). According to the gender-schemas, individuals form schemas for themselves and others based on the behaviour and personality expectation that is ascribed by their society. All social institutions have schematical effects that influence the psychologies of people in terms of their self-identify, their understanding of other people as well as their interaction with others in society. (Canevello, 2017:1; Starr and Zurbrigeen, 2017:567). Le Ber *et al.*, (2017:227) maintain that “social and personal identifies, together with leader’s roles, gender roles and other role schemas embedded in cultural contexts (for example, race, socio-economic status) interact to generate a woman’s leadership identity”. Eklund *et al.*, (2017:131) add that individuals conform quickly to culturally defined expectations of male and female because stereotypical norms and values are easily assimilated. The

schemas people ascribe to perfect leaders matches with the schemas attributed to masculinity (Koenig *et al.*, 2011:616; Stoker *et al.*, 2012:31-32) than the schema associated with femininity. The schemas women hold that they cannot function in certain fields and that men are better in certain fields such as engineering are due to society's gender based division of labour, which has shaped their thinking and belief systems, which also conform to Object Relations Theory (Flanagan, 2011:123; Corey, 2013:80).

Furthermore, some respondents asserted that gender should be used as a factor for recruitment into leadership positions because women's gender roles align more with the leadership characteristics that are required by modern organisations.

Yemi stated that:

*"Sometimes gender could play an important role or be a determining factor because, as women, we are more sensitive in dealing with certain issues. Women can manage diversity more in the work environment".*

Hvo stated that:

*"In leadership, you have certain key skills and characteristics in some of these element gender plays because there are some people of a specific gender that are more inclined to have more of skills, for example the qualities of a good leader include your ability to motivate others and good communication.... Judging from my experience in the municipality, I think females are good communicators, which is necessary for leadership positions".*

The respondent's perception of women having leadership skills aligning more with the leadership skills required by modern day organisations is supported by Eagly & Carli, (2003:810), American psychological Association, (2006) and Eagly, *et al.*, (2014:153-154), who argued that female's characteristics are necessary for the complexity of modern (public) organisations and can translate into better organisational performance (this will be extensively discussed in the next section). This finding is contrary to various theoretical frameworks supporting the perspective that men are better leaders than women, for example the role of congruity theory which emphasised the conflict between female gender characteristics and expected qualities of a leader

(Eagly & Karau, 2002:574). However, this study argues that the contrasting view held by respondents regarding whether gender should or should not be a key factor for accessing leadership positions suggest that a need for management induction where public servants will be schooled on the meaning of management excellence should be realised.

## **7.8 Gender and access to leadership opportunities in public organisations**

As alluded to in Sections 2.7.6.3, 2.7.6.4, 3.2.2 and 4.5.3, of this study, men have more privileges and access to senior management opportunities in public organisations. This question was asked to gauge respondents' perception and experiences on gender and access to leadership opportunities in the public sector. According to respondents, gender discrimination is visible in women's unequal access to leadership opportunities, as gender defines access to top and senior management positions. Siso stated that women compete for leadership on the basis of their skills, capabilities and attributes, while men have to bring being men on the table. She stated that she is in her current leadership position because competency tests were conducted, and that she outperformed her male colleagues in all the tests. Because of the strict monitoring of the results by her municipal manager, it was difficult for her to be denied her current position. Most of the respondents stated that it is still an open secret that men are preferred for directorship and senior leadership positions. Women do not have equal access to leadership opportunities as men do, which is manifested through the insignificant number of top positions occupied by women in our leadership structures. In support of this sentiment, Jaga *et al.*, (2018:438) argued that "nothing has changed" in the new South Africa, since the male dominated public sector/service (including local government sphere) has not delivered on the non-racist and non-sexist agenda of the newly democratic state.

Scholars have argued that women's unequal access to leadership opportunities is a result of the societal gender role system, which promotes the perspective that women are most industrious as home makers and not as decision makers (Eagly & Wood, 2012:59-60; Eagly and Karau, 2002:573). The respondent's responses are contrary to the assertion of Muraya *et al.*, (2019: 249), who argued that female gender roles and their reproductive abilities could boost their selection and appointment into leadership.

In line with the respondent's claims, various feminist theorists argued that women's access to leadership positions is locked, blocked and limited by biased cultural practices, values, beliefs, norms and the unequal structural arrangement of society (Potokri, 2014:358; Pullen *et al.*, 2020:1-2). Women's limited access to leadership opportunities is echoed in the following excerpts:

Mago:

*"Women do not have equal access to leadership opportunities because of societal perception that women cannot lead. It originated from our old parents that if a woman leads anything it will not succeed or it will fall in a pit. It's like a curse that has been placed on women that they will never lead, so this thing is still in the minds of people, so giving a women \*(sic) a management positions people have to analyse it and scrutinise it trying to get reference, all these affect women's access to leadership".*

Mpo said:

*"hmmm ... access to leadership opportunities favour men through recruitment, when an advert is opened they will tell you that everyone is free to apply but you still find out that most of the people that will be appointed with be males, they make opening gender sensitive but they do not stick to their requirements".*

Gigo said:

*"women don't have access to leadership opportunities because our section 56 and 57 managers are deployed by the ruling party, if there was \*(sic) no political interference women will be able to access positions based on their skills and capacities and we will have more female representation in leadership. Access to our 56 and 57 managers is based on who you know, your political affiliation and not what you know".*

Niko said:

*"Male and female do not have equal access to leadership opportunities especially in South Africa you will find out that position of the municipal managers and CFO are mostly occupied by men; they hold the belief that men and not women will better handle those positions. And is like this across board, there is still gender disparity in access to key leadership roles".*

Mzo:

*“Practically no, but if you argue with people in higher positions they would say we are not looking at gender when we hire people but practically when you look at the local sphere of government you will find few women as leaders and more men in leadership”.*

The respondent's expression of dissatisfaction that, even if the South African government is promoting equal representation of men and women in all structures in the public service/sector (including local government sphere), women do not have equal opportunities to access higher positions in these spheres of government.

Niko stated that:

*“Since the creation of the district municipality, it is only now that the District has a woman as the head of a municipal strategic department in our district municipality”.*

According to the respondents, women's access to leadership opportunities is still determined by men as they predominate in leadership. Cigo and Mago mentioned that municipal managers, who are mostly men, deny women access to powerful and senior management positions because of their plan to sustain corruption and other suspicious acts.

Cigo stated:

*“Men don't give women equal access to powerful positions because they know that women will not support their corruption, for example they never gave me a directorship positions because firstly I won't take money which is wrong even if it is from the political party that is dominating. There was a time I did so well in the interview, I know because the MEC of community service was present at the interview, I was number one instead of giving me the positions they suspended me and gave the position to a man”.*

Mago:

*“Municipal managers prefer males in senior management positions, I am not so sure on what is their reasons are, but they believe because men mostly do corruption. Men in higher positions they talk like brother, they cover each other in their fraudulent act.*

*Men feel that appointing females into senior leadership positions will make their lives more difficult”.*

The respondent's responses are supported by Funk (2019:8) who pointed out that the decision of men, as an organisation's evaluators, matters in women's leadership access and career advancement. Respondents' response is further supported by Ngomane, (2017:392) who asserted that men tend to promote each other into the highest and most powerful positions. According to the respondent's, the majority of those in top management are men and these men form career networks and informal meetings, which help to strengthen their relationships. In contrast, women are few or lone within public boardrooms, and most female managers hardly have time to form career networks because they are usually overburdened with work, and most of them rush home for family duties after working hours. The study also found from respondent's responses that, compared to men, women do not form or have networking relationships with men and with their fellow women. The inability of women to form networking relationships with their fellow managers (men and women) will have a negative effect on their career and leadership and advancement. This stance is deduced from literature reiterating the benefits of networking to women's professional careers and leadership advancement (Vinnicombe *et al.*, 2004:18, O'Neil *et al.*, 2011:734), especially as they strive to undertake and seek leadership positions in the work environment from which they were previously excluded.

The respondents indicated that women are especially given leadership opportunities when a department is in trouble or during precarious situations. Women are used when men have failed; women are given access to leadership opportunities when they see that the municipality is falling apart. Respondents argued that is like a curse that has been placed upon women that the only time they will have the opportunity to lead is when there is trouble or when a man has misbehaved.

Mago stated that:

*“Women mostly have access to leadership positions when there is compromise like in my case. I am not in top management structure, there is someone, a man in this position who was suspended.....now I am acting. They gave this position to me because the man who previously occupied this position was naughty. Now I am acting*



*to salvage the situation. They want me to build the department after denying me this position for a long time”.*

Glass and Cook, (2016:51) and Bruckmuller and Branscomber, (2010:433) collectively support the respondents’ arguments that women have more access to leadership opportunities when (public) organisations are experiencing some form of crisis, what Ryan and Haslam, (2005:81) termed as the *glass cliff*. This study argues that a higher risk of failure is inevitable when women accept such positions, which could lead to further devaluation of women’s leadership and acceptance by society. From the respondent’s responses, regardless of women’s skills and experiences, they are mostly considered as a second option in access to senior management positions in organisations.

Wava said that:

*“After 25 years of democracy, we are still seen as inferior to men especially in gaining access to top positions in the municipality. When it comes to education, women are working very hard to empower themselves and women are people; when they start something they must finish it. Tell me why a man will be preferred above me when we have the same qualification, skills and experience. Let me tell you the truth, I was given this position because there was no male who qualify for this position as a professional nurse”.*

This means that the structural barriers hindering the progression of women into leadership since the era of colonialism and Apartheid still lingers in this democratic dispensation. The respondents’ responses support literature that demonstrates that after 24 years of democracy, now 25years, talented women in South African still face an uphill battle when it comes to holding powerful positions in the public sector (Osituyo, 2018:78-79; Zhuwao *et al.*, 2019:8).

However, some of the respondents held the view that we cannot entirely say that there is no equal access because it has improved when compared with previous generations. Vico and Yemi stated that their predecessors were males and that they are the first female to occupy their current leadership positions. According to the respondents, we have men and women in all our leadership structures; women are more in our middle management levels but in our directorship positions women are

few. This confirms the assertion in literature that, even though gender inequality persists in leadership, women have made remarkable progress in breaking into professional and managerial positions in recent times. This is especially evident at the lower and mid-level management cadres of organisations (Bombuwela & Alwis, 2013:3; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2017:76; Seo & Huang, 2017:619; Macis & Tonin, 2017:18; Madsen & Scribner, 2017:232). Today, women have far greater access to leading and professional management positions than they did a century ago (O'Neil *et al.*, 2015:2). However, it is also apparent that women still undergo subtle biases and prejudices that influence their leadership progression and ambitions for senior leadership roles in the local sphere of government. The study found that recruitment into some senior and top management positions such as the Section 56 and 57 managers, are mostly done by the political office, and such deployment usually favours men more than women. This suggests that access to leadership opportunities may not be equal for men and women due political deployment as revealed in literature (see Section 2.7.6.3).

## **7.9 Female managers' leadership style**

As stated in Chapter 2, the transformational leadership style is associated with females' leadership style. To gauge the perception of the respondents on the leadership style displayed by women, the respondents were asked to provide their opinions and experiences pertaining the leadership style displayed by female managers.

The majority of the respondents reported that female managers display transformational and democratic leadership styles. Mago stated that women are more transformational, they want to see their subordinates advancing; they want to bring innovation so that the organisation can achieve better results. They argued that women tend to listen to their subordinates and encourage, mentor and coach them for organisational growth. Women inspire and motivate employees to put their best into their work. Furthermore, female managers communicate more; they engage employees and elicit opinions from their subordinates before reaching a decision. The respondents argued that female managers follow government-established law more than male managers; women are mostly interested in the achievement of

organisational goals above their personal goals and objectives. Respondents' association of transformational leadership style with female leadership indicates that female managers place significant value on achieving collective/organisational goals, employees' development, greater organisational outcome and employees' participation. Importantly, a leader plays an essential role in the enhancement of work productivity, employees' work participation and innovation including the shaping of employees' moral values and the achievement the goals of the organisation (Paracha *et al.*, 2012:55; Mulla & Krishuan, 2011:130). The finding of Wu, (2010:38) demonstrated that both male and female employees prefer to be led by a leader who adopts the transformational leadership style. Since female managers demonstrated the transformational leadership style (as alluded to in Chapter 2), and as preferred by employees, one would expect that women would be seriously considered for employment into higher leadership positions. However, the reverse is the case as stated, since women are mostly visible in lower level and non-leadership positions, which deprived women the opportunity of displaying their transformational abilities and styles.

On the contrary, some respondents stated that female managers employ a combination of different leadership styles. They argued that leadership style is based on the situation and it varies from person to person because you still find female leaders who are transformational in one situation but in another situation they could be autocratic or even dictators.

As stated by Gigo:

*"If I have to become an autocratic leader just to save the municipality from crashing or to save the interest of the municipality, I will do that. As a female manager I display different types of leadership style depending on the situation".*

Siso stated that:

*"Leadership style is mostly influenced by a leader's personality, experience, social environment, training and the circumstances in which a leader finds his/herself including the culture of the institution. I may say that I am a democratic leader in this situation but when I get to another situation then I become completely autocratic because that situation demands that, but fairly speaking on a normal day I am that*

*kind of a leader who would gave a subordinate an opportunity to have a say, while I make the decision”.*

The respondents outlined negative attributes linked with women’s leadership styles. For example women are too scared, aggressive, feel insecure, bullying, imitate men, are unstable, unable to take decisive and unpopular decisions, people pleasers, relying too much on men believing that men possess better experience and always depending on the support of other people before taking decisions, and women are scared to venture into something new. This perspective is explained in the excerpt below:

Siso stated:

*“Let me be honest with you what I have observed in this municipality that I am planning to change through policy, training, leadership seminar and workshops is women’s confidence level. Female managers in this municipality are very scared to take decisions, when they want to take decision, they always look for someone who is much more stronger to back them up. When they have to take popular and discursive decisions, they shy away from that, they want to please everybody and when you are in leadership you can’t do that. There comes a time where you and I have to disagree and agree, female managers lack that”.*

However, Jigo, Cigo and Hiho stated that they have no idea of the leadership style displayed by female managers because they have not been under the leadership of women since they joined the municipality. This is a pointer to the degree of gender inequality, social injustice and women’s leadership exclusion in the local sphere of government. However, deducing from respondents’ responses, women are mostly transformational leaders, but they can also use other leadership styles depending on the situation. This study argues that women’s adoption of different leadership styles is essential for today’s complex and ever-changing working environment, especially in the local government sphere. Public leaders’ flexibility is key because of the changing demands of contemporary society which public institutions, in this case the local sphere of government, are mandated to meet. The different leadership style displayed by women managers is seen as a reason modern organisations and those organisations under precarious situations are said to be excellently managed by

female managers (Rosner, 1990:125; Mckinsay & Company, 2009:12-14; Mabalane, 2016:124).

### **1.12 7.10 Females' gender is associated with better leadership**

The respondents stated that women are better leaders than their male counterparts because of their reproductive characteristics. Tinnin stated that how can't a woman not be a better leader than a man, remember a woman start a child from zero, she instils knowledge and everything of a child. Tinnin further stated that, in the home, women are more worried about the well-being of their family and that most female managers take this mentality into the workplace. The respondents asserted that women's leadership begins from the home, unlike men who believe that their role is to provide financial support for their family. Kiko and Cigo stated that, when you look carefully and do a comparison between the departments headed by a male and a female, you could see that females are better leaders than males, but my problem is that female managers are few. The respondents claim that, because female managers are both mothers and sisters, they are more considerate and caring.

Wava gave an example of why she stated that women are better leaders:

*"When an employee is constantly absent from work, what a male manager will do often is to say what the protocols says or the law says. But a woman will go deeper to find what the problem is and in the long run you find out that you win this person in doing the right thing...males will always go by the book, women will always apply their motherhood sense in leadership while following the law. Even when an employee does what is wrong a women \*(sic) will not just write the person off but will show the person that this is not the right way to do things, and at the end of the day, you will win the person into doing the right things".*

Tinnin stated that:

*"Women think about their subordinates' personal needs and this is leadership, the lack of concern for subordinates kills morale and before you know it people are more demoralised in their work... because a woman is a primary caregiver, naturally she is going to be a caring manager".*

Hvo stated that:

*“From my experience, female managers know that is not all about your responsibilities at work, but also your social environment. Women understand that you work but it is more than just your responsibilities at work, perhaps female managers understand the balancing of work and personal life.... For me at the end a leader is a person who can motivate you”.*

Vico further narrated her story on how employees see her not only as a manager but also as a mother:

*“Being a women \*(sic) in top management positions I am the oldest person in this municipality. My relationship with my employees is seen as a mother and children relationship, I am not seen as a manager but as a mother. This is because I show great concern for my subordinates they can walk into in my office at any time explaining their personal and work-related issues”.*

Mzo stated that:

*“Female managers have open relations and express more concern for their subordinates, for example if a people has a problem oftentimes they say come to my office and let sort them out but men don't always have that”.*

The respondents comments that female managers show concern towards subordinates is consistent with the statements of Eagly, (2007:1-6); De Mascia, (2015:1-3); AAUW, 2016) who specified that female managers deep concern for subordinates brings about intellectual stimulation, motivates employees and subordinates to contribute their best talents, encourages team building and interpersonal relationships. The statement above is what Hornung *et al.*, (2011:60) termed as employee-oriented leaders, where the leaders show great concern and respect for employees' work-related and personal needs, which often results in employees' improvement, employees' participation and improved organisational performance. However, it is tragic that, regardless of the advantages associated with female leadership, it is still very difficult to change societal perception on women's gender as atypical to the requirement of a good leader. These instances are also acknowledged by Batliwala, (2010:7) that society is failing to recognise that women

bring different qualities into public leadership, with a more attention on building strong interpersonal relationships, collaborative decision making, workers' cooperation and, above all, employees' active participation, which is one vital means of empowerment.

The respondents stated that women's leadership brings about a caring government given that public servants will be aware that the government has their interests at heart. According to Chiko, this can help increase employees' feelings that they are part of the organisation's plan because most employees feel that they do not care for them. Belle *et al.*, (2015:76) suggests that a sense of contentedness and belonging increases employee participation, engagement and performance. Hence literature suggests that a feeling of belonging to an organisation brings to employees' consciousness that they are supported, included and secured.

All the respondents asserted that female managers' belief that is not just the managers that make the organisation successful but every member of the organisation. Female managers engage their subordinates, encouraging their work participation and skills development.

Lilo stated that:

*"I don't think female managers say my word is or what I say is what needs to be done, people are given the opportunity to talk, is not only one person or the manager talking, there is room for everyone to participate and exchange ideas".*

Wava stated that:

*"Departments run by women are more successful than those run by men because women engage their subordinates in brainstorming, they don't believe that I am the boss and you have to listen to me. Leadership is not a top down approach; subordinates must be involved...female managers delegate duties to everyone".*

Siso:

*"There is this general saying that a woman have got six sense, I don't know how far true is that I, and they say women can multi-task, I know can multi-task....a men cannot do that, this could give me more edge in certain areas of management. Also I am that*

*kind of leader who will give subordinates the opportunity to have a say but, at the end of the day, I take the decision”.*

Zino stated that:

*“Female managers engage their employees while male managers have the tendency of just making the decision on their own. Women consult because they are used to keeping the family together and they apply it in the workplace”.*

The respondents further stated that, unlike male managers, female managers have a softer approach to leadership. Women are not dictators like men; female managers carry everybody along when making their decisions. Women mentor and encourage their employees to advance. Mago mentioned that, although male and female leaders want to see their subordinates grow, men are mostly interested in the advancement of their fellow men. While women are interested in the advancement of both males and females. More so, the respondent's claims that women have the skills of organising, a woman is a good planner and a better thinker than a man. Unlike a man, a woman is a good communicator, women have a softer approach to leadership than men. In addition, a woman is more logical, more systematic, strategic and diplomatic. Mago mentioned that men have a temper, while women are affective; men do not want to communicate, sometimes they think that they are the head and, as the head, they have the right to do anything. Furthermore, the respondents affirmed that female managers believe more in collaboration, teamwork and giving credit to employees where credit is due.

Mzo stated that a parable”

*“That as they always say a woman is the glue that keeps everything together. A woman sees other people's ability, she is very quick to give gratitude where gratitude is due”*

Hvo mentioned that men are better at delegating than women. The reason she gave was that women are inclined to doing things themselves, which starts from their homes. Despite claiming that women are better leaders than men, some respondents stated that both men and women could be good and capable leaders. This means that



the few women who are in management positions are demonstrating that women can be capable leaders if given the opportunity.

Most of the qualities attributed to female managers by the respondents mirror the socially constructed stereotypic qualities associated by society with femininity. Therefore, the finding supports the theoretical perspectives that a leader's leadership behaviour or style could be influenced by descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes and/or on the gender of the leader enacting that behaviour (Heilmann, 1983:269; Eagly & Karau, 2002:575; Player *et al.*, 2019:9). In support of respondent's responses, a recent meta-analysis of Funk, (2019:2) and Zenger and Folkman, (2019) found that female public managers outperform male managers in the demonstration of leadership qualities, for example, teamwork, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, collaboration, employee care, motivation, empowerment and development, problem solving, issues analysis and innovation. Outside fulfilling the principle of democracy, female gender characteristics are perceived as indispensable in managing the complexities of modern organisations and the ever changing demands of citizens. It also translates into greater organisational performance, productivity and societal growth (see Sections 1.1 and 2.7.3). What is confusing is that irrespective of the fact, when it comes to recruitment and promotion into leadership, males are still preferred over women.

In Chapter 4, (Section 4.6 specifically) it was shown that the local sphere of government is incapable of delivering and maintaining basic services that led to the violent protest by citizens. Johnston, (2018:6) argues that the lack of female representation in leadership positions has strong implications for public policy and service delivery. Tinni reported that a major explanation for poor service delivery by the municipalities in South Africa is because men are corrupt and they mostly dominate key and senior management positions;

*"In the local sphere of government, there is the outcry of corruption and inadequate service delivery maybe because men mostly dominate in leadership. I think they must start putting women in senior management positions because women knows \*(sic) how hard it can be when there is no water, electricity and maternity care". (Tinni).*

Mago stated that male managers are concerned more about enriching their pockets rather than achieving the objectives of government, such as providing effective basic services to communities. Other respondents mentioned that women fear corruption, they want to prove beyond doubt that they can do better than their male peers. In support of the respondents, Rheinbay and Chene, (2016:4) stated that countries with more women occupying high-ranking political positions tend to have lower rates of corruption than when political positions are dominated by men. Corruption hinders effective public service delivery and deprives members of the impoverished groups in society an opportunity for advancement (UNDP, 2010:5). The respondents stated that women think holistically and are more sensitive to the development of communities as well as meeting the community's needs. By implication, inequality in leadership accounts for the increased rate of corruption in the South African public service and local government sphere and in the inability of municipalities to meet their constitutional mandates of providing basic public services to communities. This study argues that, based on the leadership qualities of female managers, if we have more female representation in municipal leadership positions, the poor service delivery plaguing the South African local sphere of government might become better.

### **1.13 7.11 Benefits of women's leadership empowerment**

Benefits attributed by the respondents to women's leadership advancement centre on human development, societal growth, and change in the biased perception on gender and leadership fitness, reduction in corruption, gender equality, increases in family income, improvement in the standard of living in homes, better education for children and the fight amongst men. This perspective is explained in the excerpt below.

Hvo stated:

*"I think if you empower those women in lower positions that whom I see leadership potentials in them, I am inclined to believe that we will have better focus community driven issues, we will have focus on youth development, and you will see more initiatives of getting the community involved and uplifting them. You will see a more healthier and safe community and environment for our kids".*

Xifo stated:

*“Women’s leadership empowerment can help improve the standard of living within families, better education for child, socio- economic growth and improved organisation productivity”.*

Niko stated:

*“Women’s empowerment can help change the perception that men are better leaders than women. If women are empowered and everyone is aware that what men can do women can also do will definitely help to change gender perception about women”.*

Gigo stated:

*“Women’s leadership can help to reduce corruption and improve social justice and transformation”.*

Kzo stated:

*“When women are in leadership, they will act as mentors within their organisations and in their communities. This can help to reduce unemployment among other women and increase the leadership ambition in other women in lower positions”.*

Siso:

*“Women have got certain attributes that is needed by the society, when you look at the abnormalities that is happening in the society, such as the abuse of women and girls, rape and killing of children, who are the perpetrators, men. Women leaders can help to reduce social violence and all the evil happenings in society. Women will not only think with their minds, but their hearts will also be in what they are thinking, putting them into policy-making”.*

Moso stated:

*“When there is too much dominance of males in leadership, there is always a cold war, but when men and women are involved there will be peace. The District municipality will go far if the decision-making process consists of both genders”.*

From the respondents’ responses, regardless of the benefit associated with the female leadership style, female managers are not given the platform to use their imaginative skills to effect positive changes. This idea is explained in the excerpt below.

Tinni stated:

*“Due to the patriarchal gender norms prevalent in society and in the workplace, when a female managers introduce change or try to use her imaginative skills to improve a situation she is often judged as deviating from the standard. It is so unfortunate that society is yet to accept that female managers have different thinking and can introduce changes in leadership and governance”.*

The respondents’ responses support the assertion by scholars that women’s leadership potentials are not fully tapped and that women are not given the opportunity of becoming fully self-actualised beings (Morak, 2018:2), since their imaginative skills are not been valued and put to use. Consequently this study argues that preventing female managers from using their innovative skills and capacities to influence policy decisions may leave society impoverished. However, the respondents mentioned that these benefits of women’s leadership will be possible only when you advance women with the necessary skills, experience, and qualifications.

#### **1.14 7.12 Perception of barriers preventing the leadership acceleration of women**

As stated in Sections 1.2, 2.7.6 to 2.7.6.6 and 3.2.2, literature suggests that visible and invisible barriers hinder women’s leadership advancement and career progression. This promotes and sustains the under-representation of women in directorship and senior management positions in public organisations and municipalities. To ascertain women’s awareness of these barriers, the respondents were asked to indicate the barriers preventing their career and leadership advancement. Most of the findings were in line with the various gender theories used in this study, showing that women’s leadership advancement is hindered by biased societal gender systems and expectations, patriarchy, gendered organisation culture, inability to access skills development interventions and women’s individual challenges.

All the respondents mentioned that patriarchy is a major barrier impeding women’s leadership advancement and employment into senior management positions in public institutions. In line with the respondents’ argument, from time immemorial public sector leadership in almost all countries, with South Africa being no exception, are structured in line with patriarchal ideologies (Miller & Mctavish, 2011:683; D’Agostino, 2017:10), that promote gender bias and leadership stereotypes in the workplace (Stamarski &

Son Hing, 2015:1; Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018:813; Dosumu & Adeyemo, 2018:197). Traces of patriarchy (for example preference for men in leadership) are evident in the public administration and in the leadership structures of almost all countries, including those states claiming to be democratic. For example the US (D'Agostino, 2017:10; Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018:813). Citing this reality undermines women's capacities, thus reducing their opportunities for professional career and leadership advancement in the public sector. Boardrooms, management structures and corridors of power where women are scarcely represented is patriarchal and against democratic values. This study argues that male-norm public administration, in the face of democratic provisions, is an explanation for the very sluggish transformation achieved on gender related issues in the public sector. Just as Osituyo, (2018:172) stated, the practices, and nature of public organisations limit women's career advancement. In line with this, the majority of the respondents reported that the municipal environment is still highly patriarchal. They argue that is as if the local sphere of government was originally designed specifically for male's dominance and control over women. The respondents expressed their frustration that patriarchal municipal culture supports the preference for men in top structures, while women are often relegated, neglected and overlooked for leadership positions. The respondents' viewpoint correlates with the postulation of the radical feminist (Zastrow & Kirst-Asham, 2016:125; Oerton, 2013:45; Mukhuba, 2016:7235), that the preference for men in top management positions originated from biased gender traditional norms, value and beliefs transferred into organisational cultures and practices. The respondents' claims as to how patriarchal social structures thwart women's professional career and leadership advancement are echoed in the following excerpts:

Chiko stated that:

*"I think is the issue of patriarchy because its being a norm that senior manager should be males and they must be at the top structure".*

Mago stated that:

*"Patriarchy influences women's leadership advancement because there is still the perception that men are heads, and emanating from the previous years is like a norm that municipal managers prefer men for senior leadership positions".*

Kizo stated that:

*“Preference for males has always been a serious challenge, because men are mostly given leadership opportunities you find out that men are more qualified and with longer years of experience as opposed to women”.*

Zino stated that:

*“...in the local sphere of government managers are still expected to be male”.*

Xifo stated that:

*“Preference for males is something that has been there in the past, although is still on, is going to be a process to completely phase out”.*

Niko stated that:

*“The panel in charge of recruitment are always biased, sometimes even when a woman is qualified they still go looking for males”.*

Tinni stated that:

“Preference for men in leading positions do not only affect women’s leadership advancement but also promotes the belief that men are better leaders than women, which has implications for the consideration of women for key positions”.

In support of the respondent, literature suggests that the preference for men for higher leadership positions leads to the underestimation of women’s capacities to lead and the difficulty for women to become leaders, achieve success in leadership roles and less positive behaviour towards female managers by employers (Triana *et al.*, 2019: 2423; Schuster & Martiny, 2017:40; Ertle *et al.*, 2017:2; Eagly & Karua, 2002:573). Moroka (2018:1) argues that the males’ dominance in senior leadership structures of organisation creates the impression that women are not as talented as their male counterparts, hence the result is their minimal representation. The preference for males in senior management positions is a clear indication that women’s talent is untapped and underutilised in government decision-making processes, especially in directorship and senior management levels in the DKKDM. This study argues that women would encounter fierce contest when trying to advance into higher positions in

the DKKDM because the male-normed organisational culture does not seem to appreciate women's skills and talents.

From the observations of Osityo, (2018:174) and Funk, (2019:8), male managers reproduce patriarchy through the preference for men in recruitment and promotion. In line with respondents' comments, male managers favour their fellow men during recruitment and promotion because they believe that males' characteristics align more with the requirements of a leader, especially in departments like engineering and technical services. Mago stated that male managers prefer their fellow men for leadership positions because they believe that women are too weak and highly emotional; as a result women won't be able to handle or face tough situations. Cigo mentioned that men fear allocating power to women because they believe that if women have power they will be deprived of their powers. Cigo further stated that men feel entitled to leadership positions, just as they do in their homes. Waza mentioned that if a manager is a male in technical services, he would believe that the next person to succeed him must be a male and not a female.

The respondents' claim is supported by Rink *et al.*, (2019:10) who observed that, in choosing and identifying a successor for a leadership position, administrators in senior positions overwhelmingly show preference to men for promoting people with whom they share similar social characteristics, and also with individuals with whom they have established good interrelationships. This study deduced that selecting and identifying a woman for leadership succession might be somewhat difficult. Firstly because women do not share similar gender and social characteristics with men. Secondly, it is possible that women do not have positive interpersonal relationships with men in the workplace, which is evident from women's inability to form networking and other career relationships with male colleagues. As stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6, Funk, (2019:8) asserted that most male managers who often make decisions regarding the occupational mobility of women are struggling to believe that women and men are intellectual equals because of women's gender characteristics. Hence, male managers favour their fellow men during hiring, promotion, and access to training and development. There is still the inability of male managers to separate gender norms from management excellence as espoused by Rink *et al.*, (2019:1-2) and Funk, (2019:8). The fact that men still do not regard female gender characteristics as suitable

for management posits a serious challenge for women's leadership mobility and advancement. Basing leadership preference on gender and not on competencies and the ability to function means that patriarchy is still fully engrained in the mindset of men (Nienaber & Moraka, 2016:148). Engrained gender bias in the mindset of most male managers, visible through discriminating recruitment and promotion practices, prevent women's leadership progression and advancement.

The respondents further stated that patriarchy influences the mindset of women to such an extent that some women still think leadership positions are not meant for them; they still prefer men for leadership positions over their fellow women. This stance is supported by Rink *et al.*, (2019:1) that men and women hold the belief that effective leadership should mirror the stereotypical qualities and behaviours attached to masculinity. This perspective could also explain why some female managers try very hard to copy males' style of leadership as claimed by the respondents as one of the negative aspects of women's leadership (see Chapter 7, Section 7.7). A slow progress in women's leadership advancement should be expected based on the patriarchal mindset still held by both male and female employees in the workplace.

The respondents stated that, due to patriarchy, women must work very hard, and twice as hard as men before they can be allowed the opportunity to lead, regardless of women's qualifications and experience. The respondents' responses are supported by Rawat, (2014:43), who contends that patriarchy is a major reason why we still find disempowered women among the educated middle class and upper class in societies. Women's degree of education, skills and professional achievements cannot lead to gender inequality due to internalised stereotypes associated with females' gender (Rawat, 2014:43-44; Terjeson & Singh, 2008:56; Funk, 2019:1; Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018:815) because the degree of education attained by women cannot successfully eliminate the unconscious bias ingrained in people (male and female) through socialisation from the early stages of development. In line with the finding of Rawat, (2014:43) that educated and qualified women are frustrated by men with patriarchal mindsets, the respondents argued that most men in management positions who still hold the patriarchal belief that women's place is in the kitchen build strong resistance against highly educated and talented women.



Cigo mentioned that:

*“In our municipality there is a department headed by a man and is a disaster”.*

Siso stated that:

*“There are some many men sitting on senior leadership position who are not competent, the thing is because our society has accepted that men are better leadership fit owing to patriarchy and colonialism and in our case as South African Apartheid, men are given top and senior position without competency test”.*

The respondents stated that, due to the male-dominated environment, women are hesitant to speak their minds freely, even in board meetings. The respondents further argue that it will be very difficult for talented women to break through because the local sphere of government is the men's environment. The researcher found that the preference for male leadership leads to the hiring and promotion of some men who do not possess the right capabilities and competencies, which has serious implications for service delivery. These findings suggest that action is required and to immediately find measures to exterminate internalised bias about women's gender characteristics and management roles.

Leadership stereotypes were also mentioned as one of the barriers limiting women's advancement in the local sphere of government. From the respondent's responses both male and female employees still hold leadership stereotypes which are influenced by societal perceptions of gender role expectations. Mgo stated that female employees hold leadership stereotypes, which affects women's progression into top structures.

*“There are still some women, who are very traditional; they believe that men should lead why they follow. They will tell you that you must respect tradition. I am from a rural area and I am a chairperson of one of the groups, sometimes most women don't believe that I am driving them to do the right things. The proverb in Tshwana that anything led by a woman will not succeed or will fall into a pit is still holds firm in the workplace. Even in the municipal environment, most people lost trust in women's leadership because of the stereotypes associated with female gender. This may be because north-west province is still very traditional”.*

Kiko stated:

*“...that leadership stereotypes are still evident in the workplace, you can see that women still feel that men are better leaders and men judged themselves as better leaders than women. Although this is fast changing with the new generation of women, more than men”.*

Tinni stated:

*“I think leadership stereotype is still going on in the municipal environment, maybe women are afraid because of the stereotypes that leadership is not meant for them”.*

Kizo stated:

*“Women have not yet ventured into leadership in the local sphere of government because of the long existing stereotypes. Women still choose men as leaders over women. Some women still believe that men are more capable leaders than women even if they have more related job-skills and experiences than men do”.*

As indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6 gender-based leadership stereotypes affect the psychologies of men and women. Because of the internalisation such stereotypes, women constantly underrate their capacities to lead as compared to men. While both men and women judged men as better leaders than women, although in male dominated organisations (Funk, 2019:1), and even when a woman is most qualified for a job, she underestimates herself by choosing a man for such position (Paustian-Underdahl *et al.*, 2014:5; Koca *et al.*, 2011:592). Consequently, the implications of the internalised leadership stereotypes for women include low interest in leadership, low morale to advance their professional career and making women more likely to conform to biased traditional gender norms.

Another reason mentioned by the respondents for the under-representation of women in leadership positions is the lack of self-confidence. As stated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.6, lack of self-confidence compromises a person's general capability to function effectively in senior management positions and women's lack of confidence deters their leadership advancement in the corporate world. Tinni asked a question, *“Are women confident enough that they can take up leadership positions?”* She explained

that her question stems from the fact that women are not applying for senior leadership positions. She gave an example that there was an advert on the national newspaper for the position of Director of Community Development and Tourism but no women applied. She stated further that women have not yet reach the stage where they are confident about their skills and abilities. Moso and Xyo stated that, from their HR experience, most women suffer low self-image, which often results in their lack of confidence and interest in applying for and competing with men in higher positions. Mpo stated that, as an HR practitioner, most women feel that management positions are not meant for them but for men. The study found that self-confidence does not only affect women in lower positions, but also among some of those women already occupying leadership position.

Sis stated:

*“What I find in the female managers that we have is that they are very scared to take decisions. They also want somebody who is much stronger to back them up. When they have to make unpopular and decisive decisions they shy away from that, they want to please everybody and you cannot do that in leadership*

Mpo stated:

*“Some female managers suffer from serious inferiority complex, they are easily intimidated, they feel they are not better than men, even when they have more qualifications and skills. Women managers have this negative attitude because they are not settled”.*

Jigo stated:

*“The only female that we have in our directorship position she is too afraid to make decisions”.*

Niko stated that:

*“I think the problem lies with us as women, even those already in management positions are still afraid, majority of them lack confidence in their abilities, sometimes women in middle positions are afraid to undertake higher positions”.*

In Chapter 2, Section, 2.7.6.6, Guillén *et al.*, (2018:839) mentioned that, in the workplace, little is known about what could increase or decrease a person's confidence level. However, supported by Paustian-Underdahl, *et al.*, (2014:5) the study found that the male-dominated workforce, which fuels the perception of the role incongruity between females gender and leadership characteristics, and women's continuous experiences of hostile treatments diminish women's self-confidence level. Also some women's unwillingness to aspire to higher leadership roles. This perspective is explained below:

Mzo stated that:

*"...for example ,if a woman have electrical engineering qualification she's not going to be confident in applying for the position of a director because is going to be all those males below her thinking that she's not good enough just because she's a woman. The thought of being surrounded by all males in a department is frightening for women and it can be reduced their confidence level".*

Chiko stated:

*"In the male dominated working environment like the local sphere of government, there are times when we are just three females in the boardroom and the others are males. You will not feel as ease or comfortable to contribute or add anything to the discussion because men are just full of themselves they believe that we've been here for a long time and that they are the cornerstone of the organisation".*

Niko stated that:

*"Male dominance affects the psychologies of men and women. If women have the skills and experience just because that the environment is dominated by males, women then become so afraid".*

Vico stated that:

*"Although you can see that women have the skills and experience for job but because males dominate the work environment women become very afraid".*

Hvo stated that:

*“...is predominantly males sitting on the interview panel, as a female when you walk into the interview panel and you see the panel sitting in front of you are all males, automatically you as a female will become very scared and uncomfortable. If I as a female is appointed as a director in infrastructure and everyone below me are males, I will not be so confidence in myself even if I have the skills, remember is a male dominated field and everyone below me are males. I might be inclined to get job else that is not male dominated”.*

The study found that women managers fear being judged negatively by both their male and female colleagues especially in fields that are generally perceived as men's domains, and this adversely affects women's confidence level. For example, Hvo stated that if she was appointed as the director of engineering department she will not feel confidence in herself even if she possess the necessary skills because the field is mostly dominated by men; older men who do not believe that women possess technical skills. However, Cigo and Zino mentioned that not all female managers lack self-confidence. Cigo stated that when she was appointed at a manager, she was the only female working with male managers and was not by intimidated those men. Zino mentioned that her director is a young female, she will not allow all those men to nput her down, she is very confident in herself and in her abilities. However, as stated in Section 2.7.6.6, an unfavourable working environment can make female managers lose their self-confidence because it could create the feeling that they are unwanted or the feeling that the position they occupy does not suit them (Mathipa and Tsoka, 2001:326).

Another reason acknowledged by the respondents as impeding women's leadership advancement is workplace misogyny, through incivility, and demeaning and derogatory statements by their male colleagues. The lack of support from other women in higher positions was also cited. This excerpt is explained below;

Tinnin stated that

*“Men intimidate women, men want women to be very weak, they want to see women cry if possible when they sit in the council meeting, they love to put women down, when they see a little fault or mistake they are quick to judge women, and women fear such intimidation”.*

Chiko stated that:

*“This year we have one female director and one assistant, one of them was born in 1987. Sometimes you will think if these men will open door for her because these men think that she knows too much. Women, especially young female managers’ capabilities are often underestimated, devalued and wrongly judged by men in the local sphere of government. Men see women who are well experienced and confident like they know too much and rude”.*

Mago stated that:

*“I have seen a department in the local sphere of government where a woman has just been recently appointed, and all those small boys and men who have to report to her are very arrogant. Because a man has previously held that position for many years, they can see that this young woman is coming up with new initiatives but they try to slow her down by their demeaning actions and words. Municipalities do not carry out change management system which can help to solve this problem”.*

Mpo stated that:

*“Men are intimidated by women; they don’t want to be led by a woman. They find it intimidating when a woman is higher than them and or are in the same management level with them. Men believe they were born leaders according to them, they frequently underestimate the capacities of women; men do not see themselves as being equal to women.”*

Kiko stated that:

*“Men undermine women in leadership, I am speaking of men between the ages of 40-45, and they see women as toys that they can use sometimes”.*

Mzo stated:

*“Men abuse women, I am not interested in higher positions or in applying for one because I do not want to be used as a puppet. Men think that because you are a woman you can easily be manipulated. For some women they do not have a problem with that, our current CFO says that at times this issues gets to her’.*’

Mpo:

*“Most women in leadership do not encourage other women, they become so intimidated especially when they feel and know that you as their subordinate know better than them. Some female managers still have this negative attitude because they are not settled. They have this inferiority complex that is suppressing their capacity”.*

According to Miner-Rubino and Cortina, (2007:1254) workplace incivility towards female managers manifests through sexist language, underestimation and devaluation of female capabilities and promotion of low morale in women, which translates into turnover intention, reduced productivity and job dissatisfaction for professional women. The study found that mistreatment of women in directorship positions negatively affects other women in middle management and lower level positions, leading to their lack of zeal for leadership advancement. This area remains one of the gaps in the body of literature, especially in the local sphere of government (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007:1254).

Another reason for leadership inequality, highlighted during the interview was political interference. All the respondents pointed out that, when it comes to promotion into leadership positions, especially Section 56 and 57 managers, politics plays a major role. Political interference was the most mentioned barrier indicated by the respondents as militating against women’s career advancement in the local sphere of government in general, with the DKKDM not being an exception to this rule. The following excerpts highlight respondent’s views on political inference.

Tinni stated that:

*“Mhn...women have not thought it wise or right to take up top and senior management positions especially when politics are involved because politics can be very challenging, toxic and stressful”.*

Mago stated that:

*“It will be difficult to bring women into leadership positions because the ruling party dictate who should be appointed. They do not give administration the platform to do their recruitment without any interference”.*

Mzo stated:

*“Sometimes positions are negotiated and people are deployed because of their party affiliation. Political interference plays a major role in the selection of section 56 managers when they are hired you always hear of political interference, and most of the people who are normally deployed are men”.*

Siso stated;

*“If you are not popular in politics as a woman, you will not get any positions”.*

Gigo stated:

*“...is so sad that if I am not an active member in politics I will never get there because I have to be deployed by the ruling party. If I am not with the ruling party, I will never be among the section 56 managers, which is unfair. The situation is sad for example my superiors cannot mentor me to become a director; I have to belong to the political party that they represent. Women’s leadership elevation in the local sphere of government is dependent on party affiliation”.*

Hvo stated;

*“Our council appoints our section 56 managers, which is political. Women with leadership skills must also have political connection to get access to leadership positions”.*

Yemi mentioned that

*“Politician gives the municipality mandate that are not influenced by the South African law. There are discrimination when it comes to appointment into senior management positions because of political interference”.*

Other respondents stated that they can’t apply for higher leadership roles because they can’t deal with the political issues.

Xifo stated that:



*“I can’t apply for higher leadership positions myself because of the politics and what it involves. The local sphere of government is highly politicalised, if you are good enough to deal with that then you can apply”.*

She further stated that some women are not interested in advancing their leadership career because the local sphere of government is different from other spheres of government and the private sector, and that maybe the dynamics of politics demotivates them. In support of the respondents’ responses, Reddy (2016:2) mentioned “politicisation” entails a wider decision-making process that influences who receives what, how and when, in a gender context in the local sphere of government. By implication, politics substitute merit-based criteria, for example in hiring, promotion and selection into top management positions. Recruitment and promotion practices are flawed in most municipalities because of the failure to separate politics from personnel administration. This study suggests that, to maintain professionalism in the local sphere of government as envisaged by the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, there is a need for policy interventions to address the issue of party deployment into strategic management positions in the local government sphere.

Traditional gender roles was another reason recognised by the respondents as preventing women’s leadership advancement. Most of the respondents stated that, in the local sphere of government, management positions are very demanding and such advancement interferes with their household responsibilities.

Wivo mentioned that, for a woman who wants to occupy strategic management positions in the local sphere of government, she must be ready to allow herself to be a woman, girlfriend and everything to the community. Wivo stated that, as a woman and a wife, when you decided to take up management positions, the household chores that you are supposed to be doing will be limited. Wivo further stated that most women are not applying for leadership positions because they would rather be peaceful in their own space at home and not be frustrated by everything that comes with management. Niko mentioned that she is struggling with balancing her traditional gender roles and her leadership roles because, during the day she gets to be very busy with her leadership duties and most of the time she takes some of her office work home, which interferes with and disturbs her family time. Some of the respondents mentioned that

they will not apply for higher leadership roles because they want to separate their work life from their family time, as stated by Lilo:

*"I am a line manager on this stage, and I am speaking for myself. Personally I don't think I won't be able to advance my leadership career but I won't do that because if I take into consideration my family pressures and the challenges that senior leadership positions request from you. Sometimes it will interrupt your private time and your family time. Because there is a lot of meetings, workshops and I am more of a family person, I would want to separate my work from my family time, female managers have a lot of pressure. A woman must choose what is important between her career and her family".*

Yivo stated:

*"Just that society views women as people who will always do the house chores and run the family errands, the kids and everything that has to do with the households. Most women who hold strong positions, I have seen them falling short in the running of their households and they become judged because they are failing in running their homes. Remember as a female manager your judgement is in two folds, as a mother and as leaders. I think most women will rather not opt for higher positions that will take them away from their homes, only a few women that would focus on their career and be eager to get up the ladder".*

Moso stated:

*"Remember with men it is very easy for a man to apply for positions that are very demanding because in my culture a woman raises the kids and not a man. Men do not have a lot of things to do in the home, a woman will rather choose jobs that are not too demanding so that they can also manage both their personal and work related issues".*

Emabo stated:

*"In any instance where my leadership role clashes with my child's need, I will rather choose my child at the end of the day, I am speaking for myself. I think my child comes first. While will I want to advance when I know that it will affect my child".*

The lack of support systems both to assist female managers with their indispensable traditional gender roles, and for their leadership career advancement were identified as impediments to women's occupational advancement. Cigo mentions that although there is maternity leave, the municipality does not provide a support system for female managers with children going to crèche. Cigo mentioned that, in her first profession as a nurse, her previous employer provided crèche that her children attended while she was busy performing her job. Cigo stated that when she is at work, she knows her child is safe regardless of the time she finishes with her work. Some other respondents mentioned that they are not interested in higher leadership positions because the municipality provides no support system especially for their little ones, as Lilo stated:

*“One of the reasons I said I won’t want that top top positions is because there is no support system, especially for women with children in day care, the municipality pay no concerns, every mother must find a way out for herself. She must arrange her own transport, her own day care, arrange how to pick the kids from school and drop them off.*

Hvo stated that:

*“The working environment demotivate you because they do not assist female managers with facilities like day care centres for our kids, if there was one I would have brought my little one, if my little one is sick, then I know she’s just downstairs. The municipality do not cater for my need as a mum”.*

Yivo stated that:

*“When you look at a municipality like Enhlahnzeni, they have a day care centre because they want female managers to be more focused and not be stressed when they are performing their strategic function, I will die to work with that municipality because they cater for women in management positions that have households to run”.*

In support of the respondent, literature demonstrates that women encounter serious difficulty balancing work and family life and that this challenge is more intense among mothers from poor family backgrounds (Omar & Ahmad, 2009:3; Nishaat, 2017: 2053; Adisa et al., 2016:414). Adisa et al., (2016:414) add that women are engaged in stressful productive labour without a corresponding decrease in their traditional gender

roles (cooking, cleaning and running family errands). As stated in Section 2.7.6.5, some professional women resign their high paying jobs for family causes, and this has continuously contributed to non-achievement of gender leadership equality in top organisational structures. Omar and Ahmad, (2009:1) mentioned that the first thing women, especially women with younger children, watch out for before deciding to take a job is to determine access to childcare facilities where they can easily access their children while at work. This suggests that providing childcare facilities within the municipality to assist female managers with their little ones could be an effective mechanism for attracting and retaining more talented women and reducing the rate of turnover among professional women. Researchers suggest that reasons why progressive organisations and employers choose to establish childcare centres at the workplace and provide family friendly policies are to (UNICEF, 2012:16; Omar & Ahmad, 2009:1; Adisa *et al.*, 2016:432)

- improve the retention and recruitment of desired employees
- reduce stress caused by numerous parental responsibilities that could affect organisations' productivity
- reduce parents' work turnover and absenteeism
- Increase work commitment and job satisfaction
- enable employees to cope with high parental responsibility and work life
- help strengthen parents' bonds with their children and family
- help working parents find their balance between their occupation and home.

Evidence-based research demonstrates that there is a strong relationship between maternity leave, childcare support and assistance and women's active participation in the labour market (Olivetti & Petrongolo, 2017:229; UNICEF, 2012:16; Adisa *et al.*, 2016:432). Accordingly, to achieve leadership diversity through women's workplace participation, it is important that government provide childcare support that could assist female managers cope with their leadership roles and motherly responsibilities.

The respondents mentioned that the local sphere of government does not provide the career development support necessary for the leadership advancement of women. The respondents argued that they do not have access to leadership development opportunities such as mentoring, coaching, networking, and succession planning. The respondents' claim is supported by the ILO, (2017:5-6) and Takawina, (2017:2) that

women hardly have access to leadership and career development opportunities in the public organisations despite being instrumental for their promotion into corporate hierarchy. Scholars have continuously advanced that exposing women to professional leadership and career development opportunities such as mentoring, coaching and networking are effective strategies for boosting and encouraging women's leadership and advancement (Wang, 2009:36; ILO, 2017:5).

### **1.15 7.13 Training and development of employees**

Training and development interventions provide managers with prime opportunities to expand their skills and knowledge in their current job and for future leadership advancement (Swanopoel, 2016:32). In addition to boosting managers' competencies, Jenkin, (2018:243) mentioned that training and development in the form of adult learning is necessary for the leadership inclusion of all those previously marginalised, regardless of the reasons that led to their marginalisation and subjugation. Because women were previously marginalised in relation to access to top and senior positions (see Section 1.2), the purpose of the question is to ascertain whether there are established training and development programmes that can assist women to reach top and senior management positions in the public sector.

All the respondents held the view that training and development is germane for the progression of more women into leadership positions in the municipal environment. Mzo and Nko, Mpo and Xifo held the view that training and development is important because it will help to boost women's confidence for higher leadership positions since they already have the qualifications. The majority of the respondents claimed that relevant training would equip women with the skills to perform exceptionally in leadership and to prepare them for future advancement. From the literature review, authentic leadership skills necessary to drive innovation in the workplace are acquired through intense and continuous exposure to organisational learning, education, and occupational training and development (Aris *et al.*, 2019:2770). Niko specifically requested that training and development for women should be continuous because it takes time to develop a person into what you want them to become. The respondents' claim is supported by Ledlow and Copper, (2013:153) who asserted that successful leadership training helps to improve self-confidence, meet personal developmental

needs as well as to improve the work-related competencies of a leader. Therefore, the lack of self-confidence, which was identified as affecting female managers and their leadership advancement, means that the leadership training, if any, done by the municipality was unsuccessful. This suggests that an evidence-based leadership training intervention through experiential learning, action learning, coaching, succession planning, mentoring and networking, which are empirically proven to be powerful in building a person's confidence are needed to boost female manager's self-confidence (Hopkin *et al.*, 2008:352; Stead, 2014:427), to guard against gender-based discrimination, bias and provide a pathway for women to build their career (Dosunmu & Adeyemo, 2018:192).

Gigo mentioned that, at some point, training and development can assist women to advance but, at another point, it cannot. Gigo based her argument on the perspective that the politics in the local sphere of government hamper the objectives of training and development since Section 57 and 56 managers are often selected by the political party regardless of whether internal employees have acquired skills. Furthermore, the respondents stated that they have a skills development plan in the municipality, but it is all employee inclusive and that training does not result in the leadership advancement of women. The respondents further argued that there is no intention by the municipality to develop women for their leadership advancement and that the only development initiatives of municipalities are on paper; there is no implementation. The denial of the existence of career development plans for women is represented in the following extracts:

Mago stated that:

*"In the municipality, there is no indication that they want to see women grow; there is no initiative in place that could be used to help encourage women for higher positions being that they have been marginalised in leadership. The training and development programme for everyone end up favouring more men".*

Cigo stated that:

*"Training and development programmes can assist in the leadership acceleration of women, but I don't see any effort to promote women's leadership, we don't have any*

*development programme for women. Our municipality do not have a formal leadership training for their managers, let alone for women managers”.*

Kizo:

*“There are no training for female managers, the municipality are just doing lip service when it comes to leadership equality; those women who have advanced make their conscious effort to develop themselves. If you want to grow, you have to develop yourself. The municipality does not help you reach your full potentials”.*

Hvo held the view that there are so many women in the municipality that you could see leadership potential in them, “they don’t just think, they think outside of the box”. Yet these women have never been trained or exposed to training on their jobs. Hvo argued that the work environment demotivates women because they are not concerned about your skills development. Hvo further argued that she is not aware of any leadership development programme for managers, let alone for women.

The study observed that, in the DKKDM, there are no formal leadership development programmes targeted at capacity building for women managers, including those aspiring to leadership roles. The only training offered by the municipality is through the allocation of bursaries to employees to undertake any programme in the university they choose to capacitate themselves. Education is good but real exposure to real job experiences, through continuous training, workplace learning, and job rotation is necessary to build women’s confidence and leadership skills to perform optimally.

When a follow-up question was asked that if the DKKM, as the umbrella municipality, had a training and development initiative for women’s leadership advancement, all the respondents stated that they are not aware of any developmental programme for women. Gigo stated that when it comes to women’s empowerment, the DKKM is the most ineffective District Municipality. Gigo stated that the office of gender and women’s empowerment is in the political office. In the political office you get women who do not understand anything on gender and women’s empowerment sitting in high positions, and most of them are without a university degree, hence how they can improve female managers who are more qualified than them. They only celebrate Women’s day on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August with lane lunch where they sing gospel songs. Gigo, Cigo and Wava

stated that women are demoralised with the way things are done in municipalities; as a result, most of them are leaving the municipality for other jobs.

Few of the respondents stated that the only programmes for leadership development in the municipality is the Certificate in Municipal Financial Management (CPMD). They stated that the same programme is for everyone interested in senior leadership positions. It is used to capacitate managers in key management skills such as project management and strategic management. However, access to this programme depends on the position you occupy in the municipality. The researcher found that not all female managers are aware of the existence of this programme. The lack of training and development support for women, as specified by the denials, is in line with the major problem, which this study identified as one of the reasons for gender leadership inequality in the local sphere of government (see Section 1.2). This study argues that the lack of leadership training and development schemes to build the capacities of female managers including those women seeking leadership positions will exacerbate gender inequality in top structures due to the perspective that women's learning largely depends on skills approach, supported by a conducive work environment (O'Neil *et al.*, 2015:7).

#### **7.13.1 Challenges to skills development in the local sphere of government**

In Chapter 4, Section 4.7, it was indicated that there are several challenges in relation to skills development in the local government sphere. The challenges to skills training and development as identified by the respondents are explained below:

- No leadership development programmes for women: there is no leadership training and development programme that can be used to identify women who can handle senior management positions
- Irrelevant/inadequate training: most of the training offered by the municipality is not geared towards leaders' advancement and development
- Lack of qualified skills personnel to train and empower women for higher positions: Cigo stated that, most of the time, the service providers are not accredited to give relevant training
- Lack of proper integrated training and development planning
- Lack of the dissemination of training and development information



- Lack of adequate developmental support from municipal stakeholders such as senior management and the local trade unions
- Instability of training and skills development programmes for building and enhancing the competencies of administrators in municipalities
- Lack of skills inventory, skills monitoring and evaluation by the municipality
- Lack of financial support from the municipality for skills development
- The formal and informal approaches to skills development are neglected and employees are not given the opportunity to practice newly developed skills after skills development
- Inability for training and development to meet the unique developmental needs of women

The respondents' responses are consistent with COGATA (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2015); Cloete, (2016:2) and Ngobese, (2017:113) observation on the skills development gaps within most municipalities, which are the manifestations of the poor performances of the municipality in the delivery of essential public services to citizens (see Section 4.7). According to Sebola, (2014: 637), training facilitators who do not possess adequate knowledge on the functioning and operations of local government contribute to skills development challenges within municipalities. All the respondents in this study do not see the HRD department as supportive in their skills development and empowerment. The respondents' responses correspond with the findings of Cloete, (2016:158-159) in his research conducted within municipalities in South Africa. From Cloete, (2016:158-159) the research participants stated that the quality of services provided by HRD to various departments is very poor and do not support their skills development and career advancement. Apart from the skills development failures, the findings also show that gender mainstreaming is missing in all HRD related decision and practices in the DKKDM.

### **7.13.2 Mentoring opportunities for women's advancement**

Ample research conducted on mentoring showed that, when compared with non-mentored employees, employees with mentoring experience have greater satisfaction with their work, are more confident, possess better experience, skills, and psychological wellbeing as well as being less vulnerable to stress and anxiety (Eby *et al.*, 2008:225; University of Wolverhampton Business School, 2009:3; Gordon &

Melrose, 2011:14; Sandandos & Chamber, 2019:144). Similarly, most female managers with mentoring experiences explained that their mentoring experience was very instrumental in their leadership advancement and personal development (Al Ariss, 2014:269). However, despite the benefit of mentoring as a powerful developmental instrument for cultivating women's talent, skills and knowledge, literature expounded that women find it very difficult to access mentoring opportunities in the workplace, as indicated in Chapter 4, Section 4.5.5. This question was asked to confirm the existence of or non-existence of mentoring opportunities for women in the local sphere of government.

All the respondents stated that they have no mentoring experience either from their male or female managers. From respondents' responses the researcher found that the local sphere of government does not have an established mentoring system (either formal or informal) for women's development. The majority of the respondents stated that they do not have access to mentoring opportunities because of the insignificant number of women in senior and top leadership positions. The respondents all agreed that mentoring experiences is necessary for their advancement into higher positions. These findings are consistent with the assertions of Al Ariss, (2014:269) that the number of women in leadership positions is inadequate to successfully mentor the large number of women who are occupying lower positions, including those in the middle-management levels. The respondents further argued that, amongst the few women in leadership positions, not all of them are interested in the mentoring and development of other women, as stated by Hvo:

*"There was this female manager who was very high in politics, in the beginning a lot of was happy thinking that she will be a good mentor, and a good role model. But at the end she was like I am here, and I have the power, she wasn't a mentor for all of us at all and at the end of the day, she didn't promote gender equality. Again men are not driven to mentor women, maybe that's why we have only females at our directorship positions at the moment".*

This finding supports literature that women managers may not be interested in the mentoring of women at the ground floor (Yokwana, et al., 2016:1399; Mahasha, 2016:20). This amplifies the general saying that women can be their own worst

enemies in their journey of development, as alluded to in Chapter 5 Section 5.12. Again, the mere fact that all the respondents indicated that they do not have mentoring experiences and access to good mentorship also supports the findings in literature that men, as they predominate in leadership, do not have interest in the mentoring of women for higher leadership roles in the public sector (Yokwana, *et al.*, 2016:1399; Hansman, 2002:40; Chandler, 1996: 93). The skills development challenges experienced in the municipalities, informal and formal approaches to adult learning, through networking, mentoring and coaching opportunities are not included in the skills and development plan of municipality. Both formal and informal organisational learning should/ought to promote the professional competencies of female managers and will assist women in building confidence at work and help improve their well-being (Takayanagi, 2017:50; Radakovic & Antonijevic, 2013:1-2). The lack of mentors for their development suggests a very big problem because mentoring is one vital instrument for combating conscious, unconscious and already internalised gender stereotypes (World Economic Forum, 2019:online).

### **7.13.3 Coaching opportunities**

Globally, executive coaching is known to be a powerful and effective way of advancing senior managers' professional careers, individual skills development, improvement in performance and results of organisations (McNamara, 2014:6; Jones *et al.*, 2016:251; Grover & Furnham, 2016:2, International Coach Federation, (ICF cited by Zuñiga-Collazos, 2020:30). The testament on coaching for public managers includes improved leadership skills, communications skills, better organisational commitment, retention, organisational learning, increases in job satisfaction, boosting interpersonal relationships and the ability to manage complexities (Jones *et al.*, 2016:251; Dyrbye, 2019:1407; Zuñiga-Collazos, 2020:30). Hopkins *et al.*, (2008:348) suggest that coaching targeted at women's leadership improvement could be important for several reasons, especially due to their developmental concerns (i.e lack of self-confidence). Coaching can help improve women's self-confidence, capabilities and leadership development and make talented female managers career ambition to become clearer (Hopkins *et al.*, 2008:238; McNamara, 2014:6; Madsen & Andrade, 2018:64). This question was asked to gauge women's opinions on their coaching experiences and their leadership skills development.

All the respondents stated that they have no coaching experience. The study found that the local sphere of government does not have an established coaching system targeted at women's professional development. All the respondents mentioned that coaching is important for their skills improvement and development, especially to enable them to become more self-confident in this male-dominated environment. The study deduced from the respondent's responses that women lack female coaches because of few numbers of women in top positions. The finding is supported by the survey conducted by Laff, (2007:18) and Banwells, (2020:2) which demonstrated that, due to the scarcity of women in top and senior management positions, women do not have equal coaching opportunities just like their male managers in various fields, for example in sport management and engineering.

#### **7.13.4 Succession planning**

Succession planning is an internal organisational exercise that is concerned with manpower activity such as the optimal identification, hiring, investing in employee skills and experience including the avoidance of skills interruption that may result from retirement or any unforeseen circumstances such as an employee's service withdrawal (Virick & Greer, 2012:576; Tunaridies, 2018:15). Scholars agree that succession planning is the best talent management strategy that can assist an organisation to continue even when a leader occupying an important position leaves the organisation (Ganu & Boateng, 2012:70-71; Virick & Greer, 2012; Pee *et al.*, 2014:702). However, apart from filling leadership vacancies, succession planning has become one of the most powerful tools for equipping potential managers and employees with professional skills, expertise and knowledge (Virick & Greer, 2012: 577). More so, the empirical studies of some scholars such as Conger and Fulmer, (2003:79; Barsh *et al.*, 2013:4) and Islam *et al.*, (2017:535) indicates that the implementation of effective succession planning could assist in bringing more women into senior leadership positions according to their qualifications, talents and experience. With this perspective in mind, this question was asked to ascertain the respondent's opinion whether there is an implemented succession planning scheme that could assist to close the gender leadership gap.

The majority of the respondents stated that, in the local sphere of government, there is no formally implemented succession plan not only for women but also for all employees. The denial of the existence of a formal succession plan is represented in the following quotation.

*“We do not have a succession plan or a promotional policy, if they are, they are just on paper, practical implementation is a very big problem in the local sphere of government. Talented women leave the municipality because they are not given the opportunity to advance”. (Siso)*

Wiva stated that the environment does not allow women to see the need for training because there is no succession plan to ensure that, after training, you can advance to the next level.

Gigo asked:

*“What is the relevance of training and development if you know that you are never going to advance, there are not strategy in place such as succession plan or promotional policy to advance you after training? ... the situation is so dire because even if your boss decides to train you, the likelihood that you will succeed him/her is not there because of patriarchy and politics”.*

Siso mentioned that, due to lack of succession planning, the amount of money spent by the municipality to train women is wastage because some women leave the municipality after training since there is no platform for them to advance.

The respondent's responses are consistent with the study conducted by Islam *et al*,, (2017: 535) in which their study participants indicate little or no use of succession planning for women's career advancement and leadership development. Similarly, to confirm the argument of the respondents who indicated that although there is a succession plan, it does lead to women's leadership advancement. The finding by Ngomane, (2017:3986) conducted in the *Department of Rural Development and Land Reforms in South Africa* indicated that succession planning programmes initiated in public sectors are not targeted at women's career development, hence they do not promote women's leadership advancement. The study found that the Dr DKKM does

not seem to have a concrete plan for the identification and development of women for higher leadership roles.

One could argue that having a woman as a successor for a critical decision-making position in the municipality, as in a male-dominated municipality, may be difficult or almost impossible (Virick & Greer, 2012: 576). This trend perpetuates the status quo, male normed leadership, slowing down the government gender transformation agenda in municipalities. An implication for failure to identify, develop, and attract or retain talented women for senior management positions may result in wastage of relevant skills necessary for sound leadership, which is considered to be scarce in the South African public sector (South African Board for People Practice {SABPP}, 2017: 3-4; Naidoo, 2010:112).

#### **7.14. Women-only training and development programmes**

As alluded to in Chapter 4, literature reviews in Section 4.5.1 indicated that the traditional leadership training methods adopted by public organisations do not essentially meet the unique developmental needs of women. Some scholars also stated that women face daunting leadership development challenges that are unmet by traditional training and development programmes in public organisations (Brue and Brue, 2016:83-90; Mpehle & Kanjere, 2013:765 and Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:294). As a result, these scholars (Brue and Brue, 2016:83-90; Vinnicombe & Singh, 2003:294) advocated for a women's-only leadership development programme. This question was specifically asked to gauge respondents' perception and opinions on the implementation of women's development programmes in DKKDM.

Almost all the respondents stated that they are in support for the development of women-only leadership training programmes in the municipality. They held the view that the implementation of a women-only development programme is not only ideal but also necessary because it will provide the platform where women can boldly speak their minds, and engage with other women in higher positions, whom they aspire to emulate. The respondents indicated that there are no programmes in the District municipality to bring all women together. The respondent's responses for the support of the implementation of women-only leadership development programme is captured in the following excerpts.

Gigo:

*“This will work, as an HR practitioner I have initiated this but we are yet to start it, it will be an avenue where women managers at all levels come together to share their real-life every day working experiences with other women. My plan is to start with programmes with senior and junior managers before extending it to all women in the municipality”.*

Wava:

*“Women are not given the platform to express themselves, we don’t have a management meeting, we have few female directors but we don’t have the platform where we come together to discuss management issues. There is no platform from the political office to say let’s meet to discuss issues that affects us as women”.*

Vico:

*“The programme will be ideal because I found in the municipality that women don’t have a lot of drive, they are just happy that they have a job regardless of their positions. Some women are bulldog women who you have to push in everything; this programme can help to encourage them”.*

Lilo:

*“I think this initiative will be a good idea because those women in top management positions hardly relate with other women on the ground floor. It will be good that even if it is monthly or quarterly that women in top management positions have discussion with women in lower levels. Encourage them and inform them on their management experience, even if just to inform that as a female manager holding strategic positions, I have families, husband and children, if I can do it all of you can”.*

Niko:

*“These initiatives are necessary because I myself I have got other women that I look up to who I know I want to get to their positions where they are. If we have this platform, it will assist to demystify the issues between men and women in terms of positions”.*

Zawa:

*“It will help to motivate other women, it will give growth and increase confidence in women also it will allow women to take the best practices from professional women”.*

Hvo:

*"I think this programme will be excellent especially because you can relate freely with other females, the women in top positions can share their experiences with you. It will be excellent to have the right female managers having face-to-face conversation and interaction through training sections with other women. Remember you won't be afraid to ask questions that men don't have answers to, they can provide career advice to other women".*

Viko:

*"This initiative will encourage women to have a different mindset. it will encourage women because remember if you are outside looking at me working crazy hours and I don't go for lunch, some women might start becoming very worried that what if they venture into this position they are also going to experience similar situations of not having a personal life or not being able to do other things. However, female managers engaged with other women through learning in the form of coaching and mentoring workshops they could see that they have been afraid of something that was never there, like being a leader and a mother is manageable".*

The respondents' responses find expression in the study of Brue and Brue, (2016:83-90), Mpehle and Kanjere. (2013:765) and Vinnicombe and Singh, (2003:294), that women-only leadership training and development would result in building women's self-efficacy, promote their self-discovery, increase their leadership desires and promote authentic leadership performance. The mere fact that women will be engaged in a group discussion, discussing real work activities, learning for professional female managers, modelling the behaviour of women and experienced female managers acting as instructors, coaches and mentors to women in lower level positions. Moreover, female managers evaluating and providing feedback on women's performance supports the various learning theories used in this study (Chapter 4 Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4 and 4.3.5). Deducing from the excerpts, women-only leadership development programmes could be a medium to bring women together to discuss gender issues, especially those that relate to their leadership skills development, which Mabelane, (2016:145) identified as lacking in municipalities. The idea behind the development of women-only development programmes is not entirely



new, just like the coming together of various women's movements lobbying for gender equality and the leadership advancement of women. The coalescence of professional women from different fields is to assist in the capacity building, including the boosting of the self-confidence of women in middle and lower level management.

The respondents further mentioned that, even if there is a leadership programme targeting the development of women, there has also to be a training scheme to bring men and women together because women's issues cannot be discussed in isolation from men who are the perpetrators of gender inequality and the oppression of women. This perspective is explained in the excerpt below:

Wava stated:

*"In south Africa men are the abusers of women and young girls, men abuse women because they feel women are given a better platform and preference and that they are forgotten....in the workplace if we keep pushing men away they won't know what it is that women want. If you put men in the training and development of women, they would understand more the reason why women need to be empowered. For example, if male and female managers are in a leadership training where gender issues are discussed, men will understand gender issues and the needs of women better. Whether we like it nor not this sphere of government is still dominated by men and we need men to collaborate with us to fight this battle. Training must be twofold, remember we don't know why men are treating us this way, we need to find out from them".*

#### **7.15 Regulatory framework for women's leadership inclusion and advancement**

The respondents asserted that there are no policies and legal frameworks in support of women and for their leadership development and advancement at local government sphere.

Hvo stated that:

*There is no legal framework that is approved for women's leadership development and advancement and promoting gender equality. I have not seen any framework or policy that is generated out of government legislation on gender equality in the municipality, the recruitment and advancement of women is not driven by strict policy".*

Moso stated:

*“There are no policies implemented which is driving the empowerment and leadership development of women. Such policy is important to identify positions or development where women are scarce, and source in service provider to bridge the necessary competences gaps”.*

Gigo stated:

*“There are no frameworks speaking to gender equality and women’s leadership advancement and development, if there are women will advance because now they’ve got the qualifications and experience”.*

As alluded to in Section 1.1, women’s full and active participation in critical decision making is not completely dependent on their demonstration of zeal, educational qualifications and interest and in having an equal playing ground and the same opportunities as men (Durojaye & Adebaj, 2014:6169; Goetz & Jenkins, 2016:212-213). According to Esquivel, (2016:15) there must be a concrete mechanism in the form of sound policies and enforceable statutory frameworks to promote women’s effective participation. To this end, ensuring women’s full and effective participation in public sector leadership requires government implementation of sound policies, programmes and legislative frameworks. Deductively, the fact that respondents stated that they are unaware of the existence of any established guidelines, measures and policies to promote women’s advancement and leadership participation illustrates a hindrance to women’s effective engagement in municipal leadership, especially in the DKKDM.

Some of the respondents asserted that there are legislative frameworks promoting women’s development, but the municipality does not necessarily implement them. In support of the non-implementation of the legislative frameworks by municipality, Jigo stated:

*“We only have the EEA, but is not implemented, the under-representation of women in top and senior management positions shows that the EEP is not implemented”.*

Chiko stated:

*“Gender legislative frameworks, for example the EEP is not implemented in our municipality, if they were implemented we will have empowerment programmes for women. I don’t think I have seen programmes and policy that is biased to towards women’s development”.*

Siso stated:

*“The legislative frameworks are not necessarily implemented, but we got the EEA”.*

Similar to the study findings on non-implementation of EEA by the DKKDM, the CGE reported that some departments in the North West Provincial Government do not comply with the EEA. The Commission on Gender Equality on systemic investigation report on shelters that accommodate victims of violence (CGE 2019) emphasised the lack of adequate implementation of gender equality regulatory/policy frameworks, including in the area of skills development in the public sector/service and the local government sphere. According to Lovendusky *et al.*, (2002:88), the mainstay for government policy is strongly dependent on good implementation. Consequently, the non-implementation of the EEA by the public sector make government policies fall terrifyingly short of the gender transformation programme expressed in the policy. The EEA prioritised the advancement and development of designated groups, for example women, for their full inclusion and representation in the public service (see Section 3.3.3). Deducing from the provisions in Section 2 of the EEA, this study argues that the policy intention of the EEA seems invisible in the DKKDM owing to the following reasons;

- non-achievement of substantive gender equality in directorship and senior management levels.
- failure to make conscious efforts to identify barriers which have an adverse impact on women’s leadership acceleration,
- inadequate training and retention of women as part of designated group
- lack of preferential treatment towards women to achieve the numeric target (50% target of government) in the workforce
- lack of the implementation of any special measures that promote leadership diversity in all management structures.

According to Section 20 of the EEA, municipalities are expected to prepare and develop an Employment Equity Plan that sets the target that they must achieve; such a target prioritised black women and other minority groups. Municipalities, including the DKKDM are mandated to submit their EEP to the Department of Labour annually. Most of the respondents stated that their municipalities do not care to develop their EEP as required by the DoL. The study found that only one municipality amongst the municipalities under this study have the EEP but not necessarily implemented. Siso stated;

*“What happened in this institution is that we do the EEP because it is a compliance issue, but we do not plan correctly the target, we just do them for compliance sake and not for implementation, we don’t have policy that advance women”.*

All the respondents stated that they are not aware of any Affirmative Action Policy developed by their municipality to ensure that suitable qualified women advance into leadership. Municipalities fail to implement affirmative action measures despite this being a national objective. From the research findings, there is no proof showing that municipalities are being taken to task for their failure to implement affirmative action policies and for non-achievement of the target set in the EEA. The CGE, (2013:107) observed the chasm in that the legislative framework is not biased towards women’s advancement and leadership acceleration. This study argues that the legislative framework for promoting equal representation of men and women in leadership would be supportive, however, the legislative frameworks are flawed through inappropriate implementation. Failure to consciously train, develop and empower women for senior management positions takes place through the non-implementation of a supportive policy framework. Morak, (2018:25) observed that, in South Africa, no government department has been penalised for their poor representation of women in their top structures, a result of their non-implementation of the legislative frameworks for equalising the public sector. While gender legislative framework is necessary for women’s leadership advancement, this study concurs with Brandt, (cited by Morak, 2018:25) that if the municipality allocated professional and executive positions to women just for complying with government directives, tokenism should be expected, and women’s talents might not be valued.

## 7.16 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the empirical results obtained from the qualitative primary data collected through semi-structured personal interviews, direct observation and the researcher's field notes. Most of the findings from the interviews were consistent with the findings from the questionnaire regarding the perspective on gender inequality and the skills development of women for their professional and career advancement. However, a few findings were contradictory. The qualitative findings demonstrated that female managers have the ambition to advance their leadership career regardless of their struggles to balance family and work roles, whereas the qualitative finding shows that some women do not wish to advance due to the fear of combining family role and leadership responsibilities and other factors such as engaging in politics. The other contradictory finding is the linking of managers' competencies to a specific gender. The quantitative findings revealed that gender has nothing to do with the manager's leadership competencies and skills (see Section 6.2.1) whereas the qualitative findings revealed the majority of female managers believe that they possess better leadership skills than their male peers because of their reproductive roles, which tend to promote team work, concern for subordinates, and employees' full engagement and empowerment, as observed in contemporary literature.

The major findings from the qualitative survey pay much attention to gender, societal role expectations, culture, leadership stereotypes, organisational environment, implicit and explicit discrimination, misogyny, and career development challenges. In relation to gender, female managers in leadership roles were exposed to problems stemming from societal conceptualisation of gender and the role expectations of men and women, which perpetuate patriarchy. The findings revealed that traditional gender expectations for women regarding their caregiving roles still hold firm, even when husband and wife undertake jobs outside of their homes, women are still expected to cook, wash and take care of their husbands, the kids and run the family errands (see Sections 7.4 and 7.12). Female managers feel that they are not equal to men when it comes to performing household responsibilities, which has always promoted their disadvantages in the public space. In agreement with the quantitative findings, the findings revealed that, due to gender role beliefs and expectations, women are often perceived as less qualified in handling strategic management positions, whilst female

managers receive negative judgement not necessarily because of their inability to perform but due to social constructs on the ideal image of a leader.

The findings revealed that girls are not developed and trained with any leadership mentality during their early stages of development and, up until today, that lack still prevents some women from seeking and aspiring to senior leadership roles and into technical fields. Due to internalised gender schemas for femininity and masculinity, the findings show that female managers develop implicit bias against themselves in certain careers. For example, in Section 7.7 it was indicated by the respondent that it will be strange to see a woman as a director in the electricity department because it is more of a man's field. Also, the study revealed that some female managers self-select out of senior leadership roles and they recommend men for senior leadership roles over their fellow females. This is a description of how self-marginalisation and discrepancies based on gender identity continue to plague public institutions in this constitutional dispensation.

The study found that the principle of equality, and the gender equality provisions of government are not necessarily followed in the DKKDM. In line with the quantitative findings, this chapter indicated that women do not have access to equal employment opportunities. The majority of the respondents expressed their frustration that, on paper, men and women are regarded as equal but appointments into senior leadership positions still favour men (see Sections 6.2.4, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 7.8, and 7.12). Most of the respondents claimed that the reality of men's leadership preference is seen in the under-representation of women in important leadership positions and that the culture of the local sphere of government is patriarchal and masculine and does not support the leadership advancement of women. Furthermore, the study found that women are hardly considered for positions such as the Municipal Manager. However, the study found that women's presence in leadership in all spheres is increasing, especially within the middle management level. Worthy of note is that some female managers were the first women to occupy their current leadership positions within the DKKDM

From the qualitative findings, female managers' leadership challenges within the local sphere of government are summarised in the table below:

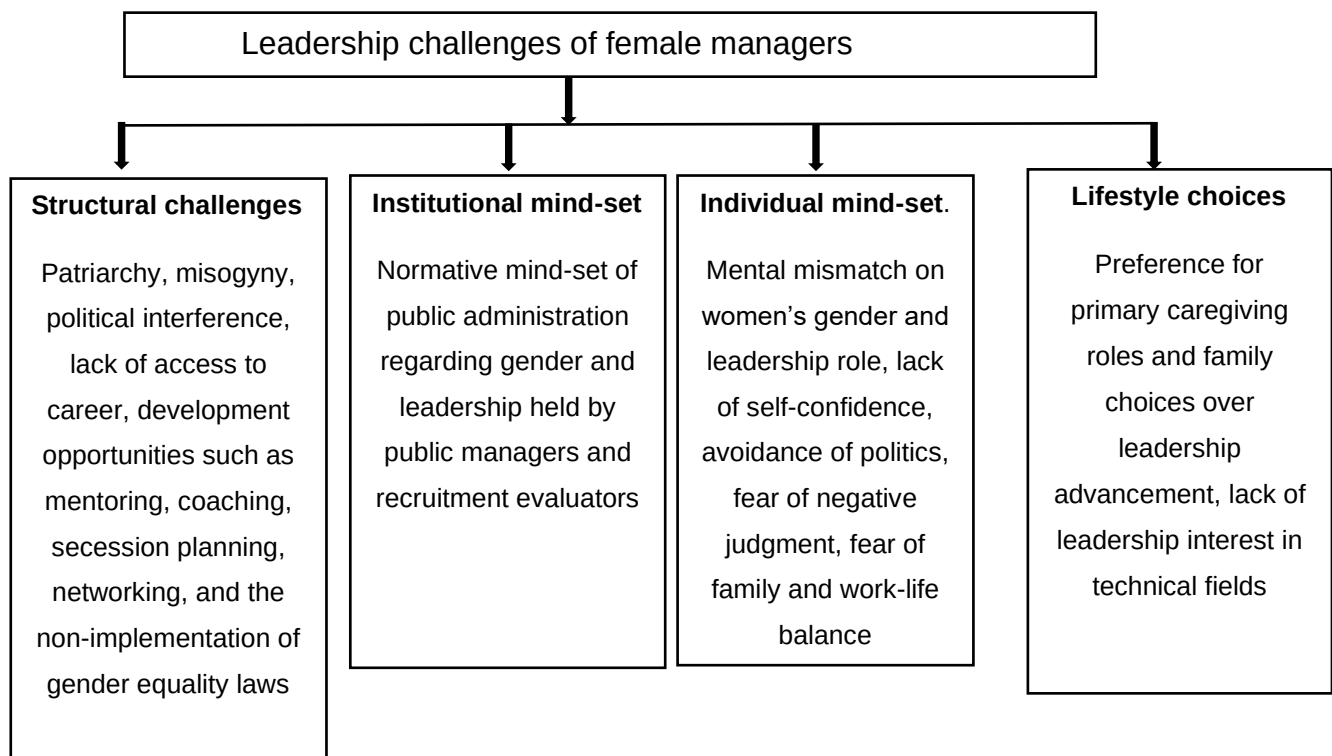


**Figure 7.1: Female managers' leadership challenges in the DKKDM**

**Source: Author's compilation (2019)**

The qualitative findings on women's leadership challenges correlate with the findings of the quantitative as explained in Chapter 6 (see Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.12, 6.2.13, 6.2.14, 6.2.15, 6.2.16 and 6.2.17) and the literature chapters (see Sections 1.1, 1.2, 2.7.6, 2.7.6.1, 2.7.6.2, 2.7.6.3, 2.7.6.4, 2.7.6.5, 2.7.6.6, 4.5.3, 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6).

Another important finding from the qualitative analysis is that men abuse women. Male managers are perceived by the respondents as mostly the perpetrators of gender inequality and the social injustices done to women. The study found that some female managers are manipulated and used by their male peers, and women who refuse to be manipulated are intensely oppressed and deprived of opportunities for advancement (see Section 7.12). The study found that a repercussion of these misogynistic behaviours is that women in middle management positions who experience and/or feel that their fellow females in senior management levels are manipulated or used by men, shy away from advancing (see Section 7.12).

In relation to training and development, the study found that continuous investment in the leadership training of women through various career development interventions is important for women's leadership advancement (see Sections 7.13, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and

7.11.4). The study also found that there are no established training schemes for the leadership advancement of women in the DKKDM in particular, and that women lack access to career development opportunities, for example, mentoring, coaching, career networking and succession planning. The DKKDM does not have any established internal leadership training programme for all managers, their approach to skills development is through the awarding of bursaries to employees to obtain any formal education of their choice (see Sections 7.13 and 7.13.1). Conversely, any approach to training might be ineffective as claimed by certain female managers with regards to their leadership advancement, due to the skill needs and uniqueness of the municipal environment, which requires more than general education. Due to women's social realities and leadership needs, the findings indicated that majority of female managers suggested the implementation of a women-only development programme.

In line with the quantitative finding, the DKKDM does not consider women's leadership empowerment as a strategic priority. The findings revealed that there is no attempt by the District Municipality to meet the basic provisions of the EEA. From the findings, most of the municipalities under the DKKDM failed to develop an EEP, as required by the DoL, which is meant to guide the effective internal plan of municipalities on measures to mainstream gender (see Section 7.15). The study found that there is no implemented gender-based legislation for women's leadership development and advancement in the local sphere of government (see Section 7.15). Additionally, the current female managers employed in the DKKDM are not all aware of some of the measures initiated for their empowerment and advancement. For example, the potential implementation of the Affirmative Action Policy in relation to the prospect for eradicating structural inequality and gender disparities in leadership roles in the DKKDM remains ineffective.

Based on the findings analysed in Chapters 6 and 7 of this thesis on gender issues and the skills development challenges of female managers in DKKDM, the next chapter presents a development approach to advance female managers and aspiring female managers into senior public leadership positions in the local sphere of government.



**CHAPTER EIGHT**  
**CONTRIBUTION CHAPTER: A PROPOSED APPROACH FOR THE TRAINING**  
**AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEMALE MANAGERS FOR SENIOR LEADERSHIP**  
**POSITION IN THE DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**

**8.1 INTRODUCTION**

From the empirical evidence discussed in Chapter 6 (see Sections 6.2 to 6.2.19) and 7 (see Sections 7.3 to 7.15), it will be difficult to isolate women's leadership challenges in the local sphere of government from foundational issues such as societal expectations on issues such as: leadership qualities and behaviour, and women's active leadership participation in the domain of senior leadership in this historically male-normed municipal environment. The empirical findings discussed in Chapter 7 indicate that women public officials are under-represented in directorship and senior leadership positions in the local sphere of government and due, to factors categorised into structural challenges, institutional mindset, individual mindsets and lifestyle choices (see Section 7.16). As emphasised in the study's problem statement (see Section 1.2) and across major discussions of this thesis, components of good governance and democracy such as social justice, effective delivery of basic public services and goods, inclusivity, equality, human development and societal growth could be impossible without women's active participation and involvement in all spectrum of public sector leadership (see Sections 1.1, 2.3, 2.7.3, 6.2.11, 7.10 and 7.11). This is in addition to the fact that a significant number of female managers in senior public leadership positions are needed, especially to model younger women with high potential and leadership ambitions and to make the working space become more attractive to women graduates. From a theoretical and practical exposition, women's empowerment is a necessary condition for addressing both implicit and explicit challenges fuelling gender inequalities and discrimination, and to improve women's opportunities to participate in governance and strategic decision making. Against this backdrop, this chapter is dedicated to the construction of an approach for the empowerment and development of women for their public leadership advancement in the local sphere of government, specifically the DKKDM.

## **8.2 Conceptual definition of an approach**

An approach refers to a set of ideas, values, philosophies, beliefs and general assumptions intended for solving problems and closing gaps (Girll and Kusum, 2016:6692). Isaksen et al., (2011:20) conceptualised an approach as a means of ensuring the occurrence of transformation and development. Furthermore, another view of an approach comes from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, which suggests that an approach is a way devised for dealing with something; a way of thinking to tackle a real-life problem. Deducing from the definitions of an approach as cited above, the meaning of an approach can be summarised as a method and style adopted, an action and steps taken in solving a real world problem, for closing gaps and for accomplishing goals. In this study, the goal to be accomplished is the expansion of women's capacity and providing them equal leadership access to close gender gaps in senior management positions in the DKKDM. Prior to the development of an approach, real-world problems or inequalities are usually identified, an understanding of the root causes of the identified problems is mandatory if the objective of that approach is to be successfully realised. Implying that the identification of the problems is a vital factor for achieving the anticipated result(s) or desired outcome, Nussbaum, (2006:4) emphasises that, to properly confront women's gender issues and challenges in public institutions, approaches dealing with women's development should be evaluated for their ability to identify women's problems and recommendations should be made and tackled in line with the identified problem. The research agreement with this perspective is based on the idea that women experience discrimination differently, for example because of their race, status, and other intersectionality. In line with the suggestion of Nussbaum, (2006:4), the challenges experienced by female public managers in the workplace .as indicated in the empirical findings in chapters 6 and 7 and in the literature chapters (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4) informed the proposed empowerment approach developed in this thesis. The proposed approach contains both holistic and proactive solutions to the identified problems, incorporating actions to accelerate women's leadership and to eliminate unconscious barriers and assumptions frustrating the achievement of gender equality in the local sphere of government, particularly in the DKKDM.

### 8.2.1 The development of an approach

The development of an approach is not contingent on an established *scientific logic* (Girll & Kusum, 2016:6692). Similarly, constructing an approach is far more than the assembling of different theoretical assumptions, perceptions and working idea. Rather the development of an approach embodies the application of imaginative reasoning, personal intuition, and intellectual skills towards the construction of a desired outcome that is entirely new and unstructured, in which the objectives are towards growth and transformation. Isaksen *et al.*, (2011:20) stated that, in developing a creative approach, one attempts to advance a desired outcome that has an unknown answer or no ready-made solution. In line with this thinking, the novelty of the proposed approach constructed for the advancement of female managers and for preparing women for public management positions in the local sphere of government in this thesis lies in the realisation that there is no ready-made mechanism or approach targeting the training and leadership development of women in the DKKDM as indicated in Section 1.3 of this thesis. Further, in academic research such as this, the development of an approach is mostly influenced by the study's theoretical underpinnings, pre-existing knowledge (see Chapters 2, 3 and 4) and the empirical findings of the study in Chapters 6 and 7, and the researcher's epistemological stance.

The proposed approach in this thesis epitomises an empowerment approach to be followed in the public leadership advancement and development of women. According to the pioneering work of Batliwala, cited by Sen and Mukherjee, (2014:190), empowerment for women in public leadership positions means the process of transforming all unequal power structures in public organisations. Within the context of gender mainstreaming in the public sector/service, women's leadership empowerment means the institutionalisation of legislation, policies, public plans, and public programmes to promote public leadership equality and equal access to opportunities by both men and women. Rowland, (1995:87) suggests that women's empowerment means more than giving women access to critical public decision-making positions, but also includes public organisational practices that will make women perceive themselves as being able, entitled and fit to occupy public leadership positions, particularly at senior organisational levels. This implies that, regardless of providing equal access to opportunities for women as stated in gender equality policy legislation in South Africa, public institutions need to implement and embrace practices

that uplift women's consciousness of being eligible to undertake senior public leadership positions. This study argues that female public managers' consciousness of being unrestricted in access to important public decision-making positions, which is not the case in the local sphere of government as indicated in the empirical finding analysed in Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.9, 6.2.10, 7.8, 7.12 and 7.14, and the crafting of measures to enable women to build their internal capacities are fundamental for women's public leadership advancement and development. The crafting of empowerment measures is important, based on the recognition that women in large numbers have not yet ventured into municipal leadership due to challenges such as sex discrimination, role stereotyping, career development challenges, women's lack of adequate work related experience in some departments and self-confidence to undertake senior positions in technical departments such as engineering (see Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.16, 7.6, 7.8, 7.12, 7.13, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4).

From this, women's empowerment corresponds with the act of challenging human rights violations evident in the ambience of the local sphere of government, such as, patriarchy, prejudices, gendered organisational culture, which promote biased recruitment and promotion practices (see Sections 6.2.7, 7.8 and 7.12). These barriers not only decrease women's public leadership access and doubt that female public managers can perform excellently in a male dominated public work environment, but also make public female managers feel less confident of themselves, unwanted and ill-suited as public leaders (see Section 7.12). In addition to the deconstruction of harmful social practices in the public workplace, gender and empowerment should be able to erase internalised gender prejudice and activate individual self-realisation in female public managers, which will ultimately influence women's abilities to compete and negotiate for higher leadership positions in the public sector/service including the local government sphere. The proposed approach to women's empowerment in this study do not only seek a numerical increase of women's public leadership representation in the DKKDM, but also to harness women's energy and creativity for public organisational development and public productivity.

According to Aina, (2015:2) a paradigm shift towards ensuring genuine sustainable development necessitates a renewed focus on people-centred development, where priority is channelled towards human capacity development, poverty eradication and the elimination of all gender-based discrimination and inequalities. The proposed

model entails measures that could help with the elimination of gender inequalities in the public workplace and the expansion of women's unique capacities for their equal public leadership representation and active participation in the local sphere of government. Such a feat, for example women's leadership advancement is possible if public servants, comprising public managers, both male and female, HRD and HR departments, and political institutions, execute their operational activities in accordance with government legal measures initiated for ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment in the public sector and with a determined focus to end all forms of discrimination against women. The proposed model is presented in Figure 8.1.

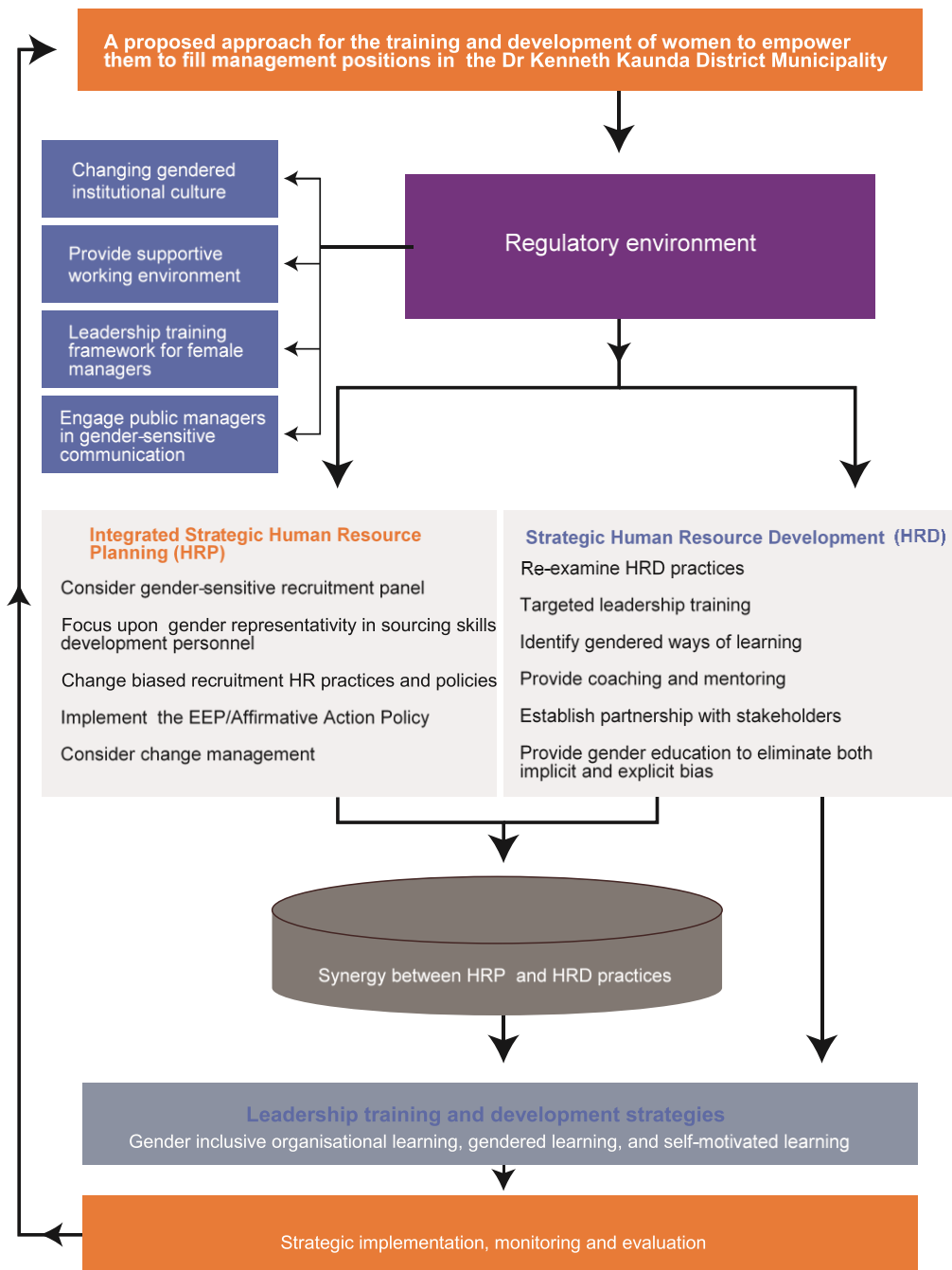


**Figure 8.1 A proposed approach for the development of female managers for senior management positions in the local sphere of government: the case of DKKDM**

**Source: Author's compilation (2020)**

### **8.2.1.1 Regulatory environment**

The proposed approach views the regulatory environment as germane for ensuring women's equal participation in public sector leadership. The proposal for a regulatory framework correlates with the assertion of Enyew and Mihrete, (2018:60) that policy frameworks and laws are prominent strategies for freeing women from oppression, marginalisation and exploitation and which promote their secondary positions in societies, including in the workplace. Arguing from the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis as discussed in Sections 1.5 and 2.4.1.2, according to the liberal feminist theory, women's rights to equal leadership opportunities must be maintained and protected through solid public policy frameworks and enforceable regulations. In South Africa, various impressive legislation has been initiated by the government for the public leadership advancement of women (see Sections 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.5, 3.3.6, 3.3.7, 3.3.8 and 3.3.9). However, from the empirical chapters, the implementation and compliance remain a serious challenge in the local sphere of government (see Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.13, 6.14 and 7.15).

From the empirical data of this thesis represented in Chapters 6 and 7, there is no intention by the local government in promoting the public leadership acceleration of women, which is seen from the non-compliance and lack of implementation of policies meant for women's advancement and empowerment. From the empirical evidence analysed in Sections 6. 2.16 and 7.15 of this thesis, the DKKDM and the local municipalities under the district do not have any career development programmes targeting the public leadership training and development of women, which is one of the public-legal provisions for ensuring substantive gender equality (see Section 3.3.3). Most municipalities studied were unable to provide the Employment Equity Plan that they are expected to submit to the Department of Labour annually. The DKKDM is failing to use the internal mechanisms at its disposal such as the development of special measures for the advancement of women as stated in the Affirmative Action Policy, and the use of the EEA in gender employment and promotion into municipal management positions (see Sections 6.12, 6.13 and 7.15). This finding is confirmed by Hick and Buccus, cited in Vyas-Doorgapersad, (2015: 127) that regulatory provisions and guidelines are scarcely followed in the local sphere of government and that gender equality is not considered a serious issue within municipalities.

The inadequate awareness of the regulatory frameworks by public female managers is also captured in the empirical chapters of this thesis as a void in the legislative frameworks that could foster ignorance among women about their legal rights in the public sector/service including local government sphere. This finding correlates with the statement that, in the South African public sector/service, including the local government level, most women still do not know their rights when there are gender discrepancies (see Section 3.2.2). Such a scenario results from the lack of dissemination of information on gender policies and human rights education. Ultimately it will be extremely difficult for women to lay claims on equality rights provided by the government for their advancement if they are not aware of those legal rights.

A gap identified by this thesis is that the regulatory frameworks for promoting gender equality do nothing towards the elimination of internalised gender prejudice and leadership stereotypes among all public employees, both male and female, which they learnt since their early stages of child development from patriarchal cultural norms, which are implicitly used against women during the process of hiring and promotion of public sector/service leaders including the local government sphere. Human beings do not exist aside from their social realities; humans naturally harbour unconscious biases and they unconsciously show favour to members of the same social group. They also use the implicit bias attached to a social group by their society against that group. This argument is supported by the study findings as indicated in Section 7.12 that men show preference to their fellow men when it comes to public leadership advancement, not because they hate women but due to internalised gender stereotypes which are unconsciously displayed. In support of this argument, Vyas-Doorgapersad, (2015:131) stated that, due to the stereotypical mindset that still exists in societies, it is unacceptable for women to lead or dominate their male peers according to social gender norms. Such mindsets result in a situation where men feel entitled to power and this mentality also promotes men's lack of support for women's leadership in the public workplace. The empirical evidence presented in this thesis and the literature in Section 2.7.6.4 reveal that male public managers are struggling to believe that they are equal to women when it comes to the handling of powerful public decision-making positions due to gender role expectations attributed to women by society. This study argues that such stereotypical mentality could inform the



possibility of non-compliance and inadequate implementation of gender equality frameworks by male public managers who predominate in the public leadership realm.

#### **8.2.1.2 Change gendered organisational culture**

Changing the prevailing gendered public organisational culture, where access to senior public management positions is determined by social identity, appearance and societal gender role expectations will provide women with the opportunity of competing for public leadership roles on fair grounds. For example, in a male-normed public organisational culture and structure, it is unconsciously assumed that men are more intelligent, more talented and more competent in handling public leadership roles than women, which further influences other public workplace activities and behaviours, such as the identification of public leaders, hiring and promotion including respect for such public leaders. In the empirical data section of this thesis, Section 7.12, it was indicated that, due to the gendered and patriarchal environment and culture of the local sphere of government, which portrays women as fit for public leadership, women are hardly considered for senior public leadership roles. According to the respondents, men feel as though public leadership is their birthright. Women face intense resistance from men when they try to advance. The findings show that most female public managers are less confident to speak their minds due to the male normed environment, and female public managers are often disrespected by their subordinates, especially men who feel that they can't be controlled by a woman - *the weaker sex* (see Section 7.12). The result of the masculine workplace culture of the public sector is the gross under-representation of women in senior public management levels, as indicated in Sections 6.2.9 and 7.6 of this thesis.

From the scholarly research of Powell, (2011:144), Kossek *et al.*, (2017:229) and Longman *et al.*, (2018:5), gendered public organisational cultures are characterised by occupational segregation, prejudice against female public managers, constant preference for male public leaders in strategic public management positions, doubt in and/or the cross-examining and re-examination of the legitimacy of female public leaders, tolerating misogynistic behaviours and public workplace incivility to women and lacking concern for the development of public programmes for promoting public management diversity. According to Carli and Early, (2012:456) and Mabelane (2017:163) in masculine public organisational cultures, management excellence is

associated with assertive behaviours, thus creating the perception that the communal behaviours associated with female public leadership is ineffective. A masculine public organisational culture produces a working public environment where women's distinctive capacities and public leadership abilities are barely appreciated, undermined and evaluated less favourably, where female public managers social realities such as their caring responsibilities are hardly featured in public organisations' agendas, and where female public managers are vulnerable to all forms of gender-based violence (see Section 6.2.7, 7.12). From the findings in the empirical chapters, in the local sphere of government, when choosing a public manager to head an engineering department for instance, it is extremely difficult for public employees (both male and female) to have the strong conviction to support a woman for that public position (see Sections 7.7 and 7.12). Even when a female is to be considered for such a position, she will be subjected to higher standard testing and scrutiny than her male peers (Kahn, 2014:20). Masculine public organisational culture requires female public managers to go the extra mile and work harder because they will always have to prove their competencies if ever they are to be considered for elite position(s) (see Section 7.12). Kossek and Buzzanell, (2018:814) contend that the public workplace was designed to suit men's realities with the assumptions that men have little or no nurturing and family errands to perform. This has given rise to the conceptualisation that an ideal public leader is one who works for prolonged hours without distractions, one who will be readily available for the public organisation, especially when it requires travelling for days, attending conferences, seminars and meetings outside the town of the working environment and, in the process, scarcely perform caregiving responsibilities.

The public workplace reflects the local community and the cultural context of the nation in which it exists. These include factors such as societal assumptions on femininity and masculinity, cultural values relating to working styles, time, patriarchal ideologies, and expectations on gender role including the interaction between male and female. For example, the ambience of the DKKDM is not insusceptible to the traditional norms and cultural practices within its environments, which may not necessarily support the development of women's professional public career and public leadership advancement. Thus, the working environment of the DKKDM is influenced by the patriarchal and conservative environment of the South African communities and

society. As indicated in Section 7.12 of this thesis, the North West province has been the milieu where the DKKDM is situated and is deeply traditional, which gives rise to the gendered leadership practices within the local municipalities under the District.

Kossek *et al.*, (2017:240) notes that cultural expectations on public gender roles are rigid in male-normed cultures, where men are expected to lead the way whilst women are expected to follow. This perspective is not different from the arrangement of government institutions and public administration where influential structures are entrenched on domination and submission, replicating patriarchal ideologies (Section 2.7.6.4). There seems to be a tussle in communicating to public employees that patriarchal ideologies, which thrive on the maintenance of public power and discrepancies between men and women (Akala, 2018:233) are no longer applicable. Neither is promoting women's intellectual inferiority that culminates in the discrimination against women in their access to senior public leadership opportunities (see Sections 2.7.6.4, 7.8, 7.12). This is because, in the eyes of the law, all human beings, men and women, husbands and wives, boys and girls are equal. This means that public workplace opportunities, for example public management positions, must not be reserved for men by virtue of their social identity, as this will count as an unlawful action. Hence, to improve women's public leadership, public organisations must shape their culture to deconstruct those practices that sustain and maintain the belief that men and women are not equal through job segregation, hierarchical imbalances and discriminatory practices, as indicated in the empirical chapters of this thesis.

Evidence-based research supporting the proposal for a change in the masculine organisational culture as a key pathway for ensuring the development and leadership acceleration of women in the public sector are many (Kossek *et al.*, 2017:294; Dosunmu & Adeyemo, 2018:192; Mabelane, 2016:165; Robbin *et al.*, 2009:101). Kossek *et al.*, (2017:294) argue that most public organisations, when trying to promote gender diversity, focus on developing schemes to change women with no effort directed at changing the context that frustrates women's advancement. The situation is severe in the local sphere of government as there is no initiative designed for women's career advancement (see Sections 6. 2.14, 7.13 and 7.13.1) and for changing the context that disadvantages women (see Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12). One can argue that it will be practically impossible to advance women into senior public

leadership amidst a masculine public organisational culture, which affects public leadership opportunities and employees' motivation for women as public leaders.

Changes in public organisational culture for the promotion of women require more than just adjusting the masculine culture. Lorsch & McTague, (2016:98) emphasise the report from CEOs who have successfully led transformation in public organisations, and state that public cultural change is what you get after you have initiated new public practices and measures to challenge tough situations, in this case gender inequality in public leadership. For example, the DKKDM can change their approach on employees' skill development and capacity building from merely depending on formal education (see Section 7.13) to on-the-job training through succession planning, mentoring and coaching. This study proposed that changes in the masculine public organisational culture must be aligned with the legal-administrative provisions of government developed for promoting gender equality and women's public leadership inclusion in the public sector. Robbins *et al* (2009:464) mentions that public policy frameworks and laws are frequent motivation for effecting change, for example government laws on gender equality in Rwanda for instance, a country with the highest public representation of women in parliament (see figure 2.4) sparked up a major change in the nation's gender representation in public governance and legislation. The decision by the South African government to promote diversity in all public leadership spectrum can be a public motivation to push for a change in the patriarchal and masculine cultural practices of the public sector/service especially in the local government sphere. Following the EEA, municipalities are expected to restructure public cultural practices defining public employment patterns and promotion into public leadership to attract and retain more women in top public leadership positions. Organisational change for inclusivity is a continuous process, which could be very challenging because it requires change in public behaviour and attitude, in this case towards women for their acceptance into public leadership. The change process must not be viewed as a restriction, but as an opportunity to fully harness the potential of women for the benefit of the entire public organisation, communities, and the nation at large. This study argues that aligning gender equality legislation with public sector/service and local government organisational culture, through the advancement of women into senior public management positions, especially in public departments where they are scarcely represented can help to encourage both the insiders (other

public employees) and outsiders (social perceivers) to accept and value women's leadership in those fields. Such acceptability, which will help to change people's biased perception about women and public leadership roles, is necessary to encourage more women to aspire to higher public leadership roles in municipalities.

#### **8.2.1.3 Establish leadership development framework for women**

In patriarchal societies, which applies to almost all cultures, most women have been trained, cultured, and conditioned to believe that they are not good enough to handle certain positions in the public space, especially senior and professional positions. Such upbringing also influences most women's advancement decisions. As indicated in the empirical findings, women's lived experiences and societal perception regarding senior public leadership roles affects female public managers self-confidence, career ambition and gender preference for certain public leadership positions (see Sections 2.7.6.6, 6.2.2, 7.4 and 7.12). The situation is seemingly not changing, possibly because in the public sector/service and local government sphere there are not enough skills development and vocational training programmes to assist women in breaking their self-limitation, learnt through social interaction, insensitive gender culture, value, and norms. Female public manager's self-limitation, which is especially manifested through their low confidence levels, hampers women's leadership advancement, desire to advance and performance. This study argues that it is essential that women get the right work-related skills, knowledge, experience, and confidence they need to assume senior management roles. As established in most discussion in Chapter 4, for example in Sections 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.4, 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 by the female managers in Sections 7.13 and 7.14, to make this happen, women need to be exposed to continuous leadership training and skills development opportunities. Although internal public leadership training opportunities for public managers seem to be a gender inclusive challenge within municipalities, there should be a public legal policy framework targeting the professional and public leadership training of female managers in the local sphere of government. The testament from women's public leadership development programmes as indicated in Section 4.5.1 of this thesis are pointers to the fact that women-only public leadership training initiatives can have exponential effects on their learning and capacity development in the local government sphere.

#### **8.2.1.4 Providing supportive working conditions**

This study argues that motherhood is an important component of African women's reality, hence providing supportive working conditions that would enable female public managers to cope with their public leadership functions and indispensable gender roles can help to attract and retain more women in higher public leadership positions in the DKKDM. Women need public regulations and government laws that can support their caregiving roles whilst they pursue professional management careers in the public sector/service including the local government sphere. Inflexibility when it comes to volume of working hours and the lack of adequate childcare support to assist female public managers was indicated in the empirical findings of this thesis as one the barriers deterring women's advancement in the DKKDM (see Section 7.12). The implementation of flexible working hours is vital for female public managers as it will assist female public managers, especially those within child bearing age, those who may decide to start a family and or those faced with parenting milestones. Flexible working hours here does not mean providing part-time jobs for women, but providing a working condition that will accord female public managers the opportunity of attending to parenting demands such as caring for a sick child or attending their children's school functions during working hours. Flexible working hours for female public managers could also include giving women the right to choose their work schedules or to draw their work plan conducive for their personal productivity and work routine (Koekemoer & Downes, 2011:3, Jaga *et al.*, 2018:437). For example, giving female public managers the right to choose their knocking off time, lunch and coffee or tea break, and also allowing female public managers to choose their preferred month or days for their workplace leave. Nevertheless, it is important that these arrangements are effectively managed and monitored to prevent the drifting of focus away from work roles and expectations. This study argues that work flexibility is a progressive step towards the leadership acceleration of women in the DKKDM in that it will help to reduce women public managers' stress and turnover intentions, which may result from work-life conflict, and also increase their work satisfaction (Wheatley 2017:569, Jaga *et al.*, 2018 437).

This study argues that providing childcare support, especially for female public managers with young children is another important aspect the DKKDM should consider to encourage bright women to join and remain in senior public leadership

positions. Providing childcare facilities for female public managers, particularly within the vicinity of the public working environment, will help to prevent distractions while they perform their public leadership roles, knowing that their children are in the same building with them. Female public managers with children that are not of school going age will have somewhere to drop off their children; they will not need to worry or rush out of work just to pick up their children, which can help promote concentration on their job function. The feeling that they are in the same vicinity as their children can help to ease the tension about the safety of their children. Some manifestations of not supporting female public managers with childcare facilities include labour turnover, absenteeism, reduced productivity, reduced career advancement intention and increased stress and anxiety. Hein and Cassirer, (2010:8) mention that a major cost of not providing affordable access to quality childcare facilities is gender inequality, undermining women's opportunities for career development and advancement including their chances of becoming leaders in the public sector. Hence the DKKDM must guard against the consequences that might lower women's leadership participation.

#### **8.2.1.3 Engaging public managers in communication on gender issues**

Communication between public managers (male and female) is vital to expose them to how beliefs on cultural norms and gender role expectations enforce and undermine gender inequality. Such awareness can lead to the promotion of gender equality in the DKKDM. Creating an organisational environment that encourages and promotes gender equality and inclusivity in senior public management positions is possible if public managers are eager to do so. From the findings discussed in Sections 7.12 and 7.15 of this thesis, public managers, especially male managers, are responsible for maintaining men's supremacy and domination in public management positions in the local sphere of government. Public managers' readiness to support and promote gender equality is expedient both to change the prevailing patriarchy and ensuring women's leadership advancement. This perspective is supported by Gilbert *et al.*, (cited in Hearn *et al.*, 2015:8) who asserted that senior public managers' commitment to gender equality is the first step toward ensuring women's advancement and gender diversity in the public sector/service (especially at the local government sphere). This is basically because senior public managers have a great influence on decisions

relating to hiring, promotions and training and development. Doubtlessly, public managers' level of gender prejudice and stereotypical mentality has connotations for women's public leadership participation and professional advancement in government institutions. The International Labour Organisation, (2017:3) concur, stating that public managers with gender biased mentality can prevent women from reaching the corridors of power. The empirical findings of this thesis indicated that public managers and organisations' evaluators undermine women's access to public leadership opportunities, especially because of their gender bias mentality on women's gender and requirement on public leadership roles (see Sections 6.2.3. 6.2.4, 7.8, 7.12 and 7.14). The empirical finding also revealed that that public managers, especially male public managers, use demeaning and sexist language on women managers. The findings that men promote women's discrimination could be a reason Segovia-Pérez, *et al.*, (2019:11) suggest the establishment of men-only public development programmes to raise consciousness and to create awareness on gender equality. Furthermore, the empirical findings also indicated that male public managers and few female public managers believe that women can't handle certain public management positions because they assume that, due to women's characteristics, they will not be able to manage the technicalities that may be involved, for example a woman becoming a public director in a municipal engineering or traffic department. Such stereotypical beliefs, language and portrayal is so unhealthy for bright, talented and ambitious women who have the skills and experience to pursue public leadership careers in those fields. Gender inequality and the inhuman treatment of women, regardless of the public position they occupy in government institutions including in the local sphere of government, seems to be more of a psychological challenge rather than a deliberate one. In supporting this line of thought, Bodenhausen *et al.*, (2009:111-112) posit that non-deliberate biases against women are possible because of cultural practices and social norms that perpetuate stereotypes, which lead to beliefs on the ideal gender for senior public management positions. A measure to deconstruct internalised gender prejudice and discrepancies inherited from traditional norms and cultural practices is pertinent to achieve significant progress in the development and public leadership acceleration of women in the DKKDM.

This study argues that public leadership gender stereotypes and prejudice are constructed through various channels of public communication. In the same vein, the



public attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour deterring women's advancement can also be challenged through gender communication by engaging public managers in a discourse on gender issues in the public workplace. Engaging public managers in communication as an intervention strategy is to enable perspective-taking, which is the ability to actively consider the psychological condition and subjective experience of other people or another social group (Todd & Galinsky, 2014:374). Perspective thinking allows male and female public managers to share their different standpoints, ideas, opinions and experience on gender issues, which can lead to an understanding of gender issues from an alternative perspective, in this case from the perspective of the oppressor (men) and the oppressed (women). Todd and Galinsky, (2014:374) and Shih *et al.*, (2009:565) respectively mention that perspective-taking is effective not only for reducing prejudice between social groups, but also helps to improve attitudes and behaviour towards individuals and members of an outgroup, for example, minority groups and marginalised groups.

This study argues that changes in gender inequality and the misogynist behaviours towards female public managers can be achieved through the dissemination of information through various public communication channels to create awareness on gender equality and equal treatment. This begs the question, are male public managers aware of women's gender issues in the public workplace? Although this not part of the study objectives, Jaffe, (2018: online) mentions that it seems that male public managers may not be fully aware of, or recognise, the various challenges limiting women's advancement in the public workplace in America. Although this study was conducted in America, there seems to be limited empirical evidence and research investigating this issue in the South African public service/sector, including the local government sphere. This study views engaging male and female managers in gender sensitive communication as germane to create gender awareness on leadership issues and to expose what female managers consider as discriminatory behaviour. As the most affected, hearing female public managers' perspective on gender-based discrimination is critically important because male public managers might be ignorant of how their behaviour consciously and unconsciously distresses and disadvantages female public managers. Also, male public managers might not be able to provide feasible solution(s) to female public manager's problems if they are unaware of gender issues hampering women's performance and public leadership advancement in the

DKKDM. This assumption was raised by the respondents, as indicated in the empirical chapter of this thesis (see Section 7.14). Real problem solving begins with awareness and intention to provide proactive solutions to the identified problem. Furthermore, female public managers will have the opportunity to share with male public managers their experience of violence and other attitudes and behaviour hindering their leadership advancement in the DKKDM. This can lead to male public managers and female public managers learning more about each other and could help to dispel negative images, become less prejudiced, and could lead to a better interpersonal relationships between men and women. The DKKDM needs to implement a public communication intervention that brings male and female public managers together to raise gender awareness on explicit and implicit bias undermining women. The idea here is to encourage public managers to start considering high performing female public managers for senior public leadership roles and respecting them. For example, using likable language phrases such as “competent”, “hardworking” or “job well done”. This can help to change the biased perception of lower level public employees about female leadership because senior public managers in the public sector/service, including the local government sphere, have direct influence on public employees. This process should be guided by legislation and government laws promoting gender equality.

#### **8.2.1.6. Integrated Strategic Human Resource Planning (HRP)**

This study argues that the integration of gender equality into public human resource planning within the DKKDM will increase the focus upon the acceleration of women, especially into directorship and top management positions. This study asserts that there seems to be a total neglect in the public human resource planning on issues relating to women’s career advancement and leadership development in the DKKDM. From the empirical findings of this thesis analysed in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively, public human resource (HR) related decisions, practices, policies, and planning lack reference to women’s career development and gender diversity issues. For example, within the various local municipalities in the DKKDM, there seems to be no developed plan targeting women’s leadership advancement through various internal and formal and informal leadership development measures such as succession planning, mentoring, coaching and other talent management strategies. The finding explains how the HR Department of the DKKDM fails to contribute to the progress in women’s

leadership advancement of that district municipality. This study argues that internal career developmental interventions targeting the skills upgrading of female public managers are key areas that the DKKDM should not ignore in HR planning, considering women's social realities and the masculine municipal environment that, by its nature, does not value women's public leadership advancement (see Sections 7.4, 7.12).

Given the "gender blindness" of the HR Department in the DKKDM, there is no document reflecting on women's career development and leadership advancement. As indicated in Section 6.25 of this theses, women's talent is not tapped through various career development interventions, which is expected given the conservative and highly patriarchal nature of the local sphere of government. The fact that leadership positions where decisions relating to employees' career advancement are decided are predominantly occupied by male public managers (see Sections 2.7.6.4, 6.2.7, 7.6, 7.12). As indicated in the empirical chapter in Section 6.2.17 and the literature review in Section 4.5.3, failure by the HR Department in the DKKDM to intentionally plan for women's leadership development will result in a huge loss of talent(s). The talent loss will not only affect woman's opportunity to participate in influential public positions, but also the achievement of the constitutional mandates of the local sphere of government and the achievement of sustainable development and economic growth objectives in the Republic of South Africa (see Sections 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 6.2.11 and 7.11.).

In contemporary South Africa, one of the goals of all arms of government, including the local sphere of government is to ensure women's equal participation in all public leadership spheres. Following this line of thinking, a critical strategic function of the HRP is to plan towards the capacitation of women for their placement in top public management positions, to bring into reality the equal representation of women in the public sector/service including the local government sphere leadership roles, as envisaged by government. This study contends that public human resource planning seems not to be contributing to the realisation of the intent of the Affirmative policies and even the EEP in the DKKDM. From the empirical findings of this thesis analysed in Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.13 and 7.15, the impression created is that HRP take no cognisance of Affirmative Action Policies and the Employment Equity plan. This reflects the assumption that gender legislation is not being considered during HR

planning and, as such, does not have any influence in recruitment and promotion into public leadership roles that reflects the intent of gender equality. Hence it is not wrong to say that HRP does not support gender diversity process in the DKKDM. In addition, the male dominated recruitment panel, which affects women's confidence to perform well during the leadership selection process, also hampers the achievement of gender equality (see Section 7.12). HRP should consider involving more female recruiters in their recruitment panel to recruit more women into senior leadership roles.

From the empirical findings of this theses, another aspect that the HR Department seems to neglect in their planning is how to change the status quo of unequal leadership structures. This study argues that, unless the HR Department deliberately decides to plan towards changing gender imbalance in public/organisational leadership positions, the status quo will remain. As indicated by the research participants in the empirical findings (see Sections 7.7 and 7.12), changing the status quo requires the implementation of change management. Change management refers to the process of deviating from the normal organisational culture and setting certain beliefs and structural arrangements in the Municipality to achieve desired goals, in this case gender leadership diversity. Harvard Business School, (2016: online) specified that public leadership skills development should be merged with change management rather than approaching the separate provisioning of such public leadership. The Harvard Business School, (2016: online) further stated that public leadership entails moving away from cultural expectations in a way that stimulates others to choose and to follow. In relation to this study, public change management is necessary to transform cultural expectations at senior public management levels, to transform the prevalent masculine municipal organisational culture and to inspire all public employees to embrace women's leadership. The HR Department can carry out change management strategy by reshuffling and redesigning job roles especially for public management positions that are socially perceived as men's roles. The reshuffling and changing of public leadership responsibilities should go hand in hand with relevant public training and development. For example, ambitious and bright female public managers can be identified and developed with the necessary public skills, knowledge and experience to head public engineering or public technical departments in municipalities. In the same vein, public organisational arrangements can consider training male public managers for public management positions

predominately occupied by women, for example, director of corporate service and human resource management roles. This process is important to change people's perception and public structural arrangements in the local sphere of government from the occupational dominance by sexual category and social role expectations. This adaptation process can help to boost the acceptability levels of female public managers in technical fields and also help to reduce or eliminate the mental mismatch amongst women themselves on the ideal gender to lead public engineering or public technical departments (see Section 7.7). Furthermore, change management can also help to encourage women with the ambition to pursue careers in public technical fields.

#### **8.2.1.7 Strategic public human resource development (HRD)**

Strategic public human resource development would enhance the focus on public organisational learning, which is necessary to help female public managers to function optimally in their jobs, build strong self-confidence and adapt to the changing demands of the public workplace as well as for their advancement into higher public management positions. The motive for establishing and implementing strategic training is to bring about inclusivity and gender equality in senior public leadership, which is yet to be achieved in the DKKDM (see Sections 6.2.7, 6.2.9, 7.5, 7.6, 7.8 and 7.12). HRD should consider the following encompassing a review of public HRD practices: identify a target group for public leadership training, establish partnership with public (and private) stakeholders, identify gendered ways of public learning and skills acquisition and provide public gender education through biased training to counter implicit and explicit stereotypes.

##### **8.2.1.7.1 Review of HRD practices**

Reviewing public HRD practices may be helpful for the identification, attraction, retention, and the development of women for senior public management positions in the DKKDM. In support of the proposal for the reviewing of public HRD interventions within the DKKDM, Seo, *et al.*, (2017:36) mentions that a re-examination of public HRD interventions to support women's public career advancement is vital because the gendered social standing of women could compromise the effectiveness of public HRD schemes initially designed to help women advance in the public sector/service (especially at the local government sphere, according to this study). From the empirical findings of this thesis, there seems to be serious lack of commitment by the

HRD to supporting women's advancement into public strategic management positions through leadership development interventions. Also, there seems to be no deliberate effort in designing public leadership development and career advancement measures for female public managers and women aspiring to different public management positions. SALGA, as the public institution coordinating skills development in the local sphere of government (see Section 1.2), do not have any leadership development programmes in place for women's development in all 257 municipalities across the country (at the time of this study). Although SALGA established the Women's Commission (SWC), and its objectives include the capacitation and empowerment of women to enable their active participation in leadership and in local government matters (SALGA Women's Commission 2017). The perceived lack of commitment towards female public managers' career advancement is perilous to South Africa's democratic principles, for example, a reduction in gender inequality and the opportunity for public human development. To secure and retain talented working mothers in senior public management positions in the local sphere of government, HRD must neither overlook not underestimate the importance of career development interventions for the development of female public managers (Clark, 2011:501,503, Seo *et al* 2017:36), especially to improve their self-awareness, public leadership experience and self-confidence.

The establishment of public leadership skills development programmes should be preceded by a public human resource inventory and skills audit. The public human resource inventory and skills audit is germane to ascertain women's educational levels, public management experience, special public sector/service competencies, and training needs. Such information is key to the identification of potential women that will be a channel for various public developmental programmes to produce a miscellaneous pool of public skills and talents that could help to bridge the public leadership gender gap in all levels of public management in the DKKDM. Skills analysis is an important part of HRP. Effective HRD functioning will depend on HRP to be able to ascertain and to understand the public skills needs and competencies of the target group (in this case women). Thus, a synergy between HRP and HRD practices is essential to achieve the desired outcome on the public leadership development and advancement of women in the local sphere of government, as guided by the EEA and other gender equality policies.

#### **8.2.1.7.2 Targeted leadership development program**

The glass ceiling and cliff face by female public managers, which has continued to hamper their acceleration into senior public management positions in the local sphere of government, necessitate purposefully designed and practical measures for addressing those barriers. Targeted public leadership development programmes to address the discrimination faced by female public managers especially in accessing public development programmes such as succession planning which leads to professional advancement can be helpful to break through the glass ceilings. With regards to this study, targeted public training means that the DKKDM is undertaking the responsibility to identify, groom and build the skills and confidence of women for their public leadership inclusion and for gender equality. The DKKDM must recognise that, due to the patriarchal municipal environment, without a deliberate plan targeting the leadership development of women, they might not benefit from the contribution of a diverse senior public leadership and eventually experience wastage of scarce talents.

The targeted public leadership training for women should focus on building psychological resources for performing work-related roles and maternal roles. Kossek and Buzznell, (2018:819) examined various literature and found that women's self-confidence in their maternal roles (pregnancy, nurturing of children) and confidence as leaders actually matters. Ledge, *et al.*, (2017: 883) found, in their empirical study, that women who lack maternal confidence experience significantly greater conflict in managing work and family roles than those women who have acquired strong maternal confidence. Ultimately, female public managers' level of maternal confidence, which Ledge, *et al.*, (2017:884) define as women's having confidence in their ability to meet their family needs and caregiving responsibilities, act as a vital moderator in women's leadership advancement (see Section 7.12). Maternal training for female public managers as working mothers is an important aspect that is missing in training programmes offered by organisations including public institutions (Kossek and Buzznell, 2018:819). The DKKDM is no exception and should focus the targeted public leadership training initiative to cultivate women's maternal confidence and the confidence needed for leadership roles, which seems to be lacking amongst female public managers (see Section 7.12).

The DKKDM should choose to implement targeted public leadership training through an effective succession planning. The empirical findings of this thesis indicate that succession planning is not necessarily implemented in the DKKDM, which has resulted in bright women leaving the municipality for organisations where they can advance their leadership careers. This study argues that an effective succession plan targeting the career and leadership advancement of women is essential to prevent talented female public managers from leaving the municipalities, to eradicate both visible and invisible glass ceiling and to provide female managers the opportunity to grow into professional positions and levels that can make them suitable candidates for directorship positions. Other talent management and retention strategies such as the implementation of public promotional policy, formal and informal mentoring, coaching, and networking can also be adopted by the DKKDM to create a pool of female public managers that will be readily available for job and career advancement.

For women to grab the public leadership advancement opportunities planned for them by the municipality, creating awareness on the targeted training through various means of communication is key. Such communication is important to address the problem of the lack of dissemination of training and developmental programmes as indicated in the empirical findings of this thesis. The communication initiatives should convey public information such as the criteria for selection, training needs and objectives and alternative public leadership development programmes that may be available for those not successful after the selection process. The selection process to identify the right female public managers for targeted training is an essential element that the DKKDM must consider. Supported by Watai, (2018:online), the selection process should contain a nomination procedure that would allow female public managers to nominate themselves and other women whom they feel have public leadership potential that can move the municipality forward. Since the crux is for public leadership positions, it is important that the nominated candidates are supported by their departmental heads.

#### **8.2.1.7.3 Provide coaching and mentoring opportunities.**

The fact that women are less likely to find public managers of either sex who are willing to act as their mentors, as indicated in the empirical findings, suggest that the DKKDM should implement a mentoring and coaching programme for women's advancement.



This study proposes that, without the implementation of mentoring and coaching opportunities for female public managers, the implications encompass the perspective that female public managers might not be able to fully realise their inherent potential, and develop critical thinking and empathy skills including self-confidence (Jones, 2017:6). As indicated in Sections 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 of this thesis, mentoring and coaching are powerful career development and learning interventions that can be relied upon to improve female public managers' self-confidence for effective public leadership, especially in the male dominated public organisational environment and culture where they find themselves.

The DKKDM should view the implementation of public coaching and mentoring opportunities for women as a measure of breaking the masculine public organisational culture responsible for female public managers' low self-confidence and reduced interest in aspiring to higher public positions. Being a public manager or supervisor does not necessarily make one a mentor. Thus HR public managers should carefully select public managers, both male and female, within various public departments (including the local government sphere) who will participate in the mentoring and coaching of female public managers. This study views efforts by female public managers and male public managers who can act as mentors as germane to the public leadership advancement of women, especially because there are limited number of women in public management positions who can act as mentors. The expectation of this study is that inclusive public mentoring and coaching programmes in the DKKDM will not only contribute to women public managers' capacity building, but also it could also help to enhance the public networking relationship among public male and female managers, which seems to be lacking in DKKDM. In addition, if a female public manager in the DKKDM is to be trained for a public leadership position in, for example, the engineering department, a male mentor could be better at leading the way because of long years of experience and the scarcity of skilled female public managers in technical fields. Although male public managers can be an important source of mentors for women, at the same time female public managers need to have access to female mentors who have excelled in their public leadership career in the local sphere of government. The DKKDM should consider investing in the training of both mentor and the protégé as a vital part of the public mentoring and coaching programme. The training of the mentor and protégé is important to establish the

training needs, to promote commitment and regulate the relationship between the mentor and protégé, and the anticipated outcome and expectations.

In Sections 4.5.5 and 4.5.6 of this thesis, it was established that mentoring and executive coaching are powerful mechanisms for accelerating public organisational learning and leadership development. Performance on the job provides a vital opportunity for organisational learning. According to Barsh and Yee, (cited in Mabelane, 2016:175) mentoring and coaching programmes create an opportunity for female public managers in the local sphere of government to be supported in continuous and in-the moment manners. To ensure that the mentoring and coaching is successful, the DKKDM must guard against behaviour such as the “queen bee syndrome” and misogynistic behaviours that might be exhibited by mentors. For example, the empirical data analysed in Section 7.13.2 indicated that some women in senior public positions in the municipality are not driven to mentor women in lower level positions just as their male counterparts. Hence, the DKKDM should be careful in selecting public managers for the mentoring and coaching of female public managers, because a manager with the correct understanding on the importance of mentoring women will create a working environment where women have the same opportunity to advance as their male peers. In addition, quarterly and annual reports should be developed, critically analysed and consolidated and best practices should be shared in all the local municipalities under the district of the DKKDM.

#### **8.2.1.7.4 Gender education and training to counter unconscious bias**

Employees in public organisations have their intuitively developed and preconceived view on what it means to be a leader. Such views are mostly developed from their organisational culture, practices, structural arrangement and from cultural norms. As stated in the empirical findings of this thesis analysed in Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.4 and 7.12, organisational perspective of public leadership appropriateness is based on gender role expectations which portray women as less fit to handle senior management positions. The internalised gender bias on public leadership roles has refused to wither even in the phase of various public policy frameworks promulgated to combat discrimination against women in the public sphere (including the local government sphere), which is visible in the biased hiring and selection into senior public leadership positions (see Section 7.12). The inability of the public policy

framework promoting gender equality and leadership diversity to eliminate the intense discrimination, marginalisation and uncivil behaviours towards female public managers suggests that prejudice against female public managers may be unconscious (see Sections 2.6.7, 7.8 and 7.12). The American Psychological Association, (2020: online) mention that unconscious stereotypes are more damaging to women's advancement and development in the public sector/service. From the empirical findings, there are some actions that make female public managers feel relegated, devalued and underestimated which, may not be intended (see Sections 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.4 and 7.12).

The public gender education through leadership training is to school employees on gender transformative attitudes towards women. All public employees, regardless of their positions in the DKKDM, should participate in the biased training because human beings have unrecognised unconscious bias, especially when it comes to women and public leadership, due to their social culture which creates gender binary between the male and female sex, influence from their peers, family, environment and upbringing.

To reap the benefit of the gender training, the purpose of the biased public training should be communicated to all employees to create awareness on the meaning of unconscious bias. The HR must carefully select the facilitators to handle the training. The chosen facilitators must be highly qualified and experienced on a variety of diversity issues in the workplace. The facilitators should use practical scenarios in the public workplace such as HR relating decisions on hiring and promotion into senior positions to expose how unconscious bias manifests as the major cause of women's leadership under-representation (see Sections 2.4.6, 6.2.7 and 7.12). Because unconscious bias was not acquired in a day, public employees cannot get rid of the deeply ingrained psychological construct in a one training session. Thus the biased public training should be continuous. Interactions among public employees should be prioritised over giving lengthy lectures. This way, public employees will have the opportunity of asking questions, sharing their personal experiences and learning from each other. The dialogue among public employees would help to create awareness on unconscious bias, assist public employees to adjust their automatic pattern of thinking and to eliminate misogynistic behaviour towards female public managers.

#### **8.2.1.7.5 Establishing partnership with relevant stakeholders**

Given the unequal representation of women senior public management positions and the lack of public career development opportunities targeted at female public managers, it is important that HRD establish partnerships with senior public managers within the DKKDM and with learning public institutions, for example higher institutions of learning, research institutes and other civil society organisations. The lack of an established partnership with senior public managers reduces their determined commitment to advance women, and the lack of support from relevant stakeholders was indicated in the empirical findings as it relates to challenges to skills development in the DKKDM. As indicated, public managers' commitment towards women's public leadership development is the first step in promoting gender equality and women's advancement in the public sector. Further, HR partnerships with external stakeholders is supported by Amagoh, (2009:995), who stated that a total reliance on internal public skills development schemes may result in an insular mentality, which impedes the opportunity for creativity. Partnership with external stakeholders can lead to a discovery of new approaches to learning, and the inclusion of new training technique and content, which may not be included in the public leadership development content developed by HRD in the DKKDM.

Partnership(s) should be entered to plan, develop, coordinate and implement public leadership development programmes for women, to address the financial challenges affecting female public manager's skills development, to provide professional instructors for targeted public leadership training programmes and to provide role models, instructors, coaches and educators to assist in the mentoring and coaching programme for female public managers in the DKKDM. The partnerships should focus on reporting, monitoring and the assessment of public development programmes and the reviewing of public developmental programmes based on the identified skills and training needs. In addition, the partnership should also focus on sponsoring research investigating leadership skills development from women's perspectives and to add women's voice to the formulation of HRD policy on public leaders' skills development

### **8.3. Career development strategies**

This study viewed the combination of career development approaches such as diversity/inclusive learning, gendered learning and self-motivated learning as crucial for women's public leadership development and advancement. The combination of different career development strategies is premised on the idea that a single public learning approach might not be sufficient to fully unlock women's public leadership potential due to the possibility that women may differ in their preferred approaches to learning (see Section 4.3). It is also possible that women have different educational background and lived experiences due to their different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The combination of different public learning approaches is supported by Bhagat *et al.*, (2015:58), stating the use of mixed and different approaches to learning is important to enhance learning in the public service/sector especially at the local government level.

#### **8.3.1 Diversity/inclusive learning**

As the working environment is becoming more gender diverse, there is a need for the DKKDM to develop initiatives such as the public diversity/inclusive learning initiatives that consider women's developmental needs, lived experiences and social background to create a public learning environment where women feel valued and have equal access to learning. The fact that female public managers feel that they are not valued and are unequal to men, as indicated in the empirical findings, can affect their learning capabilities when paired with male public managers in the same training. Learning that different values, opinions and perspectives from an individual's standpoint will enable both male and female public managers to learn from and respect each other's opinions and experiences, which can help erase gender inequality and social injustices. Fujimoto and Hartel, (2017:1122) support the proposal for diversity public training. However, they stated that a noticeable omission in the diversity training offered by public organisations is their failure to incorporate practices that value the diverse perspectives of public employees; for example, across gender categorisation and hierarchal boundaries within the organisation.

From the empirical findings of this thesis, a shortcoming in the inclusive training offered by the DKKDM is its inability to adequately meet women's developmental needs both as public managers and as working mothers, implying a neglect in female managers' social realities. From the conceptualisation of diversity and inclusive public organisational learning by scholars, meeting public servants' different needs and incorporating their different social backgrounds into the training content are crucial components of effective diversity and inclusive learning. Such a diversity environment is proven to help challenge gender bias and stereotypes that hinders women's active participation and sense of belonging in the workplace (Bezrukova *et al.*, cited by Fujimoto and Hartel, 2017:1121).

To ensure the effectiveness of the inclusive public training, HRD must plan towards the equal participation of male and female public managers in the training. As indicated in the empirical findings, most female public managers are scared to speak in boardrooms because of male dominance. Likewise, if the training is dominated by male public managers, the outcome might not be different. Male and female public managers should be given equal opportunities and equal turn-taking to participate (speak) in the training session, and their different perspectives must be fully valued and respected. In addition, the training content should include public gender diversity and public leadership issues in the workplace and feedback should be obtained about training to ascertain changes in behaviour.

### **8.3.2 Gendered learning**

The gendered learning through women-only developmental programmes is to provide a learning environment that brings together women from different levels within the municipality. Supported by the empirical findings, in section 4.5.1 of this thesis it was indicated that women-only public developmental programmes provide for a public learning environment that helps to boost women's self-confidence, provide women with the opportunity to learn from experienced, talented and professional female public managers whom they might not have the opportunity of meeting due to their complex public management duties. This study argues that the public women-only leadership training programme will enable women to locate professional female mentors and increase their chances of establishing public networking relationships with a community of highly experienced female public managers.

### **8.3.3 Self-motivated learning**

Self-motivated learning is the type of learning driven by an employee's zeal to improve their public work performance, the desire to deepen their understanding about their working environment and to achieve personal goals. The drive to pursue and achieve personal ambition, for example public leadership advancement, is an important catalyst for investing in self-motivated public learning. The unequal representation of women in senior public management position will not change unless women make determined efforts and take steps to learn and grow in the municipal (public) working environment. Self-motivated learning is important for female public managers to perform extraordinarily in their public leadership duties, and the recognition of their extraordinary performance will pave way for their advancement even while in a male dominated working environment. Arguing from the performance of most women in the frontline of public leadership, there is the possibility that male public managers would promote the advancement of female public managers whom they perceive to have outstanding skills and experience.

Women must know that their advancement lies in them wanting to change their unequal situation through personally determined effort, which will require devoting more time and energy and their earned resources towards their personal development. Self-motivated learning for female public managers is key to breaking barriers such as lack of self-confidence because the more you learn the more confident and well informed you will become. HRD should encourage public employees to be self-motivated in relation to learning in the municipal environment, as stated in Section 4.3.1 of this thesis, the more encouraged learners become, the higher the tendency for them to learn faster. In the same vein, women who have acquired skills through their personal efforts should be recognised, showcased, and rewarded, especially through job promotion. Another important way to encourage women's self-motivated learning is through deconstructing all patriarchal structures, and the creation of advancement public platforms, because women won't want to learn if they have the belief that they will never advance, as indicated in the empirical findings of this thesis (see Section 7.13.4). Career advancement is dependent in them being secured in the assurance and knowledge that progression in the public workplace is both possible and achievable.

#### **8.3.4 Strategic Implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation**

The definition of the term implementation includes the execution and carrying out a plan, the translation of patterns of public activities, and transforming a formulated sequence of a plan for the achievement of an organisational objective. Implementation is the action that follows any preliminary thinking, which could result in desired change, in this case the advancement of women in the DKKDM, if effectively executed. For the proposed model to come to fruition, the implementation of the various interventions listed in the model is dependent on having an enabling and supportive public working environment and organisational culture, a strong commitment by the HRD department and the various departmental heads and the participation of all employees in the DKKDM, including the availability of resources targeting women's professional development. Mabelane, (2016:176) supports this assumption stating that part of a public organisation's commitment to advance women's leadership in public organisations is noticed in their allocation of public resources and the drive put into the implementation of their public strategy for organisational changes, to ensure women's advancement.

Furthermore, assisted by SALGA, individual municipal departments and the individual municipalities should develop their implementation plans. The crafting of the plans should be based on the public employment equality plan and expectations regarding the empowerment and the public leadership advancement of women. Through departmental monitoring and assessment units, for instance, municipal departments can give reports on the progress achieved and areas of concern, if any. From the reports, the municipal departments are at liberty to consider revising any of the listed interventions based on their assessment and needs of the municipality. Moreover the reports from the various municipal departments in the DKKDM should be submitted to a panel that should consist of personnel from HR, the HRD department and SALGA. Reporting to higher authorities such as SALGA can act as a persuader for (municipal) departments to make progress in the empowerment and leadership development of women (Mabelane, 2016:176).



## **8.4 Chapter conclusion**

From the onset, the study sought the empowerment of women with a specific focus on increasing female public manager's active participation and representation in senior positions in the local government sphere, specifically the DKKDM. This chapter presents an approach constructed for the development of female public managers for senior management positions in the DKKDM. The development approach contained components, which were discussed in this chapter. Structurally, the components in the proposed development approach are not to be followed in chronological order. Nevertheless, all the components are vital in creating a conducive working environment that will foster female managers' leadership advancement and the development of ambitious women seeking public leadership positions in the local sphere of government. The proposed development approach was constructed based on the empirical findings of this thesis analysed in Chapters 6 and 7 and from the theoretical underpinning of the study (see Section 1.5, 2.4 to 2.4.2.4).

Overall, the proposed approach contained proactive and holistic solutions to women's leadership problems (see Chapters 6 and 7), and actions that can help to expose gender role bias and deconstruct both the implicit and explicit prejudice frustrating women's leadership advancement. Furthermore, strategies that can assist female managers to build their internal capacities, work related-skills and improve their confidence levels, including raising consciousness of women's eligibility to undertake senior leadership roles in the local sphere of government were also emphasised and discussed in the proposed empowerment approach.

As the ultimate section of the study, the following chapter provides the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this thesis.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **9.1 INTRODUCTION**

The theoretical and empirical findings discussed across the different sections and sub-sections of this thesis have proven that women's empowerment is a critical factor for their inclusion into public sector/service leadership positions (including in the local government sphere). This will lead to sustainable and decent employment for women, consequently contributing to the nation's economic growth and development. This includes the governance realm, equality matters, societal and human development, and poverty reduction within households. The aim of this chapter is to conclude the study and make recommendations based on the feminist theories used, literature reviewed and the primary data gathered from the responses of female public managers through in-depth personal interviews, semi-structured administered questionnaires and the reflective notes of the researcher. Over and above these issues, women's empowerment requires that the public sector/service, particularly the local sphere of government, eliminates the macho organisational culture and discriminatory practices that make it very difficult for intelligent and qualified female public managers to advance up the leadership ladder. Importantly, the local sphere of government should stop paying lip service to women's empowerment and the promotion of gender equality in leadership. There is a concord between the recent academic research and government official publications that the local sphere of government is the sphere where women are least represented in senior management positions in South Africa. Although this may be the case because the sphere is where politics is at its peak, which continues to discriminate against women and, as a result, some women public managers are not interested in participation in the organisational structures of the same sphere. Also, the sphere is still deeply conservative, patriarchal, and still viewed as men's domain.

Measures to ensuring that the paid working environment is safe and favourable for women's public leadership advancement requires the institutionalisation of an enforceable public policy to eliminate all structural impediments, the legitimisation of public gender equality practices and access to the public workplace opportunities and the establishment of public leadership training scheme(s) to groom women with

technical skills. Raising awareness on gender equality and women's leadership advantages on public organisational growth and community development can also assist in women's leadership acceptance and acceleration in the local sphere of government. This study sought to investigate equality practices and the public training and development practices at the local sphere of government, which are influential for women's active public participation and representation in public management roles. There are many impediments that slow the achievement of gender equality and leadership training and skills development of women at the local sphere of government in South Africa. This study sought to discuss these and other gender related issues surrounding the empowerment of women through the various chapters of the thesis as illustrated in Table 9.1, showing the attainment of the research objectives.

| <b>Research Question(s)</b>                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Research Objective(s)</b>                                                                                                                                               | <b>Corresponding Evidences</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Thesis chapter</b>       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| What are the established theoretical frameworks for gender and gender inequality, especially in public administration?                                                           | To establish a theoretical framework for gender and gender equality                                                                                                        | The study used feminist theories and other gender theories as its theoretical framework, since they seek to explain how traditional expectations on gender subjugate women, and ways to ensure gender equality in leadership through the empowerment and development of women                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Chapter 1<br>&<br>Chapter 2 |
| What are the local and national (including possible international) statutory and regulatory frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions?       | To determine the local-based and national (including possible international) statutory and regulatory frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment in the RSA.   | The study discussed the statutory and regulatory framework for supporting and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment with reference to South Africa. The study argues that the regulatory and statutory frameworks have been instrumental in women's empowerment and development in the public sector, but implementation is still a serious problem in the local sphere of government.                                                                                                   | <b>Chapter 3</b>            |
| What are the challenges to women's empowerment and leadership training and skills development in the local sphere of government in South Africa?                                 | To determine the challenges affecting women's empowerment and leadership training and skills development in the local sphere of government in South Africa                 | There is no legal framework targeting the empowerment, leadership training and skills development of women. Gender equality and women's empowerment frameworks are not implemented, evaluated, or monitored. Female managers lack access to career development opportunities for example, coaching, mentoring, networking, and succession planning. Women's leadership empowerment challenges emanate from structural challenges, institutional mindsets, individual mindsets, and lifestyle choices | Chapter 6 and 7             |
| What theoretical frameworks can be adopted for the leadership training and skills development of women with specific reference to the local sphere of government in South Africa | To determine the theoretical frameworks that can be adopted for the leadership training and skills development of women in the local sphere of government in South Africa. | The study discussed various organisational adult learning theories that are instrumental for women's empowerment and skills development. The study established that coaching, mentoring, succession planning, education, employee training and development are vital for women's leadership progression and skills development                                                                                                                                                                       | Chapter 4                   |

|                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| What gendered approach to development may be constructed for the development of women into leadership position in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality? | To construct a gendered approach to the training and development of women into leadership position in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality | A proposed approach encompassing several measures towards ensuring gender equality, social transformation and women's leadership development and advancement is presented, where the DKKDM is required to holistically plan, design, implement, monitor, and continuously evaluate gender equality practices | Chapter 8 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|

**Table 9.1 Synopsis of the Research Questions, Objectives and Evidence**

**Source: Author's compilation (2020)**

The synopsis of the study as illustrated in Table 9.1 clearly shows how the research questions and research objectives (see Section 1.3 and 1.4) have been addressed through theoretical and empirical evidence. Worthy of note is that sufficient theoretical and empirical evidence was gathered on the problem under investigation to adequately supply answers to the research questions. As indicated across discussions in the thesis, the study sought to improve women's representation and active participation in leadership and governance in the local government sphere, through the construction of an approach for women's leadership development and advancement in the DKKDM.

## **1.16 9.2 Summary and conclusion of the study**

**Chapter 1** covered different sub-headings encompassing the study's introduction, background to women's empowerment and development in South Africa, conceptualisation of gender and gender inequality, public training and education to support women's development, the local government as a sphere of government, the problem statement, the research questions and objectives as detailed in Table 9.1, a glimpse of the theoretical foundation and a summary of the adopted research methodology. Lastly, the chapter explained the significance of the study. This was expanded to imply that the study sought to expand theoretical aspects and add practical realities and theoretical contributions (discourse) to the discipline of public administration and to reinforce the equality and democratic practices of the South African public administration realities contained in the Bill of Rights, through women's empowerment and public leadership development. The study sought women's empowerment and public leadership advancement for their equal public leadership participation with men as it is paramount for the realisation of basic human rights

enshrined in the Bill of Rights in the RSA Constitution, 1996 and for inclusive public governance.

The key argument in Chapter 1 was that women are joining the South African public sector/service (including the local government sphere) in large numbers, especially because their equal employment right is guaranteed in the Bill of Rights and in other important legislation initiated by the government. Yet women are still under-represented in senior leadership structures in the public sector/service, especially in the local sphere of government. The reasons for this gap are indicated in Chapter 1 of this thesis wherein the phenomena and concepts such as patriarchy, toxic societal norms, male domination, lack of access to education, management training opportunities; role stereotyping and cultural stereotypes were identified and discussed. Women's access to public leadership training and development is important not only for their professional development and the achievement of public gender equality, and but also to liberate their minds from internalised gender stereotypes, which are manifest through their low confidence even as public managers. Nevertheless, in the problem statement (see Section 1.2) it was discussed that there is no public leadership training targeting the advancement and development of women for their leadership progression in the local government sphere. In the problem statement, it was also discussed that the "one-size-fits-all" training offered by the local sphere of government may not be beneficial to women's advancement due to their social realities and approach to public skills acquisition. As the foundation of this thesis, Chapter 1 plays a vital role in placing the study on a solid foundation where the exploration for women's public leadership empowerment as a tool for promoting gender diversity in municipal leadership was premised.

**Chapter 2** of the study extensively discussed the central theoretical underpinning of the study, viz, feminist theories and other gender theories in connection with RQ1 and RO1. This was accomplished through the unpacking of the theoretical assumptions, core components, principles, and the ideological importance on the empowerment and development of women in the public sector/service, especially in the local government sphere. The chapter discussed the feminist perspective as adopted in the discipline of public administration which explains the unequal power structural relations between men and women and the discriminatory practices of government institutions which sustain the gross under-representation of women in senior management positions.

However, the chapter indicated that the feminist perspective is lacking in the discipline of public administration. Feminist theories and other gender theories assist in the exposition of the lived experiences of women in the public sector/service, especially in the local government sphere, owing to their societal gender identity, the unequal power relationship existing between men and women as legitimatised by cultural norms, and how the patriarchal culture, which is replicated in public institutions promotes the sexist exploitation, marginalisation and discrimination of women especially in access to management positions in the public service/sector, including the local government sphere. Feminist theoretical tenets find expression in the political and administrative leadership spaces including the social environment of government institutions. From the theoretical arguments and literature in the field of public gender and leadership, Chapter 2 further discussed the implementation of gender equality policy frameworks, special measures to empower women and the adoption of a gender sensitivity approach, especially during recruitment, promotion and leadership training are necessary requirements for women's leadership development and advancement in the public sector/service, including the local government sphere.

In Chapter 2, a scholarly literature review on leadership was conducted. The chapter paid attention to the concept "leadership", salient components of public leadership and how public leadership skills can be acquired and developed. The chapter established that the orthodox belief that leadership competence is inborn in one gender is fast changing, and that public organisations are urgently searching for high quality leaders. A discussion on leadership as a public administration function was also highlighted in Section 2.7.2. The study argued that public leadership constitutes a critical part of public administration and social development, effective and efficient public service delivery and good governance is dependent on the leadership skills of public managers. Public administrative leadership was distinguished from other types of leadership in that public managers are concerned with real-life problems, for example poverty, health, housing, education, and environment, this is addition to the fact that they represent the public interest. The chapter further discussed that the environment of public administration in relation to the local government sphere is fast changing not only with the demand of meeting the changing needs of the public but also in meeting international obligations on promoting gender equality and social justice in the public working environment. Mention was made that women's view of public administration/

working environment (local government sphere) as being unfavourable leads to high labour turnover, psychological trauma, decreased motivation for public leadership advancement and job satisfaction.

The chapter further recognised that, in recent times, there has been a significant surge of research on gender and leadership in almost all disciplines, with scholars, government and members of the public agitating for the inclusion of women in governance and organisations' boardrooms (see Section 2.7.3). Women's presence in public leadership was said to have a positive impact on public organisational productivity, good governance, better work performance and financial success (see Section 2.7.3). Chapter 2 discussed the gender differences in males' and females' approaches to public leadership, whilst women tend to display transformational public leadership style, with features such as on collaboration, team building and employees empowerment. Furthermore, the chapter discussed that women's public leadership style has the tendency of meeting the needs and concerns of disadvantaged people in communities, yet important leadership positions in government institutions in almost all countries in the world are still dominated by men. This is not to rule out the fact that more women have advanced into public leadership positions in the last two decades, especially into middle public management positions both globally and in South Africa (see Section 2.7.4). When it comes to the number of women in countries' parliaments and in senior administrative positions, the chapter established that South Africa is doing better than some developed countries, for example the USA and the UK. Chapter 2 concluded by stating the challenges hampering women's leadership advancement in the public sector/service, including the local sphere of government.

In line with **RQ2 and RO2** as illustrated in Table 9.1, Chapter 3 covered an analysis of the statutory and regulatory frameworks for women's empowerment and gender equality. This was done through a discussion on the global, regional, and local context of gender equality legislation in relation to women's leadership inclusion and their active participation in public governance. Overall, a major discussion in the chapter covered the emphasis that women's rights are a fundamental aspect of human rights and that the unequal treatment of women robs them of their freedom, peace, social security, human development, and inherent dignity. Critical aspects of human rights upheld by international human rights include women's right of access to equal employment opportunities and benefits, education, the deconstruction of patriarchy



and harmful cultural practices as well as the skills development of women for the achievement of gender equality.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the UDHR, as the cornerstone of human rights laws, states in its provision in Article 2 that “everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. These provisions align with the equality principle of the new democratic Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The UDHR and other human rights laws such as BPFA, CEDAW and SDG and women’s movements such as the UN-Women views women’s enjoyment of human rights as being free from insensitive social gender norms, patriarchal ideology, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. These human rights laws mandated member states to develop legal frameworks to secure women’s human rights, protect them from toxic traditional practices and ensure their participation in the public governance and development of their communities. As stated in Section 3.2.2 of Chapter 3, there is a need to empower South African women in the public workforce on human rights laws because it seems that most of them do not know their human rights or how to demand their rights when these are violated.

The chapter discussed the phrase “women’s empowerment” that was first introduced during the Beijing Declaration and Platform for action (BPFA) in 1995 to serve as a guiding principle for international development community. The platform proposed 12 key areas including women’s equal access to quality education, (public) management training and professional development as integral to women’s empowerment. Succinctly, the aim of BPFA is to cultivate women’s capacity and abilities to enable them to access critical decision-making positions in government institutions. In addition to women acquiring skills, the chapter also established that women’s empowerment requires the deconstruction of structural bias and harmful practices that disadvantage women. The chapter discussed that the CEDAW pays close attention to how harmful traditional practices fuel women’s subordination in society. An important aspect of CEDAW as a human rights law is that it guides member nations on how to eradicate discriminatory and gender insensitive practices against women, mandating governments to implement special measures to ensure substantive gender equality.

Guided by various international and regional human right laws acceded to by the South African government (see Sections 3.2-3.2.9), Chapter 3 additionally discussed that the Bill of Rights contained in the 1996 RSA Constitution, and other legislation such as the Affirmative Action Policy and the Employment Equity Act of 1998 was specifically developed for the advancement women in the public sector. The purpose of the gender policy framework includes the eradication of social injustices, role stereotyping, and discrimination on the basis on sex, gender, race, and others. Important to note (as the researcher's observation) is that preferential treatment given to women to expand their capacities to place them on equal footing with men is regarded as "fair discrimination", and not as unfair discrimination which is highly prohibited. The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination (PEPUDA) Act of 2000 stipulates that fair discrimination is necessary to correct the social imbalances of the past caused by historic discriminatory practices (see Section 3.3.2). South Africa has a progressive established legal framework that is supportive of gender equality and women's leadership development and advancement in public administration (including the local government sphere). But these policies are mostly flawed by the lack of adequate public policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Aligned with RQ4 and RO4 as shown in Table 9.1, Chapter 4 covered the discussion on various adult organisational learning theories to guide public leadership training and development of women. The adult organisational learning theory discussed in this chapter encompass the behavioural learning theory, cognitive learning theory, experiential learning theory, action learning theory and the social learning theories (see Sections 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.3.4 and 4.3.5). The chapter emphasised that the effectiveness of the adult organisational learning theory is largely dependent on a learner's personal determination to learn and an identification on the need to learn, learner's cognitive processes, motivation, and the learning environment (see Section 4.3). The chapter further discretely conceptualised HRD as an organisational practice concerned with the coordination of learning, education, and employee training for the achievement of organisational, societal, and individual objectives. The chapter established that the purpose of establishing an HRD department within a public organisation is to support learning, ensure employees' skills and personal development and performance enhancement. Women's leadership acceleration and advancement in the public workplace depend on women having access to a conducive

learning environment and career development opportunities that are supportive of their professional skills development. Succinctly, HRD and its related practices such as education, public employees' training and skills development initiatives, coaching, mentoring and succession planning can be relied upon to build the leadership competencies and technical skills of women and in ensuring gender equality in the public leadership realm. The chapter further established that HRD theories neglect important aspects of gender concerns such as sexism, role stereotyping, misogynistic behaviours, biased hiring and promotion practices and the prevailing power dynamics within organisations (see Section 4.4). In relation to the training and skills development in the local sphere of government, the chapter discussed that, although there are efforts to capacitate municipal employees, there is no developed policy-framework targeting the public leadership training and development of female public managers.

Chapter 5 discussed the research methodology, where discussions focused on the research approach, design, data collection and analysis instruments and the ethical aspects employed by the study. In a nutshell, the study followed both a qualitative and quantitative research approach because the researcher was driven by the need to gather complete and detailed information from the perspective and experience of the respondents, in an investigation on gender related issues and on women's public leadership training and skill development experience, which may not be possible using just one research method. A single qualitative case research design was adopted, the case used was the DKKDM comprising of Kenneth Kaunda, JB Marks Local Municipality, Maquassi Hills Local Municipality and Matlosana Local Municipality, and the unit of analysis was women in management. The stipulated population was N=50 female public managers due to their limited numbers in municipal management positions. The primary data was collected using the semi-structured in-depth personal interview and the semi-structured personal administered questionnaire. The researcher used the purposive non-probability sampling in selecting the participants for the interviews and those that completed the questionnaire. The purposive sampling for the interview included HR personnel (N=4) and selected women in professional leadership and in senior public management positions (N=23), while women in the public middle and senior management positions completed the questionnaire (N=41). It is also important to note that some of the female public managers who participated in the interview sessions also filled the questionnaire. The qualitative data was

analysed using the deductive and inductive thematic analysis that included the development of codes. While the quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). With regards complying with the research ethic of the North-West University and in ensuring the ethical principle of social science, the study obtained ethical clearance from the North-West University Research and Ethics Committee (see annexure 1). Permission was obtained from the municipal managers of the DKKDM (see annexure 3), the research participants signed a consent form indicating their interest and willingness to participate in the semi-structured interviews and completion of the semi-structured research questionnaire (see annexure 4 and 5). The study's ethical clearance number is: 0042519A7 (see annexure 1).

RQ3 and RQ3 covered the analysis of the challenges influencing women's unequal leadership representation and leadership training and skills development in the South African local sphere of government with a focus on the DKKDM. Overall, Chapters 6 and 7 served to expose the gender issues and the public leadership training and skills development challenges that affect the realisation of gender equality and women's advancement into the public top and senior municipal management positions in the DKKDM. The identified challenges emanate from the respondents' responses obtained through the qualitative and quantitative data collection research instruments (see Section 5.4, 5.4.1, 5.4.2) and literature review.

The significant findings analysed in Chapters 6 and 7 captured wide-ranging barriers that cultural gender role expectations, institutional components, traditional beliefs on a public leader's qualities and individual choices posed on women's public leadership advancement and development. With regards to social expectations, from early child development, women are not trained to become public leaders, but rather as homemakers and caregivers, and this affects their public leadership quest and career choices even in their adult life. Most female managers who feel that undertaking senior public leadership roles will conflict with their caregiving roles often give up their public leadership career advancement ambitions for family causes. Public organisations copy society's expectations and beliefs on the gender qualities of a leader when choosing public leaders and women's characteristics are socially perceived as atypical of the ideal qualities of a public leader. Chapters 6 and 7 exposed that public organisations evaluators, who are often male public managers, are suffering from the

mental mismatch between female gender characteristic and the qualities of a good public leader. Some male managers in the social environment of the DKKDM still hold the belief that women are a set of beings who are so efficient in the management of strategic public leadership positions because of their nature. The internalisation of this bias affects the psychologies of both men and women to such an extent that men, and bright female managers with public leadership skills and qualifications comparable to those of their male colleagues still select and prefer men for senior public leadership positions. This internalised gender bias promotes patriarchy, preference for men in public leadership positions, misogynist behaviours towards women and low self-confidence in female public managers (see Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12).

Moreover, Chapters 6 and 7 discussed that women's public leadership advancement challenges are further compounded by the lack of internal public leadership training and skills development programmes and support systems to assist female public managers with maternal roles (see Sections 6.2.15, 7.12, 7.13, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4). The local sphere of government mostly adopts formal education as the means of training and skills development. As a result women, are not exposed to on-the-job training, which would help them advance their leadership capacities and self-confidence. Other human capacity development challenges inhibiting women's public leadership training and skills development include women's lack of access to mentoring, coaching, networking, and succession planning, lack of access to public financial resources, irrelevant training, lack of qualified public skills development personnel, lack of a public skills inventory, skills monitoring and evaluation (see Sections 6.2.16, 7.13.1, 7.13.2, 7.13.3 and 7.13.4)

Further complicating their under-representation in senior public leadership roles and the lack of the implementation, monitoring and adequate evaluation of gender equality and women's empowerment policy by the DKKDM, women are hardly advanced into public leadership positions using the EEA which is meant to close gender gaps (see Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.13, 6.2.14 and 7.15). In relation to the attraction and retention of women into municipal senior management levels, the study argued that the establishment of women-only public leadership development programmes will be instrumental in building strong confidence levels for female public managers. This is not to say that diversity public leadership training and skills development programmes cannot continue in the local sphere of government, especially in the DKKDM.

In line with RQ5 and RO5, Chapter 8 proposed an empowerment approach for the public leadership advancement and development of women. As stated in Section 8.2, measures to deal with inequalities and women's public workplace challenges should be constructed based on the identification of the real problems from their public social environment. The validity of this proposed approach to support women's public advancement and development lies in the fact that elements contained in the approach were especially recommended based on the current gender inequality practices and women's leadership training and skills development challenges in the local sphere of government. Overall, the proposed approach for the empowerment of women contained elements such as the legislative environment, deconstruction of biased public organisational culture, support systems for female public managers, as well as gender sensitivity communication for public managers and political parties. The proposed empowerment approach contains aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment that should be considered in HRP and HRD interventions to facilitate women's public leadership advancement and development in the DKKDM. The adequate implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the empowerment approach with respect to women's public skills development and advancement was also emphasised.

In Section 9.1, it was mentioned that the aim of the current chapter is to summarise, conclude and make recommendations from the study. The following sections present the recommendations of this study, which are in two parts. Firstly, recommendations are made for the consideration of local sphere of government on the public leadership development and advancement of women. Secondly, suggestions are made for further studies.

### **9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

#### **9.3.1 Regulatory environment**

While the South African government has ratified various international, continental and regional human right laws on gender equality and institutionalised local regulatory provisions for development purposes and women's advancement (see Sections 3.2.2 to 3.3.9), there is no corresponding willingness to implement those gender policies by most municipalities. As covered in Sections 6.2.12, 6.2.13, 6.2.14 and 7.15 of this

thesis, criticisms laid against the legislative framework include the lack of implementation, the absence of any constitutionally developed strategy to advance women and the lack of the awareness on important public policy-frameworks initiated for women's public leadership advancement. The absence of any constitutionally developed public policies for women's empowerment implies an absence of gender mainstreaming programmes, which has an adverse impact on gender equality and women's empowerment for public leadership advancement owing to women's previous years of intense marginalisation. In this era of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as stated in Section 1.1 and Section 2.6 of this thesis, without enforceable legislation, gender mainstreaming and public programmes to support women's advancement, the DKKDM municipalities may never achieve their employment equity target (50% representation of women in senior public management positions). In addition, the effective delivery of basic public services within the district, which is an important constitutional mandate of the local sphere of government, might become impossible without the active public participation of women in senior public positions (see Section 7.10). In this regard, the study recommends that the DKKDM develops special empowerment public frameworks with the backing of gender policies for the identification and professional development of women into senior management positions to ensure women's active participation in public decision-making positions. The framework should be used to develop appropriate career paths for bright women with the ambition of becoming public leaders in the local sphere of government. Moreover, the DKKDM must ensure that all departmental heads and managers integrate gender perspectives into their strategic plans and programmes.

Palumbo and Calista, (1990:3) mentioned certain variables that enable the successful implementation of a public policy. One of these is that the reason why people need that public policy must be clearly identified. Agreeing with this assertion, the study recommends that South African municipalities (with reference to the DKKDM) need to be educated on the meaning of gender equality and gender mainstreaming and its impact on men and women, the working public environment and community development. Importantly, the state of functionality of government machinery such as the Commission for Gender Equality and SALGA matters a lot in the promotion of gender equality in the local sphere of government. Both these public organisations ought to be disseminating information on gender equality, organising workshops to

teach about gender policies and gender issues, challenging assumptions and thinking that continue to reinforce unequal power relations, misogynistic behaviour, and eliminating patriarchal ideologies in all South African municipalities. This study recommends that the DKKDM organises continuous training programmes for all its public employees that can assist to change internalised biased gender perception to enable them to appreciate, respect and value women's public leadership, especially in senior public positions.

Due to the complaint by female public managers that they are unable to speak and express themselves in an environment that is mostly dominated by men (see Section 7.12), compliance on the public legislative provisions should focus beyond equal representation of women in public management positions to the structuring of the entire organisation. Examples are the formulation of a recruitment and selection panel, career training of public facilitators, organised labour representatives, targeting participants for training and committees in the DKKDM. To tackle the problem of the lack of awareness by female public managers on human right laws, the DKKDM should invite stakeholders such as SALGA, DPSA and the CGE in a workshop to empower women on their constitutional human rights and gender policy safeguarding their rights to equal empowerment opportunities, and how they can exercise and demand their rights when there is any case of gender discrepancy. Public education in human rights is seen as a fundamental aspect of human rights and a responsibility that enhances awareness and strengthen respect for human rights (Bajaj, 2011:32-33). Some of the challenges faced by female public managers from the municipalities studied shows a disrespect for female managers' human rights, for example the resistance encountered by female public managers when they try to advance and other misogynistic behaviours (see Section 7.12). This study recommends that human rights education should be included in the content of HRD training for the purpose of equipping all public employees with knowledge, skills, and basic principles of human rights and how they can exercise their rights whilst protecting and respecting the rights of other colleagues in the public workplace.

### **9.3.2 Engage public managers in gender sensitivity and training**

Meaningful changes must start from the top. Lower level employees must see that the tone for gender equality and women's leadership advancement and development is



initiated by public managers, then it will be easier for them to follow. The qualitative data analysis covered in Section 7.12 shows senior managers do not support the leadership advancement of women due to the mental mismatch between female gender characteristics and leadership requirements. The mental mismatch between gender and leadership is mostly displayed unconsciously. From literature, unconscious bias is the most dangerous barrier limiting women's leadership advancement and acceptance in the public sector/service including the local government sphere (see Section 8.2.1.7.4). Issues such as gender public leadership stigma for example, the socially preconceived notion that women are generally emotional, lack self-confidence and are too fearful to take tough decisions, which are predictors for advancement, are unconsciously used against female public managers who may not have those attributes (see Section 7.12) (Kossek & Buzzanell, 2018:819), therefore depriving intelligent and star performing female managers of their opportunity to advance. Although this is not the case for all female public managers, there is a need for the public sector to distinguish between gender role expectations and public management excellence and skills. Kossek and Buzzanell, (2018:819) suggest the development of public organisational initiative to consciously fight implicit and explicit bias that may result from gender role expectations culturally attached with femininity and masculinity and performance linkages.

Public education and gender biased public training are proven as an important technique to responding to challenges of both conscious and unconscious bias. This study recommends that there should be gender sensitivity training for public managers to assist them to develop a transformative attitude towards women. As stated in Section 8.2.1.5 the sensitivity public training should be more of perspective thinking, an engagement between male and female public managers. This platform will enable female public managers who are distressed by any form of gender discrimination and role stereotypes from their colleagues, either male or female, to be able to share their perspective. This also applies to male public managers who may be muddled on any gender issue and/or are still struggling to understand why women cannot advance and deal with their career challenges in senior management positions in the public workplace. The sharing of different gender perspectives on gender issues will help to remove the assertion that male public managers may be unaware of the series of challenges deterring women's public leadership and professional advancement (see

Sections 7.14 and 8.2.1.5). The gender sensitivity training to shift the thinking of public managers and to ensure a gender transformative attitude towards female public managers is essential, especially because leadership in the local sphere of government is still dominated by men and the municipal environment is still considered as men's domain (see Sections 6.2.9, 7.6, 7.12 and 7.14). Since male public managers are described or identified as the perpetrators of gender-based discrimination in the South African public service/sector and in various capacities in the different communities (see Section 7.12 and 7.14), this study recommends that the DKKDM should consider putting male public managers in the frontline of gender equality and women's public leadership acceleration, in solidarity with female public managers.

As stated in Section 2.4.2.3 and in the empirical findings of this thesis (see Sections 7.4, 7.8 and 7.12) gender inequality against female public managers and women in general, are reflected through language. The essence of gender sensitivity training is to bring to light the consequences of biased language on the effectiveness and opportunities of others, in this case women. This study recommends that public managers should be encouraged to be gender bias free in their language especially when addressing female public managers. Similarly, female public managers should be counselled about the use of patriarchal languages against themselves and on their fellow women. Women should be encouraged to report any case of disrespect, gender biased attitudes, as well as hostile and uncivil workplace interactions whether personally experienced or observed (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007:1266). The study recommends that the DKKDM can establish a public policy declaring its intolerance for the use of sexist language, maltreatment, and disrespect for public employees regardless of their gender/sex. The public policy instrument should contain punishment or penalties for public managers who fail to adhere to gender equality policies and labour laws prohibiting discriminatory behaviour. Moreover, the DKKDM ought to establish programmes or a care system to assist any public employee who may have developed psychological conditions, and less job satisfaction because of their experience of uncivil and hostile treatment from gender exploitation in the public workplace.

### **9.3.3 Establish partnership with academic institutions**

From the empirical findings of this thesis, the DKKDM and its local municipalities do not have adequate capacity, expertise, and finances in place to deal with women's public leadership development challenges. This study recommends that the DKKDM should establish partnership with academic institutions such as the North-West University (given its proximity) within its jurisdiction, which will help to provide new learning contexts. Additionally, such an initiative could reduce the cost of HRD by bringing the public leadership development programmes to the district, thus reducing the time limitations of female public managers. The critical process of assessing the public leadership development programme should be delegated to academic institutions as part of the established partnership. That way the DKKDM may have undivided attention in implementing the public leadership development programme and not undermine the assessment processes.

#### **9.3.4 Supportive working conditions for female managers**

It is common cause that any public organisation, including the DKKDM, can provide women with assistance, particularly in relation to maternal roles and career advancement opportunities suitable for advancing women's public careers and to achieve a balanced and diversified public gender leadership system. Providing women maternal support can also help to reduce female public manager's tendency of not providing adequate care and support for their children's health development (Jaga *et al.*, 2018:431). In most cases, female public manager's decisions to "opt out" of public leadership roles and responsibilities is associated with competing narratives such as parenting and work-life and workplace inflexibility and long working hours. This study recommends the establishment of work-family friendly policies that can allow female public managers flexibility of balancing work and family responsibilities. As covered in Section 8.2.1.4 the work-family public policies should give female public managers the leverage of choosing schedules that they think will work best for them. Moreover, providing childcare support such as daycare centres and playground for children within the vicinity of the DKKDM, especially for new mothers, will assist in the retention of female public managers (see Section 7.12). On the other hand, if the municipality does not provide family-friendly policies to assist female public managers, other efforts to increase women's leadership participation may not yield fruitful results.

In searching for a proactive public-driven solution to assisting new mothers to advance in public organisations Ladge *et al.*, (2018:895) suggest mentoring programmes to pair employed new mothers with experienced working mothers to provide them with sound internal resources (advice and counselling) and potential role model for adapting to maternal responsibilities. Getting a female mentor who is experienced with motherhood and public leadership responsibilities will help to erase the fear in the minds of new mothers who may have imagined that being an effective public leader and a good mother is not possible (see Section 7.12). This study recommends the showcasing of female managers who are proficient in managing their family roles and public leadership responsibilities and giving them opportunity to speak and interact with other women, especially those in middle public management positions who fear advancing owing to their motherhood roles (see Sections 7.12, 7.14). Such an exposure can help to reduce family-workplace conflict, psychological flux and anxiety and turnover among female public managers.

### **9.3.5 Deconstructing the gendered institutional memory and patriarchal culture of the local sphere of government.**

The local sphere of government is still seen as men's domain, not because there is any regulation or public policy stipulating men's dominance and control, especially in this era of constitutional democracy, but due to the prior and existing gendered organisational practices, process, culture and normative belief on public administration leadership. According to a public organisational imprinting hypothesis proposed by Stinchcombe, cited by Johson, (2007:98) the context at the time of the formation of a public organisation imprints an enduring culture, with a lasting effect on the organisation's priorities, strategies, and practices. Building on this idea, Baron *et al.*, (1999:527) discovered that the founding context of a public organisation has a lasting impact on its public management structures. Premised on this theoretical exposition, since the establishment of municipalities, South African public strategic management positions have been mostly occupied by men, which, even today, automatically influences women's relegation in senior public leadership echelons, (see Sections 7.6, 7.12). The empirical findings of this thesis show that influential public leadership positions are still reserved for men due to the belief that such public leadership positions in the sphere belong to men (see Section 7.12). In most of the municipalities studied, a woman has never headed the position of a municipal

manager. It only recently that a woman is occupying the seat of a municipal manager in Kenneth Kaunda (see Section 7.6). The relegation of women in such influential positions is not due to any written law but can be attributed to the historic pattern of public leaders' preference, which has always been skewed in the direction of men. The public leadership historic pattern of public institutions signals discriminatory messages to women and constitutes a serious psychological barrier to their public leadership advancement and gender preference for public leadership roles (see Section 7.12).

The institutional memory of public institutions, including municipalities, with regards to public management positions reinforces men's dominance and creates a patriarchal mentality in both male and female employees and are used against women (see Section 7.12). From a feminist perspective, to address the patriarchal public institutional memory and the gendered culture of the public sector/service in relation to the local government sphere, there must be a total restructuring of the entire public management and local government structures and culture to bring about change. This study recommends public change management to deconstruct the long history of patriarchal hegemonic municipal memory across all public leadership structures in the local sphere of government (see Section 8.2.1.6). This suggestion was also raised by most female public managers that a public change management system will help to transform municipalities from men's dominance and change the dominant narrative on female gender characteristics and public management roles.

The public change management system can be achieved through an adjustment or introduction of new practices just for the attainment of public leadership gender equality. For example, the DKKDM can make employment openings and promotion into public management positions accessible to more women especially into positions that they have been historically denied. This recommendation is in line with the Affirmative Action Policy of the South African government, which states that recruitment into public leadership positions should be done in favour of qualified women for the achievement of substantive equality (see Section 2.3). As indicated in Section 8.2.1.6 of this thesis, capacity building to nurture and equip women with relevant competencies is germane to achieve this change process because women will not be given public positions just for tokenism. Casaca and Lortie, (2017:39) posit that the introduction of public change can be chaotic and or even result in conflict

between groups in a public organisation. This study is aware of the fact that public change management might not be easy to achieve especially because it will disrupt the existing power dynamics due to the claim that men feel entitled to power in the local government sphere (see Section 7.12). However, this study suggests that the DKKDM can raise awareness of the need for change, with a constitutional backing stipulating municipalities' obligation to promote gender equality in public leadership structures through the advancement and development of women.

### **9.3.6 Establish an affinity and women networking platform in the DKKDM**

The purpose of organising an affinity and networking group such as the *Women and Leadership Affinity* group (WLAG) is to facilitate conversation, disseminate and gather information on women's collective ideas, problems and to challenge women and the rest of world to change the unequal positions of women in global society (International Leadership Association {ILA}(2015:1-4). This platform is proven to help women both in senior and lower public management levels to connect, engage and to learn from each other's experiences, which can help to strengthen the overall administrative climate for women (O'Neil *et al.*, 2018:338). From the empirical findings covered in Section 7.14, female public managers expressed dissatisfaction that the DKKDM does not have a platform to bring all female public managers within the district together in discussion on gender and public management issues. In Section 7.14, the empirical findings also indicated that, because women do not interact and engage with women in senior public management positions, they are unable to identify female public mentors and even learn from their unique public leadership experience as people with whom they share similar social identity. Women's inability to locate professional female mentors was also attributed to the limited number of women in senior public leadership positions (see Section 7.13.2). In this light, this study recommends that the DKKDM should establish women-only public leadership programmes to assist women, especially those in middle management levels with their developmental needs and in helping women, especially in middle management levels access professional mentors in their specific jobs. The advantages of establishing women-only public leadership programmes were emphasised by the research participants in Section 7.14 and in the literature review in Section 4.5.1 of this thesis. Importantly, the establishment of women-only development programmes or affinity groups will assist women who may

be shy of expressing their concerns in mixed gender public training programmes (Madsen & Andrade, 2018:64).

### **9.3.7 Establish gender desk or unit within the DKKDM**

Matoane, (2015:119) in her Ph.D thesis on *Women in local government decision making and leadership positions an analysis of the gender dynamics in the Nkangala District Municipality, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa* clamours for the resuscitation of gender desk in SALAGA, stating that the gender desk will be crucial to revive broader mainstreaming programmes within the local sphere of government. Municipalities in South Africa such as Sekhukhune District Municipality and Ethekewini Metropolitan Municipality have established gender desks or divisions with the objective to internally mainstream gender into public decision making and municipal management processes, the coordination of women's activities, and public gender awareness programmes in their municipal jurisdiction. In addition, the function of the gender desk includes the public implementation, evaluation and monitoring of gender public policies, practices and the effect of other municipal public policies and programmes on male and female genders (Ethekewinini Metropolitan Municipality 2011). The study recommends the establishment of a gender desk or unit within the DKKDM, to be managed mostly by female public managers in senior public administrative positions. The gender desk will be the first point of call to report gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and discrimination within the working environment and in the district. The gender desk will provide psychological support to victims of sexual harassment, organise public gender awareness campaigns to speak on gender issues and organise human capital development programmes for women. The gender desk will contribute significantly to conducting gender awareness campaigns and programmes through the participation of municipal employees and communities under the DKKDM. Communities. The involvement of communities is paramount because the empirical findings showed that the North-West province, which DKKDM falls under is still highly patriarchal and conservative (see Sections 6.2.7 and 7.12). To ensure the desired outcome, the public gender desk needs to be supported by adequate financial resources and must be vested with strong public decision-making powers to have an influence on municipal policy making and planning. This study recommends that the public gender desk should be placed relatively high within the institutional hierarchy of

the DKKDM to ensure that they have the power and authority to implement proposed changes.

### **9.3.8 Women taking personal and collective decision to advance**

No doubt the patriarchal working environment is detrimental to women's public leadership advancement and acceptance which have a serious repercussion for their leadership development and advancement in the local sphere of government. As stated in the empirical findings of this thesis, female public managers battle with compounded discriminatory behaviour and uncivil treatment both from their fellow women and from their male colleagues. As covered in Section 8.3.3, nothing will change unless women take determined steps and efforts through investing in their professional careers to change the existing narratives. Personal professional career growth is indispensable to make a leader remain relevant in their working space and for future advancement. Women must not be people who want to be pushed (as the participants put it *bulldog women*) in everything including in the development of themselves and their careers (see Section 7.14). As discussed in Section 4.3, the effectiveness of adult learning is dependent on learner's recognition of the need to acquire skills, the type of skills they want to learn and a personal determination to learn. This study recommends that women should construct their own personal career development plan, detailing what skills they would like to acquire that will be beneficial to municipal productivity and their performance in attaining sustainability within the district. While designing their career development plans, women need to study their working environment to align their career plan with the prevailing skill needs of the municipality instead of acquiring general skills, although these may be important but may not lead to their advancement.

Women in influential and powerful public leadership positions within the local sphere of government should have a positive attitude towards their fellow women, both those in middle management and junior positions. O'Neil, *et al.*, (2018:336) in their study found that women in lower level positions in the paid working place look up to women in higher positions for career assistance and supportive behaviour as they try to climb the management ladder. This career assistance includes finding a female mentor, career coach, and establishing networking relationship with female managers whom they wish to emulate (Sections 4.5.5, 4.5.6, 7.13.2 and 7.13.3). This study



recommends that, in solidarity, women in public directorship and public management positions within the local sphere of government should use their positions to challenge the prevailing gendered public organisational structures and discriminatory behaviours displayed towards women rather than seeing themselves as competitors and enemies.

#### **9.3.10 Provide Mentoring and Coaching programmes**

On the job training through formal and informal mentoring and coaching opportunities are the most practical means for ensuring that the public, professional and personal growth within a chosen occupation. A lack of these public career development initiatives leaves public employees ill-equipped to take on, succeed and to be considered for senior leadership roles. The empirical findings from this thesis show that women do not have access to mentoring and coaching opportunities in the local sphere of government that are necessary to impact their leadership style and for their advancement. This study recommends that the DKKDM should implement mentoring and coaching programmes to complement other public learning and skills development initiatives targeting the advancement and development of women (see Section 9.3.6). After identifying potential mentors, both the protégé and mentor should be exposed to a mentoring and coaching programme to enable them to better manage their relationships, moreover, public departments should plan and organise their mentoring and coaching programmes as well as communicate best practices at the departmental level and within the municipality.

#### **9.3.11 Strategic Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies**

Strategic Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies is still lacking in the South African public sector/service including in the local sphere of government. When such treatment is applied to the proposed empowerment model of this thesis, the desired outcome, which is the leadership advancement and development of women for their equal representation in senior municipal management levels may never be achieved. When the strategic implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the proposed empowerment approach are adequately accorded the

desired attention, feedback on the approach will influence and direct the formulation of future approaches. This study recommends that the DKKDM through, the public gender desk, should intensify the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the proposed women's empowerment approach so that, once adopted, there will be a determined effort to advance women's public leadership within all levels of municipal management.

### **9.3.2 Recommendation for future studies**

While the focus of this thesis was on constructing an approach for the training and development of women for higher public leadership positions in the DKKDM, as discussed from Chapters 1 to 8 of this thesis, the following recommendations are made for future studies:

- Are male public managers aware of female public manager's workplace challenges: An analysis of the male public manager's perception on female public manager's gender issues in the public sector in South Africa
- Recognising and addressing the effect of misogyny on women's public leadership in the South African public administration context
- Public managers' challenges associated with public gender mainstreaming in the local sphere of government
- Male and female public organisational learning styles: Are there any differences?
- Public human resource development practices and gender mainstreaming in the South African local sphere of government must be initiated
- The prospects of implementing women-only leadership training programmes in the local sphere of government
- The development of a coping mechanism for professional women in a gendered public sector/service
- Measuring the productivity difference between male and female managers in the south African public sector/service (including in the local government sphere)
- Explore the career development challenges of female managers in the South African public sector/service (including in the local government sphere).

## 9.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Gender equality, women's realisation of their human rights and public participation in political and administrative public leadership is an ethical imperative for sustainable development. In short, an inclusive public administration through women's equal representation and active participation in leadership is at the core of sustainable development. Since 1880s in France and the Netherlands, a key demand of the feminist movement has been, and continues to be, the deconstruction of oppressive traditional gender norms and culture (public) which prevent women from exercising their human rights and participation in important structures of government. For example, leadership. In a similar vein, state-led gender equality initiatives that provide for the prohibition of sexism and gender-based discrimination, and women's access to quality education, leadership training, and skills development for an inclusive public administration, is a core objective of a democratic developmental state. The South African government has demonstrated immense efforts to ensure that women have equal employment rights by mandating the public sector/service (including the local government sphere) to offer equal opportunities to men and women and to prohibit unfair discrimination. Inequities done to women from the South African perspective is traced to the past Apartheid regime and colonialism, where access to leadership positions in the public sector/service (including the local government sphere) was determined based on skin colour and gender. Despite the fact that women's human right to equal employment in the public sector/service (including the local government sphere) are protected, supported and promoted by the highest laws in the Republic of South Africa, the 1996 Constitution, women continue to encounter discrimination when it comes to employment in senior public management positions. The few female public managers who have succeeded in breaking the glass-ceiling also undergo substantial and intense challenges due to the gendered public organisational culture and other contextual factors, such as family, individual and environmental factors. This gave rise to the need to adopt a public empowerment approach to liberate women from all forms of gender-based discrimination and to assist in their acceleration into senior public management positions in the local government sphere.

Environmentally, the ambience of the DKKDM is being branded as highly traditional and patriarchal. State led intervention is germane to creating a working environment that values social justice, respects people's human rights and the elimination of

barriers to the equal participation, treatment and advancement of men and women. Since the gender discrimination and unjust treatment done to female public managers in the public working environment is mostly carried out implicitly, in addition to the state-led interventions, public corrective measures including the adoption of the proposed approach constructed for the training and leadership development of female public managers (see Section 8.2.1) can be adapted to resolving this problem. The proposed approach constructed for women's public training and leadership advancement places great emphasis on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies. A gender-neutral organisational culture, provides some supportive working conditions to assist female public managers. These include the establishment of human capacity building programmes targeting women specifically as critical for women's public leadership development and advancement. Furthermore, the proposed approach views engaging public managers (men and women) within the DKKDM in gender-sensitive communication to raise awareness on the importance of promoting women's leadership since they are the ones sustaining inequality in senior public leadership positions through gender biased promotional and recruitment practices and their failure to integrate gender concerns into their departmental planning and priorities. Women's empowerment and leadership advancement requires the support of all municipal/public stakeholders including the support from political parties.

Considering the research suggestions from this study and existing literature that female public managers bring a unique constellation of public leadership related qualities, behaviours and attitude to their jobs. These translate into higher productivity and improved community development through the expression of concerns and care for impoverished members of society, improved decision making and employees' empowerment among others (see Sections 2.7.3, 6.2.11, 7.11) .The local sphere of government must know that reaping the benefits of women's public leadership lies in their abilities to combat the many barriers hampering women's public leadership advancement through the establishment of measures for building equality. In a nutshell the recommendations of this study address all the barriers to women's leadership advancement as being embodied in the internal and external public environment of the DKKDM. There is no-one to direct rules on how to advance women's leadership due to contextual factors which may affect women differently.

However, paying close attention to the implementation of the recommendations of this study will assist in the acceleration of more women into senior public management positions in the DKKDM.

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## ANNEXURES

### Annexure 1: NWU ethics approval letter



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South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222  
Fax: 018 299-4910  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

**Research Ethics Regulatory Committee**  
Tel: 018 299-4849  
Email: [nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za](mailto:nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za)

05 March 2019

#### ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Arts Research Ethics Committee (AREC)** on 07/04/2019, the Arts Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|------|---|---|--------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|--|--|--------------|--|--|------|--|--|--------|--|--|
| <b>Study title:</b> To construct a framework for the training and development of female managers to empower them to fill senior management positions in municipalities.                                                                                |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher:</b> Prof. B. Hanyane                                                                                                                                                                   |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Student:</b> J.E. Ahiane                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Ethics number:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |   | <table border="1"><tr><td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>4</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>9</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Institution</td><td colspan="3">Study Number</td><td colspan="3">Year</td><td colspan="3">Status</td></tr></table> |              |   |   |      |   |   |        | N   | W | U | - | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 5 | - | 1 | 9 | - | A | 7 | Institution |  |  | Study Number |  |  | Year |  |  | Status |  |  |
| N                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | W | U                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | -            | 0 | 0 | 4    | 2 | 5 | -      | 1   | 9 | - | A | 7 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Study Number |   |   | Year |   |   | Status |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation                                                                                                                                                            |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Application Type:</b> Single Study                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Commencement date:</b> 07/04/2019                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Expiry date:</b> 07/04/2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| <b>Risk Category:</b> <table border="1"><tr><td>Low</td></tr></table>                                                                                                                                                                                  |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        | Low |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| Low                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |
| Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation. |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |              |   |   |      |   |   |        |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |             |  |  |              |  |  |      |  |  |        |  |  |

#### Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the AREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the AREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

#### General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the AREC:
  - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and
  - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the AREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-RERC and AREC reserves the right to:

## **Annexure 2: Requisition letter of the study: Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality**



Private Bag X6001  
South Africa 2520  
Tel: 018 299-1111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>  
Public Management and governance

Municipal Manager,  
Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality  
Dear Ms. Shirkey Lesupi  
Private bag X5017, Klerksdorp, 2570  
Civil Centre, Patmore, Orkney  
[Tel: 018 4730 8000](tel:01847308000)  
Fax: 018 473 2523  
Web: [www.kaundadistrict.gov.za](http://www.kaundadistrict.gov.za)

### **Re: Permission to collect research data (Ms. J. Ahiente - 29630398)**

An application is hereby forwarded to you for consideration in seeking permission to gather data in your classified archives of your department including conducting interviews. The purpose of gathering such data is to assist in the completion of the empirical component of the applicant's PhD studies (Public Governance and Management). The responsible supervisor in this respect is Prof. B.R. Hanyane of the North West University, Potchefstroom campus. The title of her research-based thesis is; "Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: the case of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality". The expected timeframe of completion of data collection is end of May 2019.

I trust that no inconvenience will be caused by this proposed arrangement.

Yours faithfully  
Prof. Barry R. Hanyane  
[barry.hanyane@nwu.ac.za](mailto:barry.hanyane@nwu.ac.za)  
Tel. (018) 299-2334 (w)  
0836979247 (cell)

Signed: 29 April 2019

**Annexure 3: Approval letters from local municipalities under Dr Kenneth Kaunda District**

**DR. KENNETH  
KAUNDA**



Private Bag X 9017

Kaunda

2570

Tel: (018) 473 8800

Website: [www.kaundadistrict.gov.za](http://www.kaundadistrict.gov.za)

DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Civic Centre

Palmira Road

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2520

Fax: (018) 473 2523

Email: [admin@kaundadistrict.gov.za](mailto:admin@kaundadistrict.gov.za)

Our Ref: .....

Enquiries: **S.LESUPI** .....

Your Reference: .....

29 May 2019

**NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY**  
Potchefstroom Campus  
Private Bag X1290  
Potchefstroom  
2520

**TO: Prof. Barry R.Hanyane**

Permission has been given to **Ms .J. Ahiate-29630398** to conduct a research on  
"Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of  
government.

Please note that her research will commence as soon as she makes herself  
available. All necessary support will be accorded to her .

Congratulations are in order

Regards

**Ms. S.Lesupi**  
**Municipal Manager**

EXPL RING PROSPERITY



## MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Tel: +27 18 487 8009/8537 Fax: +27 18 442 1452, P.O. Box 99 Klerksdorp 2570  
E-Mail: [dnkos@klerksdorp.org](mailto:dnkos@klerksdorp.org)/Website: [www.klerksdorp.org](http://www.klerksdorp.org)

CITY OF  
MATLOSANA

TSR Nkhumise/dn (129)

30 April 2019

Ms. J Ahiane - 29630398

### RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH- NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY

The above mentioned subject bears reference.

Permission is hereby granted to consult with officials and members of the public within the jurisdiction of City of Matlosana Local Municipality with the sole purpose of collection of data for your academic research.

You are reminded to adhere to confidentiality and anonymity at all times.

The municipality wishes you all the best and success in your studies and hope you will share your knowledge for the betterment of our community.

Trust you will find the above to be in order.

Yours faithfully,

  
TSR NKHUMISE  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER





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**Date: 2019-05-29**

Dear Sir/Madam

The letter refers:

In reference to the letter dated 2019-04-29.

I give Ms. J. Ahiente -29630398 permission to conduct the research titled:  
**"constructing a development approach for female managers in local  
sphere of government"** from North –West University.

This also serves as assurance that NWU complies with requirement of the  
freedom of expression and privacy as enshrined in RSA Constitution and  
Bill of Rights.

We believe that this communique' would engross your necessary attention, and  
please do hasten to contact us should you find anything amiss with this  
letter.

Banking on your solid co-operation

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. MOSEPELE", written over a horizontal line.

B. MOSEPELE  
DIRECTOR: CORPORATE SERVICES

## Annexure 4: Consent Form for Questionnaire

North West University

Potchefstroom campus

School of Public Management and Governance

Ethics Number: 0042519A7

### Semi-structured questionnaire

**Research title:** Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: the case of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality

#### Consent to participate in the research.

The purpose of this study is to construct an approach for the development of women for their advancement into management levels in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. The leadership development of women for the achievement of the 50% representation in top and senior leadership roles as envisioned by the South African government, particularly in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, and the perception on the developmental challenges encountered by women managers prompted this study.

The study follows a mixed method research design (qualitative and quantitative). The researcher will be collecting data through questionnaires and interviews. You are requested to complete the questionnaire and or participate in the interview schedule. Your participation is voluntary and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Your responses are confidential and will be shared only with the promoter of the research. Your responses will be used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, should you decide to participate in the study, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. There is no financial benefits or compensations for participating and for completing the questionnaire.

If you require any further information you are welcome to contact my study leader/promoter Prof. Barry Hanyane at +27836979247; email: [Barry.Hanyane@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Barry.Hanyane@nwu.ac.za) or the researcher, Josephine Ahianté at +27786738516, email: [ahiantejosephine@gmail.com](mailto:ahiantejosephine@gmail.com). Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Josephine Ahianté

I consent to participate in this study in accordance with the stipulations stated above

Signature and Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **Annexure 5: Consent Form semi-structured interview**

North West University

Potchefstroom campus

School of Public Management and Governance

Ethics Number: 0042519A7

### **Semi-structured personal interview**

Research title: Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: the case of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality

#### **Consent to participate in the research.**

The purpose of this study is to construct an approach for the development of women for their advancement into management levels in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. The leadership development of women for the achievement of the 50% representation in top and senior leadership roles as envisioned by the South African government, particularly in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, and the perception on the developmental challenges encountered by women managers prompted this study.

Your participation is voluntary and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Your responses are confidential and will be shared only with the promoter of the research. Your responses will be used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, should you decide to participate in the study, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. There is no financial benefits or compensations for participating and for completing the questionnaire.

If you require any further information you are welcome to contact my study leader/promoter Prof. Barry Hanyane at +27836979247; email: [Barry.Hanyane@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Barry.Hanyane@nwu.ac.za) or the researcher, Josephine Ahianté at +27786738516, email: [ahiantejosephine@gmail.com](mailto:ahiantejosephine@gmail.com). Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Josephine Ahianté

I consent to participate in this study in accordance with the stipulations stated above

Signature and Date\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6: Research Questionnaire

North West University

Potchefstroom campus

School of public management and governance

Ethics Number: 0042519A7

Semi-structured questionnaire

Questionnaire for the fulfilment of the PhD degree in public management and governance

Research title: Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: the case of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality

You are invited to participate in the study with the title onlined above being underken by Josephine Ahiante (Student number: 29630398) as part of an academic programme of Doctor of Philosohy (Public Mnanagement and Governance) at the faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Potchesfrstroom. Essentially, the purpose of the semi-structured questionnaire is to gather data on the current state of gender and womens leadership development and advancement in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality (Dr. KKDM). Specially, the semi-structured structured interview examines gender issues, women empowernment and gender equality policy frameworks, women's leadership challenges, capacity building, and skills development of manangement in the local government sphere. And exploring techniques to empower and advance more women into senior leaderdhip structures in the Dr KKDM

You are requested to complete the questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Your responses are confidential and will be shared only with the promoter of the research. Your responses will be used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, should you decide to participate in the study, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. There is no financial benefits or compensations for participating and for completing the questionnaire. Your time and effort in participating in this academic endeavour is higly appreciated since it will enable the study to achieve its objectives and help empower women, and increase womens participation and representation in senior management structures in the Dr KKDM and in the local sphere of government.

Yours sincerely

Josephine Ahiante

I consent to participate in this study in accordance with the stipulations stated above

Signature and Date\_\_\_\_\_



**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS**

Choose your answers with an {X} in the appropriate box

1.

| Current Management level                         | Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Middle management level (salary level 11 and 12) | 1                                       |
| Director (salary level 13)                       | 2                                       |
| Chief Director (salary level 14)                 | 3                                       |
| Deputy Director General (salary level 15)        | 4                                       |
| Superintendent General (salary level 16)         | 5                                       |
| Director General (salary level 16)               | 6                                       |

2. What is your marital status?

| Marital status          | Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Married                 | 1                                       |
| Single with children    | 2                                       |
| Single without children | 3                                       |
| Divorced                | 4                                       |
| Widow                   | 5                                       |

3. In which of the following departments do you work?

| Department                                                   | Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Department of Health and environmental service               | 1                                       |
| Department of Housing and Land affairs                       | 2                                       |
| Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs | 3                                       |
| Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation                  | 4                                       |
| Department of Engineering/Technical services                 | 5                                       |
| Department of Social Development                             | 6                                       |
| Department of Human Settlements                              | 7                                       |
| Department of Safety, Security and Community Liaison         | 8                                       |
| Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport              | 9                                       |
| Others, specify                                              |                                         |

4. In which age bracket do you fall?

| Age bracket                             | Under 35 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | above 65 |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} | 1        | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5        |

5. Years of employment in your current leadership position

| Number of years in current positions    | Less than 1 yr | 1-4 yrs | 5-9 yrs | 10-14 yrs | 15-20 yrs | 21-25 yrs | 26-30 yrs | 30-35 yrs |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} | 1              | 2       | 3       | 4         | 5         | 6         | 7         | 8         |

6. How long have you been employed within management levels, either Top, Senior and Middle Management levels?

| Number of years within management positions | Less than 1 yr | 1-4 yrs | 5-9 yrs | 10-14 yrs | 15-20 yrs | 21-25 yrs | 26-30 yrs | 30-35 yrs |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Indicate appropriate answer with an {X}     | 1              | 2       | 3       | 4         | 5         | 6         | 7         | 8         |

7. Indicate your level of education?

| Type of academic qualifications/degree  | Matric | Bachelor's degree/Diploma | Honours | Masters | Doctorate |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Indicate appropriate answer with an {X} | 1      | 2                         | 3       | 4       | 5         |

## Section B: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONS

Choose your preferred answers by indicating with an X in the appropriate box

8. Gender is learned through social relationships and interaction and not as a result of biological characteristics.

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

9. Do you believe leadership effectiveness and competencies are determined by a person's gender?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

10. Do you believe that the typical gender roles in society subject women to discrimination and injustices in leadership in the local sphere of government?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

11. Do you believe the gender roles attributed to women promote inequality in their access to opportunities in the public spheres?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

12. Do you believe gender should be used as a standard for recruitment into leadership and advancement in top management roles?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

13. As a female manager, how easily do you balance traditional gender roles (for example cooking, cleaning, caring for children and family) and your professional leadership career?

| Very easy | Easy | Difficult | Very difficult |
|-----------|------|-----------|----------------|
|           |      |           |                |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

14. Would you love to aspire for higher leadership positions?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

If you disagree, please explain your reasons

.....

.....

15. Do you think other career-driven women (including peers) in local government are aspiring for senior leadership positions?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

.....

.....

15. Do you, as a female manager, consider the following factors as a threat and demotivating to your leadership advancement in the local government sphere?

|                                                                                      | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Gender stereotype and discrimination                                                 |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Juggling motherhood and complex leadership function                                  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Lack of gender-specific mechanisms (e.g. maternity leave, child day care facilities) |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Lack of career development                                                           |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Insufficient leadership training and development opportunities                       |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Lack of family support                                                               |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Sexual harassment                                                                    |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Preference for male's leadership in top and senior leadership positions              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| Lack of self-confidence                                                              |                |       |         |          |                   |

16. If there are other factors that poses a threat to your leadership advancement and progression not mentioned above, please state them

.....

18. Does the structural arrangement of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District promote gender equality in leadership?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

19. Does the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District have equal representation of gender in top and senior management positions?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

20. If disagree to questions 19 and 20 above, please explain your reasons

.....

.....

21. Do women have equal access to leadership opportunities like men in your municipality?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

\_\_\_\_\_

22. What do you think can assist in promoting gender equality in leadership?

\_\_\_\_\_

23. What leadership skills do you possess as a female manager?

.....

.....

24. Do you believe women's leadership can help promote societal change and organisational growth?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

\_\_\_\_\_

25. Are sufficient legislative frameworks and policies established to bring about gender equality in leadership in the local sphere of government?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

\_\_\_\_\_

26. Do you believe the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District adhere strictly to gender equality legislations and polices?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

---

27. Do you believe that affirmation policy programmes with regards to women empowerment and development is effective?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

.....

.....

28. Are there any constitutionally developed programmes specifically for the leadership development of women managers including those aspiring for leadership in your municipality?

| Yes | No |
|-----|----|
|     |    |

29. If you yes in question 29, are the leadership training and development programmes in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District effective?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

---

30. Do you agree that the leadership development programmes (if any) address the unique challenges of women managers?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please explain your reasons

---

Please indicate your answer with an {X} in the appropriate box

31. Do you have access to leadership development opportunities such as indicated in the scale statement?

| Skills areas         | Mentoring | Coaching | Succession planning | Networking |
|----------------------|-----------|----------|---------------------|------------|
| Indicate with an (X) |           |          |                     |            |

32. Are there internally development programmes specifically to improve women's leadership skills and progression?

| Yes | No |
|-----|----|
|     |    |

If there are any, please mention them

33. If yes, how effective are those programmes

---



---

34. What strategy does all municipalities in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District have to attract and retain women into senior management positions with qualifications and experiences?

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35. Do you believe leadership training and development opportunities (could) assist in accelerating more women into top and senior management ranks in your municipality?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

36. Do you think that implementing women-only leadership development?

Programmes is ideal?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answer

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37. What do you think can help stimulate women's leadership interest and career development?

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38. Do you believe that failure to invest in the training and development of women can lead to wastage of skills and talents?

| Strongly Agreed | Agreed | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagreed |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------|--------------------|
|                 |        |         |          |                    |

Please provide reasons for your answers

.....  
.....

39. In your opinion what do you think the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District can do to promote women's leadership development and acceleration?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

The end, thank you for your participation.



## **Appendix 7: Interview guide**

North West University

Potchefstroom campus

School of public management and governance

Ethics Number: 0042519A7

### **Semi-structured interview**

Research title: Constructing a development approach for female managers in the local sphere of government: the case of the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality

You are invited to participate in the study with the title outlined above being undertaken by Josephine Ahiane (Student number: 29630398) as part of an academic programme of Doctor of Philosophy (Public Management and Governance) at the faculty of Humanities, North-West University, Potchefstroom. Essentially, the purpose of the semi-structured interview is to gather data on the current state of gender and women's leadership development and advancement in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality (Dr. KKDM). Particularly, the semi-structured structured interview examines gender issues, women empowerment and gender equality policy frameworks, women's leadership challenges, capacity building, and skills development of management in the local government sphere. And exploring techniques to empower and advance more women into senior leadership structures in the Dr KKDM.

You are requested to participate in the semi-structured interview. Your participation is voluntary and your anonymity will be guaranteed. Your responses are confidential and will be shared only with the promoter of the research. Your responses will be used only for academic purposes. Furthermore, should you decide to participate in the study, you have the right to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. There is no financial benefits or compensations for participating in the interview. Your time and effort in participating in this academic endeavour is highly appreciated since it will enable the study to achieve its objectives and help empower women, and increase women's participation and representation in senior management structures in the Dr KKDM and in the local sphere of government.

## **Annexure 8: Qualitative interview questions**

1. What is your understanding on gender?
2. What is gender equality?
3. Do you think gender is a key factor for accessing leadership opportunities?
4. Does gender determine managerial competencies? For example leadership skills, attitude and ability to work with group.
5. Do women have equal access to leadership opportunities like men in the local sphere of government?
6. Do you believe that male and female managers possess different leadership skills in the local sphere of government?
7. What leadership skills/talents do you perceive as necessary for contemporary organisations such as the local sphere of government, which a leader must possess, regardless of their gender?
8. In your opinion, what leadership style do female managers display?
9. Do you believe the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District to be representative of both male and female leaders? Please provide reasons for your answer.
10. What do you perceive as the barriers preventing women from entering top and senior management ranks in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
11. Do you think you has Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District appropriate initiatives in place for women's career advancement and leadership development of women?
12. Do you think the training and development of women could assist in the acceleration of more women into top and senior management positions in the local sphere of government?
13. Do you perceive Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District to emphasise the empowerment and development of female managers including those aspiring for leadership positions?
14. What development programme(s) exist for women leadership acceleration in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District ? If there are any, please indicate those programmes.
15. Do you think the leadership programmes currently in place fully accommodate and support the development needs of women managers in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
16. What leadership skills development challenges are experienced in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
17. Do you think the empowerment and development of women for higher leadership roles can bring about societal change including in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
18. What do you perceive as the barriers preventing women from entering top and senior management ranks in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
19. Are the legislative frameworks for promoting women empowerment and gender equality implemented in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda?
20. In your opinion, are the legislative framework for promoting women's empowerment supportive in the development of female managers Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?

21. Do you think Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality implement appropriate strategies and approaches to develop women for higher leadership positions?
22. Do you think Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality promote a learning culture necessary for women leadership development?
23. Do you think female and male managers are treated equally in terms of rewards, benefits and access Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
24. Do you think women's leadership empowerment and progression is influenced by patriarchy? (Male's dominance), Please provide reasons for your answer.
25. Do you think there are challenges to the leadership development and advancement of women leaders in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
26. Should challenges exist, what strategies Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality could adopt to address those challenges?
27. What career advancement and leadership development measures are in place internally in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District specifically for women's leadership advancement?
28. Do you think implementing women-only leadership development programmes is ideal in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda district? Please provide reasons for your answer
29. What can be done to promote women career development and professional advancement in Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District?
30. What strategy does Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District have to attract and retain women in leadership?
31. What do you suggest that Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District must do develop more women for top and senior management positions?

## Annexure 9: Similarity index report

The screenshot shows a Turnitin web interface with a similarity index report. The document title is "Constructing a development approach for female". The report shows a similarity index of 10%. An "Info" pop-up window displays submission details. The "Match Overview" panel on the right lists seven sources contributing to the similarity index.

**Submission Details:**

| Submission Details |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Submission ID      | 1468520752                      |
| Submission Date    | 08-Dec-2020 11:30AM (UTC+0200)  |
| Submission Count   | 1                               |
| File Name          | b629-6a777ee33eae_Josephine_... |
| File Extension     | docx                            |
| File Size          | 1.81M                           |
| Character Count    | 819713                          |
| Word Count         | 139159                          |
| Page Count         | 418                             |

**Match Overview:**

| Rank | Source                                 | Similarity Index |
|------|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1    | dspace.nwu.ac.za Internet Source       | 1%               |
| 2    | repository.nwu.ac.za Internet Source   | 1%               |
| 3    | hdl.handle.net Internet Source         | 1%               |
| 4    | Submitted to North We... Student Paper | <1%              |
| 5    | uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source        | <1%              |
| 6    | ulspace.ul.ac.za Internet Source       | <1%              |
| 7    | Submitted to University...             | <1%              |

Page: 1 of 418 Word Count: 139159

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