

**FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WOMEN'S CAREER SUCCESS AT A SELECTED
INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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DISSERTATION

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SUPERVISOR: DR. B.K. MAJOLA

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my deceased aunt (Blessing Kuipa), who died fighting for the rights of a girl child.

DECLARATION

I declare that **Factors that Influence Women’s Career Success at a Selected Institution of Higher Learning in South Africa** (dissertation) hereby submitted to the university of Limpopo, for the degree of Master Commerce in Human Resources Management has not previously been submitted by me at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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04 April 2023

Surname, initials (title)

Date

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Revelation 3 verse 7

I want to thank the following people for their never-ending support toward the achievement of this study

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- ✚ The University of Limpopo for giving me permission to conduct the study.

ABSTRACT

South Africa is ranked 3rd on top countries that promote gender equality in Africa and number 17th in the world. However, in higher education women are still under-represented in most leadership positions regardless of the notable progress in attaining more qualifications than men. Through a survey research approach, the researcher investigated the factors that influence women's career success. The study adopted a quantitative approach to collect data, targeted a total number of 70 female employees under the faculty of management and law at the University of Limpopo. Data was analysed using the Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0. Factors such as personality traits, organisational cultural factors, career barriers, internal and external support factors were identified. The findings revealed that there is an influence between the factors identified and women career success. Furthermore, women still experience barriers such as the glass ceiling, gender stereotype, family responsibility and lack of mentors in their career progression to leadership positions in higher education.

Keywords: Career success, Glass ceiling, Higher education, Leadership, Management and Women.

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Although the number of females in the workforce has increased in the past few years, there is still a need for improvement in the number of women occupying management positions in the post-apartheid era (Gradin, 2019; Sinden, 2017). The career success of South African females continues to be challenged by a variety of factors, though the South African government has made great advances towards equality in education. That is by ensuring employment opportunities afforded by excellent education and through policies that promote equality and prevent unfair discrimination (Moalusi & Jones, 2019). Females in the 21st century are not limited to choosing a feminine career such as nursing, teaching and secretarial work as expected in the late 1960s (Anderson, Angel, Speak, Angot & Ahmed, 2017). Instead, young women are most often encouraged to break the career gender stereotype and consider careers that are critical to the economy such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (Letsebe, 2018).

The representation of South African females in the upper position ranks is discouraging as they are obtaining qualifications at a rate incomparable in history (McTavish & Miller, 2019). The representation rate has declined from 3.9 percent in 2008 to 3.6 in 2012 (Doubell & Struwig, 2014). In addition, more than half of students graduating first degrees in universities are females but only a quarter of these females are entering management positions (Warner & Corley, 2017). According to Boluk, Cavaliere and Higgins-Desbiolles (2019), the rate decreases as the position becomes more higher until, at the highest-level management positions. Females continue to succeed to get into junior positions in higher education institutions just like men; however, they leave these positions before attaining senior positions (Sims, Carter, De Peralta, Höfrová & Brown, 2020). Boluk *et al.*, (2019) have likewise indicated that females hold between three percent and five percent of the top positions in higher education while about ninety-five percent is occupied by men.

According to Doubell (2011) a possible explanation for the underrepresentation of women in senior management positions in South Africa, is the lack of knowledge on the factors that contribute to women career success. Since the previous studies of (Duffy, Fox, Punnett, Gregory, Lituchy, Monserrat & Miller, 2006; Punnett, Duffy,

Fox, Gregory, Lituchy, Miller & Santos, 2007) was conducted in the Americas and west Indies and not in the South African context. The studies did not include South Africa which means that there is a gap in South Africa to prove that these factors are known.

Anderson *et al.*, (2017) indicated that regardless of the large number of females who fail to thrive to higher management positions, several females are very successful and appear to be able to overcome the challenges that hold others back. However, this raises a concern as to why many females fail to succeed to the fields of management in higher education while few females achieve great success? Could it be the factors that influence career success or the approaches that successful women have applied to get into positions of influence? This study seeks to identify the factors that influence the career success of females in higher education and explores how females can learn from the experiences of successful females currently in management positions to increase the numbers of females in upper higher education positions.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The studies of Choi (2019); Fowler (2019); Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim and Mdlongwa (2018); Sims *et al.*, (2020) revealed that there is a wide gap between males and females in terms of career progression. The studies further revealed that many females are unable to reach higher management positions in higher education, despite the increasing number of females entering professional positions which were traditionally dominated by men. Female positions in higher education institutions were mainly limited to receptionists, administrative clerks, personal assistants and other jobs which were considered as traditionally female jobs (Bhana & Bayat, 2020; Coe, Wiley & Bekker, 2019). Due to better academic qualifications, more females joined professional careers and management posts in higher education institutions although it depended on their willingness to confront and overcome strong barriers that stood in their way.

In Africa, there is little empirical research conducted on the knowledge of females' career success because most of what is known, was conducted in the western context, and based on men's perspective of career success. The researcher grapples with the following research puzzle: Why is it that despite the higher number

of females getting entry-level positions, there are still a limited number of females succeeding in securing senior positions at an institution of Higher Learning in South Africa. This raises a concern on what are the factors influencing women career success in higher education.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.3.1 Women's Career Success Defined

According to Hannum, Muhly, Shockley-Zalabak and White (2015), the approaches to career success of women in literature are extremely diverse and many studies have criticized traditional career success because it is largely based on men's pattern of lives, without considering that the life paths of women differ from those of men. This is supported by O'Neil, Brooks, and Hopkins (2018:26) who noted that "career success in theory and practice are two important issues to consider; first that the traditional working pattern of education, full-time career and retirement is based on the typical working lives of men. Secondly, there is no single typical working pattern for modern women". However, on the other hand Boring (2017) believes that the acceptable definition of career success is biased as some scholars continue criticising and challenging the prevailing concepts of career success because for them it reflects on the careers of men.

The study of Kandiko, Howson, Coate, and De St Croix (2018) found that females' careers do not only lag behind but also cannot be measured up to men's careers. Other scholars believed that women's careers are very different from those of men because women have their own experience that are different from those of men (Frear, Paustian-Underdahl, Heggstad & Walker, 2019). Yet, the bias that triggers the acceptable definition of career success is regarded as very harmful since scholars will silently emphasize the old-style and the career model of men and tend to treat women as a helping hand to men's professional paths, especially if they have family responsibilities (Lämsä & Savela, 2019) and women's perceptions can also be formed around these ideas. Moon and Choi (2017) explained that women often fear or feel ineptitude to partake in leadership positions because the goal-line (success) is constructed on the activities of male patterns.

According to Van Esch, Hopkins, O'Neil and Bilimoria (2018) women who do the same job and earn less as compared to men, believe that they are equally

successful. This is supported by Dandan and Marques (2017) who mentioned that women rate themselves as successful in spite of unequal pay for the same job and their reduced opportunities of progression. Nevertheless, this might not be a problem since the definition of subjective career success review that career success refers to a person's inner fulfillment and not salary and other rewards. Fernandez and Campero (2017) disclose that women's experiences are increasingly being expressed through the concept of choice and work-life balance in industry, government and academia in many nations throughout the world. According to Sutherland (2017), researchers normally adopt qualitative study method to understand the career success of women since women describe success in personal inner fulfillment (subjective terms) rather than external standards such as status, money, and promotion (objective terms). The archaic meaning of career success is based on the standards established by men (Boring, 2017). Men frequently assess success in their careers and status through ranking order in which all work experience is seen as building in an unending style (Frear *et al.*, 2019).

According to Spurk, Hirschi, and Dries (2019) in terms of finances, women in management typically define their success in terms of monetary stability as compared to the money earned. Various scholars have observed that women have a more general view of success and value the collaboration of achievements in life that is more than just their careers (Ncayiyana, 2019; Sutherland, 2017; Moon & Choi, 2017). This is in line with the findings of Keys (2018) who stated that women's satisfaction stems from the numerous roles that shape their confidence and motivate them to progress in their professional lives and their personal lives. This is an intrinsic drive type of success that is driven by a broader set of components other than channeled perspective of money and promotion (Spurk, Hirschi & Dries, 2019).

Other scholars have looked into how women's careers are distinct from men's and signify a wider range of paths (Choi, 2019; Schachtebeck & Diniso, 2017; Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim & Mdlongwa, 2018). However, for the purpose of this study career success is defined in objective terms as observable, measurable, and verifiable attainments such as pay, years of experience and occupational status (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008).

1.3.2 Background of Women in the Workplace

In the past years, women around the world were only known as “hawkers” (someone who travels about selling goods, typically advertising them by shouting) (UN Women, 2020). A hawker, remains as one of the most common jobs for women over the course of history and even today, especially in Africa. According to Archer, Moote, Macleod, Francis and DeWitt (2020) women were seen as subordinates to men and their role was primarily domestic which included child rearing, feeding and to care for the family. They were not expected to concern themselves with matters outside the home which was more properly the domain of men. Women who were known to work outside their homes worked as hawkers in Africa, South Asia Central America, and other regions of the world during ancient times (Bebusinessed.com, n.d.).

- Women in America

In the 1800s females gradually entered the labour force even though it was not to eradicate inequalities and social injustices but to assist owners of factories to make more revenue through low-priced labour (United Nations, 2018; Choi, 2019). This started because of a report written in 1971 by Hamilton which described new ways to advance industries in America, the report stated that the one major opportunity to maximise profit remained inexpensive labour in the form of women. In the 1820s in New England, the hiring of young women and children occurred soon afterward in the surrounding farms. During this time women were regarded as the most controllable and submissive employees as compared to men and they were willing to be paid less (Choi, 2019).

In 1941, the title role of females in the labour force changed permanently as men in the United States went to war. Females started to occupy the positions that were previously occupied by males (Ehido, Ibeabuchi & Halim, 2019), this did not only prove the willingness of women to do the job previously done by men but also the capability that women had. During the time, about six million female employees entered the labour force, occupying positions in heavy industries such as engineering and construction sites and other male-dominated industries. Unfortunately, after the war, women were required to surrender the male-dominated jobs to the men who were returning from war (United Nations, 2019). Females, however, did not give up and continuously entered the labour force in increasing numbers than ever before (United Nations Women, 2019) but made a shift and they

started occupying positions known as the feminine positions such as clerical work, office work, nursing, and other termed female jobs.

- Women in Australia

According to Thomas, Forsyth, and Bonnell (2020) women in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s were seen as homemakers whereas males were viewed as breadwinners in the family. Other women were banned from other jobs and paid less than men. In the 1970s, a change occurred with the introduction of legislations that eliminated evident discrimination against women. During this decade the number of women increased in the workplace and the women's movements and civil rights also emerged (Oudshoorn, Van Berkum & Van Loon, 2018). Against discrimination, the trade unions began to lead successful equal pay cases for equal employment. In 1980 the aim of attaining gender-parity in the workplace started to gain momentum through legislations that promote equality and equal pay (Workplace gender equality agency, 2014).

Ewington (2019) mentioned that the principle of equal pay for equal work was formulated by the influential commonwealth conciliation and arbitration commission but it only favoured few women (18 percent of women benefited) because the work in question can also be performed by men. However, the newly elected Labour government of Australia argued that it was not enough and issued the federal affirmative action act of 1986. "The act later was replaced by the equal opportunity for women in the workplace act 1999 which aimed to achieve equal employment opportunity for all females and to eliminate the barriers that restrict women employment and opportunities" (Australian government, 2017). The act coerces the organisation to abide by such laws to avoid penalties.

In the 21st century, most women revolve around paid labor and family care. According to Strachan (2020) "young women in Australia are in the workforce today and are highly educated than men and the group of women born (1966-1986) have University degrees than men". The changes in Australian society since 1950 are very profound because only a small percentage of households have a male breadwinner and this is by choice.

- Women in South Africa

In South Africa, before 1994, the societies were seen as originally patriarchal (Kele & Pieterse, 2015), meaning women were regarded as subordinates to their husbands while the husbands were regarded as the heads of the family who had authority over the household. Primarily females were domesticated and their place was in the home where they had to take care of the children and see to the well-being of the family (Jaga *et al.*, 2018). Women were not expected to worry about matters outside the home because it was the responsibility of men. The domestic roles that other women took outside their homes to supplement the family income were acceptable but not regarded as feminine (Koekemoer & Olckers, 2019). Men were allowed to occupy the political, economic, and social spheres of society, and women were regarded as incapable to occupy such spheres. Before 1994 other females would engage in agricultural tasks, while others took in domestic work in white people's households so that they help to add income to their families. This was not regarded as feminine even though these women helped to supplement the family income and help put food on the table (Koekemoer & Crafford, 2019).

However, after 1994 the prescribed roles of women came to be overthrown in South Africa due to the rise of the industrial economy which rose with the growth of the town and the development of migrant labour (Moorosi, 2019). This is when most South African women lives changed after 1994 with the passage of the Constitution in 1996.

1.3.3 The History of Higher Education and Women in South Africa

Prior to 1994, there were privileged Universities and Schools for White people and for Africans, Indians, and Coloured people. According Johnson (2007) racism persisted in South Africa, and higher education mirrored the country's racially divided background. Hay and Monnapula-Mapesela (2017:11) supported the above view and highlighted that, "there was a noticeable distinction between between academic, intellectual and socio-political cultures where Black universities had to adapt to the curricular and management models used by the Afrikaans (white) universities. Furthermore, the scholars highlighted that, there was lack of equity in the distribution of resources to institutions which included the facilities, a skewed distribution of student population in certain disciplines with no more than a handful of non-white

students in the fields of sciences, engineering and technology”(Hay & Monnapula-Mapesela, 2017:12).

According to Naicker (2013:3) "a report by the national commission of higher education in 1996, revealed that women in 1993 occupied 32% of the total research and teachings positions. The report showed that most women occupied junior lecturer and lecturer positions. Moodley (2017) highlighted that in some white universities in South Africa, women held all the positions below the rank of a junior lecturer and 89% held the junior lecturer while 45% held the position of the lecturer. During that time only three percent (3%) professors and eight percent (8%) of associate professors were women (Kele and Pietersen, 2015). Blacks were visibly underrepresented and black women in particular, were underrepresented.

According to Badat (2010), the interconnected environment of racism and gender oppression was visible in predominantly white male institutions and disciplines. It is for this reason that Breetzke and Hedding (2017) believed that for these people to succeed, the system of advantage (male privilege) was maintained by an unseen hand of support, status, and lobbying that provided male academics with vital knowledge and opportunities. On the other hand academic women who succeeded in obtaining positions in the academia, had no invisible hand of assistance, which simply, mean that they did not have access to resources they needed. The transformation in higher education came post-1994 with the passage of the constitution, which outlawed the injustices in higher education (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). A number of initiatives have been implemented to help women advance in higher education. More research funding for women (National Research Fund), more positions for women and black women were made available up to the most senior leadership positions. Nevertheless, in 2007 the Higher Education South Africa found that only 3 vice-chancellors out of 23 universities in South Africa were women and 5 out of 23 registrars were women (HER-SA, 2014).

However, considerable progress in women's career success in South Africa only became visible in the last decade. According to Doubel (2011:27), "the Grant Thornton international business owners survey of 2004 ranks South Africa as the third on the list of countries of the highest representation of women in senior

positions and eighth globally of women in senior management positions". In 2017, BWASA highlighted that there was little improvement of the advancement of women in senior positions in higher education institutions (HEIs) since 2015. The 2017 report showed that women fill only 15% of decision-making vice-chancellor positions with only 9 women holding the position of dean in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and less than a third (1/3) of women hold executive directive and management positions (BWASA, 2017). This shows that women are given little opportunity to move from the level of the managerial position to top leadership positions although more women are attaining a total of 62% degrees in universities.

According to Shober (2014:319) "there are traditional stereotypes that influence women's progress in higher education although non-profit organisations such as HERSA-SA exist. HERSA-SA seeks to provide mentorship, networking, and training to empower women educators to ensure that they succeed in their careers". However, the director of HERSA-SA acknowledged that women are underrepresented in senior leadership positions.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Research aim

The aim of this study is to identify factors that influence women's career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa.

1.4.2 Research objectives

- To examine the difference between the success groups based on demographics
- To assess how females' personality traits influence career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa
- To measure how organisational culture influence females career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa
- To assess how career barriers influence females career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa
- To examine how external support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- To examine how internal support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

1.4.3 Hypotheses

H₁: There is a difference between the success group of women based on their demographics.

H₂: There is a significant influence between personality traits and the career success of women.

H₃: There is significant influence between organisational culture and career success of women

H₄: There is a negative influence between career barriers and the career progression rate of women.

H₅: There is a significant influence between external support factors and the career success of women.

H₆: There is a significant influence between internal support factors and the career success of women.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Green and Thorogood (2018) defined research methodology as a logical way to solve a problem. Basically, research methodology includes all processes and procedures followed by a researcher when collecting and analysing data for the intended study.

1.5.1 Research Design

A research design is the plan that describes the condition and procedures for collecting and analysing data (Ngcobo, 2016). The researcher adopted a correlational (non-experimental) research design to investigate the influence between the dependent variables and the independent variable.

1.5.2 Sampling

Sampling involves selecting representative units from the total population (Pride & Ferrell, 2010). A convenience sampling was used for this study with a sample size of 70 female employees.

1.5.3 Data collection

The study made use of primary data. The primary data (quantitative data) was collected using a structured online questionnaire with closed-ended questions.

1.5.4 Data analysis

Data was analysed with the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 27.0 published by international business machine (IBM).

1.5.5 Reliability, Validity and Objectivity

A pilot study was done prior to the main study in order to ensure reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha coefficients was used as the measure of internal consistency.

1.5.6 Bias

According to Simundic (2013) "Bias in research refers to any trend or deviation from the truth in data collection, data analysis, interpretation and publication which can cause false conclusions". In this study the researcher did not practice any bias.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

An ethical clearance was obtained from TREC, which allowed the researcher to conduct research. All the respondents were treated with respect and were protected by upholding confidentiality.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

Females in educational leadership positions serve as role models to female students and other females at entry-level positions. Having few females in higher positions indicates that there is a limited number of female role models to look up to. This can lead to a downward spiral of female leadership, meaning if few females are doing the job others will view it as a job they cannot do easily. This only signifies the need for more work to amend the present gender imbalance in higher education management. Additionally, finding out why certain females succeed may help in rectifying the gender imbalances in leadership and help other females to overcome the challenges others have already been exposed to. This will help to make universities to become inclusive and better places for all students and staff.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the introduction and background, problem statement, literature review, purpose of the study, objectives and hypotheses of the study and the significant of the proposed research. The next chapter discusses existing literature on women career success.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the most visible changes at the workplace in the twenty-first century is the dramatic increase of women in the labour force. Irrespective of women entering the paid labour market, women are also becoming career-oriented, while many are pursuing managerial and professional positions. However, the main concern that arises is the slow progress of women into high-ranking positions and jobs. According to Coe, Wiley and Bekker (2019), gender correlates more with occupational type in the working environment whereby higher status jobs go disproportionately to men and academia is no different from the larger professional world. In academics, women are underrepresented while men hold tenure track positions, achieve full professorship, and paid more for work in equal rank with women.

This chapter reviews literature related to this study. It is divided into five subsections; the first section give an overview of theoretical literature. Section two covers the legislative perspective which include international laws concerning women empowerment along with governmental policies that promote women's career success. The third section looks at the conceptual framework of the study. The fourth section presents the empirical literature of factors that influence women's career success in institutions of higher learning. Lastly, the challenges faced by women leaders in higher education are reviewed.

2.2 THEORETICAL LITERATURE

Brown and Lent (2017) indicated that theories guiding career success are relatively rare. However, six theories were formulated in relation to the current study.

2.2.1 The Patriarchy Theory

According to Powell (1885) the Patriarchal theory was exposed by Sir Henry Maine in 1861 after it was long held by a class of writers in Europe. Different scholars have different views about the definition of patriarchy and what patriarchy is. Akgul (2021:44) provided Lerner's 1986 definition that "patriarchy refers to the system historically derived from Greek and Roman law, in which the male as head of household had absolute legal and economic power over his dependent female and

male relations". Rawat (2014) is of the similar view that patriarchy considers men as superior to women. Morrissey (2003: 24) gave a similar definition which explains that "patriarchy is the relations of governance presided over by a father".

On the same note, Ahad and Koç Akgül (2020:44) defined "patriarchy as a concept that refers to power and control between an object and subject and subsumes, among others, the relationship between the father and the son; therefore the ruler-subject binary". However, Joseph (1994) indicated the patriarchal relationship can also be seen in a brother-sister relationship based on self-hood. According to Diekman (2015), selfhood is defined as the type of love that defines their masculinity or femininity where a girl's behaviour is natured by their male relative so as to preserve the dignity of the family. The term patriarchy is used in feminists societies to describe the power that exists between women and men (Sultana, 2011). In addition to Morrissey's arguments, the father is the primary oppressor of patriarchy and Ferguson (1999) recognized it as the father's rule. Kandiyoti (1988) observed that patriarchy can also be seen in relationships between umakoti (bride) and mother-in-law, or between a black woman from Africa and a White woman from the west (William, 2011).

In patriarchal organisations, the hierarchy of the organisation automatically classifies men's work and women's work. Saultana (2011) highlighted that patriarchy act as an obstacle to the career success of women in higher education because patriarchy encourages male leadership, domination, and power where women are subjected to dependency on males, and lack of participation in decision making, although there are differences in dominations, however, the fact remains, "men are in control". In the 21st century, appointments are made on merit in higher education, women can stand their ground against men but patriarchy continues to be a barrier for women to move forward in society (Adisa, Abdulsheem & Isiaka, 2019). Patriarchal organisations are responsible for the inadequate representation of female leaders in higher positions in educational institutions. The above statement is supported by Carbajal (2018) who mentioned that men do not provide leadership advocacy for women. This was mentioned in the faith and justice: the crisis of empathy conference, where the first question asked was "what does a man have to say about women" however, it came out that no man attended the seminar and this became

evident that women do not experience leadership advocacy from men (Carbajal, 2018).

2.2.2 The Feminist Theory

The feminist theory is most known as the champion theory for giving women a voice in highlighting how women have contributed to society. The theory was first introduced in the works of Mary Wollstonecraft in 1759-1797. The theory is the opposite of patriarchal theory. Feminist theory advocates for women's rights as opposed to patriarchy. The feminist theory has not drastically changed the world because of the gender disparities that still exist, however; it can be of help in understanding the inequalities that women come across in attaining senior positions in higher education (Diekman, 2015).

According to Rawat (2014), there are different gender disparities identified in literature and defined by feminists theorists. Some of the disparities such as power and division of labour are the main obstacles to women's progression to senior positions in higher education. Feminists pointed out that power occurs in higher education institutions and it is seen in situations where women are barred in many educational spaces, sexual harassment, and physical violence, while the division of labour is seen through unpaid labour or other jobs that are supposedly regarded as women's jobs (Joseph, 1994).

Anderson *et al.*, (2017) reports that feminists advocates for gender equality, political, economic and social sphere. Women have historically experienced prejudice because they were deprived human rights and given limited freedom by their spouses, as well as being thought to have inferior intelligence (Anderson *et al.*, 2017). However, it is for this reason that Nyangiwe–Ndika (2015) highlighted that women have been viewed as less full of humans in many societies and that females are traditionally under males and they should be subordinate to males. Nyangiwe–Ndika (2015), further emphasized that women are regarded as inferior and only men own a full supplement of reasoning. This is interpreted as crediting men as the only creatures capable of thinking, analysing, debating cases, and interpreting with logical reasoning. The aforementioned perspective is revealed in the higher learning institutions wherein societies perceive women as incapable to lead. This is evident in

higher education institutions because of the under-representation of females in senior management positions.

Nevertheless, liberal feminists argued that females have the same abilities and traits as males but the sexist modeling division deprived females of the chance to exercise their abilities in a male-dominated society (Lugones & Spelman, 2018). The females have been relegated to the private domestic sector, with no voice in the public sphere, despite their participation in it, they are pressed to take care of domestic responsibilities in the public. On the other hand, Crenshaw (2018) mentioned that radical feminists debated that women are not valued in male-dominated societies and are oppressed even though being a woman according to radical feminists is a good thing. They further argued that female workers are harassed in masculine-dominated sectors, and radical feminists emphasised that the rule by the father (patriarchy) can be eradicated suppose females understand their value as well as contest male domination.

2.2.3 The Organisational Theory

According to Business Dictionary, "Organisational theory is the study of organisational designs and organisational structures, the relationship of organisations with their external environment, and the behaviour of managers within organisations". According to Nyangiwe–Ndika (2015), different scholars argued that feminists view organisational theory as a non-gendered theory, while on the other hand, Murray and Southey (2019) are of the view that organisational theory fails to give attention to the problem of women in the organisation, hence view it as inadequate. Moreover, Irefin (2012) mentioned that gender issues are regarded as taboos in the study of organisational studies. In most organisations, every task that does not require critical thinking or that is labeled as easy is reserved for women to complete while strategic tasks are reserved for men. Therefore, it is for this reason that Crenshaw (2018) indicated that liberal feminists' views are dangerous to gender segregation in all dimensions in organisations because women will experience unequal wages and barriers to high-status jobs.

2.2.4 The Human Capital Theory

This theory was established in 1958 by Mincer and in 1962 by Becker. The model was defined by Pasban and Nojehdeh (2016), as a "key element in improving the

assets of an organisation. Furthermore, it was defined as knowledge, education, work competence, and psychometric evaluations as well as the knowledge, skill, creativity, and health of the individual which includes a person's qualifications, experience, and geographical mobility or the building blocks that job candidates use to build careers" (Marginson, 2019).

Human capital deficits have contributed to the prevention women to progress to senior management positions in higher education because for one to progress to the most senior management positions, one has to have the knowledge, skills, creativity etc. Pasban and Nojedeh (2016) highlight that the theory suggests that the more human capital experience gained and the more skills and qualifications one builds is the more work one obtain. Human capital is an important factor in higher education institutions to the academic career path as the rising path to the top-level management positions. According to Osituyo (2018) the representation of women to higher positions in higher education increases better once women are positioned to gain proper education and experience to move up the organisational hierarchy.

On the other hand, Subbaya (2017) argued that women in higher education face greater challenges in developing their human capital, because they are employed part-time, they are caregivers at home and they lack equal opportunities as men. This leads to women viewed as less productive in building their human capital theory. Although Moodley and Toni (2017) argued that women are required to work two times harder than their male counterparts to obtain the same position especially a managerial position regardless of the human capital theory. They believed that women are the most skilled, qualified and experienced candidates but are still treated unfairly in masculine environment because of the unfair expectations to behave like men and possess male characteristics, in order to be considered a desirable leader. In other words, gender stereotype is still prevailing and act as a barrier to women career progression.

2.2.5 The Social Capital Theory

Another theory used to understand women career success in literature is the social capital theory. Spurk *et al.*, (2019) defined "social capital as the collective value of social networks and the reciprocity which arises from such networks". Affandi, Permana, Yani, and Mursitama (2020) are of the view that social capital theory

refers to "collective asset in the form of shared norms, values, beliefs, trust, networks, social relations, and institutions that facilitate cooperation and collective action for mutual benefits". The social capital theory is not tangible but exists through interpersonal relationships (Robinson 2017). Women's interaction in higher education is regarded as an important contributor to the success of women who aspire to leadership positions in higher education as they share their experiences and challenges they face, and how they overcome such challenges (Sutherland, 2017).

Social capital theory affects career mobility through access to information, resources, and sponsorship. Social capital is not a tangible resource and it is so difficult to measure, the reason being that it is conceptually bound together with human capital. Robinson (2017) mentioned that another reason could "be that it can be impossible to connect the currency of social capital, trust, goodwill, information, and relationships, with the benefits of social capital, which includes career success, job search success, reduced turnover and enhanced entrepreneurial behavior". This was found to be true by Hopkins (2017) as other networks that provide social support. Furthermore, Hopkins (2017) believed that networking is an essential method in benefiting the social capital that is needed to succeed because it provides a positive gaining towards career progression. According to Dandan and Marques (2017) "the word networking has become a slogan in the current world and it seems to be offering limitless opportunities, especially for women seeking to gain a more equal footing in the higher education world".

Johannisson (2017) found networking as a useful tool that provides a path in which females discuss information, share experiences and tactics with other women. In a study conducted, where women in Ireland were interviewed, it was reported that women's networks has a positive impact on the career success of women (Cross, Linehan & Murphy, 2017). Those interviewed in particular indicated that such networks provide a good forum for sharing strategic expertise, particularly approaches for acquiring mentors, with the collective.

2.2.6 The Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is founded on Bandura's social cognitive theory and was developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett in 1994. The SCCT is a

dominant intellectual and motivational process concept that has been applied to the study of many areas, including academic performance.

According to Brown and Lent (2017:2), "the SCCT is a theory that is aimed at explaining three interrelated aspects of career development: (a) how basic academic and career interests develop, (b) how educational and career choices are made, and (c) how academic and career success is obtained". The study will focus on (c) how academic and career success is obtained. The SCCT looks into academic and career success as well as the choices people make in choosing a career and how the career is obtained. Whenever women are passionate about a profession or success in academic field, they tend to work hard to achieve their goals (Lent & Brown, 2017).

2.3 LEGISLATIVE PERSPECTIVE CONCERNING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

South Africa is a signatory to various international Laws, conventions by the United Nations (UN), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), and Africa Union (AU) which supports and encourages governments to play a vital role in empowering, encouraging, and supporting females when climbing the ladder in their careers.

There are various international laws that South Africa has endorsed, which inform all the national laws introduced in the country about women and the prevalent of discrimination in many aspects of life.

2.3.1 The United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (December 1979)

The Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) was passed by the United Nations general assembly in December 1979 to ring a bell in all areas where men deny women equality. The main goal of the convention is rooted in the reaffirmation of faith in fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of humans as well as the equal rights of men and women. This convention gives meaning to equality and how it can be achieved (United Nations, 2018).

The convention among other things gives women's legal status the most attention. Part II Article 7 (a-c), gave women the right to political participation, the right to vote, to exercise public functions, hold office and represent their countries at an international

level. The piece of legislation pointed to the nationality of married women that a women's legal status is linked to their husband's nationality. Most importantly to this study, Part III Article 10 (a-h) of the convention affirms women equal education opportunities and employment and this was given special emphasis to women most in rural areas.

Article 16 (d) of the convention devotes itself to other vital concerns, such as women's reproductive rights. It states that 'women's role in reproduction should not be a basis for discrimination'. For instance, it advocates a proper understanding of maternity as a social function between both parties, taking fully shared responsibility for child-rearing, although it is not the case in African societies. The convention recommends specific maternity protection measures that are "not considered discriminatory". Notably, it is the only treaty for human rights that emphasise family planning. The signatory countries are therefore required in the educational process to advice on family planning and to develop family codes guaranteeing women's rights "to choose on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education, and means to enable them to exercise these rights" (Assembly, 1979).

However, in Africa as a whole, this convention is still under-implemented especially on the issue of child-rearing and sharing full responsibility. Women in Africa are given a choice to choose between their career and starting a family because family responsibility is regarded as the woman's primary role.

2.3.2 The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (September 1995)

The United Nations organised the fourth world conference (Beijing conference) on women in 1995, and it was adopted by member states as a global agenda for ensuring the improvement of human rights for women and girls. According to Larson (1996) this fourth world conference gave birth to the Beijing declaration and platform for action which ensures the achievement of gender equality in critical areas of concern including education and training, poverty, conflict, and economy. The declaration aimed at advancing the goals of equality, development, and peace for all women in all interests of all humanity (UN Women, 1995). It also acknowledged the voices of women and their diversity in their roles, honoring those women who paved the way. It also declared to ensure the full enjoyment of women and girls on all

human rights and fundamental freedom and take effective action against violations of these rights (United Nations, 2017).

According to Chapter (IV) subsection (b) (69) of the declaration on women-girls education and training, Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development, and peace (UN Women, 1995). According to Doran, Hulme, Wagner, Yang and Wise (1995) “non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys and thus ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. Literacy of women is an important key to improving health, nutrition, and education in the family and to empowering women to participate in decision-making in society”.

2.3.3 African Union Strategy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) 2018-2028

In recent years the AU gave effect to the African Union Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) 2018-2028, which was launched during the AU summit in February 2019. The strategy relies on an inclusive and multisectoral approach and builds on the lessons learned from the 2009 gender policy. According to Majola (2022), GEWE is a transformational policy in which its outcomes aim to mitigate, if not eliminate the main constraints hindering gender equality and women's empowerment, so that women may participate fully in economic activities, affairs of the state, and social endeavors.

Furthermore, the AU seeks to strengthen women's agency in Africa and ensure that women's voices are amplified and their concerns are fully addressed through, among others effective legislation implementation and proper financing of gender equality work (African Union, 2019). The strategy (GEWE) was designed along with 4 pillars wherein pillar 1 aims to recognize that women should be economically empowered and being able to have full access to quality of education and control over productive resources. This pillar recognizes that for women to have a voice, they need to be equally represented in all areas of decision-making and be able to participate with impact, through the removal of all forms of barriers (Ntlama-Makhanya & Lubisi-Bizani, 2021)

2.3.4 The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

According to Namibia (2017) the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development looked into the main gender issues in the SADC program of action and community, building initiatives that are important to the sustainable development of the SADC region. According to SADC (2008) the main aim of the protocol was "to provide for the empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality by encouraging and harmonizing the development and implementation of gender-responsive legislation, policies and programs and projects". The Protocol discusses topics of constitutional and legal rights, governance, education and education, productive resources and job creation, gender violence, HIV/AIDS and resolution of conflicts.

However, Africa has made progress in progressive laws and policies to push and protect females; there is still an infinite gap in implementing gender equality and female empowerment policies that the Heads of state and government of the African Union passed. According to SADC (2019) inequalities still occurs between men and women throughout the Southern African development community region and women are underrepresented. Consistent with the SADC gender program as stipulated by the regional indicative strategic development plan, SADC has developed a women's economic empowerment framework. The framework is intended to develop and implement a regional women's economic empowerment program to facilitate strengthened coordination and implementation of the SADC region's commitments on women's economic empowerment.

2.4 GOVERNMENT POLICIES THAT PROMOTE WOMEN'S CAREER SUCCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa pledged to enforce gender equality and eradicate the injustice against women through different legislations to ensure that individuals who are from disadvantaged groups have the same opportunities at the work . Prior to 1994, women were not given equal opportunities as men in all aspects of life. They were never granted the chance to show their capabilities in managerial and senior positions particularly in higher education (Nyangiwe–Ndika, 2015) but however with the passage of the Constitution women were given opportunities to participate in all the spheres of life.

2.4.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 is the supreme law of the country which seeks to provide the legal foundation for the existence of the republic and set out the duties of the citizens and defines the structure of the government. According to chapter 2 of the Bill of rights, the Bill of rights is the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. It enshrines the rights of the people and affirms the democratic of human dignity, equality and freedom. It necessitates the requirements based on gender equality of women and other designated groups. Section 9 assures equality before the law and the eradication of discrimination by government or private persons to the people although it allows affirmative action to be taken to address the injustices of past. Equality as described in the constitution includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. It also prohibits unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly on the basis of “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth” (RSA, 1996). Furthermore, S18 of the constitution grants people the right to freedom of association.

2.4.2 The Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998

The Employment Equity Act (EEA) 55 of 1998 (as amended) is the first on the list in the South African legislation which strives to attain impartial equity in the workplace by encouraging equal employment opportunities for everyone. According to Section 2 of the EEA 55 of 1998 the purpose of the act is to “achieve equality in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce”

The Act makes provision for direct and indirect discrimination against Blacks (Coloureds and Indians), Women and people living with disabilities. According to Section 6 of the Act, “no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against an employee in any employment policy or practice on one or more grounds race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, political opinion, culture, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth”. The preceding Act certifies a method of making

the workplace more representative, fair, and conducive to any gender at work, and it emphasizes that competent people from specific groups have equal opportunities in the workplace (Republic of South Africa, 1998). This is supported by policy guidelines for a Democratic South Africa, which emphasize affirmative action in response to gender inequality and subordination. Policies adopting affirmative action are also expected to minimize employment barriers to eradicate unjust discrimination against women as per section 15(2) of the EEA (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

2.4.3 The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) 75 of 1997 as amended

The South African government enacted the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) in 1979 and was amended in 1997. The purpose of the Act is to “advance economic development and social justice by fulfilling the primary objects of the act which are to give effect to and regulate the right to fair labour practices conferred by section 23(1) of the constitution, by establishing and enforcing basic conditions of employment and regulating the variation of basic conditions of employment. Section 9 of the act allows an employee to work a maximum of 45 hours a week” (BCEA, 1997). An employer may not require an employee to work overtime except in accordance with an agreement.

According to Section 25 (1) of the BCEA “states that employees are entitled to a minimum period of four consecutive months of maternity leave. Maternity leave may commence any time from four weeks before the expected date of birth, or on the date prescribed by a medical practitioner or a midwife on the basis that it is necessary for the employee's or her unborn child's health”.

This is done to protect pregnant women at the workplace and to encourage organisations to generate a diverse working environment by addressing obstacles to women's career success (Department of Labour South Africa, 2017). With regard to BCEA section 26 (1), "no employer may require or permit a pregnant employee or an employee who is nursing her child to perform work that is hazardous to her health or the health of her child." The BCEA has issued a code of good practice on employee protection during pregnancy and after child birth. The code recognises that many women go back to work when they are breastfeeding and gives employers guidance. It instructs businesses on how to evaluate and monitor risks for health and safety of workers who are pregnant and breast-feeding and gives a non-exhaustive list of risk

for individuals who are pregnant or breast-feeding (Department of Labour South Africa, 2017).

Furthermore, Pregnant employees are entitled to maternity benefits as stipulated by section 24 of the unemployment insurance fund, for any period of pregnancy or delivery and the period thereafter.

2.4.4 The Labour Relations Act no. 66 of 1995

According to Section 1 of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) 55 of 1995, the purpose of the Act is to “advance economic development, social justice, labour peace and democratisation of the workplace by fulfilling the primary objectives of this act , which are to give effect to and regulate the fundamental rights conferred in Section 27 of the constitution which is the right to fair labour practices”. Chapter 2 of the act highlights that every employee has the right to freedom of association

Section 186 (1) (c), of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) 66 of 1995 as ammended provides that, “where an employer refuses to allow an employee to resume work after she has taken maternity leave in terms of any law, collective agreement, or her contract of employment, such a refusal will be regarded as unfair dismissal”. Furthermore, in Section 187 (1) (e) of the act, a dismissal is automatically unfair if the reason for the dismissal revolves around an employee's pregnancy, intended pregnancy, or any reason related to her pregnancy.

2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research adopted and modified the conceptual framework by Doubell and Struwig (2014) which highlighted the factors that influence women's career success at the workplace.

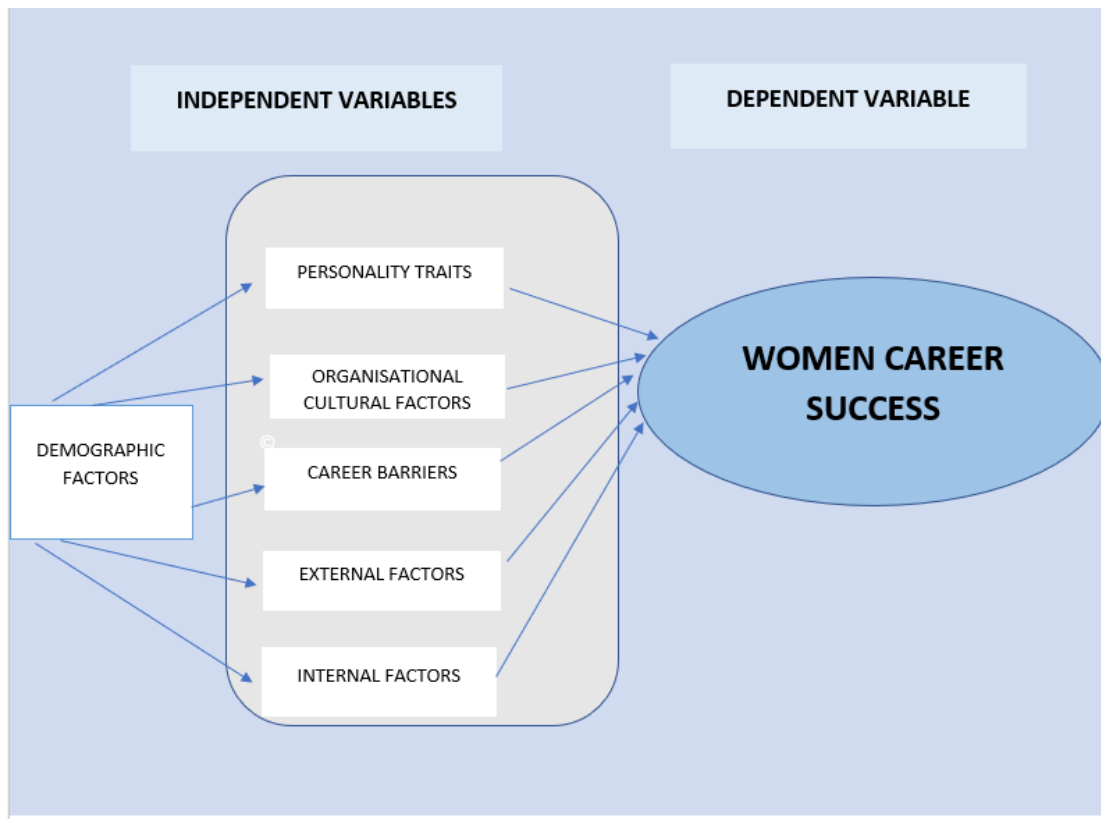


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework (Doubell & Struwig, 2014)

Based on the above conceptual framework, the influence of demographics on females' career success has many sides ranging from birth order to social-economic status. Kuba, Flegr and Havlíček, (2018) indicated that the first child in the family is more confident, firm, and concerned about status and ranking. Other demographic variables identified impacting on females' career success include educational level, parents educational level, profession, marital status, ethnicity, number and age of children and gender of siblings.

Secondly, Shepard (2017) argues that personality shaped by cultural surrounding and an individual own experience can pose as a barrier. Thirdly, cultural factors refer to the degree to which the social values of the society see women in a position of power. This can prove difficult since most African countries are patriarchal (Ncayiyana, 2019).

Fourth, the framework identifies “glass-ceiling”, which refers to a persistent artificial barrier to female advancement to leadership positions (Bhana & Bayat, 2020). Furthermore, the lack of female mentors and role models (Boonzaier, 2017), social exclusion from male networks (Bilimoria, 2017) are also identified as barriers within

the system. Lastly, female's career success appears to be influenced by internal and external support wherein internal support refers to organisational support for females to enhance their potential to succeed. These include educational programs which have an impact on employability and career success. Wherein external support refers to external activities of the organisation that influences the female's ability to succeed. This includes family support which assists females to balance work and family (Lockwood *et al.*, 2019).

2.6 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Females' career success is the most arguable topic, and several studies have been published on a similar issue.

2.6.1 Personality Traits to the Career Success of Women

According to Doubell (2011:59), "Personality traits can be regarded as a determinant in how people respond to their surroundings and give an insight into why other women succeed in top-level management positions while others are unable to succeed or to overcome the obstacles in the way". Personality traits are one of the dominant influential factors to the career success of women who have succeeded to the top-level positions in higher education, although the contention that personality affects females' career success has always been there. Scholars began to study the correlation after the mid-1990s (Lateef, 2019; Mainiero & Gibson, 2018). The studies focused on various personalities, rather than a particular trait. For instance, Judge and Colleagues; Seibert and Colleagues as cited in Choi (2019), studied "the relationship between the overall personality framework and career success using the big five-factor model of personality", which showed that personality traits are important characteristics that contribute to the success of women in higher education. On the other hand, Doubell and Struwig (2014) suggested self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and need for achievement which is relevant to the current study.

- Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to one's ability to perform successfully their duties at work (Shepard, 2017). People have an ordinary desire to control what happens which has an impact on their success. According to the study conducted by Flower (2019) performance and motivation are influenced by people's beliefs which impact their

capability to surpass career obstacles. The study of Datta and Shah (2020) showed that negative feedback from challenging situations does not move people with a high level of self-efficacy but rather they use it to their advantage since they are prepared to endure in difficult circumstances. These people set themselves challenge goals to achieve and react to challenging situations with improved efforts and motivation.

Researchers like Bandura have highlighted the expansion of self-efficacy is a guiding principle in his social cognitive theory which implies that, if people can control their behavior, they can consequently control the events that they face (Nowicki & Duke, 2017). The study of Sinden (2017) highlighted that future female leaders in higher education should be equipped with skills and abilities that conquer obstacles and defeat challenges thus as a result self-efficacy is reinforced. The physiological reaction to a stressful situation that is normal to human behavior is essential to women's performance in higher education because it enhances the knowledge of women. Hence, it is important to know how women who are succeeding in their careers can surpass these stressful situations in the 21st century.

On the other hand, the study of Vancouver, Alicke, and Halper (2017) reveals that women with low self-efficacy tend to dodge difficult activities, perceive challenges as individual threats, giving up on tasks easily, lack aspiration and ability to commit to tasks, put more focus on penalties of failure which result in a low level of actual intelligent, high-stress levels, more time to recover, and they take negative feedback personally, while on the other hand those with 'high self-efficacy' attempt difficulty goals, set difficult objectives to achieve and have higher determination which result in lower stress levels, strategic-thinking, and quick recovery from failure. The overview of provisional objectives and decreased tasks risks aim to develop self-esteem and confidence that result in having a high probability to control success. The study of Moodly and Toni (2019) emphasizes that women should have self-confidence because in most cases, they tend to be their own worst enemy in career progression. A high level of self-efficacy has the probability of increasing women's representation in senior positions in higher education and also in male-dominated careers (Lockwood *et al.*, 2019).

- Internal locus of control

According to Yoo and Shin (2017), a distinction between internal and external locus of control should be made when defining locus of control. People who have a strong locus of control can account for when they fail as well as celebrate when they win (Eller, 2019). These people are normally believed to come from households with family members that inspire or motivate and view education as important and also that account for their actions. On the other hand, Lockwood *et al.*, (2019) mentioned that people with an external locus of control tend to shift the blame to external forces for their failures and they give credit for their success to external influences. The confidence and ability to govern the outcome of actions that people normally have is measured by the locus of control reinforcement. Researchers such as Eller (2019); Mainiero and Gibson (2018) summarised research findings on people with an internal locus of control, stating that they are more persuaded to try and modify or manage their surroundings and place higher value on achievements.

- Need for achievement

The study of Beigi *et al.*, (2018) focused on the need for achievement and highlighted that difficult tasks people choose to undertake are related to the need for achievement, meaning that others may choose easy tasks to reduce the possibility of failure while others may choose challenging tasks so that failure would not be embarrassing. Women that set challenging tasks but achievable, are those with “a high need for achievement” and have a greater chance to succeed in senior positions in higher education. Lateef (2019) highlighted that their objective is to succeed, but tend to avert high and low-risks cases. Women who are likely to overcome barriers are those that show the need for high achievement because of their willingness to be successful and denote a fondness for tough challenges (Mainiero & Gibson, 2018).

2.6.2 Organisational Culture to the Career Success of Women

According to Morcos (2019), organisational culture refers to the characteristics and tangible personality that originated in every organisation. Moodly and Toni (2019) are of the similar view that "organisational culture is the collective effect of the common beliefs, behaviors, and values of people within a company". However, Nowicki and Duke (2017) are of the view that organisational culture is a cohesive pattern of principles and beliefs which provides an understanding and insights for members of the organisation about organisational performance. On a similar note Sinden

(2017:34) believed that “organisations are based on norms, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions, which in turn influence organisational practices, tacit norms, and values”. The organisational factor can either promote female's advancement in an organisation or pull them down.

The studies conducted by Bonzet and Frick (2019); Datta and Shah (2020) found out that organisational culture plays a supportive role in the modification of females' career success. The setting of the organisational culture plays an important role in improving females' careers. However, globally, the higher education context continuously remains a "masculine" setting, wherein numerous females are faced with much barriers in climbing the ladder to leadership positions in institutions of higher learning. Moodley and Toni (2017) opine that the masculine environment creates unfair expectations from women who have managed to occupy the senior positions to behave like males. These women are expected to work twice harder than their male counterparts to be viewed as enough. Nguyen (2013) indicated that women who aspire to occupy the leadership positions are expected to rise above the socially constructed norms of what Kele and Pietersen (2015:13) refer to as "femaleness" to fulfill socially prescribed roles of a leader.

On the same note, Toni and Moodly (2019: 181) highlighted that there is a phenomenon of a "think manager-think male" approach that is rooted amongst men in institutions of higher learning. Such opinions inhibit women's career success because the assumption is that women do not possess such masculine characteristics in relation to leadership. The study of De Meulenaer, De Pelsmacker, and Dens (2018) viewed women as strategic thinkers but masculine organisations view women as affectionate, interpersonally sensitive, and gentle which contributes to barriers in leadership and management positions. According to Osituyo (2018), the male counterparts are easily accepted to the leadership positions because they are labeled to have the desired traits which include assertiveness, competitiveness, forcefulness, self-reliance, dominance, and aggressiveness which differ from the nurturing characteristics of female traits.

2.6.3 Career Barriers to the career success of women

Women in higher education institutions come across several hindrances when climbing the ladder to senior management positions. According to Hopkins (2017),

most research focuses on the diverse nature of women's career paths, with less attention paid to the barriers that women encounter in the workplace, particularly in higher education. Zulu (2007) identified career barriers which are crucial for the study and are discussed further below.

- Psychological or Attitudinal barriers

Psychological barriers consist of attitudes, for instance, the attitude of men concerning the roles of women, their career ambitions, capability to succeed, poor self-confidence in their capabilities to manage the organisation (Dandan & Marques, 2017). Xie and Pang (2018) advised that the reason why women are not promoted to senior positions in higher education is the anxiety to put themselves in the front line of the organisation rather than waiting to be noticed and endorsed for senior positions. However, in academic institutions, Hopkins (2017) emphasised that, those who are active, productive, and seen in the frontline get promoted to senior positions. Research conducted by Soi (2017) revealed that women tend to be shy and less inspired to apply for higher management positions than men, they lack confidence although they qualify and hold better qualifications and experience than men.

Chitsamatanga, Rembe, and Shumba (2018) suggested that the level of expectation to succeed in women is very low since it is associated with factors such as racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination and also that they are not a participant of a certain leading group. Soi (2017) observed that women tend to underrepresent themselves in many organisations and those that succeed on their own forget that the opportunities that they had are not available to all women hence, they become their own worst enemy.

- Traditional roles as a barrier

In most cases, women are confronted with what is called in literature "role conflict" which concerns a setting wherein women should balance between family responsibilities and their careers (Dandan & Marques, 2017), they are expected to play the role of being a wife, mother, and also a professional career woman. According to Mayimele, Ndudzo, and Ndlovu (2020) females' career ambition to senior positions can be hindered because of the responsibility to choose which role

to focus on between their careers and household issues although societal morals command that family should be put first above everything and that a woman's role is in the kitchen. For example, women who have a family tend to compromise their careers, for instance, if the husband moves or gets transferred at work they automatically move with the husband and as a result, their careers get interrupted. Social mobility then becomes another barrier in attempting to move upward in their careers in higher education (Mayimele *et al.*, 2020).

- Structural/Systematic barriers

How things are done in an organisation (organisational culture or institutional cultures) institute several hindrances to the career success of women (Karadang, 2018). Soi (2017:16) defined organisational culture "as myths or ceremonies that communicate the underlying beliefs and values of the organisation to its employees". Amla and Buitendach (2019:50) view organisational culture "as shared assumptions, norms, values and beliefs of an institution which define and shape what is seen as acceptable and unacceptable behavior, a combination of values, structure, and power that has implications for every aspect of an organisation's operations and external relationships".

Regardless of the existence of formal policies to address disparities in the workplace these elusive common values of how things are done in an organisation hamper women's career success. For instance, if the culture of the University is founded on the archaic patriarchal perceptions of what is required then it is expected that women will be deprived of promotions and leadership positions (Dandan & Marques, 2017).

- Socio-economic and Cultural barriers

In African cultures, most women are expected to focus more on domestic and family duties and deprive their academic life. Chitsamatanga *et al.*, (2018) observed that the choice usually originates from what is believed to be right morals that regard a man's career success as an achievement duty to his family. Additionally, women sacrifice their careers at the expense of their husbands' because of the archaic view that only the husband provides for the family and women should be subordinated to their husbands. The economic reason is that a man's profession is given priority over

a woman who makes such sacrifices and they tend to publish articles less as a result the chances of succeeding becomes low (Mayimele *et al.*, 2020).

At the youngest age from childhood, girls are taught traditional values which are different from boys (Soi, 2017). Women are trained to be modest, submissive, affectionate, and nurturing while boys are taught to value leadership, aggressiveness, assertiveness, task orientation, and competitiveness (Karadag, 2018). This automatically acts as an obstacle to women's traits which does not follow the archaic masculine characteristics of traits. A University study conducted by Karadag (2018) on first entering students which was based on the impact of gender of the group leader. Karadag found that gender disparity produced by the study was the same as other studies on the same issue. Many female students preferred a male leader.

- Sexism and Racism as barriers

Gender contributes to the discrimination of women in the academic sphere. However, Amla and Buitendach (2019) highlighted that black women are mostly confronted by what is called double discrimination of race and gender, because white women are usually given most preference to leadership positions in higher education institutions. Xie and Pang (2018) revealed that black women are regarded as an inferior group hence their opportunities are limited. Amla and Buitendach (2019:70) furthermore, mentioned that "to highlight the impact of race, ethnicity, class, and sex on black women as a group revealed that it is important to differentiate the experiences of black academic women". Thus Maseti (2018) emphasized that women's experiences cannot be regarded as universal and there is a need for one to understand that women's experiences are not universal but they are differentiated from one woman to another through their everyday practices and the type of organisation they work in either they are marginalized or silenced group. Maseti (2018) further elaborated that obstacles such as sex and race are more evident in universities or organisations where black women are few. In this study, the term "black woman" is used to demonstrate how sex and race act as an obstacle that hinder the advancement of careers of academic black women.

According to Subbaye and Vithal (2017), the black academic woman is given more responsibility than control and less support from the bosses which results in them

feeling alienated and lonely. Additionally, this woman carries a whole lot of burden of representing her gender and race which end up stressing her (Subbaye, 2017).

- Male domination as a barrier

According to Dlamini (2019) men in management contribute to the obstacles preventing the success of women by the decisions and actions of leadership within the organisation they make. These decisions causes women's stagnation due to the fear of losing power to women. However, Hopkins (2017) highlighted that since most cultures in Africa are patriarchal including South Africa, the society's perceptions of women's role are at home, and women are also conditioned to perceive themselves as such. Furthermore, Hopkins argued that the traditional model of patriarchy has taught several females to view others differently and less capable than their male counterparts.

According to the "intra gender micro violence" research conducted by Mavin, Grand, and Williams (2014), there are male figurative order shapes that constrain women's social relations with other women as suggested by the authors. Furthermore, the authors identified three forms of microaggressions that women are faced with at the working environment, including "disassociating, suppression of opportunity, and the abject appearance of being judged on physical attributes". This is supported by Hopkins (2017) who mentioned that it demonstrates the way the traditional model reveals the relations between women coworkers and usually feels threatened by the success of other women in their organisation. These studies show that the obstacles to females' career success are not only imposed on them, but can also be enacted by them, either consciously or subconsciously. Females at times indulge in things that restrict their specialized fields when they are confronted with the need to choose between their families and their careers because of the assumptions about gender and work.

2.6.4 External Support to the Career Success of Women

The "external support" is the initiatives outside the working environment that affect the ability of women to succeed (Khunou, 2019). A study conducted by Al-Alawi, Husamaddin, Mejeran, and Madan (2019) found that a major factor contributing to females' career success within organisations is the establishment of work-family

programmes such as support from family, professional networking groups, initiatives from government, and feminist pressure groups.

- Family support

Support from family is very crucial to women pursuing a career path. Women have more freedom in career choices in societies where gender-roles are less endorsed, but an obligation to family care giving, remains an obstacles to a lot of women if domestic and caregiving responsibility is not shared equally (Botha, 2017). The studies of Moodly (2017); Toni and Moodley (2018) indicated that women make excuses for not going to the next level because they are caregivers and have family responsibilities at home.

The extended family or in-laws were also highlighted to be the reason why women do not succeed in a higher positions because of the pressure they give to women. In exploring family support in the achievement of women career success in higher education, the study of Nguyen (2013) as cited in Moodly and Toni (2017) opine that pressure from family responsibility result in females to continue sacrificing their careers. These women tend to ask for more leave days off work and volunteer to work part-time. As a result, these women lack enough experience to take up leadership positions, and a slow career progression. Moreover, Nguyen (2013) highlighted that even if women find help to relieve domestic burden, however they will still be viewed as not appropriate for promotion because of the family responsibility. In other words, family responsibility serves as an invisible barrier to women's advancement to senior positions in higher education institutions.

- Professional networking groups

Networking has a positive contribution to the success of women's careers and is also regarded as the powerful force in the implementation of certain organisational policies to women empowerment. This is an appropriate strategy in the progression of women in their careers to senior management levels. The networks may include a forum for women in leadership (Doubell & Struwig, 2014). Such programs instill confidence in women to take up the responsibility of leadership opportunities when arising (Moodly & Toni, 2017). It is for this reason that Moodly and Toni (2019) recommends that such programs should be able to address resilience in women's ability to challenging situations when faced with barriers. Furthermore, Nguyen

(2015) highlighted that such professional associations are important in encouraging women to make decisions and to trust their ability to make decisions that are in the interest of the institutions so as not to rely on their male counterparts. As a result, it creates firm independent women leaders, who can stand their ground and overcome all the barriers in their career progression to higher management positions in education.

- Government initiative and pressure groups

According to Doubell and Struwig (2014) pressure groups and government initiatives are crucial to women empowerment. The government initiatives include legislations and the pressure groups proposes recommendations. The recommendations proposed include flexible working hours, women's forums where issues that they face are addressed, equal employment and opportunities policies and the change of the existing culture (International Labour Organisation, 2018)

- Interventions aimed at equal opportunities for women around the world.
 - In the United States of America, an intervention Title VII of the Civil Rights act 1964 was initiated with the purpose of equality. Another intervention is the executive order 11246 of 1965 with the main aim of affirmative action.
 - In South Africa, the "Employment Equity Act no 55 of 1998" was initiated to address unfair discrimination amongst all designated groups. Another act in South Africa is the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment which aims to promote black women and enhance economic empowerment.
 - In Norway, the year 2002 and Spain in the year 2007, quota legislation was introduced to improve the representation of women at higher management positions.
 - In Germany and Netherlands, a "voluntary equity and equality charter" was established to increase women's representation in senior positions.
 - Globally there are pressure groups from feminists which aim to provide women with better careers and opportunities.

2.6.5 Internal Support to the Career Success of Women

Internal support refers to the support provided by the organisation to women to enhance their potential to succeed in their careers (Clark-Crockett, 2019). A study conducted by Knorr (2005) found that a major factor contributing to females' career success in organisations is the execution of internal support programmes and the creation of working conditions that are supportive for females.

Botha (2017) argued that organisations that require competitive advantage should be more focused on work environment issues and should create a more diverse environment where both males and females will operate well. This is done to support female workers who are faced with family duties. The initiatives include parental leaves, child care initiatives and flexible time schedules (Knorr, 2005). These initiatives are solutions that lead to the success of working females with kids because they can now balance work and children. The internal support includes transformation of organisational culture, coaching and mentoring, educational programs.

- Transformation of organisational culture

Most organisational cultures are associated with patriarchy, indicating the extent to which gender values are accepted in societies (Bonzet & Frick, 2019). Within a corporate environment, gender-based beliefs and perceptions are established, with the aim that, an inclusive, neutral-gender culture will have a favourable effect on the career success of women while gender-based cultures will negatively impact women's career success (Nowicki & Duke, 2017). In Africa many societies are still practicing patriarchal values and South Africa is one of those where patriarchal beliefs are still enacted in the corporate environment leading to the belief that women are not fit for the roles historically held by men. This is visible in the appointment process in higher education institutions (Khunou, 2019).

Al-Ali, Singh, Al-Nahyan and Sohal (2017) suggested that the historical gender relations are founded on the interactive five (5) cultural processes that shape and maintain a gender culture. A culture that is inclusive and manages diversity well result in increased performance. In transformed cultures, workplaces must be re-envisioned to accommodate diversity of men and women. Al-Ali *et al.*, (2017) suggested dispelling prejudice and ensuring impartiality in performance evaluations

as the management strategies to improve women's representation in decision-making roles.

- Coaching and mentoring

A solid relationship amongst mentoring, coaching, and career success for women in higher learning institutions exist. This resulted to the renewal of the scarcity of existing women mentors (Dlamini, 2019). The significant of having more female mentors stems from the opportunity to share experiences, and the mentee will benefit from the greater visibility.

Researchers such as Dlamini (2019); Carr *et al.*, (2017) distinguish between coaching and mentoring which both benefit career success. According to Ayyala, Skarupski, Bodurtha, González-Fernández, Ishii, Fivush, and Levine (2019) “Coaching refers to training aimed at immediate performance improvement and skills development, whereas mentoring is long-term and directed at career development”. The study of Gilfillan-Farrell (2020) suggests that executive coaching with leadership is influenced by interpersonal experiences. Coaches perform an essential part in removing institutional, societal, and interpersonal obstacles to the success of women’s careers (Amla & Buitendach, 2019). Both mentoring and coaching play an important role in training women with skills and capabilities which are vital to their success.

According to Doubell (2011) knowledge and information that effectively contributes to the benefit of the organisation can be gained through the process of mentorship. Researchers such as Maloiy (2020); Krishnan and Alias (2020); Golele and Rchidi (2017) acknowledged mentoring as an important instrument used to break the “Glass ceiling” to women’s career success in higher education. The employer can either choose to initiate formal or informal mentoring process, whereby “formal mentoring” is established by a third party (Doubell, 2011) and “informal mentoring” relates to a relationship formed by two people (Amla & Buitendach, 2019). Formal mentoring process has shorter life span with a specified immediate career goal. Mentorship does not only benefit the mentee but also the mentor and the organisation (Gilfillan-Farrell, 2020).

- Educational programs

Educational programmes can be used as an initiative method of forming a broad workplace for females, for example mentoring approach, succession planning and induction programs (Botha, 2017).

2.7 THE CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

According to Naidoo (2019) women have made notable progress in attaining more degrees than men in higher education. In the academic year 2016-2017, about 57% of bachelor's degrees were conferred to women in South African universities (Boring, 2019). According to the Pew research foundation (2020) women constitute half of the University's learned staff. Nevertheless, although recognizing the improvements in the figures of educated females, it is important to equally address the challenges that confront women in higher education.

Women in higher education are in the least senior positions and have less remuneration compared to men in those positions (Carr, Gunn, Raj, Kaplan & Freund, 2017). For instance, in the position of a senior administrator, if the position is held by a man the reward is extra as compared to a woman occupying the same position. Women are underrepresented in full professorships positions which in turn restricts their opportunities to succeed or advance into formal leadership positions at universities (Carr *et al.*, 2017), and yet from research it is known that there is no shortage supply of qualified and ambitious women. This is often defined as the "glass ceiling", the main challenge that hinders most women at mid-management and that serves as the main barrier to women's career success (Boring, 2019).

Naidoo (2019) labeled it as the "labyrinth" in the context of academics which simply means that women in academics are not denied the top management positions at the peak of a long career but rather such opportunities seem to disappear at countless points along their paths.

Rosa, Hon, Xia, and Lamari (2017) highlighted that women in senior positions are confronted by difficulties related to organisational structures and systems as well as the mindsets of people that need to be transformed. Helping women to overcome their challenges in higher education is an advantage because in return they will serve as mentors for the young girls. Among the rising student population is the increasing statistics of reputable women professionals that value career success and development (Boring, 2019). Nevertheless, these reputable women must have a way

of balancing their education and family life responsibility in a way that is different from those in the past. If the role models that are supposed to educate these students are facing challenges that they cannot overcome what example are they setting for the young ones? Rosa *et al.*, (2017) mentioned that young female students from different cultural backgrounds lack native role models in top-level management in institutions of higher learning.

In the tertiary sector, it is not common for women who occupy senior positions from different universities to arrange a conference where they share the challenges and experiences that they face as it is done mostly in summits. Khunou (2019) argued that the reason is not because of the variances in the organisational cultures or how the academic structures differ but a "time famine", a concept that came about in 1999 to define the feeling of having too much to do but not enough time to do it. In achieving gender equality in leadership, the concept of fairness should be noted. If women are not included in senior positions of leadership then they will lack the chance to make a difference where they work as well as in the societies they live in because leadership provides high status, privilege, and opportunities that increase perquisites of headship.

However, gender disparity and bias demonstrate an elusive mindset which is taken for granted and which is an important challenge for women. Furthermore, the hierarchy and culture of most universities discourage women from raising their voices to be heard and being fruitful because women are used as symbolic figures just to comply with a certain set of legislations. The ideas, suggestions, as well as programs that these women develop, are accredited to males, or the ideas are perceived as soft and they will be dismissed. In higher education ethnic, culture interconnects with gender because the research conducted by (Boring, 2019) showed that 86% of administrators in higher education are of people of color while only 13% are black and less than a third of a college or University are women. However, most men occupy many senior positions in the faculty.

2.8 GLASS CEILING FACED BY WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

The "Glass ceiling" is a metaphor that is used in literature as a barrier that prevents women from climbing the corporate ladder to senior positions (Hopkins, 2017). The glass ceiling is an invisible situation that is difficult for women to break (Chisholm-

Burns, Spivey, Hagemann & Josephson, 2017). The term was first used in management literature but has also been used in higher education. According to Doubel (2011) the term was coined "by Carol Hymowitz and Timothy of the Wall street journal" in 1986 who transcribed "even those few women who rise through the ranks will eventually get crashed into the invisible barrier".

In 1989, department of labor in the United States of America looked into why females were unable to advance in their careers to the top level of management (Chisholm-Burns *et al.*, 2017). The glass ceiling commission was established to identify the hindrances to women's inclusion in top-level management and it was found that not only women were underrepresented but often underutilized. Doubell (2011) suggested that women are given limited opportunities as opposed to their male counterparts to be involved in strategic tasks.

However, there is a biased view that women are not willing to take part in complex or strategic tasks in higher education because of family responsibilities (Fernandez, Campero, 2017). Contrary to this insight, women are interested in participating in such duties. Doubell and Struwig (2013) mentioned that in cases where women are appointed to senior levels of management, it is done under risky organisational conditions where females are considered to higher levels because the opposite gender would have turned down the offer because of prior project failure. In this sense, women are used as a "last option or the best in the absence of the best". Another issue is the internalisation of the glass ceiling and its consequence which was examined in the study of Akapinar-Sposito (2013). For instance, suppose a business have legislative frameworks that promote women's career success such as the B-BBEE measures, women will adopt the common values that hold them from occupying the positions and it might hinder them from even applying for such leadership roles in the first place (Mitchell, 2019). The fear of the glass ceiling and unseen societal standards might then keep women in entry-level positions (Rathore, 2017).

The glass ceiling continues to act as a barrier, even though there are no explicit obstacles preventing women from occupying senior positions (Bertrand, 2018). When advertising senior posts in higher learning institutions, recruiters ensure that the post is not discriminatory since equal employment opportunities forbid gender

discrimination but however they lie beneath the surface (Jarmon, 2014). When this type of discrimination is exercised in higher education, they look for the most justifiable reason to explain their decision. Jarmon (2014) further elaborated that, this is usually done by citing highly subjective qualities which will push an individual to the edge.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed on the factors that influence women's career success in higher educational institutions provided an overview that the progress of most women to leadership positions in higher education can be enhanced over several interferences. Additionally, the literature discovered that there is no conclusive evidence that the career success of women differs completely from that of men. This chapter concluded that the factors identified in the literature have an impact on the ability of women to endorse career success by manipulating successfully the internal and external influences.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the literature review on the factors that influence women's career success. This chapter outlines the methods that were applied to collect data in this study. It covers the research methodology used to address the main research question presented in chapter 1. The research methodology explains the research design, study population, data collection, measuring instruments, as well as statistical procedures used to analyse and interpret data. Furthermore, the ethics considered for this study are also discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology can be defined as a scientific method that is used to obtain information about the process to be followed in conducting research (Muthmbu, 2012). Gravetter and Forzano (2018) highlighted that, it is a science of studying how research can be carried out, including the research methods and the ways in which information can be gathered from different sources. Green and Thorogood (2018) defined methodology as a logical way to solve a problem. The researcher adopted a quantitative research approach to collect data. The term quantitative is defined by Creswell, Klassen and Plano (2011:33), "as an emergent methodology of research that gather quantifiable data and perform statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. It uses measurable data to formulate facts and uncover research patterns". This approach is appropriate for this study because it produces objective data that can be clearly communicated through statistics and numbers.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is explained by De Vos, Fouche and Delport (2011) as a plan on how research is implemented. The researcher adopted a correlational (non-experimental) research design to investigate the influence between the dependent variables and the independent variable. This was chosen because the results are easy to classify, it is cost effective and fast, the direction and strength of the

relationship can be determined by the researcher and the results are more applicable.

3.3.1 Sampling

According to Bernarte (2019), “sampling is the process of statistical practice concerned with the selection of individual observation intended to yield some knowledge about a population of concern or the process of selecting a representative portion of the population”. On the same note Singh (n.d) defined sampling as the process of drawing definite number of individuals, cases, or observations from a total group for investigation.

Sampling is divided into two (a) probability and (b) non-probability techniques. Probability sampling refers to an equal chance that every item or individual has, to be included in the sample while on the other hand non-probability sampling is defined as a technique where not every individual or item of the population has a chance of being included in the sample (Mujere, 2016). However, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the researcher used convenience sampling depending on the availability of the respondents and made sure that the sample is relatively a reflection of the population of the study.

3.3.1.1 Population

According to Hassan (n.d), population of the study is a well-defined collection of individuals or objects with similar characteristics targeted by the researcher for investigation. In addition, Cozby (2009) defined population as all events, things, or individuals to be represented in a study. In this study, the study populations were the employees in the Higher education sector, while the sample consisted of 55 female employees employed under the Faculty of Management and Law at the University of Limpopo Turfloop campus. The faculty has seventy (70) female employees ranging from Tutors, Junior lectures, Lectures, Senior Lectures, Head of Departments (HoD), Deans, Administrators and Professors. The statistics are presented in the table below.

Table 3.1: Primary data of the population

Professors	6
Hod's, Deans and Administrators	10

Senior Lecturers	15
Tutors and Lecturers	39
	TOTAL: 70

Table 3.1 above indicates the statistics of targeted female employees under the faculty of management and law as of the 08th of October 2021: University of Limpopo – (Source: Human Resource Management).

3.3.1.2 Sampling

In this study the researcher resorted to convenience sampling. The technique uses non-randomised method to draw the sample. This means that on the population that was targeted only those who were accessible and willing to participate formed part of the sample in this study. Convenient sampling is easy to use, less costly and time effective (Sharma, 2017). The convenience sampling method assisted in receiving many completed questionnaires quickly.

3.3.1.3 Ethical issues related to sampling

The researcher did not experience any ethical issues relating to sampling except the switch made from random sampling to convenience sampling as a result of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

3.3.1.4 Sample

The researcher targeted seventy (70) women employees employed under the faculty of management and law and fifty-five (55) employees participated in the survey. This means that seventy-eight-point five percent (78,5%) response was achieved, which is in line with the suggestions of Sekaran (2016) who suggested that a sample size of 30 and 300 would be sufficient. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of response was achieved.

3.3.2 Data Collection

According to Kabir (2016:202), “data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in a systematic manner that enables a researcher to answer the research questions, test hypothesis and evaluate outcomes”. The data can be collected and measured using qualitative approach and quantitative approach wherein qualitative is done through collecting non-numerical

data with the use of interviews or observations. While on the other hand quantitative is done through collecting numerical data with the use of questionnaires.

3.3.2.1 Data collection approach and method

The study made use of quantitative approach to collect primary data with the use of a structured online questionnaire with closed-ended questions. According to Kabir (2016:203) quantitative approach is numerical in nature and can be mathematically computed. It uses different scales which are classified as nominal scale, ordinal, and interval scale. The researcher chose this approach because of the advantages associated with it. The approach is less expensive to implement, it is standardized, and comparisons can be made easily, and the size of the effect can be measured (Afulani, Kusi & Kirumbi, 2018).

- *Questionnaire*

The data was collected from the primary source with the use of online questionnaires. According to Nyangiwe-Ndika (2015:55), “a questionnaire is a means of eliciting the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes of the respondents in a study. The questionnaire was structured which allowed a wider range and distribution of the sample and it provided greater access to more educated respondents and to persons in higher income brackets”. The questionnaire was appropriate for the current study because it yielded more and specific information that meets the objectives of the study.

3.3.2.2 Development and testing of the data collection instrument

The data collection instrument (a Likert scale-questionnaire) was adopted from Doubell (2011) and structured in a way that answers the objectives of the current study. The questionnaire was tested to check the reliability. According to Miller, Reynolds, Luce, Ittenbach, Beauchamp and Nelson (2009), reliability refers to the degree to which results obtained by a measurement and procedure can be replicated. The reliability of the construct (women’s career success) was assessed using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficients and a reliability of **0.842** was found. Figures are presented below on table 3.2.

According to Pallant and Manual (2010), the Cronbach alpha is used as a measure of internal consistency. Sekaran (2016:70) also highlighted that “it is the degree to

which the measuring instrument items are consistent in the construct it is attempting to measure, where in a high alpha coefficient indicates that the reliability is also high, and the internal consistency is used to describe the extent to which all the items in a test measure the same concept. In addition, reliability with less than 0.60 is seen as indicating poor consistency while those in the range of 0.70-0.80 are deemed as acceptable and those above 0.80 are considered very excellent". A questionnaire which consisted of 4 sections was used to measure factors that influence women's career success at an institution of higher learning. The below table depict the results of Cronbach alpha.

Summary of Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient

Table 3.2 Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Inter-Item correlations	No. Items
Personality and Cultural Environment	0.706	0.067	34
Carrier Barriers	0.676	0.193	9
Internal and External Environment	0.774	0.140	22
Overall Reliability	0.842	0.077	65

The study reported Cronbach alpha for the overall questionnaire to be at 0.842 as depicted in Table 3.2 above. This is above the 0.70 positioned by Sekaran (2016) as acceptable. Therefore, reliability of the scale used in this study is acceptable.

3.3.2.3 Characteristics of the data collection instrument

The questionnaire used for this study has four sections; each section designed to analyse data that answer specific research objectives.

Section A of the questionnaire covers the demographic information which seeks to gain insight on the background of the respondents and measure women's career success. Section B is designed to get information on the personality and cultural environment of female employees in academic while Section C is designed to

identify career barriers that female employees face in their career progression and Section D aims to outline the internal and external support that female employees perceive in their career success.

Table 3.3 Layout of the questionnaire

SECTION A (14)	
Demographic information	Q: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13
Women career success	Q: 11,12,13,14
SECTION B (33)	
PERSONALITY TRAITS	
Self-efficacy	Q: 2.1,2.2,2.3,2.4,2.12
Locus of control	Q: 2.5,2.6,2.15,2.16,2.17,2.18
Need for achievement	Q: 2.7,2.8,2.9,2.10,2.11,2.13,2.14
ORGANISATIONAL CULTURAL FACTORS	
Power-Distance	Q: 2.23,2.27,2.28,2.33,2.34,2.31
Individualism/collectivism	Q: 2.20,2.26,2.29
Masculinity/Femininity	Q: 2.21,2.22,2.24,2.25,2.27,2.30
SECTION C (9)	
CAREER BARRIERS	
Family responsibility	Q: 3.1,3.2
Gender stereotyping	Q: 3.2,3.4,3.5,3.6
Glass ceiling	Q: 3.3,3.8,3.9
SECTION D (22)	

INTERNAL FACTORS	
Organisational support	Q: 4.8,4.9,4.12,4.13,4.10
Mentoring and coaching	Q: 4.5,4.6,4.15
Leadership and management style	Q: 4.3,4.4,4.17
EXTERNAL FACTORS	
Family support	Q: 4.1, 4.2,4.7,4.16,4.18
Government initiative	Q: 4.14,4.19,4.20
Awards and role models	Q: 4.21,4.22,4.11

3.3.2.4 Data collection process

The researcher obtained permission to conduct this study from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC). Written permission was granted by the research office by issuing an ethical clearance certificate to conduct research from the faculty. A link for an online questionnaire was distributed via email to all the females under the faculty of management and law.

A message of consent was written on the first paragraph of the questionnaire. The respondents answered all the questions even though few did not fill out the questionnaires and others did not participate at all. The questionnaire consisted of 79 questions including 13 demographic questions. During the process the researcher send email of follow up to remind the respondents. The return of the questionnaires was satisfactory because $\frac{3}{4}$ of the female employees participated. The data collection process took approximately twelve weeks.

3.3.2.5 Ethical considerations related to data collection

According to Roberts, Berk and Lane-McKinley (2019) ethical consideration refers to complying with the requirements of standards of a given profession or group. On the same note, Walliman (2011:33) point out that “working with people in research

always raise ethical issues with regards to how they should be treated". The survey was conducted among female academic employees of the University of Limpopo. The ethical consequences which were taken into consideration include permission to conduct the study, confidentiality and anonymity of the employees and informed consent of the respondents.

- Confidentiality and Anonymity

Anonymity was ensured in this study because the identity of the respondents was protected in neither such that no names are included nor any other details that may reveal their identity. The respondents were also assured that they would not be affected in any way when taking part in the study and no individual data was reported in this study. Confidentiality was maintained at all times and the respondents were informed that no individual information was to be given to anyone or the organisation.

- Permission to conduct the study

The researcher requested permission from the office of TREC University of Limpopo to conduct the study. The permission was granted, and an ethical clearance certificate was issued as permission to conduct the study.

- Informed Consent

The study purpose was explained to the respondents and the contribution of their participation and how the results are to be used after collection. Respondents signed an informed consent to stipulate that their participation is voluntary. The researcher made it clear to respondents that they were not forced to take part in filling out the questionnaire and can retract from the study at any time without any consequences. In other words, the researcher did not deceive the respondents into taking part in the study.

3.3.3 Data analysis

The statistical package for the social science (SPSS) version 27.0 published by international business machine (IBM) was used to analyse data collected from respondents. This was used because of its popularity within both academic and business circles. Arkklein (2014) indicated that the SPSS is also a versatile package

that allows many different types of analyses, data transformations, and forms of output.

The package did adequately serve this study purposes. Descriptive statistics (mean, frequencies, standard deviations, and percentages) and inferential statistical analyses were used. The advantage of using descriptive statistics is that it assists in summarising and interpreting data. Coded data were also summarised using graphical presentations for the interpretation of results. Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was calculated to analyse the influence one variable has on another variables. The spearman rho correlation was used because of its appropriate on measurements taken from ordinal scales.

3.4 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

Struwig and Stead (2007) indicated that for an instrument to be considered valid, it should measure what it is supposed to measure. The items scales used in collecting data in this current study was adopted from Doubell (2011) with reference from Punnett *et al.*, (2007), Duffy *et al.*, (2006), Dorfman and Howell, (1988) and Yoo *et al.*, (2011). Morogo (2019:82) defined “validity as the extent to which the study measures right elements that need to be measured. In simple terms, validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure”.

- Pilot study

A pilot research study was done prior to the main study in order to check internal consistency and to ensure reliability and validity of the questionnaire. According to Morogo (2019:80) “a pilot study is a small experiment designed to test methods planned for a larger investigation and is important because it allows researchers from launching a large-scale study without adequate knowledge of the methods proposed”.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave a clear detail of the research methodology and research design used in order to achieve the aim of the research. The procedures used and obstacles encountered in collecting data were described and based on the Cronbach alpha the measurement instrument used was confirmed to be reliable and valid with the use of the pilot study conducted for the current study. The ethical considerations

made throughout this study were also discussed. The next chapter presents the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave an overview of the research methodology chosen for this study. The current chapter focuses on the research findings based on the responses of the respondents. The purpose of the study aimed at investigating the factors that influence women's career success at an institution of higher learning in South Africa. The chapter starts by reporting the demographic characteristics of the respondents and then the descriptive statistics on the factors that influence women's career success. The last section presents Spearman's rho correlation findings based on the factors that influence women's career success. Tables and Figures were used to present the research findings and the distributions of demographic items are discussed using frequencies and figures.

4.2 DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

4.2.1 Response rate

The respondents in this study were women academic staff at the University of Limpopo under the faculty of management and law. When collecting data, the researcher targeted seventy female employees and fifty-five females responded. There was an active participation rate indicated by 78, 5%. The results are illustrated on Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Participants response rate

Targeted	Responses	Response rate
70	55	78,5%

4.2.2 Demographic information

The demographic findings are shown in different tables and figures below. Variables such as: age, race, marital status, number of children, position, highest qualification obtained, and parents' highest qualification and overall years of experience were uncovered. The main aim of including the demographic background of the

respondents in the questionnaire was to check the potential influence it has on the achievement of women's career success.

4.2.2.1 Respondents highest qualification

Figure 4.1 below shows findings on the highest qualifications of the respondents. The findings show that the majority of the respondents were in possession of a post-degree qualification. As shown below 46% holds a master's degree showing the importance of education in the achievement of career success in higher education. Thirty-six percent (36%) hold an honours degree, 13% holds a PhD degree while 5% holds a bachelor's degree.

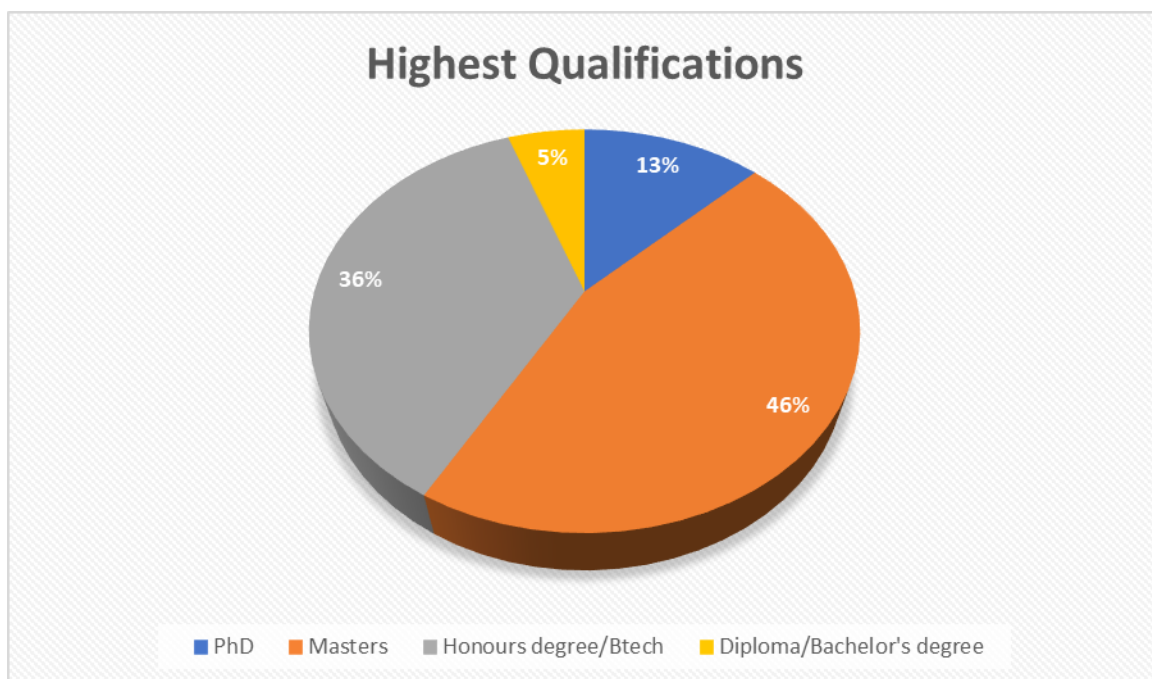


Figure 4.1. Respondents' highest qualifications

4.2.2.2 Respondents intention to study further

The below Figure 4.2 illustrates the respondent's intention to study further. A total of 62% indicated that they want to further their studies meaning that they aspire to a higher-ranking position. Only 13% does not intend to study further while 25% are unsure. This shows a positive drive that women aspire to take up the leadership position regardless of the barriers, obstacles, and challenges that they face along the way.

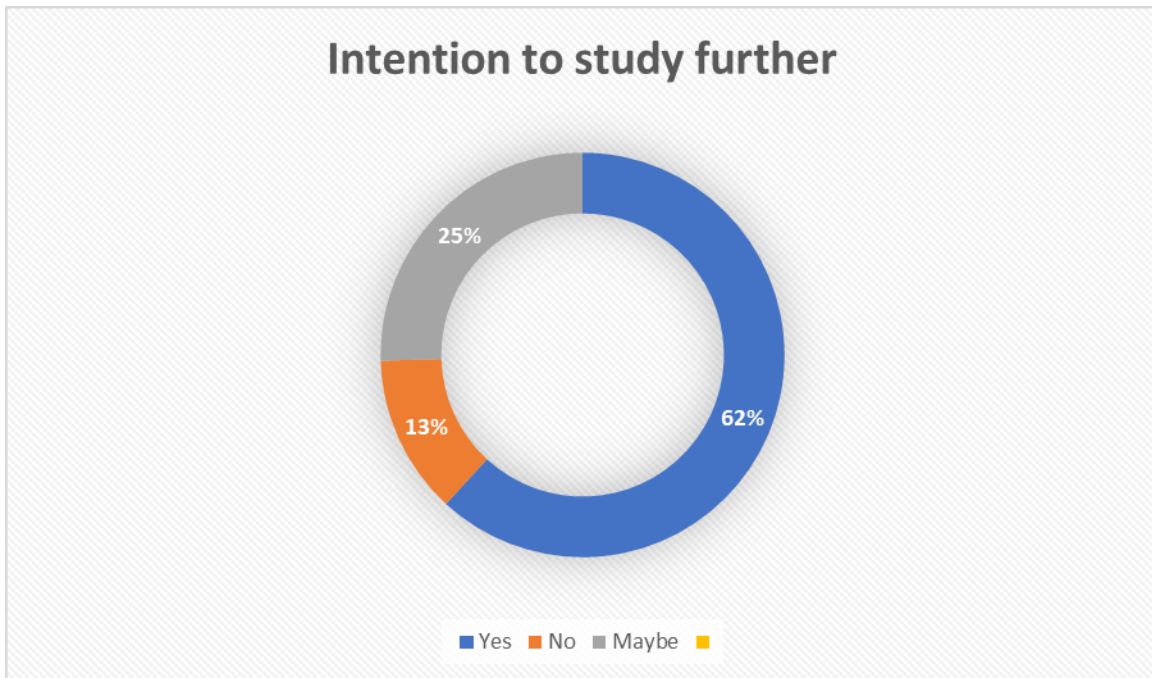


Figure 4.2 Respondents' intention to study further

4.2.2.3 Participants current position

Figure 4.3 below illustrates that only 7% of the respondents might have achieved success while 35% are likely to achieve success and a total of 58% were still holding the entry level positions but however, aspire to reach the top-level positions with reference to respondent's intention to study further as shown in Figure 4.2 above.

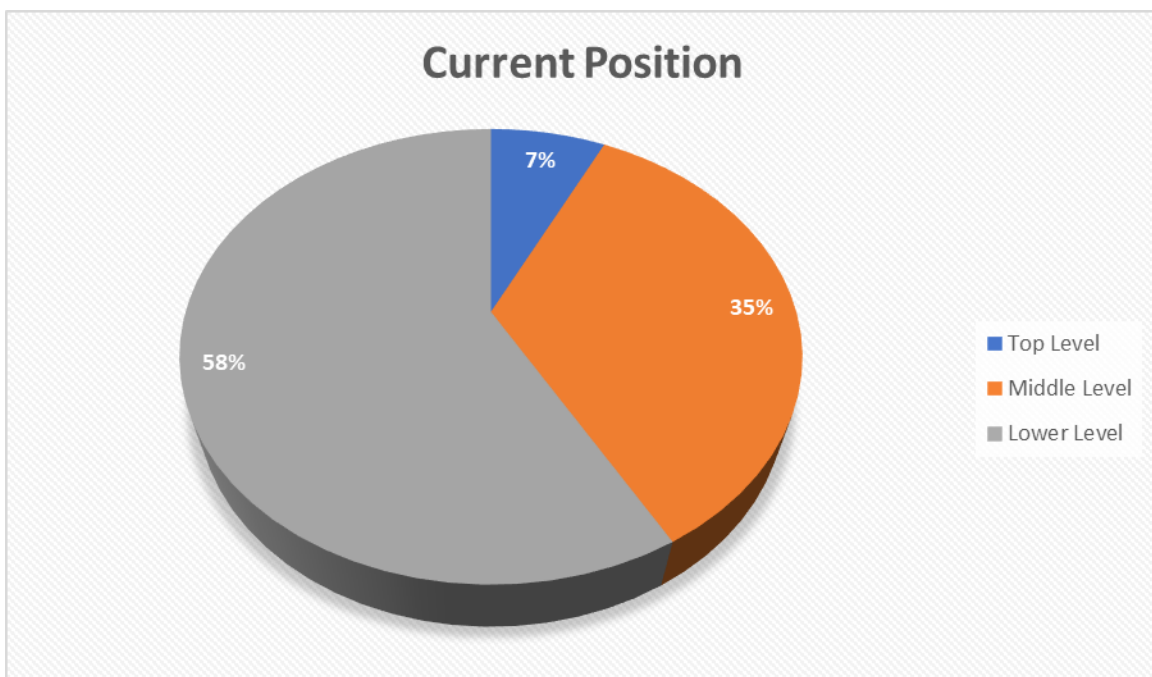


Figure 4.3 Respondents' current position

4.2.2.4 Respondents length of service

The below figure 4.4 signify that most of the respondents 35% have been with the organisation for a period of 4-6 years and the second largest 33% for a period of 7-9 years. The 20% of the respondents have been with the organisation for a short period of 1-3 years while only 13% of women have been with the organisation for a period of 10 years and above.

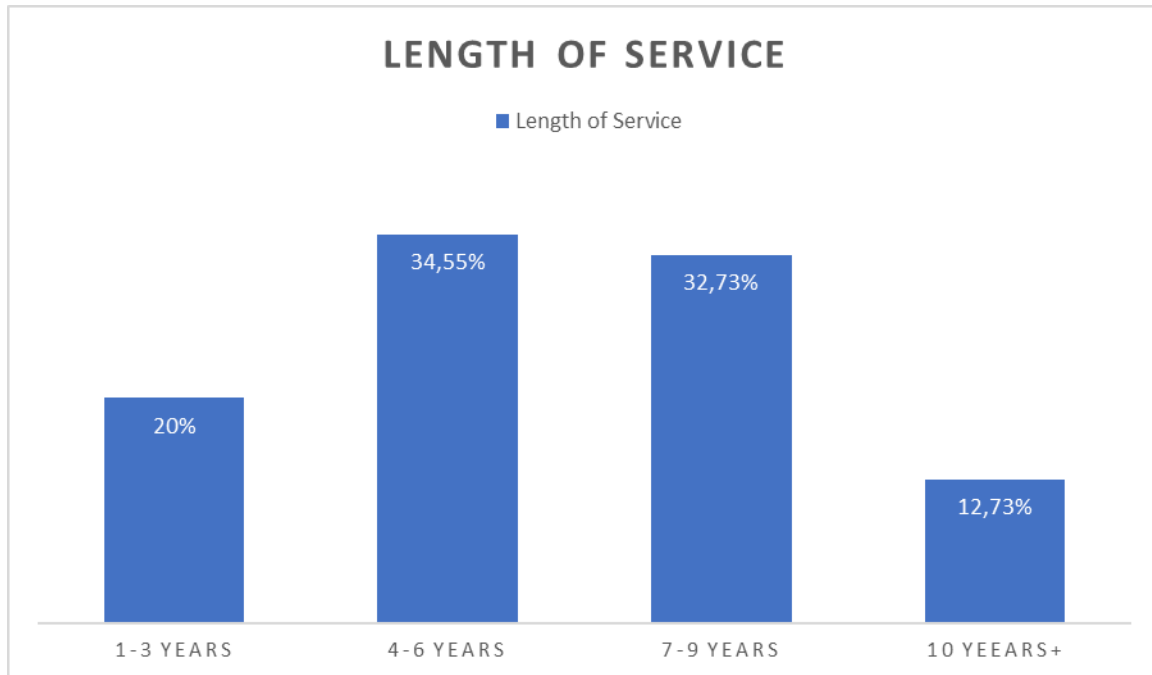


Figure 4.4 Respondents' length of service

4.2.2.5 Respondents Age

The results depicted in Table 4.2 below gives an indication of early entry into employment but fail to progress to the most senior positions as indicated in Figure 4.3 above. This could be due to barriers or obstacles that women (respondents) experience when climbing the ladder to the top. However, this was not explored in the questionnaire survey. Nevertheless, the findings below point that most of the respondents were in their early and mid-life career stages.

Table 4.2 Age of the respondents

AGE				
Age Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Under 25	4	7.3	7.3	7.3
25-29	12	21.8	21.8	29.1

30-34	12	21.8	21.8	50.9
35-39	13	23.6	23.6	74.5
40-44	3	5.5	80.0	80.0
45-49	7	12.7	92.7	92.7
50+	4	7.3	7.3	100
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

4.2.2.6 Respondents marital status

It is evident from the results shown below in Figure 4.5 that being single 38% does not negatively impact on women’s career success but rather provide a positive impact. This could mean that external support from a partner is not necessary or rather these respondents prefer to advance their careers before committing to marital relationships, but however, the second largest is from those who are cohabiting with 27% followed by married 25%. This, however, may highlight that the internal policies are adequately contributing to work life balance. On the other hand, only 7% of the respondents were divorced and 2% of women were widowed.

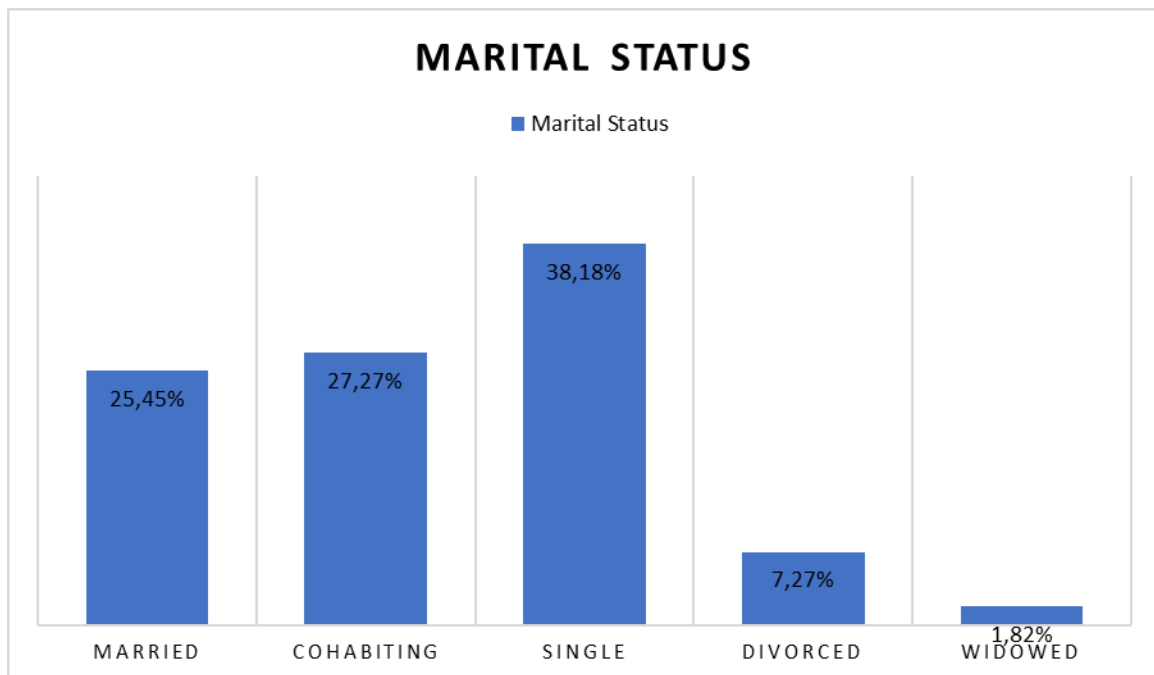


Figure 4.5 Respondents’ marital status

4.2.2.7 Respondents number of children

A notable fascinating finding was the high percentage of women (respondents) with 51% with no children as compared to the results in table 4.2 where the majority of women (24%) were between the ages of 35-39 years old. The numbers reflecting the number of children in the below figure indicate the possibility that women are

delaying having children in order to chase their careers although others may not want children at all. 38% have 1-3 children while only 11% have between 4-6 children.

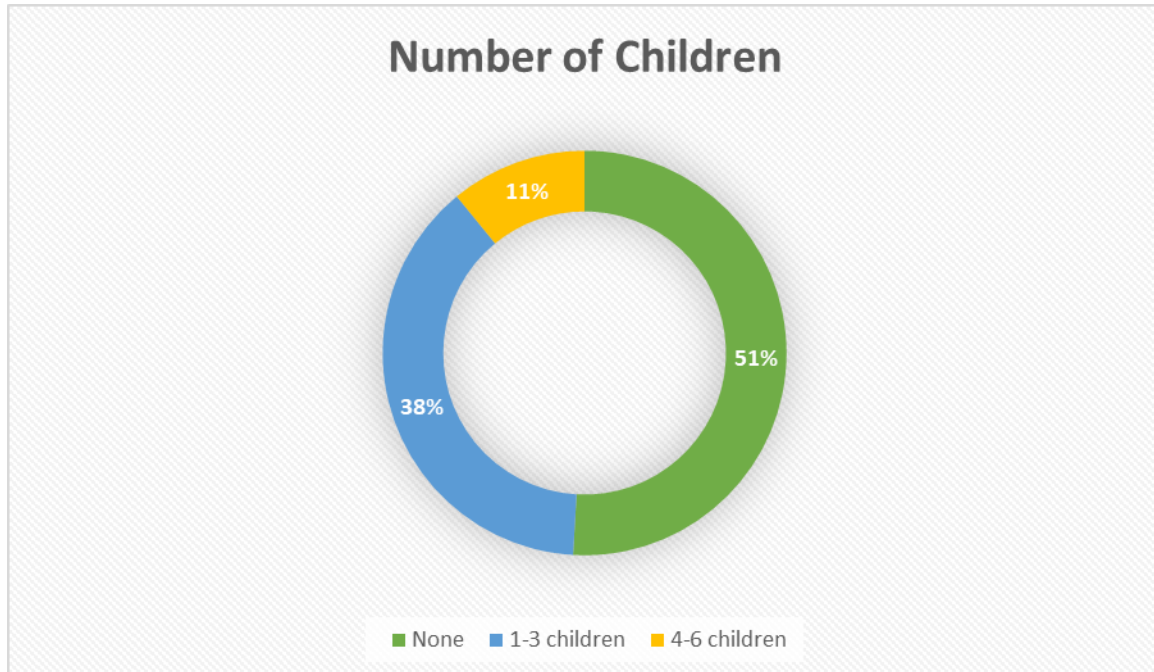


Figure 4.6 Respondents number of children

4.2.2.8 Parents highest qualification

A family environment item was included in the demographic data to check the potential influence family has on a person's achievement on career success. It is said that a person's actions and behaviour is usually a reflection of the family that he/she comes from (Kuba, Flegr & Havlíček, 2018).

Table 4.3 Respondents parents highest qualification

Participants parents highest qualification				
Age Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Under grade 12	24	43.6	43.6	46.6
Grade 12	11	20.0	20.0	63.6
Certificate	11	20.0	20.0	83.6
Diploma/Degree	4	7.3	7.3	90.9
Honours/Btech	3	5.5	5.5	96.4
Masters	1	1.8	1.8	98.2
PhD	1	1.8	1.8	100
Total	55	100.0	100.0	

The most of the findings shows that the respondents were raised in families where parents' highest educational qualification is lower than grade 12 (44%). With second large percentage holding grade 12 and a certificate (20%). Despite the percentage of parents with grade 12 or certificate the percent drops substantially for those with Diploma/Degree (7%), Honours/Btech (5%), Masters (2%) and PhD with (2%).

4.2.2.9 Respondents race

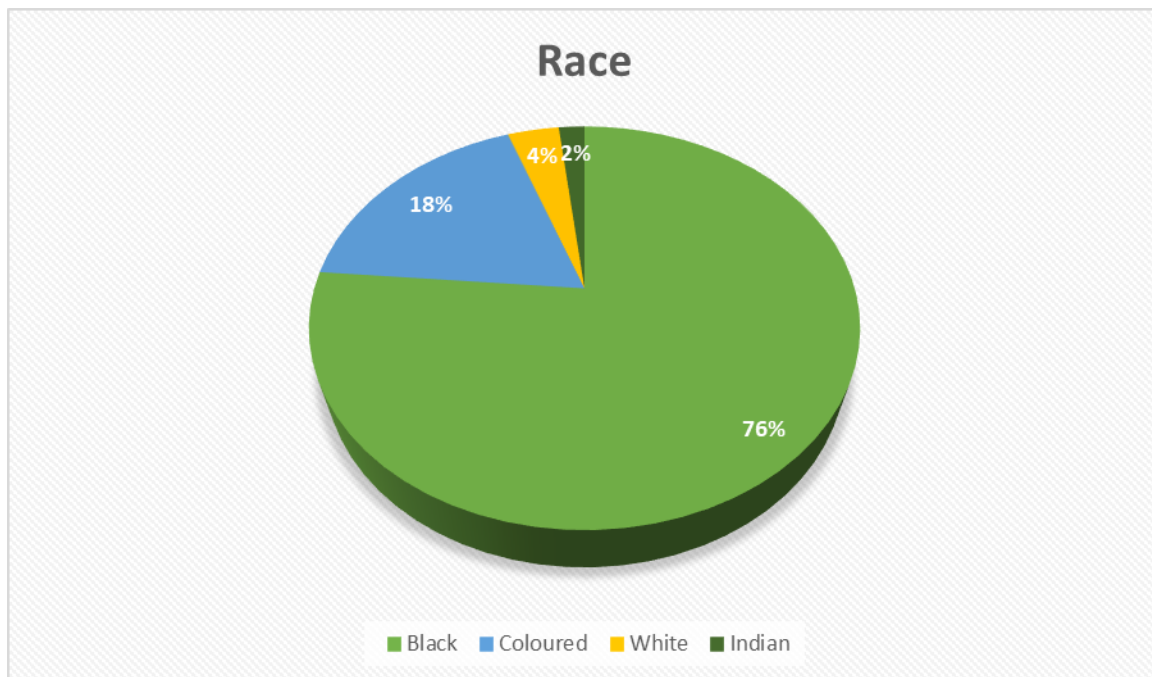


Figure 4.7 Respondents Race

It can be seen from the respondents' race as shown in Figure 4.7 above that government policies are being effectively implemented in empowering Black women. This could attribute to a high level of external support to empower black women as (76%) represents Blacks, (18%) Coloureds, (4%) White and (2%) Indians.

4.2.3 Discriminant for success groups

The researcher has categorised the respondents into two groups, the successful group, and the not yet successful group. This was done for the purpose of answering the objective 1 and hypothesis 1. The study adopted the assessment measure used by Abele and Spurk (2009b), of monthly salary, years of experience and hierarchical level to measure women career success. For subjective career success, the researcher included a question in the survey, "the extent to which employees feels

they have achieved success” which was adopted from Doubell (2011). Results are illustrated below.

4.2.3.1 Profile for success groups

Four items from the biographical scale of the questionnaire survey were used for the purpose of creating categories of success groups. These included

- (i) Salary range (Q11)
- (ii) Overall years of experience (Q9)
- (iii) Hierarchical level (Q12) and
- (iv) Extent to which they have achieved success (Q13)

Figures from the descriptive statistics were used to create groups. Response options for each of the four questions were combined to reduce the number of categories. The results of the categories are illustrated in the table below.

Table 4.4. Categories and percentage for the success group

Question	Category	Percentage
Salary range (Q11)	25000	34.6%
	30000	38.2%
	35000+	27.3%
Hierarchical level (Q12)	Top level	7.2%
	Middle level	34.6%
	Lower level	58.2%
Years of experience (Q9)	5-10	53.7%
	11-15	25.5%
	20+	20%

The above Table shows that the number of categories was reduced from five to three. After reducing the number of categories, respondents were categorised in terms of success. Based on salary range (Q11), overall years of experience (Q7) and hierarchical level (Q12), the following formula adopted from Doubell (2011) was applied:

Table 4.5. Formular used to calculate the success groups

If Q12=1 top level=1 (successful)
If Q12=2 middle, then: Q7=1(<5yrs) or Q11= 1 (<R25000) then success= 1 (successful) Q7 ≠ 1(<5yrs) or Q11 ≠ 1(<R25000) then success= 2 (pipeline)
If Q12=3 (lower) then: If Q7=1 (<5yrs) or Q11= 1(<R25000) then success= 1(pipeline) If Q7 ≠ 1(<5yrs) or Q11= (<R25000) then success= 3 (possible pipeline)

The above Table outline the formular used to categorise the respondents into 3 groups: successful, pipeline and possible pipeline. Below are the characteristics of the success groups.

Table 4.6. Characteristics of success groups

Successful <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the Respondents in the top-level management Middle level with more than 5 years of experience or earning R25 000+.
Pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle level with 5 years of experience or more and earning R25000 Lower level with more than 5 years of experience and earning more than R25000
Possible pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower level with less than 5 years of experience and earning less than R25 000

Based on the scores obtained, the latter groups scores were similar and was treated as one group not yet successful which was similar with the scores obtained under the subjective career success where successful (n= 25) and not yet successful (n=30). The frequency is illustrated on Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7. Subjective career success frequency

	Frequency	Percentage
Not successful	30	54.5
Successful	25	45.5
Total	55	100.0

The above Table shows the frequency number of the respondents who are categorised as have achieved success so far in their careers with those who have

not achieved success. 54.5% are categorised as not successful whereas 45.5% have succeeded in their careers. The above findings agree with the results obtained in figure 4.3, where only few respondents hold the top-level management positions.

4.2.3.2 Results of demographics per success group

The successful and the not yet successful groups were compared in terms of selected demographics background to check relevancy to the career success of women. The demographics included salary range, experience, marital status, birth order and parents' highest qualifications. The results are illustrated in Figures below.

4.2.3.2.1 Respondents salary range per success group

The below Figure indicates that in the upper salary range the not successful earn higher than the successful. The R16 000-R20 000 group appears to have more unsuccessful people.

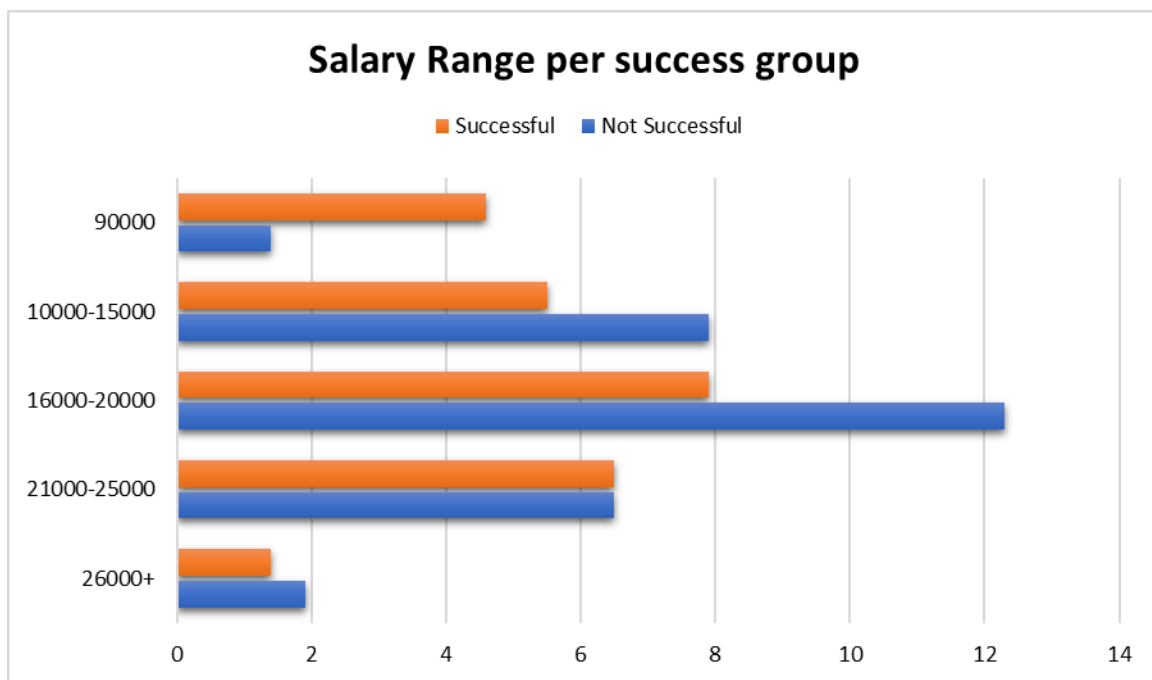


Figure 4.8 Respondents salary range per success group

4.2.3.2.2 Respondents' Years of experience per success group

The below Figure shows the respondents experience per success group. Most of the respondents in the unsuccessful category have less than 5 years of experience, this is theoretically supported because most senior positions in higher education require 5-10 years of experience. However, an interesting indication is that of those with 21-

25 years of experience and still feels that they are not successful this could point to the thickening of the glass ceiling towards the end of the hierarchy.

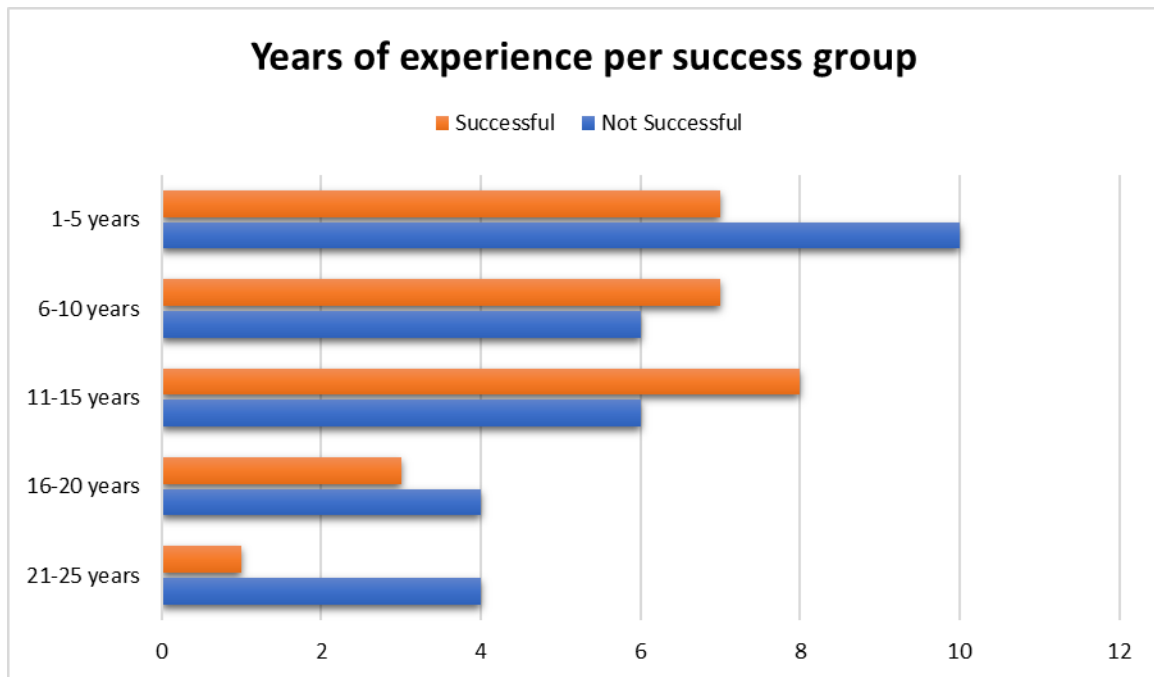


Figure 4.9 Years of experience per success group

4.2.3.2.3 Respondents Marital status per success group

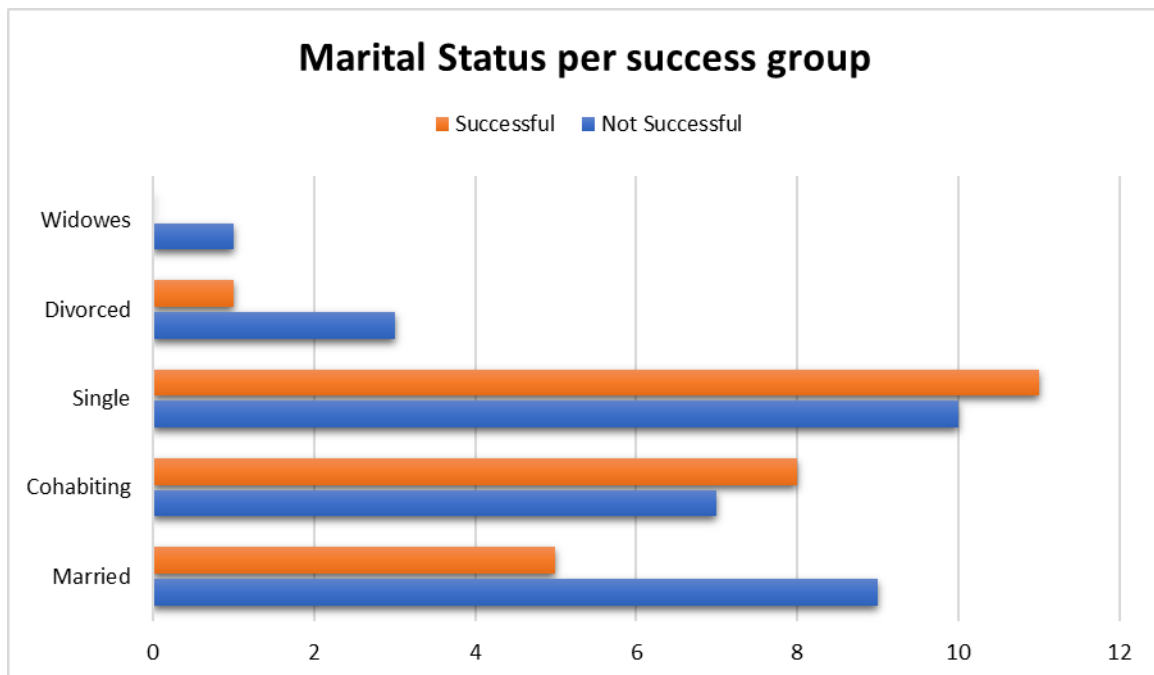


Figure 4.10 Respondents' marital status per success group

From the above Figure it is evident that the largest percentage are the successful who are single. This could point that those who are married and unsuccessful are facing family responsibility as a barrier and less help from partners in doing domestic chores.

4.2.3.2.4 Respondents Birth Order per success group

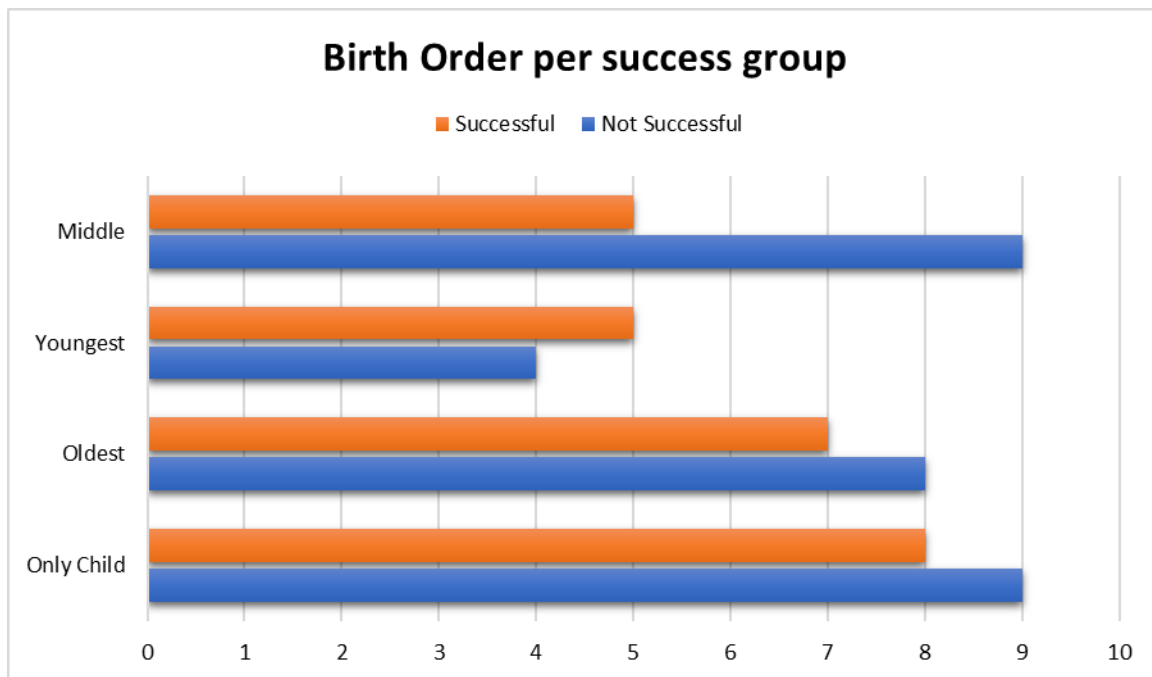


Figure 4.11 Respondents birth order per success group

From the above Figure 4.11, birth order shows less relevancy to success. The higher percentages found were the not yet successful on the only child, oldest and middle child.

4.2.3.2.5 Respondents parents' highest qualifications per success group

A parent's level of education shows less relevancy to success as evidenced by the below Figure 4.12. There is an equal number of respondents in each of the groups whose parents had no matric and slight to those whose parents had a post-matric qualification, a notable pattern is in the case of the decrease in the success group of parents with qualifications as it gets higher and higher up until none.

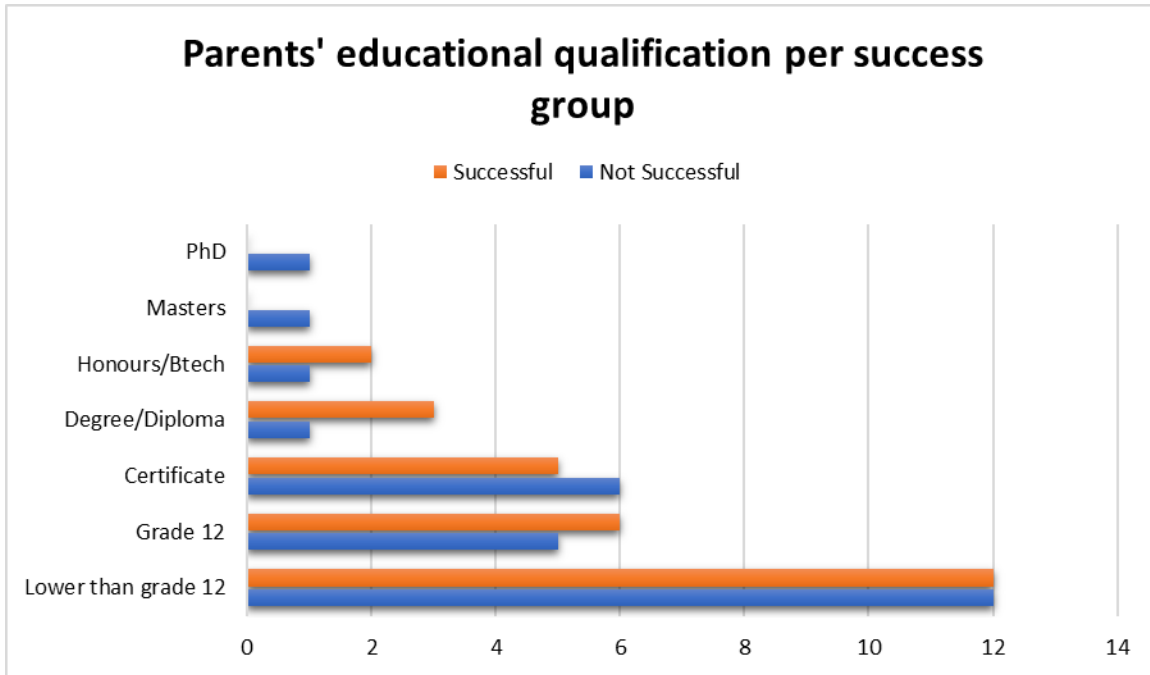


Figure 4.12 Respondents parents' educational qualifications per success group

4.3 RESEARCH RESULTS

4.3.1 Descriptive statistics for factors that influence women career success

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of data in this study. The factors identified in this study include the personality traits, organisational cultural factors, career barriers, and internal and external factors. The items were grouped into sub factors under each umbrella factor as shown in Table 3.3 under chapter 3.

A five-point scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= strongly agree) was used to measure the extent to which the factors influence women's career success. Table 4.8 below provides descriptive statistics with regards to the overall factors that influence the career success of the respondents. A mean of 3 and above implies the high influence while 2 and below signifies poor influence of the factor towards women's career success.

Table 4.8 Descriptive statistics for factors influencing the success of women the whole group

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
--	---	------	----------------

PERSONALITY TRAITS			
Self-efficacy	55	3.1164	.53290
Need for achievement	55	3.0753	.47845
Locus of control	55	2.9636	.53890
Total	55	9.1553	1.23612
ORGANISATIONAL CULTURAL FACTORS			
Individualism/collectivism	55	2.9394	.66075
Power distance	55	2.8582	.58458
Masculinity/femininity	55	2.5309	.67793
Total	55	8.3285	1.41432
CAREER BARRIERS			
Family responsibility	55	2.7091	1.22735
Gender stereotyping	55	3.5000	.76679
Glass ceiling	55	3.1273	1.0550
Total	55	9.3364	1.98735
INTERNAL SUPPORT FACTORS			
Organisational support	55	3.2836	.57952
Leadership and management style	55	3.2545	.63494
Lack of mentoring and coaching	55	3.3879	.73076
Total	55	9.9261	1.49163
EXTERNAL SUPPORT FACTORS			
Family support	55	3.4655	.58759
Government initiatives	55	3.6606	.62687
Networking groups	55	3.4909	.83606
Awards and role models	55	3.4545	.99663
Total	55	14.0715	2.24448

The above Table illustrate the mean and standard deviation for the factors identified to influence women's career success for the whole group. The mean scores are high

in most cases with exception to the factors of culture and one sub-factor of personality traits and one of career barriers.

Normality testing

Table 4.9 Tests of normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
External Support factors	.069	55	.200*
Internal Support Factors	.068	55	.200*
Career Barriers	.085	55	.200*
Cultural Factors	.049	55	.200*
Personality Traits	.141	55	.008

The normality tests were conducted to check the correct analysis technique to use. According to the above table 4.9 all variables except personality traits are normally distributed, this allow us to use non parametric test such as spearman-rho correlation analysis.

4.3.2 Spearman-rho Correlation Analysis

To test the influence between the independent variables with the dependent variable, the Spearman's rho correlation (1 tailed) test was used to analyse the influence between the personality traits, cultural factor, carrier barriers, external support factor, internal support factor, and women’s career success.

4.3.2.1 Correlation between personality traits and women career success

H₂: There is a significant influence between personality traits and the success of women

Table 4.10 Correlation between personality traits and women career success

			Personality traits	Women career success
Spearman's rho	Personality traits	Correlation Coefficient	1	-.074
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.297

		N	55	55
--	--	---	----	----

The impact between personality traits and women's career success is illustrated in Table 4.9 above. Based on the $r = -0.74$ and the $p\text{-value} = 0.297$, the influence is insignificant between personality traits and women success at the University of Limpopo, as a result the hypothesis is not accepted. This could be because these women feels that they have no control of the events that happens in their lives.

4.3.2.2 Correlation between Organisational cultural factors and women career success

H₃: There is a significant influence between organisational cultural factors and women's career success.

Table 4.11 Correlation between organisational cultural and women career success

			Organisational cultural factors	Women career success
Spearman's rho	Organisational cultural factors	Correlation Coefficient	1	.259*
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.028
		N	55	55
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).				

The Table above indicate the impact between organisational cultural factors and women's career success. The results indicated an $r = 0.259^*$ with a $p\text{-value} 0.028$ ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). The results showed that there is a significant influence between the organisational cultural factors and women's career success. Meaning that the organisational factors significantly influence women's career success. If the culture of the organisation values and recognize women then women are likely to succeed. The hypothesis is accepted.

4.3.2.3 Correlation between career barriers and women career success

H₄: There is a negative influence between career barriers and women's career success.

Table 4.12 Correlation between career barriers and women career success

			Career barriers	Women career success
Spearman's rho	Career barriers	Correlation Coefficient	1	-.188

		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.085
		N	55	55

The Table above depict the impact between career barriers and women's career success. The $r = -0.188$ and the $p\text{-value} = 0.085$. This indicates that there is no significant influence between career barriers and women's career success. The hypothesis is statistically rejected by data and is not supported. These results are in contradictory with the theoretical proposition that career barriers hinder women's career progression in higher education.

4.3.2.4 Correlation between External support and Women career success

H₅: There is a significant influence between external support factors and women's career success

Table 4.13 Correlation between external support factors and women career success

			External support factors	Women career success
Spearman's rho	External support factors	Correlation Coefficient	1	.118
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.046
		N	55	55

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between External support factors and women's career success is $r = 0.118$ with a $p\text{-value} = 0.046$. The results indicate that there is a significant influence between external support and women's career success. The hypothesis is supported.

4.3.2.5 Correlation between internal support factors and women career success

H₆: There is a significant influence between internal support factors and women's career success.

Table 4.14 Correlation between internal support factors and women career success

			Internal support factors	Women career success
Spearman's rho	Internal support	Correlation Coefficient	1	.378**

	factors	Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.002
		N	55	55
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).				

The above Table illustrate the results of correlation between internal support factors and women's career success where $r = 0.378^{**}$ with a p -value = 0.002 (p -value .001). This indicates that there is a significant positive influence that exist between internal support and women's career success. Therefore, the hypothesis is statistically supported by data. These results support the theoretical view that women are likely to succeed when the organisation provides mentors and coaches and flexible working schedule.

4.3.2.3 Summary of tested hypotheses

Table 4.15 summary of tested hypotheses

Hypotheses	Results: supported or not supported
H ₁ : There is a difference between success group of women based on their demographics	Not Supported
H ₂ : There is a significant influence between personality traits and the success of women	Not Supported
H ₃ : There is a significant influence between cultural environment and women's career success.	Supported
H ₄ : There is a negative influence between career barriers and women's career success.	Not Supported
H ₅ : There is a significant influence between internal environment factors and women's career success.	Supported
H ₆ : There is a significant influence between external environment factors and women's career success	Supported

4.4 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of this study in relation to existing literature. In light of the structure, the discussion will be applied on each objective and hypothesis.

4.4.1 Objective 1: To examine the difference between the success groups based on demographics

- H₁: There is a difference between success groups of women based on their demographics.

The demographics used to test hypothesis 1 included salary range, years of experience, marital status, parents' highest qualification and birth order. These demographics showed less relevancy to the success of women in higher education. Salary range as evidenced by Figure 4.8 showed that those who are successful earn less than those who are not yet successful. This indicates the subjective career success (an individual's self-evaluation of their own success) amongst women. According to Van Esch, Hopkins, O'Neil and Bilimoria (2018), women who do the same job and earn less as compared to men, believe that they are equally successful. This is supported by Dandan and Marques (2017) who mentioned that women rate themselves as successful in spite of unequal pay for the same job and their reduced opportunities of progression.

On years of experience the results revealed that the category of less than 5 years are not yet successful which is true because in higher education to qualify for the senior position one should have 5-10 years of experience. However, an interesting indication is that of those with 21-25 years of experience and still feels that they are not yet successful this could point to the thickening of the glass ceiling towards the end of the hierarchy. Furthermore, as evidenced in Figure 4.11 birth order shows less relevancy to success. The higher percentages found were the not yet successful on the only child, oldest and middle child. These results are in contrary with those of Kuba, Flegr and Havlíček (2018), which indicate that the first born in the family are generally motivated, achievement oriented and exhibit leadership qualities. However, there was a slightly higher percentage of the successful under the youngest child which, however, might indicate that the youngest could have found better opportunities than the eldest and middle child. Parents' highest qualification also shows less relevancy to career success as shown in Figure 4.12, however this is in

contrary with the study of Gregory, Mossop and Santos (2006:47-48), who highlighted that parents educational background is amongst the factors that are more likely to influence one's career, for instance it can be assumed that a woman from an educated family might have been encouraged by her family to further her studies.

The above discussion shows that demographic background of an individual does not necessarily influence their career, thus hypothesis (H₁) is rejected. There is no difference between success groups based on their demographics.

4.4.2 Objective 2: To assess how females' personality traits influence career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- H₂: There is a significant influence between personality traits and the career success of women

The second objective aimed at assessing how women's personality traits influence their career success. The personality traits assessed included self-efficacy, internal locus of control and the need for achievement. Based on Table 4.8 a high mean of (3.12) on self-efficacy was found, denoting the confidence in respondents' ability to progress and succeed in their careers. The findings suggests that these women possess a high belief in overcoming the obstacles in their careers. On the need for achievement, a mean of (3.08) suggest that the respondents are very ambitious and aim for challenging goals which they work hard to accomplish. However, a low mean of (2.96) on locus of control imply that the respondents lack a belief in their ability to influence events that happens in throughout their careers.

Based on the hypothesis tested, the results showed that there is no significant impact between personality traits and career success. The hypothesis was rejected as the findings showed that $r = -0.74$ and the $p\text{-value} = 0.297$. The findings suggest that there is a non-significant influence between personality traits and women's career success. These findings suggest that women lack the male characteristics such as competitiveness and assertiveness as compared the nurturing and caring. The findings were in contrary to the findings of Punnett *et al.*, (2006); Doubell and Struwig (2013), who found out that personality traits variables are positively related to the success of professional women. Meaning that when women have a belief in their capacity to execute behaviours necessary to succeed, belief that they have

control of the events that happens in their lives and have the desire for significant accomplishments they tend to succeed in their careers.

Nevertheless, this might be argued because in most cases individuals fail to influence the events that happens in their lives. These events may be external events such as Economic, Social and Political events. A death of a loved one may result in a person's change in behaviour which as a result can affect a person's personality. A psychological reaction to a stressful situation can negatively affect a person's performance hence become unable to succeed

4.4.3 Objective 3: To measure the extent to which organisational culture influence females career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- H₃: There is a significant influence between organisational culture and career success of women

The organisational cultural factors scale measured individualism/collectivism, power distance and masculinity/femininity. A low score of (2.94) on individualism or collectivism suggest that the respondents are concerned more with their own careers as opposed to organisational goals. A score of (2.86) on power distance indicate that the respondents seem to like power equality. The scale of masculinity and femininity (2.53) signify the beliefs of the respondents in relation to fair requirements to leadership positions and equal employment opportunity. This is supported by the study of Nambira and Engelbrecht (2020) which highlighted that when women appear to support power equality, possess the assertiveness and competitive characteristics as opposed to nurturing and care for others and value their own careers as opposed to the achievement of organisational goals, then they are more likely to succeed in their careers.

Based on the hypothesis, the results indicated $r = 0.259^*$ with a p-value 0.028. The results showed that there is a significant influence between the organisational cultural factors and women's career success. According to Chinyamurindi (2016) people react differently when they fail to compromise with the organisational culture which in turn negatively affect the productivity of the company.

4.4.4 Objective 4: To assess how career barriers influence females career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- H4: There is a negative influence between career barriers with the success of women

The fourth objective was to assess how career barriers influence on females' career success. The descriptive findings showed that career barriers negatively influence women's career success. In measuring career barriers, the score on family responsibility was reversed meaning a low mean indicates high influence. This is due to how the questions were structured. The scale measured family responsibility, gender stereotyping, and glass ceiling. A low mean of (2.71) was obtained on the family responsibility, meaning that family responsibility continues to act as a huge barrier to women career success. Furthermore, taking care of children and domestic chores remain as women's duties. This is evident in Figure 4.6, where most of the respondents (51%) had no children, meaning that they believe kids will slow pace their career progression. A high mean of (3.50) on gender stereotype highlights that, women still experience gender-stereotyping as a barrier. Additionally, a mean score of (3.13) on glass ceiling suggest that the invisible barriers are still acting as obstacles to women advancement to leadership positions in higher education.

Based on the hypothesis, $r = -0.188$ and the $p\text{-value} = 0.085$. The results indicates that there is no significant influence between career barriers and women's career success. The hypothesis is statistically rejected by data. These findings are contrary with the study of Nambira and Engelbrecht (2020), "critical factors influencing women advancement to managerial positions". The researchers conducted a survey of 30 women employees from different hierarchical levels. The study revealed that the most significant barrier is gender-stereotyping and glass ceiling. This was also equally argued by Bierema and Opengart (2002) that the glass ceiling remains a problem that deters women advancement to leadership positions.

According to the previous findings of Doubell (2011), women are anxious that although the effort made by government and organisation in providing legislations and policies to ensure that they are recognised in the workplace, their progress and success might be limited or blocked by the glass ceiling. Burkinshaw and white

(2017) also agreed that career success of women continues to be congested by glass ceiling and barriers. According to the study conducted by Huang, Krivkovich, Starikova, Yee and Zanoschi (2019) seventy-nine percent of entry level females and eighty-three percent of middle level management women desire to move to the next level at work. In addition, seventy-five percent aspire to progress to upper management roles, however they still face barriers when climbing the ladder to the top. According to the descriptive statistics, the career barriers are found to have a negative influence on women's career success. A mean of (3.50) on gender-stereotype was found indicating that women still experience it as a barrier in their careers. In specific, the organisational society still believe that there are roles that are better-of performed by males and not women. This might be as a result of patriarchal societies that we live in.

4.4.5 Objective 5: To examine how external support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- H₅: There is a significant influence between external support factors with the career success of women

Although it is believed that women lack the potential to lead, the current research findings revealed that women at the University of Limpopo particularly those under the faculty of management and law are given the opportunities to lead evidenced by the external support that they receive which has a positive impact on their career success.

The external environment scale measured four items: family support, government initiatives, encouragement from networking groups, and awards for role models. A high mean of (3.47) was obtained on family support for those who are married and have a family although the majority of the women were single as found in Figure 4.5. This means that the majority of the respondents have a supportive family where parents encourage them to pursue their dreams and others with spouses that help them to carryout domestic duties.

A high score of (3.66) was obtained on government initiatives meaning that the respondents do believe that the government legislations are effectively implemented in promoting the eradication of obstacles to women career success, which is in line with Figure 4.7, where many of the respondents were black people. Furthermore, a

mean of (3.49) was obtained on pressure from feminist groups meaning that the respondents perceive that it provides a better dispensation for them, and this is true since the University of Limpopo amongst others have active groups such as ULWASA that encourage women empowerment. Respondents appears to be motivated (3.45) by awards given to best research women in the University as such viewing these women as role models they look up to.

Based on the hypothesis $r = 0.118$ with a $p\text{-value} = 0.046$ ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). The results indicate that there is a significant influence between external support and women's career success. The hypothesis is supported. However, this is consistent with the study findings of Osituyo (2017) "women career advancement and underrepresentation in the public service". The study revealed that although women in leadership are still experiencing exotic and unfavourable working conditions because of the traditional patriarchal views regardless of their participation in work policies and legislation formulation, the external support provided by government such as the effective implementation of legislations like the employment equity act 55 of 1998 seems to have a positive effect on the career progression of women. Furthermore, Osituyo indicated that awards and role models inspire and motivates these women to succeed in their careers.

Negative results on this factor can act as a barrier or obstacle to women career advancement. Previous research clearly shows that there is a positive impact between external support and women's career success. The findings support the hypothesis H_5 , that there is a significant influence between external support and women's career success. This is consistent with the study of Struwig and Doubell (2013), "the contribution of environmental factors to the professional success of women". Their results showed that the more women have support from their families in which domestic and family responsibilities are shared, believe that labour laws and regulation contribute to their empowerment and are able to network, the more likely they are to succeed in their careers.

4.4.6 Objective 6: To examine how internal support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa

- H_6 : There is a significant influence between internal support factors and the career success of women

The internal organisational support is among the factors that are central to women's career success. The internal support factors scale looked at the degree to which respondents view organisational support, lack of mentoring and coaching, and leadership and management style. A high mean of (3.28) shows that the organisation is trying its best in creating an inclusive environment that promote the progression of women. The leadership and management style score a mean of (3.25) showing how the respondents are satisfied with how the management contributes to their advancement through how they lead. However, a worrying case is a high mean (3.39) on lack of mentors and coaching, this blows a siren on the management on what should be done given the importance of mentoring and coaching in the accomplishment of the success of women.

Based on the hypothesis where $r = 0.378^{**}$ with a $p\text{-value} = 0.002$ ($p\text{-value} .0.01$). The results indicates that there is a significant positive influence that exist between internal support factors and women's career success. These results support the theoretical view that women are likely to succeed when the organisation provides mentors and coaches and flexible working schedule. According to the current study findings, the internal organisational support has a positive significant influence on women's career success. The hypothesis H_6 was accepted. This is consistent with the study of Bajdo and Dickson (2001) who found that an organisation that promote gender equality, provide mentorship and coaching have an increasing number of women in management positions, although Swody and Powell (2007) contended that the implementation of work-family programs contributes to women career success within an organisation.

On the other hand, Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Collins (2001) equally agreed by indicating the implementation of family friendly policies within an organisation to promote the success of women in their careers as a way of responding to the concerns of women employees who are facing family responsibilities as a barrier to their success particularly in higher education. This is consistent with findings of Single, Donald and Almer (2018) that, flexible time schedules make it easier for professional women to balance the demands of work and life, consequently making it easier to progress to higher managerial position.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented and covered data management and analysis and the overview of research findings. The focus was made on the demographic profile of the respondents, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, discussion of the research findings. The next chapter provides summary, recommendations, and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the concluding chapter which provides the summary of the entire study. The purpose is to capture the key points from each section. The main focus is placed on the outcomes of the key objectives of the study and to provide the study recommendations, limitations, contributions, and suggestions for future research.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The study was conducted at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop Campus) under the faculty of Management and Law which is found within the Limpopo Province near Polokwane. The faculty of Management and Law consists of 70 female academics. A sample size of 55 was conveniently surveyed for the purpose of this study. A quantitative research design by means of an online questionnaire was conducted. Data was analysed and hypotheses were tested by means of SPSS version 27.0 and conclusions were drawn.

5.3 SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.3.1 Objective 1: To examine the difference between the success groups based on demographics (H₁: There is a difference between success group of women based on their demographics)

The results reviewed showed that there is no different between the success groups. The demographic background does not influence a person's outcome of their careers.

5.3.2 Objective 2: To assess how females' personality traits influence career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa (H₂: There is a significant influence between personality traits and the career success of women)

On this objective the results showed that there is no significant relationship between personality traits and career success. The hypothesis was rejected. However, based on the descriptive statistics on Table 4.8, the findings suggest that these women are

likely to demonstrate the identified traits and that it relates to the career success of women. These findings suggests that these women lack the male characteristics such as competitiveness and assertiveness but possess the nurturing and caring characteristics. The findings were in contrary to the findings of Punnett *et al.*, (2006); Doubell and Struwig (2013), who found out that personality traits variables are positively related to the success of professional women.

5.3.3 Objective 3: To measure the extent to which organisational culture influence females career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa (H₃: There is a significant influence between Organisational cultural factors and women’s career success)

On the third objective, the findings suggested that there is a positive significant impact between the organisational cultural factors and the career success for women. The mean obtained suggest that women at the University of Limpopo support power equality and value competition and assertiveness, although they lack the competitive and assertive characteristics as found above (H₂). This means that they do not prefer men to hold power positions but believe that they can also do well in those positions. These findings are similar to the findings of Duffy *et al.*, (2006), who indicated that women are as good leaders as males when the society is not patriarchal.

5.3.4 Objective 4: To assess how career barriers affect females’ career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa (H₄: There is a negative influence between Career Barriers and women’s career success)

Zenger and Folkman (2020) alluded that women leadership in higher education is mostly associated with the term “glass cliff” which is related to the glass ceiling and is regarded as an invisible barrier to women’s advancement in leadership positions. The current study found that the glass-ceiling still remain as a barrier to women’s career success in higher education. Descriptive evidence was found to have a negative impact between women’s career success and career barriers. The mean scores in Table 4.8 suggests that women continue to experience barriers in their career progression, although the hypothesis was rejected. These findings are similar

to the findings of Doubell (2011) who found out that the glass-ceiling remain a major contributing factor to the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in South Africa.

5.3.5 Objective 5: To examine how external support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa (H₅: There is a significant influence between external support factors with the career success of women)

The findings on this variable indicated that the external support is an important factor in the progression of women to higher management positions in higher education. This included the supportive families for instance parents encouraging them to pursue their careers or spousal help to carryout domestic duties to those who are married or cohabiting, support from pressure groups and awards to women so that other young women can draw motivation from them.

The findings support the hypothesis H₅, that there is a significant influence between external support and women's career success. This is consistent with the study of Struwig and Doubell (2013), their results showed that the more women have support from their families in which domestic and family responsibilities are shared, believe that labour laws and regulation contribute to their empowerment and are able to network, the more likely they are to succeed in their careers.

5.3.6 Objective 6: To examine how internal support factors influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa (H₆: There is a significant influence between internal support factors and the career success of women)

The current study findings pointed out that the organisation is trying its best in creating an inclusive environment that promote the career progression of women and women are getting positive influence from internal organisational networks such as ULWASA. Although, a worrying case was found where there is a lack of mentorship and coaching programs. Mentoring and coaching should be given greater attention because it is important in women's advancement to leadership positions.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The study aimed at identifying the factors that influence women's career success at an institution of higher learning. The objectives and the research hypotheses were attained. The key findings showed that personality traits, career barriers, organisational cultural factors, internal support, and external support factors influence women career success. It was discovered that other factors significantly influence the dependent variable while on the other hand a non-significant influence was found between career barriers and women's career success. Based on the hypothesis testing, internal and external support factors influence women's career success positively. A significant influence was also found between organisational cultural support and the career success for women. However, the influence between personality traits and the career success for women was found to be insignificant. The findings of this study supported the previous research findings on how the factors identified in literature relates to women's career success. The findings are in line with the findings of Maloiy (2020), Nambira and Engelbrecht (2020), Osituyo (2017), Doubell and Struwig (2014; 2013), Doubell (2011) whose studies indicate that the factors identified in literature influence women professional success.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings obtained in this study, the study makes the following recommendations:

Women should be taught at a very young age to aspire to become leaders, the capabilities they have and the resources around them thus to kill the archaic stereotype that a woman's place is in the kitchen. They also need to be taught that leadership is not about gender but ending sexism, as highlighted by Lawless (2021) that gender struggles are not about men and women but about ending sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression because women in most cases appear as lacking the qualities of a leader by promoting sexuality rather than their competencies, playing a nurturing role at work and not making enough effort to find support that could enable them to progress in their careers.

The study showed that the University has more female employees than males, yet these women dominate at lower-level management. There is a need for concentrated effort within the higher education to encourage women to become

leaders. Women who receive awards has a way of influencing others to pursue higher education and empower them to become leaders (Shahriar & Syed, 2017). The findings in this study reveal that there is no doubt that women can become great leaders if they receive the necessary support from the organisation, government, and family. The organisation can impose methods to assist employees create work life to beat family responsibilities.

The study can be carried out in more than one University based in different locations to compare the results and find out if the results contrast or similar. Future researchers should also consider conducting qualitative interviews to draw subjective responses from respondents. Furthermore, for future research other impacting variables should be included to determine if it is only the University of Limpopo that lack mentoring to women who aspire to leadership positions.

5.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study advances the understanding of the influence that personality traits, organisational cultural factors, career barriers, internal support and external support has on the success of women in a specific context. It also has the potential to broaden the existing knowledge within the human resource and academic discipline and the findings may add to literature which can benefit researchers and the human resource departments of different organisations and companies. Additionally, the study identified gaps which were made in previous findings. The results may be helpful to women seeking to advance their careers into leadership management.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The underrepresentation of women in higher education institutions in South Africa need to be explored further, more factors that influence the career success of women need to be identified and a bigger and more regional and national sample should be used this means that more than one institution should be investigated and compare the results. Although the intended objectives of the study were achieved, the study has limitations.

The study only took place at the University of Limpopo under the faculty of management and law and therefore the study findings cannot be generalised to all faculties and all universities in South Africa or Africa as a whole. This means that these results obtained at the University of Limpopo under the faculty of management

and law may not be applicable in other faculties or other universities in South Africa. The researcher also noted that some respondents were not willing to participate in the study and they could have been a major limitation as this could be that these employees had information significant to the study. Other respondents did not fill out the whole questionnaire while others did not participate at all. This also contribute to the limitations.

5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study investigated the factors that influence women's career success in higher education. The main aim was to assess how the factors identified influence the career success of women. A quantitative research method was applied to achieve this aim using a sample of fifty-five women under the faculty of Management and Law at the University of Limpopo. The findings showed that there is a non-significant negative influence between personality and women's career success. Based on hypothesis (H₃) a positive significant influence was found between organisational culture and women career success. Additionally, the results revealed that women still experience barriers such as the glass-ceiling, gender stereotyping in their career progression. Moreover, the findings showed that there is lack of mentorship and coaching to the aspiring women leaders. Nevertheless, on a lighter note, the findings indicated that women at the University of Limpopo are gaining positive influence from internal support network structures such as the ULWASA. Conclusively, all the research hypotheses and objectives were achieved.

Cohen (1971) once said, "when you educate a man you educate an individual but when you educate a woman you educate the whole village", thus women should be encouraged and supported to compete for leadership positions because these women will also help other women who aspire to leadership positions. Additionally, women should be taught at a younger age to aspire to become leaders, the capabilities they have and the resources around them to kill the archaic stereotype that a woman's place is in the kitchen.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

APPENDIX : INFORMED CONSENT FORM



**Turfloop Campus
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa**

I, (participant) hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the following project titled, **FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WOMEN'S CAREER SUCCESS AT A SELECTED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

I realise that:

1. The purpose of the study is to identify the factors that influence females' career success at a selected institution of higher learning in South Africa.
2. The researcher is a Master of Commerce student in the Department of Business Management (HR Programme) at the University of Limpopo.
3. The researcher will make an effort to safeguard and adhere to the confidentiality of the information provided by respondents and their anonymity is guaranteed.
4. I may withdraw from the study at any time.
5. I am aware that it is anticipated that my participation in the study will enhance understanding of the relationship among the variables of interest in my workplace.
6. If I have any questions or problems regarding the study I can contact the researcher at, 0661733948, email nsahumani3@gmail.com
7. My signature below indicates that I have given my informed consent to participate in the above mentioned study.

Signature of respondent: _____ Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____  _____ Date: 25/10/2021



FHDC2016/1981

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APPENDIX B: GATE KEEPER PERMISSION



**University of Limpopo
Office of the Registrar**

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 2407, Fax: (015) 268 3048, Email: Kwena.Masha@ul.ac.za/Retha.Balie@ul.ac.za

23 August 2021

N Sahumani

Email: 201610300@keyaka.ul.ac.za

Dear Nomsa Sahumani,

GATEKEEPER PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TITLE: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WOMEN'S CAREER SUCCESS AT A SELECTED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN SOUTH AFRICA

RESEARCHER:	N Sahumani
SUPERVISOR:	Dr. BK Majola
SCHOOL:	Economics and Mangement
DEGREE:	Master of Commerce in Human Resources Management

Kindly be informed that Gatekeeper permission is granted to you to conduct research at the University of Limpopo entitled: "**Factors that influence Women's Career success at a selected Institution of Higher Learning in South Africa**".

Kind regards,

**PROF. JK MASHA
UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR**

Cc. Prof. RJ Singh: Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Research, Innovation and Partnerships
Prof. RN Madadzhe: Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning
Dr. T Mabila, Director: Research Development and Administration
Prof. P Masoko – Chairperson: Research and Ethics Committee
Ms A Ngobe – TREC Secretariat



Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 27 July 2021

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/107/2021: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Factors That Influence Women's Career Success at A Selected Institution of Higher Learning in South Africa
Researcher: N Sahumani
Supervisor: Dr BK Majola
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Economics and Management
Degree: Master of Commerce in Human Resource Management

PROF P MASOKO

CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.



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APPENDIX D: EDITOR'S LETTER



APPENDIX E: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1.1 Age

Under 25	1
25-29	2
30-34	3
35-39	4
40-44	5
45-49	6
50-54	7
55+	8

1.2 Race

African	Coloured	White	Indian	Other
1	2	3	4	5

1.3 Current marital status

Married /	Cohabiting (living together)	Single	Divorced	Widowed
1	2	3	4	5

1.4 Number of children in the household

None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five+
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1.5 What is your current position

1	Tutor
2	Junior lecturer
3	Lecturer
4	Senior lecturer
5	Associate professors
6	Professor

1.6 Highest qualifications obtained

1	Lower than grade 12
2	Grade 12
3	Certificate
4	Diploma/Bachelor's degree
5	Honours degree/Btech
6	Masters
7	PhD
8	Other (specify)

1.7 Overall years of experience?

1.8 Are you intending to study further?

Yes	No	Uncertain
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1.9 Length of service within the current organisation

Less than a year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-9 years	10years+
1	2	3	4	5

1.10 What is your parents' highest level of educational qualification?

1	Lower than grade 12
2	Grade 12
3	Certificate
4	Diploma/Bachelor's degree
5	Honours degree/Btech
6	Masters
7	PhD
8	Other (specify)

1.11 Your salary range per month (excluding deductions)

1	9000
2	9000-15000
3	16000-20000

4	21000-25000
	26000+

1.12 Your hierarchical level on the organisational structure in the organisation you are currently employed in

1	Top level (Professors, HOD, Dean, Director)
2	Middle level (Senior Lecturer, Associate professors)
3	Lower level (Tutor, Junior lecturer, Lecturer)

1.13 The extent to which you feel you have achieved professional career success

1	Greater extent
2	Slight extent

1.14 Your birth order?

Only child	1
Oldest	2
Youngest	3
Middle	4

2. SECTION B: PERSONALITY TRAITS AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Please tick or cross the number that best illustrates the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding personal and cultural influences on your career success. (1) stands for “strongly disagree”, (2) “disagree”, (3) “neutral”, (4) “agree” and (5) “strongly agree”. Note that there are no correct or incorrect answers.

2a, PERSONALITY TRAITS

No	Items	Ratings				
		1	2	3	4	5
2.1	When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work					
2.2	One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should					
2.3	When I cannot do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can					

2.4	When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them	1	2	3	4	5
2.5	I give up on things before completing them	1	2	3	4	5
2.6	I avoid facing difficulties	1	2	3	4	5
2.7	When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it	1	2	3	4	5
2.8	When I decide to do something, I get right to work on it	1	2	3	4	5
2.9	I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me	1	2	3	4	5
2.10	Failure just makes me try harder	1	2	3	4	5
2.11	I feel insecure about my ability to do things	1	2	3	4	5
2.12	I am a self-reliant person	1	2	3	4	5
2.13	I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life	1	2	3	4	5
2.14	If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it	1	2	3	4	5
2.15	In order to get a really good job you need to have family members or friends in high places	1	2	3	4	5
2.16	Promotions are given to employees who perform well on the job	1	2	3	4	5
2.17	To make a lot of money you have to know the right people	1	2	3	4	5
2.18	People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded for it	1	2	3	4	5
2.19	Group success is more important than individual success	1	2	3	4	5

2b, CULTURAL FACTORS

2.20	It is more important for men to have a professional career than it is for women	1	2	3	4	5
2.21	Meetings are usually run more effectively when they are chaired by a man	1	2	3	4	5
2.22	It is frequently necessary for a manager to use authority when dealing with subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
2.23	It is preferable to have a man in a high-level position rather than a woman	1	2	3	4	5
2.24	Men usually solve problems with logical analysis; women usually solve problems with intuition	1	2	3	4	5
2.25	Managers should encourage group loyalty even if individual goals suffer	1	2	3	4	5
2.26	Solving organisational problems usually requires an active, forcible approach, which is typical of men	1	2	3	4	5
2.27	Employees should not disagree with management decisions	1	2	3	4	5
2.28	Group welfare is more important than individual rewards	1	2	3	4	5

2.39	There are some jobs that a man can always do better than a woman	1	2	3	4	5
2.30	Rules and regulations are important because they inform employees what the organisation expects of them	1	2	3	4	5
2.31	Instructions for operations are important for employees on the job	1	2	3	4	5
2.32	Managers should make most decisions without consulting subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
2.33	Managers should seldom ask for the opinions of employees	1	2	3	4	5

3. SECTION C: CAREER BARRIERS

NB: for this section, you will be required to use ticks or cross to indicate your level of agreement regarding each of the following variables that may be barriers to your career success. (1) stands for “strongly disagree”, (2) “disagree”, (3) “neutral”, (4) “agree” and (5) “strongly agree”. Note that there are no correct or incorrect answers.

No	Items	Ratings				
		1	2	3	4	5
3.1	I am unable to succeed in my career because of family responsibilities					
3.2	Gender discrimination is a constraint to women career success.					
3.3	The organisational culture does not value women empowerment					
3.4	Women are regarded as inferior in this organisation					
3.5	In this organisation most male occupy leadership positions					
3.6	Stereotypes against women limit them to succeed in their careers.					
3.7	There is a lack of support systems at work e.g. mentorship programs and role models					
3.8	The minority of women are held down in the workplace and never advancing to a management position					
3.9	The organisation is male dominant, and they undermine females’ ideas.					

4. SECTION D: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Please tick or cross on the number that best illustrates the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding your internal organisational and external environment. (1) Stands for “strongly disagree”, (2) “disagree”, (3) “neutral”, (4) “agree” and (5) “strongly agree”. Note that there are no correct or incorrect answers.

4a, EXTERNAL FACTORS

No	Items	Ratings				
		1	2	3	4	5
4.1	Career breaks due to family responsibility negatively impacted on my career					

	success					
4.2	I have to sacrifice family/personal life to prove my commitment to the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
4.3	Family responsibility leave me with limited time for networking	1	2	3	4	5
4.4	Women are proactively included in networking opportunities for professional and social support	1	2	3	4	5
4.5	The maternity leave policy is adequate in providing time-off for childbirth	1	2	3	4	5
4.6	I have/had a supportive spouse/partner who shares equally in domestic and family responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
4.7	I was raised in a family who encouraged me to pursue my career goals	1	2	3	4	5
4.8	Cultural values in South Africa encourage employment equity	1	2	3	4	5
4.9	Labour laws & regulations in South Africa has contributed substantially to gender equity in the workplace	1	2	3	4	5
4.10	Earlier pressure from women's movement groups have contributed substantially to the creation of a better dispensation for women	1	2	3	4	5
4.11	Awards for successful women create role models to whom I can lookup	1	2	3	4	5

4b, INTERNAL FACTORS

4.12	My views and contributions often appear to be less valued than those of my male counterparts	1	2	3	4	5
4.13	I feel that my leadership attributes are perceived as ranking lower in importance than the attributes of male leaders	1	2	3	4	5
4.15	There is a lack of role models in managerial positions with whom I can associate	1	2	3	4	5
4.16	There is a lack of appropriate mentors and coaches to whom I can turn to for support	1	2	3	4	5
4.17	There is a lack of training opportunities to enhance my career development	1	2	3	4	5
4.18	My organisation provides training initiatives for advancing women	1	2	3	4	5
4.19	My organisation has an accelerated programme for women demonstrating exceptional potential	1	2	3	4	5
4.20	Organisational policies provide flexible work solutions for balancing career and family responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
4.21	The organisation has specified targets, quotas or other affirmative policies to increase the percentage of women in senior management or executive positions	1	2	3	4	5
4.22	Mentor(s) have given me assignments that have prepared me for higher ranking positions	1	2	3	4	5
4.23	Leadership development programmes for both men and women are in place	1	2	3	4	5