Move Over Ms. Professor!

A Review of the Challenges Women Experience In Academia

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Abstract

This paper seeks to identify the professional challenges, success factors, work environment, institutional culture, research support and gender explicit practices for women in higher education in a post-apartheid South Africa, thereby contributing toward supporting women in academia at different stages in their careers. The study is contextualized within the context of national and global scholarship on the professional challenges faced by women in the academy. This included theoretical explanations and studies of perceptions of the glass ceiling, the glass wall, the mommy track, academic roles, academic bullying, the queen bee syndrome, strategies for the advancement of women and stress experienced by women. Women in the academy are unique and so too are their experiences and coping strategies. In order to fully understand effective coping strategies adopted by women in higher education; as they progress along their careers, it is integral to understand their lived encounters. This study was qualitative, using in depth interviews and collected evidence from twenty women at different levels at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The results of the study are strengthened by existing scholarship and contextualised with the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1979).

Keywords: Glass Wall; Queen Bee Syndrome; Academic Bullying; Mommy Track; Role-overload; Academic- freedom; Stress.

1. Introduction

In Africa 30 million girls of school going age will never see a classroom (Butler-Adam, 2015). "Women are traditionally considered responsible for the house, children and people in general, compared to men who are considered responsible for accomplishing their goals outside the house in war, hunting, politics and paid work. Unfortunately, precisely because of these prejudices, women are not taken seriously and discouraged from pursuing higher levels of education, to work outside the house, and to enter traditionally male dominated industries, to advance in their careers or to compete for management positions" (Poloski, 2001, 3).

It is therefore not surprising that professional challenges exist at multiple levels for women in academia along their career trajectory. Challenges concomitant to promotion namely the glass ceiling, glass wall and maternal wall, academic roles, academic bullying, the queen bee syndrome, strategies for the advancement of women and workplace stress presented itself throughout the research. The glass ceiling is identified as the unseen, unbreakable barrier, which thwarts black women in particular from progressing in their career along quantifiable trajectories, irrespective of experience, qualifications, race and attainments.

There is scant research on post-apartheid institutional culture within higher education environment concerning gender dynamics. In an effort to generate new scholarship this study will determine the impact on gender advancement and institutional culture from twenty lived experiences interviews.

2. Methodology

Twenty qualitative interviews were conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Research participants were randomly selected on the basis that they were female and employed in the academic workspace. The principle objective of the interviews was to understand the lived experiences of female academics, in relation to their career trajectory. They spanned across five campuses within the University of KwaZulu Natal. The University of KwaZulu Natal came into existence in 2004 as a result of the merger with the former 'bush college ' University of Durban Westville, the Edgewood College of Education and the former University of Natal campuses at Howard College, Pietermaritzburg and Medical School. The reason for using this institution for the study is that the merge amalgamated different types of higher education institutions from the apartheid era. The University of KwaZulu Natal was one of the first merged institutions in a democratic South Africa.

Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of ensure interpretation and observation in the social world (Snape and Spencer, 2003). Interviews were semi-structured and conversational so that all areas were discussed. Although research participants were keen to contribute to the study, they feared victimization and requested that their personal information was not made public. They signed an informed consent which confirmed their anonymity. Female academics who participated were of diverse race and age categories. They were also in different stages of their career, from junior academic positions to more senior professors.

3. A Discussion of the Findings and Scholarship Review

Over the past two decades, a multiplicity of areas premised around women in academia; however, the literature was by no means exhaustive. This study is therefore based on the assertion that coping strategies and the impact of institutional culture play a significant role in the current disproportionate gender (career advancement) statistics.

A number of significant and substantial themes materialized, linked to the historical environment in South Africa. Themes that are not fully explored and located in the literature include race and the role it played in the current university context. This is scrutinised against the national backdrop of precise laws and policies for employment.

3.1. THE GLASS CEILING

Notwithstanding the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, gender transformation has been measured. Mary Gray, professor of Mathematics at The American University states "if bias has 'infected' salary, and the process for determining rank is similar to that for determining salary, then rank too, may be 'infected" (Euben, 2001). The under-representation of women in senior positions in the academy are directly linked to the disparities of salary, rank and work-family conflict all of which place a ceiling, hindering further advancement for women.

The socialization of women during different stages, and that women find themselves incessantly up against 'old boy networks' is part of a larger gendered workplace concern. The gender bias rules of this 'network' are prevalent in cases surfacing in the United States, where women are circumvented for promotions due to their shared obligation to motherhood, and mothers who make tenure purportedly do not show the same levels of assurance as their male colleagues (Euben, 2005).

A management role in higher education for women frequently means that she has to deal with decidedly educated personalities on a daily basis. In addition she has to overcome difficulties of sex role categorizing, culture (the old boys' traditions), matters around her appearance and clothing; and leadership style (Welch, 1990). To attain success in this role, Welch (1990,169) refers, "the female manager must be able to break away from the popular public image of the mothering nurturing woman whose duty is to stay at home and tend to the family unless she be ridden with guilt. The working woman must learn to reign in the traits that are stereotypically labeled 'female', since this behavior is what men (sic) have learned to devalue and deride". Typecasts and discernments escalate and

accumulate within this context, based on the rebirth of these age-old beliefs.

Concomitant to the direct overpowering of women entering management roles are two concepts, the glass wall and the maternal wall (mommy track).

Finley's (2009) reference to the 'glass wall' when alluding to gendered remuneration and discrimination of women in America; women struggle to acquire any parity in remuneration or representation in faculty (research conducted in association with the National Education Association 2007 and the Association of American Colleges and Universities), the statistics were disproportionate for the integer of women candidates recruited versus the actual number of positions available (Finley, 2009). Comprehensively women scuffle for recognition in footings of equal pay for analogous worth (Taber and Remick, 1978 in Hutner, 1986).

Women invest in effectively balancing work-home-life, leaving minimal time to focus on recompense. Hinsliff (2000) believes that one cannot blame women for not being assertive due to the past, where women workers have been fired for probing why they received considerably less remuneration than men. "Women feel that they are a financial provider and a career at the same time; they juggle that and that may be part of why they are willing to accept just a step on the ladder and don't always push as hard for higher pay. But that does not justify employers discriminating in any way". Page number and reference No intelligence on pay inequality is transparently available in South Africa therefore all studies applied have originated from America.

Academic (sourced from American Association of University Professors) remuneration disparities were transparent, at institutions such as The University of South Florida, The University of Cincinnati and Minnesota State Colleges between 1997 and 2001 have all had women professors challenge them legally regarding salary equity. It was argued that women professors earn on average 4.85% less, than male colleagues (Euben, 2001). According to Perna (2000) "the regression analysis shows that women earn 8% less than comparable men". In 2001, Kent State University had a discriminatory merit-pay system. According to Euben (2001), from 1988 – 1992, "40% of males received above average merit awards, while only 23% of its female faculty did so". The United Kingdom Equal Opportunities Commission (2003), confirmed that women still earn less than men, including income from employment, pensions, benefits and investments, women's gross income is on average an astounding 51% less than that of men.

In terms of seniority of rank; the statistics are askew due to the greater number of men originally belonging to the academic fraternity. Although the numbers of women have increased, women are found at entry levels rather than in senior positions. "The disparities not only remain substantial but are greater in 1998 than in 1975 for half of the categories, including 'all-institution' average salaries for full, associate and assistant professors." South African statistics on the allocation of research grants indicate that growth and progress is slow. In 1995, only 14% of the monetary value of research grants was allocated to women in 2001 this increased to 19% (Bailey and Mouton, 2004, 38). Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) boasts 40 years of celebrating the advancement of women in higher education globally (White, 2012).

In the United States the term mommy tracking was given to lawyers who prioritized their families over longer worker hours. As a result, they were bypassed for promotion (Cummins, 2012). According to Robyn Farrell in Ntuli (2007b, 1) "women are driven to deliver and only if companies could provide a child-minding incentive or aftercare where children can do their homework until their mothers knock off, then women will succeed every bit as well as men." In academia, women are considered to be mommy trackers, irrespective of the marital or childbearing status. And mommy trackers in academia have decreased chances of promotion (Cummins, 2012).

The contentious definition came to the fore in 1989 after a publication by Felice Schwartz. her assertion that "women in management cost a corporation more than men do" sparked debates across the industry among activist. Whilst businesses hailed it ground breaking research, women's organizations point out that it caused retrogression to the advancement of women and reinforced the mommy track ideological principals. The mommy track is an extremely sensitive topic as it contributes significantly to gender devaluation from an emotional and financial perspective. It later came to light that the purpose of the Schwartz (1989) article was to create an awareness of the lack of flexible work environments for women in management. In the United States there are a number of court cases and precedents regarding the maternal wall. However, these laws are blurred with regard to discrimination and accommodation (Williams and Segal, 2003).

The issue with the maternal wall is that "it sends the unstated message that the woman 'asking for accommodation' is demanding special treatment" (Williams and Segal, 2003, 86). Accommodation is costly and this is the perception that is created. Rather than view this as an 'accommodation' issue, a review of policies and practices are necessary to understand and provide a certain level of flexibility to all employees irrespective of gender. Many women do not realise the glass ceiling because their careers are hindered by the mommy track or maternal wall. This concept is well explored in the United States at both an organizational level as well as within academia. However this area of research lacks within a South African context. Most barriers to women in the generic workplace are defined by the umbrella term of the glass ceiling.

Williams (2004) discusses the relationship between roles and workload within the American context. She draws relationships between stereotyping and stumbling blocks to development and the impact on competence from the "maternal wall" concept. Whilst the academic workload in terms of developmental requirements are the same across gender, the stereotypes and perceptions surrounding female academics differ due to their "juggling act" of varying roles. Williams and Segal (2003), rationalizations on the bias and discrimination that women face unambiguously with the maternal wall. This includes 'hostile prescriptive stereotyping' (p 95), where women who return from maternity leave are treated differently, principally because of the perception that her primary function should exist as caregiver and caretaker of the family (Williams and Segal, 2003).

The predominantly masculine management structure correspondingly assumes that women with children are not committed to advancing their careers or receiving promotions. Stereotypes and postulations impact on a woman's career, Williams and Segal (2003) found that married women do not wear their rings to interviews; to avoid the assumption that children will soon follow. This conjecture would either disadvantage the woman from attaining the job and if she secured the position she would instantaneously be positioned on the mommy track.

Cognitive bias moreover contributes to women's discrimination, because of the opinion that when a woman is pregnant or returns from maternity leave, that there is a decline in her performance (Williams and Segal, 2003). The continuation of bias and typecasting in the academy is reinforced by Crosby et al (2004). Women in academia are afraid to have children, as the time devoted to children would threaten tenure.

The interviews yielded the following results linked to the implication for the glass ceiling in adherence to the University's Employment Equity Policy.

There is a consistent dissatisfaction among respondents with regard to the implementation of the Employment Equity policy of the University of KwaZulu Natal. To fully understand the context and implementation process, attempts to research the official documentation linked to this was executed. This was challenging as the only publicly available documentation was apart policy in the Recruitment and Selection policy. While some Schools at the University published their goals and progress, a complete report for the institution as a whole is not public and cannot be accessed from the human resources department. This was a considerable limitation in terms of fully understanding the context of the respondents.

The unfailing frustration was the recruitment and selection policy was being 'unfairly' implemented and that academics were not "recruited based on skill but rather to fill a race quota where it is only acceptable to recruit black female academics". The reference to 'Black' in these instances was specifically defined as African.

Respondent A: "Vacancies are not filled purely because a suitable Black female candidate is not found. This impacts on the optimal productivity of the department. The ripple effect being that the current staff are overloaded and it impacts on research time and obligations"

Respondent K: "The greatest challenges are not from a gender perspective but rather a political or race perspective. With the Employment Equity quotas, only Black female appointments are allowed since 2010. The overall implication is negative because many of the Black women display 'unsupportive behaviour. Black women do not greet other members of team"

"Racism is very prevalent in Medical School. There is no team spirit. Different races embody different attitudes and it becomes difficult to work towards a common goal"

Respondent T: "The implementation of the Employment Equity policy to appoint only Black females has been difficult in my department. There is a lack of Black women in the specialised field and hiring junior candidates to fill senior portfolios without a proper skilling programme in place puts pressure on the entire team".

The Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 was designed to eliminating unfair discrimination in a employment policy. The Act is detailed in guiding employers on a fair implementation process with reference to Sections 15, 16, 17 and 20. While the current Employment Equity policy of UKZN defines women as a designated group, and addresses areas of recruitment; development programmes, succession planning and capacity building in a generic manner, it does not include specific targets aimed at gender development and career advancement. In addition, it does not include an operationally viable implementation plan, and if one exists, it is not publicly available. The challenges are an indication that the Act is not being used as a guideline for achievement. The responses from the interviews indicate short term success merely to exceed affirmative action gender quotas. The Act cautions against this as it disadvantages the affirmative action employee by failing to provide adequate support for success. The implementation of the policy, did not include designated groups as defined by the Act (see footnote 3), it applied exclusively to African women.

Respondent M: "the new performance management system, the 360-degree feedback and the new criterion for academics were implemented without communication, consultation or input. It does not add any value". Respondent N: "new promotions policy, new performance management system, workload policy all comes straight from the top. It is very autocratic, with no consultation or communication. The culture is very closed". These autocratic systems impact directly on the development of female academic staff. Respondent E: "Performance management system and key performance areas were not communicated or consulted upon. It was just implemented in 2010".

3.2. ROLES AND ACADEMIC WORKLOAD

Greenhaus et al (2003) indicates that people inevitably organize their roles in a hierarchy of prominence, while Marks and MacDermid (1996), drawing on Mead (1964), and suggest that individuals can and should demonstrate equally positive commitments to different life roles; they should hold a balanced positioning to multiple roles. Swanson and Johnston (2003) discovered that balancing family responsibilities particularly for women with

children under the age of 10 deleteriously affected research productivity. An academic role in the same study found that women are further frustrated and displeased irrespective of the academic level. The high levels of discontent in this case were due to the added burden placed on female academics to "manage the institutional housekeeping – i.e. committee work, student recruitment, departmental social events" (Swanson and Johnston, 2003, 3). Ward and Wolf-Wendel (2003) highlight that although academic freedom and flexibility are the cornerstones of the profession; women were disturbed by the high workload and the struggle of balancing home and work.

Institutional housekeeping by Bird, Litt and Wang (2004, 195) "represents the invisible and supportive labour of women to improve women's situation within the institution. Much like unpaid domestic housekeeping typically performed by women, institutional housekeeping is typically performed without resources or recognition". Men in academia are repeatedly placed on university committees that drive policy. The institutional housework placed on female academics take time and precludes them from focusing on research which is central to advancement development and promotion.

Bird et al (2004) found that women at institutions need to take responsibility for generating research and reports on gender equity issues to advance themselves at the cost of the actual measurable work that will allow for their advancement. A number of international universities have policies, guidelines and models to define and guide academic workload allocation. These lie not only in the application of the policy but also in the unwritten work such as institutional housekeeping. There are a number of gaps in the allocation of work to women academics; they are disadvantaged by this whether the guidelines are written or unwritten in a policy. "Interruptions in continuity of employment and fractional contracts can work to exclude or hinder research activity,"

Models for allocating work exclude research from the calculations which exacerbates the challenges faced by women. This feeds off the expectations that research work is conducted after hours at home, which women may find more difficult" (Barrett and Barrett, 2011, 141). The manner in which work is structured and allocated directly impacts on women creating obstacles to her advancement. Due to the lack of support systems for advancement, women lack confidence to enter management positions. While they agree that promotions will allow them to be involved in a decision-making capacity and equip them with the power to effect change on different committees and structures. "More female academic staff have a more fragmented career, and this is probably connected with their lower expectations and aspirations in both management and academic roles" (Barrett and Barrett, 2013, 43).

The current impact on academic workload is somewhat dependent on the changing notions and definitions of academic freedom. In South Africa academic freedom has fallen into much controversy with changes in higher education. Academic freedom is exceedingly important to academics as it allows them accountability with autonomy. The current university structures in South Africa threaten academic freedom. According to Karran (2007, 309) "the (apparent) need for greater managerial professionalism, both as the participation rate in higher education rises, and as the universities' research roles become increasingly important in determining national success, within the emerging global knowledge economy". Although Karran (2007) makes reference to research in the European Union, his findings are consistent with South African higher education. In the current structures in South Africa, the state as well as education structures is held responsible for the lack of academic freedom (Bentley et al, 2006).

3.3. ACADEMIC BULLYING

Academic bullying emerges to be common within higher education. According to Keashly and Neuman (2010) organizational culture and climate are determinants of bullying. A definition used by Cassell (2011, 34) was the comprehensive Von Bergen's (2006) interpretation as "harassment that inflicts a hostile work environment upon an employee by a coworker, typically through a combination of repeated, inappropriate, and unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, and/or low-level physical behaviors that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating,

harassing, humiliating, degrading, or offensive". Women are largely victims of this act irrespective of their hierarchical position within academia.

The consequences of academic bullying are severe and add to the already significant professional challenges that women experience. The consequences include poor job performance, higher employee turnover, powerlessness, demoralization and negative impact on health. (McKay et al, 2008).Mobbing is where groups of individuals intimidate, humiliate and exclude other members of the staff. Often this is done by email or confrontation and is targeted at maliciously forcing the targeted worker out of the workplace (deFalco and Crabb, 2005). Women form part of this excluded group especially when they are employed in a predominantly male faculty. Institutions do not often recognize the environmental issues and immediately base the incident on personal characteristics. Institutions need to reinforce and adhere to the policy perspective on bullying. Without this administrative support and leadership communication, bullying will continue to persist a challenge for women.

Women are particularly vulnerable if they are new hires. "Two broad causes of abusive behavior in the workplace have been identified, 1) personal (narcissism, fear, outcome uncertainty, power motives, object beliefs, negative life themes and lack of self-regulation) and 2) situational (alienation, non-supportive family, negative role models, life stressors, competitive pressures, exposure to negative superiors or peer groups, and financial need of the individual" (Cassell, 2011, 38).In the United States, being on a tenure track offers greater job security and a permanent academic position, and a structured plan to be promoted into the different stages until full professorship is attained. Individuals who are part of tenured group are likely to be greater targets for bullying while the converse holds true where the tenured group holds adequate power to be bullies (Lester, 2013).

Curtis (2011) indicates that women from 1976 – 2009 have maintained between 34% to 38% of full-time tenure positions while men hold between 48% to 58%. In a Norwegian study by Taylor and Anderson (2012), there was no evidence of a relationship between gender and incidents of bullying. In the study by Simpson and Cohen (2004) cited in Taylor and Anderson (2012), within the United Kingdom, definite empirical relationships with gender and bullying were confirmed. Women were more likely to report incidences of bullying and were more likely targets than men. Examples of what women viewed as traits of bullying behavior, men viewed it as acceptable management styles (Taylor & Anderson, 2012).

Limited research on academic bullying is available in South African, specific references were made by the following respondents on their experiences. Respondent C: "Academic bullying is very prevalent from a gender perspective. Women in the academy are not respected as their male counterparts. An example of this is that men are often addressed with their title, whereas women are addressed by first names irrespective of whether they are Professor or Doctor. Male academics make inappropriate comments regarding women's hair and clothing which causes a certain level of discomfort to the woman. Women in the department are tasked with additional admin duties." In another example of academic bullying by the same respondent, "a group of women were being emotionally abused by a male colleague. Some of these women had physical manifestations of stress such as rash breakouts due to stress and an increased amount of sick leave was required."

Female academics are yelled at by their male colleagues with no repercussions, despite the policy in place that allows them to report the incidence and follow the correct procedure via human resources. While collective action was advocated, the women still have to deal with the aftermath of the report and often results in resignation". Respondent D confirmed that "there was a lack of support for women. Men trivialized their work by putting them down". Respondent E had a number of examples of academic bullying that she experienced and attempted to show emotional support for the women being bullied. These include "Sexual harassment which is very prevalent but instead of dealing with the processes, women often resign. Male line managers break women down emotionally; often bringing them to tears by yelling and making them feel inadequate and inefficient."

The work environment is antagonistic, successful female academics have had their offices broken into, sometimes on several occasions; causing disarray and emotional trauma. There are no consequences for male academic bullies. They get away with everything and the women are forced to leave". Respondent F commented that "women are not strong enough to fight back and they are not supported in the fight". Respondent F further cited the example of a research mentor who would "break the women down emotionally by shouting, being rude and arrogant. There is little or no chance of research success in a relationship of this nature". Respondent G cited an example of a research mentor, indicating "the power dynamic is too strong. Instead of supporting the female mentee, he breaks her down emotionally and devalues her. Eventually he submitted her research papers as his own excluding her name from the publication"

3.4. QUEEN BEE SYNDROME

Devised in the 1970's, the "Queen Bee" syndrome is a feature impacting on the advancement of female academics. Limited literature on the queen bee syndrome in higher education has resulted in exploratory points of discussions during the interviews. Queen Bees define themselves by not assisting or mentoring women in any way for career success due to the fact that they have reached success by themselves. There are three types of women who obstruct or impede women's advancement. This includes; "The Princess Bee will support other women as long as they do not violate her territory. Consequently, she mentors' others as long as they stay separate from her domain. The Phantom Bee will not facilitate finding another woman for a work position. Men, then, are allocated the job and fewer women are afforded access to new work roles" (Cummins, 2012, 84). This is fast becoming a growing impediment in the career advancement of women.

de Groot (2010) indicated that the organizational culture may play a significant role in the existence of the Queen bee syndrome. Women who do not identify with other women will exhibit queen bee behaviour. If a woman has struggled her way into a senior management position, she is often reluctant to share this similar accolade with other women or make their journeys easier. Similar to the Queen Bee syndrome is the Cinderella complex whereby the ugly stepsisters work together to undermine the success of one sister (Michell, 2003). These obstacles impact on the number of women that reach senior management positions and their success at the top. Women in senior management positions feel alone and alienated, and are protective of their position.

There are a number of sacrifices required to realize senior management; these include adopting male characteristics and personality traits and forfeiting family time (Mavin, 2006).The South African research on the queen bee syndrome in retail bank is one of the first researched cases in the country. The results of the data collected deals with the perceptions of the Queen Bee syndrome as well as support structures for women in academia. This phenomenon flies in the face of all attempts to create a workplace environment to promote the development and advancement of women. Outcomes from this research was similar to research in other countries where women in management position felt that they worked extremely hard to attain success without the support of other women in the face of adversity and obstacles (Johnson and Mathur-Helm, 2013).

Mavin (2006), found in the South African study that success for women in management positions, especially in a male dominated workplace, women begin to portray these male characteristics. Their continued survival at the top depended on blending into the old 'boys' network' and they begin to "personify men by exhibiting brash, harsh and tough behaviour" (Johnson and Mathur-Helm, 2013).The queen bee syndrome in a South African higher education context may be under researched, but it is clear that the syndrome is present. It merely lacks a label (Speedy, 2003 and Mlisa, 1999). Mlisa (1999) conducted research at the Fort Hare University and concluded "this is an unfortunate situation for women as they are supposed to be role models fighting and helping their sisters to be freed from the bondage not only of patriarchal laws but also exploitative, economic laws. All women have a desire to be free and this will only happen if the few sisters who have managed to break the barriers are prepared to help those below climb the ladder" (p. 233).

The goal is the same – however the support for women is insufficient, particularly from women who have reached desired academic levels. Syndromes such as the Queen Bee and Cinderella complex are the reasons that there is a lack of female role models. Schipani et al (2006) work on the perceptions of men and women at senior executive level in 20 European countries found that the lack of mentoring stemming from the lack of women role models in management was a significant obstacle in the growth of women. In fact, 61% of the women either strongly agreed or disagreed with this obstacle to their development to senior managerial levels.

Respondent Q: "A structured mentorship or support system is lacking. This is critical to success. There is an induction programme for university teaching, but none exists for emotional support which is very important especially for newcomers and women progressing to higher levels. I was very lucky. I did not experience the Queen Bee. I had a Dean who was very supportive, and I owe my success and research accolades to her. She provided me with the academic and research guidance as well as emotional support. Her open-door policy made her extremely accessible. My new Dean is very different, and I feel a void from a support perspective. The new Dean sits in his offices and focuses on his research outputs. I try to surround myself with strong women who are willing to guide and mentor me". Respondent G: "There is no support emotionally or academically. I have an autocratic Dean. With regard to the Queen Bee, there are Black women being appointed in senior positions to meet equity criteria. They don't greet and behave like 'divas. There is no commitment for support and mentoring".

Respondent O: "Women in senior positions are highly capable. There is no formalized support or mentoring process. Many of these women, irrespective of their role, are asked to do admin work and minutes" Respondent D: "No formal support or mentoring structure in place. It would be nice. I am self-motivated so I try to support and encourage other women. Promotions based on gender alone are very negative as it impacts on the entire department. The Queen Bee exists at UKZN. There are a few women in very senior executive positions. They were part of the team that tightened the promotions criteria. I believe this was done purely to make it difficult for women to progress into higher positions". Respondent E: "There are no support structures. Even HR is a tool used by management and does not support employees. The Queen Bee does exist. These women of colour in senior executive positions block other women for progression. They have no empathy or simulate good behavior". Respondent F: "New people coming into the institution are vulnerable. Support is lacking throughout the institution. Women have all the opportunities in the present, but we are not supporting each other" Respondent G: "People need space to develop but mentoring and support is important. This is lacking at UKZN. Queen Bees definitely exist at UKZN and they are openly territorial, and they refuse to grow people".

3.5. STRATEGIES AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Brown (2000) presents a model for a management development programme for women at different stages of their career life cycle in higher education institutions. This model is based on research in Scotland. "Confidence is crucial to securing promotion in academic life and women academics tend to lack that quality and therefore do not push themselves towards promotion. Women are often blamed for their own insecurity but in fact female socialisation to feel inadequate and the very real sexist aspects one finds in most academic settings are the real culprits" (Brown, 2000, 71) This relates directly to the largely masculine institutional culture and the old 'boys network'. There are mixed studies on women-only programmes in terms of specific development goals.

Lewis and Fagenson (1995) identify that women-only development programmes provide great contributions in terms of the positive support it provides women and the effectiveness of the specific skills needed. However these programmes enhance the bias against women with the perception of male colleagues of a separatist type development and training. Women only programmes may meet specific skills set and training for women, but it also contributes to further isolation and marginalization because of the small numbers (Brown, 2000). Training programmes including both men and women tend to focus more on the generic management skills set and the

overall effectiveness of the team and institution.

Another different view by Koonce (2004) who reviewed the advantages of a successful women only development programme, the research focused on limitations of generic based development programmes. Key to its success is the confidential environment, the handpicked faculty and a collaborative rather than competitive environment. This programme "creates a place where women can learn with their professional peers in all-female settings builds special bonds on connection and trust. It also encourages risk-taking and collaborative group learning, much of which occurs as a result of women connecting with each other around shared experiences" (Koonce, 2004, 80). With differing theories around development programmes, it is imperative to highlight the role mentoring programmes would play in the development of women.

According to Lewis and Fagenson (1995), the objective of management programmes for the development of women are "first, these programmes seek to enable women managers and potential women managers to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership. This objective is referred to as increased skill. Second, they seek to reduce the negative bias and stereotyping which often serve as barriers to women's advancement. Reduction in negative bias is the objective. And finally their ultimate goal is to achieve a higher percentage of women in management" (p 39). Formal and informal mentoring programmes have different impacts on the development of women taking into consideration the key objectives. However critical success factors are dependent on an institutional culture conducive to these development options.

Stewart and Krueger (1996) described the characteristics of mentoring as the teaching-learning process, reciprocal role, career development relationship, knowledge differential between participants, duration of several years and resonance. Snell (1999), takes a pragmatic approach, suggests that a mentor is a sounding board, joint problem solver, rectifier, mirror, coach, referee, devil's advocate, connector and networker, empathiser and guide. Due to the significant shortage of women in leadership positions it is more likely for a woman to be mentored by a man.

A mentor should be someone who believes in the mentee; increasing self-confidence. It is asserted by Speedy (2003) that the relationship in the female model of mentoring where both parties are women, a more relaxed and casual relationship ensues. Mentoring exercises have proved success specifically with outcomes related to building leadership and technical skills. Women mentees thrive in a more informal environment with women mentors. "Women pursue balance between their professional and family-personal expectations and agendas, and actively seek mentors who have achieved such balance" (Speedy, 2003, 7).

The significant challenge to these programmes is the Queen Bee syndrome. Other challenges include incorrect pairing of mentors and mentees. An apt example of this is male mentors mentoring female mentees and the role of power in this relationship. "While female mentors have been found to provide their protégés (mentees) with more psycho-social mentoring (defined as personal and emotional support) than male mentors, they do not wield the same amount of organization power as men, the beneficiaries of gender-based discrimination" (Lewis and Fagenson, 1995, 50). Currently research focuses on the changing and rectification of preconceptions and stereotypes in these relationships.

Women mentors play a significant role in these outputs; Wolfe (2007) "we climb our ladders to success and power so that we can lift up our sisters. We truly are "lifting as we climb." According to her, perceptions need to be changed as children in order to incite drive and ambition. Girls need to understand that 'women can lead men', and female success is not merely about meeting quotas which are aligned to laws and national imperatives. The University of Bristol have initiated a network for 200 senior women from their institution and neighbouring institutions. Feedback from women in attendance has been positive, they concur that there has been significant improvement in the culture and atmosphere within their work environment (Mattis and Cherry, 2000).

Statistics from European states of women employed in higher education institutions had Finland at the top of the

log with 36% and Germany the lowest with only 9% of women employed. These figures represent educators at all levels in higher education and not exclusive to senior managers. Eurostat (www.ibeurope.com) identifies that the higher one moves up the academic career ranks, the number of women decrease implicitly. Of the 32% who were assistant professors; only 11% were full professors. Two development programmes were commissioned; The European Commission (part of the EU) has developed a number of initiatives focusing on research opportunities for women in higher education, specifically within the scientific frameworks. Key success indicators of the action plan were discussed at the annual meetings of Gender and Research, the first of which took place in Brussels in November 2001. "Three levels of action are foreseen or underway. An expert working group has produced a report to identify challenges and review policy options in order to address the gender balance in research policy" (International Association of Universities Newsletter, 2001, 4). The second initiative is the UNESCO 6-year Project on women, higher education and development. The key success indicator is "by increasing women's acquisition of the relevant skills so that their involvement in the reform and management of higher education systems and institutions would be greater" (International Association of Universities Newsletter, 2001, 4).

Five chairs were set up throughout the world and two networks to address challenges and recommendations to improve the position of women managers in higher education. A more recent example is the MIT study "MIT report on the status of women faculty in Science and Engineering (2011). Studies were conducted in 1999, 2002 and 2011 to monitor challenges faced by women in these faculties, support structures to manage these challenges and examine the improvement, if any. The concerns that were raised in the 1999 study were that. A) Recruitment processes were different for men and women where standards for recruitment and promotion were lower for women, thereby impacting on the perception of their capability; B)The perception of childbearing and childcare policies were identified as 'women issues' rather than family issues. C) Mentoring programmes – the perception was that women mentors will be more sympathetic to other women D) Concerns at high levels of committee work or institutional housekeeping which impacts on research time."

The concerns were aggressively addressed in the 12-year period and driven by academic leadership with positive outcomes. Not only is the President of MIT a woman but also 2 of the 5 academic deans and 2 of the 6 departmental heads are women. Committees were established to provide a network of support and to monitor and evaluated the equity data. A review of all policies to ensure equity and correct understanding, for execution. There was an increase in female faculty from 8 to 19%; an equitable distribution of rewards and grants resulted from this. "Change in attitudes among some male faculty including, (a) awareness that search committees must consciously look for women and minority applicants since diversity is important and since potentially qualified female and minority applicants can be overlooked; and (b) the fact that younger male faculty find it natural to have women in powerful leadership roles" (Hockfield, 2011)

With tremendous challenges faced by female academics, begs the question of what they consider success indicators during their career trajectory. It was established that some of the women interviewed made mistakes earlier on in their careers but quickly learnt to rectify and adapt in a male environment where little or no support was available. The respondents without family commitments found their success easier. They were able to utilise personal 'family' time to catch up on administration work and use the time to meet research requirements (Respondents A and B). Key to the success was receiving support in numerous ways. These included a 'safe' work environment to share personal issues, having emotional and research support as well as having a senior academic guide them in areas which are new and unfamiliar. Amongst all the negativity and objecting of other individuals, it was asserted that; "to immerse yourself in the positive and that the flexible work environment is conducive to research. Having moral support from team members and senior academics impacted positively" (Respondent D). According to Respondent E, "there needs to be a network of support and solidarity among women, there are no mentorship practices; no support and women feel devalued especially by the old boys' network. Policies on workloads and sabbaticals are in place but practices differ according to gender".

3.6. STRESS

Research on stress experienced by academics conducted by Barkhuizen and Rothmann (2008) and Oosthuizen and Berndt (2008) were consistent with reports of stress among male and female academics. However women defined stress indicators differently to their male counterparts. Job dissatisfaction, job insecurity and psychosocial factors have often been generic causes of stress in the workplace (Long, 1995). "Higher education institutions have to manage and protect their staff from increasing levels of stress in order to preserve staff well-being, organisational performance and the intellectual health of a nation" (Barkhuizen and Rothmann, 2008, 322). According to male academic's workload, inadequate salaries and lack of recognition were perceived to provide the greatest stressors whereas job insecurity, isolation, lack of recognition and work politics were perceived by women as stressors (Oosthuizen and Berndt, 2008; Cloete et al [eds], 2004).

According to Robbins and Coultier (1999), a number of sources to workplace stress are directly related to the changes that transpired in 2004 in higher education (Cloete et al [eds], 2004). The following sources of stress that could be related to the merging of institutions and the changes in institutional culture are fear, excessive rules and regulations, change in the organization, restructuring, role ambiguity and role overload (Robbins and Coultier, 1999, 15). This is an adaptation and expansion of the original Cooper and Marshall (1976) model of the sources of stress.

There is insufficient scholarly work on the impact academic freedom has on women in higher education, expressly in terms of research outputs. Bentley et al (2006) assert that research agendas are no longer at the discretion of the academic. These are dictated by the government or private sector organizations and research skills and writing are sold off to the highest bidder. "Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are complementary in a way, in that institutional autonomy can create an environment for greater freedom [for] academics not to be constrained by external forces (Loyiso Nongxa) and, that institutional autonomy on its own will not guarantee academic freedom. It is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the advancement of the latter right (Du Toit)" (Bentley et al, 2006, 25). In an attempt to rectify the South African situation, Bentley et al (2006) recognises that changes need to be effected in the current systems from a racial and a gender perspective. At the time of the study only 37% of women made up the academy althoughonly 13% had reached the level of full professorship.

The new institutional culture forced high teaching workloads on academic staff. This occurred in two ways, firstly the streamlining and restructuring of departments left a heavy burden of administrative work on female academics, and secondly the promotion policy criterion failed to consider the current academic culture. Respondent B: "Academics are not supported. We are bogged down with volumes of administrative work. At meetings, it is expected that I take minutes, type and circulate. During leave or holidays, I have to be electronically switched on as there is no admin staff in the office to filter important or urgent work. It's becoming almost impossible for many people to meet the criteria of the new promotions policy with the addition nonacademic requirements. I am able to meet the requirements and manage the work because I just work. I am divorced and my children are in boarding school". Respondent P: "There is much admin work and it is difficult to combine the admin and the teaching load. Added to this, was the new promotions criterion. There are women who do not cope with this, they breakdown and resign. The work overload impacts on service delivery to students. The research output expectation is unrealistic". Respondent R: "….workload policy all comes straight from the top. It is very autocratic, with no consultation or communication." Respondent E: "More admin, more teaching hours, more research outputs, less support". The greatest challenge to coping according to Respondent F was the inability to deal with stress and the physical manifestations of stress by way of illness."

The boy's network is consistent with the challenges of increased workload experienced by women. This factor as a challenge still came up quite strongly in the responses indicating that the 'old boys' network is still prevalent. Respondent A confirmed the existence of the network. At the Westville campus "older Indian male academics have no respect for women. They talk down to women and we are all waiting for them to retire" Respondent L:

"The network continues to exist, but progress is noted. The old Howard College was predominantly white male. Of 13 heads of School, 5 are women". Respondent D: "if the old boys' network continues to exist, I choose to ignore their existence and focus on my productivity". Respondent O: "The network is very prevalent. Reference is often made to the 'old days…'where strong views of masculinity prevailed. White males were seen as 'experts and authority'. The old boys' network had a specific standard to live and work by. Things are changing slowly". Respondent G: "The old boys' network exists. Traditional they were made up of the prominent white male group. The UKZN hierarchy is still controlled by the old boys' network."

4. Implications of Research

The findings outlined are anunencumbered indication that the challenges that women face are consistent at aintercontinental level.   These unique experiences of South African women are indicative of apartheid, multi-culturalism, race, class and gender compounded by the political transition. To identify challenges and coping strategies experienced by women in academia is a simple task; however specific limitations with research on the Queen Bee syndrome and academic bullying is not effectivelyscrutinized in a South African context.

5. Conclusion

This study gives credence to women's experiences in the academe, theories that were utilized have provided a contextual foundation for important research required. While reference to studies exemplifying sectors outside the academe where narrow researchers on gender development agree that gender socialization continues to play an important role in the academe. Fundamental issues such as this need to be dealt with in order for one to see future successes. By attempting to understand the scholarship in terms of professional challenges, it places better context of interpreting and understanding coping strategies. Limited research currently exists on such an exhaustive and combined list of professional challenges as cited in this scholarship review.

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