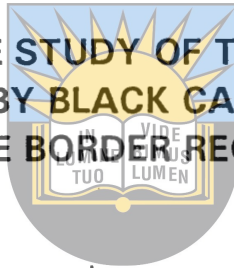




**UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

**A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS  
EXPERIENCED BY BLACK CAREER WOMEN  
IN THE BORDER REGION**



by

**University of Fort Hare**

*Together in Excellence*

**NANDIPHA MEGAN SISHUBA**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements of the degree of  
**MASTER OF ADMINISTRATION**  
in the subject  
**INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

at the

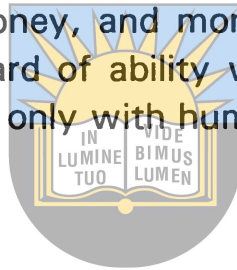
**UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

**SUPERVISOR : DR G.A. RICHARDSON**

February 1993

## **FOR BLACK CAREER WOMEN - THE INVISIBLE QUIET CONTRIBUTORS**

A job is meaningful because it measures one's ability in terms that can be judged publicly and equally with others, its worth money, and money here isn't merely money, it's a standard of ability which has nothing to do with feminity but only with human capabilities.



Dinah Wessels (1982-20)  
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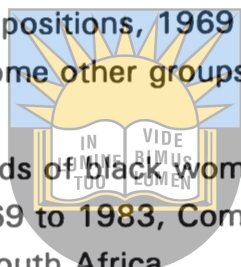
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ALICE

FEBRUARY 1993

## SUMMARY

### A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY BLACK CAREER WOMEN IN THE BORDER REGION

by

NANDIPHA MEGAN SISHUBA

DEGREE: MASTER OF ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

SUPERVISOR: DR G.A. RICHARDSON



Black women in South Africa are exposed to double discrimination, because they are both black and women. However, very little is known about the black career woman, particularly the problems she experiences, her strengths which make her to move upwards on the occupational ladder despite her problems.

This investigation explored these issues within a qualitative research paradigm, using a phenomenological approach. Ten black career women in the Border region were interviewed using a semi-structured interview to elicit responses about the problems they experience as black career women. Existing research on career women has tended to concentrate on white career women and there is also a lack of qualitative research in this area.

The findings of this investigation are best summarized by stating that black women still face so many problems as are discussed in chapter two of this mini dissertation. On a positive note, it is worthwhile to note that these women have made headway despite their double trouble which indicates that they have special strengths which wise employers need to take into account when considering these women as a source of manpower.

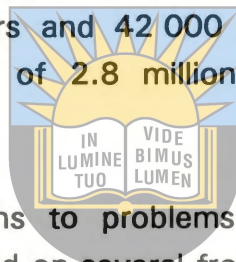


## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 SKILLS SHORTAGE

South Africa faces a major skills shortage crisis. The present ratio between skilled and unskilled labour is in stark imbalance to our needs. Of the economically active population, more than half (53%) are unskilled and a further (35%) semi-skilled. Only 9% are highly skilled and 2% in executive positions. It is predicted that by the end of the century there will be a shortfall of 103 000 managers and 42 000 highly skilled workers, while there will be an oversupply of 2.8 million unskilled labourers (Bryant, 1990, 7).



There are no simple solutions to problems of this magnitude and the situation will need to be tackled on several fronts. We have to find ways of increasing our supply of skilled labour. One of the answers is to make better use of an underutilised resource, namely women.

Despite this growing need for capable people in our economy women as a human resource have been wastefully underutilised in South Africa.

#### 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

In recent years research which has been undertaken on problems experienced by career women has tended to concentrate on white career women. In this process another disadvantaged group namely black women appears to have been forgotten. There is no doubt that these problems are not peculiar to white women in South Africa. Women in other countries are also under the same pressures and the black woman cannot be an exception. In actual fact her position can only be more disadvantageous because of a variety of reasons.

This research attempts to open up this area of research by taking a look at the problems experienced by black career women in the Border Region.

There is no doubt that the development of education for women in all countries has increasingly affected their employment opportunities, yet they remain insufficiently utilised in most industrial countries. An important reason for this has been societal stereotypes about the roles of men and women in society. The woman's role has for a long time been regarded as that of a child-bearer and homemaker, and that of a man as a breadwinner and protector. These ideas are deeply entrenched in all societies. Changing them is definitely proving difficult. However, modern developments and economic expansion are progressively overturning these outdated stereotypes, particularly in the field of work.

In South Africa the economic planners have further been forced to acknowledge that they are absolutely dependent on a racially mixed labour force if they are to cope with the problems of labour shortage in the various categories of jobs. So far, more attention has been focussed on integrating white women into these jobs. Soon however, these planners are likely to be forced to give serious considerations to incorporating individuals from the other racial groups as well.

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A number of black women have gained entry into jobs which were dominated by males, particularly in white collar occupations.

The questions that are often asked are: are these few educated women given the full opportunity to compete in the open labour market? What sort of problems do they experience in pursuing their careers in full? There is no doubt that these women are proving that diligence, drive and determination can do much to curtail disadvantages and discrimination. There is therefore a dire need for research in this field so that we can be able to speak with more authority on these issues having empirical evidence as backup.

### 1.3 GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

In the next chapter, a brief look at the black career woman is presented. In the same chapter attention is given to the problems experienced by black career women. Strengths which are believed to contribute to the success of black career women are also examined. The study itself involves a phenomenologically based analysis of transcripts of a semi-structured

interview conducted with ten black career women in the Border Region. Chapter four considers the methodology used in this study. The final chapter contains an analysis of transcripts of the interviews conducted with the subjects. This mini-dissertation ends with conclusions drawn from the foregoing interviews.



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## CHAPTER 2

### BLACK CAREER WOMEN

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Black women are steadily increasing their participation in and contributing to the South African economy. These women have not only increased their participation and contribution to the South African economy, they have also moved upward on the occupational ladder. According to regular reports and breakthroughs and success stories in the media black women have gained entry into positions of responsibility in a wide range of occupations that previously were the domain of men, particularly white. Actual numbers are still small but trends are promising. This progress has occurred and still continues, despite the double handicap that these women have and still suffer in the working world as they are exposed to discrimination, and prejudice because they are both women and black.

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Discussions given by Prekel 1980, 1982, 1986, 1989; Mojalefa 1982; Pretorius 1982; Mvubelo 1976; are primary sources referred to in this chapter. This chapter gives an overview of the position of black working women in South Africa focusing on the employment trends from 1940 to 1983. This will be followed by a summary of the problems of working women world-wide. Thereafter more attention will be paid to problems peculiar to black women in South Africa.

#### 2.2 EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AMONG BLACK WOMEN

In 1940 black and white women's occupations were almost completely distinct. Black women were almost exclusively employed in unskilled blue collar occupations, whereas their white counterparts were largely employed in the more skilled white collar occupations. Notably 60% of black women worked as domestic servants (compared with 8% of white women) and another 11% were farm labourers (compared with less than 1% white women) Cunningham and Zolokar, 1992, 542).

### 2.2.1 Professions

In 1940 only one in twenty black women was employed in professional and technical positions, compared with one in four white women who were spread across a number of professional occupations. Black female professionals were virtually exclusively teachers (Cunningham and Zolakar, 1992), see Table 1. The number of black women in professions has more than doubled from 1969 to 1981, as can be seen in Table 2. These women are still heavily concentrated in the traditional women's jobs of nursing and teaching, where there have been increases among black women of 207% and 220% respectively. There has been a rapid increase in other less traditional professions for instance medical and dental practitioners, university and college professors and lecturers, medical auxiliaries, sociologists and social workers. Promising also is the movement of black women into professions quite new to them such as pharmacy, law, market research and computers.



### 2.2.2 White collar jobs

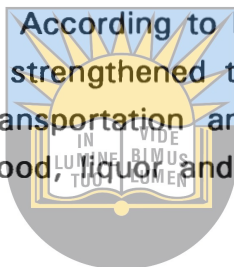
Black women were almost unrepresented in 1940 in the clerical and sales occupations that together employed virtually one-third of white women. By the end of 1960 black women had begun to make inroads into more skilled occupations. For instance according to Cunningham and Zolakar (1992, 543) the proportion of black women employed as clerical workers increased from 1.3% to 8,0% over the 20 year period between 1940 and 1960, although it remained well below that of white women. The number of black women holding management and administrative positions increased from 20 in 1969 to 751 in 1983 as can be seen in Table 3.

### 2.2.3 Industry

As can be seen in Table 1, in contrast to the slight gains in occupational status made by black women between 1940 and 1960, the improvements between 1960 and 1980 were dramatic. The proportion of black women employed as domestic servants decreased from 38% to 6%. Table 4 shows statistics for skilled and semi-skilled workers and operators in various

industries. Black women have again shown the highest growth rate among industrial workers. The figures in Table 4 support statements made by Sarah Chitja and Lucy Mvubelo concerning the progress of black women in industry.

According to Chitja (1980, 39) the eight black women working in the clothing industry in the Transvaal in 1948, represented only 0,14 per cent of all women workers in industry, and by 1979, the number had increased to 13 857 or 82,11% of all women in the (Transvaal) industry. According to Lucy Mvubelo (1976) when black women first entered the clothing industry they were not even accepted by the black males and could not join the then existing all-male African union. But today black women trade unionists play a leading role in the industry. According to Prekel (1986), between 1969 and 1983, black women also strengthened their position in several other industries, mining (739%), transportation and communication (1 572%), furniture and timber (184%, food, liquor and tobacco (104%) and leather and shoes (1 680%).



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### 2.3 PROBLEMS FACING ALL WORKING WOMEN

According to Prekel (1980, 1982 & 1986) the problems faced by working women are mainly culture bound. She further divides these problems into two categories, those in the women's work and social environment, and those that have been internalised by the women.

#### 2.3.1 Problems in the environment

Women of all races and nationalities face a variety of traditional role expectations and stereotypes in their environments. These affect both perceptions about women's personalities and their abilities and the way women are treated at home in the community and at work.

**TABLE I**

Occupational Distributions of Black and White Women, 1940, 1960 and 1980.

	1940	1940	1960	1960	1980	1980
OCCUPATION	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK	WHITE
<b>Professional and Technical Workers</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>20.1</b>
Doctors, Lawyers, & Engineers	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.7
Teachers	3.6	8.9	4.4	7.1	6.3	7.2
Nurses	0.4	5.1	1.5	3.6	2.6	3.6
Librarians & Social Workers	0.2	1.4	0.5	1.0	1.6	1.2
Other	0.2	3.0	1.3	3.8	5.2	7.4
<b>Managers</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>6.4</b>
Manufacturing	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.7
Wholesale	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.4
Financial, Insur., & Real Estate	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.4	0.4	1.0
Retail, Personal Service & Entertainment	0.7	3.1	0.7	2.2	0.9	2.8
Other	0.0	0.8	0.2	1.2	0.8	1.3
<b>Clerical Workers</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>36.5</b>
Secretaries, Typists & Stenographers	0.4	10.1	2.3	11.7	7.5	13.0
Other	0.9	14.1	5.7	22.4	21.5	23.5
<b>Sales Workers</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>6.9</b>
Financial, Insur., & Real Estate	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.8	0.4	1.7
Other	0.6	7.3	1.3	8.0	2.4	5.2
<b>Craft Workers</b>						
<b>Factory Operators</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>7.2</b>
Textile	2.3	8.5	3.1	6.1	3.7	2.2
Manufacturing	1.5	6.1	5.2	8.8	6.3	4.1
Other	4.1	4.0	6.3	2.7	1.9	1.0
<b>Transportation Workers</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Labourers	1.4	0.8	1.2	0.5	1.2	0.7
<b>Service Workers</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>15.4</b>
Service Workers	7.5	7.2	10.5	7.1	12.5	7.7
Cleaning and Food Protection	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.7	0.4
Other	2.7	6.5	12.9	5.4	12.4	7.4
<b>Private Household Workers</b>	<b>58.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>37.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Private Household Workers	2.8	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.4
Farmers	2.8	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.4
<b>Farm Labourers</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>

Source: 1940, 1960 and 1980 Decennial Censuses of Population.

TABLE 2

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OF BLACK WOMEN IN PROFESSIONS, 1969, 1981 and 1983, COMPARED WITH SOME OTHER GROUPS IN S.A

Profession	Black Women			Coloured and Asian Women			White Women			Black Men			White Men		
	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983
Medical, dental technicians	-	17	50	26	54	103	467	501	1062	21	79	142	675	613	870
Chemical technician	9	16	6	6	28	94	365	419	363	105	170	162	2 319	1 605	1033
Technical Assistants	29	170	230	44	504	747	1987	5230	5886	813	1097	2391	3 684	7 851	8573
Medical, dental practitioners	6	17	39	17	153	85	373	1500	1512	63	144	225	8 741	15227	16096
Nurses and midwives	7132	19720	21888	1351	6607	7699	11516	19373	21518	1218	583	1108	1 092	524	857
Pharmacist	-	17	17	-	31	33	272	1486	1216	3	24	36	2 287	3842	3643
Home economist/dietician	-	13	10	-	3	18	148	307	336	-	-	-	1	3	16
Therapists and Medical auxiliaries	123	217	540	60	251	356	1754	3623	3493	90	86	188	206	240	289
University & College professors & lecturers	23	89	329	19	162	771	1187	3002	3371	143	351	554	5026	8684	8794
School teacher	18532	41303	59279	9432	22818	22622	24582	43246	44390	18377	23964	30237	18284	24253	20302
Legal profession	0	13	40	7	26	20	79	624	592	41	88	214	5987	6362	6055
Market researcher	1	7	173	1	-	3	64	178	133	1	31	50	262	531	414
Librarian/archivist	15	34	28	14	103	173	639	1694	1769	12	78	123	229	266	235
Psychologist	2	12	13	-	6	13	109	421	330	7	39	29	225	832	655
Sociologist	198	249	458	93	421	532	854	1207	1639	165	170	175	241	213	236
Public relations officer	-	149	19	3	5	24	108	742	795	47	336	136	460	1153	989
Programmer/systems analyst	-	37	14	5	35	42	305	2021	2207	-	225	98	1312	6209	5585
Total professional*	33613	75503	95251	13059	34918	37743	54799	107513	112958	24037	34506	44906	113399	201621	201798
Percentage increase in total professionals 1969-83 (1981-83)		183,4	(26,2)		189	(8,1)		106,1	(5,1)		86,8	(30)		78	(0,1)

\* These statistics understate the increase in the number of professionals, particularly in the case of Black women and Black men, because owing to political developments between 1969 and 1983, statistics for Namibia, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei and Venda were excluded from recent surveys. Many professionals live in these areas.

\*The totals of professionals in the various race and sex groups are larger than those listed in the table, since only those occupational categories in which Black women showed interesting trends were included in the table.

Source: Manpower Surveys, 8, 14 and 15, Pretoria, Department of Manpower.

TABLE 3

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OF BLACK WOMEN IN MANAGERIAL, CLERICAL AND SALES POSITIONS, 1969 to 1983, COMPARED WITH SOME GROUPS IN S.A

OCCUPATION	BLACK WOMEN*			COLOURED AND ASIAN WOMEN			WHITE WOMEN			BLACK MEN*			WHITE MEN		
	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983
Managerial, executive and Admin Accountant(not registered), book-keeper	20	743	751	79	693	1308	5277	20434	22646	567	1533	2109	72891	135437	147845
Chashier,teller paymaster	18	63	110	169	852	1011	10432	16609	16923	62	705	245	12194	14328	14038
Clerk: accounting audit	60	1151	4629	265	3881	4337	10185	15536	17893	842	2144	1576	3869	3088	2753
Storeman, stock clerk	52	234	469	110	1675	1904	9086	16026	15360	102	743	875	6908	5548	4737
Typist,stenographer	145	1264	1953	560	3041	2079	2518	7549	3186	7825	13569	15495	16714	11524	12716
Office machine operator"	298	1153	1528	1014	3946	3726	52770	58220	51894	279	269	584	185	874	860
Operator: computer and data capturing*	60	607	470	509	614	436	14093	2924	1332	1017	2224	2346	424	214	194
Total clerical employees	-	504	1099	-	3365	4376	-	12706	15946	-	1025	1168	-	1915	2627
Sales and related workers	1680	18141	31100	7935	46135	57286	192587	315679	322679	35330	95202	85775	130737	114007	114859
Service:public, personal domestic	3728	26565	34300	5125	18417	21460	54711	76332	67526	21274	34904	49910	53217	70512	66311
Percentage increases in main categories, 1969 to 1983, (and 1981 to 1983) by population group	42855	112024	120546	18020	35279	34066	18005	27351	27489	152352	214021	232694	47312	78683	70701
Managerial, Admin & Exec.		3655	(1)	1556	(88,7)		329	(10,8)		272	(35,8)		103	(9,2)	
Total clerical employees		1751	(71,4)	622	(24,2)		68	(2,2)		143	(-9,9)		-12	(0,7)	
Sales and related workers		820	(29)	319	(16,5)		23	(-11,5)		137	(43,0)		25	(-6,0)	
Services employees		181	(7,6)	89	(-3,4)		53	(0,5)		53	(8,7)		49	(-10,1)	

.. The 1969 survey did not show "Operator: computer and data capturing" as a separate category, but computer operators were included among "Office machine operators".

Source : Manpower surveys, 8, 14 and 15, Pretoria, Departments of Manpower.

TABLE 4

Employment Trends of Black Women in Industry and Related Work, 1969 to 1983, Compared with Some Other Groups in South Africa  
Skilled and semi-skilled workers\* by industry, excluding artisans and apprentices; and artisans, apprentices and supervisors

Industry	Black Women			Coloured and Asian Women			White Women			Black Men			White Men					
	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983	1969	1981	1983			
Actual mining and quarrying activities	198	295	1 662	-	-	51	13	242	347	438	887	553	186	351	956	26 862	34 192	31 133
Transportation, delivery, and communication	350	6 021	5 855	287	1 836	1 686	8 903	10 551	13 017	128 187	185 561	214 785	62 671	47 458	52 820			
Metal and motor industry	2 382	13 416	11 083	4 074	13 039	8 534	10 572	2 419	1 692	77 984	163 808	155 533	29 031	25 350	27 527			
Building and construction	-	504	232	3	121	323	6	177	29	29 132	117 854	115 466	15 314	13 041	10 097			
Furniture and timber	1 731	4 825	4 911	806	2 335	3 245	103	86	61	17 009	16 857	2 337	1 948	1 390	869			
Clothing, textile, and cleaning	31 379	62 624	65 869	62 080	74 159	72 409	4 085	1 527	2 259	42 491	34 697	31 273	2 003	1 295	1 214			
Food, liquor, and tobacco	5 680	10 461	11 582	6 794	9 148	6 949	818	1 105	1 007	21 825	46 323	38 578	3 306	3 183	3 005			
Leather, artificial leather, and shoes	218	2 580	3 881	5 893	13 268	9 001	1 025	399	236	3 593	4 067	5 170	571	366	282			
Glass, fibre glass, tiles, lime, bricks, cement	1 555	3 689	3 639	188	2 511	2 170	121	41	75	20 369	31 050	32 393	2 241	1 754	1 736			
Chemical, rubber, oils, fats, soap, plastics, explosives, fertilizers	1 261	565	860	1 026	3 337	1 791	791	712	511	16 970	34 183	20 125	5 064	7 113	6 896			
Printing and paper	462	167	840	2 048	2 552	2 940	2 419	1 165	1 059	5 771	7 422	9 209	2 232	1 882	1 310			
Total workers and operators in above industries	45 216	105 168	110 424	83 199	122 836	109 089	21 866	18 424	20 292	802 228	1 195 008	1 007 828	151 284	136 472	139 889			
Artisans and apprentices	-	76	211	86	1 037	1 638	5 710	7 292	6 824	-	17 277	21 809	186 339	208 922	211 669			
Supervisors, other skilled workers	2 729	10 109	14 973	6 101	11 423	15 186	6 983	4 992	4 216	47 983	135 808	174 767	50 965	67 686	75 115			
Percentage increase total industrial workers, 1969-83 (1981-3)		144	(5)		31	(-10,9)		-7,2	(10,1)		26	(-15,7)		-9,5	(0,3)			
Percentage increase supervisors, 1969-83 (1981-3)		449	(48)		149	(33)		-40	(-15,5)		264	(28,7)		47	(11)			

\*Labourers excluded

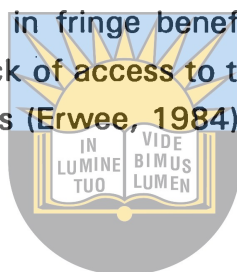
Source: Manpower Surveys, 8, 14 and 15, Pretoria, Department of Manpower.

### 2.3.1.1 Factors within the organisation

Although labour legislations passed in the 1980's have made discrimination against women and other minority groups illegal, residual, traditional stereotypes prevailing within organisations prevent women from undergoing further training or being considered for promotional opportunities.

#### 2.3.1.1.1 Personnel policies

Surveys in 1982 and 1984 regarding employment conditions in companies employing professional women, show that companies provide inadequate career planning, discrepancies in fringe benefits between men and women occur, women experience a lack of access to training programmes as well as fewer promotional opportunities (Erwee, 1984).



#### 2.3.1.1.2 Power hierarchy

Van Rooyen (1989) suggests that one of the reasons why so few women are in executive positions in organisations, is attributable to women's lack of insight into power and their ability to effectively play organisational politics. Research is cited which indicates that many women in middle management positions may have reward power but they may lack expert power because of the nature of the work they do. Van Rooyen (1989) explains that women experts find that their expertise is often not substantiated further by authority inclusion in power coalitions and their power base is therefore of limited value in terms of future career development. One of these training policies is the lack of penetration of women into seats of power in companies.

#### 2.3.1.1.3 Day to day problems

There are also a host of day to day problems largely related to inadequate facilities appropriate to meet the needs of working women. These include lack of day-care and creche facilities, opportunities for flexi-time and paid maternity leave to mention but a few.

#### 2.3.1.1.4 Lack of mentors

The lack of women in top management positions in most companies means that women lack role models and mentors within the workplace. Schmiki (1984) has expressed reservations about the applicability of the male model of mentorship to females. Male managers are also hesitant to act as mentors for women because such a role is unfamiliar to them.

#### 2.3.1.1.5 Reward structures

Brehm (1989) maintains that the economic needs of women have changed and with this, the demands which they place upon any pay structure. Women are no longer working to provide themselves with "pin money" (Brehm, 1989, 20) and an interest outside of the home. The growth of single parent family has compelled them to be sole supporters of their families. The decline in the South African economy has made the dual income family a necessity for many women. According to the data gathered by the PE Salary Surveys it can be noted that the pay gap between white males and females of all race groups in supervisory and departmental manager positions has narrowed considerably between 1984 and 1990. Brehm (1989) observes that women have moved into job categories previously held by men (e.g. supervisory levels) where they receive salaries closer to those of their male counterparts in the same jobs rather than female salaries.

Another major problem in the environment crippling career oriented women in South Africa is the joint taxation system which is a strong disincentive for married women to enter into, or progress in their careers. Especially the high income bracket women whose services the economy needs most are discouraged into enforced idleness in this way.

Fortunately, after many years of representation, taxation is now receiving government attention. The 1987 report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Tax Structure of the Republic of South Africa chaired by Justice Cecil Margo recommended that (amongst others) the system whereby married women are taxed should be changed to one where men and women are treated equally and where they should be taxed separately. This is a

promising move by the government to improve the situation for working women.

#### **2.3.1.1.6 Attitudes of males to the advancement of career women**

Human and Allie (1989) undertook a research on the attitudes of white English speaking male managers in South Africa. Their findings provide an indication of the kinds of attitudes which could be expected to be held by a "liberal" group. This group expressed reservations about the advancement of women in business. Doubts were expressed by this group about the objectivity and aggressiveness of women, the ability of women to contribute to organisational goals; the ambition of women and the acceptability of responsibility of women assuming leadership positions, the competitiveness, self-confidence and emotional control of women.



#### **2.3.1.1.7 Sexual harassment**

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One of the most underrated problems of the working woman and also the woman manager is the issue of sexuality.

This can range from the sensitive issue of etiquette in the business relationship between men and women, through whether to accept dinner invitations from male business associates to direct sexual harassment on the job.

Sexual harassment of the working woman occurs far more frequently than most people realize or admit. Most women suffer the harassment in silence, regarding it as their personal dilemma and assuming that nothing can be done. Whatever form such harassment takes, the woman is usually in a negative position, since the male employers, co-workers or clients making demands may be in a position to endanger her career progress or even her economic livelihood. Although bosses and supervisors who have direct economic power over the women concerned are evidently most frequently the culprits, problems are also experienced with co-workers and even subordinates (Prekel 1979 and Savery & Gledhill 1988).

The problem is aggravated because there are no official channels for complaints, and the superiors of male molesters frequently tacitly or openly support their behaviour, but most frequently because women fear reprisal.

#### 2.3.1.1.8 Problems experienced by re-entry women

Van Uytrecht (1988) looks at the re-entry women in South African labour market. Re-entry women refers to "that group of women who re-enter the labour market after having dropped out entirely for a period of time" (Richardson, 1991, 85). Van Uytrecht (1988) identifies several specific problems unique to this group of women and these include:

- Discrimination based on their age, since most of these women are older than 30 years, accompanied by a disregard for previous experience gained as a home manager or voluntary worker.
- Little or no support from family members.
- Reduced job satisfaction because these women re-enter the workforce in less prestigious jobs with lower remuneration than those held before career interruption.
- Lack of confidence at work due to outdated skills.
- Lack of specialized counselling services to prepare women for re-entry into the labour market.
- Lack of time-management skills, resulting in feelings of being overwhelmed.

#### 2.3.1.1.9 Myths and stereotypes

Closely related to culture and tradition are the many myths and stereotypical beliefs regarding the capabilities, career attitudes, ability to assume authority and responsibility and the potential of women as managers, that are accepted and perpetuated by most men and even by many women. Most of these have been scientifically disproved at least as far as career oriented women are concerned. These stereotypical assumptions are, however still applied to all women regardless of their individual abilities and career orientation.

An example is the common belief and complaint of management that women have higher turnover and absenteeism than men. Although limited information is available on the South African situation, it has been proved in the United States and Britain that the imputed job instability of women is more a function of attitudes towards women as workers, and of their job levels, than the actual occupational behaviour of women (Prekel, 1982).

Women are not given worthwhile jobs because of their reputed job instability and their turnover and absenteeism rates agree with those that are typical of the level on which they work.

It is also assumed that a woman will follow a typical life pattern of women. It is assumed that every woman will get married, give birth within a few years and then leave any job she may have to become fully dependent on her husband's income. This is, according to Prekel (1982), assumed with every individual woman in spite of the fact that growing numbers of women do not follow this pattern. This is assumed in spite of statistics showing that the better the job is the less likely a young mother is to quit to become a housewife.

  
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Men continue to perceive women as the rearers of their children, so they find it appropriate that women should renounce their careers to raise families. By condoning and taking pleasure in women's traditional behaviour, men reinforce it. Not only do they see parenting as fundamentally female, they see a career as fundamentally male (either an unbroken series of promotions and advancement towards executive positions or stagnation and disappointment). This attitude serves to legitimize a woman's choice to extend maternity leave and even leave employment for several years. By the same token, men who might want to take leave after the birth of a child know that management will see such behaviour as a lack of career commitment, even when company policy permits parental leave for men.

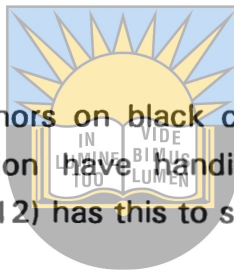
Women's traditional role encourage particular attention to the quality and substance of what they do, specifically to the physical, psychological and intellectual development of their children. This traditional focus explains why career oriented women tend to search for more than monetary reward

(social importance, meaning in what they do). This too makes them more likely than men to leave the corporation in search of other values.

From the above discussion it is fair to deduce that managers who hold these stereotypes or traditional attitude about women in the workplace see employment of women to be costly. Turnover rate is higher among women than men.

## 2.4 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY BLACK CAREER WOMEN

### 2.4.1 Introduction



One common premise by authors on black career women is the fact that racial and sexual discrimination have handicapped these women in the labour market. Prekel (1989, 12) has this to say:

In a country where discrimination is legal, where it is officially "OK" to be prejudiced against someone who is different, in whatever way, most black women are doubly disadvantaged in the labour market.

This is beautifully summarised in the following by Stone (1975, 25):

The racial division of labour (however) does not deny the existence of a sexual division of labour; it only serves to complicate it. Women in the dominant racial group may find themselves in a position superior to that of males of the dominated group. It is the women in the racially subordinated group who find themselves in the most inferior position. On the one hand, they are subjected to racial and on the other hand to sexual domination. The sexual and racial divisions of labour generally coincide to relegate them to the most subordinate positions. In instances where the sexual barrier is overcome, the racial barrier remains and vice-versa; sexism and racism combine to form a double barrier to true mobility.

The problems mentioned in the previous sub-section are common to all working women in the various countries. However Prekel (1989) observes that these women are up against most of the many problems (both internal and in the environment) that beset other "minorities" or disadvantaged groups. The problems they have in common with other groups include:

**Black men:** restricted geographic mobility, remnants of discriminatory laws, overt and covert racial prejudice, lack of job related skills and education, lack of role models and mentors, possible language barriers and communication problems, and resistance and resentment from conservative whites because of fear of numbers.

**"Minorities" in general:** stereotypes, lack of acceptance, feeling unsure about how to fit in, exclusion from the political network, vulnerability or hypersensitivity to criticism, tokenism, the need to prove oneself, "marginality" between different cultures, and protective paternalism or deliberate discrimination.

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The combination of all these barriers must surely be overwhelming.

## 2.4.2 Problems unique to black career women in South Africa

### 2.4.2.1 Cultural problems

Although Black cultures have acculturated due to urbanisation and Westernisation, some aspects of traditional Black culture still hinder the advancement of black career women.

Traditionally a black man is the head of the home. In Black culture a woman is a subordinate irrespective of her age, education or marital status. For instance when a married woman wishes to join a women's union in church she is asked by the executive committee members whether she has obtained her husband's permission to join the union. If the answer is no, then she is told to go back to her husband and seek his permission, if he does not grant

her permission she must beg him and she will only come to the union when the permission has been given by her husband.

This 'minor' status affects the women's self esteem, their ability to take independent decisions or to own or run a business.

Edwards (1980) believes that the main reason is the upbringing of girls, and their habit of obedience, which is conditioned into them, they are always told to be pretty, to be clean, to do what they are told. Men believe that girls are directed by their mothers rather than by their fathers regarding their future life and all this is against them, once they get into industry and they have to stand on their own and do a demanding job.

Regarding education, again there are many odds facing them. Particularly in South Africa, education at girl's schools is not directed towards the natural sciences or towards mathematics, it is again directed towards BA Soc Science or something similar, but will certainly not follow a course in what might be called a "useful" faculty. A combination of these influences is believed to lead to a natural shyness and a lack of self confidence, some kind of unassertiveness displayed by most women when they are operating in a practical field in a company (Edwards, 1980).

When a black woman marries she becomes a member of that family and the in-laws may veto some of her career related decisions (Prekel, 1989).

The belief held by black men noted by Mvubelo (1976) that if a woman is paid the same salary as they are, they (the men) are being discriminated against is still true today. For instance black male workers become very embarrassed when they find out that they are paid the same wages as women.

#### 2.4.2.2 Self esteem

The above cultural factors reinforced by the political system and personal experiences of prejudice and being disadvantaged, could undermine many black women's self confidence and their ability to assert themselves.

Naturally this may affect their ability to achieve and handle responsibility or authority (Prekel, 1989). To this effect Mojalefa, has this to say:

One of the strains that I feel the black career woman faces when she enters a job that has traditionally been reserved for people of other races or sex, is that she has to prove herself. From the start she feels that she is put under the test of proving that she can do it, not only as a woman but also as a black woman. Under normal circumstances one would accept that one has to prove his or her worth in any job. The case of the black career woman is, however, different in that it is not a normal situation. We have here a case of a fourth class citizen and a woman at that, who is likely to be the last person to be thought of as suitable for a particular position. How does she cope with the expectations once she is given the chance? Does she feel spontaneously motivated to achieve for the sake of achievement or is she struggling to 'prove a point', in order to dispel the possible prejudices held against others of her kind? If she copes with her job, is she accepted by her colleagues, males and females of her colour and of the other groups, as well as by the clientele of her organisation or is she merely constantly reminded that she is an exception to the rule? Just how does it affect one's motivation to achieve in such a job? What is the possibility that the black woman suffers from what is known as fear of success in women? (Mojalefa, 1980, 89).

#### 2.4.2.3 Pay inequity

While women the world over battle against pay discrimination, Black women are usually at the bottom end of pay scales in South Africa.

Mojalefa (1980) mentions as a major problem the practice of many South Africa employers of unequal remuneration. According to Prekel (1986) although officially wage discrimination is no longer permitted in most industries as a result of labour legislation following the Wiehahn Report, it will take a long time for practice to catch up with the ideal because of past discrimination in terms of both race and sex.

In a CCV TV Newslines programme on the 25th November 1992, black women in the survey video mentioned pay inequality as the primary problem in their work situations. Therefore what was true when Chitja (1980); Mojalefa (1980) delivered their papers in a seminar titled "Women: a vital human resource" is still true today.

Mojalefa further mentions problems encountered by black women as a result of low pay:

If we accept the principle of wage incentive then we must admit that the black woman does not receive much in terms of this. It is not uncommon for them to find themselves in a position where they are expected to perform the same kind of functions and to make the same kind of sacrifices as their white counterparts who hold the same professional qualifications, yet they find that they earn a lot less than their white colleagues. One should thus ask how this knowledge affects the black women's performance. Especially knowing that she has to do her job very well, because she is more often than not in great need of money. I have often wondered how many black women give just enough to retain their jobs. How many of them would not give all of their capabilities or as much as their white counterparts, whom they regard as justified to do so in terms of their earnings. How does this affect their loyalty and honesty to their employers and their work stability? How often are they tempted to change their present jobs for one that is offering slightly more? (Mojalefa, 1980, pp 88-89).

Prekel (1989) says, besides being demotivating and further undermining self esteem, low pay also affects black women in various ways such as they battle to make ends meet, cannot afford day care, domestic help or appliances which would help them to manage their heavy work and home load. They can afford neither the time for, nor the expense of further education that would help them to improve their occupational prospects. These financial incapacities place them under constant stress which may be reflected in the quality of their work.

Thus pay discrepancies limit both a woman's ability, and her incentive to perform and to improve her position. In addition, the low value that employers place on the contribution of the black woman in particular could further reduce her self-esteem and thus handicap her personal growth.

#### 2.4.2.4 Influx control

Although influx control regulations have been abolished since 1986, they were applied more strictly to black women than to black men for many years. Women had great difficulty in obtaining work permits and accommodation in urban areas, both necessary to legalise an individual's employment. This meant that the best career opportunities in the highly developed areas were often out of reach for many qualified black women.

Those lucky women who managed to obtain work permits in the 'prescribed areas' experienced accommodation problems once they were in the particular areas. The lack of housing conveniently close to the workplace and easy to maintain will remain a time consuming and costly problem for many women for years to come. For instance most of these women rent backyard rooms which are unimaginably small. This room serves as bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, lounge and dining room. These are uncomfortable living conditions and humiliating for someone who can definitely afford better accommodation. The hotels are not a consideration for them because they are far less attractive than these rooms. When one considers that these rooms are normally expensive and are also rented at a risk because the landlady or landlord can ask the tenant to vacate the room at short notice, then one can imagine the type of accommodation that these women are shunning in the hostels or squatter camps. This means that women usually have to take whatever housing they can get and often lack of electricity at home adds to the burden of their domestic responsibilities.

#### 2.4.2.5 Married women have limited rights

In most companies it is assumed that in all groups men are breadwinners. This cheats many women of equal benefits such as accommodation, housing loans, medical aid and pensions and also makes them more vulnerable to

'redundancy'. Frene Ginwala convenor of the Women National Coalition says that the status of women is "legally insubordinate". This she says is a result of the history of insubordination of women (Ginwala; CCV TV Newsline 1992).

#### 2.4.2.6 Family related problems

The black working mother, particularly in the urban area is faced with severe child care problems. The world wide change from traditional family structures means a loss of valuable support system. Thus she no longer has the traditional extended family to assist her with bringing up her children, and there is often an acute shortage of creches and day care facilities. This means that working women have serious problems in arranging for the care of their children while they are at work. This problem is more serious when we realise that most of the creches available admit only children 2 years old. Infants are therefore not considered.

It is upsetting for a woman to leave her children in unfamiliar conditions or with strangers because she has no better alternative. Mojalefa (1980) has these questions to be answered: How much attention and concentration can this worried mother give to her work? Can she really do justice to her job, particularly if one considers that, allowing for travelling time, such a mother is often away from home for at least 12 hours a day?

An additional burden is the excessive workload of the women who often do not have modern home appliances or even electricity to help them with their household chores, and in addition, live in a culture where men very seldom give any support with domestic responsibilities (Mojalefa (1980).

As regards conditions of employment, social pensions, maternity and unemployment benefits the South African woman is generally not protected by law. It is left up to the individual company to make its policies on these issues. There are not so many companies or institutions that make adequate allowances for unpaid leave. While many companies grant unpaid leave, most give a time off that is too short by any standards, others grant maternity leave with 331/3% of the total wages/salary of the employee.

The majority of black women take up a job because of pressing financial needs of the family. Normally an average black family cannot live comfortably on the earnings of the man because he is in most cases earning very little himself. It is very rare to come across a black woman who has happily given up her job to bring up her kids because she and her husband have saved enough to take care of this, or the husband's income is sufficient to allow them to live comfortably on it. This is according to Mojalefa (1980) a luxury that a black woman cannot afford. Keeping in mind the economic position of the Blacks, one can appreciate that when the black woman goes to confinement she needs the money more than ever before because she has an extra person to feed and clothe. One can thus understand why so many black women leave their tiny babies with strangers so that they can go back to work, the reason being fear of losing their jobs and pressing financial need.



#### **2.4.2.7 Marginality**

Human (1981) has used the term "marginality" to describe another problem commonly encountered by black professionals and managers (both male and female). According to Human marginality is the sense of being torn between the new Western white culture in which they work and their own black culture in which they grew up and still live. This conflict and confusion is worsened by the political system in South Africa, and could negatively influence the career growth of high-level black workers. It may be even worse for the woman who has outstripped her husband by her career success.

#### **2.4.2.8 Established employment practices**

Considering established employment practices and job reservation legislation until recently in effect, Prekel (1986) states that many employers have probably never even considered appointing a black woman to a position of responsibility and authority, although they may not have any formal policies restricting this. Even those who consider it may hesitate for fear of resentment or possible backlash from men of all races, should a black woman (however well qualified) be appointed to such a position.

Unbiased thinking and changes in attitude will be required if black women are to be given full opportunity to contribute to the South African economy.

#### 2.4.2.9 Lack of mentors

There is a lack of black female mentors in predominantly white and or male occupations as it is only recently that black women are entering these positions. The role model display skills and technique which the actor lacks or thinks she/he lacks, and learns through observation and comparison with her own performance. Thus role models serve as reference groups and are required for achievement to occur.

The absence of role models may also restrict black women's career choices. People choose careers which are consistent with their self images according to Mojalefa (1980). Therefore as a result of sex and race stereotyping of jobs, black women are less likely to acquire training and job behaviours associated with predominantly male and or white jobs.

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The importance of role models in the acculturation of women into non-traditional occupational roles has according to Jones (1984), been demonstrated by many studies (Brenner 1972; Buchanan, 1969; Greenfield, 1972; Loring and Wells, 1972). In addition James (1984, 45) quoting O'Leary states that:

to defy societal role expectations requires a strong personality, particularly since few females have the opportunity to observe models of women who are intelligent, attractive and respected in their careers.

The role of people outside the family is significant. Mednick (as quoted in James, 1984) studied Black American college women and found that innovators (women in traditionally "masculine" fields) tended to report being influenced less by their parents than by various other people. In view of the small number of black women in superior positions, presumably there are as yet relatively few such people to serve as role models for black women in South Africa.

## CHAPTER 3

### STRENGTHS OF BLACK WOMAN

After the discussion of problems, employers may wonder whether it is worthwhile considering these apparently problem-prone women. Despite the host of problems mentioned above, black women in South Africa do have several strengths which have assisted them to make headway in the workplace. Prekel (1982, 1986, 1989) mentioned several strengths which she believes contribute to the success of black women.

#### 3.1 SOME SUPPORT FROM CULTURE

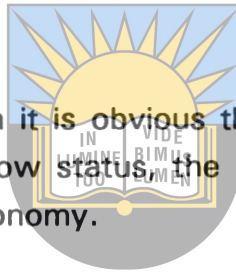
Despite the many handicaps placed on women by black tribal culture, in some ways this culture makes it easier for women to work. Black women are traditionally the workers, carrying considerable economic responsibilities in their communities. In rural areas for instance a woman cultivates the fields, ploughs the fields, and tends a vegetable garden to grow food for her family. If the family is starving it is not the husband who is blamed for being lazy. It is socially acceptable that men wake up in the morning and gather near the kraal and chat for the whole day doing nothing, whilst the wives are busy cleaning the huts, preparing meals, fetching water, tilling the land etc. Black men are not accustomed to bringing any food for the family. Even the herd of cattle and flock of sheep that he is a proud owner of, he is not the one who is looking after them, it is only the children supervised by their mother who tend the livestock.

It is not surprising to see a heavily pregnant woman with a big bundle of wood on her head or painting the huts. When the woman has delivered the baby, you will find her doing all the duties with the baby on her back if she does not have grown-up children who will look after their little sister or brother or a grandmother to babysit the child.

Therefore because of this way of life, black women do not have to overcome the fear of social stigma and the barriers restricting many white women. Integrating child-care into her chores is not problematic.

It is not surprising in urban areas to find a black woman working whilst her husband stays at home doing nothing. The woman cannot afford to see her family in poverty whilst she is healthy to go and work. The black community will blame her husband for this poverty but they will further say "Why doesn't she stand up and find a job? Look, see, how her family is suffering". The perception of the woman as a provider of the family in black culture is still there. In many cases a black woman still call on other members of the extended family to assist with child care, a support system to which few white women have access. Most black grandparents take it for granted that they will look after the children while the mothers work.

### 3.2 HARD WORKING



From the foregoing discussion it is obvious that black women have always worked hard. Despite their low status, the women have usually played a significant role in the tribal economy.

In the present times, many women who are single parents or whose husbands are working away from home as a result of the migrant labour system have come to take the major responsibilities for their families. This discipline of hard work and responsibility stand black women in good stead in the work situation.

### 3.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Often prompted by economic necessity, many black women have become active in small own or family businesses, many of which have developed into successful general dealers, restaurants, hotels, garages, butcheries, beauty salons, liquor stores, dry cleaning firms and taxi services. Mkalipe (1984) estimated that about 70% of small businesses owned by blacks, were run by women. In many cases, the business may be registered in the husband's name, but the wife is responsible for the entire operation. The success of these women in creating their own jobs, together with government sponsored support to stimulate black enterprise, could encourage more black women to take such initiative.

### 3.4 OWN ORGANISING ABILITIES

When black women first entered the market they were not allowed to join black men's trade unions. This prompted them to organise themselves.

Today black women are respected and powerful in organised labour. Even black male trade unionists acknowledge the importance of involving black women in trade union politics.

They see how powerful and influential black women are in their communities and how this strength can be channelled with fruitful results into union activities. The leadership and organising skills developed here can be valuable in professional and career development.

### 3.5 ROLE MODELS EMERGING



Whereas in the past black women had few role models to motivate and guide them in their career development, black women now moving upward can serve as role models for other women. For instance in 1982, the late Mrs Marina Maponya won the Barclays Executive Women's Club Business Woman of the Year Award. Dr Maphele Ramphela is the vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town and a member of the board of directors of Anglo American Corporation. We have seen women participating at Codesa 1 and 2 working groups though in small numbers. The visible success of these women and many other black women must be a new source of encouragement to others still on their way up.

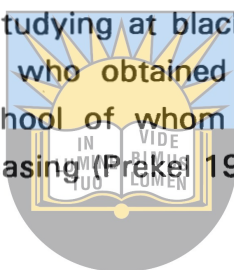
### 3.6 SUPPORT FROM WHITE WOMEN

White women have become increasingly aware of the plight of black women, and spontaneously a variety of groups have been formed in which women of all races work together to promote cross-cultural understanding and to help to identify and solve problems faced by women. These groups include organisations like the National Council of Women, Women for peace, Women's Legal Status Committee and many church groups.

### 3.7 EDUCATION IMPROVING

On various occupational levels, education and training play a crucial part in the career progress of black women. Although low educational level has been a serious handicap in the past black women are increasingly availing themselves of the new opportunities opening up. Gone are the days when educating a black woman was seen as a waste because she is going to marry and that investment will be lost. In the past a black woman was sent to school up to the standard where she can read and write after which her education will be terminated and her parents look for a prospective bridegroom for their daughter.

The number of black women studying at black universities in South Africa has increased. Black women who obtained senior certificates and who successfully complete high school of whom a significant number obtain matriculation exemption is increasing (Preke 1982).



### 3.8 SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

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#### 3.8.1 Communication and cooperation

Because women have had a lot of practice from an early age at communicating with and caring for others, they are often good at it. They can often find a means of conciliation with others instead of getting involved in a confrontation. For instance when a black woman needs to settle an issue with her husband she knows that she cannot confront him with the problem. She must first work out an approach so that they can discuss and solve the problem in a most amicable way. When a group of men is talking, part of the process is gaining the floor. Women on the other hand tend to take turns in group discussions.

This more cooperative behaviour is important in terms of consultation and democratic decision making process that should lead to higher morale and greater commitment from the people in an organisation.

### 3.8.2 Affiliation and attachment

Black women value affiliation highly than self enhancement. This is part of the black extended family culture wherein an individual is "dependent" on others too much. The significance of affiliation and attachment is displayed when, for instance, a woman is married she is given a new name by her in-laws, names such as "NOMTHUNZI" (meaning a shade under which the whole family has to come under and rest); "NOMZI" (homemaker). This strong sense of belonging to and concern for others can be a real resource in organisations that often create feelings of acceptance and being a family. The importance of attachments and connectedness for women has often been seen as a handicap. This also can be an asset in organisations. Workers especially at lower levels feel good when they see that you care for them. They become happy, are more open with their problems be they work-related or not.



### 3.8.3 Emotionality, vulnerability and lack of self confidence

Women seem to have far greater ease in expressing their vulnerability, their lack of self confidence and their emotions. Grant (1988) has reframed these so-called weaknesses in women as solid strengths. By having to defend themselves less and deny less, black women are in a strong position to work productively with their feelings of weakness and to eventually build new strengths on a sturdier psychic base than denial allows. In black culture a woman cannot talk whilst a man is always talking. She has to keep quiet.

This also allows for a more accurate assessment of self and of one's strengths and weaknesses, an assessment that would ultimately be more beneficial to organisational behaviour. Instead of viewing these qualities as strengths, however, there is rather an exhortation for women to change to become more self confident and less emotional. Whereas women may in fact benefit from acknowledging and building on their strengths, to follow the models presented in management seminars and literature is again to exhort women to improve themselves, to change so that they may fit the system and therefore be successful in it. That women's ability to express emotionality, vulnerability and helplessness may actually add a humanizing dimension to organisations is not a notion that is much in evidence in the

management literature. This humanizing dimension could have a very positive effect on the quality of life in organisations (Grant, 1988).

These women's "skills" are critical in helping to stop the tide of alienation, apathy, cynicism and low morale in organisations. The arguments are ultimately relevant from the organisational perspective as well. If organisations are to become more humane, less alienating and more responsive to the individuals who work for them, they probably will need to learn to value process and product.

Women have an extensive involvement in the processes of our society, an involvement that derives from their greater participation in the reproduction process and their experience of family life, both of these activities, so different from the activities of men, lead to the development of different psychic structures. Thus women may indeed be the most radical force available in bringing about organisational change, however, they cannot do this as isolated tokens. Further, women must learn to value their own experiences, believe in their own values, and listen to their own inner voices and the voices of other women if indeed they are to speak in a different voice in the organisations for which they work. If women can find ways of bringing their whole selves into the organisation, not as saintly mothers or dutiful daughters but as mature women, the result will be both liberating for women and humanizing for organisations.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

When embarking upon any research, a question which needs to be addressed immediately is the question of methodology. By methodology we mean the philosophy of the research process. This includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research and the standards or the criteria the researcher uses for interpreting data and reaching conclusions.

In this chapter an attempt is made to explore the topic of methodology in four part treatment. Focusing first on the meaning of the term methodology; second on the reasons for choosing a phenomenological approach in this study; third on a comparison between qualitative and quantitative research and finally methodology used in this study.



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Schwandt (1990), postulates that all of us are participants in what he calls a postpositivistic culture of inquiry. By that he means that we are thinking about and conducting our inquiries in a zeitgeist that is characterised by a general rejection of the logical positivist or logical empiricist program of enquiry. To be aware of current conception of inquiry in both the social and the physical disciplines is to understand that there is no indisputable foundation for knowledge, to recognize that knowledge is in principle uncertain and contingent.

It is in this zeitgeist that we must first examine what it means to talk about methodology.

Schwandt (1990, 259-263) describes methodology through a series of propositions:

Firstly, as the examination of any methods text in the social disciplines will show, we have tended to derive our understanding of methodology from the conception of scientific

method, the principles and procedures that govern investigations of the physical world and not from the humanistic disciplines. In part, this is testimony to the pervasive secular and professional belief in the naturalistic interpretation of the social sciences. In the current zeitgeist, this belief is being challenged. For example, in an essay exploring the rise of the interpretive turn in the social sciences Geertz, (as quoted by Schwandt 1990), claims that social thought is being refigured, that, in the social disciplines, something is happening to the way we think about the way we think. In this refiguration, the methodology of the natural sciences is being discarded as a guide, and it is being replaced with explanatory schemes and methods drawn from literature, law, theatre and the like.

Secondly, we tend to regard scientific methodology as the paradigm case of methodology and the one sure tradition independent of rational argumentation. Phillips (as quoted by Schwandt, 1990) expressed the view that scientific reasoning is:

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epistemologically similar to all forms of human reasoning and that all effective thinkers employ a method of inquiry similar to that of scientific method. This claim has been severely attacked in recent years. Phenomenologists maintain that, under the influence of this biased view, we tend to regard scientific method as the way of conducting rational inquiry. They claim that we have collapsed epistemology into scientific method.

The philosophy of science that has emerged since the mid-nineteenth century as the heir to the theory of knowledge is methodology pursued with a scientific self understanding of the sciences. Scientism means science's belief in itself, that is, the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather must identify knowledge with science.

Thirdly, within the current zeitgeist, we recognise that methodology is historically situated and that it evolves. Our understanding of what constitutes scientific methodology changes over time. To claim that methodology evolves is to recognise that prominent terms (e.g. induction, observation, theory, hypothesis, empiricism) that we often take for granted in our discussions of methodology have changed in meaning, that there is no such thing as the scientific method, forever fixed and unchanging; that methodology does not develop ex nihilo; that there are no absolute standards against which methodologies can be evaluated. Our inquiry methodologies and our standards for judging the implementation of those methodologies develop together and are continually revised by a process of mutual adjustment.

Fourthly, to study a methodology is not simply to examine the exercise of method, it is to study a way of knowing, in other words methodology and epistemology are linked. Ways of knowing are guided by assumptions concerning the nature of the phenomenon into which we inquire.

This research project attempts to approach the subject of the problems of black career women from an experiential angle. As such the application of qualitative research approach is most appropriate.

## 4.2 PHENOMENOLOGY

The aim of this subsection is to offer an alternative approach for behavioural sciences because the dominant natural scientific approaches dating from the second half of the 19th century have not succeeded in developing a valid paradigm or a coherent discipline of behavioural science.

The problem is that psychology did not become a natural science because its phenomena presented themselves in such a way that a paradigm, clearly similar to those of the other natural sciences, arose via a systematic study. It would be more accurate to say that pioneers like Wundt, Fechner and Calton simply legislated psychology into existence as a natural science

independent of philosophy. In this new science, priority was given to the natural scientific methodology rather than to authentic subject matter which confronted the researchers and scientists (Kruger, 1986).

Natural scientific psychology assumes that man is either an interacting mind-body unit or an organism, the behaviour of which is determined largely by genetic pre-programming and or continuing conditioning and reinforcement.

Kruger (1985) maintains that phenomenology is a method, more properly it is an attitude but not that of a technician with his bag of tools and methods ready to repair a poorly functioning machine. Rather it is one of wonder and respect as one attempts a dialogue with the world, to get the world to disclose itself to one in all its manifestness and complexity. The phenomenological psychologist is identified not by the subject-matter with which he deals, but by the way in which he attempts to understand and describe his environment. He is obsessed by the concrete, his primary aim being to observe, to comprehend, then to render explicit what was initially seen vaguely in the first comprehension. Yet he is wary of theoretical observations and accepted opinions lest, prejudging that which has yet to be fully known, he fails to be faithful to the phenomenology, the investigator remains true to the facts as they are happening.

This certainly does not, according to Kruger (1985, 1986), mean that the phenomenological psychologist has no presuppositions about what he has set about to understand. Clearly, anyone setting out to systematically and rigorously investigate any phenomenon is, from the beginning, guided by what he already understands about the phenomenon. Since the phenomenological psychologist acknowledges that his research and the results obtained are to a certain degree, guided or determined by his approach, he raises the issue of objectivity and grasps the fact that the results of research are inextricably bound to the perspective of the method used.

When conducting research in psychology conceived as a human science, it is imperative to realize that the design is not centred around a subject - object relationship but rather a subject-subject relationship. That is, the object of research is an experiential being who is present to the research situation. As such, he brings with him his past and intended future, human

temporality being experiential, each moment tends toward a future not being an extended present.

The operative word in phenomenological research is describe. The researcher aims at describing as accurately as possible the phenomenon as it appears, rather than indulging in attempts to explain it within a pre-given framework. Scientific explanation has its usefulness, but it too often becomes so involved in explaining that it loses sight of the original data altogether.

All phenomenological research is based on communication. The human being radically differs from all scientific objects in that reciprocal communication can be established. Furthermore the human being is a being that already has a certain self-understanding.

Phenomenological psychology has also contributed to areas such as industrial psychology, where an explication of the meaning of work for the worker would seem to be a promising beginning. For instance Nzimande (1983) used phenomenological psychology when he studied the experience of being a black factory worker. Richardson (1991) also used phenomenological psychology when he studied the meaning of work for the South African career woman. Hobbs (1981) studied the lived experience of the Indian factory worker in South Africa.

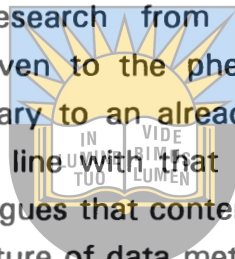
#### **4.3 A COMPARISON BETWEEN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

Serious consideration is given to the possibility that the traditional quantitative research orientation in psychology can no longer be considered therapeutic to all that it was once believed to be. It is argued that any research approach, such as a quantitative one, that gives priority to the methodology as opposed to the phenomenon is based both on faulty causal status conceptualization and on inappropriate ontological reduction. As a result, it is forcefully argued that psychology should aim more at being a descriptive science than an explanatory one (Stones, 1985).

In attempting to compare these two approaches to research Neimeyer and Resnikoff (1982, 77) identify the following significant differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods:

1. Differences concerning the **subjective vs objective** nature of questions and data
2. The **active vs passive** nature of the experimenter's participation.
3. The **inductive vs deductive** approach to data.
4. The **vague vs precise** formulation of the research design.

According to Stones (1985) the fundamental point of departure of phenomenologically based research from traditional natural scientific research is that priority is given to the phenomenon under investigation rather than this being secondary to an already established methodological framework. This stance is in line with that held by certain behaviourists. Kantor, (1979) for example, argues that contemporary psychology is not yet a true science despite its furniture of data methods, and operations because of its uncritical acceptance of the priority of methodology (Kantor, 1979, 161).



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Any study of concrete human phenomena requires that the researcher's fundamental world view be made explicit since this will determine the way in which the phenomena are to be understood. In turn this understanding guides the nature of the researcher's methodological uncovering of the phenomena which itself is not a given bare fact, but which reveals itself according to one's uncovering procedures.

In our everyday lives we tend to think of the objects surrounding us as being independent of us and as functioning according to certain laws of nature and physics. Consequently, we tend to categorize, organize, and interpret our perceptions according to the perspective of the natural sciences, that is the **natural attitude**. However a phenomenological psychologist sees the world differently and this could be called **transcendental attitude** (Stones, 1985, 64). In it the researcher strives to suspend or to bracket, preconceptions and presuppositions and does this by making them explicit. As the process of phenomenological reduction continues, the researcher

becomes increasingly aware of still further assumptions and in this way is able to move from a natural attitude through a transcendental one.

Stones (1985, 63-75) compares the traditional natural scientific approach with phenomenological alternatives and to that effect has this to say.

By contrasting the traditional natural scientific approach with suggested phenomenological alternatives, it might prove possible to demonstrate how a phenomenological approach offers some definite guidelines for conducting rigorous qualitative and descriptive research in psychology.

1. It is important to distinguish between experimentation and research noting that research may be defined as a cautious inquiry involving a critical and exhaustive investigation but not necessarily experimentation. An experiment should be seen as a way of supplementing direct observation and thus obtaining information about a phenomenon that would be difficult to obtain in other ways. What is argued here is that one never begins research with an experiment, but rather that one might arrive at a certain stage in the investigation where experimentation is deemed necessary or useful.
2. This leads to the related issues of measurement versus meaning. Giorgi (1970) argues that while measurement is the most useful form of description for quantitative data, which are characteristic of the natural sciences it is equally as unsuitable for qualitative data.
3. Within the traditional empirical approach it is axiomatic that in order to understand a phenomenon better it should be reduced to its most fundamental elements or constituents. Unfortunately, however, meaning does not lend itself to reductive analysis. On the contrary, a phenomenon takes meaning from its surrounding and thus the contextual horizon is not irrelevant to its understanding. Although a kiss for instance can quite

easily be reduced to a level of understanding as a series of voluntary muscular movements, it is perhaps best comprehended within a context. Is it a kiss between two lovers, a parent and child or quite simply a metaphorical kiss? Without reference to the context of a phenomenon there can be little clarity regarding its inherent psychological meaningfulness.

4. Another difference between a phenomenological and a traditional understanding of the research situation has to do with research perspectives. A subject's response is not solely the result of the stimulus characteristics, but also of the meaning that the entire research has for that person, both as a participant in and observer of the research. The implication here is that how a subject experiences the research must always be included as an integral part of the data of the research, and that an aspect of the subject's experience is how the researcher experienced the research. That is, the researcher cannot be viewed as an independent observer, but must be seen as a participant observer.
5. The traditional research paradigm contains the assumption that if the exact conditions are duplicated, the phenomenon must reoccur. From what has been said thus far it is obvious that this assumption cannot be met for characteristically human phenomena. It would seem more rigorous and more sensible to postulate that an essential theme, but not necessarily its identical manifestation, needs to be repeated.

Qualitative research methods seek to understand subjectivity through empathetic understanding of the other's experience. Knowing another's experiences serves as a major source of understanding. Understanding the meanings which an individual attaches to a situation or experience enables the researcher to appreciate the influence an event has on an individual, how the individual interprets events and whether any predictions can be made about future behaviour in similar situations. In direct contrast,

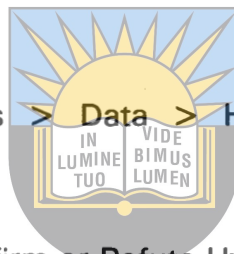
quantitative methods place emphasis on objectivity, stressing concepts such as reliability and validity. Active participation in the form of participant -- observation and in-depth interviewing are commonly used by qualitative researchers in gathering and directing the data. Qualitative researchers do not operationally define dependent and independent variables and because research questions are formulated to investigate a phenomenon in its natural context and the participant's frame of reference, variables are increased to a maximum rather than limited, kept under control. Research is not approached with a specific set of priori hypothesis as is often the case with quantitative research. Mathews and Paradise (1988, 227) offer the following schematic representation of these two approaches to the research process.

### Qualitative Research

Data > Tentative Hypotheses > Data > Hypotheses

### Quantitative Research

Hypotheses > Data > Confirm or Refute Hypothesis



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Guba and Lincoln (1981) postulate four factors relating to tests of scientific rigor in both conventional and non-conventional research. They are

- (1) truth value,
- (2) applicability,
- (3) consistency and
- (4) neutrality.

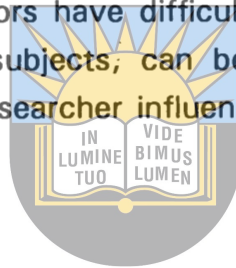
#### 4.3.1 Truth Value

When conducting quantitative research, the truth value is determined by accessing how well threats to internal validity have been managed and by the validity of tests and instruments as measures of the phenomenon under investigation. In order to be valid, a research design must ensure that its findings are characteristic of the phenomenon being studied and not the product of the investigative procedure.

In qualitative enquiry, truth is far more elusive. The value of this kind of investigation lies in the discovery of human phenomena or experiences as

they are lived and perceived by others. Truth is subject orientated rather than being defined by the researcher. Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggest that credibility be the criterion against which the truth value of a qualitative research endeavour to be evaluated. To be believed, a qualitative study should present faithful descriptions or interpretations of an experience so that the people having that experience or reading about it would immediately recognise it. The credibility of a qualitative study is strengthened when investigators describe and interpret their own behaviour and experiences as researchers in relation to the experiences and behaviour of the subjects. In this regard Sandelowski (1985, 32) states:

The threat of "going native", or becoming so enmeshed with subjects that investigators have difficulty separating their own experiences from the subjects, can be offset by deliberately focusing on how the researcher influenced and was influenced by a subject.



#### 4.3.2 Applicability

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Applicability of traditional scientific research is judged by how well extraneous variables have been controlled. Findings are externally valid when factors such as subject selection and the effects of being in a study have not produced artificial conditions incomparable to those in the natural world. External validity refers to the generalizability of findings and the representativeness of subjects, tests and experimental situations are important considerations here.

In qualitative research, there are fewer threats to external validity because in this type of research, emphasis is placed on studying phenomena in natural settings with very few controlling conditions. Generalizability is an illusion because of the uniqueness which characterizes every research situation. Sampling is usually theoretical rather than statistical and sample sizes are usually small since a large quantity of data need to be analyzed. Any subject belonging to a specific group is considered to represent that group and his/her experience is regarded as representing a slice of life. Representativeness in qualitative research is often seen as referring to the data rather than the subjects or setting, and the researcher is concerned

until the typicality or atypicality of observations. Guba and Lincoln suggest that the term "fittingness" be used to refer to the criterion of the applicability of qualitative research findings. A study meets this criterion when the findings fit into contexts outside the research situation and when its audience view the findings as meaningful and applicable in terms of their experience.

#### 4.3.3 Consistency

In quantitative research, reliability refers to the consistency, stability and dependability of a test or testing procedure. If the study is replicated by one or more researchers and he/she/they arrive at the same results, then the study is reliable. Qualitative research emphasizes the uniqueness of human situations and experiences and stresses existential reality rather than "objective" reality. Auditability must be the criterion used to judge the consistency of qualitative research. A study complies with this requirement when another researcher could arrive at similar or comparable conclusions using the same data, perspective and situation.

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#### 4.3.4 Neutrality

Neutrality refers to bias free research. In quantitative research, neutrality is linked to objectivity. In order to be objective, the researcher must strive for reliability and validity. He must remain impartial towards his subject material. Whether such impartiality is possible when conducting research with human subjects is debatable and has led to claim of dehumanization by the proponents of qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research values subjectivity on two fronts - the involvement between investigator and subject and the subjective reality or meaning given to life experiences by subjects.

It needs to be pointed out that some researchers such as Neimeyer and Resnikoff suggest that the ideal approach to research lies in a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodology.

## 4.4 METHODOLOGY USED IN THIS STUDY

### 4.4.1 The approach

When embarking upon any research the initial crucial aspect for consideration is one's choice of research methodology. This study presents the application of a qualitative non-numerical research approach in a field where this type of research approach has not previously been extensively applied.

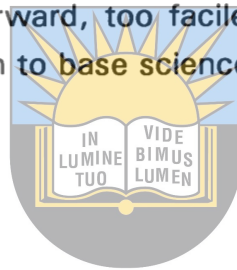
What is being attempted in this study is an analysis of the meaning of descriptions of personal problems and experiences of black career women in situations that are easily recognizable as belonging to everyday life of working women.

Giorgi (1985) has this to say, psychologists are first and foremost human beings living in the everyday world, they are not foreign to the kind of experiences being provided by the subjects, granted relative social and cultural stability. Hence the ability of the researcher in this study to understand the subjects involved.

In everyday life, of course, certain sedimented and practical ways of perceiving, understanding and dealing with such phenomena are developed, but these pragmatic modes of coping do not have the clarity, precision or systematization that one expects of a scientific perspective. Nor are they necessarily completely nor exclusively psychological as they are lived although psychological aspects are almost always included. Hence, it is not unreasonable to assume that the science of psychology would want to understand these everyday phenomena in its own terms and in a more precise way. Since its commitment to become a natural science, psychology has primarily attempted to gain this precision and systematization with either a laboratory setting or one type of quantitative measurement or another. In doing so, many important aspects of these phenomena as lived and experienced were either overlooked or severely distorted because the methods of the natural science were invented primarily to deal with phenomena of nature and not experienced phenomena.

Consequently the purpose of this study is to exemplify and do justice to the lived and experienced aspects of black career women's lives and to do so, one first has to know how these women actually experienced what has been lived, which in their case are the problems they have experienced as black career women.

While there are still many unsolved problems surrounding the use of descriptions in psychological research, the overall assumption of the works of Giorgi, supported by his many years of experience, is that a qualitative analysis of descriptions can yield psychological insight of a value at least equal to what quantitative approach yields, although different in character and style. The major difficulty with its acceptance seems to be the fact that it seems to be too straight-forward, too facile. A description seems to be such a flimsy thing upon which to base science (Giorgi, 1986).



#### 4.4.2 The participants

The ten participants used in this study are all black career women who comply with the following criteria.

1. They all live in the Border area.
2. They all work out of choice and are not part of the work force for economic reasons only.
3. Are married, or had been married or single with or without children and are or were required to fulfil a diversity of roles.
4. They are regarded as being successful in their occupations.
5. They are willing to participate in the study on a voluntary basis (having the option of remaining anonymous if they wish).

The participants were selected using seniority lists as indicated in the respective participant's organisation's establishments. All were approached either telephonically or in writing to participate in the study (an example of the letter requesting the participation of subjects is included at the end of

the thesis as Appendix A. Following this, appointments were arranged for interviews with those subjects who were willing to participate.

Prior to the interview, considerable effort was devoted to establish rapport between the researcher and the subject, as advocated by Stones (1986). The general instructions which preceded the interview are enclosed as Appendix B.

#### 4.4.3 The interviews

A researcher should suspend all his/her preconceptions and judgement when conducting research using phenomenological approach. Questions can often be used as facilitators in order to obtain the information desired. Hagen (1986) points out that when considered from the natural science viewpoint, data obtained from an interview must be regarded as less than satisfactory, of only secondary importance and consequently unreliable. What is needed is a "reorientation" towards data obtained in the interview. Hagen, (1986, 338), states:

  
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The reorientation involved in adopting a phenomenological perspective restores interviews to a position of central importance in research, not a mere adjunct to other methods, they are considered a main means of access to the respondent's life world ... Such descriptions are not treated like physical variables; the focus is not on control but on understanding the meanings intended.

A question that needs to be asked is whether the interview can bring us closer to understanding meaning. According to Giorgi (1986), descriptions (through their words and sentences) convey meaning in that they depict a situation as it exists for the experiencer.

Giorgi (1986:21) contends:

Overall, then, descriptions of situations by subjects can form the base of a research program when the psychological meanings of such descriptions are being sought rather than the

objective facts ... That is because that is when the lived meanings are most significant in revealing the subject's personal projects.

In keeping with this approach towards the interview, a semi-structured interview was conducted with each subject once rapport had been established between the researcher and the subject. Rapport is defined by Chaplin (1975, 439) "as a warm, close relationship between any two individuals in a psychological situation".

In this regard Stones (1985) states that rapport should exist between the researcher, and the subject and it is important that the researcher creates a situation in which the subject can feel relaxed and where anonymity and confidentiality can be guaranteed if so desired by the subject.

The questions asked during the course of the interview are presented at the end of the thesis as Appendix C. These questions concerned several key problem areas and often led to further questions so that although the basic format of the interviews remained similar, it is fair to say that no two interviews were similar and each retained an unique character of its own. The interviews were recorded on audio cassettes and transcribed later. Stones (1985) concurs with this approach by saying that, it is probably best to put questions to the subjects in tape recorded interview sessions. It has been found that the spoken interview allows the subjects to be as near as possible to their lived experience. The interview should be conducted in an informal, nondirective manner, the interviewer attempting to influence the subject as little as possible. The great advantage of a semi-structured or non-directive interview is its flexibility, allowing the investigator to grasp more fully the subjects' experience than would be possible in a more rigid methodological technique. The transcriptions of the interviews appear at the end of the thesis as Appendix D. At the end of the interview the participants were asked for their impressions of the interview. The response to this question was positive with the participants wishing for similar studies to be undertaken.

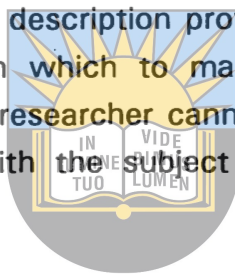
#### 4.4.4 Explicating the protocols

##### 4.4.4.1 The attitude of the researcher

Before discussing the procedural steps to be followed when explicating protocol, it is most appropriate to start with a discussion of the attitude which the researcher needs to adopt in approaching this type of research and in this regard Wertz (1983, 206) identifies five components which characterize the researcher's attitude toward his research.

##### a) **Empathetic immersement in the world of description**

The researcher uses the description provided by the subject as a point of access from which to make the subject's living situation his own. The researcher cannot be a mere spectator but must experience with the subject in order to study the subject's experiences.



##### b) **Slowing down and dwelling**

Rather than glossing over details of the subject's description as if they are already understood, the researcher makes a deliberate effort to slow down, linger and dwell upon it.

##### c) **Magnification and amplication of the situation**

Facts which appear uninteresting and of little significance to the subject become important if the researcher does not merely gloss over them, but lingers upon and amplifies the situation.

##### d) **Suspension of belief and employment of intense interest**

Rather than entering deep in the description, the researcher abstains from absorption with subject's experience and steps back in order to reflect upon the genesis, relations and overall individual structure of the experience.

##### e) **Turning from objects to their meanings**

The researcher is interested in meanings rather than facts. His interest is in the way the situation appears to the subject, the

meaning which objects and events have for the subject and the participation in terms of which such meanings arise.

#### 4.4.4.2 Stones' phenomenological method of explication

An approach which can be used in explaining in detail the protocols is the one set out by Stones (1985, 69-71). This method entails the following stages:

1. An intuitive and holistic grasp of the data. Since phenomenological research is engaged research, involving the researcher in an interpersonal situation, the researcher's mode of involvement in this phase is very important. In the initial recording of the protocol, the reader should bracket personal preconceptions and judgments, and to the extent possible remain faithful to the data. After achieving a holistic sense of the protocol, it is read again, with a more reflective attitude in order to prepare for further phases in which a more exacting analysis is required. In addition the repeated reading of the protocols in this early phase assist the researcher in retaining a sense of the wholeness of the data despite its dissection in subsequent phases.
2. Spontaneous emergence of natural meaning units (NMUs). The protocols are broken down into naturally occurring units, each conveying a particular meaning, which emerge spontaneously from the reading. Each unit, termed a Natural Meaning Unit (NMU) may be defined as

"a statement made by (the subject) which is self-definable and self-delimiting in the expression of a single, recognizable aspect of (the subject's) experience" (Cloonan, 1971, 117).

The intention conveyed by each NMU is thereafter expressed in a reduced form as concisely as possible. Wherever possible, the subject's own phraseology, the individual linguistic style, should be adhered to in order that the data may speak for itself.

3. **Rigorous reflection.** The researcher proceeds to reflect on the natural meaning units, which are still expressed essentially in the concrete everyday language of the subject, and transforms the intention of each unit from the concrete language of the subject into language which expresses a psychological perspective of the phenomenon.
4. **Synthesis and transformation.** The final phase comprises two steps. Firstly, the researcher must synthesize the insights attained by taking into account all the expressed intentions derived from the natural meaning units. It is at this stage that various discrepancies might be noted, certain themes might appear to contradict others, or appear to be unrelated to the others.

Secondly, the researcher has to communicate this phenomenological synthesis to the world of critical opinion. This is conveyed either as a specific description of a situated structure or as a general description of a situated structure. While the specific description is one which communicates through a psychological perspective, the unique structure of a particular phenomenon for example, the lived hunger of my brother or of my given research subject-participant, a general description is one which communicates the lived structure common to the experience of being hungry, be it my mother, brother, best friend or research subject-participant. There is an obvious tension between the expressed specifics of a concrete situation and the more general description based on psychological insights derived from the explication. To this fact Giorgi (1970) says its the intent of the method, however, to arrive at the general by going through the concrete and not by observation or formalization.

#### 4.4.4.3 Arriving at a general description

Wertz (1983, 229-235) proposes four procedures in the psychological analysis of the general:

##### 1. Seeing general insights in individual structures

Here the researcher must determine which features of the individual descriptions manifest a general truth and which do not. This is achieved by rereading the individual protocols and then questioning whether they refer to all cases. This 'interrogation' will determine which meanings can be taken as being true in the general context and which cannot.

##### 2. Comparison of individual descriptions

In order to be able to say that a statement found in an individual protocol is true for all, the researcher must actually find such statements (either explicitly or implicitly) in all the individual descriptions. This amounts to a reflective penetration into the individual descriptions in order to find implicit common themes rather than a mere cross-checking of statements.

##### 3. Imaginative variation

Here the researcher imagines all possible variations to see what is consistently necessary, for it to qualify as an instance of the phenomenon under study. The use of imaginative variation enables the researcher to clarify the limits of the research in that it determines what falls within the realms of the phenomenon under research and what does not.

##### 4. Explicit formulation of generality

The researcher puts into language the general truths he has identified. This involves formulating the necessary and sufficient conditions, constituents, and structural relations which constitute the phenomenon in general. Critical reflection is required in which the researcher has to ask himself whether the phenomenon under consideration can exist without a particular statement. If the answer to this question is negative,

then what the statement expresses is necessary for the phenomenon.

If the answer is positive, it is unnecessary and must be let out of the general description. finally the researcher asks himself whether what the statement expresses on its own is sufficient for the phenomenon, or whether more must be included to reveal the whole.

#### 4.4.4.4 Guidelines followed in this study

In this study, the guidelines followed were those outlined by Stones (1985, 68-71). The questions asked served to elicit significant areas of the problems experienced by black career women. The responses of all the subjects were considered so that the stages outlined by Stones were followed for each and every area delineated by the questions.



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## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF TRANSCRIPTS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

What is being attempted in the following pages is a direct analysis of the meaning of descriptions of problems experienced by black career women in situations that are easily recognisable as belonging to everyday lives of these women. The discussion of the problems as elicited by the questions in the semi-structured interview contained in appendix C forms the bulk of this chapter. Finally an attempt is made to give practical solutions to the problems mentioned at the conclusion of this chapter.

After the taped interviews have been transcribed, the scientific phase of the application can begin. It is inevitable that many, if not all, of the descriptions by the subjects will be incomplete or imperfect. Lack of skill in expression, forgetfulness, poor vocabulary and the inability to express oneself clearly could be contributing factors. These imperfect descriptions would clearly not invalidate the subject's experience but may fail to reflect an essential part. This problem can be overcome by the use of more than one subject which is the case with this study. By making use of a variety of subjects, the possibility of finding underlying constants or themes in the many forms of expressing the experience is greatly increased. Thus, the problem of certain aspects being omitted is minimized and those aspects which are most important should appear most frequently, assuming and not unjustly so, that those which are most important are least likely not to be verbalised. Similarly, a subject may concentrate on one particular area and fail to describe other areas of personal experiences. This does not necessarily imply that this is all there is to that experience, merely that, that person has not explicitly described other aspects. The explicit areas of concern mentioned by other individual's descriptive expressions are also useful source of information. At least they should be compatible. If not, then it is incumbent upon the researcher to take these incompatibilities into account when elaborating the structure of the phenomena.

## 5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS

### 5.2.1 What work related problems have you experienced or are presently experiencing?

In explicating the problems experienced by black career women, it is crucial firstly to consider the problems experienced at work. In response to this question, eight of the ten subjects indicated lack of orientation and difficulty in finding a mentor. These women need personal guidance that occurs frequently than the typical occasional comments in a supervisor-employee relationship. They want more than for men to stop blocking their efforts, they want a sponsor, or mentor. This notion of lack of mentorship is best exemplified in the words of one respondent in explicating this problem:

"I have difficulty in finding a mentor. I have to find my own way through and be aggressive at times to prove my point".

The need to adapt to organisational culture without assistance from subordinates, colleagues and supervisors was mentioned by five of the ten subjects. When they first started working in all the organisations they have worked for, they had to find their own way and learn about the organisation and its culture through trial and error.

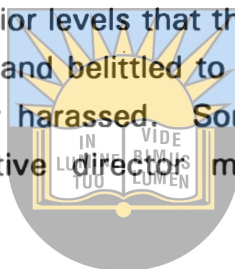
Seven of the ten participants indicated lack of being fully accepted. Their ability to perform their duties competently was doubted, men were perceived as harbouring, negative attitudes about these ladies. One woman said:

"... he asked me who is going to administer that aptitude test? I told him that I am the person to administer the test. Then he asked me, are you qualified to do the test? I said yes. Are you a graduate? ...

All the participants mentioned that men regarded them as less feminine the more successful they became. Two single participants complained that men were intimidated by their success and were reluctant to ask them out. This experience illustrates the restrictions or existential obstacles which black

culture imposes on the career development of black women and is in keeping with the low status afforded to women in traditional black culture mentioned by Prekel (1986).

Conspicuous by their absence from the participant's responses, were the problems of taxation and sexual harassment. One would have expected these two areas to have been mentioned. The reason may be that black women in general do not concern themselves about tax issues. Secondly the new tax structure that has been introduced in 1991 was an improvement on the old, this might account for the absence of this as a problem area. On the issue of sexual harassment, it is possible to speculate that this was not mentioned because the majority of women in the investigation were at such senior levels that this was not a problem to them, or that they feel embarrassed and belittled to even mention that they had in their career life been sexually harassed. Sometimes sexual harassment is subtle and even the executive director may not take the complaints seriously.



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### 5.2.2 Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?

In response to this question, one major theme emerged. The career women in this study experienced their spouses as supportive and encouraging. They mentioned their husbands as their source of inspiration, very understanding and sometimes giving advice and suggestions on how to deal with problems at work. One woman quoted what her husband said:

"You are the best in parental juggling, combining academic work with domestic duties".

Supportive and understanding as their spouses may be, it is a fact that these women work harder than their male counterparts. One woman said:

"When we come from work, he takes off his clothes, and throw them all over the place. I have to tell him to put his dirty socks in the washing bin. He sits and reads his newspapers or

watches TV whilst I prepare supper, washing the kids and sorting out what he has to wear tomorrow."

These women made use of domestic help in order to cope with this problem.

These women's husbands were men who were successful in their own rights and who were not in any way threatened by their wives' success. Being in a relationship with someone who was also successful enabled these women to feel understood and supported by their spouses.

It thus becomes obvious that the experience of work can have important implications insofar as the black career woman's experience of others is concerned, in particular the experience of being-with-a-loved-one. For the black career woman it brings her closer to the loved one when the husband understands, supports and encourages the wife. Being a spouse has to be reconciled and integrated with being a career-woman for the experience of work to be an enjoyable, fulfilling and meaningful part of existence. When this is not the case, the woman is faced with deciding between these two modes of existence and frequently has to relinquish one or the other, or divide herself between these two modes of existence, which become separate and distinct.

### **5.2.3 Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

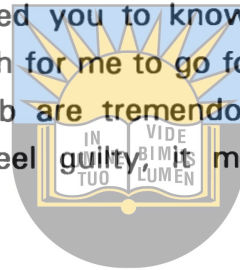
In so far as children were concerned seven of the subjects felt that the demands of their careers had negatively affected their children. One woman said:

"It does because most of the time you are so full of stress and you are so tired. When I arrive at home, I am exhausted. I even ask my children not to disturb me because I need to unwind for an hour or so, but that is difficult for children, because when they see you, they want you, they want your full attention but you are unable to attend to them. You have to make them grow before they are ready to understand and accommodate you".

They had to divide their attention between the children and work. During holidays for instance, they try to make up for time lost. They rely on helpers who are sometimes scared of them as parents, and do not exercise the necessary discipline, sometimes they are harsh to their children.

One woman said:

"You know with children you cannot say to them, okay, I'll first study or do research or improve my qualifications and when I'm finished I'll come back and attend to you. You cannot catch them again, if they have passed that stage you cannot say, okay, I have finished studying, be three years again, I'll teach what I would have loved you to know. As a mother, I feel sometimes it is so selfish for me to go for a senior post because the demands of the job are tremendous. I feel it is time I cannot call back. I feel guilty, it means I have lost them forever".



Three participants mentioned that they experienced support from their children. They experienced their children as being proud of them and felt that the children had benefitted from their careers by having learned to be more resourceful and independent than the children of non-working mothers. The children also benefitted financially. However, these women mentioned that they had pampered their children with gifts, maybe as a way of trying to make up for their frequent absence from home.

The responses in this area of questioning once again suggest that this is a realm of the experience of career women with potential for tremendous conflict. The double burden of these women is rendered particularly severe because of the difficulty of finding reasonably priced and convenient child care. At the same time the interviews drive home strongly that we are also dealing with internalized restraints that drive from women's self identities as wives and mothers, their perception of the legitimate roles they should assume as adult women in relation to their families.

Existentially, the career woman has to grapple with the "given" of her biological gender. Implicit in this "given" is the potential for childbearing and being a mother. Advances in medical technology (in the form of

contraception) have widened the choices available to women so that it is possible to loosen oneself from the biological constraints on female existence. Women have the freedom to make choices about whether to have a family at all and if this option is chosen, a further choice between home and family or both must be made. If both home and family are chosen being-mother with being a career-woman have to be integrated or combined.

#### **5.2.4 How does being a career woman affect your relationships? (i.e. family, friends)**

In response to this question, two major themes can be identified.

The career women in this study experienced their in-laws as being reluctant in accepting the way they dress for work. They are expected to be dressed in a dignified manner which is sometimes contrary to the dress codes of their institutions. In-laws want them to be always available when they need them. Six of the subjects mentioned that their in-laws understand and supports them especially because when they have problems, the career woman offers them solutions and give them the very much needed financial support.

As far as the relationship with the in-laws, one woman said:

"My work hours are very long and awkward and as an in-law sometimes in-laws demand so much out of a person, it is like you are making your job special or very important".

One subject experienced no problems at all with her relationships. She said:

"Perhaps if you talk to a black woman about that, we have seen our parents working, our mothers working. Instead I think it would affect me negatively if I did not work, we black women in South Africa are used to be working mothers and so in-laws do understand".

Friendship is also affected. These women have no time for socialising, the limited leisure time available is for catching up with their mother and wife roles.

It thus becomes apparent that the experience of work can have important implications insofar as the career woman's experience of others is concerned, in particular the experience of being with family or friend. What we see from the themes identified above, is that the experience of work changes the career woman's experience of spatiality in her relationship with a friend. It either brings her closer to friends and in-laws when they understand or it distances her from them when they perceive her as making her career the most important thing in her life.

### 5.2.5 How do you fit into the community as a working woman?

Insofar as the community is concerned, two major themes emerged. Firstly, five of the subjects experienced no problems at all. They blend in very well in their communities. The other five experienced real problems such as for instance isolation by the community. The community being afraid to approach them, on the positive side, these women are elected and nominated to positions of authority in the community, sometimes in absentia.

What one notices from the responses given, is that the subject's residential area has a direct impact on these women. Career women in affluent residential areas do not experience any problems because all the other women are also successful career women. The major problems are experienced by women residing in black townships where the majority of women are not educated and therefore are at the lower echelons in their work organisations.

### 5.2.6 How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?

Here all the subjects identified and emphasized positive effects of their work. There were number of benefits which were mentioned and among these were:

- work enhances your self confidence.
- work enhances your self image (i.e. building a positive self image).
- work gives you access to influential people which result in doors opening for you.
- work makes you feel that you are yourself.
- work improves your morale.
- work helps you make friends from all walks of life, who sometimes give you support which you don't get at work or at home.
- work helps you make contacts with other professions.
- work helps you grow (develops you as a person).
- work improves general knowledge.

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All of them felt bad because some opportunities were not made available to them due to apartheid laws, for instance the Job Reservation Act where certain categories of jobs were reserved only for whites.

All these benefits point towards an enhancement of existence in a widening of existential horizons in all realms of existence, the subjects' relationship with others in their world and their relationship with themselves. Being a career woman changes a woman's experiential world in all these areas of existence.

### 5.2.7 How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?

The majority of the subjects in this investigation felt that it was possible to cope with the demands of multiple roles, but stressed that it was crucial to try and find a "balance" between these roles. The "balance" can be achieved by being well-organised and relying on domestic help and the help of relatives in looking after the children and performing domestic chores.

Four of the subjects mentioned that it was important not to let the problems experienced in the work situation to spill over into home life.

Six of the subjects stressed the importance of managing time well and spending quality time with their families and felt that the fact that they worked made motherhood to be challenging.

Perhaps this can be seen as suggesting that being a career woman alters one's experience of time. The career woman may have to divide her time between work and home or use time in ways that are meaningful and productive. Certainly, she is more and more aware of time and this awareness may even extend to a division of time into work-time and leisure or home time. One woman said:

"... even when I am to visit a friend, I write that in my diary".

With regards to problems experienced at work the majority of the subjects (eight) mentioned their husbands as their source of inspiration, sharing their problems with them. Five of the subjects mentioned women's organisations as a source of strength for instance being president of the Women's Coalition can help one to make self assessment and self evaluation.

All of the subjects believed that effective communication is also very important. Talk out your reservations, your hard feelings and frustrations. All of them mentioned that you must know what you are doing, know your job and be confident about it.

### 5.2.8 What do you think the future holds for blacks career women?

Here all the subjects were very optimistic about what the future holds for black career women. All of them said that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. For the first time black career women are able to move towards achieving goals that they have set for themselves. In the past most jobs were the domain of males. It is now up to these women to seize these opportunities and make the best out of them.

In summary the position of the black working woman can be expected to improve in the future. Although the number of black women who have moved up into professions and white collar work in the past decade is relatively small, the trend is very strong and is noticeable in almost every occupational category. Furthermore, current changes in South Africa should also work in favour of black women for instance, the increasing liberalisation of the political structure and removal of discrimination, improvement of black education, changes in labour legislation and practices. The tabling in Parliament on 5/2/93 of the Abolition Against Discrimination of Women Draft Bill is at least a positive move.

### **5.3 PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS**



#### **5.3.1 Employer**

Employers in need of conscientious and loyal workers should take a new look at black women as workers invest in their training and development and help them to overcome some of the problems that they face as working women and as black workers (Prekel, 1986).

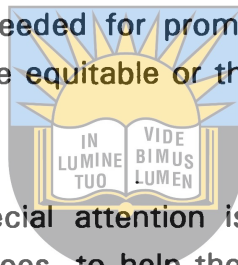
A positive climate must be created at all levels in an organisation to ensure support and cooperation from co-workers, and to avoid possible rejection or sabotage by others who may feel threatened. Managers must take initiative and pay special attention to the development of black women. We salute those few companies that have made efforts in this direction such as Southern Life, Anglo Alpha Cement, Murray and Robberts Properties, Thomas Cook Rennies, and Nestle to mention a few.

Employers should take an active role in providing better and sufficient day care facilities. These facilities should be subsidised to bring them within reach also of the lower income groups. Concerns over child-care affect mothers' ability to concentrate on their work and thus have their effect on absenteeism, tardiness, labour turnover, and lowered work performance. Day care therefore, becomes as much a problem of the employer as the employee.

Employers should provide affordable and time saving transport which can be a valuable fringe benefit, enabling working women to leave home, and get back at a reasonable time, thus countering unnecessary fatigue.

Employers need to make sure that participative management includes black women's input on issues that affect them. They should contribute in problem solving sessions, quality circles and appropriate social activities.

Employers need to eradicate discrimination from policy and practice. This can be achieved by scrutinizing policies and practices for both open, conscious discrimination and unconscious, subtle paternalism by ensuring that all women and all races have equal opportunities for promotion, training and for gaining experience needed for promotion; by ensuring that both salaries and fringe benefits are equitable or they may demotivate potentially valuable people.



In the short term, some special attention is necessary for employers to develop black women employees, to help them to overcome disadvantages of the past through affirmative action. This must not reverse discrimination but should include special attention to developing task and interpersonal skills. It is also necessary to help them understand and cope tactfully with discrimination and paternalism they may experience if not from colleagues, from clients or outsiders.

### **5.3.2 Society**

A great help in a dual-working family, is the husband's and consequently the children's attitudes towards mother's work or career. As soon as husbands and wives realise that there is no such thing as female or male domestic duties, but only duties that have to be done irrespective of who does them, children also tend to be more willing to do a woman's work or a man's work arbitrarily.

The attitude of the society as regards, mothering, should be readjusted to parenting instead. Society finds it very hard to believe that the capabilities of mothering are learned and not innate. Apart from breastfeeding, a father can perform all other mothering duties as well as any woman. He needs to

be taught these things, for instance, changing diapers or burping or holding baby correctly. But mother has to be taught these things as well. She does not receive all this knowledge in a bumper package at baby's birth.

Boys and girls have to be brought up in a family and school situations to accept each other as equals in dignity. If boys are supported and encouraged during their formative years to make fun of girls, refuse to play with them, humiliate them and ostracise them simply because they are girls, there is no way to expect them to suddenly turn about as adults and see female peers as equals. Women have remained and will remain, the little girls that society allowed and encouraged little boys to shove aside so that they could play with the boys without any interference and they are still doing it when they are forty five years old.



### 5.3.3 Government

All those involved in and responsible for educational policymaking must identify and make conscious effort to combat vestiges of sex-role stereotypes in the school curriculum. Educational personnel should be exempted from fostering on their students occupational choices based on sex stereotyped values. As the school environment is a socialising milieu, it is fundamental that educational agents do not resort to sex discrimination to quell disciplinary problems. School literature should support the anti-sex discrimination campaign.

A more tangible female self realisation could emerge, if labour policies made it their intent to ease the situational pressures confronting the family unit as a result of the combination of occupational activities and domestic responsibilities.

Women should be granted paid maternal leave (pre-natally and post-natally) for up to two years. If white men can be granted two years leave for military services, why can't the the same concession be made, to women? Bearing and eventually giving birth to a child, is just as much service to the country as military service (Swanepoel, 1982).

The government can also contribute in several ways to the better utilisation of this vast undervalued human resource: by continuing with its programme towards better and more equitable labour legislation and practice in South Africa; by improving education and training opportunities for black women of all ages; by helping with the provision of day care facilities and related social services; by better utilizing black women employees in all branches of the civil service. Even the provision of electricity and other amenities in black townships is invaluable to the black woman coping with her dual workload.

#### **5.3.4 Action by women**

Black women need to have more educational qualifications. They must take part-time courses and keep upgrading their skills.

To become more visible both in the workplace and outside it, women need to be more conspicuous in the politics of organisations, associations, societies as well as in local and provisional government.



Women need to cultivate positive attitudes and seek challenges, while at the same time avoiding being submissive in accepting the status quo. Women need to forge links with other women to learn to share ideas, give away information and do countless favours without considering the cost. Women need to set up team bonding activities in the same way men go to rugby matches together. Practising networking skills is of prime importance.

Women need to learn to ask for what they need. Here training is necessary in persuasive techniques in speaking and writing succinctly, in being less emotional and being able to motivate requests, to learn to make their lives simpler than those of their mothers; to look outwards and find good workplace models.

#### **5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This section discusses some areas into which further research could be conducted in order to add to the existing body of knowledge which exists

about black career women. This study provides some positive pointers to guide a further research on problems experienced by spouses of black career women.

#### **5.4.1 The problems experienced by black career women**

There is evidence that increasing attention is being paid to the problems experienced by black career women; efforts by Prekel (1982,1983,1986,1989); Pretorius (1982); Mkalipe (1984); Mojalefa (1980). It is apparent that investigation into this area is still in its infancy and increased research into this area is needed.

#### **5.4.2 Career orientation of black women**

The place accorded to work in a person's value system is an important variable which helps to explain what he or she wants in a job and that will determine the importance of a career in a person's life. Research into career orientation of black women by means of semi-structured interviews can elicit responses indicating the relative importance of a career in a black woman's life.

#### **5.4.3 Attitudes of Black Male Managers to the advancement of black women in business**

In recent years, the limited research which has been undertaken on attitudes in organisations has tended to concentrate on the attitudes of whites on the upward mobility of black people particularly black males. In this process, another doubly disadvantaged group namely black women appears to have been forgotten. Research into the attitudes of black male managers to the advancement of black women in business is needed.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study could have been extended to include employers of career women and also subordinates of black career women so as to be able to compare their perceptions of career women.

The participants were perhaps more familiar with the study through magazines and T.V. viewing about problems of career women, such that their responses could not have been their real experiences and that could affect the reliability of the data.

## 5.6 A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY THE BLACK CAREER WOMAN

From the foregoing, the general description of the experience of the problems encountered by the black career woman can be summarized as follows:

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There are many problems which confront the black career woman. These include lack of orientation, difficulty in finding mentors, negative attitudes towards women advancing, discriminatory laws blocking the advancement of blacks in general. These barriers frequently give rise to the impression that one is a stranger in a foreign country where one is unfamiliar with the culture. In order to survive these women adopt this culture without question, but are never fully accepted. These women are aware that more demands are made on them since they are expected to be present in the world in a variety of ways than men (i.e. as wife, mother, and career woman). Women are brought up to believe that their most crucial role is that of mother. For them caring for others is an essential feature of existence, even in the workplace and they experience competition and organisational politics as unknown territory - alien to their existence. In addition, the black career woman finds herself in conflict with cultural mores and customs and this has the potential for self-isolation and even loneliness in interpersonal relationships since men in one's culture do not always accept a wife who is more successful than they, the men are, and especially with the in-laws who sometimes feel that the woman attaches more importance to her career more than her role as a traditional African wife.

The Apartheid laws such as the Job Reservation Act and Urban Areas Act, to mention but two, also hindered the advancement of black career women. The black career woman finds that other parts of her life are affected by her career and there are both positive and negative influences. On the positive side, work enriches life and opens up aspects of one's existence in that it assists one to grow, stimulates the mind, enhances one's self confidence, gives access to influential people which result in doors opening for one. On the negative side, being a career woman interferes with one's leisure time, disrupts friendships and social life and takes one away from one's family.

## 5.7 CONCLUSION

It is obvious that the scarcity of competent males at the required levels will force organisations to employ women. What is needed is a change in attitude because the skills shortage is not going to improve. There are many problems which confront black career women. The role of these women have been and is still largely an ancillary one, pre-dictated on the prevailing assumptions that the primary and necessary roles of adult women are those of full-time mothers and housewives.

These problems frequently give rise to the impression that one is an alien to a country where one is unfamiliar with its culture. In order to survive these women adopt this culture but are never fully accepted. Women experience a sense of what Richardson (1991, 170) called "strangeness" by being excluded from the experiential world of their male colleagues. More demands are made on them since they are expected to be present in the world in a variety of ways than are men. The socialisation process which has been inculcated into the women's minds that their most crucial role is that of mother usually leads to a lack of the ruthlessness needed in the world of business. Caring for others is seen as an important part of existence, even in the workplace and they experience competition and office politics as unfamiliar territory from their existence.

Furthermore, these problems emphasise the tremendous need for training and retraining of women as a prerequisite for the optimum use of women especially black women in the economy. More importantly irrespective of all other social or economic principles these women will only be induced to

enter the labour market if their role therein is made meaningful and worthwhile, in terms of self actualisation and personal growth.

Black women still have a long way to go in the workplace and many of them have not yet started the career journey. But if they, their employers and the community were to analyse their positive qualities and consciously use these building on their strengths rather than focussing on their weaknesses and problems, they could continue to move forward and increase their contribution to the South African economy. Some special attention to the utilisation of and development of black women employees will probably be an excellent investment. Companies that have the reputation that they are fair and positive employers of black women, could attract and keep the very best of these capable, productive quiet contributors.

From the perspective afforded by the participants in this study, one can reasonably conclude that the future is a rich and challenging one for black women. The growth of the economy will continue to provide them with increased opportunities. Worker shortage would present increased opportunities for women with contributions in terms of the quality of the workplace gaining them high recognition.

By the turn of the century, it will become apparent that corporate and public support for working parents is not discretionary, but a matter of vital self interest for corporations. Tangible support and true flexibility (not seminars and referral programs that look good on paper which go only a very short way in actually alleviating day-to-day problems) need to be the practice of the most far sighted corporations.

In conclusion, the successful corporations of the future will be those that can turn away from the rigid structures of the past in favour of programmes that support full innovative participation from all employees. Women will seek positions that allow them both the career and family opportunities they need, avoiding corporations that limit their contributions and developments.

With the tabling of the three draft bills on 5 February 1993 by Mr Kobie Coetsee geared to promote women's rights and bring about equality there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

It should be noted that the problems of black women are compounded by traditional values and these will have to be addressed if they are to take their rightful places.



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INTERVIEW TEN

1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?

Uh! The main problem is the lack of facilities, so most of the time you have to theorize rather than being practical. Even in the budget our schools are the last ones. Even with government grants, they take a long time to be processed due to the red tape. I think the bottom line is the socio-political inequalities in South Africa. Black education is not the government priority.

The kids themselves are not exposed, I'll say to today's life due to economic and social environment which affects their performance at school.

I have a lot of problems with subordinates who take advantage of you being a friendly person. They then are not exemplary to the kids. Also the demands by the government setting quotas whereas does not meet the teachers halfway by providing the necessary equipment. Then the teachers sometimes take advantage of those problems. You must have a good approach with them otherwise they will defy you, especially the older subordinates, I mean by age, they do not expect as a child to give them, uh! to instruct them.

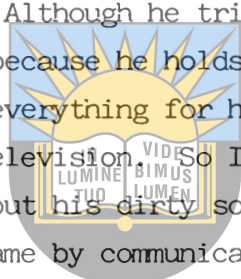
I don't have problems with my present superior, but with the previous one, yes I had problems, he did not know the way, was lazy and he felt threatened that I will take his post.

2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?

Yes, it does, especially with us blacks, westernised though we may be, but you find that with male to a certain extent they still believe in the traditional way that a man used to be the head of the family and a woman as a subordinate.

He does not accept me as an equal, so whenever I do something, especially that I am above him by qualifications and the post I am holding, he feels that I am his boss as well. One other thing I'll say it does affect our relationship as well because I am working, supper is not ready, so may be, if I was not a career woman I was going to provide everything readily for my "boss."

Although I am a career woman he expects me to be a housewife as well. Although we both come from work but he expects me to cook food for him, to wash his clothes. Although he tries to understand, but I can see that it is not easy because he holds to the old tradition that as a woman, I need to do everything for him whilst he is reading the newspaper and watches television. So I still struggle a lot to teach him, for instance to put his dirty socks in the washing bin and all that. But all the same by communicating with, convincing him that I am still his wife, I respect him whether I earn more money than him, it does not change the fact that he is my husband.



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**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

Definitely yes, definitely yes, because somebody who is not the mother's child will not look after the child as the mother would. For instance if I am at work, I wonder what the helper is doing to my child, wondering whether she has changed the napkin or what.

**4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.**

Well, to my immediate family, I do not think it does at all, it does not at all. With in-laws although they know I am a modern working woman, they expect me to play the role of a "makoti."

5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?

With me I do not have problems with the community, instead it is the people who have the problem, because they think that I am hard to reach in so much that it is not easy for them to confide in me. They do not invite me to their rites because they think that I see them as old fashioned.

6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?

I feel proud because when I compare myself with other women I feel blessed. Even when I have problems I think about those who were not able to achieve what I have achieved and then feel good about myself.



7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?

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You must have courage and motivate the young teachers, and praise good work. With patience, tolerance, I do cope.

8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?

For the black woman I think there is still a lot to be done, because we are not yet accepted, there is still that bad attitude from the males, in so much that whenever there is a woman who is competent enough to fill the post, they always say, oh, it is a woman, what she think she knows, but we do prove them wrong. I hope that in the near future a black woman will have her own place, will be accepted because really in various fields women have proved themselves to be competent enough more than males, especially that there are careers such as teaching at primary schools, where a lady teacher is the one who can be good because she is a mother and knows instinctively how to treat a child. Women are more tolerant, patient and not as short tempered as men and these rare qualities make them expects.

Thank you for your participation. We have now come to the end of our interview.

APPENDIX A

Example of the letter sent to subjects requesting participation in study.

Industrial Psychology Department  
University of Fort Hare  
Private Bag X 1314  
ALICE  
5700

30 September 1992;

Mrs P. Rasimeni  
African Bank  
Bisho Branch  
BISHO  
5608



Dear Mrs Rasimeni,

I am presently involved in research on the problems experienced by black career women in the Border region towards a Masters Degree in Industrial Psychology through the university of Fort Hare.

As part of my research, I need to conduct short interviews with black career women. This single interview should last approximately 60 minutes at the maximum and involves questions relating to the problems you experience as a black career woman.

The interview will be recorded on audio cassette tape and transcribed after the interview. Participants in the study are granted anonymity.

In view of your position in your field, I believe you could make an important contribution to the research. I appeal to you to participate. Would you please complete the reply form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided for your convenience.

I am planning to conduct the interviews from the third week of October 1992. Should you be willing to participate, I can arrange the exact time and date of the interview with you telephonically so as to minimise any disruption in your schedule.

Yours faithfully,

N. M. SISHUBA: (MISS)

## APPENDIX B

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO THE SUBJECTS PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF INTERVIEW

The following general preamble was given to each subject in the study once rapport had been established.

Good Morning (Afternoon)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Confidentiality will be maintained and that you will remain anonymous. As I indicated to my letter to you, I am conducting interviews with black career women in the border region. I want to ask you questions relating to the problems you have experienced as a black career woman.

I want to further point out that there are no "correct" answers to these questions since everyone may have encountered/experienced different problems. In replying to the questions, I want you to consider your entire problems you experienced as a career woman from time to time you started out until the present. Please feel free to ask me any questions about thing you are not sure of during the interview.

Are there any questions before we begin.

## APPENDIX C

### QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE INTERVIEW :

- 1) What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?
- 2) Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?
- 3) Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?
- 4) How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.
- 5) How do you fit into the community as a working woman?
- 6) How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?
- 7) How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?
- 8) What do you think the future holds for black career women?



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APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW ONE

1. **My first question is, what work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing now?**

Oh! Well I'll start with the present. I am working as a substitute. I had a problem at the beginning due to lack of guidance. I think I needed some form of guidance. I felt there should have been some orientation course. I had to consult with my seniors now and then. When you step on somebody's feet, the expectations are high. The students expected me to present myself as my predecessor. The department I am working in is male dominated and I am the only woman. Again because of the apartheid regime and sexism, I am a woman and black in a predominantly white faculty. It is not much of the problem because of my level of maturity and the most of the people in this community, I know them. Experience again, you do not know how they perceive you or what they think of you because there is no form of assessment and feedback on your performance.

In my previous career as a nurse I never experienced any problems, because I like community work. I have no problem in associating and I enjoy helping people.

2. **Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

Yes, as a career woman you must not forget especially in our tradition. You have to meet the demands of your husband, the home, the in-laws and cope with the demands of your work. Being a career woman you tend to neglect some of the household chores. But I am fortunate because I have a professional husband, and we do compromise. The demands are minimal.

Otherwise if he was not professional, I'll be having a problem. Due to our culture you always feel that there are things you need to do yourself for your husband. Now you rely totally on helpers which sort of a way interferes with your contact with your husband.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and homemaker?**

Yes, it does, you have to divide your time especially for children. Children sometimes do not understand. You feel you have to make up for the time lost. Whenever I go during the holidays, I take my little girl to wherever I go. It means you have to divide your time. When I knock off at 17h00, I give myself time to talk to her, to help her with her school work and send her to bed. If you are not careful you lose discipline over your child since she spends most of the time with the helpers who are sometimes harsh to our kids, or afraid to discipline the children and the result is a deviant or too spoiled child.

**4. How does being a career woman affects your relationships with your family?**

Since I am a married woman, I have a very understanding in-laws. Although I feel I need to attend to them especially during the holidays. So for things such as funerals and "imisebenzi", I have to be there because others won't understand. They'll say look, she is not here, by the way she is learned. Otherwise my family is very supportive.

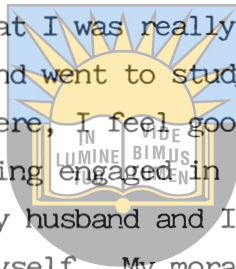
**5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

I fit in the community very well. I think the advantage is that the community as a whole is very understanding.

I am in the same wavelength with other career women in the area. Again it depends on your personality. You have to be accommodative, accessible and go out and meet people.

6. **How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

Again, it is a question of goals. Personally I feel self-filled because I feel I have partly attained some of my goals, you know. Uh! I left the nursing profession, worked with my husband and I did not feel that I was really working. When I decided to change my career and went to study at university and completed and got employed here, I feel good about myself, I am very confident. Prior to being engaged in this career, I used to feel as an appendage to my husband and I hated it. I couldn't be actually proud about myself. My morale is boosted as well.



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7. **How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

I compartmentalize my time among the three roles, that of mother, wife and career woman. What also helps me is the support and understanding that I get from my family as a whole. Because of the level of my maturity, I am able to cope with all the problems I have mentioned previously.

8. **What do you think the future holds for black career women?**

We have to continue living. We have to contribute to the economy. Irrespective of your financial background, you had to work. Women can now be employed in managerial and executive positions. We have to show men that we can cope in the kitchen as well as outside the kitchen. We have to show them that it is a question of ability and skills which we can all acquire and not your sex or race that counts. Women need to consult with other women.

**We have come to the end of our interview, thank you for your participation.**

INTERVIEW TWO

**1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?**

We are serving communities who have not used the library before. You can imagine a person who has never used a school library. Second problem concerning staff, unfortunately we have to supervise staff who are not trained, who are not library professionals which actually compounds our problems, because we spend a lot of time training staff, on the job training. The role of librarian has changed, we are no longer custodian of books, librarianship has become so complex. Surprisingly in my position, I get more respect from the junior white staff, for example in the morning they take it upon themselves to greet me, whereas with the black staff the opposite is true. They think when they greet me they are lowering themselves. Suppose because I am married in our culture a married woman is given some respect. People not reporting for work on time. We are serving the community, we have to open on time. We have staff members studying, who are suppose to be on a flexiprogramme, you have to run after them supervising them and see that they are at work.

**2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

No, not really. My husband is very supportive.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

As a mother, yes. You know with children you cannot say, I am studying or doing research, please wait. You cannot call them back now and say, ok, I have finished studying, be two or three years old again. You never catch up with the lost. You go for a senior post and the demands of the job also grow. I put my children in a boarding school at a tender age and then I have lost my little boy.

4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.

Uh! Yes. No. With my family especially from my side, I come from a career orientated family and they do understand. With the in-laws - uh! You know them. With them it seems that you are making your job very important.

5. How do you fit into the community as a working career woman?

No, in my community, in the area most of the people have gone through university. Our town is a university town. Most of my friends are also career women. I also belong to YMCA which is a christian organisation and as such, I meet a lot of people from all walks of life. It is not a situation where the community see me as a person out there.

6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?

Good and bad. Good because previously I was a teacher. You know if you are in a teaching post, you feel good because you see your products. Here it is a problem, you cannot really determine your productivity. I feel bad because some of the opportunities were not opened to us: Right now we are computerising our library and none of us has been exposed to them. We do not have trouble shooters who really go down deep and root out the problem. We are using the computers with no real in depth knowledge. In so much that if I could have time, I would like to go and do computers in libraries.

7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?

At work, calling a person, if there is something I am not happy about. If it is with my senior, I go to her. Communication is very important. You must communicate your problems to all parties concerned so as to get solutions to them.

8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?

Good, because for the first time we are beginning to see ourselves moving towards obtaining goals we have set for ourselves. Previously some of the jobs were earmarked for males, now it is no longer the case, the sky is the limit, it is up to us to prove ourselves.

Thank you for your participation. We have come to the end of the interview.



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INTERVIEW THREE

1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?

Ok, in my case I have come across as much as I have overcome those problems. I have started working at 16 years. You can imagine nobody took me seriously. I was not given any particular job, nobody cared what I was doing. I used to quickly do the mail, and took the initiative to learn to know what was happening in other departments in the bank. Then there came my opportunity, I was utilised as a substitute in every department whenever somebody was on leave. Ok, that was when I was a junior.

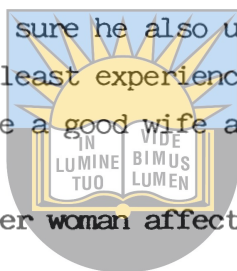
Now the problem is not being fully accepted. For instance when I joined this company, if I had guts, I would have resigned after six months. I was under pressure. Then I sat down and analysed my background, where do I come from, how did I perform, why this attitude, why am I so pressurised. Head office was worse, clients, everybody pressurised me. But I said in the past years I have not failed, I must take this as a challenge. I am new in this particular type of job, the pressure, I am getting pressurised because I am so good, my branch had recently opened and it was doing so well. I got a lot of experience within a minimum space of time.

Much as I know that males do have reservation about women in my position, their attitude has changed. Regarding clients, I do not think problems will ever come to an end. For instance I went to inform a client that we are to repossess the vehicle. The husband was not there. The wife said, "Ndimxelele umyeni wam ukuba makaye kula mfazi wala bhanka, uthi ke uyile la mfazi wavuma."

If you are declining a loan, you are saying no because you have to stick to the policy it is personalised; Oh, it is because it's a woman. Oh, you know when a black person is holding a high position, she forgets about others.

2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?

Ok, it does much as I am coping very well this year. Otherwise last year it was very difficult. Last year we used to knock off at 20h00. Last year I almost failed. We under-estimated the business we were likely to get. Fly to Jo'burg, Pretoria, Umtata, a course for a week. I do not know whether my husband is wearing a clean shirt or not. Even when I am local, what kind of supper am I going to cook. I strained my relationship with my husband. As much as he understands the kind of institution I am working for because we used to work together in a similar institution, I am sure he also under-estimated the pressures of the job. But now at least experience has taught me well. I am adapting. I am trying to be a good wife as well as a career woman.



3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?

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Yes, when I go home, I sleep on the coach, I take my little ones under my arms, the two are on my feet, hug them, and tell them how much I love them, etc. I try as much as possible not to neglect my children because of my career. I feel that communication with children is very important. When I have to go much as I am going to phone them when I am away, I always feel it is not enough. My children must go astray like any other child. I do not want to blame myself when they are delinquents. I communicate very freely with them now and not later in life, when it will be too late to fodge intimate ties by then.

4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.

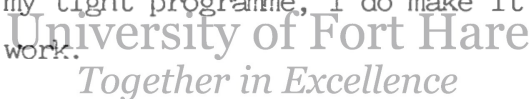
It does, especially from the in-laws. They expect me to wear "iqhiya" and yet the conditions at work are not conducive. For instance I have recently lost my father-in-law and they expected me to come to work wearing a black "qhiya"; not wearing bright clothes, but I cannot do that, my job does not give room for that. They could not understand. What I do, I wear the headcloth when I am coming to work, when I arrive at the office, I take it off.

Now when they come to see me at the office for this and that, they find me without the headcloth. The they take me otherwise, are surprised and question my "wifeness". In this type of job, I am seeing various kinds of people both males and females. You sit with a client for thirty minutes, then there your sister-in-law is sitting in the waiting room waiting for you.

I am not available for socialising with friends. I knock off late and the little time off I have, I have to spend it with my family.

5. **How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

Perfectly well. Infact you do get people who want to recognise you. But if I am at an occasion with other women as a woman, no manager, only a woman at traditional meeting, I feel very relaxed and are very accomodative. In my tight programme, I do make it a point that I accomodate community work.



6. **How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

I do not experience conflict between myself and the career I am following. The more you know what you are doing the better. If you say no, it is no because of reasons you understand and stand by your decisions. I feel very good and self fulfilled.

7. **How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

I have undergone training, I understand that I meet different types of people with various problems. I deal with the problems in isolation. I treat them differently. I distance myself from my client's problem and solve it in a very objective way as it is possible. I told myself that I should have very good and warm relations with staff. As a result relation is very cordial. We work when it is time for work. So my only problem is with my clients.

The other person who helps me to cope with these problems is my husband. He understands me very well and support me. Confidence is also important. You must know what you are doing. Do not be inconsistent.

**8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?**

If men would understand that we are capable, we can do it. For instance we are thirty three branches, and my branch come up number five. If men can remove it in their minds that the place of the woman is in the kitchen. Even women themselves must not under-estimate themselves. Even in meetings women must contribute constructively and show men we can do it. Women can be managing directors, directors of big companies.



We must not attach any sex into this. We must develop each and every person who has the ability and aptitude to the fullest.

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My advice is that to women who see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel-end, go at it. For instance, when I joined the bank at 16 years, I never thought it at any one stage that I would be managing a branch. But through learning when they were not eager to delegate to me, I learnt on my own, and at the end it showed me that I had to work hard towards the future. If there is an opportunity jump at it, do not doubt yourself. You develop once you get the challenge. If one woman does not fail, all women will not fail, infact, women are powerful.

Thank you, your participation is appreciated. We have come to the end of our interview.

INTERVIEW FOUR

**1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?**

I will divide this into two phases. Firstly I started in a completely black institution. I never experienced any problems peculiar to a black career woman. The problems I experienced were problems that any person would experience, be it a man or a woman.

Then now coming to a racial mixed institution. It is where I experienced problems. I am not sure whether I experienced these problems because I was a black woman or because my position was not clearly defined. Perhaps as being in charge was not clearly stated. I did experience problems not from blacks, but from a white of Head of Department who did not recognise the fact that I was in charge.

With subordinates if there was a problem, my interpretation was that may be my role was not clearly stated. As far as my wanting to recognise my H.O., my being in charge, my qualifications, what I am capable of doing, I had problems, he would squash everything I do.

**2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

Not at all. I have a way of when I'm home, I attend to my family life and when I'm at work, I attend to my work. I am successful in both roles. My husband even said "you are the best in parental juggling combining academic work and domestic duties.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

Not at all. It makes motherhood very challenging.

4. **How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.**

If you talk to a black woman about that she will tell we have been brought up, our mothers working. Instead it would affect me negatively if I was not working. Black women in South Africa are used to working and motherhood. Therefore I have no problem, my family understands.

5. **How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

I fit in very well. I think I blend in very well. I am balanced. I have not neglected my duties as a married woman, wife because I am a career woman. I am handling all the roles well.

6. **How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

Not bad at all. I feel good. To be educated and then not contribute anything to the community, I would feel bad. I contribute to the community and as a result I feel good.

7. **How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

Time management is very important. If you do not manage it then you become a bundle of friends. Even if you think of visiting you put it in your diary that you are to visit.

8. **What do you think the future holds for black career women?**

There is a bright future for black career women, but I am worried about what is happening, people, there is this uh! uh! oppression of women by men. Uh! talking of the oppression of women by men. I want to believe that we as blacks should not view it as the West is viewing it.

If I trace the black culture, it has never been like that black women were oppressed by blacks. You find people saying that it is in our culture. I refuse it is not in our culture. Now what is happening is people believe that this is true. You look in our language in Xhosa, women are respected by males. Ok, yes, now black women are oppressed. Our men has copied it from the west, i.e.; the whites, now they are doing it. Black women have to reject that. It is not in our culture, our men used to respect us.

Look, our fathers used to go and work away from home, leaving our mothers looking after the home. For instance look at the English language, they say the place of the woman is in the kitchen. You do not find that in our languages, e.g.; in Xhosa there is nothing like that.

There is a bright future for black women. If we could stand up and reject this belief that black women



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You have to remove that oppression of women is in our culture. We have to stand up, stop being influenced by other people saying it is in our culture.

**Thanks, we have come to the end of our interview.**

INTERVIEW FIVE

**1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?**

The training you have, makes you feel that you are to cope. But when you come to practice, you find the training is not enough. There is a need for orientation. This is a fairly new profession and even the employers do not understand, there is a lack of understanding. When they see a social worker, they see a socialite, a person attending parties, etc., and this is not the case. You do not get any feedback after you have assisted a person and so your seniors think that you are not doing anything. When you sit and interview a client you have to work on a relationship. People, especially the supervisors which are not trained in the field, they think that you are just conversing for fun. They do believe that when you are a social worker, you need to go out and visit and when you interview a person in an office, they think that you are not doing enough. They do not know that some cases are handled better in an office atmosphere.

The heads like to dictate, giving you jobs that are not of a social worker. Therefore your social work activities are hindered. The rigid official working hours also are a barrier. If you need to see a client after normal knocking off hours, you have to make a strong motivation. You are expected to do a good job and yet there are obstacles. Therefore I developed to be aggressive. You have to fight with everybody and at the end of the day they see your point.

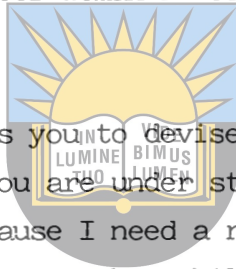
**2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

As for my husband, he has to endure a hard life, because these problems they happen during the day, but I take them home. Your relationship suffer. You have to work very hard on your relationship, but you have to work from a base. So with me as a christian, I find an anchor. With me my christianity and commitment helps me to cope.

If you learn to be tough at work you transfer that to your husband and now you see the person you married disappearing and you find that he has to do the adjusting. Even if you have a helper, due to our tradition, your husband want things from you. You are too tired even to care, you reach a stage that even if he has an affair you are too exhausted to mind. But now that our children are grown up and are at boarding school, we do have time to ourselves, and now I am beginning to enjoy life.

3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?

Yes, it does, because it needs you to devise means to survive at home because most of the time you are under stress. I even ask my children not to disturb me because I need a rest before I attend to them. But it is difficult because when children see you, they want you to pay attention and yet you are unable as a result you make them grow before they are ready.



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4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.

Well, I am a loner. You may even call me a workaholic. I take work home. I like to be alone and most of the things that I write, I usually get inspiration to write some of the things I write when I am alone. I visit the people close to me.

5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?

Well, I wish people could accept me as I am and not as a director. I remember one time we were at a bus stop and we were conversing very well, but suddenly they realised and recognised me, then the conversation stopped to be free flowing. There was a bit of tension and awkwardness.

In the area where I work, I am relating very well with them, because I am working with them. They know me from the work situation. But when I am at Mdantsane where I stay, the people who talk to me are those who know my children and they know that I am approachable.

Other people who interact with me are people from the church. Because of my faith in Christ, I do not believe in many traditional rituals, and whenever we have a party, people will come very late, already drunk because they know that they will not get liquor.

6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?



I am not something else but a social worker. My being a social worker satisfies me. I feel very good, because I think I am doing a good job. As a result of this job I have made a lot of friends, contacts and I am still making friends. Some of these friends are now married and some of them have requested me to be a godmother. I make contacts with other institutions and develop ties and work together with them.

7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?

My faith helps me a lot. I share my problems with God through prayer. The other coping strategy I use is to share my experiences with friends especially male friends, they are very understanding and supportive. My husband is also supportive and my children are very understanding. If there is communication breakdown, I go around and talk to my subordinates. I even have weekly meetings with staff every Monday. These help to iron out some of the problems. I also counsel my subordinates on individual basis.

8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?

There is hope because when I started there were very few women in the higher echelons in the services, but now there is a lot of women. Because we are trying our level best men are gradually accepting us on an equal basis.

In a paper I delivered, I quoted Deborah of Biblical time, who was head of the military. This shows that having women in powerful positions is not new. Women are also competent. We can do it. I am confident that with extra effort we can achieve our goals.

We have come to the end of our interview. Thank you for your participation.

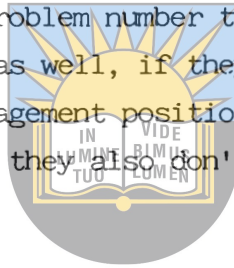


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INTERVIEW SIX

1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?

The main problems you know, are your colleagues at work. I am not sure whether it's because I'm a black woman or I'm a female, but the tendency is that when you are a female, they take you lightly. There is no respect, number one, and there is no co-operation. Though you do get co-operation but what wonders one is you get most co-operation from males than females. Problem number two, except colleagues or subordinates, your superiors as well, if they are males, they are not used to have females in management positions. There is that feeling that females are inferior, they also don't take you serious. Those are the main problems.



2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?

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In my case it doesn't, because my husband is also a career man who understands that we have got to advance the two of us. I have not had any problems even when I have to go out for sometimes, I have not experienced any problems.

3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?

No, with kids as well, if they are understanding, then the problems are limited.

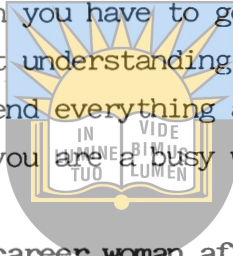
4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.

With in-laws, you do get problems, like they don't expect you to be away, let's say from work, they expect you to be at home at certain time.

And it doesn't happen that way, but I have no problem really because my in-laws are not staying with us. I have discovered that to most of my husband's family, especially, they understand now that I'm a career woman, they get some help from me, they do understand that I am the one who can help them in most problems.

5. **How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

Our community is such that people I mix with, are working women. If not, they have businesses of their own. It's not a problem as such, you fit in well, it's only when you have to go out in the country where the husband's family is not understanding that you get problems, if you will not be able to attend everything at the time they are attending those things because you are a busy woman.



6. **How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

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You know I wouldn't be anything else than a career woman, Nandi. I don't think myself staying at home, looking after the children. I see myself as a chartered accountant, having my own business and having people working under me, being independent.

7. **How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

Well, in the work situation, I do have those problems but, how do I put it. Well, in my case, what I usually do is to show my bosses that I am capable, number one, that I do not have any complaints. If there's a decision to be made, then I stand by my decision, nobody else changes me unless I am convinced. And as far as the subordinates are concerned, I just step my foot down they must know who the boss is and that is that.

8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?

If we unite as black career women, and say, open up conferences and seminars, we discuss our problems and find solutions to them, then there is hope for us. Then the main thing is having confidence in what we are doing. Let's work hard at it and get the best out of it and show the men that we are worth what we are. We are not in these positions by chance or anything.

Thank you, we have come to an end of our interview.

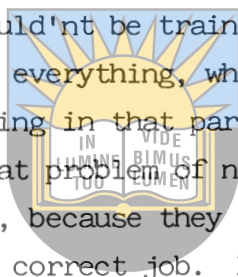


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INTERVIEW SEVEN

**1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?**

In the first place I had a problem when I started working because at that time there were few graduates, especially female graduates. So for both my colleagues and superiors, I've observed that they were having a very inferior complex. So I had to strive very hard to adjust myself. Number one, we could not be trained because they expected we are graduates, so we know everything, whereas even if you are qualified, you still need training in that particular job, you can't just go and work. So I had that problem of not getting somebody to train me properly. Number two, because they feared competition, they did not want to place me in a correct job. Number three, still they did not want to pay me the remuneration that I deserve, so they decided to place me incorrectly purposefully.



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**2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

No, I had not experienced any problem in that particular area, I mean I can still cope.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

No, I can just say it's vice-versa. Sometimes because of the problems I have at home, I cannot perform properly at work.

**4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.**

Now that I'm serving the government, in fact when I joined this section, I've joined it during the time when the posts were frozen, in fact the recruitment was frozen, so I did not have any problems of people trying to pester me into helping them with job seeking.

Otherwise when I was in the industry, I had those problems. I was a personnel officer. Somebody will approach me, I have a cousin like so and so, I have a daughter, so can't you please, so I had to strive to tell them, no, I can't do a work like that or that way.

**5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

No, the only problem that I have found is when I had to attend some church occasions and I got to be here at work and sometimes there are things that need my personal attention. I have no way of getting away.

**6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

I feel very pleased, infact I don't imagine myself sitting at home, even if I can have millions.

**7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

So far the situation is better now that there are so many female graduates who have joined the civil service. Infact the attitude is no longer the same as when I've started working. So it's the change of attitude.

**8. What do you think the future holds for the black career woman?**

I think there's hope for black career woman, infact even the males now, they have changed. Some have believed that the woman's place is in the kitchen, but now they can see that women are progressive. And infact, they compete far better off than male colleagues.

**We have come to the end of our interview. Thank you for your participation.**

INTERVIEW EIGHT

**1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?**

I'm working as an educational work counsellor in the Department of Manpower. What we do here, we do aptitude tests and counselling of students. The problems I have experienced are with white students, especially their parents. Because I'm black, they do not have confidence in me. They are used to white vocational counsellors and cannot accept a black. They do not think I can do my job efficiently. For example some time last week, one student's parent phoned to make an appointment for an aptitude test for his child. He was ignorant and knew nothing about the test. I had to tell him, he asked me who's going to administer this test and then I told him it's me. Then he asked me are you qualified to do it, then I said of course yes. Are you a graduate, I said yes. That's the problems I'm experiencing. With my colleagues, I've got no problems, they do accept me as I am.

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**2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?**

No, I have no problems, my boyfriend is a professional who understands and is very supportive.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

Yes, it does to some extent although I'm not married, but I've got a child because I was once married and I got divorced. Now and again being a career woman and a mother as well, so I've got to act two roles, that of a mother and a career woman.

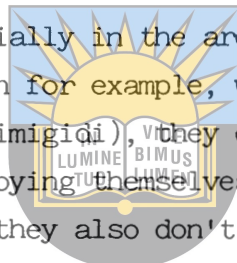
**4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives.**

Yes, the problem I have is with my family, I'll say with my stepmother because there are four of us at home.

I'm the first born and I've got two sisters, two half sisters and a half brother. So I'm the only one who is highly educated so my stepmother now and again gets jealousy. Those are the only problems, otherwise there are no conflicts because we are working. If there's a conflict because the other two siblings are not working, they've got matric and they did attempt some professions but they never fit due to their own negligence, so there is that conflict.

**5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

Yes, I do have problems especially in the area that I'm living. I fear I'm the only career woman for example, when there are these social gatherings and feasts (imigidi), they don't invite you in. I just see people gathering enjoying themselves now and again. When there's a death in the area, they also don't inform me but they use to do that. But before I went to school, they use to inform me because I was not a highly educated somebody. But when I came back there having completed a degree, they all shrunked.



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**6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

I feel very good, I feel that I have uh! I have a feeling of self actualisation, in that I have satisfied my need, I've got what I wanted. I feel good.

**7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

I do a lot reading, research, consult to get more knowledge so as to be more confident of what I am doing.

8. What do you think the future holds for black career women?

I think with the new South Africa as the new changes come together and stay in one area, in suburbs, they can form their own association, where they will get respect.

We've come to the end of our interview. Thank you.



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INTERVIEW NINE

1. What work related problems have you experienced and are experiencing?

I'm sure that question may be difficult in the sense that the TBVC states, unlike the metropolitan areas, you'll find that there is much of a chauvenistic ideas from the main point of view from the TBVC states. This perhaps attributes to the fact that most of the men in TBVC states have been streamlined their mentality by various laws.

It's unlike for instance you can hardly get to Jo'burg and find some women having the same opinions that I have well getting into problems. It is found that almost there are injustices in the sense that you have somebody at your top from the TBVC states, I would say who have no qualifications like you have and this has a bearing on the fact that perhaps the criteria for employment is never shaped to suit the needs of the organisation. So they just employ whoever perhaps is loyal to the structures that are present and this is a result that the tendency is that your perceptions as an academic tend to have an oppressive effect to the superiors who don't have or who are not equipped with the same academic education and this may inhibit more ideas that perhaps may come from your point of view. You know the tendency is that your initiativeness tends to distabilise completely because whatever you want to implement is not perceived in the same kind of way.

2. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a wife?

Back to the priority which is work, right away and there is so much demand that takes you away completely from any other kind of relationship, whether it is your husband, a boyfriend or children themselves. The better part of the times where you are totally away from the home, have to attend meetings later to work. At times you have stay until late at the office and do work, because you feel you have a time frame into all of the things you have to do. So as a result relations become strained in the sense that you'll find out that you lack control somewhere.

By the time that you have achieved something from your career point of view, you have completely lost the control from the relationships by absenting yourself either way.

**3. Do you think that being a career woman affects your role as a mother and home-maker?**

Well, yes, no, in the sense that, yes if perhaps one is looking at it from the point of view that if you have other children, because the tendency is that it depends as to their own perceptions what kind of a mother they want to have. That's why I say yes, if they are quite adults, because if they've got perceptions of a mother that we are looking for a mother who is perhaps a career woman, who's fully fledged, who's got all, so much respect, who's having a managerial position, then it is yes for them. But for other kinds of children who don't have that kind of a perception it is obviously a kind of a deprivation of some kind. Because the tendency is they are looking to be loved and pumpered and be taken up by a mother. Or the mother just being there at home, so it depends on the perception of the children per se that basically all children want their mothers to be there, it's a basic line that they want their mother. So they should feel that deprivation to some extent but obviously is pressed out as to what perception they have, basically every child feels the absence of the mother at home, and therefore they suffer because you find that some other roles that we have to play as mothers, discipline, something might start during the day when you are not there or out of country. By the time you implement or punish, its already belated and it does not have the effect it is suppose to be seen so as a mother it is.

**4. How does being a career woman affect your relationship with your family? i.e.; relatives**

Almost you find out with me, no, I would say because you find that most of traditional rituals, they happen over the week-end when people can afford leisure time except this is counter productive in the sense that you as a person, perhaps they demand you so much because they see a role player.

They identify with you because of your successes and they feel that being present in their occasions perhaps you know the image of the family. So it does not really affect the fact that you are a career woman, your image does not affect the family absolutely.

**5. How do you fit into the community as a working woman?**

I think one should look at the kind of vocation in terms of the community, when you have to refer to this. Obviously being a career woman, the tendency is that you offset yourself and move away from communities that would be oppressive.

In black townships, obviously the tendency is that it is either they have to depend entirely on you on whatever decisions or whatever chores of the community. Where there is a need they speak out they have to depend on you, it means they see a real role player out of you, that's another segment of communities. Then the other segment of communities they may label you as a loner, a person who perhaps is of a certain class who distances herself from communal needs, or who is not accessible. The tendency is that your image is enough to set them even before you say anything, that is why I say it depends to the kind of community that you stay because if you're staying in a community that is perhaps having very radical opinions, they will perceive you without having said anything just being there quiet running your own life, it's enough to threaten their lives.

**6. How do you think that being a career woman affects the way you feel about yourself?**

I think this has to do with the personality of the person. It is supposed to have a contribution into your perception and the way that you assert yourself and the way that you associate, the kind of people that you associate with. But with we, as I said earlier on when I may refer to point one, that it depends to the individual, your personality trait, the kind of person you are.

A career woman as I am, don't want to be idolised. I always feel that the work that I am doing is enough to talk for me than to perhaps put myself into an area, or elevate myself and feel that I should be felt where I am. I feel that the kind of work I'm doing is enough to say that this is a career woman than for me to be loudly saying that I am a career woman.

**7. How do you cope with the problems you have mentioned earlier on?**

Well, it is obviously strenuous to be a career woman because you'll find that at times you are never at home, for instance last year I was overseas, and I was overseas for about twenty days. I came back immediately I had to attend a conference in Johannesburg for five days and that on its own you feel there's something that you are not doing. You always have that guilt that you are supposed to do your normal routines at home and you are not there, but obviously, because your career demands so much from you, you have to do that. So there's always that gap between you and the home which you cannot really fill. It is either you fill it by doing worse, pondering kids unnecessarily, spoiling them because you are trying to close up gaps either way from the children's point of view, from other associates outside or from the relatives you always want their tenderness because you can afford, you have monies to afford, you can always close the gaps by either showering them with gifts so that you close up the gaps.

**8. What do you think the future holds for black career woman?**

I sincerely think that I'm happy that you've raised that kind of thing, because just now, I was busy trying to organise a forum where I felt I've attended a lot of forums that specifically look at injustices that women have received in the past and who end up being very chauvinistic, but I've recently read an article, and it is out of that article that I've started imagining that one should be looking at really that God had an intention why he created man and woman. He was looking at different attributes or even equal attributes.

I think if career woman should be looking at what capabilities each person have put that in line with man which don't have, then we can both of us fully develop in any other country in the world. Because it is out of capabilities that you as a person can develop any economy. So I feel black women should quietly look at first, assess themselves to what they need, to sort of look at. It will invite a lot of self assessment and self activeness from a black career woman, assert themselves. I'll look at assessment as the starting point. The tendency is that you find people just because there's mention that there are injustices, women deprived, that even people that don't have enough capabilities as men have termed to compete, so there's a lot of chances only if women concentrates on the fields they have experts on, and do some speciality than to sort off waffle and do things that perhaps are , it could be some sort of a direction and speciality and concentrate and put more effort into what you are expected to do, you know, I still we think we can be a real contributory factor into the economy of the country or we can play a contributory factor into this country.

**Thank you for your participation. We have now come to an end.**

