AN EVALUATION OF GENDER EQUITY IN THE AMATHOLE DISTRICT COUNCIL HEAD OFFICE, EAST LONDON
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By

Zixolele Tsomo

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SUPERVISOR: PROF D TAYLOR

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DECLARATION

I, Zixolele Tsomo, declare that the work presented in this treatise is my own work and has not been submitted by me for evaluation at any other university. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the treatise.

Signature  ---------------------------------  Date  ---------------------------------

Zixolele Tsomo
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the promotion of gender equity in the Amathole District Municipality (ADM). This investigation originated against the phenomenon that women are continuously faced with barriers to progress in the workplace. In an endeavour to find a meaningful solution to the problem, it was necessary to assess the degree of transformational change in the workplace; to ascertain what these barriers are; and how they can be overcome. The study commenced with an overview of the stance of women in the Republic of South Africa, especially their struggle to find a platform from where their voice could be heard.

In order to achieve the research objectives, an in-depth literature study was undertaken. A survey was also conducted to examine the perceptions of gender equity in the ADM. The required data was collected by means of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with female officials in senior managerial positions.

The study concludes with a number of recommendations that emanate from the literature review and qualitative study.
# Table of Contents

**DECLARATION** ........................................................................................................................................ i

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** ......................................................................................................................... ii

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ........................................................................................................................ iii

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** ............................................................................................................................ iv

**LIST OF ACRONYMS** ............................................................................................................................ viii

**CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPT** .................................................................................... ix

**CHAPTER 1:** ............................................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY ................................................................. 1

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT ......................................................................................................................... 3

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION ......................................................................................................................... 3

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES ..................................................................................................................... 4

1.5 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY .......................................................................................................... 5

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW ......................................................................................................................... 5

1.7 DELIMITATION OF STUDY .................................................................................................................. 7

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN ..................................................................................... 8

1.9 UNIT OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING ............................................................................................... 10

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ........................................................................................................... 10

1.11 CHAPTER LAYOUT .............................................................................................................................. 11

**CHAPTER 2** ........................................................................................................................................... 12

LITERATURE REVIEW ............................................................................................................................... 12

GENDER EQUITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ........................................................................ 12

2.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................. 12
2.2 Gender Policy in Local government ................................................................. 13
2.3 THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY .......... 15
2.4 THE STANCE OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY ...................... 17
2.5 THE PLACE OF GENDER EQUITY IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT 22
2.6 OBSTACLES FACING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS ................... 25
   2.6.1 Cultural differences .................................................................................. 25
   2.6.2 Established Traditions ............................................................................. 28
   2.6.3 Lack of assertiveness and mentorship ..................................................... 29
   2.6.4 Unjustified prejudice ............................................................................... 30
   2.6.5 Stance of women in managerial positions .............................................. 31
   2.6.6 Promotion opportunities ......................................................................... 31
   2.6.7 Acknowledgement of skills accomplished on an informal basis ............. 31
   2.6.8 Stance of women in the workplace ......................................................... 32
   2.6.9 The Glass Ceiling .................................................................................... 33
2.7 SUMMARY ...................................................................................................... 34

CHAPTER 3 ......................................................................................................... 36
3.1 INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................... 36
3.2 TERMINOLOGY DEFINED .......................................................................... 36
   3.2.1 The concept of research ........................................................................... 36
   3.2.2 The concept of design ............................................................................. 38
   3.2.3 Sampling .................................................................................................. 38
   3.2.4 Population in the context of sampling ................................................... 39
   3.2.5 Target Population .................................................................................... 39
3.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY MEASUREMENT ........................................ 39
3.4 SAMPLING METHODS .................................................................................. 41
3.4.1 Non-probability samples ................................................................. 41
3.4.2 Probability-based samples ............................................................ 42
3.4.3 Aspects to bear in mind when considering a sampling method .......... 43
3.5 METHODOLOGIES ........................................................................... 44
3.6 THE APPROACH, PROCEDURE AND METHODS SELECTED FOR THE
COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS RESEARCH............................ 45
3.7 SUMMARY ....................................................................................... 47

CHAPTER 4 ............................................................................................. 48

INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA ...................................... 48

4.1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................. 48
4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION .................................................. 50

Numerical goals of ADM according to race, gender, Occupational Level .... 50

Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2005/6 .................................. 50
Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2006/7 .................................. 51
Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2007/8 .................................. 52
Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2008/9 .................................. 53
Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2009/10 ............................... 54
Numerical targets for Occupational Level 2010/11 ............................... 56

4.3 CONCLUSION .................................................................................... 62

CHAPTER 5 ............................................................................................. 64

5.1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................. 66
5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS ................................................................... 66

5.2.1 Gender Equity Plan ..................................................................... 66
5.2.2 Equity Forum ................................................................................ 66
5.2.3 Satisfaction with the job ............................................................... 67
5.2.4 Lack of organisational support for gender................................................................. 67
5.2.5 Budget constraints ...................................................................................................... 68
5.2.6 Capacity........................................................................................................................ 68
5.3 CONCLUSION.................................................................................................................. 69
5.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.............................................................................. 70
6. REFERENCES..................................................................................................................... 71
APPENDICES......................................................................................................................... 80
Annexure A .......................................................................................................................... 80
LIST OF ACRONYMS

AA    Affirmative Action

ADM   Amathole District Municipality

ANC   African National Congress

EE    Employment Equity

EEA   Employment Equity Act, 1998

EEP   Employment Equity Plan
CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

(a)  **Employment Equity**
Employment equity implies the right to fundamental equality of opportunities for all persons; this also encapsulates the right to be treated fairly in seeking and maintaining employment. Tinarelli (2000: 2) defines employment equity as a term centred on two statements: the first statement centres on eradication of unfair discrimination in the form of hiring, promotion, training, pay benefits and retrenchments in line with constitutional requirements. The second statement focuses on measures to encourage employers to undertake organisational transformation to remove unjustified barriers to employment for all South Africans.

(b)  **Affirmative Action**
Affirmative Action refers to specific steps, beyond ending discriminatory practices that are taken to promote equal opportunities and to ensure that discrimination will not recur (Taylor, 1991: 14).

(c)  **Gender**
In this context, gender refers to social roles allocated to men and women and their relationship. Such roles are conditioned by political, social, economical and cultural factors and characterised by unequal power relations. The *New Practical Standard Dictionary* (Funck & Wagnalls) explains gender, *inter alia*, as one of the words having the same form for the masculine and feminine, for example, the word worker can be either masculine or feminine. Gender equity therefore implies that men and women have equality of opportunity, that is, a state of being equal (Tinarelli, 2000: 2).

(d)  **Disability**
Disability refers to persons with handicaps. The term handicap is usually associated with physical impairments (Carrell, Kuzmits & Elbert 1993: 163).
(e) **Blacks**

The term Blacks, refers to Africans, Asians and Coloureds. They are also known as people from previously disadvantaged groups or designated groups (South Africa, 1998b).
CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The national elections of 27 April 1994 marked the end of inequalities in South Africa. A democratic constitution was drafted and passed in 1996. Section 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) guarantees that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic and social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language or birth. The democratically elected national government of South Africa, in its capacity for representing all people, is obliged to rectify any discriminatory legislation and enforce the laws of the country. This means that government is obliged to abolish discrimination, which treats certain groups of people unfairly (Cahn, 1995: 24). The parliament of South Africa passed the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) which marked the end of unfair discrimination in the workplace on the abovementioned grounds (as per the South African Constitution) and added the following to the list: family responsibility, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status and political opinion.

The Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) provides for Affirmative Action programmes. These programmes are aimed at redressing unfair discrimination in the workplace. In relation to the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) the first black president of a democratic South Africa, Nelson Mandela, once said: “The primary aim of affirmative action must be to redress the imbalances created by Apartheid. We are not asking for hand-outs for anyone, nor are we saying that just as a white skin have been a passport to privilege in the past, so a black skin should be the basis of privilege in the future”. The first point to be made is that Affirmative Action must be rooted in the principle of justice and equality (Human, 1993: 3). Expectations regarding the establishment of equity in the workplace have been high (Human, 1996: 45) and the debate around the implementation of employment equity is on-going. On the one hand, equity in the workplace is viewed as fundamental to removing gender and class
discrimination. It is also viewed as crucial to the stability, economic success and global success of the country (Human, 1996: 65). On the other hand, employment equity (EE) and Affirmative Action (AA) practices have been associated with damaging phenomena such as tokenism and reverse discrimination, stress for beneficiaries and the lowering of standards and production (Maritz, 2002: 65).

Certain reports have indicated that progress on achieving employment equity has been slow and that many organisations are not achieving their targets (Employment Equity Report, 2003: 75). Dissatisfaction and frustration prevail among designated groups, due to a perceived lack of management commitment to the process. The South African system of government cannot claim that it is successful in equity if it excludes certain people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, namely; women, the disabled and blacks. In essence, one may deduce that in the past unfair discrimination, inequality, exclusions and other unjustified barriers were used to impede the employment of previously disadvantaged groups.

The abovementioned discussion puts the focus on the definition of EE, which is a fair chance in the workplace, and it serves to ensure that no one is denied an opportunity for employment or advancement for reasons unrelated to ability. EE also refers to a series of initiatives designed to remove discrimination from the workplace (Quinta, 2005: 35). This study will primarily focus on gender equality.

The first part of this study will briefly highlight the historical facts reflecting the numerous social imbalances in South African society. One piece of legislation, namely; the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998), has served as the catalyst for change. To embrace diversity within South African organisations, the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998) recognises that because of the former policy of separate development and other discriminatory societal practices, there have been disparities in employment opportunities among the race groups.

The second part of the study will concentrate on gender and gender equity. The focus on gender is of particular interest as the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998)
concentrates on marginalised groupings and gender imbalances. This study investigates whether or not more women are being employed at senior levels in the work place, with particular reference to a selected local government structure in the Eastern Cape.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a perception that the number of women in middle and senior management positions in South Africa has slightly improved. According to Coetzee (2005: 86) the problems surrounding equity arise mainly from the manner in which equity is implemented and employees' perceptions thereof, rather than the practices themselves. International research has shown that many people tend to evaluate EE plans in terms of fairness judgments (SIOP Committee, 1995: 78). In the United States of America (USA), the failure of an aspect of EE has been attributed to these programmes being implemented inequitably and neglecting to address employees' perceptions of fairness (Coetzee, 2005: 65).

The primary purpose of this research is to evaluate the extent to which EE is implemented in the Amathole District Municipality (ADM) Head Office, with emphasis on women in senior positions. A further aim is to ascertain whether attitudes of discrimination still prevail in the municipality after the establishment and implementation of the Equity Forum by the ADM. This study will further investigate how the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998), hereafter referred to as the EEA, has affected the staff employed at the Head Office of the ADM.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The main question to be investigated in this research is: Has the implementation of the EEA affected employees' perceptions of the fairness of EE practices and procedures? This question can be further broken down into the following sub-questions:
• Do perceptions of fairness differ between groups in the categories of race, gender and job level?
• What are the factors that influence perceptions of EE?
• Is there a relationship between the contents of the EEA and the general satisfaction (or degrees of satisfaction) with the Implementation of this Act?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the EE policies of the ADM with special emphasis on gender related issues. The study further intends to investigate and evaluate EE policies of the municipality in order to establish how effective these policies have been in addressing gender issues in particular. The objectives of the study are:

• To establish whether the means to enable the ADM to promote gender equity have been adequately provided. That is, are clear policies in place to promote gender equity? Is there a structure (forum) to implement such policies? Are there suitably qualified staff and adequate finance allocations to adequately promote gender equity at the ADM?

• What work procedures exist to guide employees? What control measures exist to ensure public accountability?

• To determine what strategies are in place at the ADM for utilising the means to enhance gender equity at the Head Office of the municipality. In other words, to identify what steps have been taken to implement employment equity.

• To establish the levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employees in the work environment in terms of prescriptions contained in the EEA and related policies and strategies implemented by the ADM.
To determine if there is any disparity in the views of management and employees with regard to the effectiveness of the EEA in terms of addressing gender equity at the ADM Head Office.

To explore any possible difficulties that could adversely influence the effectiveness of the EEA in its implementation by the ADM.

To establish the views of selected women at the ADM in terms of the “glass ceiling” theory. This theory refers to an invisible barrier created by attitudinal and organisational prejudices that bar women from top executive positions (Wirth, 1988: 93).

1.5 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

From discussions with officials in the workplace, it appears that in certain public institutions there is a lack of adequate gender equality, especially in terms of the more senior positions in local government. This is especially visible in terms of middle and senior management positions. Of concern is that there are numerous legislative prescriptions pertaining to gender equality in the workplace.

Despite these prescriptions, many women still face discrimination in the workplace. By using the Head Office of the ADM as the focus of the study, the researcher intends to establish whether the above perceptions are indeed correct. The study will investigate the extent of gender equity and the perceptions relating thereto by selected women in senior positions employed by the ADM.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to a democratic South Africa, the country had largely been isolated from the world economy due to its discriminatory laws and former policies of separate development. White people had received preferential employment treatment in the pre-democratic South Africa. The first democratic election process which was held during 1994 saw the
overwhelming majority of South African citizens voting for the African National Congress (ANC). The transition of government marked a change from the policy of separate development for the various population groups to a democratic government of national unity with a constitutional framework which encapsulates certain rights and embraces the notion of, *inter alia*, ‘One Law for One Nation’.

The newly elected government inherited a society marked by deep social and economic inequalities, as well as serious racial, political and social divisions (White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995). The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) points out that representation is one of the main foundations of a non-racist, non-sexist and democratic society, and as such, one of the key principles of the democratically elected government of South Africa. The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995) emphasises that before 1994 Black citizens (Africans, Coloureds and Asians) had been excluded from positions of influence in the state and civil society and that women were similarly disadvantaged, particularly those from Black communities. In addition, people with disabilities, irrespective of gender or race, were seldom found in any positions of influence in the state or civil society (RSA, 1995).

The White Paper on Local Government (March 1998) states that municipalities have a range of delivery options to enhance basic service provision. It further prescribes that the administrations of government need to be geared to implement the chosen delivery options in the most effective manner to ensure maximum benefit to their communities. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997 (also referred to as The Batho Pele White Paper) seeks to build a public service that is capable of meeting the challenges of improving the delivery of services to the citizens of South Africa. It promotes the application of the Batho Pele (People First) Principles by public officials in the execution of their duties. It is proposed for the purposes of this study that any lack of proper implementation of policies may hinder the implementation of the eight Batho Pele Principles as prescribed in terms of the Batho Pele White Paper (1997).

Section 56(2) (c) of the *Local Government Municipal Structures Act* (Act 117 of 1998) requires the Executive Mayor to recommend to the Municipal Council strategies,
programmes and services to address priority needs through the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Section 56(3) (e) of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998) also states that the Executive Mayor must oversee the provision of services to communities within a municipality in a sustainable way. Sound records of management are also the foundation of any government that needs to provide services.

In addition, the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, introduced a new democratic process. Many Acts have been passed in Parliament since 1994, and these Acts could affect the lives and the Human Resources (HR) profession most closely as they may seek to redress the past inequitable discriminatory practices and processes. Specifically, the EEA has had a profound impact on the daily operations of HR practices and procedures. However, despite the advent of a democratic order, the South African workplace is still, in certain instances, characterised by discrimination and inequality.

One of the clearest indications of the perverseness of systematic inequality is the under-representation of black citizens and women in senior positions and the almost total lack of representation of disabled people in certain organisations. More than 80% of the population (black citizens) makes up only 4% of senior management in corporations. Moreover, women constitute 56% of the total population but only 12% occupy senior management positions. People with disabilities are estimated to constitute approximately 12% of the population but are almost invisible and often exploited in the workplace (www.statssa.gov.za). The South African Constitution of 1996 and labour legislation make provision for addressing the imbalances of the past with particular emphasis on gender equality in the work place (The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995).

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY
The research will focus on the ADM Head Office in East London, which is located in the Province of the Eastern Cape. The ADM is geographically located in the central coastal portion of the Eastern Cape Province and its area of jurisdiction comprises eight local
municipalities, namely; Mbhashe, Mquma, Great Kei, Amahlathi, Buffalo City, Nkonkobe, Ngqushwa and Nxuba.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In the social sciences and humanities, the qualitative and quantitative methods of research are often employed for purposes of empirical surveys. Both approaches encompass within their limits numerous strategies, which are, to some measure, divergent and conflicting. Consequently, the question arises of whether these approaches to the same object can be regarded as (scientifically) justifiable and tolerable (Mouton & Marais, 1990: 154-5). With respect to methodology, science offers some degree of latitude. The term methodology refers to the way in which researchers approach problems and seek answers in social sciences as well as how one conducts research (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984: 1).

The quantitative approach may be defined, in general terms, as that approach to research in the social sciences that is more highly formalised as well as more explicitly controlled, with a range that is more exactly defined, and which in terms of the methods used, is relatively close to the physical sciences in contradistinction. Qualitative approaches are those approaches in which the procedures are not strictly formalised, while scope is more likely to be undefined and a more philosophical mode of operation is adopted (Mouton & Marais, 155-156). The approach to be employed in this research study will be a combination of descriptive and analytical approaches. The qualitative approach, using a suitably constructed interview schedule, will be used to gather “rich” data from the respondents for the purposes of the empirical survey.

The process of research design can be defined as the framework or way in which the research is conducted in order to best answer the research questions and achieve the aims of the study. This process, inter alia, ensures that:

- The relevant data is gathered and analysed;
• The research steps are co-ordinated to ensure the efficient use of resources;

• The research is performed according to scientific methods;

• The research objectives are met; and

• The framework within which to solve the specific problem is maintained.

For the purposes of the research study, the ADM will be used as a case study. As previously stated, the study will employ the qualitative research method since the sample group will be reasonably small. The qualitative research method is referred to as the interpretative ethnographic model of social science research as it focuses on understanding the people who derive meaning from their world (Dzwimbo, 1995: 17). Badenhorst (2008: 23) asserts that qualitative research relies on data in the form of words and researchers that are seeking the meaning of human action. These researchers depend on descriptions to express their data.

Data will be collected through face-to-face interviews with the selected sample group from the ADM Head Office to meet the aims and objectives of the study. Face-to-face interviews will also provide an opportunity for the respondents to expand on any of the interview questions. Moreover, face-to-face interviews will assist in providing relevant information pertaining to the study, especially regarding possible follow-up questions. The interview questions will be clearly explained to the respondents, and where necessary, they will be interpreted in a language that is more easily understood by the respondents. However, researchers should be cautious with regards to ensuring that responses of personal interviews, political documents and minutes of meetings are not guided by explanations (Hanekom & Brynard, 1997: 35).

The study will be empirical in nature as it seeks to address a real life problem and both primary and secondary data will be used. Primary data will be collected primarily through responses to questions posed during interviews. Reference books on Public
and Municipal Administration, other relevant publications, applicable journals and South African legislation and policies will be consulted for secondary data.

1.9 UNIT OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

Fox and Bayat (2007: 104-110) stipulate that data analysis is not limited to the mass media, but can also include, *inter alia*, transcriptions. According to Creswell (1994: 153) data analysis requires the following:

- The researcher to be comfortable with developing categories and making comparisons and contrasts; and

- The researcher to be open to possibilities and see contrary or alternative explanations for the research findings.

The proposed sample group for the empirical survey will comprise of selected senior female officials employed at the Head Office of the ADM. According to the organogram of the ADM there are nine women in senior management positions at the Head Office of the ADM who will then comprise the sample size for the survey.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The information collected from the respondents will be confidential and shall under no circumstances be revealed to anybody. The names of the respondents will not be revealed and anonymity will be assured. The process itself and the research findings will be used for academic purposes only. The respondents will be clearly informed of the purpose of the study as well as the nature of their participation. The perceived risks and benefits of participation will also be clearly conveyed by the researcher.

The respondents will be informed that they have the right to decline to participate if they choose to do so. All participants will be required to sign a letter of informed consent after reading the information leaflet. This will be an indication that each participant
agrees to the terms of his or her participation. Each participant will receive a copy of the signed consent form for his or her own records and will further be informed that they are free to withdraw from the survey at any point without any adverse consequences.

1.11 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The study comprises of five chapters as follows:

**Chapter One:** Covers the introduction and background to the study. It also outlines the problem statement, research objectives and research method to be employed.

**Chapter Two:** Comprises the literature study, which incorporates relevant books, articles and other publications on the topic.

**Chapter Three:** Focuses on the methodology to be employed in conducting the empirical survey.

**Chapter Four:** Deals with the interpretation and presentation of data that will emanate from the empirical survey.

**Chapter Five:** Summarises the investigation, any deductions and conclusions arrived at, as well as recommendations regarding the implementation of gender equity in the workplace with particular emphasis on the ADM.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: GENDER EQUITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

For a meaningful discussion of gender equality in the Republic of South Africa, it is essential to obtain clarity on the meaning of the term gender equality. In this context, gender refers to social roles allocated to men and women and their relationship. Such roles are conditioned by political, social, economic and cultural factors and characterised by unequal power relations. Gender equity implies that men and women have equality of opportunity, that is, a state of being equal (Beall, 2010: 115).

In the preamble of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 it is, inter alia, stated that: “We, the people of South Africa, recognise the injustices of our past;… adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to – Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights …” Furthermore, Chapter 2 of the Constitution comprises the Bill of Rights, which inter alia explains what equality means to everyone. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

Gender roles of both men and women have changed considerably during the past decade. Equal opportunities for all in the various spheres of life are being sought. There is an increasing recognition among politicians and researchers of the importance of considering gender issues in local government. The promotion of gender equality seems to focus on women. Cultural differences, established traditions and unjustified prejudice are inter alia highlighted as obstacles facing women in leadership positions.

In this chapter, attention will be given to gender policies in local government, some pieces of legislation relating to gender in South Africa and the changing role of women
in contemporary society. Attention will also be given to the stance of women in South African society as well as the obstacles facing women in leadership positions.

2.2 GENDER POLICY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The 1994 South African government preordained to formulate and implement gender sensitive policies that promote and encourage a better life for all its citizens, the participation of women, the representation of women, and equality for all, in line with their constitutional rights. Local government was thus expected to play a practical role in the social, economic, and material development of local communities, consequently transforming the lives of women through the provision of basic services. Socially, women and children are more vulnerable to the elements and to issues at the local sphere of government. The issues affecting women and children range from providing free basic services like water and electricity to every household, creating jobs in communities where people live, working for social and economic development, building safety and security in the communities and fighting the spread of HIV and Autoimmune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (Joseph, 2002: 4).

Economically, women tend to face social and economic constraints due to the structural basis of gender inequalities in the South African economy and society. Women are more likely to be excluded from formal employment and rely heavily on informal employment. Where women are involved in the informal economy, they tend to earn less than men because of the structured gender bias within the economy. As a result of their earning capacity, women often face difficulties in providing services and necessities for their families. Without access to services and capacity-building programmes, it is difficult for women to escape poverty. Subsequently, the participation of women in local government and the integration of gender analysis in programming and service delivery are essential for ensuring effective service delivery and contribute to the empowerment of women (Gray & Mare, 2002: 1).

The Gender Policy Framework for Local Government (2007) provides clear guidelines on how and when Council should integrate gender in service provision, as well as in its
internal functions and procedures. The primary objective of the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government Policy is to create an enabling environment for all municipalities and other local government stakeholders in order to implement programmes aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering women (Gender Policy Framework for Local Government Policy, 2007: i). The emphasis of this policy is on taking the recommendations made by the women’s movement and those contained in national, regional and international instruments and turning them into core principles for the National Gender Programme. The adoption of the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government Policy (2007) in local government has seen women occupying senior positions without fear or favour. A recent example of this policy at work is the appointment of Ms Lulama Mokhobo as the Group Chief Executive Officer of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). Despite the progress resulting from the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government Policy (2007) close monitoring is still needed and achievable targets must be set.

Women in South Africa comprise 60% of the total population and yet they still face gender, class, racial and cultural discrimination. While there is a growing awareness of the plight of women coupled with the efforts made by the government, the situation of women has worsened. South Africa cannot claim success until the development of women is made a priority and empowered women can serve as a critical driving force in the social and economic development of communities and the country in general. The 1994 inaugural speech of former President Nelson Mandela echoed this sentiment when he said, “it is virtually important that all the structures of Government, including the President should understand fully all the structures that freedom cannot achieve unless women have been emancipated from all the oppressions”. The empowerment of women entails addressing issues of gender inequality that manifest in numerous ways, such as; access to opportunities, resources, tools of economic advancement and basic human rights. Women as a group have tended to lag behind their male counterparts when it comes to achieving their life goals (Gender Policy Framework for Local Government Policy, 2007: i).
In order to consolidate the accomplishments already completed towards gender equality, to minimise gaps and to overcome the challenges confronting government; the focus now has to be on the implementation of gender sensitive policies set by government. Roux (2005: 60) identifies possible factors that may affect the implementation of policies at the local sphere of government, including the lack of implementation capacity.

In relation to gender policy, Valk (2000: 14) believes the problem in implementing gender policies is threefold as it is complex, contested and politicised. It is complex because it is not simply a matter of a technique to reduce disparities between women and men. Furthermore, it cannot be carried out in isolation from other development issues and approaches. It is contested because there may be a degree of confusion over goals, strategies, concepts and terms used or because conflicting perspectives on women and gender exist. It is politicised because it questions the socially and culturally determined relations between women and men while challenging the existing allocation of authority and resources.

2.3 THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

In South African society, considerable emphasis is currently being placed on fundamental human rights, the elimination of discriminatory practices in society, equal opportunities for all spheres of life, promotion of equality and the empowerment of women (Greyvenstein, 1996: 75). Consequently, the traditional roles of men (including men as breadwinner, the stronger sex, leaders and rational thinkers) and the traditional roles of women (including women as homemakers and child minders, as well as emotionally and financially dependent on, and inferior to, their husbands) have suddenly become problematic. Established patriarchal structures, which are based on people in the upper echelons (both men and women) having more power over people (both men and women) in the lower positions, are regarded as making the people in lower positions inferior or substandard and are therefore currently being challenged. Gender roles are no longer clearly demarcated as in the past. Traditional roles are constantly
being questioned, re-examined and redefined. Subsequently, it has become more essential to be sensitive to stereotyped representations of gender in various contexts.

Gender roles of both men and women have changed considerably during the past decade. These changes have been caused by a new political dispensation on the one hand, where equal opportunities for all in the various spheres of life are being sought and by changing social conditions, such as women joining the labour force, on the other hand. Gender differences and power relations are major causes of inequality in development. There is an increasing recognition among politicians and researchers of the importance of considering gender issues in local government policy, planning, practice and research in order to reduce political inequalities and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of local government (SADC, 1997: 3).

It seems that the promotion of gender equality focuses on women due to the fact that the voices of women are often unheard when social and economic matters are considered, especially those affecting the status of women. However, both men and women have to be brought on board for effective equality to be achieved. According to Mtintso, the Deputy General Secretary of the ANC, there can be no sustainable development when decisions affecting the whole population are taken without input from almost 50% of the population (SADC, 1997: 1). Women constitute half of all humanity and development cannot take place if they are excluded.

The application of gender equity has, for many democracies, at times been an area of contention. The question arises of whether established traditions, social customs and beliefs of the various culture groups and religions could be ignored when gender equity is applied. Denial of equal rights not only negates equality but is also contrary to the guarantees of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).

The justices are not too clear what makes a right fundamental. But, Justice Powell explains that it is not the social importance of the right nor the justices’ conclusions about the significance of the right that determines whether or not it is fundamental, but whether it is explicitly or implicitly guaranteed by the Constitution. The complexity of
equal protection experienced by the Supreme Court is expressed in this statement, “...this Court seems to regard the equal protection clause as a cat-of-nine-tails to be kept in the judicial closet as a threat to legislatures which may, in the view of the judiciary, get out of hand and pass ‘arbitrary’, ‘illogical’, or ‘unreasonable’ laws?” (Beall, 2010: 210). The justices now expand the range of closely reviewed classifications beyond race and ethnicity to include illegitimacy and gender. In order to arrive at meaningful conclusions it is essential to analyse the available literature on gender equity.

2.4 THE STANCE OF WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY

It appears that the key roles played by women in the past, in social and economic development, were those of productive activities in domestic labour as child bearers, carers and the ones responsible for the socialisation of the next generation (Bickman, 2009: 156). Gabriel (1991: 68) maintains that women in rural areas face a double disadvantage as females and members of a rural population. Jones (1990: 222) states that women in underdeveloped countries suffer simply because they are women. This is because the designers of economic and social development overlook the contributions of women to their communities. As a result, women only have limited access to innovations, training and other resources that could facilitate their tasks and increase their productivity (Gabriel, 1991: 68-70). Literature shows that there is a link between poverty, hunger, powerlessness and vulnerability, including marginalisation and all these predominantly affect women. Poverty continues to be a problem for women and the solution to the concomitant problems of poverty is in restoring the capacity of individuals (Midgley, 1995: 112).

Various factors contribute to the impoverishment of women in communities at large. Globally, gender, socialisation and culture have a negative impact on the development of women; even though there are positive factors that develop communities to be self-sufficient. Gender sensitive policies are developed and implemented in South Africa to accommodate the previously disadvantaged groups as highlighted in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994) and the White Paper for Social Welfare
(1997), but they have not achieved the set target as rural women are still poor. These policies should sensitize development practitioners about gender equality including addressing the imbalances of the past.

The Government has completed a report on women in South Africa in preparation for the United Nations conference in Beijing on the status of women to be held in 2013. The RDP office has been mandated to spearhead a broader empowerment programme for women, taking into account that women often represent the poorest, most exploited and most marginalised sector of our society. Government is to formulate an integrated and sustainable rural development policy in consultation with rural people, their organisations and stakeholders. In particular, attention is to be given to the idea of broadening access to services and support to small-scale agricultural producers by ensuring access to land, appropriate markets, credit facilities, training and support. The capacity to implement development programmes in rural areas is a serious bottleneck, which needs to be addressed as a priority.

The National Policy Framework on the Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality details the principles which all sectors will integrate into their own sectoral policies, practices and programmes. It provides guidelines for South Africa to take action towards providing a remedy for its historical legacy by defining new terms of reference for interacting with each other in private and public spheres, and by providing and recommending an institutional framework that facilitates equal access to goods and services for both women and men. The policy calls for gender equality to be at the centre of the transformation process in South Africa within all the structures, institutions, policies, procedures, practices and programmes of government, its agencies and parastatals, civil society and the private sector.

The South African Government considers the National Gender Machinery as critical for facilitating gender-sensitive delivery whilst the responsibility and accountability for implementation lies with the different government ministries and agencies. In South Africa, the responsibility for the empowerment of women and gender equality is vested in the Presidency, with the Minister in the Presidency as the Minister responsible for the
empowerment of women and gender equality. However, the responsibility for gender mainstreaming as a strategy for realising gender equality rests with all the members of Cabinet.

The National Policy Framework on the Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality articulates the following strategy with regard to gender, women, youth and children:

- Reducing the high incidence of crime and violence, especially against women and children.

- Promoting responsible and healthy reproductive and sexual behaviour among adolescents and the youth in order to reduce the incidence of high-risk teenage pregnancies, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. This will be promoted through the provision of life skills, sexuality and gender-sensitive education; user-friendly health services; and opportunities for engaging in social and community life.

- Advocating and facilitating measures that enable women and girls to achieve their full potential through:
  
  o Eliminating all forms of discrimination and disparities based on gender;

  o More effective implementation of laws that protect the rights and privileges of women; and

  o Increasing the representation of women in decision-making bodies through affirmative action.

- Promoting the equal participation of men and women in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including responsible parenthood, reproductive health, child-rearing and household work.
According to the ANC Women’s League (2006) the following are some of the gender related policies adopted by various government departments:

- The National Policy Guidelines for handling victims of sexual offences adopted by the Department of Justice which provide a framework for sound interdepartmental, inter-sectoral collaboration and the integration of effective institutional arrangements for a multi-pronged approach in managing victim empowerment.

- The recognition of customary marriage by the Department of Justice in order to abolish the minority status of women that married under customary law. The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (2000) provides a legal basis for remediying the denial of legal recognition and consequently legal protection for women married under customary law. However, the challenges emanating from the interpretation and implementation of the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (2000) pose a new set of disadvantages for the intended beneficiaries. A lack of awareness of the rights contained in the legislation and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and the lack of access to the institutional framework aimed at realising the rights secured in the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (2000) erode the promise of a non-racist and a non-sexist society.

- The Employment Equity Bill (1997) adopted by the Department of Labour, which emphasises the increase in the representation of women in decision-making positions in both the Private and Public sector.

- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) adopted by the Department of Labour focuses on involving domestic workers.

- The White Paper on Affirmative Action Policy adopted by the Department of Mineral Affairs and Energy which intends to increase support and access for women-owned businesses.

It seems that the applicable authorities are aware of the situation of women and endeavour with the required legislation to create opportunities to change the situation of women for the better. Effective implementation of legislation could bring about improvement, growth and development in the lives of women. The empowerment of women in line with these policies and legislation will develop the self-esteem of women and their knowledge, thus enabling them to develop their communities. In all societies, there are unequal values attached to females and males, with males having a higher value than females (Winberg, Douglas, Van Heerden, Van Heerden, & Pouriller, 1997: 60). In South Africa, a man by virtue of being a man is the head of the family, whether he is a breadwinner or not. The most important aspects of community development in developing societies are programmes specifically directed at women that will enable them to play a leading role (Jeppe, 1985: 39).

In some communities, gender determines the socialisation and development of a person. Attached to gender are gender roles and gender identity. Golombok and Fivush (1994: 3) assert that gender roles include the behaviour and attitudes that are viewed as appropriate for males and females in a particular culture or society. Golombok and Fivush (1994) explain that gender identity is a person’s concept of himself or herself as a male or as a female. In communities, gender identity and gender roles determine what is expected from a person and an understanding of the two genders contributes to how one views being a man or a woman. Gender is not about women, but focuses on the interests of both women and men.

The feminist school of thought believes that for development to benefit women, power relations between women and men in the development process need to be critically examined (McMichael, 2000: 155). Gender relations are defined as the social construction of roles and relationships between women and men in society (Baden &
Goetz, 1998 in Ellis, 2000: 139). According to Francis (2000: 79) gender relations are material, social, ideological and moral issues. They include division of labour, sexuality, affection, ideas about rights, responsibilities and ideologies about men and women and how they should treat each other. The roles of men and women are unequal in terms of power, decision-making, control over events, freedom of action and ownership of resources. Thus, gender is fundamentally about power and subordination (Midgley, 1995: 139-143). It is mostly women and children who are disadvantaged by unequal power relations within a family. Mathye (2009: 260) asserts that women in rural populations of developing countries tend to be economically, socially and culturally powerless. Women in urban areas, especially the illiterate and the unemployed, also suffer from the powerlessness experienced by rural women.

The Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa) defends customary law and patriarchal domination as they oppose women’s ownership of land and gender equity at all levels (Coetzee, Graff, Hendricks & Wood, 2001: 169). The status of women is changing, albeit very slowly, as there are developments taking place and structures are beginning to recognise women. For example, in South Africa, in the Eastern Cape Province in the Senqu municipality which is under the Ukhahlamba District Municipality, there are women acting on behalf of their underage sons as chiefs of their tribes. This situation was not even an option in South Africa in the past. This is an indication that men are opening doors for women in their circles to actively play roles in what is commonly known as “a man’s world”. The United Nations Development Programme (1995) stresses that gender equality and women empowerment are central to achieving all other developmental goals.

2.5 THE PLACE OF GENDER EQUITY IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Personnel administration comprises enabling functions which must be performed so as to provide the means to ensure that the functional activities of the staffing functions are carried out in an efficient and effective manner (Cloete, 1992: 151). The functional activities of staffing can be classified into personnel provision functions, support functions, training and development functions, and utilisation (that is; managerial)
functions (Cloete, 1991: 152). The extent to which gender equity is maintained generally depends on the efficiency and effectiveness with which the personnel provision functions are performed. According to Cloete (1992: 152) these functions comprise the following:

- Creation of posts (jobs).
- Recruitment.
- Determining personnel needs.
- Determining fields of recruitment.
- Attraction of candidates.
- Selection.
- Placement.
- Probation.
- Promotion.
- Transfer.
- Termination of services.

The means to ensure that these functional activities are performed in an efficient and effective manner include, *inter alia*, a clear policy on the following:

- The establishment of a structure such as a staffing section;
• The provision of a budget to perform these functions;

• The provision of skilled staff to carry out these functions;

• The establishment of work procedures to ensure the best way of carrying out these functions; and

• The introduction of control measures to ensure an efficient and effective rendering of account regarding the way these functions are performed.

The promotion and maintenance of gender equity as explained in previous chapters is not an easy task. On the one hand, there is a demand that gender equity must be maintained. On the other hand, there is a demand for efficient and effective services. It would therefore be unwise to do the one and neglect the other.

The reviewed Employment Equity Plan (EEP) of the ADM (July 2011 – June 2012) deals, *inter alia*, with staffing functions such as:

• Recruitment policies and procedures;

• Promotions and transfers;

• Selection criteria;

• Appointments;

• Terms and conditions of employment;

• Training and development;

• Performance and evaluation systems; and
Disciplinary measures.

Thus, from the above exposition, it is clear that the ADM has a desire to promote and maintain gender equity. The reviewed EEP (July 2011 – June 2012) summarises the vision, mission, values and objectives of the EEP. The EEP highlights the means required for promoting gender equality in the ADM. In this study, the information gathered from the interviews will subsequently be discussed within the aim of ascertaining the progress made in the ADM with regards to the promotion of gender equity.

2.6 OBSTACLES FACING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

This section provides a discussion of the obstacles facing women who are in leadership positions.

2.6.1 Cultural differences

Levy and Tapscott (2001: 135) explain culture, *inter alia*, as the sum total of the attainments and activities of any specific period, race or people, including their implements, handicrafts, agriculture, economics, music, art, religious beliefs, traditions, language and story. Socio-cultural perceptions and societal values continue to oppress the attitudes of women and discourage women from taking risks in business and in leadership positions. The negative cultural aspects in patriarchal societies make women more vulnerable, causing them to become victims of crime and gender-based violence. Hendricks (2003: 18) sees culture as a social environment that discourages women from pursuing career paths in the fields of science, engineering, and technology. In this case, one of the impediments that are used to deny women promotion in the workplace is culture, simply because it consigns women to the home environment. Thus, stumbling blocks such as laws and folkways are the taboos and perpetrators of culture. Consequently, South Africa is still alleged to be a society that has different rules for women and for men (Mackay, 2008: 148). Unfair treatment still takes place despite the view that "social equality is one feasible organising principle for shaping the quality of
life and circumstances of living of individuals and groups in society, as well as for structures of all human relations” (Thorne, 1994: 32).

There is strong empirical evidence to suggest that culture has important consequences for the structuring, management and behaviour of organisations in both developing and industrialised countries. One of the best-known and influential organisation science culturists is Geert Hofstede, an articulate Dutch scholar based at the Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation in the Netherlands. Geert Hofstede does research on organisations in both developing and industrialised countries. In the 1970s, Hofstede collected data from over 1,600 International Business Machine (IBM) workers and managers in over 60 countries. When Hofstede analysed the questionnaire data, he found that certain countries clustered along specific cultural dimensions and that these dimensions could not be explained by other factors such as job level or the country’s level of economic development. Malefane (2008: 148) also came up with four cultural dimensions which are:

- **Power distance**, the extent to which hierarchical power places people at psychological distances from each other;

- **Uncertainty avoidance**, the extent to which ambiguity is perceived as threatening and risk-taking behaviour is avoided;

- **Masculinity/femininity**, the extent to which masculine traits such as achievement, courage and competition are valued over feminine values and behaviour such as nurturing and sympathy; and

- **Individualism/collectivism**, the extent to which people define themselves individualistically or in terms of the groups to which they belong and the degree to which they see the inner groups, such as; family, clans, and other social organisations) as the primary source of work and solutions to their problems.
More recently, Hofstede used longitudinal data to show that individualism is caused by national wealth and income levels. It appears that Western organisation scientists in developing countries are putting too much emphasis on cultural variables and not enough on organisational tasks, task performance and the management process itself. Culture and cultural studies are important because they provide a better understanding of the context within which organisations and the management process take place (Levin, 2005: 163).

According to Tsoka (1999: 23-25) there are important ongoing cultural and structural developments in the area of organisational cultures. Tsoka (1999) comments about the response to the on-going development regarding social engineering with its consequences for the workplace, including those issues that a democratic culture has realised in South Africa, such that transformation in the country as a whole is brought about. Together with these fundamental changes, an inevitable clash of values emerged, in the sense that men, who were mostly white and dominated most leadership positions, reacted negatively and with a fear of these changes as they perceived them to be real threats to their leadership positions. This proved to be a clear clash between the competing values of equality and inequality of liberty, domination or exploitation or oppression of life affirmation, disregard of life; and finally of cooperation, competition amongst people of different sexes, and also amongst people of different skin pigmentation (Mothae, 2008: 165).

It is also important to realise that socio-cultural perceptions, such as lack of time and lack of political commitment, kept women confined to roles outside of politics. Since changes in society come through the political process, there is a critical need for women to be among those who make policies and take decision at all levels of government in order for their plight to be adequately addressed (www.africanaction.org.za). Research findings on culture as a barrier indicated that 27% of male respondents strongly believed that the place of a woman is at home as compared to 20.5% of female respondents who disagreed. The other percentage was distributed to other variables, being either neutral or not in agreement. The statistical evidence showed that there is still a negative perception regarding women managers across the spectrum. The
implications of cultural differences in the selection of a candidate for a specific post can hardly be over emphasised (www.statssa.gov.za).

2.6.2 Established traditions

Mouton (2006) explains tradition, *inter alia*, as:

- The transmission of knowledge, opinions, doctrines, customs, practices, et cetera from generation to generation, originally by word of mouth and by example.

- That which is so transmitted; a body of beliefs and usages handed down from generation to generation; also, any particular story, belief, or usage so handed down; hence, remembrance, or recollection existing by transmission.

Bottomore (1994: 676) states that the word "tradition" comes from a Latin verb "tradere" which means, to deliver, transmit, and hand down through time. The act of transmitting or handing down is not performed in a vacuum, but within a societal environment in which the culture is supposed to be passed down from generation to generation. This should not imply that tradition itself is inherently a static thing, tending always towards the quiescent. On the contrary, tradition, although moving from the past, keeps itself abreast by not only informing the present, but also interacting with it. In such interaction, it also contributes significantly towards shaping the future. In this respect, tradition "holds a special place among the customs, conventions, folkways and styles which are the building blocks of human cultures" (Bottomore, 1990: 676).

Mothae (2008: 165) maintains that recruitment should always focus on qualified applicants. The recruitment of women for traditionally male jobs poses different types of problems. Women typically read the same mass media as the men. The problem becomes how to use the media to overcome a socialisation process that started when both sexes were just infants. Women are often very sensitive to what men perceive as minor sexual discrimination. For example, when a police chief is quoted as saying,
“Okay, we’ll take any woman who can do what a man can do,” he is telling women not to apply, as they will be judged on male criteria.

Past experience shows that there are jobs that were traditionally designated for women exclusively, such as child nurturing, cooking, and so on. In respect of this prescription, a recent survey indicated different responses for women and men. 20.7% of women and 12% of men strongly disagreed with the statement that, on average, a stay-at-home mother is a better mother than a woman who works outside the home at least part-time. Therefore, the assumption is that many South Africans still consider a woman's place to be at home raising children. Therefore, a great deal still needs to be done to debunk existing myths around the roles of women and men because men can also do that which was previously reserved for women, such as; nursing, sewing, cleaning and sweeping. The research further revealed that the perceptions of some men are changing in that they view the work done by women as equally important as the work done by men (www.statssa.gov.za).

2.6.3 Lack of assertiveness and mentorship

Values and attitudes are important aspects for any institution (public or private) to consider when recruiting a candidate for a specific post. For an individual, her or his basic value system ultimately determines who and what that individual is, how she or he relates to herself or himself, to others and to her or his job. Hence, values are important for motivation because of their influence upon the behaviour of a person. Any dissonance between organisational values and individual values can certainly create problems with regards to motivation. An attitude on the other hand, refers to the way a person tends to feel, see or interpret a particular situation. It focuses on a specific physical, social or abstract object predisposing its holder to respond in some preferential manner (Mothae, 2008: 175). Attitudes are commonly classified as (1) positive or constructive, and (2) negative or destructive. A positive attitude emphasises success and encouragement. In contrast, a negative attitude stresses possible hurdles or the viewpoint that in a given case the objective cannot be attained. Most objectives are accomplished far more effectively when positive attitudes prevail (Bottomore, 1994:
Tsoka (1999: 22) indicates that women, who successfully made it in the business echelons and managed to shatter the glass-ceiling, discovered that South African managers lack commitment in the development and advancement of women. It appears that women leaders are left to themselves to sink or swim.

This unfortunate situation is bound to happen because even the few women who make it to the top leadership positions, to their shock, find themselves faced with the absence of female mentors, which is not the case with men (Tsoka, 1999: 22). Suitable mentors will create opportunities for officials in middle management to prepare themselves for posts in the higher echelons.

### 2.6.4 Unjustified prejudice

Levy and Tapscott (2001: 1148) explain prejudice, *inter alia*, as a judgment or opinion formed without due examination and a mental decision based on other grounds other than reason or justice, especially a premature or adversely biased opinion. To prejudge means to form a judgment on an issue or person prematurely. The concept means an act of judging, even before the actual assessment of what is the real state of evidence and without adequate information being taken into account (Oxford, 2002: 1109).

A study on the role of women in managerial positions conducted by Tsoka revealed that 39.7% of the women strongly agreed that women were ready to compete successfully with their male counterparts and only 15.7% of the men strongly agreed with them (www.statssa.gov.za). Therefore, it seems that the majority of men do not believe that women have what it takes to become leaders. Popenoe (1997: 308) believes that such a prejudiced view can easily lead to women being discriminated against, even before applying for a position. Kristof (2008: 3) further mentions that women are prejudged, by factors such as physical attributes when applying for a leadership position. Beautiful applicants receive lower ratings because they are subconsciously pegged as stereotypically female and therefore unsuited for a job or to be a boss. The rationale behind this is that a less attractive woman, if physically challenged by facial attributes, could be regarded as suitable to be a manager because she will not cause too much
disturbance in management. This way of reasoning highlights the need for suitable criteria for the selection of a candidate for a specific post.

2.6.5 Stance of women in managerial positions

A study on the role of women in managerial positions conducted by Tsoka (1999: 22) revealed that in Gauteng there are 10.8% of men in top managerial positions as opposed to 5% of women. Tsoka (1999: 23) argues that these figures clearly indicate that the number of males in leadership positions is more than double the number of females in such positions. Furthermore, 17.8% of men are in middle management as opposed to 8.9% of women and 9.4% of men are in lower management as opposed to 5.6% of women in the lowest rank. It seems that women tend to be concentrated in the lower levels of management. Duties in these lower levels further entrench the domestic roles of women while at the same time preventing women from acquiring experience and the type of on-the-job management training that will enable them to manage themselves or their businesses successfully. Steps ought to be taken to enable the concerned institutions to provide the required on-the-job training for women.

2.6.6 Promotion opportunities

Men continue to dominate the upper occupational categories despite the fact that women, particularly in the urban context, have caught up with them in the corporate stakes. This means that there is indeed a lack of promotion into leadership positions for women, even though women have the necessary educational qualifications like their male counterparts (Mbeki, 2001: 9).

One of the cornerstones of democracy in South Africa is gender equality and women empowerment, without which our young democracy cannot achieve the desired results if women are still sidelined in economic mainstreaming. It is important to note that it was on this basis, that the South African gender policy framework and economic policies, such as the Beijing Platform for Action were adopted and made available. It was conducive for women to seize such opportunities in redressing the past policies which
affected the majority of the people, especially black women who were the worst victims of past minority rule (Mbeki, 2001: 10). It is essential that the required processes be applied to ensure that the best candidate for the job is appointed.

2.6.7 Acknowledgement of skills accomplished on an informal basis

Women bring a wealth of valuable experience to their positions, even though they may not have the formal qualifications. Some possess experience in a range of community activities, including paid policy work, unpaid political community work, union work, board memberships and paid work in non-governmental organisations. The career opportunities of black participants were hindered under discriminatory preferential learning through actual involvement in a wide range of organisations outside the academic field (www.findarticle.com). Equating maleness with effectiveness and femaleness with inappropriateness and inadequacy is incorrect. A study on the role of women in managerial positions conducted by Tsoka (1999: 17) indicated that 22% of female respondents strongly disagreed and 17% of male respondents agreed that women lack the skills to manage. The p-value test on this variable indicated that p=0.00, a range which means that the significance of the test is not noticeable (Tsoka, 1999: 19).

2.6.8 Stance of women in the workplace

Research seems to indicate that there is more research done on women who hold managerial positions that on women in other positions (Calas & Smirich, 1996). Organisation studies tend towards a managerial bias, studying mostly the managerial sectors (Mumby, 1996). The choice of topics reveals some assumptions on the nature of women and men in organisations and about what is important for study purposes.

Focusing on women as managers and asking why they are not reaching the top as rapidly as men, reveals the assumption that climbing the corporate ladder and reaching the top is an important, desirable and fundamental aspect of people’s lives. It assumes that this is what women automatically strive for as an enviable state. This assumption
forms part of a broader western mindset that views individualism, capitalism and rationalism as desired values and ideas.

In spite of changes to gender stereotypes and gendered work divisions, the gender stratification of the workplace is still very much present and it is not disappearing as rapidly as is sometimes believed. The fact that society in general and the workplace specifically, remain gender-stratified despite all the changes is referred to as “evolution rather than revolution” (Thorne, 1994: 65). The labour market has changed drastically in recent years from a mostly male occupied arena to having equal proportions of men and women (Charles & Davies, 2000: 97). Despite these changes in the labour market, gender differentiation continues, with a tendency towards gender traditional occupations, a continuing wage gap and discontinued career paths for women and unequal work division in the home front (Alvesson & Billig, 1997: 99). To some extent, men and women live in different worlds with different orientations towards career achievement; different expectations and following different choices (Alvesson & Billig, 1997: 102). Women generally make up 50% of the economically active population. However, they have not been successful in entering the management world in the same proportion (Charles & Davies, 2000:98).

### 2.6.9 The glass ceiling

While the phrase *glass ceiling* is metaphorical, many women who find themselves bumping their heads on it find it very real indeed. It is most often used to describe the sexist attitude women run into at the workplace. Given the current situation, it is hardly surprising that women are often advised to “look like a man and work like a horse”. This situation has sparked the coining of the term ‘the glass ceiling’ which refers to an impenetrable organisational boundary that prevents the progress of women in organisations. It is based on gender and not on ability. Morrell (2001: 93) defines the glass ceiling as an invisible barrier created by attitudinal and organisational prejudices that bar women from top executive jobs. The glass ceiling is not seen as an absolute barrier and some do attain top positions in organisations but this can be seen as the
tokenism that presents a distorted illusion of fairness and availability in the organisation (Frankforter, 1996: 155).

The glass ceiling has also been shown to be more prevalent for women of colour as they experience a double disadvantage of invisibility in both male networks and white networks (Morrell, 2001: 94). Some authors choose to use another more complex metaphor for the positions occupied by women in organisations. Morrell (2001: 95) sees the workplace more as a hierarchical crystal maze with clear focal points to aim towards but with invisible barriers around every corner. Most women fight their way through this maze without the use of the ladder, which is only made available to men and women who are fast-tracked. Other authors maintain that the ‘glass ceilings’ preventing women from obtaining top positions are in fact barriers at all levels in organisations (Charles, 1998: 102). Thus, it appears that the changes in education (such as changes in curricula) and in the labour market have not necessarily lead to greater independence and that the restructuring of gender relations does not involve a steady increase in the autonomy of women but rather a shift to new forms of inequality exemplified in the idea of the move from private to public patriarchy (McMichael, 2000: 16).

2.7 SUMMARY

With the arrival of a democracy for the Republic of South Africa, most people, especially blacks, strongly believed that the struggle was over. However, there still appears to be gaps that need to be addressed in implementing employment equity, affirmative action and diversity management. According to Hendricks (2003: 2) the representation of 40% of women in Parliament and Cabinet is an indication of the serious endeavour of government to fight gender inequalities.

In chapter one it was pointed out that the road to equal opportunity is in many democracies an uphill one. Phenomena such as culture, ethnic or social origin and religion are protected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and cannot be ignored when the implementation of policies regarding gender equity are considered. Cultures and traditions can change but not instantly. It is an
evolutionary process. There is, however, evidence that the authorities are aware of the situation of women and policies to create opportunities to change for the better have been approved. Women experience, inter alia, cultural differences and established traditions as stumbling blocks in their aspirations to be promoted to the top positions within the public sector.

Administration takes place wherever two or more people take joint action to achieve an objective (Cloete, 1986: 1). The joint action takes place in public institutions established for the rendering of specific services in an efficient and effective manner. To enable a public institution to achieve its objective, qualified staff with a positive attitude to serve the public is required. Members of staff are usually recruited from a multi-cultural society. To ensure co-operative effort, apart from the minimum academic requirements, cognisance will also have to be taken of the cultural backgrounds, established traditions, social customs and beliefs of potential candidates. The following chapter will discuss the chosen research methodology for the study.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A prerequisite for meaningful decisions or conclusions is that such decisions or conclusions should be based on relevant data. This means that the related information being used as input for such decisions and conclusions must be relevant and correct. In the social sciences, the particular source of data and the manner in which the data is collected are important. It is with these considerations in view that this chapter describes the research design, research methodology, auxiliaries and the methods that were applied to acquire suitable information in order to arrive at meaningful conclusions regarding the effects of gender equity on the promotion of women as senior managers in the ADM.

The research design is a key element of an empirical study which affects the success of the study as a whole. Leedy (1997: 93) states that research design is the strategy (that is, policy), plan, and structure of conducting a research project. The research methods used in this study included a literature review and an empirical survey that was conducted as a means to solve the problems outlined in Chapter 1. The literature review provides guidelines for the general tasks of managers, it explains how women fit into the management role, and provides an overview of women as managers in the ADM.

The empirical survey was conducted by means of interviews. The next section provides clarity on some of the terminology used in this chapter.

3.2 TERMINOLOGY DEFINED

3.2.1 The concept of research
Research is a process through which one attempts to achieve systematically and with the support of data the answer to a question, the resolution of a problem, or a greater
understanding of a phenomenon. Thus, research is a cyclic process (Leedy 1997: 9-10). Research is also defined as a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding (Mouton and Marais, 1992: 7).

According to Kerlinger (1986: 10) scientific research is “systematic, controlled, empirical and the critical investigation of the natural phenomenon which is guided by the theory and hypotheses regarding the presumed relations among such phenomena.” Melville and Goddard (1996: 14) define research as a process of expanding the boundaries of one’s ignorance. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1995: 1169) explains research as the systematic investigation of some phenomenon in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions or collate old facts by scientific study of the subject or by a course of critical investigation. Leedy (1985: 84) maintains that certain criteria form a common denominator that is true to all research and must be built into the research design at the planning stage with the discovery of new facts and their correct interpretation, taking the following into account:

- Effective research is rational, systematic and is guided by constructive, critical assumptions and measurable data.

- Research must always answer questions to solve problems.

- If there is no discovery of suitable answers, there is no research.

- Research is a human activity that promotes critical thinking in a cross-cultural approach.

- There must be an interpretation of data for the enlightening awareness of what the facts mean (Leedy, 1993: 12).
3.2.2 The concept of design

“Design is the preparation of a working plan aimed at systematically assembling, organising and integrating data, in order to solve a particular research problem” (Yin, 1994: 20). Lee and Ormrod (2001: 91) assert that research design includes the planning, visualisation of the data and the problems associated with the employment of the data in the entire research project. The Concise Oxford Dictionary (2000: 1169-1195) explains that design implies a preliminary plan, concept or purpose. The data required for such an action plan must be based on the following fundamental questions:

- Where is the data located?
- What data is needed?
- How will the data be secured?
- How will the data be interpreted?

Yin (1994: 20) affirms that the purpose of design is to maximise the validity and reliability of the research findings.

3.2.3 Sampling

Zigmund (1994: 48) stipulates that sampling involves ensuring that a small number of items or useful parts of a population are able to produce a conclusion that could be extrapolated to apply to the whole population. The sample utilised in this research study comprises all of the female officials appointed in the senior positions of management at the ADM. There was no need for the research to go beyond the boundaries of ADM because it would have no bearing on the ADM systems.
3.2.4 Population in the context of sampling

In the context of research, population refers to the total of individuals or objects being analysed or evaluated (Johann, 2004). It is a collection of the items that are of interest in research (not necessarily people). The population represents a group of phenomena that is being researched. Populations are often defined in terms of demography, geography, occupation, time, time requirements, diagnosis, or some combination of the above. Population refers to any group that is the subject of the research interest (Wayne, 2001: 165). Population refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics or a set of entities that presents all the measurements of interest to the practitioner or researcher (Strydom, 2002: 144). Bless and Higson (2000) believe that a population is a set of elements on which the investigation focuses and for which the obtained results should be generalised. Coope (2003) specifies that the population is the sampling frame. In this document the term population refers to a group of employees in the ADM Head Office in East London in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.2.5 Target population

The target population for this study is the relevant female officials appointed in managerial positions of the ADM. A target population is the specific, complete group relevant to the research project (Zigmund, 1994: 358). However, it is not always possible to include all the staff, because some of them would be on leave and others off sick or out of the country on work commitments.

3.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY MEASUREMENT

Two factors should be considered in any type of measurement, namely; validity and reliability (Leedy, 1993: 41). Validity is concerned with the soundness or effectiveness of the measuring instrument. The following questions can assist in endeavouring to ensure that validity and reliability are maintained:

- What is the accuracy of the measurement?
• Does the measuring instrument measure what it is supposed to measure?

Leedy (1993: 41) asserts that the following types of validity criteria could be considered:

• **Face Validity**, which relies upon the subjective judgment of the researcher.

• **Criterion related Validity**, which employs two measures of validity with the one measure being a criterion for checking the accuracy of the other measure.

• **Content Validity**, which is the accuracy with which an instrument measures the factors or situations being studied.

• **Construct Validity**, which is a concept that cannot be directly observed or isolated, such as honesty.

• **Internal Validity**, which is the freedom from bias in forming conclusions in view of the data.

• **External Validity**, which is concerned with the extent to which the conclusions that are reached can be generalised from the sample that is taken and used to clarify other cases.

Reliability on the one hand, deals with accuracy. Reliability is the extent to which, on repeated measures, the indicators yield similar results (Leedy, 1993: 42). In quantitative research projects, reliability can be evaluated by repeating a question in a questionnaire. It usually confirms the accuracy with which the measurement, test, instrument, inventory or questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure.

Research and design focuses on maximising both the validity as well as the reliability of the research findings. The use of human subjects in research usually raises the
question of ethical standards and should therefore not go without careful scrutiny (Leedy, 1993: 128).

3.4 SAMPLING METHODS

Sampling can be divided into two types, with each one having its own variations (Neuman, 2006: 219). The two major types of sampling are non-probability sampling and probability-based sampling.

3.4.1 Non-probability samples

Non-probability samples focus on volunteers, easily available units, or those that happen to be present at the time of the research. This type of sampling is useful for quick and inexpensive studies, qualitative research, pilot studies and developing hypotheses for future research. Non-probability sampling is divided into three areas, which are:

- *Convenience sampling* which is also called an accidental sample or man-in-the-street sample. In this type of sampling, the researcher is able to use units that are convenient and close at hand.

- *Purposive sampling* whereby the researcher selects the units with some purpose in mind. According to Welma, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) purposive sampling is regarded as the most important type of non-probability sampling. In purposive sampling, researchers rely on their experience, ingenuity and previous research findings to deliberate on the analysis. The non-probability sample selects the type of units observed on the basis of the researcher’s own judgement regarding which units be the most useful or representative (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). This is called a judgement sample.

- *Quota sampling* which involves the researcher constructing quotas for different types of units.
Other non-probability methods include library research, participant observation, marketing research and consulting with experts.

3.4.2 Probability-based samples

Probability samples are based on the probability theory. In probability-based sampling, every unit of the population of interest has to be identified, and all units need to have a known chance of being selected into the sample. The following are examples of probability-based samples (Neuman, 2006: 19-21):

- **A simple random sample** where each unit in the population is identified and each unit has an equal chance of being in the sample. The selection of each unit is independent of the selection of every other unit. The selection of one unit does not affect the chance of any other unit.

- **A systematic random sample**, where, similar to a random sample, each unit in the population is identified, and each unit has an equal chance of being in the sample. However, this system is less cumbersome than the simple random sample, using either a table of random numbers or a lottery method. From time to time, this system presents some problems. For instance, if the selection intervals match some pattern in the list, one would then introduce systematic bias into the sample.

- **A stratified sample** whereby each unit in the population is identified. In a stratified sample groups could be categorised by sex, class or age, et cetera. This type of sample is used when the researcher knows that the population has other sub-groups that are of interest. Walliman (2001) argues that stratified sampling should be used when cases in the population fall into distinctly different categories. For example, Walliman believes that businesses whose workforces need to be divided into categories could be approached in this fashion.
- A *Cluster sample* which views the units in a population as not only being members of the total population, but as members who are encountered naturally in clusters within the population. Cluster sampling has to use a random sampling method at each stage. This results in a larger sample than using a simple random sampling method, but it saves time and money. It is also cheaper to administer.

### 3.4.3 Aspects to bear in mind when considering a sampling method

#### 3.4.3.1 Sampling size

According to Leedy (1994: 210) the basic rule to follow is that the larger the sample, the better. Such a generalised rule is often not too helpful to the researcher who has a practical decision to make with respect to a specific situation. The researcher should consider three factors when deciding on a sample size:

- What degree of precision is required between the sample population and the general population?

- What is the variability of the population?

- What method of sampling should be employed?

Huysamen (1994: 47) asserts that the size of the population should be borne in mind when determining the size of the sample. Furthermore, the smaller the total population, the larger the sample should be so as to ensure satisfactory results. Kothari (1985: 71) argues that the sample size should be neither excessively large, nor too small. Moreover, the sample size should be optimum, thus fulfilling the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility.
3.4.3.2 Sample error

Alreck and Settle (1985: 66) state that no sample is likely to produce results that are exactly similar to those of the entire population from which the sample was drawn. They stipulate that there is always a possibility that those included in the sample may not be perfectly representative of the whole population. The difference between the sample data and the population data results by random chance is known as sampling error. The higher the sample error; the lower the reliability of the data. Also, the smaller the sample; the lower the reliability of the data.

3.4.3.3 Sample bias

The researcher needs to ensure that an unbiased sample is selected from the target population. Leedy (1997: 219) states that bias is inherent in all research, but it may contaminate a descriptive survey more easily than most of the other methodological procedures. This is sometimes very difficult for the researcher to detect. Considering that the survey in question only relates to women in senior managerial posts at the ADM, it is unlikely that there was any bias with the application of the approach due to the small sample.

3.5 METHODOLOGIES

Kothari (1985: 3-5) identifies the following research types:

- **Descriptive research** which includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The researcher has no control over the variables. The researcher can only report on what has happened or is happening. This method is also known as *ex post facto* research.

- **Analytical research** where the researcher uses facts or information that is already available to be able to do a critical evaluation of the material.
• *Applied research* which refers to the need of the researcher to find a solution to an immediate problem facing a business, an industry or society.

• *Fundamental research* which is generally concerned with the generalisation and formulation of a theory.

• *Conceptual research* which is related to some abstract idea or theory and is frequently used to develop new concepts.

• *Empirical research* which is used when proof is sought that certain variables affect other variables in some way. It is regarded as the most powerful support possible for a given problem.

• *One-time research* which focuses on the research that is confined to a single period.

• *Clinical research* which refers to the researcher using a case study method or an in-depth approach to reach basic causal relations.

• *Historical research* whereby the researcher uses historical sources, such as documents and archaeological remains to study events or ideas of the past.

### 3.6 THE SELECTED RESEARCH APPROACH, PROCEDURE AND METHODS

The available approaches, methods and auxiliaries at the disposal of the researcher were considered in the light of the nature and extent of the survey to be performed for this project. In view of the size of the small population sample (consisting of all the women in senior managerial posts of the ADM Head Office) and the fact that an empirical study relies on experience or observations, and is regarded as the most powerful support possible for a given problem, the researcher used the qualitative methodology for the purposes of this project (Kothari, 1985: 4).
The implementation of the empirical study started with an analysis of the available literature and the gathering of the relevant information. It was considered that this information be supplemented with an empirical study conducted by means of one-on-one interviews. The one-on-one interviews were seen as an opportunity to gather meaningful information. According to Schostak (2006: 10), the interview can be described in terms of individuals directing their attention towards each other with the purpose of opening up the possibility of gaining insight into the experiences, concerns, interest, beliefs, values, knowledge and ways of seeing, thinking and acting of others.

Since semi-structured interviews are flexible, they are considered productive tools in research. Flick (2006: 149) concurs that semi-structured interviews are widely used and they allow people to express their opinion better, through the use of open interviews, than structured interviews where only pre-determined questions are used. Semi-structured interviews also allow the interviewer to change and move away from the predetermined questions. Thus, the interview is flexible, which is in line with the interpretive paradigm. According to McFarlane (2000: 30) researchers from the interpretive tradition are more flexible about their results than researchers from the positivistic paradigm and believes that due to the complexities of social life, it is justified to allow a degree of humility. Leedy (1997: 196) notes that face-to-face interviews have the advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with the participants and gain their co-operation. Thus, the researcher decided to use semi-structured interviews as the means of obtaining the required information for the research study. The arrangements for the interviews with the relevant staff (the women in senior managerial posts in the ADM) to be used in the survey were made via the contact person at the ADM.

Although semi-structured interviews include predetermined questions, they also allow other topics to come up during discussions. During the survey, questions were posed to all the participants systematically and consistently (Struwig and Stead, 2001: 59). Considering that one-on-one interviews could be time consuming and that it would be unacceptable for the interviewees to be taken away from their workstations for too long,
structured interviews were conducted. Thus, to a certain extent, it was possible to focus on strategic issues.

The interviews focused on the following areas:

- How women could play a more meaningful role in senior positions in local government.
- Whether the EEP assisted women in advancing their careers.
- Whether women believe that there is an invisible barrier known as the *glass ceiling* in their workplace.
- Whether women are faced with more, less or same amount of challenges compared to their male counterparts.

### 3.7 SUMMARY

The objective of this chapter was to document the research methodology used for the study. This chapter analysed the available approaches, methods and auxiliaries that were at the disposal of the researcher. Due to the nature of the project and the size of the sample population, the researcher decided to obtain the required information by means of face-to-face interviews which is in line with the qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach was justified as the suitable research approach for the study on account of the small sample group used for the study.

The subsequent data collected and the research findings are discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research methodology used during the study was presented in Chapter 3. The data was analysed and interpreted according to the face-to-face interview questions that were posed to the senior women managers at the ADM Headquarters in East London. Only eight out of twelve senior managers were interviewed as the other four were on leave. The officials who were interviewed showed significant interest in the topic and gave the researcher sufficient time despite their busy schedules. Questions were answered with enthusiasm and yielded a 100% response rate.

The focus was on the stance of women in senior managerial positions. The required information was obtained by undertaking a survey of the relevant literature and semi-structured interviews with the selected participants. In order to ensure that gender equity will be maintained, the ADM must be enabled to implement gender equity.

The vision of the ADM is defined as “service excellence to our communities in supporting integrated and sustainable development”. One of the values of the ADM stipulates that, “our working environment is governed by the principles of representivity, equality, mutual respect and human development”. The ADM has developed an Employment Equity Plan which was approved by the municipal council in December 2002. The first EEP of the ADM expired in November 2007 and the second EEP will expire on the 30 June 2012. In terms of Section 20(2) (e) of the EEA the EEP is valid for five years. The objectives of the EEP are, inter alia:

- To ensure that the ADM complies with the EEA; and
- To conduct an audit and report on the current employee profile of the ADM.
In light of Section 20 of the EEA and the EEP of the ADM, the municipality appears to have made reasonable progress concerning EE. The statistics obtained from the ADM concerning the stance of gender equity show that the gap in gender equity in the occupational level of senior management shrunk during the period 2006 to 2010 from 53% to 24%. In the occupational level of top management the gap in gender equity decreased during the period 2008 to 2010 from 43% to 14%.

The study was done based on the following objectives of the EEA of the Amathole District Council:

- To ensure that the ADM complies with the EEA.
- To conduct an audit and report on the current employee profile of the ADM.
- To conduct an audit of the HR policies of the ADM.
- To identify employment barriers that are adversely affecting people from designated groups.
- To set out the objectives to be achieved in each year of the plan.
- To set out the numerical goals to achieve the equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups within each occupational level in the workforce and presenting the timeframe within which this is to be achieved, as well as the strategies intended to achieve the goals.
- To state the procedures that will be followed to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plan (Amathole District Municipality Reviewed Employment Equity Plan, July 2011-June 2012:4).

The following section provides an analysis of the data.
4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

Comparative statistics on gender equity in the ADM from 2006 – 2010

The Key for the following tables is as follows:
- A: African
- C: Coloured
- I: Indian
- W: White

Figure 4.2(a) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2005/6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Level</th>
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<th>Female</th>
<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011 - June 2012
### Figure 4.2(b) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2006/7

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Occupational Level</th>
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<th>Female</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012

### Legislator, Senior Officials and Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numbers</th>
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<th>Indian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
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Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012
### Figure 4.2(c) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2007/8

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<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials and managers</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012

### Bar Chart: Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012
### Figure 4.2(d) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2008/9

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<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
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<td>Top management</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011 - June 2012

### Top Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>Indians</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011 - June 2012
Figure 4.2(e) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2009/10

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<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012
Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012
Figure 4.2(f) Numerical targets for Occupational Levels for 2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Level</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Top management</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Employment Equity Plan Amathole District Municipality July 2011-June 2012
The above tables show that there is progress in the ADM in terms of addressing EE with regards to race, gender and occupational levels. Despite the fact that most women at the ADM are acting senior managers at present, the respondents were positive that they will do their best to show that they are the suitable candidates for the positions. The following subsections present the questions posed to the participants during the interviews and their responses to those questions. The responses indicate that the respondents believe that it is time for women to be given the opportunity to play a leading role in the management of the ADM.

4.2.1 How do you feel women could play a more meaningful role in senior positions in local government?

All respondents stated that it is time that they lead the ADM. They indicated that they are ready to lead and it is long overdue for them to do so. They maintained that the voices of women should be heard because there is no difference between women and their male counterparts as women are more hands-on than men and are able to confront any obstacles without reacting as men do.
4.2.2 Has the EE Plan of the Amathole District Municipality assisted you in the advancement of your career? If yes, please specify. If no, please explain further.

85% of the respondents at the ADM disagreed with the fact that the EEP has helped to push them up the corporate ladder. The remaining 15% were not sure that they were there because of the EEP as they strongly asserted that in the ADM people are employed based on merit. They stated that the selection process is done fairly with experience, performance and educational background being taken into account.

Some respondents revealed that the EEP is a HR function and is used by the panel to determine which candidate is best suited for a position. The Study Assistance Programme which is available to everyone has helped some women to advance their careers, but it depends on the individual whether he or she wants to study or not.

4.2.3 Do you understand the mandate of the Equity Forum established by the Amathole District Municipality? Please provide reasons for your answer.

Again the results revealed that 85% of the senior women managers at the ADM are unaware of the Equity Forum and could not comment on this question. However, they believed that it is an HR function to organise the Equity Forum and that they as managers are not part of that process. The rest of the respondents claimed that the Equity Forum does exist although they are not part of it. They revealed that its mandate should be to look at the fairness in employment, to eliminate corruption and nepotism recommending when candidates for employment.

4.2.4 Are you aware of the “glass ceiling” theory and if so, what is your view on the theory?

90% of the respondents were aware of the “glass ceiling theory”. However, it was only after the researcher gave them a clue as to what the “glass ceiling theory” is that they were able to adequately explain it. The researcher explained the “glass ceiling theory” as follows:
The glass ceiling refers to barriers that prevent women from advancing in the organisation. The glass ceiling hinders not only individuals, but society as a whole. It reduces the pool of potential corporate leaders and deprives the economy of new leaders, new sources of creativity and ‘would be’ pioneers of the business world. In order to become global contenders and maintain a competitive advantage organisations must be prepared to dismantle the glass ceiling.

The glass ceiling inequity represents a gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of the hierarchies than at the lower level of the hierarchies. Women experience unequal workplace experience because they are crossing over clearly laid out “ideological boundaries” which portray men as breadwinners and women as the caregivers. The gender gap not only grows but accelerates as people move up the hierarchical order. There has been no scientific evidence reported validating the often made assumption that women lack the drive to get to the top.

4.2.5 Do you believe that there is an invisible barrier known as the glass ceiling that exists?

When the abovementioned explanation of the “glass ceiling theory” was given to the respondents with examples, the senior women managers in the ADM unanimously agreed that there is no glass ceiling in their institution but instead everyone is given a fair chance to prove herself or himself. Consequently, in most cases women at the ADM started by acting in their positions and ultimately became senior managers. Some are acting senior managers with the hope that they will make it to the top and become executive managers.

All the respondents claimed that everyone is employed on merit at the ADM with women having what it takes and should thus be given a chance to express themselves. Furthermore, the respondents highlighted the fact that the top management of the ADM
is giving them a chance. They declared that the ADM aspires to have 50% gender equity and affirmed that the ADM will meet its target and exceed expectations.

4.2.6 Are you more or less likely to be valued and heard in your workplace than the views of male executives with similar positions, backgrounds and qualifications as yourself?

Almost all of the respondents agreed that female views are just as likely to be valued and heard as those of male colleagues who are in similar positions. They maintained that in a meeting situation no one is overlooked. Moreover, if a point of view is valid and a person is able to convince the other colleagues with regards to that point, they will listen to the views of that person and such views will be implemented irrespective of gender, race or creed.

4.2.7 Do you feel that you have to work more, the same amount or less than male executives with similar positions, backgrounds and qualifications?

In ADM, most women managers are acting senior managers. Thus, they are obliged to work very hard to prove that they are suitable candidates for those positions and can be absorbed on a permanent basis. 50% of the respondents claimed that they have to prove that women can also be good managers just like men.

4.2.8 Do you believe that you have better, the same or fewer opportunities for career advancements that a similarly qualified man with the same background would have faced in your position?

The respondents who are senior women managers at the ADM declared that the barriers to their career advancement are being removed. Even though these barriers are not being removed at the pace they would like, for them at least there are good signs.
4.2.9 Do you believe that there are currently more, the same amount or fewer barriers to your career advancements than an equally qualified man in the same situation faces?

The respondents indicated that they are faced with the same barriers as their male counterparts. 87.5% of the respondents stated that they have faced the same barriers to career advancement as a similarly qualified man would have encountered in their situation. Approximately 12.5% highlighted that they faced more barriers than their male counterparts in similar situations.

4.2.10 Do you receive more, the same or less recognition for your accomplishments as male executives with similar qualifications, position and background as yourself?

More than 90% of the respondents maintained that they receive the same amount of credit and recognition for their accomplishments as their male counterparts, whereas almost 10% indicated that they receive less credit and recognition. 10% of the interviewed women asserted that they are treated with less respect by their colleagues than men who are similarly qualified. 90% of the respondents affirmed that they are treated with the same amount of respect as men who are similarly qualified.
4.3 CONCLUSION

A proper plan is in place to monitor and evaluate policies at the ADM. Monitoring is done in accordance with the EEP. Section 20(2) of the EEA states that, the final responsibility for the formulation, communication, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EEP rests with the Municipal Manager. Each Head of Department has the responsibility of ensuring that his or her department achieves the numerical goals and targets set by the ADM. This will be ensured by integrating the goals and targets into the performance management system of the Heads of Department.

The ADM Skills Development and EE Steering Committee will be involved in monitoring the progress of the implementation of the EEP (Amathole District Municipality Reviewed EE Plan, July 2011- June 2012). This will be done through quarterly meetings of the EE Steering Committee during which progress reports, prepared by the Municipal Manager or the Corporate Services Director, will be presented and discussed. The Municipal Manager and/ or Management will consult the ADM EE Steering Committee before any changes are made to the EEP. The ADM EE Steering Committee may be requested to make proposals on corrective action in case of deviations from the policy or numerical goals as reflected in the EEP.

Women who are not climbing the corporate ladder should not blame the system as they have equal opportunities compared with their male counterparts with doors now opening for everyone irrespective of race, gender or creed. The public and private sectors have similar rankings in terms of the progress they are making in reducing barriers to the advancement of women. Women currently working in the private sector do not view the progress of the private sector in minimising barriers to the advancement of women any differently than other senior women managers in the public sector. 12.5% of non-executive women and 21.43% of executive women in the corporate boards of directors, feel that barriers are falling at a moderate pace. 75% of non-executives and 50% of executives in these sectors feel that barriers are falling slowly. Corporate boards of directors receive abysmal ratings from executive women in terms of the rate at which barriers to the advancement of women are falling.
This chapter has discussed the complexities around the promotion of gender equity on the one hand, and ensuring that efficiency and effectiveness with the rendering of services are not forfeited on the other hand. The EEP of the ADM provides the means for promoting gender equity. The EEP succeeded in creating a work environment in which a positive attitude towards gender equity and service rendering is created amongst the participants in the higher echelons (officials in senior managerial positions as well as the council of the ADM). The willingness of the ADM to meet the desires of the staff has contributed towards a situation where the obstacles normally facing women in leadership positions have disappeared.

The gap in gender equity is shrinking. The means that capacity building initiatives are in place. With the positive attitude experienced in the workplace it is clear that the ADM objectives of gender equity of having 50% males and 50% females, and the promotion of efficient and effective service rendering will soon be achieved and sustained.

The next chapter will present recommendations based on the research findings that were discussed in this chapter.
CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Men are generally regarded as being the breadwinners, the stronger sex, leaders and rational thinkers while women are seen as homemakers and childminders who are emotionally and financially dependent on and inferior to their husbands. The key roles played by women in social and economic development were those of productive activities in domestic labour as bearers, carers and the ones responsible for the socialisation of the next generation. These roles, functions and responsibilities developed spontaneously over many years during the history of humankind. In other words, the process was not allocated or regulated by law. Thus, it cannot be undone by law. The developments of these roles, which to an extent differ from community to community, are the result of a slow but continuous process. The roles are accommodated or explained as the result of phenomena such as traditions, habits, customs, culture, and etcetera. These roles have an effect on the field of administration as well.

Administration takes place wherever two or more people take joint action to achieve an objective such as rendering public services. These services must be rendered in an efficient and effective manner. The challenge is getting the participants of various backgrounds, beliefs and cultures to work together to ensure that the objective is achieved in an effective and efficient manner. The maintenance of these phenomena is protected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). Section 30 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) stipulates that everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice.

The human environment (physical, economic, political, social and religious) has over the past decades changed. Women have equipped themselves academically for specific careers. Nevertheless, in spite of the changing environment and their qualifications,
they experience invisible barriers created by attitudinal and organisational prejudices that bar women from managerial and top executive positions. It is against this background that women have developed a sense of inferiority. The designers of economic and social development overlook the contributions of women to their community. As a result, women have only limited access to innovations, training and other resources that could facilitate their tasks and increase their productivity. Literature shows that there is a link between poverty, hunger, powerlessness and vulnerability including marginalisation, and all these predominantly affect the stance of women. The most important aspects of community development in developing societies are programmes specifically directed at women in which they play a leading role. This is however, a tedious and slow process.

Socio-cultural perceptions, such as lack of time and lack of political commitment, kept women confined to roles other than politics. Since changes in society come through the political process, there is a critical need for women to be among those who make policies and take decisions at all levels of government in order for their plight to be adequately addressed. In order to ensure that the voice of women will be heard, it was realised that the emphasis of their struggle must shift to the political arena.

The first democratic elections of South Africa in 1994 can be regarded as a boost for the position of women as far as the promotion of gender equity is concerned. Nevertheless, it remains a slow process. The adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) can be regarded as another boost for the promotion of gender equity.

Gender roles are no longer clearly demarcated as in the past. Traditional roles are constantly being questioned, re-examined and redefined. Considerable emphasis is currently placed on fundamental human rights, the elimination of discriminatory society practices, equal opportunities for all spheres of life and the promotion of equality as well as the empowerment of women.
Gender roles of both men and women have changed considerably during the past decades. These changes were, *inter alia*, caused by a new political dispensation where equal opportunities for all as well as the elimination of discriminatory practices in all spheres of life were being sought and the changing social conditions where women are now considered as a part of the labour force.

With the abovementioned considerations in mind, the subsequent section presents recommendations based on the findings of the empirical research that was conducted in order to ascertain the progress of gender equity in the higher echelons of the ADM.

### 5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.2.1 Gender Equity Plan

The respondents at the ADM did understand the concept of gender equity but when the researcher requested a copy of the policy document it could not be found. Instead, the EEP was the only document the researcher could access. Thus, it is recommended that a policy document that outlines the gender objectives of the ADM be compiled and known to all the necessary stakeholders.

#### 5.2.2 Equity Forum

None of the respondents knew about the Equity Forum and its objectives. They told the researcher that they had never heard about it.

It is recommended that the Equity Forum should be re-established to look at all the equity related issues of the ADM with representation from each department. It would be advisable for officials to work hand-in-hand with the HR department to promote fairness, efficiency and effectiveness in the ADM.
5.2.3 Job satisfaction

The results of the study demonstrated the importance of job satisfaction and the commitment of senior women managers as significant factors in turnover processes. For instance, although some managers in the study indicated that they were dissatisfied with their salaries, they indicated the love of and commitment to their job. Therefore, the municipal top executives and the employing body should enhance these feelings in order to contribute to the retention of these managers. When recruiting, care should be taken not to portray an unrealistically good picture of the ADM. The prospective employee (women manager) should know from the start what it would be like to work at the ADM.

The researcher recommends that job description and responsibilities should be clear, and employees should be kept up-to-date with the changes taking place in ADM. It should be understood that, intrinsic factors are not sufficient to bring about job satisfaction and staff retention. Extrinsic factors also have an influence on withdrawal behaviours. Therefore, a holistic approach becomes necessary if this situation is to be properly managed.

5.2.4 Lack of organisational support for gender

In order to provide sufficient institutional support to municipalities like the ADM, the municipality needs to formulate a gender policy along with an implementation strategy. The municipality should be encouraged to table gender issues routinely in municipal planning sessions, including integrated development planning. The municipality must ensure that gender is incorporated in the municipal performance management system. It must also start with the prioritisation of gender disaggregated statistics on service delivery and success of empowerment programmes.

It appears that the ADM is in need of assistance from internal and external stakeholders in order to build an alliance with the municipality. The ADM should create coordinating structures as support for women by implementing a supporting structure for the development of a gender plan or gender programme that could help the municipality to
focus on gender and assist in carrying through commitments encapsulated in the Gender Policy Framework for Local government.

5.2.5 Budget constraints

The ADM is experiencing budget constraints due to either a lack of a specific municipal budget for promoting gender equality and EE or because gender is not included as a component in the budget and is often awarded the smallest amount of the overall budget. According to the research findings another challenge is that gender issues are always the first item to be cut off from the budget when municipal funds are scarce.

It is recommended that the municipal budget of the ADM should be gender responsive, specifically ensuring that resources are allocated for the gender related development of municipal policies and actions. This would serve as assurance that gender is being taken into account in all municipal budget allocations and expenditure.

5.2.6 Capacity

The implementation of all policies is determined by the capacity of municipality. Brynard (2006: 199) views capacity in terms of general systems thinking, as the structural, functional, and cultural ability to implement the policy objectives of the government. Capacity refers to both tangible and intangible resources. Tangible resources include human, financial, material and technological resources. Intangible resources include leadership, motivation, commitment, willingness, courage and endurance.

According to Makinde (2005: 64) the nonexistence of adequate resources will result in implementation gaps since laws will not be enforced, services will not be provided and reasonable regulations will not be developed. Woods (2000: 811) asserts that capacity is comprised of two elements, namely; policy capacity and implementation capacity. Policy capacity entails the ability of local government to structure the decision-making, coordinate it and conduct informed analysis from it. Implementation is the ability to carry out the decisions and enforcement thereof.
In order for ADM to be successful, it needs to address the lack of capacity and create capacity-building initiatives. Capacity building is an essential step in achieving effective policy implementation. It encompasses more than training and includes human development, organisational development, as well as institutional and legal framework development.

Gender planning is the comprehensive process that entails identifying and addressing the impact of a policy, programme, and initiative on men and women. The main objective of gender planning is the advancement of an equal quality of life for men and women with particular focus on their social needs, access to employment opportunities, control over resources and access to development benefits. In order for the ADM to fulfil its developmental commitments, it needs to be more gender sensitive to the needs of its female citizens who are marginalised and disadvantaged.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate and evaluate the effectiveness of the ADM EE policies with special emphasis on gender related issues. The study further intended to investigate and evaluate the EEP of the ADM so as to establish how effective these policies have been in addressing gender issues. Moreover, the aim of the study was to look at the work procedures that currently exist as guides for employees and the control measures that exist as means of ensuring public accountability of the ADM. This was done by establishing the views of selected senior women managers at the ADM.

According to the respondents a lot has been achieved by the ADM but more still needs to be done. The women managers who were interviewed indicated that they are happy with the way things are done at management level. They expressed that the recruitment processes are transparent and candidates are chosen based on their experience, educational background and how they express themselves during the interview sessions.
Looking back at their careers, the senior women managers in the ADM declared that they are not faced with more barriers to advancing their careers than similarly qualified men would have encountered in the same situation. They also claimed that they do not have to work any harder than a man they know who has similar qualifications and background as themselves and occupies a similar position. The situation women face today is better than what they have experienced in the past; albeit there is significant room for improvement.

The researcher has identified a few concerns during the research study but they are very important. Communication at the ADM is not properly administered and certain women managers were unaware of the Gender Equity Plan, and the Gender Equity Forum. They were unaware of how other departments work within the ADM or who the senior managers of other departments are. Thus, moving forward, the ADM would also need to ensure that whatever mechanisms are put in place to improve gender equity, they are properly communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

5.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are some areas suggestions for future research:

- Perceptions of men and women on the promotion of employees into top managerial positions; and

- Development of implementation plans to ensure that equal opportunities are realised and practicable in the workplace.
6. REFERENCES


Coope, L. 2003. Take on the Challenges. HR focus, 3.


Annexure A

FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SAMPLE: SENIOR WOMEN OFFICIALS AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF THE AMATHOLE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, EAST LONDON.

INTERVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Moderator’s Instructions:

- I will introduce myself and clarify to each participant I interview the reasons for conducting the interviews. Read the “Subject Information Sheet for Participants”;
- I will inform the group that the interview/discussion will be confidential;
- I will inform the group that I would like to record their interview/discussion and request their permission to use a tape recorder or any other audio/audiovisual recording instrument;
- I will inform the participants that they may withdraw from the interview/discussion at any point should they wish to do so;
- I will obtain each participant’s verbal consent for participation; and
- I will obtain each participant’s written consent for participation.

READ TO EACH PARTICIPANT:

“Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview / discussion today. Before we begin, I would like to confirm that you have given your voluntary consent to participate. Do you agree freely?”

“Okay, then I would like to start with the instructions.”

Begin:

- Start with the instructions;
• Proceed with participant introduction; and
• Introduce an ice-breaker comment to set the tone for the interview.

Questions for the face-to-face interviews:

1. How do you feel women could play a more meaningful role in senior positions in local government?
2. Has the Employment Equity Plan of the Amathole District Municipality assisted you in the advancement of your career? If yes, please specify. If no, please explain further.
3. Do you understand the mandate of the Equity Forum established by the Amathole District Municipality? Please provide reasons for your answer.
4. Are you aware of the “glass ceiling” theory and if so, what is your view on the theory?
5. Do you believe that there is an invisible barrier known as the glass ceiling that exists?
6. Are you more, just as or less likely to be valued and heard in your workplace than the views of male executives with similar positions, backgrounds and qualifications as yourself?
7. Do you feel that you have to work more, the same amount or less than male executives with similar positions, backgrounds and qualifications?
8. Do you believe that you have better, the same or fewer opportunities for career advancements that a similarly qualified man with the same background would have faced in your position?
9. Do you believe that there are currently more, the same amount or fewer barriers to your career advancements than an equally qualified man in the same situation faces?
10. Do you receive more, the same or less recognition for your accomplishments as male executives with similar qualifications, position and background as yourself?

Thank you for your kind participation in this study.