Are company policies accommodative of female employees in the steel manufacturer?

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ABSTRACT

The steel manufacturer selected for the current study is the largest in Africa and employs over 10,000 people. Given the nature of the business and the intensity of the steel manufacturing process, the company is dominated by males.

The aim of this study was to investigate whether the company policies are accommodative of female employees in the steel manufacturer. The question that this research aimed to answer was whether the low retention of female employees in the company can be attributed to the less career progression and the lack of work-life balance considerations in policy development.

Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were followed in the study, wherein an interview was held with the company’s Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) strategist and questionnaires were distributed to the permanent female employees in the company.

A questionnaire was developed using close-ended questions to obtain information of the demographics of the participants, as well as their opinions on the study. The questionnaire was distributed to 200 permanent female employees and 150 were completed and returned.

The results were analysed at the North West University’s Statistics Department where percentages, Mean and Standard Deviation were computed.

Given the negative responses received from the participants, the following recommendations were made:

- The establishment of a Talent Management Department: It is hoped that this department could help ensure that the career paths and abilities of the employees are monitored and matched with those of their employers.
- The establishment of a policy regarding work-life balance and a consideration for the establishment of an in-house child care facility or a subsidization of mothers whose kids are going to child care facilities outside the company.
- An emphasis of an all-inclusive culture wherein employees could feel engaged and appreciated in the company.
- The cultivation of a culture that is focused on its people and pays attention to the needs of employees.
- The establishment of a clear succession and employee retention policies.
- The development of mentoring programs which could help the selected steel manufacturer to build a knowledgeable workforce. This is mainly because the steel
industry is not an easy one and as such requires lots of engineering and technical expertise.

The overall recommendation for the selected steel manufacturer is that this study be expanded to a bigger audience which will include male employees and to all business units of the South African unit.

**Keywords:**

Career progression, company policies, culture, employee engagement, succession planning, steel manufacturer, work-life balance, retention.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AICPA: American Institute of Certified Public Accountants

ASA: Attraction, Selection and Attrition

BEE: Black Economic Empowerment

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CFO: Chief Finance Officer

CLC: Corporate Leadership Council

COO: Chief Operating Officer

HR: Human Resources

JSE: Johannesburg Stock Exchange

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

PDP: Personal Development Plan

SAPA: South African Press Association

SAQA: South African Qualifications Authority

SET: Science, Engineering and Technology

UK: United Kingdom
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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

According to chapter one of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, “designated groups” mean black people, women and people with disabilities (researcher’s emphasis).

The primary aim of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 in the workplace is:

- To promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in the workplace through the elimination of unfair discrimination;
- To ensure equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce and,
- Retain and develop people from designated groups and to implement appropriate training measures in terms of an Act of parliament providing for skills development.

Research has shown that companies succeed and survive by hiring people with talent and potential however, for companies to sustain their success they need to ensure that employees stay within their employ for longer periods.

Human Resources strategies have a direct influence on the quality of employees hired and on whether these employees remain within the organization (Wylie, 2011:8). According to Wylie (2011:8) company policies and procedures regarding structured recruitment strategies and retention programs need to be analysed in order for these companies to reduce turnover costs. Retaining employees in organizations will preserve the wisdom, knowledge and skills that will benefit the firm (Pfeiffer & Veiga 1999:45). McShane & Von Glinow (2010:431) observe that the attraction, selection and attrition (ASA) theory is aimed at assisting organizations in attracting, selecting and retaining people with their own characteristics, values and character. This statement is actually true when one looks at the type of company and industry of the selected steel manufacturer. This steel manufacturer is the largest steel producer on the African continent, with a capacity of 6.5 million tonnes of liquid steel per annum. The company has a depth of technical and managerial expertise which has been carefully nurtured since 1928. The company operates within five plants in South Africa, with its headquarters at Vanderbijlpark.

This steel manufacturer employs over 10,000 employees. Given the nature of the business in which this company finds itself and the intensity of the steel manufacturing process majority of its employees are males. The culture of the company accommodates male employees more than it does their female counterparts.
A qualitative research study was conducted on the retention strategies for female employees within this selected steel manufacturer. The interest in the topic of this study was aroused by the seemingly massive resignations from the employ of the company. The study also set out to understand the type of an environment within which female employees within the company operate. The study sought to ascertain the extent to which this environment was conducive for female employee.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE TOPIC/RESEARCH AREA

There are many reasons why employees leave organizations. Some of these reasons are personal such as changes in family situations and some are influenced by employing organizations such as being overlooked for promotion or being asked to do something against one’s belief and values (Mitchell et al., 2001:96).

As stated by Cummings & Worley (2009:473) employees bring different resources and perspectives to the organizations they work for. They have different preferences, expectations and life styles. Organizations must design a human resources system that account for these differences if they need to attract and retain a productive workforce.

According to dictionary.com (2014) employee retention refers to efforts by businesses to maintain a working environment which supports current staff in remaining with the company. Many employee retention policies are aimed at various needs of employees to enhance their job satisfaction and reduce substantial costs involved in hiring and training new employees. BusinessDictionary.com (2014) further states that employees are interested in knowing that growth opportunities do exist within the organizations they work for. This knowledge makes employees to feel content and they will therefore be more willing to stay within the company for longer periods. Musser (2001:65) states that retention strategies that are mostly used by organizations for all employees are;

- Mentoring;
- Networking;
- Career and learning opportunities;
- Interesting work;
- Good benefits, and
- Balance between work and home life.

Musser (2001:65) continues to state that the best tools to use in retaining female employee includes providing a welcoming climate, a balance between work and home life, career opportunities, opportunities for professional development and networking and mentoring opportunities.
Robbins et al. (1998:181) stated that in a survey conducted on groups of males and females on the same occupational level it was found that the female group generally reported lower job satisfaction. This was attributed to fewer promotion opportunities and stress from non-work issues. These employees expressed their job dissatisfaction by looking for other positions in other departments as well in totally cutting ties with the company.

1.3 MOTIVATION OF TOPIC ACTUALITY

Organizations need to motivate employees to obtain the best possible results for a long period of time. According to Robbins et al., (1998:652), organizations that have well designed career programs will have employees with realistic expectations, while career tracking systems will lessen the chance of employees leaving the company because of inadequate career opportunities. The employees that are most underutilized in organizations are women, especially the ones that are in management positions (Harel et al., 2003: 248).

A qualitative research study was carried out on the selected steel manufacturer’s retention strategies for female employees. This research study was necessary based on the observation of a number of female employees who were resigning from the company. This study also sought to understand what current female employees expect from the company in order for them to be motivated and want to stay longer with the company.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The question this research aimed to answer was whether the low retention of female employees can be attributed to less career progression and on the lack of work-life balance consideration in policy development. Many employees never reveal the true reasons why they leave their current jobs. These employees normally gave reasons for leaving as being better jobs while carefully avoiding the discussion of unpleasant aspects of the current job situations (Steel et al., 2002:153).

The above question therefore has prompted the current study as the findings will shed some light on the reasons why female employees at the selected steel manufacturer leave the organization.
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 Main objective

The main objective of the study was to develop or introduce work-life balance and career progression policies for female employees at the selected steel manufacturer.

1.5.2 Secondary Objectives

In instances where policies exist the objective of this study was to assess the effective implementation of policies for retaining female employees at the selected steel manufacturer.

1.5.3 Hypothesis (if applicable)

The lack of work-life balance and retention strategies or policies at companies is the reason why female employees resign.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN/METHOD

1.6.1 Literature review

The literature review used in this study assisted the researcher herein to get more insight and understanding of the researcher area. Through the literature review the researcher herein was also able to identify the gaps in the system and also to come up with informed opinions and to formulate sensible findings.

The researcher was also able to understand what previous studies have been able to identify as being problematic and what were suggested solution to the problems. The sources that was found to be helpful to the researcher includes the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, policies on work-life balance, articles on women wellness in the steel industry and on retention strategies for female employees. Text books on organizational behavior and articles related to the topic will also be used for the research. Archives were also be utilised on exit interviews from the Human Resources Department of the selected steel manufacturer.

1.6.2 Empirical research

1.6.2.1 Research setting

The research setting was the Human Resources Department of the selected steel manufacturer, and will include liaising with the Human Resources consultants and managers.
1.6.2.2 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

A meeting was set up with the Human Resources manager to share any observations and to share the aims and objectives of the study with him in order to find reasons why female employees are not retained and to help to formulate policies and strategies to aid female employees' retention. The assurance was also given (in the form of signing confidentiality agreements) that the results of the study will be confidential.

1.6.2.3 Sampling

A sample of not less than 200 female employees ranging from junior management to senior management was selected for purposes of this study.

1.6.2.4 Data collection methods

Data such as policies and exit interviews were sought from the company's Human Resources department. Questionnaires were also distributed to the current female employees. This was done in order to gain more understanding on what female employees expect from the company in terms of work-life balance and also in understanding the company's plans in respect of the progression of female employees within the company.

1.6.2.5 Recording of data

Data collected in this study was stored on the hard drive of the researcher's PC and is password protected.

1.6.2.6 Data analysis

Data analysis followed the method of data collection, data reduction, data display and the drawing up and verification of conclusions.

1.6.2.7 Strategies employed to ensure quality data

The research setting was the Human Resources department of the selected steel manufacturer. The researcher liaised with Human resource consultants and managers for information relevant to the phenomenon under study. It was in these liaisons were the sharing of insightful and beneficial information on the benefits of retaining key employees within the company were shared. The assurance that any information obtained from the company in respect of this study will be kept strictly confidential was given by the researcher to the company. A confidentiality agreement form was signed between the researcher and the company in this regard.
1.6.2.8 Reporting

Written communication is utilised in the reporting of the findings of this study. The purpose of the written report is to create a lasting record of the investigation and its output. The core components of the report are:

- Executive summary, Table of contents, introduction, Research method, Results, conclusions and recommendations.

1.6.2.9 Ethical considerations

Ensuring every participant’s freedom from harm is a crucial part of any research. According to a research study guide from Henley University (2009:37), code of ethics explains that it is the duty of researchers to preserve and protect the privacy, dignity, wellbeing and freedom of the research participants. The four key areas highlighted in this regard are the following:

- Freedom from physical or psychological harm;
- Freedom from coercion;
- Disclosure about the nature of the research, and
- Privacy.

Within the whole period of this research the above key principles were upheld.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.7.1 Layout of the study

Chapter 1 – Introduction and background of the study

Chapter 2 – Literature review

Chapter 3 – Empirical Study

Chapter 4 – Contributions to the study, conclusions and recommendations

1.7.2 Chapter summary

Chapter 1 – Introduction and background of the study.

- This chapter provides the introduction, background on the topic and what has motivated the researcher to decide on the chosen topic.

Chapter 2 – Literature review
This chapter deals with what the previous researchers have done and found on the topic and what are the suggested solutions by the previous studies.

**Chapter 3 – The empirical study**

This chapter deals with the methodology that was followed for the entire period of the research. It also outlines the methods used in the collection of data, how the data is interpreted and analysed.

**Chapter 4 – Results, Conclusion and Recommendation**

This chapter deals with the interpretation of the findings of the empirical study and how the study has contributed to existing literature. The contribution of the whole research study conclusions and recommendations also form part of this chapter.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Researchers have identified a number of factors that function as barriers to women’s advancement in the workplace.

These factors include glass ceiling, artificial barriers that prevent qualified individuals from getting promoted within the organisations, gender discrimination, pay differences, sexual harassment, a male-dominated organisational culture, ineffective retention policies, lack of succession plans and work-life balance (Zhong, Couch & Blum, 2011: 6). Studies have also identified factors that serve as facilitators of women career progression. These factors include hard work and perseverance, networking and mentoring, a charismatic personality, job performance, communication skills and post-employment education.

The literature review for the current study was conducted not only within the steel industry but also in other industries such as law, government and science, engineering and technology (SET) industries. This was done with a view of ascertaining the spread of the phenomenon of women advancement (or lack of) across various industries.

2.2 CAREER PROGRESSION AND PROMOTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Although women have increased representation in middle management, it is difficult for them to access the most senior positions within the workplace (www.clcexecutiveboard.com). In an article written by Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) in 2013, it was stated that even in the United States of America where affirmative action is prioritised, women only accounted for 11.2% of the fortune 500 corporate officers in 1997.

Working women are accumulating the required experience and education. There is however a growing concern that they still encounter what has been termed “the glass ceiling” in the workplace. The term was made popular in the 1980’s and refers to barriers to women’s upward movement within organizations (Hoobler, Wayne & Lemmon, and 2009:939). The “glass” metaphor refers to the invisibility of these barriers. Examples of these barriers include lack of mentorship and role models for women, stereotyping and views that associate masculine traits with leader effectiveness.

Job advertisements do not openly deter women from applying for high level positions, but available evidence suggests that women continue to face difficulties in advancing to senior
positions. In an article “SA still has some way to go in building the pipeline of future female leaders” written by PwC South Africa in 2015 (www.pwc.co.za), it was found that women hold less than 4% of CEO positions in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) listed companies. The article further states that there are only 13% of women who occupy executive positions in the basic sector compared to 87% of positions that are held by their male counterparts. In the financial sector the same phenomenon was also found to exist, wherein males represent 85% of the boards and only 15% is represented by women.

Another study done in March 2013 by the South African Press Association (SAPA) (www.timeslive.co.za) about women CEO’s in South Africa revealed that 21% of South African businesses that were surveyed had no women in senior positions and that this had been the statistic for the past six years. The perceptions held by leaders and managers about female employees seem to have a negative effect on the chances of women getting promoted and thus contribute to the gap in promotions between men and women.

The most common form of stereotyping is that of seeing women as having care giving responsibilities and as such those who are highly focused on their careers are less likely to marry and have kids (Hoobler, Wayne & Lemmon, 2009: 941).

The experience of barriers to women regarding career progression is also being felt in the law firms. A study conducted in law firms in Britain has revealed that in order for female lawyers to realise their partnership potential, they have to demonstrate higher performance standards as compared to their male counterparts (Walsh, 2012:512). Another reason which is given for women not progressing in law firms is that the law fraternity requires what is termed cultural capital, which means socializing with senior lawyers in both work and non-work settings. It has been found that most women, especially those with children are unable to engage in social activities and that hinders their chances for promotion.

In a study conducted in 2009 in the US Department of labour, women accounted for 46.4% of all workers employed in the leisure and hospitality industry in 2008. Women were however found to continue to be underrepresented in the management positions compared to their overall employment and as such are inequitably hired, promoted and rewarded (Zhong, Couch & Blum, 2011: 5). Although some sort of improvement has been evidenced by women in achieving management positions since the middle of the last century, the increasing number of women in the hospitality industry has not produced a proportional increase in the number of women in management positions. In the International Journal of Human Resources Management, Harel et al., (2010) found that women are under-utilised in this sector, especially in management positions. According to the study, women are discriminated against and are only considered on lower level management positions, and as such are less represented in top positions. In this
study it was found that women are lagging behind their male counterparts with regards to career progression, salaries and training and development. The recommendation of the study was that organisations should promote women into powerful positions in order to gain organisational effectiveness.

2.3 RETENTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES

It is very important for organisations to support the needs of their employees beyond recruitment (Musser, 2001:71). Employee retention refers to the organisation’s ability to maintain an environment which supports and encourages employees to remain in its employ. This is an ongoing process that requires a continuous and sustained effort from an organisation. To this end, many employee retention policies should be aimed at addressing the needs of the employees in order to enhance their job satisfaction and to reduce the costs of rehiring and training new staff (www.businessdictionary.com). While numerous studies have been conducted in employment and retention, there is still a need to understand the factors that influence the retention of women in science, engineering and technology (SET) careers (Servon et al., 2011:273).

In their study, Servon et al., (2011:274) have investigated the factors that hinder the retention of women in management positions in the science, engineering and technology sector, which are likely to be evident across public, private and non-profit sectors. It was found that even though women have formed part of the work force in the SET sector, they are still affected by what is referred to a leaky pipeline. The leaky pipeline is a theory that suggests that factors such as discrimination and lack of interest make it more likely for women to leave academic SET field. Musser (2001: 66) stated that a study done for the retention of women has identified key tools that will encourage women to stay within their careers as being: a welcoming climate, balancing work and home life, challenging work, access to career opportunities, mentoring opportunities and networks.

2.4 MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES

Formal mentorship programmes can break through barriers between women and their career progression (www.clcexecutiveboard.com). Mentors help new employees to understand the unwritten rules of the workplace and the organisational norms. Mentoring programs have proven to be effective and able to can benefit employers in retaining their staff. There is however a false impression about mentoring, that people expects relationships to happen automatically. With women, there may be no natural match between a mentor and mentee, therefore more effort and assistance will be required in this relationship.
2.5 NETWORKING AND A WELCOMING CLIMATE

It is not easy for new employees to get to know their co-workers. Organisations have to assist new employees to meet with existing employees. This can be achieved through employee orientation weeks and also by hosting focus groups where employee issues may be discussed.

Methods of improving a welcoming climate can through staff development and teaching employees to tolerate each other.

Retention of women is not only a problem in manufacturing or engineering industries, the dilemma of retaining female employees is also felt in accounting firms (Mitchell et al. 2001:96).

In the big Accounting and Auditing firms, almost 50% of the employees may be women but only 5% may stay with the company until they make it to be partners (Mitchell et al., 2001:96). Mitchell et al, (2001:96) further explain that people leave their organisations for several reasons, some of which may be personal, or some may be a need to change an environment or even a need to learn new skills. Other reasons may be influenced by how organisations are treating their employees. Being treated unfairly, observing an unfair treatment on a co-worker, being overlooked for promotion, lack of succession plan or being asked to do something against one’s belief can be reasons for leaving current employment.

Employee turnover, as a result of being unable to retain, has its costs implications on both the employee and the organisation. The employee will encounter the stress of finding a new job, and relocation hurdles should he or she find a new job in a new area. The cost of turnover for organisations is that employees will leave the organisations with valuable information and skills gained through their working experience. The costs of advertising new positions, processing of candidates, interview and selection of candidates are costs that are encountered by organisations. Notably, as soon as job dissatisfaction sets in, employees will look for alternative jobs, while satisfied employees are less interested in looking for alternative jobs.

According to an article written by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) in 2013, the sustainability of its industry does not only depend on their ability to hire, but also on the ability to retain and advance the talent within the industry (www.aicpa.org). The article further explains that in 2010, female managers and senior managers increased to 50% and 41% respectively, these increases are attributed to the flexible programs that the industry is offering. However, given the increases, the industry encounters turnover and stagnation as they approach the director and ownership career stages. According to AICPA, the barriers for women career advancement can fall within the following three categories:

- Career advancement;
Lack of female role models, and
Work/ life integration.

The article goes on to explain that the stereotyping and lack of female leadership styles impact more negatively on careers of many women who want to prosper. Expected leadership styles and abilities or norms and values are still based on a population of male leaders (www.aicpa.org). The lack of female role models hinders the anticipated success of other women, because success of other women in the same field will give other motivation to succeed. The article goes on to explain that societal norms related to child care, elder care and home responsibilities also impact negatively on the success of women.

A study by Steel et al. (2002:154) on gender group differences has shown that women are more likely to leave organisations because of family considerations. The study has shown that in 1986, 33% of women indicated their reasons for resigning from their jobs as family responsibilities, and only 1% of male employees stated family considerations as their main reason for quitting. Family considerations appear to be the reason why women quit their jobs. Studies have also shown that other reasons for organisations to be exposed to high turnover are women’s exposure to sexual harassment and limited career opportunities (Steel et al., 2002:154). It was also found that the reasons for quitting as applying to educated women resemble those of their male counterparts, namely, better job opportunities. The reasons given for uneducated female employees were found to be different.

2.6 SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning refers to knowing who will steer the ship if the corporate jet crashes tomorrow. It is about growing own talents to ensure business continuity over the long term (www.faithsources.com). Succession planning is an on-going process of identifying, assessing and developing skills to ensure continuity in organisation’s positions (SAQA, 2013). Companies that value the success and advancement of their employees are recognising succession planning as a tool that can be used to achieve that goal. For women to realise their potential and have equal opportunities to reach senior management levels, it is essential that they are provided with developmental opportunities (www.clcexecutiveboard.com). Some companies have built women-specific elements in their succession planning processes, to guarantee that female high potentials are given equal chances alongside those of their male counterparts.

An article written by (www.faithsources.com), citing William Rothwell goes on to describe a traditional succession plan as often being highly political, as done secretly and with few conversations held. In some organisations, employees that are on the succession plan might not even be aware of such plans.
The article suggests that succession management, which is a process that ensures that organisations have leaders and talent that can implement the organisational vision, should be developed by all companies. The result of proper succession management is a long term leadership sustainability strategy which is sustained through attraction, retention and development of talent.

2.7 WORK- LIFE BALANCE / INTEGRATION

Female employees are at a great disadvantage when it comes to career advancement because society expects them to curry the burden of family responsibility.

An article written by corporate leadership council, a UK-Based research council, found that nine out of ten employees agree that the ability for organisations to help employees in balancing their work with their personal lives determines their loyalty to their organisations (www.clcexecutiveboard.com). The article suggests that in order for organisations to retain women, companies must enhance their productivity and facilitate their advancement into managerial roles, by implementing work-life and family-friendly programmes.

The programmes suggested by the article are:

- **Attachment –based programmes**
  This program includes maternity and childbirth leave, sick-child leave, and other family or medical leave entitlements. Employees continue to get their health benefits and are guaranteed their employment when they return from maternity leave.

- **Time –based programmes**
  This program includes flexi-time, sharing of job responsibilities, compressed work weeks. Some companies utilise the benefit of new technologies and allow mothers to work from home for a reasonable time.

- **Child care–based programmes**
  These include both on-and off-site corporate child care and subsidies for child care services. This initiative will reduce the burden of female employees from worrying about the well-being of the young ones and concentrate of their work commitments.

In her 2014 article “Egg - Freezing benefit send the wrong message to women” Sabrina Parsons, a software company chief executive outlined why she thinks the egg freezing benefit by Apple can demoralise women (www.businessinsider.com). According to Parsons, the egg freezing may suggest that women can progress in their careers if they opt to delay starting to have families. Parsons goes on to suggest that organisations like Apple should rather take the money intended to pay for egg freezing and use it to either pay for a full-time baby nurse for the
working mothers, offer extensive maternity benefits or even sponsor quality day-care facilities at the work place. The suggestion can help women to integrate their family and work life, and therefore have a feeling that they are supported by the organisations and can continue on their career and leadership track after giving birth.

If a woman takes leave to bond with her children, she is viewed as a liability to the organisation, because she does not prioritise her job, if she is always at work, she is perceived to be a bad mother (Tajlili, 2014:254). In her article Tajlili highlights how women find themselves in what is referred to as “double-bind”, where they feel torn apart between being a mother and a professional career woman. It was found through this study that the chief executive of Yahoo, Marissa Mayer, was condemned by the media for announcing that she was pregnant shortly after she was appointed into the top position. Tajlili (2014: 254) also found that the term work-life balance is un-achievable in today’s fast-paced world.

A study done in the UK by Lyness & Judiesch (2014: 97) found that the focus on work-life balance reflects the value placed on an employee’s quality of life as well as the pressure to perform his or her work, are leading to family-work life imbalances. This study also found that societies differ in prescribing roles for women and for men. This concept is termed “gender egalitarianism”, whereby the gender determines a person’s responsibilities. Low gender egalitarian cultures are characterised by traditional gendered division of labour, where men are perceived as breadwinners while women are viewed as care takers and mothers. Again in traditional low egalitarian gender beliefs, women are unable to strike the work-life balance due to their work and home responsibilities, while men may be able to achieve the balance.

A study conducted by Zhao, Settles & Shen (2011: 724) reveals that in America, women’s career development is still more determined by the family needs than the development of men. It was found that men’s employment status is generally unrelated to their fatherhood, and women with no children are more likely to be employed than mothers.

2.8 THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANISATION CULTURE ON FEMALE EMPLOYEE’S SUCCESS AT WORK

Organisational culture refers to a pattern of basic assumptions that are considered valid and that are taught to new members as the way to perceive, think, and feel in the organisation (McShane & Von Glinow, 2010:416). The culture defines what is important and unimportant in the company and consequently directs everyone in the organisation towards the “right way” of doing things. According to McShane & Von Glinow (2010:416), the most important elements in managing culture are:

- What leaders pay attention to;
• How leaders react to crises;
• How leaders behave;
• How leaders allocate rewards, and
• How leaders hire and fire employees.

In the science, engineering and technology (SET) sector, culture is male dominated and linked more to masculinity, and that on its own is discriminating to female employees (Servon et al., 2011:274). In this sector, women tend to display or adopt what is called “impression management” in order to fit in. Impression management refers to the potential for individuals to adopt certain characteristics in order to create an impression of themselves, which they hope will bring forth a desired reaction in another individual, including job promotion and advancement (Servon et al., 2011:274). Women in the engineering sector are therefore forced to adopt the masculine identity and behaviour in order to be recognised and be eligible for promotions, which will lead to their retention. Companies in the manufacturing industry also face challenges due to the majority of male employees and the specific work environment. It is an area that is historically male dominated and does not attract many female candidates (www.clcexecutiveboard.com).

The shortage of skilled labour and the increase in competitive and talented women requires leaders in manufacturing industries to devote their attention to the recruitment of women. In order for manufacturing companies to accommodate women, the senior management needs to fast track the changing of culture and start embracing female employee talent.

According to Corporate Leadership Council report (2013), manufacturing companies can use various initiatives to increase the proportion of female recruits; this can be achieved through:

• Establishing targets for recruiting female entrants and assess performance against the targets;
• Strengthen recruitment activity at institutions of higher learning, with high proportion of female students;
• Build relationships with career advisory services to facilitate the targeted recruitment.
• Use search firms with particular connections to female populations.
• Sponsor selected female students through university courses.
• Offer internships or vacation work experience to selected female students, and
• Ensure selection teams reflect the diversity that the organisation seek in its employee base.
2.9 RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE RISKS OF LOSING VALUABLE FEMALE EMPLOYEES

A few barriers in this chapter have been identified as barriers for the success of female employees and eventually leading them to leave their organisations. Companies have implemented programmes that can help in retaining women and ensuring that staff turnover is reduced. An article written by Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) in 2013 suggests the following recommendations for organisation with the aim of retaining female employees:

- Identifying and tracking high potential female employees;
- Ensuring that women have mentors;
- Implement succession planning with a focus on women;
- Rotate women across functions and ensure they have line experience and cross training;
- Offer women challenging roles and responsibilities;
- Developing a comprehensive retention plan for women, and
- Assist female employees in balancing work and personal responsibilities.

Mitchell et al. (2001:104) recommends that organisations must develop comprehensive retention plan which will involve or include the following steps:

- **Determining whether turnover is a problem** by answering questions such as: how many people are leaving the organisation? What skills are being lost? And what is the cost of replacing these employees?
- **Determine why people are leaving.**
  Employees find it easier to sugar coat their reasons for leaving organisations by citing better careers and personal reasons. For organisations to understand the real reasons for their departure, it is recommended the exit interviews be conducted by external consultants to ensure that employees openly disclose their reasons.
- **Investigate why people stay**
  This can be done by conducting focus groups with existing employees and also by determine factors that make them stay and then leveraging on those factors.
- **Develop a top-level support for the plan.**
  An organisation needs to be willing to allocate financial and human resources to the planning, development, execution, maintenance and monitoring of the plan.
- **Identify the targets of the plan.**
An organisation needs to determine whether the retention plan is only for a selected few employees or it is for every employee. If the latter is the case, then it would mean that the initial selection process of recruitment must be very critical, because the company will eventually retain every employee.

Steel et al. (2002:153) suggest that the following strategies will reduce the staff turnover and help to improve employee loyalty within organisations:

- **Blanket strategy.**
  This strategy is a broad based strategy directed at an entire organisation. It is designed to influence an overall improvement in the organisation’s retention rate. Blanket strategy addresses company-wide attrition by changing hiring techniques (for e.g., developing systems that screens job hoppers), targeting career employees and implementing a corporate wide strategic human resources planning process.

- **Focused strategy.**
  This strategy is tailored to a particular group of employees, e.g., women or engineers. The strategic initiatives hereof are therefore designed to respond to specific company issues that could lead to a high employee turnover.

2.10 LITERATURE ON A SPECIFIC STEEL MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Various studies conducted on manufacturing industries and science, engineering and technology (SET) industries have revealed that these industries are male dominated. The structure of the selected steel manufacturing industry that is being researched in the current study is as follows:

- The chief executive officer (CEO) is a white male;
- The chief financial officer (CFO) has resigned and the acting is a white male;
- The chief operating officer (COO) is a white male;
- The head of legal department is an Indian male;
- The general manager for Procurement and Logistics is a white male, and
- The general manager for Human Resources and Communications is a black male.

A meeting was held with the company’s BEE specialist, and it was found that the company is still lagging behind in the following areas:

2.10.1 Organisation’s culture

As the company is a manufacturing company, it is dominated by males, as one could see the domination of males in top structure.
The company needs a strong change management candidate in the HR department that will specifically deal with change management issues, including the current culture. The change in culture needs to be adopted by top management so that it can be a priority and then be filtered downward through the entire organisation.

2.10.2 Retention policy

The company has no retention policy. There is however some employees that are given retention bonuses. These are largely awarded as a cash lump sum to the affected individuals. Half of the funds are usually given in the beginning of the year that the retention bonus is offered and the balance is paid at the end of the third year. There is however no policy that governs the retention bonuses.

2.10.3 Succession planning policy

When asked about a succession planning policy, the BEE specialist confirmed that there are some employees with the company who are on the succession plan, and this differs according to departments. The company is however having Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Personal Development Plans (PDP), but the Human Resources (HR) department does not make it a priority to monitor the progress on each employee’s PDP.

The BEE specialist has recommended that the company needs to establish a talent management department. This department will oversee all employees’ career progression function. Some of the functions will be to ensure that employee’s strengths and weaknesses are assessed and matched with their capabilities. The proposed department will also ensure that the PDP’s are monitored. It will also ensure that there are enough budgets allocated towards developing employees.

2.10.4 Maternity leave policy

The company has a maternity leave policy which entitles female employee of paid leave during their maternity months. Should an employee who qualifies for maternity leave the employ of the selected steel manufacturing company prior to the completion of one year’s service, all monies paid in lieu of the maternity period become immediately repayable. The policy does not limit employees to the number of confinements; however the following conditions in the policy may discourage female employees to have children;

2.10.4.1 Payment options

Employees are allowed a choice between two options in this regard. These options are the following:
Option 1 – offers a maximum period of 6 months, with 33% of the employee’s salary and option 2 offers the employee a maximum period of 4 months with 100%. For the period of maternity leave, contributions to employee’s benefits such as pension or provident fund will only be calculated at 66% of the employee’s salary.

The above options can make it difficult for employees to decide which option is best and/or which is best between staying longer with their babies with less income or to stay for a shorter period with the baby with 100% of their salary.

2.10.4.2 Re-commencement of employment

Even though employees qualify for maternity leave upon appointment, it must be understood that leave can only be approved on the full understanding by the employee that it may be necessary for the company to fill her position during her period of absence or the employee may be deployed to a different position on the same status and remuneration level during the period of their confinement. The above limitations can discourage women from having children while working for the company and some may start looking for jobs at companies where maternity benefits are more favourable to women.

2.10.5 Recruitment and Selection practices policy

The company has a recruitment policy that can be referred to as a normal and standard policy. The only exception or concern with the policy is the non-advertisement of what is categorised as senior management positions. When a vacant position becomes available in these positions, the procedure followed to fill the vacancy is through a succession planning process integrated within the performance management system of the company. What brings about the concern with this policy is that the company does not have a proper documented succession planning policy for guidance.

2.10.6 Work life balance policy

No such policy exists in the selected steel manufacturing company.

2.11 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose for this study is to assess the extent to which company policies in the selected steel manufacturing company are accommodating to female employees in terms of career progression and work-life balance. The observed problem in this company is the low retention of female employees.
What the study aims to investigate is whether the low retention can be blamed on the company policies not addressing career progression or whether the low retention can be attributed to other factors.

As part of literature, the company policies have been reviewed. It has been found that most of the policies are normal and standard, however, the following policies may lead to women feeling not accommodated in the company and as such may push them to eventually leaving the company:

- Maternity policy has two limitations. These are listed in paragraph 2.8.4.1 and 2.8.4.2 above. These limitations are deemed to be unfavourable to women.
- Succession planning policy
  There is no policy that governs succession planning within the selected steel manufacturing company.
- Retention policy
  There is no formal policy that governs retention at the selected steel manufacturing company.
- Recruitment policy
  The recruitment policy does exist but senior management positions are not advertised. The policy states that these positions are filled by candidates that are on the succession plan, even though there is no policy that governs the succession plan.
- Work life balance policy

There is no such a policy in the selected steel manufacturing company.

From the above it cannot be concluded that company policies are not accommodating of female employees and can therefore not be blamed for the poor retention of female employees. Despite this finding the problem still persists and its reasons are still under investigation. The only other method that can be used to try to close the gap is by means of administering a questionnaire to existing female employees.
CHAPTER 3

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the research design, whereby the research approach, sample design, procedure, data collection methods and research ethics will be discussed.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH/ DESIGN

According to Wylie (2011:97) a research design is a plan and structure that is followed by a researcher with specific methods of collecting data and with the purpose of realizing the research objectives.

The appropriate research design involves, among other things, the convenience, costs, time and constraints relating to the conducting of research that will yield quality, accurate and reliable findings.

Welman et al. (2012:8) state the purpose of quantitative research as being that of evaluating the objective data consisting of numbers while the purpose for qualitative is to evaluate the subjective data from the interviewees’ responses.

For this study, both the qualitative and quantitative research methods were followed. An interview was conducted with the Black Economic Empowerment specialist from the company’s Human Resources Department and a questionnaire was distributed to the selected sample from the company for data collection.

According to www.betterevaluation.org using a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data collection method can yield better results because the mixture ensures that the weaknesses of the one method is balanced by the strengths of the other method.

3.3 THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A proposal of the study was presented to the company’s Group Manager for Organization Effectiveness and Transformation. This was done with a view of seeking permission for the conducting of the study within the company. This permission was granted and it extended to the distribution of questionnaires to the company’s units.

3.4 THE SAMPLE DESIGN

A sample provides a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole population (Wylie, 2011:98). The sampling process and design enabled the
researcher herein to select a set of respondents from the business units of the selected company.

The company consists of six units. These units are situated in the provinces of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape. The three units that were chosen to form part of the sample of this study were drawn from Gauteng. This selection was informed by the fact that these units were convenient to the researcher in terms of their location.

3.4.1 The Population of interest

The survey population was a group of female employees that are permanently employed by Steel Manufacturer. The population of interest was determined before the research could be conducted. The selected employees were the only individuals that the questionnaires were delivered to. This was further motivated by the fact that the current study focuses on the selected company and not on the whole steel manufacturing industry.

3.4.2 The data collection methods

According to Wylie (2011:99) data should be reliable and easy to obtain, should be affordable and must also be relevant to address the situation at hand. He further differentiates between primary and secondary data whereby primary data involves interacting with respondents in collecting data at first hand, while secondary data already exists.

Levine et al. (2014:52) state that data can be collected through either primary or secondary sources. They explain primary data source as data that is collected by the researcher at first hand and secondary data source as data that exists and was collected by someone else. According to Levine et al. (2014:52) data can be collected by using any of the following methods:

- Data distributed by an organization or an individual;
- The outcomes of a designed experiment;
- The responses from a survey;
- The result of conducting an observational study, and
- Data collected by ongoing business activities.

For the purpose of this study, primary data was collected through responses from a survey that was conducted through a questionnaire and an interview with the company’s BEE specialist, while secondary data was obtained through the perusing of the selected company’s policies.
3.4.3 Setting up of the questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions for gathering information from individuals for statistical purposes (Wylie, 2011:102).

The advantages of using a questionnaire in a research are that:

- It is not expensive;
- It is anonymous;
- Good for sensitive issues like stereotyping and race related issues;
- Easy to compare and analyze the research findings;
- Obtains large amounts of information quickly, and
- Can be easily completed by respondents within the organization.

For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire was designed to answer close-ended questions from participants with the aim of quickly collecting quantitative data, in a non-threatening manner.

3.4.3.1 The distribution of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed and collected personally by the researcher herein from the selected respondents in the company. The questionnaire stated that the participation in the survey is anonymous and voluntary.

3.4.3.2 Measures

The low retention for female employees was measured with a questionnaire and consisted of 28 items with 9 subsets.

These nine factors were addressed as follows:

- Succession planning
  - Do you have a succession plan?
The company ensures that female employees have mentors.
The company has a retention plan that focuses on women.
A knowledge and skills transfer program exists in the company.
Women are offered challenging roles and responsibilities.

**Employee Engagement**
- A succession plan boosts the morale of the subordinates.
- A succession plan instills confidence in employees and gives them a sense of belonging.

**Advancement of female employees**
- In this company women work harder for promotion.
- The company overlooks women when it comes to promotion.
- A talent management department in the company will ensure the progression of women.

**Career progression**
- Women occupy high positions than their male counterparts.
- The company prioritize the progression of women in leadership positions.

**Work life balance**
- The maternity leave policy works well in this company.
- The company’s flexi-time policy accommodates mothers.
- An in-house child care service can help women to cope with their work.
- I feel that women can cope with the demands of a career in this company.
- I will encourage women to apply for positions in this company.

**Working mother subsidy**
- The company subsidizes working mothers with child care services.
The company allows new mothers to work from home for a reasonable time after maternity leave

- **Sexism**
  - The company I work for is dominated by males
  - As a woman I enjoy working in this company
  - As a woman I am happy to spend the rest of my life in this company
  - A great deal must still be done to make this company more women friendly

- **Culture**
  - The company I work for is people focused
  - My work place deals effectively with sexual harassment issues
  - The culture in this company encourages and empowers female employees to succeed
  - The company sponsors female employees through tertiary education

- **Sexual harassment**
  - I have witnessed / experienced sexual harassment in this company

The responses were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

5 = Strongly Agree

4 = Agree

3 = Neutral

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

3.5 **THE SAMPLE FRAME**

A sampling frame is a list of items that make up a population from which a sample is drawn. The sample frame needs to be complete and up to date (Levine *et al.*, 2014:54).
The sample frame for this study was defined according to the following characteristics:

- Respondents are permanent female employees of Steel Manufacturer;
- Respondents are randomly selected from the Gauteng-based business units;
- No specific race was given preference;
- No specific departments were given preference;
- No specific age was given preference, and
- No specific level was given preference.

3.6 THE SAMPLE METHOD

There are two types of sampling methods, namely, the probability and the non-probability methods. In this study a probability sampling method was followed wherein a Simple Random Sampling was used. Random sampling gives every member an equal chance of being chosen (Levine et al., 2014:54).

3.7 THE SAMPLE SIZE

Determining the sample size is a common task for organizational researchers. The quality and accuracy of the research can be influenced by inappropriate, inadequate and excessive sample size (Wylie, 2011:104).

For this study, the sample consisted of 200 female employees from the three Gauteng-based business units. A total of 150 completed questionnaires were collected.

3.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

A descriptive statistics, being the method used to primarily summarize and present data, was used to analyze the research data. Descriptive statistics summarizes data in a meaningful way in order to identify patterns and behavior of a particular sample of participants. The current research was kept simple in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes.

The data obtained through a questionnaire was summarized through the two measures of Central Tendency. Central tendency is the extent to which the values of a numerical variable group around a central point allows the researcher to report where most of the responses fall (Levine et al., 2014:136).
The Mean is the most common measure of Central Tendency (Levine et al., 2014:136). The Mean is obtained by adding all the values together and dividing them by the number of observations (Wylie, 2014:107).

The advantages of using the Mean in data analysis are that:

- The concept of a midpoint is clear and easily understandable;
- The Mean relates closely to the population from which the sample was drawn and can be altered by the changes in the data, and
- Only one Mean can exist.

The disadvantage of using the Mean in data analysis is that:

- The Mean is affected by extreme scores and can be a tedious process if lots of data exists.

3.9 RESEARCH ETHICS

Ensuring every participant’s freedom from harm is the central principle in research. According to a research study guide from Henley University (2009:37), code of ethics explains that it is the duty of researchers to preserve and protect the privacy, dignity, wellbeing and freedom of the research participants.

The four key areas highlighted in this regard are the following:

- Freedom from physical or psychological harm;
- Freedom from coercion;
- Disclosure about the nature of the research, and
- Privacy.

The above key principles were upheld within the whole period of the current research.

3.10 SUMMARY

A questionnaire was distributed to 200 permanent employees of Steel Manufacturer. A total of 150 fully completed questionnaires were received and analyzed at the North-West University’s Statistics Department in Potchefstroom.
The results of the analyses are discussed in chapter 4 below. Conclusions and recommendations to Steel Manufacturer are also tabled and discussed in Chapter 4 below.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS, DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to table and discuss the results of the questionnaire that was distributed to permanent female employees at Steel Manufacturer.

4.2 TARGET POPULATION

The target population was the permanent female employees of Steel Manufacturer. The units that were targeted for purposes of this research were those based in Gauteng. These units and the chosen female employees were deliberated selected and as such no random sampling was used in this regard.

4.3 THE STUDY POPULATION

4.3.1 Demographical information

Data for this study was collected at the selected steel manufacturing company. The participants consisted of 150 permanent female employees at the three Gauteng based units of Steel Manufacturer.

The participants consisted of one employee that was under the age of 21, thirty three employees that were between the ages of 21 and 30, forty one employees were between the ages of 31 and 40, forty five employees were between the ages of 41 and 50, while thirty employees were 51 years of age and older.

The nationality of the respondents was a mixture of 52 Africans, 12 coloureds, 8 Indians and 76 whites.

The qualifications of the respondents were ranging from no Metric qualification to Master's degree. One respondent did not complete Matric, 58 have Matric certificates, 38 respondents have National Diploma, 51 have Bachelor's degrees, 18 have Honours degrees and 3 had Master's Degree. The working experience of the respondents ranged from less than 2 years to 36 years and more.
4.3.2 Measures

The low retention for female employees was measured with a questionnaire and consisted of 28 items with 9 subsets. These nine factors were addressed as follows:

- **Succession planning**
  - A1: Do you have a succession plan?
  - A4: Does the company ensure that female employees have mentors?
  - A5: Does the company have a retention plan that focuses on women?
  - A6: A knowledge and skills transfer program exists in the company
  - A7: Women are offered challenging roles and responsibilities

- **Employee Engagement**
  - A2: A succession plan boosts the morale of the subordinates
  - A3: A succession plan instills confidence in employees and gives them a sense of belonging

- **Advancement of female employees**
  - B1: In this company women work harder for promotion
  - B2: The company overlooks women when it comes to promotion
  - B5: A talent management department in the company will ensure the progression of women

- **Career progression**
  - B3: Women occupy high positions than their male counterparts
  - B4: The company prioritize the progression of women in leadership positions

- **Work life balance**
  - C1: The maternity leave policy works well in this company
  - C2: The company’s flexi-time policy accommodates mothers
• Working mother subsidy
  o C3: The company subsidizes working mothers with child care services
  o C4: The company allows new mothers to work from home for a reasonable time after maternity leave

• Sexism
  o D2: The company I work for is dominated by males
  o D3: As a woman I enjoy working in this company
  o D8: As a woman I am not happy to spend the rest of my life in this company
  o D9: A great deal must still be done to make this company more women friendly

• Culture
  o D1: The company I work for is people focused
  o D5: My workplace deals effectively with sexual harassment issues
  o D6: The culture in this company encourages and empowers female employees to succeed
  o D7: The company sponsors female employees through tertiary education

• Sexual harassment
  o D4: I have witnessed/experienced sexual harassment in this company

The responses were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where:

5 = Strongly Agree
4 = Agree
3 = Neutral
2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

4.3.3 Reliability and Validity test

Exploratory factor analyses were done on each part of section two (Information on experience and opinion), to see how the items clustered together formed constructs.

Reliability of a test refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same persons when they are re-examined with the same test on different occasions (Anastasi, 1988:84). The validity of a test on the other hand concerns what the test measures and how well it does so (Anastasi, 1988:84). If a test is found to be valid then it means such a test measures what it set out to measure.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was captured and analyzed by the North-West University’s Statistical Consultation Services at the Potchefstroom Campus.

Frequency tables were drawn up to describe the demographical variables of the study population. Chronbach Alpha coefficients which measures internal consistency or reliability of a test were computed for each measuring instrument’s subtest. According to Gliem & Gliem (2003), the following ranges indicate the reliability for Chronbach Alpha:

\[
\begin{align*}
\geq 0.9: & \text{ Excellent;} \\
\geq 0.8: & \text{ Good;} \\
\geq 0.7: & \text{ Acceptable;} \\
\geq 0.6: & \text{ Questionable, and} \\
\geq 0.5: & \text{ Poor.}
\end{align*}
\]

Confirmatory factor analyses were done to confirm construct validity of subtest. To determine whether a factor analysis may be appropriate, a Kaiser’s measure of sample adequacy (MSA), which gives an indication of the inter correlations among variables was also computed for each confirmatory factor. According to Hair et al., 1998:730, the interpretive adjectives for MSA are as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\geq 0.9: & \text{ Marvelous;} \\
\geq 0.8: & \text{ Excellent;} \\
\geq 0.7: & \text{ Good;} \\
\geq 0.6: & \text{ Acceptable;} \\
\geq 0.5: & \text{ Questionable, and} \\
\geq 0.4: & \text{ Questionable.}
\end{align*}
\]
0.8: Meritorious; 
0.7: Middling; 
0.6: Mediocre; 
0.5: Miserable, and 
<.50: unacceptable.

The rotated factor pattern (Standardized Regression Coefficients) were also computed. 

Due to the fact that no random sampling was done the interpretation of comparisons between group means was done according to Cohen's effect sizes, d (Cohen, 1988).

### 4.4.1 Results of exploratory Factor Analyses

**Table 4-1: PART A – Succession Planning and Employee Engagement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clustering of items on PART A</th>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Amount of factors Retained</th>
<th>% variance explained</th>
<th>Communalities varies between</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: (Succession planning) &amp; Factor 2: (Employee Engagement)</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.5 &amp; 0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An MSA of 0.71 is adequate for Part A, which measured both the succession planning and the employee engagement. This result means that the factors that were clustered together to measure succession planning and employee engagement were adequately correlated.
Table 4-2:  PART B – Advancement of Female employees & Career Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clustering of items on PART B</th>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Amount of factors Retained</th>
<th>% variance explained</th>
<th>Communalities varies between</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: (Advancement of female employees) &amp; Factor 2: (Career Progression)</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.25 &amp; 0.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An MSA of 0.53 is miserable for Part B which measured both the advancement of female employees and career progression. This means the factors that were clustered together to measure career progression and advancement of female employees were not satisfactorily correlated.

Table 4-3:  PART C – Work – life Balance and Working Mother Subsidy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clustering of items on PART C</th>
<th>MSA</th>
<th>Amount of factors Retained</th>
<th>% variance explained</th>
<th>Communalities varies between</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1: (Work life balance) &amp; Factor 2: (Working mother subsidy)</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.15 &amp; 0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An above average measure of 0.65 for MSA was obtained for Part C, which measured work life balance and subsidy for working mothers. This means that the factors that were clustered together were correlated satisfactorily.
An adequate measure of 0.3 for MSA was obtained for Part D, which measured work sexism, culture and sexual harassment. This means the factors that were clustered together were correlated satisfactorily.

### 4.4.2 Cronbach’s Alpha results

The Cronbach’s Alpha for the study yielded the following results per subtest:

- Succession planning = 0.82;
- Employee engagement = 0.89;
- Career progression = 0.56;
- Work life balance = 0.65;
- Working mother subsidy = 0.80;
- Sexism = 0.74, and
- Culture = 0.54.

The above Cronbach’s Alpha results prove that the factors used in the subtests were all consistent and reliable as they are all above 50%.
4.4.3 The Mean and Effect Sizes (ES)

According to Levine et al., (2014:136) the Sample Mean is the sum of values in a sample divided by the number of values in a sample. For this study, the responses were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, then the mean should be 3, where:

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

The Effect sizes indicate the extent to which a difference is large enough to have an effect in practice (Becker, 2000).

For the purpose of this study, the guidelines for interpreting the Effect Sizes are as follows:

≥0.2 = Small effect, unnoticeable;

≥0.5 = Medium effect, noticeable with naked eye, and

≥0.8 = Large and practically significant.

The population was divided into two groups by the age. Group 1 (Under 21 to 40) and group 2 (41 and older).

Table 5 below shows the results of the mean on the variables and effect sizes between the two groups:
Table 4-5: Means and Effect Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest/Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
<th>Effect size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Engagement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5***</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Progression</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-life Balance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother subsidy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 shows the means of the variables and effect sizes between the two independent groups. The means were around 3, whereas the effect sizes between the groups were small and unnoticeable except for one variable where the difference was 0.73 on sexism.

4.5 DISCUSSION

According to the analysis of the results from the questionnaire, it is found that the variables used in this study were consistent and reliable. It was also found that among the two independent groups of female employees which were grouped by their age, the effect sizes
were unnoticeable. This means that the opinions and the experience of the female employees that participated in the survey are similar.

For this study, the responses were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, then the mean should be 3, where:

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

4.5.1 Succession Planning

The mean for succession planning was 2.46. This figure falls more right hand side of the scale, which indicates that the participants responded negatively to this variable. This result indicates that the participants do not have succession plans. This figure also indicates that the employees do not have either mentors or retention plans. The score again explains the fact that women are not being given challenging roles and responsibilities and lastly, there is no knowledge and skills transfer program in the steel manufacturer.

Based on the effect size of 0.33, it shows that the negativity of the responses for both groups on this variable is a true reflection of the sentiment of all participants when it comes to this variable.

4.5.2 Employee Engagement

The mean for employee engagement was 3.90. The questionnaire posted two statements wherein the researcher wanted to see if participants will agree or disagree whether a succession plan instills confidence in employees, boosts their morale and also gives them a sense of belonging. The result came out more to the right hand side of the mean indicating that the respondents agreed with what the researcher wanted to prove.

There was no difference of opinions from both groups of the participants in this regard, the sentiment was the same.

4.5.3 Advancement of female employees

The factors that formed a construct for advancement of female employees were analyzed separately as follows:

- B1: In this company women work harder for promotion?
- B2: The Company overlooks women when it comes to promotions.
- B5: A talent management department in the company will ensure the progression of women.
The mean for B1 was 3.9, for B2 was 3.86 and for B5 were 3.01. These mean results indicate that the participants concur with the researcher’s close ended questions.

### 4.5.4 Career Progression

The two closed ended questions to measure the career progression variable was as follows:

- B3: Does women occupy higher positions as compared to their male counterparts?
- B4: Does the company prioritize the progression of women in leadership positions?

The mean for this variable came out as 2.32. This was more to the right hand side of the scale. This result indicated that the respondents do not agree that women occupy higher positions as compared to their male counterparts within the selected company. The participants disagree with the fact the company prioritize the progression of women in to leadership positions.

Based on the effect size of 0.1, it shows that the negativity of the responses for both groups on this variable is a true reflection of the sentiment of all participants when it comes to this variable.

### 4.5.5 Work – life balance

The mean for this variable came out as 3.10, which is surprisingly close to the neutral scale of 3. This result might have been affected by the fact that the group 2 participants are over the age of 40 and their work is their priority at this stage. The sentiment for this response was similar for both groups, based on the effect size figure of 0.16.

### 4.5.6 Working mother subsidy

The mean for this variable came out the lowest at 1.69. It is clear that the selected steel manufacturer does not offer any financial help towards working mothers. This feeling is mutual amongst the two groups. This is based on the effect size figure of 0.03 from the mean results.

### 4.5.7 Sexism

The close ended questions for this variable were balanced in the sense that there were those who wanted to test both the negative and positive response of the participants.

The questions used in this regard were as follows:

- D2: The Company I work for is dominated by males.
- D3: As a woman I enjoy working in this company.
- D8: As a woman I am happy to spend the rest of my life in this company.
- D9: A great deal must still be done to make this company more women friendly.
The mean for employee engagement was 2.43. This result reveals that more participants answered negatively on both questions D3 and D8. The effect size on this variable was a significant 0.73. This is the most noticeable difference in this regard. The reason for this could be attributed to the fact that the group 2 employees feel that they want to spend the rest of their lives in the employ of the company. This could be motivated by the fact most of these employees, given their age, are closer to going on pension.

4.5.8 Culture

The mean for this variable came out at 2.85, close to the negative side of the scale. The effect size showed no difference at a rate of -0.07. This result indicates that the culture in the company does not encourage or empower female employees to succeed or does not sponsor female employees with tertiary education. Notably, this score might mean that the company is not people-focused as this was one of the close ended questions used in measuring this variable.

4.5.9 Sexual Harassment

The mean for this variable came out at 1.80. This was close to the negative side of the scale. This result indicates that extremely few women might have been affected on this variable. This result is a positive result. The effect size was 0.29, which means that the sentiment is shared among the groups.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to establish whether the low retention of female employees in the selected steel manufacturer is a result of the company policies not being accommodative of female employees. The company policies were thoroughly scrutinized as part of this study. It could not be concluded that all policies of the company resulted in the low retention of women, but the following policies or lack of proper policy on the following aspects could be blamed:

- Maternity leave policy;
- Succession planning policy or the lack thereof;
- Retention policy or the lack thereof, and
- Work-life balance.

Due to the lack of conclusive evidence of the company policies, it was decided that a questionnaire be distributed to the current permanent employees for a further investigation of
the identified problem “whether the low retention of female employees can be attributed to less career progression and the lack of work-life balance consideration in policy development”.

The results of the questionnaire indicate that the selected steel manufacturer is still has gaps in a lot of factors which the literature review in chapter two suggested can be used to reduce employee turnover and help retain female employees. The results showed that there is no succession planning for employees in the selected company. The results further revealed that the employees are not engaged when it comes to issues that affect them.

The respondents felt that female employees are overlooked when it comes to promotions and believe that a talent management department can help accelerate the advancement of female employees in the company. The respondents do not believe that the company prioritizes the progression of women into leadership positions. They further believe that male counterparts are occupying high positions within the selected steel company.

Regarding the work-life balance and subsidy to working mothers, the respondents agreed with the fact that the company does not subsidize the working mothers financially or otherwise. Culture and sexism were other variables that were investigated in this study. The study sought to ascertain whether these variables contribute to the high female employee turnover within the selected steel company. The response of the participants in this regard was that the company is not people-focused. The company’s culture was found not to encourage female employees to succeed. The company was found not to be sponsoring female employees when it comes to tertiary education.

The overall conclusion, based on the results of the questionnaire is that the morale of the female employees within the selected steel company is very low. Female employees feel that they are not engaged and some feel that they will not spend the rest of their career in the company.

4.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Over and above the recommendations and strategies for retaining female employees mention in chapter two, paragraph 2.7, the following are recommended to the selected steel manufacturer in this regard:

4.7.1 The establishment of a Talent Management Department

The company needs to develop a Talent Management Department. Talent management refers to the process of attracting, developing, engaging, retaining and utilizing talent to the mutual benefit of the business and employees (Bussin, 2014:17). Based on this definition not only
employees will benefit but also the company will benefit. The Talent Management Department will ensure that the career paths of all employees within the selected steel company are monitored and matched with the employees’ potential abilities.

4.7.2 Work-life balance policy

Employees enjoy the jobs that are flexible so that they can manage their work-life balance (Robbins, 2003:21). According to Robbins, the majority of tertiary students say their career goal is attaining a balance between their jobs and their private life. This means even new employees; those recruited fresh from school, already need a good work-life balance. Robbins (2003:21) stresses the fact that companies that do not prioritize the work-life balance for its employees will struggle to attract and retain their valuable employees. It will be advisable for the selected steel manufacturer to establish a policy regarding work-life balance. The company should also consider establishing an in-house child care facility or subsidizing mothers whose kids are going to child care facilities outside the company.

4.7.3 Employee engagement

Employee engagement is another aspect that participants responded negatively in. This was because they felt that there is still a gap in the selected steel manufacturer in this regard.

Employee engagement in individual sense of purpose and focused energy is evident in their display of personal effort directed towards organizational goals (Macey, et al., 2009:7). Macey et al., (2009:1) further observe that engaged employees feel a sense of belonging, believe in their company’s mission and also understand how to achieve it. The selected steel manufacturer needs to establish an all-inclusive culture wherein all employees could feel engaged and appreciated within the company.

4.7.4 Organization Culture

Culture is defined and created by the company’s executives and is a result of consideration of the values and the mission that the company is thriving towards (Phillips & Edwards, 2009:176). Phillips & Edwards (2009) further assert that a positive and an all-inclusive culture does encourage employees to stay engaged. The responses from the participants were very negative on this aspect. This means that the company should encourage a culture that is focused on its people and should listen to the employees’ needs.

4.7.5 Succession planning and Employee retention Policy

The selected steel manufacturer needs to establish clear succession and employee retention policies. During an interview with the company’s Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)
specialist, it was confirmed that no such policies exists within the company. These policies will ensure that employees have career paths mapped out for them. This will in turn result in valuable employees being retained. The lack of career development and promotion opportunities is part of the reasons for employee turnover (Rothwell, 2010:163).

According to Rothwell, (2010:165), employers that are serious about reducing employee turnover should pay close attention to the satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels of their employees over stress, pay, promotional opportunities, career development and work-life balance.

4.7.6 Mentoring

Workplace mentoring is described as a relationship between two individuals, usually a senior and junior employee, whereby the senior employee teaches the junior employee about his or her job and orientates the junior employee into the organization and industry (Allen et al., 2009:2).

The concept of mentoring can help the selected steel manufacturer to build a knowledgeable workforce. This is mainly because the steel industry is not an easy one and as such requires lots of engineering and technical expertise.

The overall recommendation for the selected steel manufacturer is that this study be expanded to a bigger audience; including male employees and that this should be done at all business units of the South African unit.


Manager as Investigator – Study guide. Henley University of Reading: www.henly.reading.ac.uk


ANNEXURES

APPENDIX A – QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTION

Thank you for participating in this survey as a component of a research study project that I am conducting as partial fulfillment of the requirements of my MBA mini-dissertation at the North West University.

The purpose of this study is to determine the reasons why female employees resign from this company and also to determine what would encourage women to stay with the company for longer period.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and anonymous. By completing and returning this questionnaire you give your consent that the results may be included this research study.

If you have any questions about this research study or your rights as a participant in the research, or to get feedback on the results of this research study, please contact me on 082 923 3911 or Angelinah961@gmail.com. or my research study leader, Ms. Karolien Nell on 082 771 0153 or karoliennell@gmail.com

INSTRUCTIONS

Read each question, think about your current environment, then tick the level you believe most accurately describes or reflect your opinion.

Please answer this questionnaire by making a cross (X) in the space provided next to each question/ item. Please select only ONE item. Please kindly answer ALL questions.

Example: Would you like to participate in this research by filling in a questionnaire?

1. YES  0. NO

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age in years
### 1. Under 21 | 2. 21 to 30 | 3. 31 to 40 | 4. 41 to 50 | 5. 50 and older

### 2. Nationality / Race


### 3. Highest qualification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Did not complete (Matric)</th>
<th>2. Senior Certificate (Matric) or Equivalent</th>
<th>3. National Diploma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Doctor’s Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Years in working experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Less than 2 years</th>
<th>2. 2 to 5 years</th>
<th>3. 5 to 10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. 10 to 15 years</td>
<td>5. 16 to 20 years</td>
<td>6. 21 to 25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 26 to 30 years</td>
<td>8. 31 to 35 years</td>
<td>9. 36 years and more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. Job Title

__________________________________________

### SECTION 2: INFORMATION ON YOUR EXPERIENCE AND OPINION

#### PART A: Succession Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Do you have a succession plan?</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. A succession plan boosts the morale of the subordinates</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. A succession plan instills confidence in employees and gives</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
them a sense of belonging

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. The company ensures that female employees have mentors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The company has a retention plan that focuses on women</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A knowledge and skills transfer program exists in the company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Women are offered challenging roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART B: Career Progression**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In this company women work harder for promotion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The company overlooks women when it comes to promotion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Women occupy high positions than their male counterparts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The company prioritize the progression of women in to leadership positions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A talent management department in the company will ensure the progression of women</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART C: Work-life Balance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The maternity leave policy works well in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The company’s flexi-time policy accommodates mothers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The company subsidizes working mothers with child care services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The company allows new mothers to work from home for a reasonable time after maternity leave</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. An in-house child care service can help women to cope with their work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel that women can cope with the demands of a career in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I will encourage women to apply for positions in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PART D: Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The company I work for is people focused</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The company I work for is dominated by males</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. As a woman I enjoy working in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have witnessed / experienced sexual harassment in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My workplace deals effectively with sexual harassment issues</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The culture in this company encourages and empowers female employees to succeed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The company sponsors female employees through tertiary education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. As a woman I am happy to spend the rest of my career in this company</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A great deal must still be done to make this company more women friendly</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART E: Are there any suggestions that you think may make this company to be more accommodating to women?

___________________________________________________________________________