

Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic
minority women of African descent working in New Zealand

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Abstract

The ever-growing number of different ethnicities and cultures in the contemporary workforce is presenting various challenges and opportunities to organisations, employees and their families. According to Royal Society of New Zealand (2013) Auckland is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world with more than 160 different languages spoken, it is now more diverse than ever before with an unprecedented increase in the ethnic, cultural, social and linguistic diversity in recent years.

This study focusses on a minority group living in Auckland and explores their careers stories and leadership aspirations. More specifically the research considers how the participants' background, initial career choices and subsequent migration to New Zealand has influenced their career and leadership aspirations in their adopted country. African women who migrated to New Zealand in the past two decades have confronted challenges that have had an impact on their careers. These challenges comprise a range of complex issues that are best understood through taking an interpretive approach using an intersectional sensitive methodology that recognises the multiple identities that these African women hold. According to Crenshaw (1989) any analysis such as this that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the specific manner in which these women are subordinated because this intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism.

A qualitative study in the form of face-to-face in-depth narrative interviews was carried out with the participation of nine African women who have been resident and professionally employed in Auckland for at least five years. The purpose of the study was to explore the participants' career and leadership aspirations in order to better understand their experiences and challenges.

It was found that intersecting axes of multiple identities are adversely impacting on the career and leadership aspirations of the participants and thus causing delays and/or a lack of career progression into leadership roles for women of African descent working in New Zealand. These

multiple identities have impeded their career progression, and some participants are still experiencing the fallout in their professional lives despite migrating to New Zealand many years ago.

This research has contributed to knowledge by adding to the extant literature about African people who have migrated to New Zealand. The research also gives a voice to the African women participants who otherwise may have remained unacknowledged and silent without this opportunity to share their professional career stories. Finally, given the diversity of New Zealand's population, this research study can be replicated within other minority communities in New Zealand thereby ensuring that their experiences and perceptions are also articulated and acknowledged.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:

Name: Isabel Chiambiro

Date: 23 August 2020

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This research explores the challenges and opportunities faced by ethnic women minorities of African descent who are at different career levels in New Zealand workplaces. Specifically, the research aims to capture stories of their leadership aspirations. Janis and Donald (2010) note how the situation faced by women of colour is more complex than that faced by white women. The main reason for these additional complexities is the way in which sexism has been emphasized without considering other forms of discrimination such as race and ethnicity and the impact this discrimination has on their perceptions, career experiences and aspirations of leadership. Showunmi, Atewologun, and Bebbington (2015) show how leadership diversity studies often limit our understanding of the complexities of individual experiences because they often focus on single categories and by doing so, misrepresent the realities women of colour may face.

Ethnic minority women have multiple identities that have been affected by other factors such as the historical and social contexts. In particular, the historical legacies of slavery and racial discrimination continue today, the 'Black Lives Matter' movement being but one recent example. Talking about racial discrimination is a very sensitive topic in many workplaces which can lead to the lack of connection. This lack of transparency also hampers networking as ethnic minority women try to guard against how much they can reveal about themselves (Catalyst, 2004). The majority of women in this research came from a similar background where most of the Southern African countries were colonised and over time, racism, sexism and patriarchy became embedded as the norm. Even though colonisation is often seen as an era long passed, the legacy of colonialism continues to be felt today.

To illustrate, a research report by Catalyst (2004) about African-American women in the workplace noted how their authority and credibility was frequently questioned, how they faced persistent and intractable negative race-based stereotypes and, the lack of institutional support. Similarly, Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) highlighted how African female managers and leaders are presented with subtle

discrimination and gender stereotyping that cause major obstacles to their career progression. These women were perceived to be less competent and were subjected to a higher standard of performance. This resulted in this group of African female managers having to prove themselves by trying to outperform their male counterparts in the workplace (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009).

1.1. Why study Ethnic Minority Women of African Descent in New Zealand

Since the mid-1980's, immigration policies for entry into New Zealand signalled a shift in the criterion from nationality and ethnic origin to skills-based assessments of eligibility (Simon-Kumar, 2011). This policy shift saw a change in the immigrant profiles from being predominantly British and white European with the migration of Black Africans stimulated by the adoption of a formal refugee quota in 1987, a response to the outbreak of wars and genocide in countries like Ethiopia, Somalia and Rwanda (Adelowo, 2012). Simultaneously, Black Africans were also able to migrate to New Zealand for educational purposes and as skilled migrants to fill targeted labour shortages (e.g. information technology, teaching). Prior to these policy shifts there were few people of colour from Africa living in New Zealand. The terms ethnic and ethnicity (the identified ethnic group/s) are used in this thesis as ethnicity denotes cultural affiliation for statistical purposes. According to Statistics New Zealand (2018), ethnicity includes members of a group that share some or all the elements such as sharing a common ancestry or history, share a similar culture, traditions, customs, beliefs and or language and come from a similar geographical, tribal or clan origin.

To understand the challenges women of African descent face in New Zealand, an exploration of their background history of discrimination, racism, sexism, cultural and traditional context is required. Women migrants coming from Africa have a different background compared to first and second generation women of African descent born elsewhere. Not only do this group of women face racism and sexism in their newly adopted country, they struggle to shift beyond a form of patriarchy that has its roots

in the colonizing processes of their home country (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009). To date there has been very limited research on this group of women migrants in New Zealand.

This research aims to elicit the career stories of women of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand. Nine women who came to New Zealand under different circumstances share their individual stories. They tell of migration, settling in a new place and searching for employment and developing a career while having their families including children to cater for. Each of the women has a combination of visible and invisible demographic characteristics and depending on the context, how each woman self-identifies at a specific point in time, may differ. At the time of this research, the nine women held middle management roles within their employing organisations. For the purpose of this research, an intersectionally sensitive approach (McBride et al., 2015) is adopted in contrast to using a specific intersectional methodology. Intersectionality, originally formulated as a political project by Black American legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) sought to make visible the discriminatory factors faced by African American women when trying to navigate the US legal justice system. As a concept, intersectionality allows for the open acknowledgement of differences among women and their varying experiences of discrimination. An intersectionally sensitive approach recognises where intersections occur, more specifically the simultaneous interplay between ethnicity and gender and other categories of difference (e.g. age, occupation, religion) that emerge from a specific cultural context (McBride et al., 2015).

1.2. Research questions

The core research question this research aims to make visible is:

What are the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand who aspire to lead?

To do so three sub-questions were formulated to guide the research:

What factors have influenced their career pathway?

What is their understanding and experience of leadership?

What are their leadership aspirations?

1.3. Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the research topic and justifies why this research matters. It defines key concepts that will be used within this thesis such as ethnicity and intersectionality.

Chapter 2 traverses a broad range of interdisciplinary literature to give the reader a sense of the background information applicable to a study of African women, their careers and leadership aspirations and experiences as they navigate and progress into leadership positions. The intent of this broad overview is to provide a platform on which the chapters that follow, build.

Chapter 3 starts with an introduction of the methodology and the research methods used in this research. The research philosophy will be discussed explaining how assumptions shape the way a researcher understands the research questions, methods used and the interpretation of the findings. The methodology used is then discussed alongside, outlining the approach taken in this research. My development as a researcher is also reflected upon.

In Chapter 4, the findings are outlined drawing on the key themes that came from the nine career stories. The topics drawn from the analysis included their reasons to migrate, their experiences of settling and working in New Zealand, career progression, their leadership understanding, aspirations and experience.

Chapter 5 expands and discusses the themes that came out of the findings. Links are made to the pertinent literature and participant's stories. The themes are discussed in detail, including culture and

background, family and responsibilities and intersecting axes of multiple identities. The multiple identities are further broken down into kiwi experience, accent and the intersection of ethnicity and gender. To end, further themes of self-doubt and lack of confidence, fear of leadership roles, lack of role models and lack of time are brought to the fore.

The final chapter concludes the research by discussing the main findings and an overview of the research process. This chapter also talks about the contribution of the research, implications of the study, limitations and recommendations for future research. This is followed by the conclusion of the chapter and of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This research seeks to explore the background, career choices and leadership aspirations of a group of ethnic minority women of African descent who, on migrating to New Zealand, work in professional occupations. To do so, a review of a selection of the extant literature from the past three decades provides a platform to better understand the challenges African women may face in their career journey as migrants in their adopted country. The literature review begins by an intersectional history and background of women of African descent. This background helps inform us of the history, context and the experiences that have an influence on women's participation and aspirations before and when navigating their careers into leadership roles. Understanding women's participation and empowerment in an African context is essential to positioning the expectations of this ethnic group and workforce participation in New Zealand. A review of a selection of literature on the meanings of career and the determination of women's career paths in general follows. The vagaries of defining leadership will then be discussed including literature on women and leadership and how this USA dominated literature aligns or not, with African women leadership. Finally, an overview of women and workforce participation in New Zealand, migration and the New Zealand labour market brings context to the forefront.

2.2. Intersectional history and background of women of African descent

Literature from the USA points to the fact that Black women have always been workers as slaves, farmers, domestics, skilled and unskilled laborers, and for a limited few, as part of the professional workforce (Scarborough, 1989). This article also mentioned that Black women have found it impossible to escape racism and sexism in the job market despite their history of industriousness. New obstacles were placed in front of these women by the very laws designed to eliminate employment discrimination. Systemic wider societal barriers were ignored. While the legal system tried to prevent the discriminatory practices faced by

black women within workplaces, the legal system failed to truly understand their experiences or address their concerns (Scarborough, 1989).

Poignant here is the work of Black American legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw (1989). She sought to highlight how different forms of oppression, such as race and gender converge, hence coined the terms “interlocking” or “intersection” as an alternative way to view how multiple forms of oppression simultaneously modify one another (Jordan-Zachery, 2007, p. 255). Crenshaw (1989) argued that any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated because intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism. Broadbent, Strachan, and Healy (2018) noted how an intersectional approach narrates the way in which different elements of disadvantage link together in a complex dynamic to limit the choices of individuals. When considering inequality, an awareness of history, society and biography should all be taken into consideration. To illustrate, Evans and Herr (1991) show how societal prohibitions, a lack of direction and preparation due to no fault of their own, shaped the immediate post slavery contributions of African American women. Thus, when making decisions on the types of employment available, African American women were influenced by their perceptions of racism and sexism which then, severely limited their options of career choices (Evans & Herr, 1991).

The experiences of African Americans in the United States are fully captured through critical race theory that provides a framework for contextualising the epistemological worldview of the experiences of a group of people that have been subjected to racism, discrimination, and marginalisation (Jean-Marie, Williams, & Sherman, 2009). Critical race theorists have pointed to “the malleability, resilience, and opportunism of the category of ‘race’ and ‘race thinking’” (Mir, Toor, & Mir, 2015, p. 506) from being biologically grounded to a socially constructed concept used by dominant groups to oppress people of colour. According to Jean-Marie et al. (2009), a critical race theory framework allows for an exploration of the intersection of race, class, and gender through storytelling. Storytelling enables the naming of one’s own reality. For instance, in a world in which race and racism permeates all of what we experience, telling

stories reveals to others the salience of cultural, social, and personal values and behaviours that are central to one's identity and how experiences are interpreted. This view therefore challenges the dominant discourses in the structures and processes of, for example, education that marginalise and oppress minority groups such as African American women whose experiences have been misinterpreted, omitted and devalued (e.g. Jean-Marie et al. 2009).

Similarly, across most African countries, colonialism, patriarchy, discrimination, culture and traditions have had an impact on women's workforce participation. These experiences have prompted the growth of scholarly interest in African feminisms through for example, the African Feminist Initiative. Such intellectual collectives aim to bring to the fore the co-existence of multiple African feminisms, while at the same time, seeking solidarity by differentiating the standpoints of African feminist scholars from Black American feminisms (see Decker & Baderoon, 2018). To illustrate, Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) argue that the status of African women is shaped by Africa's past and present. They posit postcolonial theories as offering a means of unpacking the profound negative effects of colonial penetration in Africa since the early nineteenth century.

There is a sparse literature on the work experiences of black women in many African countries. According to Nolde (1991) black women in South Africa suffered a triple yoke of oppression by gender, race, and class throughout the apartheid regime. Here, psychologically, apartheid has been predominantly understood as a complex set of intergroup relations involving forms of deliberate social engineering (Nolde, 1991). Black women in South Africa have found themselves in the low skilled, low paid, and many of the least protected jobs. They also experience additional impediments, both in law and in custom, alongside the discriminatory practices faced by groups of women in many countries around the world, many of which have their roots in the past. Nolde (1991) notes however, that through employment, black women in South Africa can assert and empower themselves. Sullivan and Stevens (2010) found that the nature of black women's social locations within South African society in both the past and the present drew on both hegemonic and subordinated discourses of race and gender. Further, Jaga, Arabandi, Bagraim, and

Mdlongwa (2018) explain how patriarchy co-existed with colonialism to create a racial and gendered hierarchy that resulted in differentiated employment locations for each group in society under the apartheid state.

In a review of women in Zimbabwe, patriarchal racist settler colonialism influenced the position of women at independence in 1980 (Gordon, 1994). Gordon (1994) draws on a Government of Southern Rhodesia Commission of Enquiry, (1956 cited in Gordon (1994), to highlight how patriarchy mediated by race allowed white women to benefit from the exploitation of both black men and women. Black women suffered the effects of both sexism and racism. The philosophical undertone of the white, colonial masters relegated all women to the background, they were rendered invisible and deliberately neglected. Consequently, many Black indigenous women, were stripped of their traditional titles and oppressed. White women were considered unsuitable for the rigors of public life, unable to vote, to contest elections, to sit in parliaments, or to be employed in the civil service (Gordon, 1994). In terms of the economy, colonialism promoted the rule of a few white men over all women, which was contrary to the initial division of labour between Black men and women during the pre-colonial era. The British administrators created an institutional structure in which there were no women at any level of the administration. Mba, (1982 cited in Chimakonam and Du Toit 2018) shows how this form of patriarchy spread beyond Zimbabwe to for example, Southern Nigeria where the colonial administrators did not expect or wish to find women involved in government.

2.3. African women's workforce participation in Africa

In a discussion looking at women in the professions Broadbent et al. (2018) signal the importance of conceptualizing disadvantage as a multi-layered, multi-dimensional phenomenon that has at its heart the interlocking structures of gender ideology, employers' actions and workers' preferences. In the African context there is a paucity of research literature that identifies the political and institutional disadvantage that women, including those who work in the professions, face in employment. Hence, the purpose of this

section is to review a selection of limited literature available to understand something of the contextual history and background to African women's workforce participation.

Wekwete (2014) argues Africa is characterised by gender inequality in many areas including economic participation. This has seen women marginalised in all sectors of the economy including the labour market, training and education. Women are over-represented in the care economy, work on small pieces of land, and they dominate the informal sector where they are more likely to be part of the unmonitored cash economy. For this reason Wekwete (2014) notes that much of their work is either excluded from national accounts or is unpaid. In the agriculture sector, women's progress to empowerment is hampered by bottlenecks related to land ownership, lack of access to agricultural inputs and lack of credit facilities in the businesses they run. The majority of work women undertake is unpaid labour, hence women's care work and activities engaged in the informal and agricultural sectors are not officially recognized. Women, according to any statistical measures of employment, are largely, invisible (Wekwete, 2014). It is widely acknowledged that earning an income can increase a woman's autonomy thereby enhancing their economic and social status. Few women are however, employed in the formal sector and those that are, occupy low-status jobs. The gender wage gaps and discrimination in the formal sector have limited women's participation. (Wekwete, 2014). Similarly, Taylor (2018) found that while black women continue to do much of the work, they receive very little training, and control sparse areas of land. Typically, women are involved in processing food, managing the home, caring for children and the elderly, and marketing and selling surplus products (Taylor, 2018). While in pre-colonial African societies, the different roles men and women played were often demarcated, but also were complementary and such balancing was vital for the society to prosper. Men classically gathered the harvest, hunted for food, and defended the community with arms. A woman's primary role within many African societies was to cherish family life and be a 'respectable' wife and mother (Taylor, 2018).

Booyesen and Nkomo (2010) state that despite a majority of the economically active population being black South Africans, the occupational representation of race and gender groups in the labour force

largely reflects the pattern that existed during apartheid. White males still dominate top and senior management positions followed by white females, black males and black females. Sinden (2017) states that though the South African government claims that extensive progress has been made to ensure equal employment opportunities for all women, the existent literature shows that progress towards equality in the workplace in South Africa is insufficient and slow. Poverty and extreme inequality is widespread. Sinden (2017) identifies several explanatory factors such as a higher prevalence of temporary contracts among women, differences in educational attainment, and labour market occupational segregation. Another factor behind higher unemployment rates for women is that women are more likely than men to exit and re-enter the labour market due to family commitments. Career interruption for child-rearing results in longer periods of unemployment while men are more likely to move directly from one job to another (Sinden, 2017).

2.4. Women's empowerment in African countries

To empower women allows them the opportunity to participate fully in social, political and economic spheres of life (Manuere & Phiri, 2018). The available literature shows there is still a huge gap in the equality of many African women compared to African men. Recognition of this has seen several initiatives being established to empower women. One outcome is groups of women having a voice by being able to participate and make decisions. In Zimbabwe, Kapungu (2008) talks of one programme through the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN) that initiated Gender Budgeting. This initiative aimed to contribute to the reduction of gender inequalities and to promote gender sensitive development and improvement of the welfare of Zimbabwean citizens. A review of the Gender Budget in 2008 found an increase in participation by women in decision making processes. Further, women had access to career stability and leadership positions, even in the Defense Forces which previously had been a male dominated area (Kapungu, 2008).

Looking at South Africa, Jaga et al. (2018) highlight that even after the dawn of democracy in 1994, South African workplaces had white men in leadership. To deliver equity and to rectify the long-

suffered disadvantages in employment experienced by other races within South Africa, the Employment Equity Act and affirmative action were legislated to open up doors for everyone including black men, all women, (black and white), all Indian people a group referred to as 'coloureds' and people with disabilities. In most workplaces, a few Black men, were employed in roles previously occupied by white men. Most workplaces opened up to the employment of white women, but as a consequence, Black women were not employed in higher paid roles (Jaga et al.2018).

Wittmann (2012) posits that people's actual working conditions have not changed much in South Africa though there has been change to the legal situation. Despite white women experiencing discrimination due to their sex, they continue to be part of the privileged minority of the population. In South Africa gender activism, the complexity of discrimination such as ethnicity, class, and gender and the relationship between the struggle for gender equality and the struggle of communities, is well understood. Gender and empowerment activities are at present not only bound up with the individual self-realization of women but also include a general improvement of the socio-economic situation of the marginalised communities in which many people continue to live (Wittmann, 2012).

So, in the countries of Southern Africa despite Government intervention through structural programmes and pockets of women's activism, the problems still remain the same. Simiyu, Namusonge, and Sakwa (2016) see gender inequality in the distribution of resources, access to opportunities and power imbalances still being exhibited. Cultural and patriarchal tendencies including customary practices relating to land and inheritance, amongst others, continue to hinder the power of women to exercise choices due to gender inequality and discrimination. In the next section a selection of literature will review the situation of women in the New Zealand workplace.

2.5. Women and workforce participation in New Zealand

In New Zealand society, women have always been active and influential, but this has not guaranteed equality, politically or socially. Free public primary education in 1877 for girls alongside boys was the first formal step towards improving the status of women in New Zealand (Davies & Jackson, 1993). Simon-Kumar (2011) comments on how New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote in 1893 and from then on, women's activism has been visible, examples being the temperance movement, within trade unions, the 1970's feminist movement and alongside these, independent Māori women's organisations. While New Zealand may pride itself in being the first country where women succeeded in getting the vote, Davies and Jackson (1993) comment that historically, colonial New Zealand was no different from other countries in terms of low pay for women with domesticity being a key area of paid employment for many single women. Maori women's first encounter with work outside their family was often as domestic servants in missionary homes where they were not often paid cash but were provided with food and clothes. According to Simon-Kumar (2011), the first half of the 1960s brought a large number of female migrants from the Pacific Islands. During this era, Maori women together with Pakeha, and then by the 1960's Pacific Island and Asian migrant women joined to experience a different and varied participation in the labour force.

Statistics New Zealand (2017) show the main industries where women are employed include health care and social assistance, scientific, technical, administrative and support services, education and training. The overall participation rate of women in paid work is 63% (Statistics New Zealand, 2017, see figure 1). According to Ryan, Ravenswood and Pringle (2014) internationally, compared to other Organisation for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD) countries, New Zealand has the seventh highest rate in female part- time work. This in part, reflects women still being responsible for the majority of domestic unpaid work, in particular, the care of children (Ryan, Ravenswood & Pringle, 2014) Moreover, New Zealand has systemic occupational segregation with 80 percent of women in occupations such as nurses, caregivers, primary school teachers and secretaries. Traditionally male dominated occupations such as

construction, engineering information technology plumbing and motor mechanics have very few women (Ministry for Women, 2019).

Women are also under-represented in leadership roles in New Zealand (Ministry for Women, 2019). As a consequence, evidence suggests that a significant number of highly experienced women leave the workforce, start a small business or find themselves unable to get past senior management roles and move into top leadership positions (Ministry for Women, 2019). The current Labour government has committed to having more women in public state sector leadership roles. For example, there has been an increase in the number of women on public sector boards to a record level of 47.4 percent for 2018, up from 45.7 percent in 2017 (Ministry for Women, 2019). The same cannot be said for private sector corporate boards which in 2018 sat at about 22.5 percent of women (NZX, 2019) with progress to equal representation best described as ‘glacial’ (Withers, 2017).

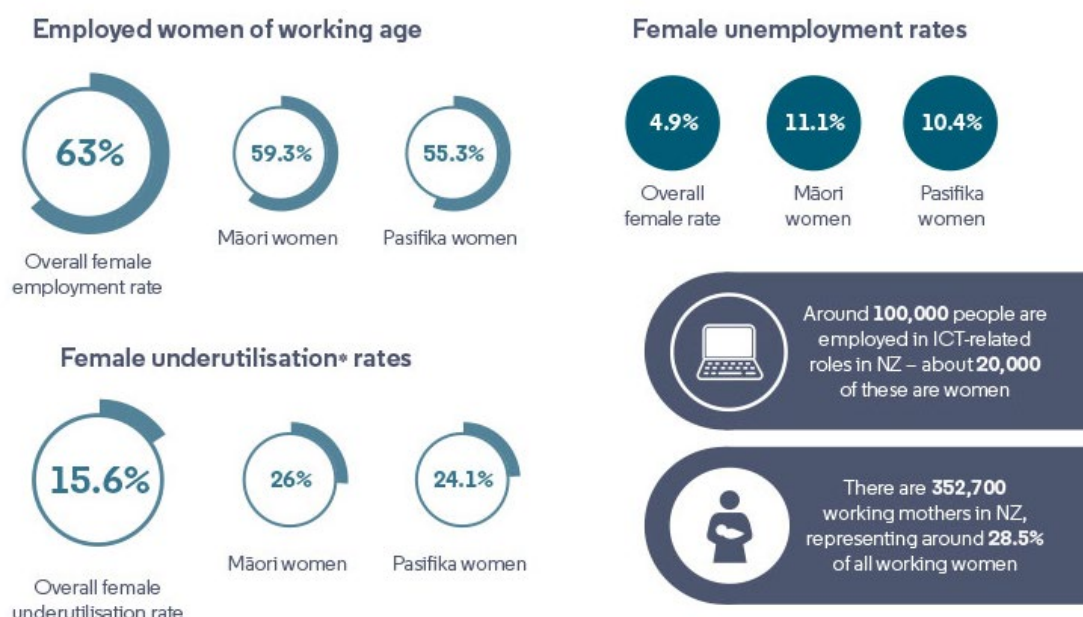


Figure 1. Women in the Workforce 2017

Source: Statistics New Zealand (2017)

The participation of women in the New Zealand labour market is attributed to some favourable conditions that have emerged through legislation, and then improved over time (e.g. Employment Relations

Act, 2000). Conditions such as the current twenty-six weeks paid parental leave, the negotiated availability of flexible working arrangements in some employment sectors, improvements to pay equity claims and minimum wage requirements can make it attractive for women to participate in the workforce (Ministry of Women, 2019).

2.6. Challenges and social experiences of African women in New Zealand

According to Adelowo (2012), there is little research available on African women in New Zealand. Nevertheless, by being women of African descent and migrants, they face the possibility of being subjected to an extra blanket of racism. In one of the few studies on why African women have migrated to New Zealand, Adelowo, Smythe, and Nakhid (2016) identify the following reasons: economic, political, education, professional development and because friends and relatives were already in New Zealand.

Adelowo (2012) noted that career development was the main purpose for African women to migrate to New Zealand particularly through educational achievement. Reflecting on her personal experiences since migrating to New Zealand, Adelowo (2012) was told by other African migrants to go and train as a caregiver because that is “our job”. She was advised that she would not be able to secure a job with her Master of Social Work certificate she had from Nigeria as New Zealand employers cannot be forced to accept qualifications gained elsewhere if they are not willing to. Reflecting on this experience Adelowo (2012) sees this as the impact of internalised racism. One consequence is that some African women in New Zealand feel that they will not be able to find employment that is suitable to their pre-migration qualifications. Brown and Segrist (2016) argue that internalized racism is an inescapable element that marginalized racial populations have ‘accepted’ as a result of racial discrimination. Odedra, Blackwood, and Thorn (2018) concur, finding that acculturation difficulties, language and communication barriers, credential recognition and discrimination explain the underutilisation of the skills of migrant women.

In a similar manner to other groups of migrants, the African women who are the focus of this study undertook their education in English in their home countries. Adelowo (2012) comments that it is their English accent that could hamper their efforts to gain employment and career prospects and aspirations. She noted that African English accents marked them as immigrant and African while also experiencing language as a problem in their daily life. In terms of employment, Adelowo (2012) stated that almost all the women in her study spoke extensively of experiencing inter-personal and institutional racism, identifying racism as one of the stressors they had experienced since migrating to New Zealand. Some participants identified discrimination by interview panels, at work, colleagues and managers having no confidence in them because they were the first or only Black person they had ever dealt with. Participants also indicated how they were labelled as overqualified because of their higher education qualifications to improve their career prospects and felt they had to work harder to demonstrate their employment was deserved (Adelowo, 2012).

Hajro, Stahl, Clegg, and Lazarova (2019) note how acculturation requires adaptation to unfamiliar social and environmental conditions, usually producing intense physical and psychological stress. They define acculturation as the “process of change that occurs in the behavioural repertoire, value system, and personal identity of individuals upon migration” (Hajro et al., 2019, p. 332). Adelowo (2012) found African women face similar issues through having to cope with social acculturation stress, overcoming differences in cultural values, beliefs, and practices often associated with the realization of being labelled as members of a minority group. They also experience being uprooted, a loss of identity, unhappiness, and anger, which often leads to depression (Adelowo, 2012).

If African women are coming directly from Africa it can be difficult and can take a very long time to adjust to the new society. Moreover, African migrants tend to want to stay within their African community rather than interacting with New Zealanders and other cultures (personal observation). Odedra et al. (2018) argue that migrants failure to culturally assimilate into their host countries can cause physical and mental issues that can have a negative impact on their career. Additionally, a lack of social and

professional networks in the host country means that skilled migrants are disconnected from valuable groups that are crucial for career progression (Aure, 2013). When they move to a host country such as New Zealand the absence of support and networks has a negative impact on an immigrants' settlement. Adelowo (2012) indicated that women were able to find social support from within the African community to cope with stress after migrating. Conversely, there was no indication of available networks on a professional level. Odedra et al. (2018) discuss how the lack of social and professional networks in the host country means that skilled migrants are disconnected from valuable groups that are crucial for career progression. It is to the notion of career that this literature review now turns.

2.7. Understanding the meaning of 'Career'

Careers link the relationship between people and their organisations and how these fluctuate overtime (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989). In the contemporary setting Sullivan and Baruch (2009) discuss the influences of a range of contextual factors such as national culture, economy, political environment and personal factors, such as relationships with others, and how these can influence an individual's career. Despite a broadening of the concept and recognition of the multiple meanings of career (eg., Sullivan & Baruch, 2009) studies in the traditional 'linear' model and non-traditional models of career (e.g protean; boundaryless; kaleidoscope; patchwork) still appear anchored to male, work-centric assumptions of the past. The difference is the professional 'worker' is just as likely to be female, working within organisational career systems and processes that may limit or constrain their choices (Ryan, 2012). Given this and changes in the paid work environment the following definition encompasses the conceptualisation of a contemporary career:

"Career is defined as a unique pattern over an individual's life span, this includes work-related or other experiences such as different employers and industries, different jobs across different levels and occupations. This definition recognizes both physical movements, such as between levels, jobs, employers, occupations, and industries, as well as the interpretation of the individual, including his or her perceptions of career events and outcomes" (Sullivan and Baruch 2009, p.1543).

Wesarat, Sharif, and Majid (2014) discuss career management as being a key factor for accomplishing both personal and organisational goals. Moon and Choi (2017) argue that the new way of thinking has moved the responsibility for career success from the organisation to the individual. While many young women still maintain the value traditionally placed on family and nurturing roles, they are as a group, more career-oriented, with high educational aspirations and greater extrinsic ambitions. The need to find a way to best invest in paid work and family life has become more intense in recent years (Kim, Willem, & Linda, 2006). Young and O'Brien (2018), discuss that the combination of work, family, career and the intersection of gender and race-related oppression contributes to additional stress for employed women of colour. For women of African descent, sexism and racism are career barriers that research has explored but these studies tend to be based on a single-axis of marginalization of either race or gender. (Young & O'Brien, 2018)

2.7.1. Women's determination of career paths

Relationships and responsibilities such as spouse's careers, childbearing, and caring for the elderly family members tend to shape women's lives. The organisational career as experienced by groups of men is distinctly different to how women's careers evolve (Clarke, 2011). Men often do not have to worry about their paid work careers when raising children because their spouse is doing the 'extra' work for them, or they do not acknowledge the constraints on their life because of the risk of losing status Priola (2007 cited in (Neale & Özkanlı, 2010)). The question is, are women in the career they want, or do they find themselves in 'jobs' due to the conflicting demands of paid work and home? The social and economic changes determine the level of participation of women in the workforce and a husband's earning potential also has an impact on the woman's work and childbearing decisions, (Damaske, 2011).

Correll (2001 cited in Whitmarsh and Wentworth (2012) observed that occupational segregation is usually clear at an early stage of a career path. Occupational segregation is based on the cultural conceptions of gender that serve to constrain the early career-relevant choices of men and women.

According to Whitmarsh and Wentworth (2012) the personality of the mother, her educational status, and attachment style can influence their daughters' early career planning (Whitmarsh & Wentworth, 2012). Similarly, according to the Simmonds School of Management (2012), gender roles define what women and men are expected to do when scholars first explored the impact of gendered social roles on the career choices of men and women. In this article, it was mentioned that when scholars turned their attention to children and adolescents, it was noted that children's gender role stereotypes were established as early as the age of two. For instance during these decisive years, children are likely to see movies where only 19% of characters "on the job" are women; watch television where 27% of the women, compared to 1% of the men, are doing housework, and read books where men are depicted in twice as many careers as women, in other words, and without thinking, growing up in this gendered media landscape has an effect on how children think about their career potential. In New Zealand, (Kellner, 1999, as cited in Michelle (2012), added that media products provide materials which forge our identities in regards to our sense of selfhood, our notion of what it means to be male or female, our sense of class, ethnicity and race, nationality and sexuality.

Whitmarsh and Wentworth (2012) discuss how girls have been discouraged from choosing science and technology careers that are traditionally dominated by men. They identify different psychosocial factors that include lack of career information, lack of role models, concerns about juggling career and family, sex-role stereotypes, and limited psychosocial support. Though some women have chosen their own careers, Whitmarsh and Wentworth (2012) note that women's career choices continue to reflect lower levels of aspiration, educational attainment and achievement as the central priority is that their career will need to fit around family responsibilities. Cook, Heppner, and O'Brien (2002) note that career development theory reflects the worldview of men who are able to separate work and family roles, have a linear career trajectory, see work as central to their sense of personal worth, and identify their primary values as individualism and autonomy. Kossek, Su, and Wu (2017) discuss that women's careers are a multilevel, multidisciplinary dynamic phenomenon as occupations generate role expectations for each gender that are coming from the

differences in role occupancy in society and family. All these factors are generally applicable for women and this is before race and class are considered which adds further complexity to women's career choices and decisions.

2.7.2. Defining leadership

Defining leadership is not a one-size-fits-all process (Almaki, Silong, Idris, & Wahiza, 2016) Jackson and Parry (2018, p. 9) define leadership as “an interactive process involving leading and following within a distinctive place to create a mutually important identity, purpose and direction”. This definition is more relational than the dominant ‘power over’ definitions that are popularized in many Management and practitioner texts (Jackson & Parry, 2018). To help understand the complexities of leadership Jackson and Parry (2018) offer six different ways or lenses in which to understand leadership: position, person, process, performance, place and purpose (Jackson & Parry, 2018).

- Leadership through position: who has the formal power to create leadership?
- Leadership through person: who has the informal power to create leadership?
- Leadership through process: how is leadership created?
- Leadership through performance: what is achieved through leadership?
- Leadership through place: where is leadership created?
- Leadership through purpose: why is leadership created?

According to Eacott (2011) leaders need to understand the collective unconscious assumptions of their work by being thoughtful about the context of where they work, including the value placed on their work by a diverse range of societal forces and power relations. It involves various aspects such as interpreting multiple sources of information, assessing alternative view points, and developing a reasoned and defensible argument for practice (Eacott, 2011). Hogg, van Knippenberg, and Rast Iii (2012) explain that leadership is a universal feature of humankind and can significantly change our lives.

2.7.3. Understanding the social construction of Leadership

The way we construct meaning about events are based on theories and social interactions we have with others and shapes and influences the value of information that we receive. The social construction of leadership happens at either the individual level, through situational and individual difference variables or at group level, when shared conceptions of leadership are common which then link and unify members of the group (Shamir, Pillai, Bligh, & Uhl-Bien, 2007). Ruben and Gigliotti (2016) discuss the way individuals think about their approach to leadership in a group, in organisations and other settings and how they make sense of their dynamics of social life. How one understands his or her own contributions to leading others and to being led by others in a variety of contexts, including work, home, and the community is based on individual's perspective on leadership.

In explaining social construction of leadership, leaders and followers often have different perceptions of the narrative constructs of organisational activities. These social constructionist approaches to leadership are not focused on identifying the attributes of the individual but how individuals construct reality through the activities of other individuals and groups (Konja, Matic, & Lalic, 2014).

Hart (2016) notes how some individuals might aspire in a non-specified way to want “a better life,” whereas others might strive for specific transformative social change, such as a change in the law. Individuals might also set their aspirations in relation to what they know they can achieve or they might set aspirations more ambitiously to strive for ways of being and doing they are unsure of realising. Fritz (2017, p. 1019) defined leadership aspiration as the personal interest for reaching a leadership position and the will to accept the offer to take over such a position and the formal power this denotes.

2.7.4. Women and Leadership

Do women have to act like men to be a leader? Do women have to work extra hard to gain key formal leader positions? Talented women are often depicted as too ambitious with gender politics harshly constructing them through patriarchal stereotypes (Mamokgethi, 2015). Carbajal (2018) argues women must adopt male standards of leadership, with those keen to become leaders being expected to act like men. Men are stereotypically depicted as rational and objective while female stereotypes suggest women are emotional and subjective. Other characteristics attributed to women are being interdependent, cooperative, receptive and accepting and being aware of patterns while looking at a whole picture and context. Neale and Özkanlı (2010) discussed that this stereotyping of gendered roles can hinder a woman's progression in the workplace hierarchy as they are overlooked in the promotions process. For example, in New Zealand, universities are dominated by white males, Maori women must cope with being female as well as Maori (Neale & Özkanlı, 2010).

Yoder (2001) discusses how women are effective leaders despite the fact that women's leadership roles are often perceived in gendered terms. Characteristics of men and women are different in the way they lead, and that leadership does not occur in a genderless vacuum. Yoder (2001) further explains that effectiveness is not the same for men and women and that there is a need to explore the basic relationship between what leaders do and how effective they are as this depends on the contexts in which the leader operates.

2.7.5. Leadership and African women

Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) reviewed the literature on women, leadership and organisations over a 30 year period. They found that while there have been numerous studies on this topic, more specific studies of African women leaders are lacking, meaning there is little understanding of the experiences of African women leaders who occupy leadership or management roles.

Pheko (2014) shows that in Botswana, the literature is mainly focused on the legislation about gender development and equality and socio-economic challenges. However, some research findings suggest that societal norms and values might have more impact on an individual's career than the legal framework (Pheko, 2014).

Kiamba (2008) highlights that in politics, the marginalization of women is because men are in the majority and monopolize the decision-making structures. Also, inherent patriarchal structures are an underlying problem for women, and this has been the difficulty for women when dealing with state and the party processes which control and shape the lives of people. According to Sadie (2005) the role and status of women in African society are still tied to traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes. Many women in this system find it difficult to distance themselves from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. As noted earlier, the woman's role is typically a homemaker despite women's education and entry into the job market, while the man is still depicted as the bread winner, head of the household with an inalienable right to a public life. This domestic sphere and pervasive cultural attitudes confine and constrain women's identity and is one of the main barriers to women's entry into politics. African women's participation in the labour market and the choice of careers is influenced by the earlier socialisation practices for girls that emphasize their role as mothers and wives. This is deep rooted within the culture and traditions within their community (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009).

According to Kiamba (2008) a further compounding feature is that women oppose other women leaders. In an interview with one African woman (BBC News, 2005) she saw the potential for women to bring change but outlined her thoughts on why there are so few women in positions of power. She spoke of women seeing each other as a threat due to scarce resources, a lack of unity among women, being jealous of one another and also the fear of raising a voice. Pheko (2014) concurs with this statement arguing that some of these negative behaviours also include jealousy and resentment, especially from other women.

2.7.6. New Zealand and Global comparisons of women and Leadership

According to a report by Grant Thornton (2018) the business community has made significant progress in the period of 2017 to 2018 to make sure women are represented at the top. There has been a significant rise from 66% to 75% of companies with at least one woman in senior management. While globally, there has been a significant change, New Zealand has taken two firm steps back. The results in New Zealand are more dire with an all-time low of 18% of women in top leadership positions since the report began in 2004 (31%), compared to 20% in 2017. According to Grant Thornton (2018), this could suggest that private sector businesses are concentrating on box ticking rather than achieving tangible progress in this area. . The tone has to be set from the top and there is a need for meaningful behavior changes at all levels of a business as no progress can be made towards creating a real gender balance just because there may be diversity policies in place. The diagram, figure 1 and 2. below shows Africa to be leading in 2018 with the highest percentage with at least one woman in senior management.

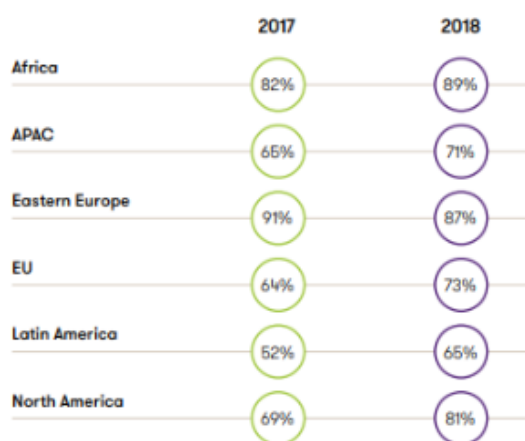


Figure 2: Percentage of businesses with at least one woman in senior management

Source: Grant Thornton Report (2018)

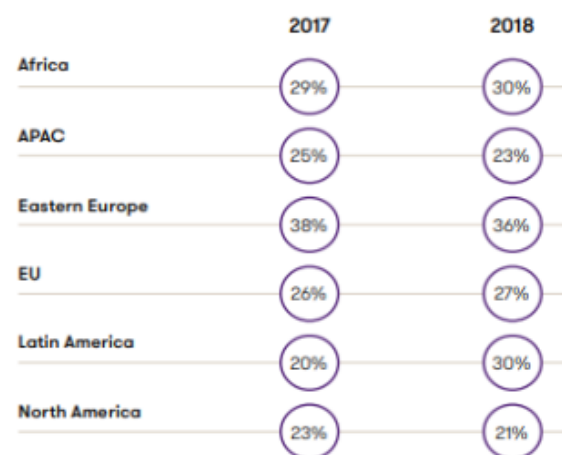


Figure 3: Proportion of senior roles held by women

2.8. Immigrants, migration and the New Zealand labour market

Different groups and communities migrate in different ways and for different reasons. These include education, political and economic reasons, a better life, exile or family or personal reasons (Bhugra, 2003).

As mentioned by Meares, Bell, and Peace (2010), a focus on skilled migration in New Zealand, reflecting international trends was facilitated by the entry of growing numbers of migrants from an increasing range of countries. High levels of international migration are likely to continue due to global economic inequality and demographic imbalances between the aging populations of the developed industrialised countries including New Zealand. Large numbers of people from less industrialised countries of Asia, Africa, and South and Central America who are in the working age group means that migration is likely to continue. Most of the policy debates and discussions about migrants are ‘genderless’ and if the policies will work for men, they are also presumed to work for women and children. Discussions however should be targeted at better understanding how the economic experiences of migration to New Zealand differs for women and men and how it affects the careers and family lives of male and female migrants (Meares et al., 2010). In support of this, Adelowo, Smythe, and Nakhid (2016) add that women are traditionally seen as family dependants that migrate only to join their husbands and they are often classified as a homogenous group along with low-waged migrants and not included in groups of highly skilled (women) who migrate on their own account and merits.

According to Adelowo et al. (2016) since the 1840’s immigrants who were encouraged to migrate were expected to adapt without difficulty to New Zealand life. To achieve this, prospective immigrants were to complete an application form in the English language according to the Immigration Restriction Act 1899. This was a way to discourage migrants, who were not of British origin. Changes to New Zealand's immigration policies from 1978 became slightly more multicultural and humane, particularly through provisions allowing refugees to be reunited with their families. Also Simon-Kumar (2018), highlights how there was a preference for skilled migrants throughout the 1990s, who desired to settle and contribute to New Zealand society as permanent residents and, in due course, as citizens. Latterly, a diversification of pathways of entry for new migrants led to ethnic migrant women entering the country as either principal applicants filling skills shortages, or as secondary applicants accompanying their spouses.

There were not many Black African migrants prior to 1990 but as mentioned earlier, the political and economic circumstances including the outbreak of wars and famine in a number of African countries led to the adoption of a formal refugee quota in 1987 and a consequent surge of African migrants arriving in New Zealand. Other Black African immigrants came to New Zealand for educational purposes and as skilled migrants (Adelowo et al., 2016). According to Refugee Services (cited in Tuwe (2018), African professionals who came to New Zealand in search of employment and a better life were mostly from English speaking countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria.

2.9. Conclusion

In this chapter, literature relating to the background of women of African descent and the interlocking nature of their identities was discussed. A review of a selection of literature about women and leadership and African women and leadership highlights the commonalities and different challenges this group faces compared to other groups of women. Literature from the last thirty years has been reviewed to consider the background and status of women in general and how African women are positioned within this context. New Zealand labour market participation was also reviewed to give an insight of the labour market participation of women and how African women are also placed within the labour market. The discussion on literature relating to the career and social experiences of African women as migrants in New Zealand also gives an insight into the additional challenges faced by this group while aspiring to be leaders. What became clear in the literature review is that African women's interlocking identities has a major impact on career choices and progression. While most women experience sexism at some stage(s) in the personal and professional lives, women of African descent do encounter an extra layer of discrimination with notions of patriarchy and cultural and social traditions creating additional barriers to career advancement. Though some African countries are changing, the pace of change is very slow. In the chapter that follows my research philosophy, methodology and methods used to collect and analyse the data will be discussed.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Qualitative research methods are used to answer questions about experience, meaning and perspective of participants. Qualitative research techniques are many and varied and include semi-structured interviews, small-group discussions and in-depth interviews (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey, 2016). As mentioned by Moser and Korstjens (2017) qualitative research has been defined as the investigation of phenomena, through the collection of rich narrative materials using a flexible research design in an in-depth and holistic fashion. Its aim is to provide an in-depth insight and understanding of real-world problems. In this research a focus will be on uncovering some underlying hidden issues African women face in the New Zealand workforce that are under-researched. The qualitative approach will explore their career experiences to shed light on why few women of African descent are in leadership positions despite the fact they have the necessary qualifications and experience to successfully undertake senior leadership roles.

A suitable framework for this qualitative research is an interpretive approach using an intersectional sensitive methodology that recognises the multiple positioning that an individual holds. This chapter begins with a discussion on research philosophy, the philosophical positioning of this research and appropriate methodology. The concept of intersectionality in feminist theory is then outlined and defined in relation to the research study. Further discussion on methodology follows and the chapter concludes with an explanation of the actual research process that I (the researcher) followed i.e. the participant recruitment process and the collection and analysis of the stories.

3.2. Research Philosophy

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) explained that research philosophy lays the foundation of what one is doing when embarking on a research study and they explain this as a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge. These assumptions include epistemological assumptions. According

to Al-Saadi (2014, p. 2) epistemology is a way of looking at the world and making sense of it. It involves how one defines ‘knowledge’ and embodies a certain understanding of what that knowledge entails. These assumptions shape the way a researcher approaches a research study i.e. how they understand the research question, the appropriate methodology and methods used including the gathering, analysis and interpretation of findings. According to Zukauskas, Vveinhardt, and Andriukaitienė (2018) the assumption is perceived as an initial reasoning statement however it is based on the theorising person’s knowledge and insights that emerge as a product of intellectual activity. Research philosophy is therefore a development of research assumptions, its knowledge, and nature.

Jean-Marie et al. (2009) posit that the common experiences of Black women are drawn from an historical connection between them and the fundamental elements of an Afrocentric epistemology. This Afrocentric epistemology originates from the richness of their African roots that inform what they believe to be true about themselves and their experiences of oppression resulting from colonialism, slavery, apartheid, imperialism, and other systems of racial domination. Black communities throughout the Diaspora share these material conditions that cultivated Afrocentric values within them. Black women’s Afrocentric epistemology deconstructs dominant ideologies that justify, support, and rationalize the interests of those in power. Also highlighted by Ani (2013) there was unwillingness on the western colonial powers to find meaning in the ideas, values and systems that run counter to their privilege.

3.3. Philosophical position

This research is based on the assumption that women of African descent in New Zealand organisations are not viewed the same way as other employees as their rate of career development and advancement is limited or non-existent. It is argued that women of African descent are generally not the preferred candidate in organisational appointment processes. Indeed, this experience is so embedded in the actual career experiences of African women that it impacts on their confidence and self-belief to an extent that they fear they are incapable of career advancement. The limited literature about the experiences of African women

in New Zealand, (Adelowo, 2012) points to racism, sexism and to some extent internalised racism while working in organisations. Internalised racism as explained by David, Schroeder, and Fernandez (2019) is when an individual instills characteristics such as values, images, and ideologies perpetuated by the White dominant society about one's racial group, leading to feelings of self-doubt, disgust, and disrespect for one's race or oneself.

This process of exploring and understanding according to Saunders et al. (2009) requires the researcher to refine the skill of reflexivity so that they question their own thinking and actions while learning to examine their own beliefs with the same scrutiny as they would apply to the beliefs of others. Reflexivity is defined as:

The process through a researcher recognizes, examines and understands how his or her own social background and assumptions can intervene in the research process. It is sensitivity to the important situational dynamics between the researcher and the researched that can impact on the creation of knowledge. Researchers can use the process of reflexivity as a tool to assist them in studying across differences (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, p. 146)

This position is based on my own observations as an African woman that career progression does not move fast enough even though individuals have qualifications and experiences suitable for advancement into a senior internal position or into a leadership role. Although it is up to individuals to design their own careers, despite some limited organisational career management practices, individuals are now more driven by their own career aspirations (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Thus they become more self-directed and this process is driven by individual reflection and re-evaluation. African women's attitude to career has been shaped by a different work context prior to their New Zealand experience. According to Kiamba (2008), a number of factors such as traditional prejudice, social pressures, fear of becoming more capable than men have resulted in women shying away from demanding jobs and consequently women's sensitivity to people's misconceptions combine to restrict their desire to become a successful career woman. Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) also stated that these women are also subjected to more scrutiny and have to outperform others to be able to be recognised.

3.4. Methodology

The methodology used in this research draws on an interpretive approach to fully explore the research question(s). Saunders et al. (2009) argue that interpretivism enables new, richer understandings of social worlds and contexts. Interpretivists are critical of the positivist attempts to discover definite, universal laws that are generalizable and apply to everybody. Because people are different and from different cultural backgrounds, circumstances and times, they create and experience diverse social realities and elicit different meanings and understanding. This approach draws on individual experiences to construct and interpret an understanding from the gathered data. Interpretivism supports scholars in terms of exploring their world by interpreting the understanding of individuals (Thanh, 2015). By exploring the career stories of women who have migrated from Zimbabwe, Sudan and Kenya, this research aims to understand the intersectional and multiple positioning that women of African descent hold. The research makes sense of these complex and competing identities in terms of understanding participant's career and leadership aspirations and experiences.

3.5. The concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory

Feminist epistemologies take the view that what a person knows is largely determined by their social position, as such women are regarded as an oppressed social class (Gray, 2018). Intersectionality has become an all-encompassing theory that expanded from being primarily a metaphor within structuralist feminist research (Carbin & Edenheim, 2013). In feminist theory, the relationship between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege has become the predominant way of conceptualizing intersectionality. This theory originates in anti-racist feminist critiques and is offered as a theoretical and political remedy to what is perhaps the most pressing problem facing contemporary feminism. Intersectionality theory has been celebrated as the most important contribution that women's studies has made so far (Carastathis, 2014).

The starting point for intersectional research according to most scholars was the late 1980s and almost every text on intersectionality refers to the American lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw (Carbin & Edenheim, 2013). It exposed how legal thinking, disciplinary knowledge production, and struggles for social justice were undermined by single axis thinking. Intersectionality has proved to be a productive concept over the intervening decades. It has been positioned in various disciplines such as history, sociology, literature, philosophy, and anthropology as well as in feminist studies, ethnic studies, queer studies, and legal studies (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013). Carbin and Edenheim (2013), state that Crenshaw's major point was to show how black women were excluded by white feminists from the feminist movement by setting a white, middle-class agenda and how, at the same time, black women were not fully recognized within the anti-racist movement because of a male bias. The American radical black feminist critique influenced Crenshaw and another theorist Patricia Hill Collins and used intersectionality as a metaphor for different sections of power structures interacting. Intersectionality can recognize anyone in at least one of the categories, making it a profoundly personal (Carbin & Edenheim, 2013).

3.5.1. Defining Intersectionality

This approach by Crenshaw (1989) states that Black women are predicated on a discrete set of experiences that often does not accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender. They are sometimes excluded from feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse. By simply including Black women within an already established analytical structure does not solve these problems of exclusion. Any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated. This intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism (Crenshaw, 1989). Consequently, to embrace the experiences and concerns of Black women into feminist theory and anti-racist policy discourse, the entire framework that has been used as a basis for translating women's experience or the Black experience into concrete policy demands must be reconsidered and reorganized (Crenshaw, 1989).

Walby, Armstrong, and Strid (2012) state that Crenshaw (1989) uses the concept of intersectionality to indicate how a lack of understanding of this intersection led to the marginalization of black women, and how the interactions of gender and race limit black women's access to the American labour market. Groups at the intersection of two or more identity categories are left out of focus in both analysis and politics. Crenshaw makes a distinction between structural intersectionality, that which concerns the intersection of unequal social groups and political intersectionality which concerns the intersection of political agendas and projects. Crenshaw (1989) also points to representative intersectionality as another platform that disadvantages minority groups like black women.

McCall (2005) stated that feminist researchers have been extremely aware that analyzing gender as single category has limitations. Some feminist critics initially alleged that feminism speaks universally for all women, In fact, as stated, feminists are possibly alone in the extent to which they have embraced intersectionality. As it appears, it could even be said that intersectionality has been the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies, in conjunction with related fields, has made so far (McCall, 2005).

Intersectionality according to Coleman, Bush, and Crawford (2012) is an aspect of diversity which looks at the individual as a particular case rather than an example of a category of diversity. Accordingly, a more complex picture is uncovered through the intersectionality of dimensions of diversity rather than focusing on one aspect only. While African women aspire to lead, the traditional leadership theories have suppressed and neutralised how gender and race/ethnic dimensions may impact on leadership and who gets to lead. These theories also include leadership stereotypes that are linked to white, male, heterosexual, middle class attributes (Showunmi et al., 2015).

According to Hill and Bilge (2016) this intersectionality approach analyses the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organisation of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the

complexity of the world and of themselves. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor. They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways.

3.5.2. Using Intersectionality as a methodology

This research practice mirrors the complexity of social life and raises unique and challenging methodological demands. In an attempt to address issues around complexity McCall (2005) came up with three approaches that deconstructs analytical categories in order to explore the complexity of intersectionality in social life.

- **Anticategorical complexity**

As mentioned by McCall (2005) This approach appears to have been the most successful in addressing issues of complexity. Social life is considered too complex, overflowing with multiple and fluid determinations of both subjects and structures. This category simplifies social fictions that produce inequalities in the process of producing differences judging by the fact that there is now great disbelief about the possibility of using categories in anything but a simplistic way. Carastathis (2014) discussed that social life is considered too complex therefore this approach deconstructs analytical categories.

- **Intercategorical complexity**

This approach is recommended by McCall (2005) because of its power to engage with the larger structures that generate inequalities. It requires the provisional adoption of existing analytical categories that scholars use to document the relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions, (Walby et al., 2012). Added by Carastathis (2014), this category ‘focuses on the complexity of relationships among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories

- **Intra-categorical complexity**

McCall (2005) stated that authors working in this manner tend to focus on people whose identity crosses the boundaries of traditionally constructed groups and on particular social groups at neglected points of intersection. Although this approach has the disadvantage of displacing the focus from the larger social processes and structures that might be causing the inequalities, it is done in order to reveal the complexity of lived experience within such groups. With this approach inspiration is drawn from Crenshaw's work in order to examine small groups that have not been previously analysed.

According to Walby et al. (2012) these approaches are problematic in that there are tendencies to neglect an analysis of the power of the actions of the dominant group within the category. The focus has been on the actions of the disadvantaged groups as the analysis of intersectionality, for instance, there has been a focus on the actions of white women rather than white men in the context of an intersectional issue facing black women. If we look at ethnicity, it is important not to neglect the role of racists in the politics of silencing ethnic minority women in various issues affecting them. As further mentioned, in order to understand the relationship between inequalities it is necessary to understand the nature of the social relations through which it is constituted ((Bhaskar, 1997) in (Walby et al., 2012). To address the nature of the relationship between sets of unequal social relations, the ontology of inequality needs to be specified as a prior step (Walby et al., 2012)

Hancock (2007) identifies three approaches to the study of race, gender, class and other categories of difference from a political science perspective. These include unitary, multiple and intersectional approaches as indicated in the figure 4. below.

	Unitary Approach	Multiple Approach	Intersectional Approach
Q1: How many categories are addressed?	One	More than one	More than one
Q2: What is the relationship posited between categories?	Category examined is primary	Categories matter equally in a predetermined relationship to each other	Categories matter equally; the relationship between categories is an open empirical question
Q3: How are categories conceptualized?	Static at the individual or institutional level	Static at the individual or institutional level	Dynamic interaction between individual and institutional factors
Q4: What is the presumed makeup of each category?	Uniform	Uniform	Diverse; members often differ in politically significant ways
Q5: What levels of analysis are considered feasible in a single analysis?	Individual <i>or</i> institutional	Individual <i>and</i> institutional	Individual <i>integrated</i> with institutional
Q6: What is the methodological conventional wisdom?	Empirical or Theoretical; Single method preferred; multiple method possible	Empirical or Theoretical; Single method sufficient; multiple method desirable	Empirical and Theoretical; Multiple method necessary and sufficient

Figure 4. Differences among approaches to study race, gender and class and other categories in political science.

Source: Hancock 2007

Bilge (2010) explained that Hancock's approach allows a more comprehensive answer to the questions of distributive justice, power and government towards a broader level of analysis, while still adhering to the need to analyse concrete and specific situations. Andersen (2008) in Choo and Ferree (2010) mentioned that the methodological emphasis focuses especially on differences of experience for subgroups within a category according to what Hancock's multiple intersections and McCall's intra-categorical approach. These approaches often generate lists of groups to be included as well as debates over the priority to be given to one or another intersectional location. Further, as stated by Choo and Ferree (2010), a methodological emphasis on inclusion sometimes undermines the study of difference by not giving sufficient attention to its relation to unmarked categories though the theory calls for critical consideration of the normative cases as well as the excluded or marginalised cases.

Reconceptualisation of intersectionality, Holvino (2010 as cited in Castro and Holvino 2016, p.330), proposed that social differences be studied as simultaneous processes of identities (how individuals

see themselves and are perceived by others in organisations), institutional processes (organisational structures and procedures that are taken for granted but perpetuate inequalities) and social practices (local and global influences and structures) in which organisational practices are embedded.

3.5.3. Intersectionality in this Research

The above literature gives an overview of both the significance and intellectual debate the surrounds intersectionality in feminism and gender studies today. While recognising its' importance and, at the same time, cognisant of its methodological complexity, in this master's level research, an intersectional sensitive approach is taken (see McBride, Hebson, & Holgate, 2015). This approach recognises where intersections occur, more specifically the simultaneous interplay between gender and any other categories of difference that emerge from the individual career stories of the participants. Concurrently, as modelled by Castro and Holvino (2016), this research recognizes the interplay between the macro, meso and micro levels needs to be addressed (see diagram below). As this research is being carried out in a New Zealand context, it is important to explore how the minority women of African descent socially construct notions and perceptions of career and leadership at the micro (individual) meso (organisational) and macro levels (country context).

While trying to understand the macro, meso and micro levels in levels in New Zealand as indicated in the diagram on figure 5 below, it is important to understand where women of African descent came into play within the New Zealand workforce. The traditionally constructed dominant groups in the New Zealand context in this research are the middle-class white males who have been long established in the workforce and make policies that impact on other identities including the African women who are a particular social group at neglected points of intersection.

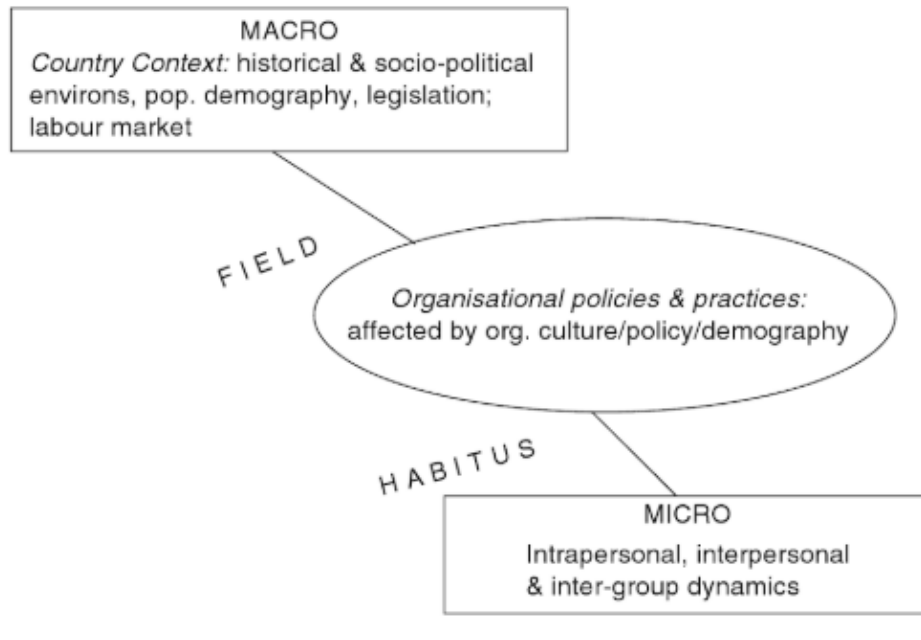


Figure 5. Micro, meso and micro levels

Source: Pringle (2015)

Based on Syed and Ozbilgin (2009), layers of diversity management exist at the macro context where it is the dominant domain, encompassing the meso and micro levels. Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) mention that at the societal level, the socio-historical, political, cultural and economic context of each country should be focused on when considering a participant's narrative experiences. Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) suggest that this meso level includes the legal framework of diversity and equal opportunity, cultural traditions, political ideologies and other elements within the socioeconomic context. In this domain social classifications and stereotypes such as a person's status based on his/her gender, age and ethnicity create distinctive and commonly accepted codes of social difference. Tatli (2011) explained that an individual's social world can be constructed by focusing on what is different about them and that this social world is made up of fields which are relational and multi-dimensional social spaces.

The meso level as explained by Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) gives attention to the influences of institutional practices, policies, structures and systems on the experiences of managers and leaders. Accordingly at this meso level, African feminists also pointed to the historical roles of men and women in

traditional African societies in order to fully understand contemporary gender relations (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009). Pringle and Ryan (2015) added that professions, organisations and their implementation of diversity management also sit within the meso level and provide a space for these institutional practices to play out.

Winker and Degele (2011) suggest that the micro level is where identity is constructed, and a sense of belonging is created and that individuals constitute their identities in delineation from others. By focusing on difference in relation to gender, class and ethnicity, this sense of difference is exacerbated in the construction of identity and the search for belonging.

3.6. Ethics

As this research is qualitative and involves face to face interviews with participants, an ethics application process was completed and approved by the Ethics committee at the Auckland University of Technology. This ethics process outlined the research design and research process including an explanation of, the recruitment of participants and the recording, transcribing and analysing of data. Ethical concerns with the narrative interviews were addressed by the creation of participant information sheets, consent forms and interview guidelines. Confidentiality was assured using pseudonyms and participants were given the option to withdraw from the research if they wished. In addition, the ethics application included a sample email to be used to invite participants to be part of the research study, and a transcriber confidentiality agreement in case I decide to use a professional transcriber instead of doing it myself.

3.7. Recruitment and selection

In order to recruit participants appropriate criteria was established. To meet the criteria, participants had to be:

- Of African descent
- migrated from Africa to New Zealand

- working in New Zealand for at least five years
- able to speak fluent English
- at any career levels within their employment organisation
- aspiring to a leadership position or have experience in a leadership role.

There was no age limit as progression can take longer than in other careers. This criteria aligned with the purpose of the research which seeks to understand participant's career stories.

I approached the chairperson of Women's Affairs in the African Communities Forum Incorporated (ACOFI), a registered organisation that caters for the general welfare of all Africans in New Zealand. The Chairperson shared my research topic with the different African communities that belong to the organisation. She also shared information about the research study across teams that she works with in their respective communities and asked these team members to also distribute the information to their friends and family. I also shared information about the research study with some friends who showed interest in participating. The chairperson also arranged to publish the purpose of the research on the ACOFI Facebook page.

A snowball sampling technique was applied as some of the participants referred their friends who then contacted me through email and phone. I ended up with eight candidates through these connections although my aim was to get between ten and twelve participants. The post was then forwarded to other groups and in total eleven participants were confirmed. One of the participants who was initially keen to participate withdrew due to time constraints while another withdrew due to family and work commitments. Thus, I started the interviews while still scheduling the others, as the process of recruitment was very time consuming.

3.8. Method

To explore the participant career stories, an interview guideline was developed comprising semi structured interview questions which facilitated participant storytelling. This method was chosen because it enables participants to tell their stories in their own way. According to Sharan and Elizabeth (2016), storytelling is the first person account of experience told in a story form with a beginning, middle and an end. The stories are also called narratives which is a way of sharing our daily lives. According to Qu and Dumay (2011) a great deal of care and planning before, during and after the semi structured interview is required with regard to the ways questions are asked and interpreted. Rowley (2012) states that the semi-structured interview method enables the researcher to create a guideline for the interview. Although there are a range of topics or questions, the order of these will differ depending on how the participant chooses to tell their story. Sometimes I varied the questions or asked the topics/questions in a different order. I also used prompts to get more information where appropriate. A semi-structured interview guide can have around six to twelve well-chosen and well-phrased questions to be delivered mostly in a set order. As semi-structured interview are an effective and convenient means of gathering information according to Qu and Dumay (2011), it allows the skillful interviewer to modify the style, pace and ordering of questions to evoke the fullest responses from the participants. This method proves to be especially valuable if the researcher is to understand the way the participants perceive the social context of the study. As mentioned earlier, the ordering of questions reflected the way my literature review was set up but there was still some flexibility in the way questions were asked, the extent of probing and the ordering of questions/topics (Rowley, 2012).

3.9. The Research

Participants who met the criteria for the research were drawn from Auckland city. As the research was carried out by myself via face-to-face interviews, I arranged to meet with the participants at a mutually agreed, quiet and safe place. Most interviews were held in Auckland city and I used my work office during

the weekend or after hours. One exception was when a participant requested to have the interview at her office as she had meetings afterwards, so it was more convenient for her. Careful planning in terms of time, location, communication, and timely provision of documentation was done in order to make the participant comfortable with the research setting.

In preparation for the interviews, I would arrive on time and check on my participants' whereabouts. When the participant arrived, I would offer coffee and have a general conversation for about fifteen minutes to enable them to settle down and relax before the interview began. My first interview was the longest as it was also a pilot which enabled me to practice my interviewing techniques as well as manage the time carefully and be mindful of staying on topic. The pilot interview also gave me an opportunity to reflect on the semi structured interview questions and how well the questions contributed to the focus and flow of the storytelling process. After the pilot I changed a few of the interview questions and rearranged the order to ensure the interview questions were more closely aligned to the research questions. I amended my checklist to ensure I gathered all the demographic information and addressed all of the key topics. Malmqvist, Möllås, Hellberg, Rose, and Shevlin (2019) state, increasing research quality is one of the aims of conducting a pilot interview. The interviews generally ranged from forty-five minutes to one and a half hours. As discussed in the previous section there was an interview guideline to follow. This enabled me to check off questions/topics and capture any missed information, however most participants answered the questions within the telling of their stories. There were fifteen questions with prompts stipulated by Rowley (2012) including topics around the participant's background in career choice, leadership aspirations, their understanding of leadership, women leaders in their organisations, challenges, barriers, opportunities, support and their future career aspirations.

I usually started the interview by introducing myself and then I outlined the study by explaining the reason for doing the research, and how and why it may be of interest to them. I would also indicate the anticipated length of the interview, and assure the participants that anything they say will be treated as confidential and ask their permission to record the interview (Rowley, 2012). All of this information had

also been provided in advance in the Participant Information Sheet and Consent form but I felt it was important to reiterate this at the start of the interview in order for the researcher and the participant to have a shared focus and understanding. Since it was the participant's story, it was important that my facilitation of the interview enable the participant to lead the conversation while I acknowledged my interest and understanding of the story by nodding my head and smiling. This kept the participant motivated in telling their story. This is mentioned by DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) who discuss how the participant is encouraged by appropriate interviewer silence, nods, smiles and utterances.. Accordingly, listening is the key to successful interviewing and the researcher must take care to be attentive, empathic and nonjudgmental. It is very important for the researcher to listen in order to invite and engender participant conversation and storytelling. The observation of non-verbal cues is also essential during a face-to-face interview. These cues include voice, body language, gestures and intonation, and can supplement the participants' verbal response and can give clues to the interviewer about the tone and process of the interview (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

One of the participants was highly qualified and had extensive leadership experience. During the interview, I felt my interview guide was not appropriate because of her high-level qualifications and experience. Instead, we focused on what African women need to do and what support they also need in order for them to develop their careers and aspire and move into leadership roles in the New Zealand workplace. With the other participants the interview guide seemed appropriate and their individual stories were interesting in their own way as they went through very different career and leadership experiences in New Zealand organisations.

3.10. My development as a researcher

Before starting this research project, I did not have experience at all even to come up with a topic, though I had a strong interest in diversity and inclusion which led to my choice of topic. I gained confidence to proceed with research though enrolling in two papers that gave me a thorough insight about the research process. These papers were Research design and Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis. During the

second class, I decided on my topic and I also got help in identifying my supervisors with vast experience in diversity and inclusion and the research process. The second paper was also instrumental in shaping my understanding of research as we undertook a research project that we designed a topic, collected and analysed data, discussed the findings and recommendations. This boosted my confidence to undertake a thesis.

Discussions with both my supervisors at the beginning and at various stages of the research was very informative in understanding the research process. Their guidance in formulating and submitting the research proposal through the ethical application process, and the very useful resources added value to the outcome of the research. Both supervisors checked in on me when I went quiet for a while as I also had a full time job. Support from the supervisors and from my organisation was outstanding.

While undertaking the second research paper, I understood why we do reflective writing, it is to understand yourself as a researcher and learn from that process. A quote from Gibbs (1988) extracted from (McCarthy, 2011) clearly outlined reflective writing.

‘It is not sufficient simply to have an experience in order to learn. Without reflecting upon this experience it may quickly be forgotten, or its learning potential lost. It is from the feelings and thoughts emerging from this reflection that generalisations or concepts can be generated. And it is generalisations that allow new situations to be tackled effectively’ Gibbs (1988 pg.9)

My research is to explore career stories. To explore according to Stebbins (2001) is when there is little or no scientific knowledge about the group, process, activity, or situation they want to examine but have a reason to believe it contains elements worth discovering. My research explores career stories of women of African descent working in New Zealand. There is little research about this group. This group faces additional challenges because of their background, race and sex. Little is known about them and their career experiences although there is research in American and the United Kingdom where most literature used came from there.

The final research topic emerged from the researchers experience. I am an African woman who falls in the same category and meet the criteria outlined for this research. Getting participants was a bit

challenging, my assumption being they are not exposed to being research participants since there is not much research done about them. According to Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, and Crann (2015) for hard to reach, hidden, and vulnerable populations, when identified as a member of a particular social group, they often face sensitive social, psychological, and physical risks. This makes them more hesitant to identify themselves to researchers. One of the participants clearly mentioned that she doesn't want to be known at all. I had to assure her about the confidentiality and anonymity that is thoroughly observed and strictly adhered to by our AUT ethics committee. This made me realise the importance of going through the ethics process.

Another challenge was to get the confirmed participants to attend the interview appointment that had been set. Cancellations and postponing influenced my research as this caused delays in getting the data so I can move forward to the analysis phase. It was important that I understood that this research is different and women being the sole organisers of their family life and balancing work and other commitments and being under researched participants. Initially when I started booking the timing for the participants, I had interests from a good, targeted number of participants of between 10-12 participants but ended up with only 7 interviews done for the research. The ones that ended up attending the interviews had older kids that would take care of themselves. Most who cancelled and younger children and working in full time employment. Myself as a researcher understood because I have been there before. I learnt to accept that things do not always work the way I wish even when I do careful planning in advance. This also taught me to be patient and to adjust my timelines to suit the needs of my research.

By taking an interpretivist approach I was seeking to understand African women in New Zealand context in which they live and work, this gave me a chance to reflect on my own career story and to improve the way I interacted with my participants.

3.11. Analysing the stories

The process of breaking data down into smaller units to reveal their characteristic elements and structure is what data analysis involves (Gray, 2018). As mentioned by Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, and Chadwick (2008) the researcher has to make sense of the data that has been collected by exploring and interpreting the interview transcripts, field notes and observations. Although they provide a descriptive account of the study, they do not provide explanations. Data analysis in this research began during the interview process where I was analysing the participants' emphasis of points, their body language and how deep they went while narrating their career stories. I had a diary with me while recording the stories to capture these moments of emphasis. After the interview process when the participant had gone, I would go back to my diary to see what I would have noted while replaying the interview in my mind. I would also note down any immediate thoughts, impressions and insights to consider at a later time.

After data was collected and transcribed, the data analysis phase began. In this phase an interpretivist approach was used as it enabled the analysis of the participants stories using a lens that takes account of their cultural context (Adelowo et al., 2016). As data was collected through interviews, an inductive approach was used to analyse the stories because it involved working exclusively from the participant's particular experiences (Azungah, 2018). Thomas (2006) outlined an understanding of the primary purpose of the inductive approach in that it enables frequent, dominant, or significant themes to emerge from the raw data, without the restraints imposed by more structured methodologies. Gray (2018) also mentioned that in the inductive approach, themes are drawn out of the individual stories collected from the participants.

To analyse the stories in this research, a process using thematic analysis was followed. This method as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) organises and describes data set in rich detail by identifying, analysing and reporting patterns in the form of themes while interpreting various aspects of the research topic. According to Burnard et al. (2008) this process involves discovering themes in the interview transcripts and attempting to verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data and repeating

the process to identify further themes and categories. A theme represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set and captures something important about the data in relation to the research question. The flexibility of thematic analysis allows the researcher to determine themes and their prevalence in a number of ways. However the themes that are identified, coded, and analysed would need to be an accurate reflection across the entire data set comprising participant stories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.11.1. Steps done in Thematic Analysis

It is mentioned in (Braun & Clarke, 2006) that qualitative analysis guidelines need to be applied flexibly to fit the research questions and the participant stories that emerge from the interview process. . The following steps were applied in this research analysis process.

3.11.1.1. Familiarizing myself with data

Data collection was done by me through recording the stories, however due to time limit, transcriptions were done by a University approved service provider. To familiarise myself with the stories I listened to the audios several times while reading and re-reading the transcripts, noting down and highlighting initial ideas and insights. As mentioned in Azungah (2018) the researcher needs to immerse themselves in the stories reading and digesting the many and varied experiences. This is done through reflexivity and open-mindedness while following the rationale of participants' narratives and trying to make sense of and to understand 'what is going on'. According to Burnard et al. (2008) this stage is usually known as open coding with an aim to offer a summary statement or word for each element that is discussed in the transcript.

3.11.1.2. Generating initial codes

As mentioned by Braun and Clarke (2006) codes identify a feature of the data that seems interesting to the analyst and can be assessed or understood in a meaningful way. Thus I would

define the code by identifying and recording one or more passages of text that exemplified the specific feature of interest and meaning. (Gibbs, 2007).

3.11.1.3. Searching for themes

The development of themes emerged through collating codes into possible themes, gathering all information and codes relevant to each potential theme, and then considering how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At the same time, according to Kim, Willem, and Linda (2006) I was also careful to also note categories and themes that did not seem relevant to the research question(s) at this point.

3.11.1.4. Reviewing themes

As mentioned in Braun and Clarke (2006) this stage involves checking to ensure that the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set thereby generating a thematic map of analysis.

3.11.1.5. Defining and naming themes

The defining and naming of themes was the next step in the process of analysis. This was done through refining the specifics of each theme and then generating clear definitions and names for these themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Burnard et al. (2008) stated that this is the stage when categories are further refined and reduced in number. The themes are also reviewed by grouping them together to ensure they reflect the relevant research questions and analytical and theoretical ideas developed during the research.

3.11.1.6. Producing the report

I then selected vibrant and compelling extract examples to illustrate the themes and aligned these themes to the research question and relevant literature. This final step led to the writing of the

findings and discussion sections where key experiences and insights are outlined and discussed.

(Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.12. Conclusion

This chapter begins with a discussion of research philosophy relevant to the research and my own interpretivist philosophical position in regards to this research project. The concept of research methodology was explored and then I identified ‘intersectionality’ as what I considered to be an appropriate methodology for this study. A discussion around the ethics process, recruitment of participants and how the research was conducted was followed by a reflexive discussion on my own development as a researcher through this postgraduate thesis process. The chapter concluded with an outline of the six-step process followed to analyse the individual stories and draw out codes and themes across the whole data set. Finally, the chapter draws to a close by linking the outcomes of the process of analysis i.e. the development of themes, to the next chapters which explore key findings, insights and conclusions and discuss these in relation to the extant literature.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by migrant ethnic women minorities of African descent who are at different career levels in New Zealand workplaces. Specifically, the research aims to capture narratives around the participant's career and leadership aspirations. In the telling of their career stories the research seeks to uncover some of the more hidden issues that are faced by nine African women in the New Zealand workforce. The discussion of the key themes that emerged will follow the structure created by the three research questions that informed the participants' stories:

What factors have influenced their career pathway?

What is their understanding and experience of leadership?

What are their leadership aspirations?

The chapter is organized as follows: first, the influences behind participants career choices and how this led to their current professional roles is outlined. Second, the process of settling into life in New Zealand and the subsequent shaping and development of participants careers is detailed. Third, participants understanding of leadership is discussed and this is followed by further detail relating to their understanding, exposure, aspirations and experiences around leadership. Finally, the career challenges that participants faced when aspiring to and developing leadership capabilities are discussed before concluding the chapter. The themes that emerged from the participant's stories are identified in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1. Overview of key themes derived from the interview data

Career Influences	Understanding of leadership	Leadership aspirations/ experience/development	Challenges
Self determination	Role model	Lack of exposure	Culture/background
Family/parents	Decision maker	Tough but rewarding	Family/ children/husband
School/ teacher/ career guidance	Influencer	Lift your hand for projects	Kiwi experience/ accent
Education system	Capability	Support within organisations	Intersection/ race, gender
Choice of subject at high school	leader	The ball is in your hands	Speaking up/lack of confidence

4.2. General Background of the Participants Career choices

This section discusses the influences on participants career choices and how these choices had an overall impact on their career to date. All nine participants came from various countries in Africa, including Zimbabwe, Kenya and Sudan. They also came from different backgrounds, a variety of professions, career levels, and years of paid work experience (see table 1.2 below). Seven women (Tamara, Kara, Ramara, Tamia, Remima, Rawina, and Clara) who came to New Zealand (NZ) from Africa after their tertiary education, identified education as the main driver but they also noted the support of their parents in relation to their respective career choice decisions. Two of the participants were self-determined in terms of career choices in that they chose their own career paths without being influenced by anyone. The education system in the African countries that participants migrated from were such that it was necessary to achieve good marks to progress to the next level i.e. from primary to high school and then to tertiary education. As in other developing countries many parents want their children to go to University and enroll in the more traditional programmes such as law, medicine, accountancy and engineering. None of the participants mentioned pursuing alternative careers, for example, modeling, singing, fashion design or acting because of the negative stereotypes and status attributed to these types of roles while they were being educated. In most African countries these alternative types of careers were associated with reckless behavior, including drug and alcohol abuse.

The countries where the participants came from are former British colonies, thus English was one of the official languages. The participants studied in English throughout their education enabling a relatively smooth transition into the New Zealand workforce. Seven of the participants spoke of how they became interested in their chosen career from an early age. In contrast two participants, Tamara and Rawina became interested in their careers much later. Tamara was motivated by the fact that you were paid to train as a nurse. She was influenced by her sister's experience: *my sister being a nurse, knew that there were quite a lot of advantages with the profession but I think for her to be able to convince my parents, she started talking about money. So when she mentioned that to me as well, I didn't know that you got paid as a student. That's when I changed my mind.*

Rawina was keen to develop a career in the Information Technology (IT) industry because it was interesting and also very lucrative: *I decided I would do (IT) but because I had always seen people with computers when I walked into their offices. We had a typewriter and so the computers just intrigued me. I said - Oh, maybe I need to do this , my sister had done the same course so I ended up doing in IT. So I would say it was money pretty much. Not a very well thought out reason but anyway.*

Table 1.2. Overview of participants Career Background

Name	Profession	Career level	Years of professional experience	Highest Qualification at the time of the interview
Tara	Accounting & Finance	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Completing a Masters Degree
Tamara	Nursing	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Diploma in Nursing
Kara	Medical	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Masters Degree
Clara	Theology	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Masters Degree, completing PhD
Ramara	Health & Safety	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Masters Degree
Tamia	Government Employee	Early Career	Within 10 years	Bachelors Degree
Remima	Accounting & Finance	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Chartered Accountant
Rawina	Theology	Mid-career	More than 10 years	Masters Degree
Rita	Administration	Early career	Within 10 years	Bachelors Degree

Ramara spoke of wanting to be a Lawyer but because she did not get enough points to enrol in a Law degree, she settled for Human Resources Management (HR) which she ended up enjoying. She became an HR Manager in her home country before moving to New Zealand. Kara was inspired by her teacher to become a laboratory scientist. She enrolled in a course that allowed her to pursue this career which she loved, and she also met her husband who was enrolled in the same course. Clara considered her career more of a calling than a career, but she faced several barriers as a woman in her chosen profession. She overcame these challenges over a number of years and is happy and proud that she pursued her calling to study theology and become a Reverend. Tara studied Human Resources after she finished high school, her father being her role model as he worked in the HR field. She was supported by her father who believed she would be well suited to this work. Tara worked for many years in HR in her home country before choosing to become an entrepreneur. She flourished in this area of entrepreneurship, and when she migrated to New Zealand she went into the finance area. However her career of choice remains in the HR field and she has taken on more study to increase her chances of re-entering this field in New Zealand. As Tara mentioned: *and then I looked back and I said - Ok, what I need to do here for me to go with my career of HR I need to upskill my education so I applied for part-time classes in the field of HR.* Tamia migrated to New Zealand at a younger age and completed her secondary schooling in New Zealand before enrolling in a Law Degree at the University of Auckland. Tamia was interested in human rights and politics and saw this career as a way of helping to change the world and make it a better place. Looking back she realizes she was very naïve but she is now using her legal knowledge in her current role as an Immigration Officer working in the Government. Remima always wanted to be an accountant from a young age and has been pursuing this career ever since she finished high school. When Rita moved to New Zealand at a young age, she struggled to fit into New Zealand society from primary school age through to tertiary education. Her career choice reflects her desire to understand human behavior, cultures and societies. She chose to study social anthropology for her bachelor's degree from the University of Auckland and is determined to work with people in her chosen field.

4.3. Reasons for Migrating

Participants spoke of the various reasons they looked to migrate to New Zealand. For four of the participants, Tara, Ramara, Rawina, Remima, it was their husbands' influence that provided the impetus to migrate based on the job offers they received while still living in their home country. All four women commented on the expectation that they 'tag along' as part of the package. Their travel and relocation costs were paid which did make the transition once here, less stressful. As Remima mentioned: *my husband got a job in New Zealand and the company said they were going to migrate us, so they paid for all our relocation cost.*

In contrast, Tamara could not move at the time she wanted because her husband was not interested until they were forced to leave their home country (Zimbabwe) due to the economy collapsing. Even so, it still took two years for her husband to be convinced that the economy was not going to recover. Tamara then got a job offer in New Zealand and she migrated with her husband and children. Clara came to New Zealand to study for a career in Theology. Her husband left a good job to join her a month later. Tamia moved to New Zealand at a young age with her father and siblings as their country's economy was collapsing and her father was looking for *greener pastures*. Rita came with her parents and siblings as refugees twenty-six years ago when New Zealand had only a few African migrants. They left their country because of civil war. For Kara, she and her husband saw by chance, a newspaper advertisement on migration to New Zealand while travelling in Botswana. *We were travelling and someone left a newspaper where we were sitting and it had at the back "An advert for "New Zealand needs you". So we cut it out and when we went back to home, went on the Internet, applied and that's how my husband and I got jobs.* Kara and her husband met while studying at university and were in the same kind of career. They were relocated to New Zealand by their new employing organisation

4.4. Settling and Working in New Zealand

The participants who moved from their home country to New Zealand due to their husbands job offers spoke of how having to help their children adjust to their new home and community took priority over finding employment. Tasks such as finding the right daycare and considering only working part-time proved a necessity to enable these participants to be able to combine their career and family. Ramara for example mentioned: *when I moved to New Zealand my son was just about eight months, so it was very hard trying to balance life and work, so I decided to resign.* Her husband's job involved shift work so it was difficult to establish a routine that would allow her the time to work in paid employment.

A further impediment participants spoke of was not having the support of family and helpers such as nannies or maids as they had back in their home country. For example, Tara talked of how back home *we have maids, we call them maids and also my mum and my elder sister were really a big support for me. Sometimes when I had too much work and my kids were small my mum and my elder sister were there for me.*

While the occupation of maid is not customary in New Zealand, in some African nations maids as an occupational group are very common and provide critical domestic support for upper middle-class families. Some maids stay with the families, doing all the domestic tasks and taking care of the children. This gives flexibility that allows both parents to be in paid employment or other activities without having the distraction of domestic tasks or children. In other situations, maids arrive in the morning and leave in the evening rather than live within the household. This system of employment not only provides domestic support for households but also opens up employment opportunities for less educated women who need a regular income to support their family. Migrating to a country and culture where the role of 'maid' is not commonplace was a challenge for some participants. In addition, the lack of family support was another significant challenge for participants who wished to develop their careers. Tara mentioned that in New Zealand, some help is available in the form of babysitting but the financial viability needs careful

consideration: *why can't I just stay home until they become more independent - because if the person you are going to pay is going to get paid the same as you're earning [minimum wage], you tend to lose.*

Coming from a developing country to a developed country, participants spoke of how they thought they were moving to a place where systems and processes were well established. For example, Rawina stated: *I think one of the challenges was thinking - Ok, I'm coming from a developing country. I've come to a developed country - so this expectation that maybe I've got so much to learn from here, right, because when you're in Africa you're considered a developing country or under-developed for that matter.* She and other participants were amazed by the assumptions people in New Zealand had about Africa. When Rawina was applying for roles in IT she reflected on her experience:

In Whangarei, oh my goodness, it was hard for anyone, for people to even believe that you could've done IT in Africa and that there are even computers in Africa.

Rawina did not get any responses or feedback while applying for jobs in Whangarei until she moved to Auckland when she started searching for jobs again. According to her: *honestly, I don't even remember receiving feedback that we've received your email... I couldn't find a job in Whangarei so I was looking after our child and my husband carried on working until we moved to Auckland.*

Tara was amazed by the requirement of Kiwi job experience commenting that, *there was another challenge here because when you come here they talk of Kiwi experience. Even though you have a career in some sort of profession they still want you to have some of their New Zealand experience and how they do things here*'. In addition, Remima mentioned that, *"it was not very easy but I was told that it's good to start with contracting jobs and part time because the contract jobs doesn't take time in filling roles so if I did that it's easier to then gain New Zealand experience because most of the jobs wanted New Zealand experience.*

Other issues of concern while settling and looking for employment was being overqualified and ironically, having too much experience which also posed a challenge to find employment. Ramara applied for a job while she was living in a small town in New Zealand. Although she was hired, the Manager raised

the issue that she was more educated than him so he felt he could not put her on a production line but instead found her another role in the laboratory. Another challenge Ramara spoke off was unconscious bias: *whether we like it or not, there's always that unconscious bias during recruitment and selection. The moment they see a black person... the moment that they will feel that you've got a strong accent, they will not really take you as their preferred candidate.* Rawina also stated that she thought the sight of her name put people off and even when she applied for the lowest level jobs, there was still no response. Similarly Tamia commented that *because sometimes you have a different accent or a different look people don't accord you the same respect and they don't think that you have the same capacity.*

Rita came to New Zealand as a child with her parents so was educated within the New Zealand school and tertiary environment and then stayed in New Zealand to work. She spoke of '*having it tough*' while settling because there was no other African family around them or anyone in their community they could relate to. When looking for employment she identified that having an English sounding name and a Kiwi accent, made it easy to apply for roles and was short-listed for interviews. However, when entering the room for an interview she felt her treatment was different once they saw her skin colour and realised her ethnicity was African:

It was easy until it was face to face, it was easy for me to send my CV and get an interview beforehand and things like that there was no issue there. It was more like once you actually in the interview and then they look at you because your voice doesn't match your face and then the questions are not always appropriate relating to your ability to do the job or potentially learn how to do the job

Over time, all nine participants found long-term permanent employment, but meeting their career aspirations continued to be a challenge. The primary reason identified was the expectation that they were responsible for the family. This meant they had to 'think outside the box', be flexible and make some difficult decisions. For example, Rawina never took on a full-time role. *I was working part-time so there were no childcare expenses because I was looking after the kids and at the weekend my husband was looking after them when I'm at work.* Remima missed out on career progression due to career breaks. She compared

her career progress to that of her husband who took great strides in his career. As noted earlier, Remima met her husband while studying towards the same course. Reflecting on this she said: *I can see that even though we are both in the same profession with my husband he has done so much in his career... to be honest I had probably stopped thinking about where I see myself in future.*

4.5. Career progression

As signaled in the previous section participants indicated that the lack of kiwi work experience was a key factor that hindered the career aspirations of eight of the nine participants. The women were told by employers and/or recruitment agencies that they needed New Zealand work experience but struggled to get the opportunity to develop this requisite experience. When they eventually did get a role, progression was again a challenge because of their family responsibilities and being identified as women of African descent.

To accommodate these challenges participants accepted low level paying jobs and/or part-time employment. Those participants who came to New Zealand in the early 2000's, were part of a large migrant group from parts of Africa (e.g. South Africa) so they were a visible group in cities such as Auckland. Despite this participants stories revealed how the New Zealand labour market did not understand this African demographic. Often the participant's qualifications were not recognized, and their paid work experience was not considered legitimate.

To illustrate the challenges of progressing their careers, Tara spoke of how once in New Zealand, she looked for flexible options to provide an income for her family while looking for employment in HR Management. However, she found herself stuck in 'flexible work' for a much longer period than anticipated and after 5 years she felt she was not making any progress. At the time of this interview she still had not managed to attain a role in her original career of HR Management. Tara has now enrolled in post graduate studies and is hopeful that the situation will change when she completes her studies. *You know in terms of*

HR, still as we speak now I'm not in that yet but still that's where I want to be, sometimes people ask me - why are you in studying HR and what are you doing in finance?

Rawina, has always worked part-time in the IT industry to cater for her family's needs and activities. She managed to progress to a Senior Specialist role within the third company she joined in New Zealand. She explains: *I still was a senior technical analyst training others but I never put my hand up to do a managerial course. All the roles were full-time and the disadvantage was I wanted to do part-time. There was no management roles for part-timers.* Conversely, Ramara took the initiative by trying other roles where she had neither the qualifications or experience. She had been a high performer and Manager in her home country. Since migrating she has taken several secondment opportunities which eventually, after several years, saw her appointed to her current leader position. She indicated she is still not happy because her passion is HR Management. *I tried to apply to get into HR in a leadership position and I couldn't get in. I tried to apply for another leadership position, I could not get it, so it was kind of frustrating for me.* So, like Tara, Ramara has enrolled in postgraduate studies to better understand the New Zealand HR landscape. She mentioned networking, seeking advice and *attending seminars as part of a deliberate strategy to put herself out there.* Reflecting on this she notes: *Yes, I had conversations about how I should progress but personally, I feel like people from Africa have a disadvantage in terms of career development if you want to get into leadership positions because of who we are. Whether we like it or not, there's always that unconscious bias.*

Remima spoke of how progression in her career was non-existent after she became comfortable in her permanent role. Previously, she had faced challenges of working long hours, having a manager who was never satisfied, and she felt a failure in her inability to find a balance between the demands of paid work and family life due to the pressure of her paid role. This pressure had driven her to take a career break but at the same time, she recognized staying away for too long would be detrimental to her career. When she eventually gained her current permanent role, she believes she has been able to manage the family – work interface much better, although she acknowledges that she is not using her experience and skill set to

the full. Recently Remima attended a forum on women in leadership and this has caused her to reflect on her career. As she retold her career story Remima said that she now realizes that she needs to go back to the drawing board to re-invigorate her career. *The meeting we had about Zimbabwean women fellowship where we had the guest speaker talking about women in leadership, I was quite inspired and I feel like I might have a bit of homework.*

Ramara, a nurse recruited from her home country, has progressed her career. She spoke of taking on a number of nursing related roles from mentoring and developing student nurses through to taking on acting charge nurse roles when the opportunities arose. Ramara commented that the organisation does give support in terms of paying for studies if one wants to pursue further career options or being mentored by leaders to work towards the next role. Initially Ramara had little interest in other roles but she was drawn to the Team Leader role so she started to focus on developing and enhancing her experience in a way that would exhibit the required leadership traits to senior management and she was eventually promoted. She noted that *if you are that one person who is really interested, you don't wait until you are asked to be a team leader, you just do it even when you are not so that you get used to it, that's how they'll promote you.* When she was promoted she described it as being, *recognised, because recognition was very important to me and because there is a stigma that these positions are only for white people.* Ramara also mentioned that the top management in her organisation appear supportive, regardless of the nationality of individual employees.

Tamia completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Auckland while working part time and after graduation she tried to find a job related to her studies at an organisation doing a mix of paid and voluntary work. As a part-time volunteer, she commented that she did not see it as helpful in getting a permanent role within that particular organisation. She started applying for other roles and ended up in a role where she is able to use some of the knowledge she acquired while studying. Her current organisation is large, in New Zealand terms, so there are opportunities for growth. She indicated that she does not intend to become a leader but to grow to become a specialist in a specific field. Prior to studying she had worked

for more than five years in a New Zealand call centre roles in two organisations, but opportunities for progression were extremely limited.

Clara, had to overcome career barriers that were related to women not being allowed to be enrolled in the Christian Ministry in her home country. She referred to her career as a calling and had struggled to make any meaningful progress until she found that she could pursue her chosen role in New Zealand. In her interview she said: *I really felt the strong call to become a priest and that's when I wrote seeking ordination within the church back in my country. They wrote back to me I think in 1997, they said no, we don't ordain women to the priesthood. So it was as if the door had just shut.* She started looking for options to pursue theology and found a college in New Zealand. She is now leading in her ministry role, is happy and pursuing further theological studies to keep enhancing the service and support she can offer to her community.

One interview that energized and inspired me as a researcher was with Kara. Her career story seemed straight forward compared to the others I had heard. When she moved to New Zealand she was a qualified Biochemist and found employment in this field. After working in New Zealand for about eight years, a leadership opportunity presented itself when a new branch was opened in Auckland. Kara accepted the position and looking back over her career she talked about how she had been focused on her goal from an early age and how she has been quite instrumental and strategic in her approach to developing her career, always putting in extra effort to achieve her career goals. One comment she made resonated: *you don't see the barrier in front of you, it's within.* This belief that the barriers are within, has seen her willing to support other women with the career challenges they face. Having experienced them all, Kara believes she is well placed to offer advice on how to overcome these challenges. She reiterated, *I'm in leadership. If someone wants to be pushed and get that confidence or whatever they need to go into leadership, I should help them.*

Overall, there were some positive and negative experiences that were mentioned during the interviews. Most participants mentioned that it is organisational support that has made them have a great leadership experience, whether as a follower, a leader or both. This has been through the management support and

structures set up within organisations. One example given was in the public sector with one of the participants' organisation having target quotas to encourage women into leadership roles. For others, direct managers in their organisations, regardless of being public or private sector, played a major role in pushing and supporting their career progression. These participants were adamant that their career progression was based on objective and fair performance indicators.

4.6. Participants' understanding of leadership and their aspirations

Five out of the nine participants had a clear understanding of what they believe leadership to be as they are or have been in leader roles. With the remaining four, one of the participants described the leadership that her manager exhibits, the other two who have not been in formal leader roles based their responses on what inspires them and their understanding of the meanings behind the word 'leadership'. During the interviews, I could sense that some participants appeared to be drawn to leadership while others needed a push or exposure to the type of leader they might aspire to be. What was also evident was how participants used the words leader and manager interchangeably.

Tamia who has not been a leader explained her understanding of leadership based on her manager. She explains below:

When I look at my manager it is taking an overall picture of what's happening and how people are performing and encouraging them to sort of advance and to get the best results, I think that's the level that I am looking at. I think there is a level of general knowledge that you have to have and in terms of knowing a little bit of the role and managing people and stakeholders I think you need like a certain skillset

Tamia indicated that she is not interested in becoming a leader because she does not enjoy managing personalities. She does enjoy progressing her career but not in the direction of managing people. She spoke of the difficulties of leading:

I think one of the things is that sometimes you have an exemplary role model you know, and it's easier to deal with facts and things that are on paper because you don't really offend anyone or anything like that and you are just dealing with your work. I think there is an element of managing people where you have to show empathy and managing people in the right way but it doesn't mean I can't do that. I don't know but it's something that I am a little bit hesitant about. At least with my work I can put my head down and do what I want to do

Rawina desired to be in a formal leader role but decided not to apply for a leader role because of her understanding of the demands of what leadership entailed. She feared that raising her children outside their culture was difficult enough and being a leader would mean not being present in her children's lives to the extent that she felt was appropriate:

Because I knew leadership meant most likely I'm spending a lot of time at work. I'm connecting with people, or networking or doing a whole lot of things that you need to do over and above just your work. So yes, I desired that but I pushed it back

Remima was career driven and had wanted to reach the top of the ladder in Finance and Accounting in her home country. On migrating to New Zealand she observed how things work and saw her aspirations were going to be difficult to achieve:

I have looked and assessed the way things work at my work and it's a whole different scenario here so, I just had to accept that I might never be the person I wanted to be

Her understanding of what leadership is was shaped by these observations :

I think leadership is where you get more responsibilities, you can lead a team, lead projects, you need to lead something to be in leadership

Tamara had eleven years of nursing experience and was in a senior nursing role in her country of origin, but she had not led a team. When she came to New Zealand she started at a lower level but faced the dilemma of acting as an experienced nurse while mentoring and leading student nurses and also assisted new members of staff with induction processes when they joined the organisation. Her framing of leadership is:

You just have to be somebody who is passionate, considerate, have very professional ethics, understanding, with good communication skills

Ramara has been exposed to a number of leadership roles prior to coming to New Zealand so had a clear understanding of what a leader should be:

I think a good leader is someone who is a good listener, someone who's got empathy, who feels for his/her team members, who is a team player, who empowers, and someone who is not a micromanager, someone who takes people's skills, who understands that people, when they're in a certain job they are well capable and they are responsible human beings, and someone who is good with people and with good communication. Communication is very important if you are a leader, Because as a leader you're more like the driver, you are the one who makes things happen. Because if you don't drive it, sometimes things don't go the way you might want them to go so you're kind of the one who steers the ship, in a way, but steering together with the team, not you forcing the direction you want to go.

And also, I feel as a leader you need to understand people. When I say understand people, understand the work environment. Because here in New Zealand, a lot of people suffer from mental health and if you are a leader who just sees people at face value, you wouldn't understand what's going around all the team members, and you want to feel good when things happen within your team,

Ramara reflecting on her leader journey in New Zealand mentioned:

I thought it was a long-awaited leadership position, I had tried to apply to get into HR in a leadership position and I couldn't get in. I tried to apply for another leadership position, I could not get it, so it was kind of frustrating for me. So that's when I realised that I have to be open-minded, not to be really, really rigid and to be flexible in terms of my career development, so I started to look outside the box and if you want to develop your career you go and listen to speakers and you have got to be someone who networks with people,

Tara had been in leadership roles before coming to New Zealand. She had hoped to find a job that was in line with her previous role as an HR Manager. Her understanding of leadership is from experience as leader and as a follower.

For me a leader is a person who will be able to influence, not even influencing as such but they way things are being done or the way things are supposed to be done are done the right. So, a leader is someone who is not only reading through the books but you have also to use your own thinking and common-sense to see the other side of things, how they are working. So when you give a decision or you're giving an answer to somebody, it's something that that person will see you're not being biased, it's neutral. It is when you try be a role model because there are so many role models and they're not even managers but doing things right as in if... Sometimes you have processes, sometimes you have policies and those policies are there for a reason. If you can follow the right... and you lead people in the right way, telling them - This is the way we are supposed to be doing things - you have to first be that person who you want people to be, so you need to show them the way.

Although Tara has not been able to acquire a leadership role yet, she intends to keep on trying. Giving up is not an option for her as she knows she has a lot to offer. Kara's understanding of leadership is

based on her experiences. She applied for a leadership role initially to temporarily fill in for someone and later was hired. The quote below is what made me think of her as drawn to lead.

I think a lot of women already have strong organisational skills variable into their career, just by virtue of them being the main organisers within their families, like making sure kids are up and they've gone to school, this has been done. So they have those capabilities already. What then is required to put this into the context of a business and go – I'll have different departments, I need to make sure they are well-resourced, they are running well, everything is well catered for, It's almost like just a huge home.

Clara stated that she has no leadership aspirations. She had previously found the thought of leading quite scary, but after her calling into the Priesthood she now holds a leadership role. Rita understood leadership qualities to be:

I think a leader should be able to listen to everybody that are in their team, they should consider all the voices, should be approachable. A leader should be able to take risks and sometimes they should take a chance on the people that they hire because you never know if you just only ever stick to the same standard type of person you only have the same so you only have the same thought you never have anything where people can actually contribute and collaborate to come up with new ideas, you always stay the same and I don't think you can stay the same in the world live today. As a leader you should be able to lead from the front and the back pushing and pulling the cart

To summarise, all participants had a similar understanding of leadership. They spoke of a leader being a listener, someone who understood people and had good people skills, a person of influence, open minded and a risk taker, taking chances when opportunities arise. Most of the participants who aspire to be leaders saw themselves as having these attributes. Some have progressed their careers and appear to be successful while others have made the decision to step back from leadership positions as the expectations of these roles challenge their health and well-being and work family life balance.

4.7. Leadership experiences for African women working in New Zealand

Some of the participants had not been in formal leader roles before due to a range of personal and occupational challenges. Others, who have been leaders spoke of their often long and winding journey while

working in New Zealand. Participants reflected that with their relevant paid work experience, if they were male and a different skin colour (white) they would have achieved significantly greater career progression. Instead, when they came to New Zealand they firstly, had to find employment and secondly, prove themselves all over again before their performance was acknowledged. To illustrate Ramara noted:

So there's always that unconscious bias that happens that comes along with who we are. So that's how I feel and I feel I've had it hard throughout my career within the company I'm working at the moment, just because of that. If it were not that I'm the most experienced and the most committed person, in my department I don't think they would have promoted me but they had no choice

Likewise, this group of women had to show that they are not only able to do tasks but they have to stand out in terms of visible performance. Kara's position as a leader requires dealing with different countries in the Asia-Pacific Region. When asked about the negative experiences, Kara mentioned that within the organisation she does not encounter issues, but this is not the case when encountering external customers

No, not within my organisation, but outside, I think because people know me better. So I look after our third parties a lot, so when I go outside New Zealand, they kind of expect, someone else has a say, not me. So it's a bit of a challenge. It's only after a while that they realise – Ok, it's actually me they have to deal with, and they might skip me and go to somebody else who is in a completely different role who is a Kiwi and they realise – Oh, that person is actually going to come to me for my signature. So yeah, dealing with third parties they don't immediately think I'm the one who's going to have the final say.

Although experiences differ the underlying issue of the unconscious bias appeared ever-present whether within the employing organisations and/or society as a whole. Establishing credibility is something every stakeholder and employer requires from every professional, but it seems from the career stories of the participants that it is a harder task for the participants in this study, women of African descent.

4.8. Conclusion

The findings in this chapter were drawn from participants stories of their career journey. This journey began from the time they made their initial career choices, their work experience in their home country, migration to New Zealand under different circumstances, settling with family while looking for employment and their

career progression and leadership experience as African women in New Zealand. There are several organisational and individual factors that came to the fore in the participants' stories. Some spoke of very supportive employing organisations whereas other individuals are not very confident in themselves. In other organisations, participants found their way or opportunities came fairly through their individual performances and the companies having fair and best practice performance management processes. The following chapter sheds further light on the findings by integrating the discussion with the extant literature to further explore themes around the challenges and opportunities that African women migrants face in the New Zealand workplace.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter the key themes that were drawn from the findings are discussed. The research sought to explore the mid-career stories and leadership aspirations of minority African women migrants working in New Zealand in a range of organisations.

The chapter brings together the themes from the interview data and integrates the literature from chapter 2 as part of the discussion. These themes are summarized in table 1.3 below. It is important to note that while the themes are presented as discrete categories, they also overlap as when participants recounted their career stories, there were several layers or aspects of the story that related to different themes. The discussion will focus on the different challenges that participants faced including issues around family, culture and background, intersecting axes of multiple identities within Aotearoa New Zealand, self-doubt, fear of leadership roles, lack of role models and lack of time. This discussion highlights how these challenges adversely impact on career progression into leadership roles.

5.1. Key themes

The table below summaries the main themes emerging from participants career stories as outlined in the previous chapter.

Table 1.3. Overview of key themes derived from findings

Theme	Main Features
Culture & background	Traditions Norms Expectations Patriarchy
Family	Children Career break Work/life balance Husbands/ partner support or lack of Extended family

Intersecting axes of multiple identities within a new culture Aotearoa New Zealand	Kiwi experience /overqualified Accent Race Gender Unconscious bias and perceptions of African community
Lack of Confidence	Not speaking up Thinking and not acting Scared to try
Fear of leadership roles	Pressure and demands that comes with the job Working 24/7 No time for family Lack of understanding of the role
Organisational support	Manager support Reward for hardwork Exposure through secondments Nomination to lead
Lack of role models	Not many role models of African women in leadership positions Lack of mentors Lack of networking opportunities or time to undertake networking Some roles have men only
Lack of time to explore further opportunities	Too comfortable with the status quo Too busy with life and family Work/life balance

5.1.2. Theme 1: Culture and Background

Orozco (2012) explained that culture shapes our behaviors and serves as a roadmap for perceiving and interacting with the world. It is defined as a body of learned beliefs, traditions and guides for behaviors that are shared among members of a particular group. While culture is passed on from generation to generation, it is constantly, though slowly, changing (Orozco, 2012). In African societies, the role and status of women continues to be tied to traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes are strongly influenced by history and socio-cultural systems (Sadie (2005). It is expected that girls, boys, men and women play a unique and distinctive role shaped by the society. Many women who are socialised within these systems find it difficult to break from their culture and traditions even when they migrate to other countries. Adelowo (2012)suggests that

it is very important to know what makes an African woman as this may help explain her thoughts, actions and the values that she would have chosen to preserve after the migration process. The author also argues that the African woman migrant is also likely to have drawn on some of these traditional values to ensure her adaptation and survival in a new culture, such as New Zealand.

The background of patriarchy in African countries was further reinforced by British colonial rule. Gender differentiation was also embedded through an education system where girls were prepared for domesticity and boys for work outside the home (Gordon, 1996). The participants in this study affirmed these strongly held beliefs. They accepted that women are the primary care-giver within a household while men provide for the family. Taylor (2018) also pointed out that women's position in the society was altered and had a damaging influence on gender relations in Africa. Even though all participants in this study worked outside the home and also provided financially to the household, they accepted they also had to attend to the domestic tasks and be primary carers. Comments alluded to the belief that domesticity does not come naturally to African men and the idea of sharing the domestic tasks was not part of their thinking, most of the respected roles are bestowed on African men. Linking this to career progression for women who are aspiring to lead, participants spoke of the challenges of wanting to balance their paid work and domestic responsibilities with some making the decision after migrating to either put their career aspirations on hold or negotiate flexible working arrangements to meet the increased demands of their personal and professional lives. The literature shows how people in leadership roles are often expected to be available to work long hours such as attending networking events compared to those employed in lower-level roles. This is mentioned in Kiamba (2008) i.e. that administrative/leadership positions require hard work, long hours and are stressful. This is an additional burden for women who also carry primary responsibility for their child-care, home, and family responsibilities. While all the participants, whether leading or not, had some positive comments about supportive husbands and partners, delving deeper into the interview conversations, it was clear that the allocation of household tasks was far from equal. The participants spoke

of appreciating the domestic support and assistance they got occasionally from husband or partners but, in the end, such tasks were still seen as their primary responsibility. For example Nomusa and Teresa (2016) talked of how in a patriarchal society it is expected that women are both producers and reproducers. In Africa, most participants had access to a maid, nanny or extended family who lived nearby and carried the domestic load whereas in New Zealand, this support was not available. Participants indicated that the thought of having to make all the domestic arrangements, some of which included financial resources (e.g. childcare), time and effort, was at times just too hard.

The cultural norm of men as the head of the household, also made it difficult for some participants to make important decisions without male approval. If their partner/husband did not agree, then nothing changes. As stated in chapter 4, Tamara had to endure living in harsh economic conditions because her husband was not keen on migrating to foreign places. It took her about three years to convince her husband to finally move even though she had already recognized the economic frailty of their home country. Other participants spoke of how if their husband decided to move to enhance their career, they were left with little choice. In contrast Kara who already held a leadership role in her home country and was offered a promotion in New Zealand also found it difficult to raise the possibility of migration with her husband. She said in her interview:

I've had a lot of managers from head office say – Can you take the next step, can you apply for this? But I look back and I go – Will my husband be happy to just come along? What opportunities are there for him to also do a job? So I just say – No. I can't even bring up the subject with him. (Kara)

Another cultural expectation is that men as the provider should earn more than the women. Three participants mentioned that even if they qualify for the roles with higher salaries, they immediately thought that their higher salary would cause tensions. For them it was easier to ensure they stayed in roles that paid less than the husbands' earning capacity. One example was Tara who mentioned:

It's the culture back home that people think - Even if I'm going to be working in a job whereby, I'm earning more than my husband, they think the husband is weak. They are like - How can a woman earn more than you do? Men are the head of the family - and with that notion it means then that the man has to earn higher than you do (Tara)

The tensions between working together as a family towards the same goals including financial security, while aspiring to lead despite cultural norms of defined roles, were ever present in participants' narratives. Those who have managed to get into leadership positions, have husbands who are already in senior roles and their children are older and more independent. This group still face some challenges in making decisions and may still need approval from the husbands before deciding on anything that would impact significantly on the status quo. This is consistent with Murugami (2018) who argues that most developing countries are patriarchal and the order of society was originally viewed to have been designed to keep women in a subordinate role.

5.1.3. Theme 2: Family responsibilities

As participants recounted their career stories, a major part was about their family especially after they married and had children. This familial theme is identified in the literature. For example, Taylor (2018) states how a woman's primary role within many societies, is to cherish family life and be a 'respectable' wife and mother. As noted in the previous section, this statement is a true reflection of society and even when people migrate to other countries it can be difficult to shift beyond this cultural norm. Further the majority of participants migrated due to their husband's offer of employment in New Zealand. They left whatever they were doing to accompany their spouses. Once in New Zealand, it was the participant's responsibility to ensure their children settled into their new environment, attend to school and out of school activities. This involved putting their career on hold or finding flexible working arrangements to fit around their children's lives. Six of the nine participants mentioned having to look for part-time work, either pay for childcare services or negotiate with friends to share childcare arrangements so they could attend work or, delay returning to work until their children were older. Tara illustrates this dilemma:

When I came here, first I had to take care of my kids because my husband was full-time and for me it was like I had to manage the family first, you know getting them to school, to know where they are, how they'll be up from school and how you'll drop them. So I first got a job and I was working

a few hours because I had to drop my son in the morning and then I'd come and work. I'd have to leave early to go and get them from school (Tara)

There is much discussion in the literature that men are able to prioritise and fully focus on their careers even when raising children because their spouse is taking care of all the tasks beyond the workplace (Neale & Özkanlı, 2010). Tara like the rest of the participants, was expected to manage the home and children enabling her husband to concentrate on his career. Kiamba (2008) mentioned in a study by Hojgaard (2002) suggests that male leaders were more likely to be married while a higher proportion of women were divorced or independently living together or had no children.

Remima and her husband are in the same profession. Although her husband did assist at home, he did not have to make this a priority as Remima was expected to be the one with the primary responsibility. Due to three pregnancies and then taking on the primary caregiver role, Remima had been in and out of the workforce finally opting for a career break to look after the three children. This scenario is well documented in the literature. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) highlight media coverage of women failing to achieve top posts and link this to the work demands that are incompatible with family needs. Sinden (2017) also refers to career interruption for child-rearing and how this results in longer periods of unemployment for women while men are more likely to move directly from one role to another, generally moving higher in a hierarchy. In fact Kumra, Simpson, and Burke (2013) argue that women are merely travelers in this male world as working life in organisations and organizations themselves were created by men for men. Remima illustrates the plight of many women in full time paid employment, working long hours and then coming home to care for three children, overseeing their homework and other activities and preparing for the following morning. This was a situation that Remima was not prepared to tolerate in the long term. She spoke of how it was taking a toll on her wellbeing. She decided to resign and take a break but was also scared that when she returns to paid work, she may have to start at a lower level that would affect her career aspirations.

In terms of work/life balance, it could not work while in that position, I had 3 kids by that time as well so life was just something else and I was always working late and stuff so it came to a point I

think after 2 years I said that I couldn't do it anymore and I left that employment and then I thought I would take a career break (Remima)

In contrast Rawina, who had never worked full time due to family responsibilities, had sacrificed her career by choosing her family over her career. It is mentioned in Kumra et al. (2013) that women have more responsibility for 'second shift' work and are more likely to work part-time at some point in their careers to manage this additional workload. Rawina came to New Zealand with the children, settled, and looked for part-time employment to fit with family life and has been in a part-timework role ever since they migrated to New Zealand, sixteen years ago. Rawina explained:

Now I was pregnant with another child I wanted to be present for them so that they are grounded. Maybe trying to have much more of a voice in their lives because I felt like they were already being raised away from their culture. We're in New Zealand, I want to be here, I want them to know a lot about us, language, just our way of doing things and I can't do it if they're mostly being looked after by somebody else. Once my second son came I was able to work weekends only, two days a week, so I was home with our boys Monday to Friday and I would work 10 hours on Saturday and 10 hours on Sunday. I was working part-time but there were no childcare expenses because I was looking after the kids and at the weekend my husband was looking after them when I'm at work, (Rawina)

Ramara had a situation similar to Remima where she decided to resign to take care of the children. She had also moved with her husband after he got an offer of employment in New Zealand. Ramara had left a good job in a managerial role to migrate with her family. Her husband encouraged her to search for employment, but it was tough as they lived in a small city with less opportunities. The chances of getting the type of employment that she was qualified for and had significant experience was very slim. Ramara just searched for any employment opportunity to keep herself busy. Her experience resonates with much of the research on women's working lives as mentioned in that women consider how their work will coincide with other aspects of life such as relationships and having children. The results of blending and balancing these competing forces include women relinquishing promotions, creating a willingness to be under-employed and working in part-time jobs, leaving the workforce for a period of time or finding opportunities to undertake meaningful work from home. According to Ramara,

But unfortunately I didn't find it satisfying, plus when I moved to New Zealand my son was just about eight months so it was very hard trying to balance life and work, so I decided to resign. Of course, that job was shift work and my husband also had shifts, so it was kind of very hard to balance, and my daughter was five years then. So I just ended up resigning because I wanted to be with my kids, (Ramara)

Kara organises her life and makes use of paid services to ensure the children are well taken care of during her absence. International travel is a requirement of her work especially since she has moved into a leadership position. As an African woman she recognizes that it is her primary role, rather than her husbands, to ensure the household runs smoothly whether she is there or not.

At the start I used to travel a lot, and that's a challenge when kids are young. Yeah, but that definitely was a challenge because I made sure I had someone I can trust, to pay and be there so my husband doesn't have pressure. So I had someone, the son of a friend, so that was really, really good because he also was very good with the boys. He would even take them into the city to the skate park and do all sorts of stuff and pick them up from school, drop them to school. I tried to keep it as low an impact on my husband as possible. Sometimes I would cook a lot of meals before I go so that it's as normal as possible, but that was challenging (Kara)

Tara applied for a role while she was pregnant and recalled how she felt when she was not successful in her application. She thought the reason for her not to be hired was due to her being pregnant. Research shows how the assumptions that some employers have that they will have a longer time of unproductive periods from female employees when they take parental leave whether overtly pregnant as was the case with Tara (Cunningham and Macan, 2007). The authors also suggest that if a pregnant candidate is hired, they could be associated with having excessive absences or that their supervisors will be concerned about how their work would be covered during their leave and whether they would return to their job after the birth of the baby. In an article by Kumra et al. (2013) when a woman was hired as a President of Yahoo while she was pregnant, people wondered how a woman who was to become a mother could handle such a high level job.

5.1.5. Theme 3: Intersecting axes of multiple identities within a new culture

The methodology used to gather data for this study identifies intersectionality as an important dimension of the study and this was discussed in the literature review and the methodology chapter. Intersectionality is particularly relevant in this theme due to the emergence of multiple identities reflected in the participants stories. Coleman, Bush, and Crawford (2012) describes intersectionality as an aspect of diversity that involves looking at the individual as a particular case rather than an example of a category of diversity. Accordingly, a more complex picture is uncovered through the intersectionality of dimensions of diversity rather than focusing on one aspect only. Listening to the stories, the different but combined layers impacted each participant and it was clear that unconscious bias is endemic in the society. One can only identify the effect on each person by listening to lived experiences.

A combination of multiple identities that come under the broad umbrella of diversity or visible and non-visible differences (Pringle & Strachan, 2015) were identified in this study. These intersecting axes of multiple identities are on top of the cultural background and the family responsibilities mentioned earlier in this chapter and taken together were identified by participants as causing delays or a lack of career progression into leadership roles. In New Zealand, the Human Rights Act (1993 amended in 2001 to include an EEO Commissioner) outlines the conditions “upon which people may not be discriminated against during pre-employment, employment and leaving employment” (Ryan, Ravenswood & Pringle, 2014, p.186). Since the 1980’s, it is only public sector organisations that has legislation (State Sector Act 1988) that mandates equal opportunity programmes for targeted groups and requires annual reporting on progress (Pringle & Strachan, 2015). In the private sector successive governments have supported educative initiatives to encourage employers of the benefits of a diverse workforce (Pringle & Strachan, 2015). New Zealand employers are expected to treat their employees fairly, however unconscious bias can result in less than fair employee experiences. All of the participants felt some unfair treatment at one point or another due to these intersecting identities. Kiwi experience, race, gender and accent were mostly discussed in the interviews as points of discrimination. The challenge is that participants cannot point out that they have

explicitly been discriminated against. The perpetrators do not overtly utter direct comments that denotes the reason for discrimination e.g. because someone is a black, African, a woman with an accent. Participants highlight the indirect and subtle discriminatory processes that they experienced. The challenge for women being discriminated against is that they cannot say 'I have been victimized' because they do not have concrete proof to accuse someone of being racist or sexist.

5.1.5.1. Kiwi experience

The need to have Kiwi work experience is not linked directly to the lack of career progression into leadership roles, but it did have an effect on the participants because they had to start from a very low career level in order to gain this experience. Looking at the overview of participants career stories at the beginning of the chapter, some had held managerial positions in their home country but when they came to New Zealand, this experience was not recognized and they were under-employed. Odedra et al. (2018) point to the combination of challenges when seeking employment at a commensurate level and the lack of recognition of skills has been encountered by many migrant women who moved to New Zealand. This is somewhat contradictory when compared to their husbands situations, many of whom were offered a position in New Zealand before migrating to New Zealand. While this is counter to the research it appears that the husbands had unique skills that were in short supply in New Zealand hence a need for kiwi experience was overlooked. However for the women participants in this study, the lack of 'Kiwi experience' meant their career took a backward step with age also being another complicating factor that appeared to compromise their career aspirations According to Pio (2005) there is perception that migrants are high maintenance and a lack of Kiwi experience is a code for a number of uncertainties like poor fit or a lack of social acceptance in the organization as employers are often reluctant to hire someone who is different from them. Young aspiring New Zealand employees also made attaining leadership roles very competitive. Participants expressed their frustration at having to 'play catch-up' to gain New Zealand experience only to find that employers had a preference for younger leaders.

Tamara was a nurse who had more than five years experience in her home country but when she came to New Zealand she could only find a position classified as the first level of nursing. Clara, Rita and Tamia migrated when they were still students so their transition to employment also had unique challenges. An argument from three of the participants was that as long as one has transferable skills you can work anywhere, also once they were hire even for the lowest roles they will see that they are being underutilized because they have more than enough experience and education.

Tara was one of the most affected, she had been a manager and also ran a successful business in her home country. When she sought employment in New Zealand, she started as a personal assistant, then moved into administration and finance. Her background was Human Resources and she is currently furthering her studies in HR but working in finance. Trying to gain kiwi experience after migrating Tara got stuck in a finance role for many years.:

There was another challenge here because when you come here they talk of Kiwi experience. Even though you have a career in some sort of profession they still want you to have some of their experience, like how they do things here. So what I did, even though that's what determines where you'll go, it's not that you'll get the job that you're looking for or your career path, but it's just anything that is available for you and, given that New Zealand is a small country, you just go for anything. (Tara)

Another participant affected by the lack of kiwi experience was Ramara. She had been an HR Manager in her home country and when her family migrated she applied for a HR role but ended up as a lab technician. According to Ramara:

So when they hired me I remember the manager said – Oh, you're more educated than me. The manager said – I don't know how to give you the job in the production line, I want to put you in the lab. So I was put in the lab as a lab technician. So that was my first job (Ramara)

Rawina was in Information Technology (IT) industry and was surprised that she could not even get any acknowledgement of her applications when she applied for positions. She had a great IT job back home before moving to a small town in New Zealand. She mentioned:

And I just remember that time thinking - Oh my goodness, I had a good job - and no-one, responded even the lowest of jobs, customer service. I think just the sight of my name put people off (Rawina)

All of the participants spoke of how they could have started in a higher role back home compared to what happened when they moved to New Zealand. According to a study by Kon (2019) participants expressed strong feelings of disengagement and frustration on when they under-employed and working in a lower position or working for minimum pay despite their superior credentials and experiences that they had attained in their home country.

5.1.5.2. Intersection of Race and gender

Jordan-Zachery (2007) discuss how Black women's employment experiences are represented through multiple dimensions showing various ways in which race and gender intersect. In the gathering of participants stories, , every participant recalled being subjected to some form of racial discrimination at one time or another while working in their profession and/or when applying for leadership roles in New Zealand. All mentioned how difficult it can be to prove that one has been discriminated against whether the experience has been one of direct or indirect racism or sexism. Most participants indicated that initially they did not realise that it was something to do with their race but when talking with other colleagues, they were alerted to thinking it was race or power related.

Workplace discrimination is when unfair terms and conditions are set by institutions and/or individuals within them that systematically impair the ability of members of a group to work and progress appropriately (Okechukwu, Souza, Davis, and de Castro (2014). According to Liao, Hong, and Rounds (2016, p. 239) Racism is generally a less explicit process, arguing that "racism is expressed more covertly when individuals do not act in overtly discriminatory ways" This was felt by Remima when she mentioned being given too much work by her manager, even though she could manage in the beginning, the workload kept on increasing to the point that she could not cope. It meant working longer hours and having issues with work life balance as she had young children. When she asked other colleagues at the same level, she was shocked to hear from colleagues that the work she was doing was supposed to be her managers. So,

her colleagues were wondering if there was an ulterior motive including wanting her to quit. She thought the manager wanted her to fail so she can find a reason to terminate her position but before any error could be found, she decided to quit her role.

Another participant mentioned that she couldn't fully understand or explain the covert discrimination that she felt in the workplace. She believed that she had to prove herself i.e. to show that she knows what she is talking about. Kara comments:

I think it's a combination because I'm a woman, maybe because I'm African, they're not sure of the experience and knowledge I have. My role includes technical aspects as well so I have to actually bring out the technical language when I'm standing there (Kara)

The rest of the participants mentioned similar issues where they feel they have been discriminated against. In most cases their managers always tried to look for small mistakes and ignored the good things they had achieved. These experiences inevitably have a negative impact on the participants development and progression within the organisation because promotion depends on performance and the manager's reference or recommendation.

Yeah. Most of the time I would face challenges at work and I would really feel that this is pure segregation. This is really motivated not because of anything about the job but of my colour and where I come from. I would feel it and I would want to quit (Ramara)

The participants stories revealed several experiences when they were in a dilemma about how they were discriminated against in the workplace. Mostly their response was to leave their positions because of this discrimination, but it took time for them to recognize that the behavior really was discrimination. Remima realized after a long time that this was some kind of discrimination then she decided to resign and take a career break.

5.1.5.3. Accent

Ahmed, Abdullah, and Heng (2013) state that accent can play an important role in the perceptions and attitudes of a person's characteristics. They found that standard accented speakers are favored for prestigious jobs, whereas the nonstandard accented speakers are favored for less desirable job.

According to Ahmed et al. (2013, p. 249) "accent can be defined as a certain form of language spoken by a subgroup of speakers of that language which is defined by phonological features". A speaker's accent can influence his or her chances of success in an employment interview. This was discussed by Deprez-Sims and Morris (2013) who argue that having a perceived non-native accent in English affects those variables that lead to a positive or negative hiring recommendation and also affects the ratings of similarity and interpersonal attraction. Russo, Islam, and Koyuncu (2017) found that even speakers with good second language proficiency retain the phonology and intonation of their mother tongue, making accent a distinct but little recognised discriminating factor at work. The accent of African women is very strong which adversely impacts on their opportunities to secure employment and achieve career progression. According to Adelowo (2012) Africans who speak with African English accents were often ignored or corrected, rather than their listeners responding to the context of speech. The implication of this response is usually that applicants and employees who speak African English are perceived to have limited English language skills. This accent factor was an issue identified by most participants, as Tamia mentioned:

because sometimes you have a different accent or a different look people don't accord you the same respect and they don't think that you think to the same capacity and someone would see you like awkward, I remember when I was at this other organization, when I was in a call centre, this woman called on the phone, I only greeted her and said my name, she said "can I speak to a kiwi please because I can't understand you" (Tamia)

Rita, who grew up in New Zealand has had a triple dilemma because her African skin colour does not match her British name and her Kiwi accent. She has been successful when applying for jobs through a telephone interview but face to face interviews usually did not get her employment. Rita explained below.

Until it was face to face, it was easy for me to send my CV and get an interview before hand, there was no issue there. It was like once you are actually in the interview and then they look at you because your voice doesn't match your face and then the questions are not always appropriate relating to your ability to do the job or potentially learn how to do the job.

Ramara is one that felt that the multiple identities were too complex to manage. She found that with the exception of African women, others found it too difficult or challenging to understand their experiences. Though Ramara managed to get into leadership, she found it hard in the beginning and this delayed her career progression. She mentioned below:

Yes, I had several conversations about how I should progress but personally, I feel like people from Africa have a disadvantage in terms of career development if you want to get into leadership positions because of who we are. Whether we like it or not, there's always that unconscious bias during recruitment and selection. The moment they see that a black person... the moment that they feel that you've got a strong accent, they will not really take you as their preferred candidate. So there's always that unconscious bias that happens that comes along with how we are. (Ramara)

In contrast another participant was positive and spoke highly of her supervisors and organisation that gave her a genuine opportunity based on merit. According to Tamara

I actually felt that it gave me some confidence and it just boosted my passion for my profession, And just knowing that – Ok, it doesn't matter where I come from, what my accent is like and whatever, I can be considered to be the way other people are or exactly, on merit (Tamara)

Despite this exception it is suggested that the absence of organisational support, or the presence of contextual obstacles experienced by the majority of participants, is likely to impede goal progression and reduce career satisfaction (Renee Barnett and Bradley (2007). Nevertheless Tamara's positive experience outlined above, demonstrates the fact that shows that subordinates obtain greater satisfaction in their careers if supervisors provide more career support (Yang et al., 2018).

5.1.6. Theme 4: Self Doubt and Lack of Confidence

Self-doubt and a lack of confidence were issues raised by a number of participants who believed that these issues had a negative effect on their career progression into leadership roles. Although some participants did not explicitly mention these factors they tended to generalize their comments by noting how their

fellow African women lacked confidence and did not speak up and it was also evident in the stories that they told. According to Neale and Özkanlı (2010) There is research that indicates that women in general internalise stereotypes such as being judged based on their gender. This undermines their confidence and they believe they are less deserving of rewards and promotions. For African women a combination of culture, background, history and patriarchy have shaped a context whereby African women inhabit and enact their lives in the background rather than the foreground. This was identified in the literature by Kiamba (2008, p. 10) that “in many societies, women are still assigned a secondary place by the prevailing customs and culture”. While some African women have grown up in families being told that they can do anything in life, it seems that the broader social constraints imposed on them (i.e. that women should be led rather than do the leading), have dominated and constrained their career development opportunities and progression into leadership roles.

Adelowo (2012) talks of internalized racism. Most African countries have experienced colonialism thus there has always been an image of self-doubt, disgust and disrespect for one's race and/or oneself (David et al. (2019) which has been fostered by the white dominant colonizers. This has in turn led to the development and embedding of negative racial stereotypes, values, images, and ideologies of these colonized groups.

Based on the discussion with the participants, it is clear that they did not find it easy to consider applying for a leadership role, even though some of the organisations do give opportunities fairly. Participants asked themselves tough questions before taking up a role. Tamara mentioned:

So it was a bit of a challenge for me, 1) not having had experience, and 2) just the learning itself, the training itself was a little bit different, like I did not feel confident. It was a lot easier for people who trained here you know – this is what the expectation is but what is the expectation? (Tamara)

One of the participants who grew up in New Zealand found it difficult. She mentioned that growing up in a society where she did not fit in was a challenge to her confidence. She acknowledged that she has a lot of work to do regarding this. She thinks she is a natural born leader and based on the way she portrays

herself she believes that she can achieve a lot, she just needs to be given an opportunity within a supportive environment to boost her confidence.

I feel like growing up in NZ in a society where I don't completely fit in has kind of knocked back my confidence as a person (Rita)

Participants who are already in leadership roles comment on how this as an area of weakness among African women. According to Kara,

Because if you step out and you show how much confidence and how much courage you have, it also reflects on the style of leadership you will have in your role, how you would do it if you lack confidence just to step out, how will you be confident in the role?(Kara)

5.1.7. Theme 5: Fear of leadership roles

Leadership roles are very demanding. Elias (2018), discusses how perceived success in business seems to be linked to the idea of dedicating your entire life to business, meaning work has to be the overall focus of life and this includes long working hours and few if any vacations. Sheppard (2018, p. 568) says “the challenges that women face in terms of work-life balance cannot be considered in isolation from the structural disadvantages that they often face in organizations” It is particularly challenging for women leaders who also have to balance children and family responsibilities as the work schedule is not set in a way that allows for adequate family time or dual responsibility. Consequently, the potential of lifetime earnings and achieving a leadership position is compromised by the cost of having a family and working (Carbajal, 2018) According to Murugami (2018) in most parts of Africa, women tend to hold the lion's share of the roles of primary caregiver, domestic and family responsibilities and on top of this, a lack or presence of spousal support has a huge impact on women deciding to take up leadership positions or not. In fact women tend to choose roles that are considered more lowly in society and are easy and convenient to manage alongside domestic and caring responsibilities (Ansari, Jabeen and Baig, 2016).

Some of the participants did not aspire to lead due to various reasons. Tamia mentioned the difficulty in managing personalities, Remima discussed long working hours and the need to network and to be a role model. They see these demands as requiring a lot from them and they can't do it at this point in

their life. Fearing this role makes these women want to stay where they are or move sideways instead of upwards. In addition Amayah and Haque (2017) mentioned that fear of criticism and discrimination has caused some women to refuse to accept top positions and Elias (2018) points to the fact that women's confidence has been eroded by being talked down to and interrupted by men for decades.

In contrast to the literature one of the participants made it sound quite easy to lead. She mentioned that women are natural born leaders. She believes they can work under pressure managing home and work. She mentioned that if women can arrange and manage functions or a party in the home, they should just replicate this in an organizational setting by making sure all the areas are well resourced. According to her:

I think a lot of women already have organisational skills variable into their career, just by virtue of them being the main organisers within the home, like making sure kids are up and they've gone to school, this has been done. So they have that capability already. What then is required to put this into the context of a business and go – I'll have different departments, I need to make sure they are well-resourced, they are running well, everything's... It's almost like just a huge home.

5.1.8. Theme 6: Lack of role models

Most of the participants felt that there is power in having someone who looks like you in a leading role. At the same time they also believe that having access to influential networks is critical to moving up the leadership hierarchy. According to Hill, Miller, Benson, and Handley (2016) one of the many challenges faced by women of colour aspiring to leadership positions include finding a sponsor. Women and men of color have limited access to social networks that can provide information about jobs, promotions, professional advice, resources, and expertise compared to white men. The participants indicated that it is easier to approach someone who looks like you for advice and guidance. For example, when one of the participants, was deciding which career to follow, she was looking at what other people were doing who look like her. At that time there were very few African people in New Zealand. She, thought she could be good in 'playing sport' based on the black Americans she used to watch on television. Quimby and DeSantis (2006) note how individuals tend to seek role models who are similar to them in some easily identifiable way, such as gender or race.

5.1.9. Theme 7: Lack of time, life is too busy

Participants have highlighted that due to lack of time, they have decided to stick with what they know i.e. their current routine. This was common with most of the participants who had not had a chance to lead or who found it difficult to run a household and a leadership role. They have also become comfortable with the status quo, since they mentioned that it is easy to stick with what you know and what you are comfortable with. Some participants mentioned that this research interview process and the sharing of their career stories was making them think that they would like to do something more about their careers. They mentioned that sometimes they needed exposure to things that can make them think outside the box in order to make a move. Another issue is that some participants like Remima have been exposed to that kind of pressure similar to a leadership type role and they do not wish to go back to it because they could not have a good work-life balance. As discussed in Toyin Ajibade, Issa, and Sulu Babaita (2019) the stereotypes of male breadwinners and female homemakers are fast disappearing in this twenty-first century as women have increased their participation in the labour market. Women combine and balance their work and non-work obligations and it often leads to more women experiencing a high level of role overload and caregiving strain. Remima and her husband studied together back home and are in the same occupation but the responsibility of raising the children and managing the home while working has fallen to her.. She has seen how her husband has moved up the ladder while her own career progression has been limited due to child rearing and career breaks.

5.2. Conclusion

These discussions have highlighted the different layers of challenges that face Africa women as they try to progress into leadership roles. Every woman experienced the issues differently but the themes that came out career stories are similar. Only the people who have these lived experiences are able to understand what the participants have been through. Despite the challenges that the participants have faced in their careers thus far, it appears that they are still determined to be the best they can and that the act of being involved

in the research study has been a timely reminder and a stimulant to going back to the drawing board to reconsider their career aspirations including potential leadership roles and possible future career paths. Meanwhile some of the participants have increased their qualifications to place themselves in a better career position and create greater potential for promotions. Research supports this career strategy as Rubery (2019) points out that women may undertake additional qualifications as a means of protection against discrimination in the labour market. While Elias (2018) mentioned that women need to raise their voice with the realization that women are much further behind men in the career stakes, some women in this research study are already responding to the wakeup call with a renewed purpose. Remima discussed the need to have platforms that can reinvigorate their careers and confidence.

The next chapter will discuss an overview of this research study, highlighting conclusions and identifying the contributions of this study, limitations and areas for future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

This final chapter will present the conclusions of the study which sought to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by migrant women of African descent who are currently employed in New Zealand workplaces. Specifically, the research aimed to capture their career stories around their leadership aspirations before and after migration. The first section of chapter six gives an overview of the study and the methodological approach. A discussion of the main themes identified in the findings follows this. In addition, this concluding commentary includes, research implications, and acknowledges the limitations of the research, followed by thoughts on future research. Finally, the chapter closes with some concluding thoughts.

6.2. Overview of the research

The purpose of this study was to explore women of African descent careers and leadership aspirations. To do so, the study sought to bring to the fore the background to their career choices and the influences of their country of origin and how this has impacted on them as professional migrants in New Zealand. The reasons for migration and how they settled in New Zealand was also part of the narrative this study sought to understand.

This study gave the researcher an opportunity to listen to the narratives from the participants perspective. A qualitative research methodology guided the research design drawing on an interpretive scope. Semi-structured interview questions guided the collection of the narratives from the nine participants. This created a space for the voices of the participants to come to the fore in a context where most were unaccustomed to seeing their personal experiences as worthy of a research study and divulging what were at times, quite emotional and reflexive insights. Thus, being sensitive to their concerns and creating a comfortable, safe environment with assurances of confidentiality, was paramount. The research took an intersectionally sensitive approach as mentioned in McBride, Hebson, and Holgate (2015) in which

gender and race interact to shape the varying experiences of this group of women within the macro-societal and meso-level organizational contexts.

The findings in this study indicate the multiple layers of simultaneous challenges this group of women of African descent have faced through their career both in their home country and their now adopted country of residence, New Zealand. They spoke of their struggles of forging a career within the historical legacy of colonialism and the resultant hegemonic form of patriarchy. Thus, embedded cultural norms influenced their choices of career and the way they viewed their role as middle-class African women. Support however from family and/or a nanny, generally from a black African woman of lower socio-economic class, mitigated some of the pressures they faced in carving out a career in their country of birth.

On migration many spoke of different and often unexpected obstacles in an unfamiliar cultural context as they sought to settle and find employment in New Zealand. One of the key themes identified was the expectation that their primary role was to manage the adjustment of their family especially their children to living in New Zealand. For some, without close family and/or a viable and affordable ‘nanny’, seeking employment simply became too hard. When seeking employment most spoke of the need for Kiwi experience despite having the expertise and qualifications from their home country. It was interesting to note that the expectation of kiwi work experience was not an obstacle for their partner/husband with most having a permanent job offer prior to migration. One consequence for this group of women was because of a lack of kiwi work experience, they found it difficult to be employed at the level and/or profession they had in their home country. Being overqualified also proved an unexpected dilemma. Their employment prospects were further hampered by their strong accent and surnames that can be difficult to pronounce. Both these factors act in a way that immediately identified them as different. In the background the role expectation that they be the primary care-giver for the children propelled some to only look for part-time and/or flexible employment.

The experiences this group of women of African descent spoke off as migrants to New Zealand, demonstrate the intersection of race and gender as simultaneous discriminatory factors. At the time most of

these women arrived, there was a lack of understanding among the New Zealand population of African people in general. African migrants only started coming to New Zealand in the early 1990's (Tuwe, 2018). As highlighted in the literature review many parts of Africa were colonized by the British, so for this group of well educated women, their formal education and qualifications were based on the British education system with English as their first language. Despite this, New Zealand employers appeared to either be blatantly biased or simply lacked any understanding of the qualifications and experience these women offered. This caused some women great distress by having to basically re-start their career taking on lower level jobs and as a consequence, delaying any hopes of career progression. Further, many were conscious of the time factor and ageing as they competed for jobs with younger, New Zealand educated graduates. Those who did manage to acquire leadership positions did so because they had a unique skillset and mindset that did not prevent self-doubt or questions being raised about their competence as leaders among the 'local' workforce.

Aspiring to be a leader requires support and recognition from those who occupy positions higher up the leadership hierarchy, certainly in the comparatively small New Zealand business environment. There are few women of African descent in New Zealand let alone in influential and visible leadership positions. Professional networking among this group has proven challenging due to the time demands of paid work and domestic responsibilities thus the ability to link up to mentors among the African community is limited. Individuals have a tendency to seek role models who are similar to them in some easily identifiable way, such as gender or race (Quimby & DeSantis, 2006).

Overall, the findings of this study were consistent with the limited literature on the adjustment of women of African descent living in New Zealand (Adelowo (2012). Simultaneous discriminatory factors such as racism, gendered societal norms and organisational cultures, an unfamiliar accent, and lack of kiwi work experience, came to the fore. These were overlaid by the systemic patriarchal norms of their home country that dictated they be the primary care-giver for the children as they settled into a new cultural landscape. Few had family support or the ability to employ a nanny similar to what they had in their home

country. To this extent, some of their experiences as aspiring professional women mirror those faced by other groups of women striving to progress their career in the New Zealand context (Gender Equal NZ, 2018; Davis, McGregor, Pringle, & Giddings, 2017). Yet despite all the challenges that migration has thrown at them, the resilience of this group of women of African descent to start afresh within the constraints they face and forge a career are stories that need to be heard.

6.3. Contribution of the Research

The contribution of this thesis to the advancement of knowledge is three-fold: firstly it adds to the research on the experiences of migrants to New Zealand, specifically those women of African descent. There is currently little research on this minority migrant group. Further, in light of the scarcity of research this study was unique in that it melded together the women's pre and post-migration career stories and personal experiences within two differing cultural contexts. The cultural overlay offered a lens to help explain why there are few women of African descent in leadership positions in New Zealand.

Secondly, the research drew on an intersectional sensitive methodology that recognised the simultaneous interplay of demographic and cultural norms that together form multiple layers of discriminatory factors. By dissecting these layers, their personal and career stories offer insights into women migrant's experiences in a country that prides itself on being open to differences. Carbin and Edenheim (2013) note how intersectionality has the potential to capture the complexity of social life with an aim to offer a more fine-tuned way of representing the world. Simon-Kumar (2019) notes how in recent years New Zealand has been promoted as being a bicultural country accorded by The Treaty of Waitangi (1840), with a multicultural face that recognizes that the country is home to many cultures. For example, Auckland has more than 160 different languages spoken, which makes Auckland one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world (Royal Society of New Zealand, 2013). With this in mind, it is not an easy task to hear the voices of minority communities let alone see these groups represented on the wider leader

stage. Research that is intersectionally sensitive goes some way to facilitating among majority groups (e.g. employers) an understanding beyond the visible appearance of the person they see in front of them.

Finally, this research together with its use of narrative as a method can be replicated within other under-researched minority migrant communities. This will enable the growth of knowledge based on a wider understanding beyond ethnicity and/or gender of minority communities. Such knowledge would be beneficial to government agencies, employers and wider society so their unique needs can be addressed accordingly.

As a woman of African descent, I know I am not alone in the experiences I encountered as a migrant determined to carve out a career within my adopted country. It was these personal experiences that provided the impetus to do this research. One practical contribution that I can make as a member of the community is to create a platform together with other African women leaders, to assist aspiring women within our community in boosting their confidence in a safe space. As the findings highlighted, networking and the need for empathetic mentors are one of the core issues that needs to be addressed. Not all will want to be aspiring leaders. However, the confidence to see themselves as having expertise by for example, being visibly involved in projects within their employing organisation or applying their skillsets to external voluntary organisations will not only be of benefit to the individual but also raise the profile and understanding in the wider community of women of African descent.

6.4. Implications of the Research

The study identified challenges that are faced by women of African descent working professionally in New Zealand. Some of the implications are based on individuals and others are societal. In terms of the societal implications, an awareness of other cultures specifically of minority cultures is important to be able to understand the intersecting axis that is not always obvious to other people within society. This is about seeing beyond sex and skin colour. The various layers such as cultural background and traditions that are

hidden can cause emotional and psychological challenges to the individuals and can cause significant health and wellbeing issues. Sensitivity by others to cultural differences is thus important.

The issues found in this research can inform government and policy makers to continue improving policies around diversity and ‘real’ inclusion. For example, the way in which ethnicities are represented in census data are not a true reflection of the actual representation of the different people within society. This highlights the implicit dangers of social group categorization. When Statistics New Zealand produce another census, they need to look more closely at how various ethnicities are represented. Naming is politicized and never innocent. Currently African ethnicities are absorbed into the Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA) (Statistics New Zealand, 2013) yet African ethnicities draw from over 50 different countries. As a socially constructed phenomenon the way ethnicities are defined matters. To not be accurately named is to deny a group a place in society.

According to one of the participants who is already in a leadership role, African women need to reach out to other African women and beyond to break down the barriers they face in progressing their careers and leadership aspirations. Though it is not an easy task, African women in leadership roles could establish forums and platforms to support each other and to boost the confidence of aspiring leaders in a safe and comfortable environment. This will ensure that African women can connect and speak out at a lower level while they build their confidence and expertise to engage in leadership at an advanced level and on a larger scale.

This research has highlighted the need for New Zealand organisations to be more inclusive. The definition of inclusive according to Tan (2019) refers to the way that minority individuals are valued as respected members and are welcomed in an organisation or community. It is an intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that people with different identities can fully participate in all aspects, including leadership positions and decision-making processes. Educating the workforce about unconscious bias is important as it targets assumptions that individuals have about other colleagues who are from a different background and context. Conversely, women of African descent do need to speak up, so their stories and experiences

are heard and acknowledged. Some of the participants noted that they do not speak up for fear of being ignored or their points being dismissed. It is important that they take charge, be persistent and share their views.

6.5. Limitations

This research has several limitations which need to be acknowledged. One significant limitation was finding participants that met the criteria of this research. The criteria required professional women who had been employed for more than five years in professional roles in New Zealand, are of African descent and, have leadership aspirations. Some potential participants did meet two of the three requirements but declined the invitation because they did not aspire to lead. This was a significant learning for the researcher in how to frame an invitation. The topic was an exploration of their career stories, but the word 'leadership' appeared to confound the recruitment process.

Despite placing an advertisement with the major group of African Communities Forum Inc (ACOFI), the researcher still only managed to yield a very small number of participants. Most Africans in New Zealand belong to this group. After several attempts while at the same time targeting specific African women groups, the researcher still did not get the anticipated number. It was then decided to use other alternatives such as snowballing and referrals where the researcher did manage to get closer to the target number of participants. Thus, a significant limitation is the study involved nine interviews. However, this number was seen as satisfactory given the subjectivist narrative nature of the interviews that allowed the researcher to explore in-depth, the experiences of these African women. As Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe, and Young (2018) remark, a purposive sample, selected by virtue of their capacity to provide richly textured relevant information related to the phenomena under investigation, does mean the number of participants can be small to support the in depth case oriented analysis.

A further limitation was the paucity of research on African migrants in New Zealand. There is little literature on the migrant group and while there is limited research on other migrant groups to New Zealand, one cannot assume the cultural contexts in their home country or migration experiences are the same. To illustrate, one key learning experience for the researcher, was that Africans are a collective society. On reflection, rather than individual interviews this research could have benefited with the use of focus groups to generate conversations among participants. This was also discussed in Adelowo (2012) who noted how story telling in African communities is a communal activity, where the group helps validate each other's experiences. Inter-related with this and perhaps reflective of the researcher's reticence to consider focus groups, was recognizing that most of the participants are busy women who are full-time employees, mothers of young children with some involved in shiftwork. It proved difficult to get them to confirm times and then actually show up for the interview. Some who initially gave their consent for an interview ended up not participating stating they did not have the time. Whether or not focus groups could have alleviated some of the anxiety some participants felt about individual interviews remains an unknown.

6.7. Recommendations for Future Research

There has been limited research on African women settling in New Zealand and there also has been limited research on the employment experiences of African people in New Zealand. Research in future will benefit from exploring how young African females who are growing up in New Zealand are shaping their careers. It would help to understand what kind of influences they encounter in deciding what they will do in future and whether the notion of a career means the same to them as it has to their parents. Most of the participants for this study came from their home countries and had children. These children were either born in the home country and moved here with the participant (parent) when they were very young, or they were born in New Zealand. It would be interesting to see if there are inter-generational differences in choices given the participants in this study were quite limited in the options they were encouraged to pursue. Young women in New Zealand are being encouraged for example, to take up Science, Technology, Engineering

and Science (STEM) subjects to enable them to move into more male dominated career pathways. It will be insightful to have research focusing on how young African girls in New Zealand are engaging these kinds of conversations. A further project might also explore the impact of having African role models and informal professional networks on New Zealand born women of African descent.

6.8. Conclusion

This study focused on African women who have been employed in professional roles in New Zealand. This research identified how these women have navigated their employment in New Zealand despite intersecting axes of multiple identities. Some have moved onwards and up in their career while others have become stuck due to different circumstances and career opportunities. The common themes that were discussed in the chapters show how resilient these women are. There were tensions, however. The society they came from was exceedingly patriarchal which dictated that when even when they migrated to New Zealand they had to shoulder the significant family responsibilities with little support. In contrast, they were well-educated so when they migrated to New Zealand they were able to navigate their way through the challenges of employment with some undertaking further studies while others took on senior leadership positions. Though the challenges identified in this study delayed their progression, the participants changed their lives and persevered through the support of their organisations and their own tenacity. They are remarkable women who have inspirational stories and experiences to share and reflect upon.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)
Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

5 March 2019

Irene Ryan
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Irene

Re Ethics Application: **19/58 Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Sub Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 5 March 2022.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation, then you are responsible for obtaining it. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,



Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: tht9713@aut.ac.nz; barbara.myers@aut.ac.nz

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:
11 February 2019

Project Title
Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand

An Invitation
My name is Isabel Chiambiro, I am studying towards a Masters in Business at Auckland University of Technology. I would like to invite you to participate in my research to explore your career stories and aspirations of leadership while working in New Zealand.
Participation in this research is voluntary.

What is the purpose of this research?
The purpose of this research is to find out about the career experiences, opportunities and challenges you have faced as you aspire to become part of a leadership team while working in New Zealand.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?
The research is targeting minority women of African descent at different career levels and should be currently employed in New Zealand. You have been identified as meeting this criteria.
You may have received this invitation through one of the participants that will be taking part in this research. If you are interested in being part of the research, please get in touch with the researcher through the email address at the bottom of the page.

How do I agree to participate in this research?
Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You can withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?
Data will be collected through face to face interviews between the researcher and you as a participant. It is anticipated that the interviews will occur within the AUT environment/campuses convenient to where you live. It can be city, north or south campus in rooms such as the library meeting rooms or the postgraduate meeting rooms. The researcher will book these in advance and arrange to meet you within these premises.
The interview will be audio recorded, the recorded data will be transcribed. Once transcription of the interview is completed, the transcripts will be offered to you to confirm. These transcripts will then be analysed and be presented in a final thesis document, in which pseudonyms will be used in order to protect your identity.

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Appendix B: Participant Information sheet

Every effort will be made to protect participants confidentiality however since there is a small pool of potential participants, some may be known to each other.

What are the discomfort and risks and how will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

There will not be any discomforts anticipated during the research however since there will be audio recordings, these will only be used for research purposes and no data will be disclosed to any third party. While it is anticipated that there are no/minimal risks, the researcher will adhere to the guidelines on researcher safety as outlined in the AUT ethics knowledge base.

What are the benefits?

Benefits for the Researcher include:

- fulfilling the requirements of MBus qualification.
- Understanding participants' career stories while identifying the barriers and challenges that may lead to a lack of minority women leaders.
- Recommendations on addressing perceived and actual barriers and challenges that may be identified.

Benefits for the Participants:

- Giving voice to a group who are currently silenced in the organisational landscape.
- This research may aid in identifying pathways in which participants can find their ways into leadership positions.
- Through this research participants maybe motivated to fulfil their aspirations into leadership roles.

Benefits for the wider community:

- The society will start seeing other minority demographics being represented at leadership level, therefore creating images of diversity and inclusion.

How will my privacy be protected?

Data collected will be used for research purposes only and the recordings will be kept private, confidential and will be locked away in the supervisor's office for a minimum of six years. Electronic data will be protected by use of passwords and to avoid data being accessed.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

Participation in this research will be at no cost.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

To be part of this research you are asked to return all the forms within two weeks of receiving the forms. For any clarifications and questions, please contact the researcher within the two weeks. If you have already indicated your interest and you decide to withdraw, you are free to do so.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The summary of findings will be shared, please indicate your method of receiving the information either through email or post, the researcher will arrange delivery.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisors – details below.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Appendix B: Participant information Sheet

Researcher Contact Details:

Isabel Chiambiro

Email: tht9713@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Irene Ryan


Email: irene.ryan@aut.ac.nz

Dr Barbara Myers

Email: barbara.myers@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *7 March 2019*, AUTC Reference number *19/58*.

Appendix C: Consent Form



Consent Form

Project title: *Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand*

Project Supervisor: *Dr Irene Ryan & Dr Barbara Myers*

Researcher: *Isabel Chiambiro*

☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 11 February 2019.

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

☐ I agree to take part in this research.

☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 5 March 2019 AUTEK Reference number 19/58

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

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Appendix D: Interview Guide

Isabel Chiambiro Student ID 18015738

Research questions Guidelines

Topic: Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand.

Introduction:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this project.

My aim to explore your career story and your career aspirations into leadership roles.

The format includes asking you some questions that are related to your career background, your understanding of leadership, organisational support and your individual ambitions.

As mentioned on my email and **participant information form**, I will be **recording our conversation**, which I will then **transcribe** so I can write my findings for the projects.

This information is **confidential**, your names will not feature anywhere as I will use **pseudonyms**

I have already briefed you about the consent form and you have already signed it, I will keep a copy and you have a copy for yourself.

Do you have any questions before we start?

If not, would you mind giving me an introduction about yourself?

1. Tell me about your career so far. (you can tell the story in your own words and in your own way)

- *At what career level were you before leaving your country?*
- *How did you end up in NZ?*
- *At what level did you start in NZ, was it aligned to your career back home?*
- *How many years have you worked professionally in NZ organisations?*

2. What contributed to the decision of the career you are in? Was it Family, self – how so, can you tell me more about it?

3. To what extent did you get support from family towards attaining or advancing your career?

4. Can you explain your understanding of leadership? (What does the term leadership mean to you)

5. Have you had any opportunity to lead in your current or previous roles? Would you give examples?

- *If yes, give details on how you became a leader and how you felt? Can be leading a project...*
- *If no, have you had any support or guidance towards gaining a leadership role.*

6. To what extent do/did you get support within your organisation in gaining experience or exposure to leadership?

7. What organisational qualities do you think women should possess for them to attain a leadership role?

8. Of the women in leadership positions in your organisations, are there any women of African descent?

If no, do you have any women leaders in the organisation that inspire you?

If yes, can you explain the type of inspiration.

9. Of these women in leadership positions, to what extent do you interact with them?

10. Do you have leadership aspirations – hope or ambitions to become a leader?

- *If yes, how so? In what way?*
- *If no, would you like to explain?*
- *What do you need from the organisation to develop as a leader?*
- *What do you think you need from yourself to develop as a leader.*

11. Can you give details about the challenges you have faced in regards to leadership.

- *Prompt to tease out **barriers, negative experiences, career blocks, disadvantage.***
- *What kind of support do you think you would need for you to become or to work towards gaining access to leadership positions?*

12. What do you think the organisations should do to support minority women of African Descent?

- *Prompt for leadership development support and opportunities*


13. Are there any other aspects or career stories that you would like to talk about?

14. Tell me about your future career story. Where do you see yourself in an ideal career world of the future?

(Prompt. Where does the process of leadership fit in).

We have reached the end of our interview and thank you for your participation

Appendix E: Confidentiality form



Confidentiality Agreement

Project title: *Aspiring to lead? An exploration of the career stories of ethnic minority women of African descent working in New Zealand*

Project Supervisor: *Dr Irene Ryan & Dr Barbara Myers*

Researcher: *Isabel Chiambiro*

☐ I understand that all the material I will be asked to transcribe is confidential.

☐ I understand that the contents of the tapes or recordings can only be discussed with the researchers.

☐ I will not keep any copies of the transcripts nor allow third parties access to these copies.

Transcriber's signature:

Transcriber's name:

Transcriber's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Project Supervisor's Contact Details (if appropriate):
.....
.....
.....
.....

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 5 March 2019 AUTEK Reference number 19/58

Note: The Transcriber should retain a copy of this form.

Note: The Intermediary should retain a copy of this form.

April 2018

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This version was last edited in April 2018