

PERCEPTIONS OF FEMALE MANAGERS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
GAMBLING INDUSTRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
**GENDER EQUITY**



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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REPORT BY THE  
**National Gambling Board**

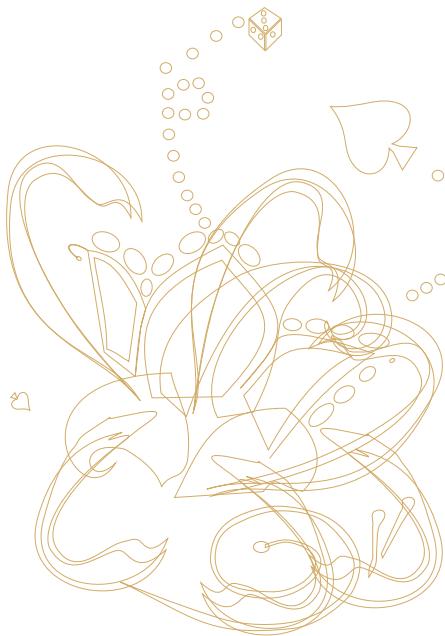
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**APRIL 2008**

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*Exclusion Of Claims*

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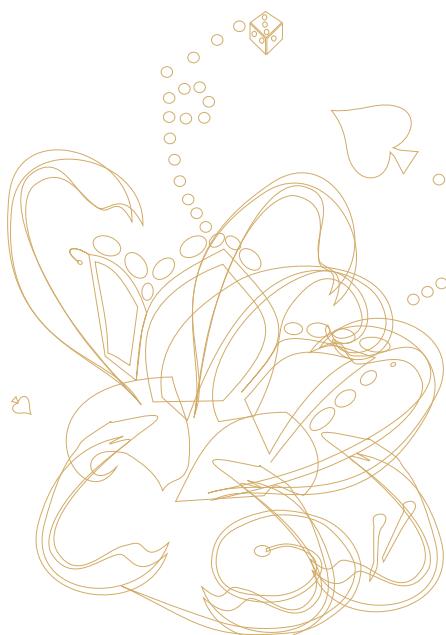
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years the South African government passed a number of laws to promote gender equality in the South African workplace. The South African Constitution states that this country is a sovereign, non-racist, non-sexist state and the Bill of Rights that complements the Constitution makes provision for gender equality. The years subsequent to 1994 saw the implementation of systems and processes aimed at promoting, protecting and monitoring of gender equality in society as a whole, thus earning South Africa some recognition as possessing one of the most progressive, gender-conscious constitutions in the world.

In addition to the above, President Thabo Mbeki addressed thousands of people, on 10 August 2006, gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to celebrate *Women's Day*, and requested that the status of women in the business sector be promoted. This theme was again highlighted in the President's address during the Women's Day Celebrations on 9 August 2007 in Kimberley, Northern Cape, when he requested South Africans to "reflect on the challenges facing all the women of this country and evaluate the progress we are making in ensuring that South Africa becomes a truly non-sexist society. We should ask ourselves as to what more should we do to ensure that the empowerment and emancipation of women becomes a daily reality. As we celebrate National Women's Day we should resolve to accelerate our progress towards gender equality both in the public and private sectors and in society as a whole."

International equity trends in the gambling industry and the strategic objectives of the South African Women Gambling Forum placed further emphasis on the importance and quest for gender equity in this industry. It would appear that there was a dearth of information on the status of gender equity in the South African gambling industry at the time this research project was initiated.

The key affirmative action legislation in South Africa is the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. The purpose of the Act is to achieve equity in the workplace, by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experiences by designated groups (black people, women and people with disabilities), to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace. As stated in this Act, these guidelines enable employers to ensure that their human resource policies and practices are based on non-discrimination and reflect employment equity principles at the commencement of employment, during employment and when terminating employment. Policies and programmes as developed and implemented by employers in South Africa are attempts to provide a more balanced view of employment equity in South Africa.

The Board consequently identified the need to conduct qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of female managers employed in the South African gambling industry on the issue of gender equity. Since this research study is qualitative in nature, the findings from this study cannot be regarded as representative of the opinions of all female managers across the gambling industry.



The sample was drawn from a population of female managers that were employed in all sectors of the gambling industry across the country. A total of 182 females were interviewed. A female manager was defined as any female employed in a management position from junior to top management level. The experience of these targeted respondents at the workplace and in the gambling industry in general supplied the basis for this research report. Data was collected over a period of eight months from December 2006 to July 2007, making use of a semi-structured discussion guide for the personal in-depth interviews.

Based on the main findings, female managers still perceived the entering of the male-dominated top management levels (the so-called 'old boys' network) in the gambling industry as a challenge. Communication with especially older senior male colleagues 'from the old school' was sometimes experienced as stressful. Specific initiatives to empower female staff were either limited or non-existing, or not supported by senior/top management unless clear mandates, policies and strategies were approved and in place. Relationships with female colleagues within the same organisation were sometimes strained due to jealousy and competitiveness. Exposure to other sectors within the holistic industry was limited and empowering networking opportunities for female employees were also limited.

On the positive side it was evident that females had infiltrated different spheres of the gambling industry with great success, as many were appointed as heads of sections/departments in different fields of expertise such as human resources, finance, public relations/marketing/communication, information technology, legal services and compliance. Female managers were very passionate about their careers in the gambling industry and aspired to more senior and executive managerial positions. There were also an increasing number of dynamic females appointed in executive managerial positions who acted as pioneers and role models for the rest of the industry. The majority of female respondents had strong and dynamic personalities, accepted the responsibilities assigned to them, and were proud of their achievements so far.

Overall female employees enjoyed good relationships with female colleagues in the same organisation, as well as positive liaison with a select few female managers in the rest of the gambling industry. Suggestions as cited by respondents to empower female managers in the gambling industry ranged from training and personal development, to the allocation of more responsibilities, frequent participation in meetings to increase overall exposure, creation of promotion opportunities, grooming of selected individuals, establishment of relevant female forums with approved mandates to address specific female-related issues, and the implementation and monitoring of gender equity policies in the workplace.



## *Executive Summary*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years the South African government passed a number of laws to promote gender equality in the South African workplace. The South African Constitution states that this country is a sovereign, non-racist, non-sexist state and the Bill of Rights that complements the Constitution makes provision for gender equality. The years subsequent to 1994 saw the implementation of systems and processes aimed at promoting, protecting and monitoring of gender equality in society as a whole, thus earning South Africa some recognition as possessing one of the most progressive, gender-conscious constitutions in the world.

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During a speech made on 10 August 2006 by President Mbeki to thousands of people gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to celebrate *Women's Day*, he asked public and private institutions in the country to seriously strive to close the gap between policy and practice in empowering women. The President was furthermore of the opinion that all women should have equal access to all opportunities that exist in society and all work-related positions of authority in the public and private sectors. He consequently requested both government and business institutions to also develop certain yardsticks to measure progress made towards implementing their empowerment plans.



International trends on the issue of gender equity moved the American Gaming Association to make diversity in employment and procurement an industry-wide priority. This commitment was cemented in 2000 when the newly created American Gaming Association Diversity Task Force was commissioned with the task of promoting diversity in all aspects of the gaming industry. The task force spearheaded an array of successful initiatives, facilitated research to determine the state of diversity in the gaming industry and developed programmes and processes that put them at the forefront of progress on this issue.

It would appear that there was a dearth of information on the status of gender equity in the South African gambling industry at the time this research project was initiated. The Board consequently identified the need to conduct qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of female managers employed in the South African gambling industry on the issue of gender equity in the industry.

Since this research study is qualitative in nature, the findings from this study cannot be regarded as representative of the opinions of all female executives across the gambling industry.

## 2. MAIN AIM AND SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 MAIN AIM

The main aim of this research project was to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of female managers employed in the gambling industry (including regulatory) of gender equity at the workplace and within the gambling industry in general.

### 2.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The secondary research objectives were to more specifically investigate the following issues in detail:

- 2.2.1 Establishment of respondents' holistic view of gender equity and perception of the approach of the industry and senior (male) colleagues towards gender equity in the workplace;
- 2.2.2 Exploration of the way in which female managers viewed their role and responsibilities in their working environment;
- 2.2.3 Determination of the level of respect and recognition between males and females on all levels, as well as the effectiveness of existing communication channels in giving and receiving information and managerial feedback;
- 2.2.4 Determination of the level of strategic involvement and decision-making by female managers;
- 2.2.5 Establishment of the barriers/challenges/frustrations associated with being a female manager in the daily execution of key responsibilities and tasks;
- 2.2.6 Establishment of the successes/achievements during their term of employment associated with being a female manager and the specific managerial benefits linked to the female psyche;
- 2.2.7 Determination of other activities not listed in performance agreements or job description requested from females due to their gender;
- 2.2.8 Exploration of current empowerment initiatives for women in the gambling industry, including available training programmes, creation of opportunities for promotion and ready access to applicable women's forums within their immediate working environment and/or the regulatory and industry environment in general;
- 2.2.9 Determination of levels of loyalty towards present employer and the perception of the co-operation and support from female colleagues, including those females employed at other gambling institutions in South Africa; and
- 2.2.10 Establishment of the profile of respondents including terms of years employed in gambling industry, level of employment and nature of work.

### 3. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

An exploratory research approach that centred on in-depth interviews with female managers was deemed the most appropriate method to gather the required information. This methodology provided the researchers with an in-depth understanding of the feelings, views, perceptions, opinions, associations and beliefs of respondents on the topics under discussion. The respondents were briefed before the start of the discussions to ensure that they felt totally free to express feelings and perceptions. The qualitative nature of this study implied that the findings from this study cannot be regarded as representative of the opinions of all female managers across the gambling industry.

#### 3.1 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

The sample was drawn from the population of female managers that are employed in all sectors of the gambling industry across the country. Although a total number of 182 females were interviewed, it should not be regarded as a representative sample of female managers employed in the South African gambling industry.

A female manager was defined as any female employed in a management position from junior to executive (senior and top) management level. The experience of these targeted respondents at the workplace and in the gambling industry in general supplied the basis for this research report.

Data was collected over a period of eight months from December 2006 to July 2007, making use of a semi-structured discussion guide for the personal in-depth interviews.

Below is the detailed sample representation per gambling industry sector.

	n	%
Casino	115	63.2%
Regulator	39	21.4%
Bingo	14	7.7%
Horseracing & Betting	10	5.5%
Other	4	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table1 : Sample representation per gambling industry sector**

The majority of female managers (63.2%) interviewed came from the casino sector while 21.4% of the female managers were regulators. The rest of the female managers came from either the bingo industry (7.7%) or the horseracing industry (5.5%). There were 4 female managers (2.2%) who indicated that they were employed in sectors other than the ones listed above, but never mentioned the exact sectors of the gambling industry in which they were employed.

### 3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

During the personal in-depth interviews use was made of a discussion guide with semi-structured questions (see Appendix A) addressing the secondary research objectives, developed in line with suggestions gleaned from the literature review pre-empting this study. This interview schedule comprised questions on different subtopics that covered issues like female managers' overall perceptions of the gambling industry and employers; roles, responsibilities, acknowledgement/recognition and communication; etc. The interview situation was informal and all spontaneous comments on needs and feelings relevant to the topic were explored at length.

A short demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) was designed and completed for each respondent to assist researchers in drawing up a respondent profile for this study. This questionnaire contained questions on the number of years that the respondents had worked in the gambling industry, the nature of their work, current designation, highest qualifications, population group, person that respondents report to, gender of person that they report to, age of respondents and the number of subordinates reporting to them.

Data was collected over a period of eight months from December 2006 to July 2007. At the onset of the study, letters were sent to all the respective industry members informing them of the research and requesting their assistance in identifying relevantly employed female managers and supplying contact details for these respondents to enable researchers to organise interviews.

Interviews were conducted with female managers in all nine provinces at times that suited them best. Each interview lasted about one and a half hours to two and a half hours. All the discussions were conducted in English and researchers took notes of responses. These notes and written verbatim quotes were analysed to form the basis of the presentation and the written report. Telephonic interviews were conducted in cases where there were only one or two female managers employed in a particular organisation outside Gauteng, as well as where respondents were not available when interviewers visited a specific venue.

In this report, the term 'female managers' refers to all women appointed in managerial positions (from junior to top management levels). In some instances, specific mention is made to 'executive managers' and this indicates only senior and/or top management.

## 4. DEMOGRAPHICS

This section describes the demographics of the female managers (respondents) that took part in this study.

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
1 - 2 years	25	13.7%
3 - 4 years	29	15.9%
5 - 6 years	26	14.3%
7 years and more	102	56%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2 : Number of years working in the gambling industry**

At the time when data was gathered, more than half of the female managers (56%) had been working in the gambling industry for seven years or more while nearly 16% had been working in the gambling industry for 3 – 4 years. The rest of the respondents had been working in the gambling industry for either 1 – 2 years (13.7%) or 5 – 6 years (14.3%).

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Senior and top (executive) management	72	39.6%
Finance	27	14.8%
Human Resources	19	10.4%
Compliance/Surveillance	13	7.1%
Public Relations/Communication/Marketing	13	7.1%
Legal	5	2.7%
Other	33	18.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3 : Nature of the work of female managers**

Most of the female managers interviewed (39.6%) were part of the senior or top (executive) management level. Female managers who worked in finance made up 14.8% of the sample, while women employed in the human resources departments made up 10.4%. The rest of the female managers were either in compliance/surveillance (7.1%), public relations/communication/marketing (7.1%) or legal divisions (2.7%). The remaining 18.2% indicated that the nature of their work was not defined in the questionnaire and involved information technology and tables and slots.

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Manager	92	56.4%
Senior manager	48	29.4%
Board member (top management)	15	9.2%
CEO/Chair of Board (top management)	5	3.1%
Other	3	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4 : Designations of the female managers**

Over half of the respondents (56.4%) interviewed were managers, while 29.4% were in senior management positions. Board members made up 9.2% of the sample while 3.1% of the female managers were either chief executive officers (CEOs) or chairpersons of boards. The rest of the respondents (1.8%) indicated that they were section/departmental heads or supervisors. There were a total of 19 female managers that did not indicate their designations.

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Primary School	1	0.5%
Secondary School	43	23.6%
Tertiary/post matric	135	74.2%
Other	3	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5 : Education level of the female managers**

Nearly all of the female managers had some form of formal education, with over three quarters (74.2%) having gone as far as tertiary level. Only 23.6% of the respondents had completed secondary school and 0.5% had primary school education. There were three female managers who indicated 'other', with one of them having no formal education.

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
White	85	46.7%
African	74	40.7%
Coloured	15	8.2%
Asian	8	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6 : Population group of the female managers**

Most of the female managers (46.7%) who took part in the study were White. Africans made up 40.7% of the sample and Coloureds 8.2%. The other 4.4% of the sample comprised Asian female managers.

	n	%
Senior manager	124	68.5%
CEO (top management)	34	18.8%
Chairperson of the Board (top management)	18	9.9%
The Board (top management)	5	2.8%
Total	181	100%

**Table 7 : Person that the female managers were reporting to**

Almost three quarters of the respondents (68.5%) were reporting to senior management, while 18.8% were reporting directly to the CEO. The rest of the female managers were either reporting to the chairperson of the Board (9.9%) or to the Board of Directors of their respective entities (2.8%).

Male		Female	
n	%	n	%
127	69.8%	62	34.1%

**Table 8 : Gender of person that the female managers were reporting to**

The majority of the female managers (69.8%) indicated that they reported to male executives while 34.1% of the respondents reported to female executives. There were five female managers that indicated that they report to both male and female executives.

	n	%
18 - 24 years	2	1.1%
25 - 34 years	67	36.8%
35 - 44 years	70	38.5%
45 - 55 years	36	19.8%
56 years and older	7	3.8%
Total	182	100%

**Table 9 : Age of female managers**

The majority of the female managers (75.3%) were aged between 25 and 44 years. Female managers aged 45 – 55 years made up 19.8% of the sample, while 3.8% of the respondents were aged between 56 years and older. There were only two female managers aged between 18 and 24 years.

## 5. DETAILED MAIN FINDINGS

The findings discussed in this section represent the perceptions of selected female managers in the gambling industry in South Africa on gender equity and are insights gathered during the 2006/2007 qualitative research study on this issue. The **board's** research team conducted in-depth interviews with female managers to probe feelings on certain *a priori* themes about gender equity and to define induced themes. *A priori* themes include the objective characteristics of the phenomena being studied and professional definitions and theoretical orientation on the topic and have an influence on research since they determine the questions asked when collecting data. Induced themes are not constructed by the researcher but obtained from the interpretations of respondent's verbal responses to questions.

As the findings cited are qualitative in nature and thus merely present all the vastly mixed feelings and perceptions expressed on the topic of gender equity, at no time does the order in which responses are discussed suggests any priority weighting. This study was also an industry first and should be seen as a process of 'testing the waters' before a more in-depth and focused study of the specific topic of gender equity with quantification of responses and reference to legal framework and policies will be considered. Another important inherent characteristic of a qualitative research study is that the findings reported are the emotional feedback on the topic by only a selected group of respondents and not at all representative of the entire population. In this report spontaneous responses given on any specific subtopic are discussed under the heading of that subtopic, identified by the main numeric indicators.

### 5.1 HOLISTIC VIEW OF GENDER EQUITY

All respondents spontaneously recalled the perceived oppression of women in the past, as well as the scourge of defamatory stereotyping and the resultant inferior roles allocated to females in society and mainly lower-level non-executive jobs available to women in the work place despite obvious capabilities. The harsh reality of the perceived women-only 'glass ceiling' effective in promotion strategies was still fresh in the minds of many respondents.

*'Redress issues of the past as high positions were only for men previously.'*

*'Men have always been considered as more executive while the women have been considered for more minor tasks.'*

*'Women have only been able to reach a certain level and could not go further.'*

*'Women can be just as effective and competent as men.'*

However, in general respondents perceived that the current emphasis on gender equity resulted in the imbalances of the past now being actively addressed. It was especially the equity in the workplace that was promoted through a more representative appointment of women in junior and middle management positions, equity in responsibilities and equal empowerment, rights and opportunities in the workplace for both genders. There was thus overall a fairer treatment of women and a future was created for them in the company through appropriate personal development and exposure to training programmes.

*'It is important to be on par with and ensure equity in the workplace and ensure that women make a meaningful contribution.'*

*'It is about balance in representation.'*

*'Women are treated fairly, given opportunities, development and succession planning.'*

*'Equality between the sexes, pay, rights, stature, responsibility, level of authority, respect and benefits.'*

*'Having access to similar training and development opportunities and equity.'*

*'Equity in growth opportunities.'*

*'Gender equity policies should be implemented; it should not be window dressing.'*

Respondents seemed to favour real empowerment to mere window-dressing and strongly felt that the opportunity that women now have to become managers or to head up companies through equity initiatives, motivated women to use their full potential and prove their true capabilities. In this process they tended to positively contribute to diversity in leadership styles and strategic decision-making within the workplace.

*'Females are given the opportunities to be managers and contribute to leadership.'*

*'They can become part of policy and the mission of an organisation.'*

*'Women are being used to their full potential and not just window dressing.'*

*'Women are being empowered and motivated.'*

Some respondents believed that the inherent strength and dynamic personalities of women, coupled with their unique slant on problem solving and their dependability, meant that they had much to offer any company. The assertive and self-confident way in which many female managers approached and executed their responsibilities were commendable and often resulted in these women acting as role models for other women. A few respondents reflected that unfortunately business in general had not yet caught on to the fact that there had been a major role-reversal between men and women in many cases as more and more women viewed themselves as the main bread winners.

*'Women have become people now.'*

*'As women we are dynamic and we have our ways to get what we want.'*

*'Women bring in a different angle to the workplace and handle things differently from males.'*

*'We are becoming role models.'*

*'We are becoming responsible bread winners.'*

*'Women have much to offer.'*

*'We don't have to doubt ourselves anymore.'*

*'Half the time when you want to get things done, give them to women.'*

Although respondents acknowledged the existence of policies, acts and regulations that guided employers with regard to the implementation of gender equity, there was a definite unfulfilled need for the implementation processes to be less laborious, more closely monitored and more 'real'. A fair number of respondents felt that there were still many incidences of blatant or more subtle oppression of women, male colleagues that struggle to accept women as equal partners and exclusion from some workplace forums.

Women felt that stereotyping still clouded their daily work life as they were not really taken seriously by employers, they did not receive the same accolade for work done and often have to work harder to prove themselves. They also cited that thinking about gender equity in general in South Africa, there were too few females in senior management positions. Female managers had the additional challenge of taxing social responsibilities at home as mother and caretaker of the family.

The odd white respondent raised a concern that the promotion of gender equity perceivably was rather a case of Affirmative Action, more than a colour-blind empowerment of all females (i.e. white women were not included in the process).

*'The process is there, but males struggle to accept women.'*

*'It is just talk.'*

*'The stereotypes need to be broken.'*

*'We are far behind as there are not enough females in high positions.'*

*'Things have changed, but we still need to go a long way.'*

*'Women are not being appreciated for the same work.'*

*'It feels as if women need to work harder.'*

*'Women are faced with challenges e.g. family life but we are managers as well, being single parents, caretakers and we have to sustain the family.'*

*'It is unfair if you look at BEE, as white women are removed from BEE.'* [Respondent probably meant 'affirmative action'.]

*'It feels as if white women are neglected.'*

A few respondents felt that women should be appointed on merit alone (based on their qualifications, skills and experience) and that gender equity should not be part of the workplace experience. Employees should be judged on their contributions and recognised for their achievements and not be appointed to any position merely for being female. However, it seemed to be difficult to recruit experienced and skilled women for the positions of executive managers. Consequently many women in the gambling industry were appointed as departmental and/or line managers in support function positions, such as legal assistance, compliance, human resources, marketing/communication/public relations and finance. One person reflected that some jobs were perceivably too dangerous for women to do, e.g. to conduct inspections (compliance activities).

*'I have never thought about male and female, I only look at position and contribution.'*

*'Good people should be recognised for their achievements and not gender.'*

*'Gender equity is not part of my world.'*

*'It is easy to get women on finance and human resources level, but difficult to appoint women on top management and executive levels.'*

*'It is a problem to get skilled women.'*

## 5.2 PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRESS OF GENDER EQUITY INITIATIVES IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY

### 5.2.1 Perceptions of the approach by the industry towards gender equity

In general female managers had very mixed feelings about the way their employer approached and implemented gender equity in the workplace. It would appear that female employees were divided into two definite camps. The women with strong and assertive personalities tended to more readily win the respect of fellow workers and often did not report any personal experiences of gender discrimination. The more subdued and less dynamic female types often fill lower level positions in the organisation and could be dominated more easily and more frequently cried foul of gender equity infringements.

Quite a fair number of female managers thus reported that they did not experience any gender discrimination or oppression and in fact enjoyed equal and fair appointment and advancement opportunities in the workplace. It would appear that more and more women were currently appointed as line or middle management managers or promoted from the lower management levels due to excellent opportunities for them to climb the corporate ladder. This pro-active and supportive gender equity approach made the gambling industry an attractive work destination for women (especially on middle management and lower levels) and in some departments/divisions there were actually more female employees than males.

*'We are all treated equally and have fair opportunities.'*

*'We are part of the government's 50/50 representativity.'*

*'Women have equal opportunity to participate in meetings and put views across.'*

*'There is a balance in management.'*

*'There are more women at middle management level than men.'*

*'There are more women in managerial positions than in the past.'*

*'If there are vacant positions, women will be considered first.'*

*'Women get promoted and appointed.'*

*'The organisation is pro-active.'*

*'The organisation is forward thinking.'*

*'In most departments, the employees are females.'*

Females were increasingly more often appointed in executive management positions (e.g. as board members, (deputy) chairpersons and/or general managers), but only in very few cases actually dominate any executive management level. These particular women were usually dynamic and highly skilled individuals that were head-hunted for their specific management skills and served as empowering role models for the rest of the female staff. This led some respondents from the more dynamic female grouping to believe that their employer might (and should) in fact focus more on the skills, knowledge, competency and performance of the (prospective) employee than on the promotion of gender equity in the workplace.

*'We have a lot of dynamic women.'*

*'Women in this industry are strong women and very tough.'*

*'The fact that our deputy chair is a woman, serves as role model for many women. It is very empowering.'*

*'More than 50% women are senior or executive management.'*

*'It will take time for it to be balanced, but women are slowly climbing up the ranks.'*

*'For the past five to six years, they have been actively addressing gender equity.'*

*'They try to follow the employment equity quotas closely.'*

*'The person best for the job gets appointed.'*

*'People are being recognised for their achievements, and not gender.'*

*'Female managers are not in their positions because of gender, but because of knowledge.'*

*'They have an intelligent approach towards gender equity where they will not appoint a woman for the sake of it.'*

Despite the positive comments of the above respondents on the promotion of gender equity in the workplace, the majority of respondents interviewed unfortunately still held a rather dim view of the implementation of gender equity in the gambling industry. They felt that the gambling industry was well aware of its responsibilities regarding gender equity but it was perceivably too slow a process, unstructured and lacking in workable implementation policies. Overall this process was still seen as 'work in progress' due to as yet unmet goals/margins especially on senior management levels. In some cases respondents complained that although equity committees and task teams were appointed, no feedback was received regarding progress.

Some respondents felt that management perceived gender equity as tokenism and a statistical exercise to comply with equity targets and legislation. The passion to really transform other than on paper alone was perceivably lacking. There was sometimes more focus on the promotion of Affirmative Action than on gender equity. The top echelons were still (white) male dominated with only the odd female appointed in a senior or executive position (no balance yet). Examples were given of the ratio of women to men, favouring men in executive managerial positions. Some respondents stated that they found it challenging to infiltrate and survive in some of the biased male hierarchies.

*'Women are involved, but only tokenism.'*

*'They only have stats in mind.'*

*'Administratively we are transformed, but not in reality.'*

*'They say equity is there, but we don't see it.'*

*'They have to adhere to regulation, but there is no passion.'*

*'They are addressing it in order to comply with the empowering index rating.'*

*'There is movement, but not quick enough, especially at top management level.'*

*'The focus has been on broad based black economic empowerment, and gender equity not singled out.'*

*'Gender equity is not spoken about, always concentrating on affirmative action.'*

*'One female in a male dominated environment.'*

*'There is no female in a management position.'*

*'5 out of 15 are female.' 'It is only me and 5 guys.' 'No female on board.' 'Few women in senior management.'*

*'There are only 2 female directors out of 10 males.' 'There is a lack of females in our Board of Directors.'*

*'At the executive level there are 2 females and 8 males.' 'Staff component is still male dominated at the top.'*

*'Middle management is balanced, but not top management.'*

*'Top executive is still predominantly white males.'*

*'African males are empowered by being appointed as directors.'*

*'Senior management is more biased towards males.'*

*'There is a perception that gambling is a male thing.'*

*'It is difficult to infiltrate the circle of top male managers.'*

Even though it might be difficult to find the dynamic and assertive type of women needed to make an impact in the top positions, too often women were still stereotyped as the weaker sex fit only for administrative tasks. Women felt that they had to work harder and excel to prove themselves and be accepted and gain some respect from their male colleagues. Due to the lack of an adequate number of skilled female managers the existing female managers often had to shoulder an inhuman managerial burden that hampered their performances.

Some of these problems could be ascribed to a degree of inexperience on the side of the newly appointed female managers because they were not groomed to prepare them for senior management positions. There was also a perceived lack of effective succession planning that delayed the promotion of junior managers to more senior positions within the organisation in line with a definite expressed need by the majority of respondents. This need centred on the promotion of female managers in existing positions and the empowerments of especially African women to fill management positions. In a few instances females themselves were also to blame for the disrespect they got from male colleagues because they threw away opportunities to prove their worth by not attending meetings or accepting challenges or responsibilities.

*'We struggle to find skilled females to occupy senior positions.'*

*'We need strong and dynamic women, go-getters, who can face the men, women who can fight for their space.'*

*'It's always been a male industry and when strong women are brought in, they need to prove themselves in order to be accepted.'*

*'Men don't realise what we are worth.'*

*'They bring you in, but don't develop you.'*

*'It is a slow process, as females still need experience.'*

*'Women do not have the spirit to fight for what is rightfully theirs.'*

### **5.2.2 Perceptions about the approach by (senior) male colleagues towards gender equity**

The female managers interviewed tended to have differing opinions about the approach and attitudes of senior male colleagues towards gender equity. A fair number of these respondents felt that their (younger) male colleagues (especially on the middle and lower management level) were supportive of gender equity initiatives. These male colleagues in fact respected them, recognised and appreciated their skills and abilities and treated them professionally as equal partners and valuable members of the team. A few respondents believed that the positive feedback depended on their own attitude towards their male counterparts – men tended to find it easier to relate to competent and assertive women that possessed good listening skills and cultivate amicable relationships with their male colleagues.

*'I am myself and don't experience any negative vibrations from senior executives.'*

*'I get support from the men. We work as a team.'*

*'We are treated the same and have the same opportunities.'*

*'We have a professional relationship.'*

*'When males find a good female executive, they say "wow".'*

*'The younger generation is more open to gender equity.'*

*'Below senior level, we get along and do work regardless of race and gender.'*

*'Because I am assertive, they accept me.'*

*'They see me as one of them and a friend.'*

*'It depends how you come across: If you are strong, they respect you.'*

However, a larger number of female managers still complained about certain unpleasantness that sprung from the predominantly male-orientated gambling industry environment. These centred on issues like disrespect towards women and intimidation, male chauvinism and paternalism, obvious exclusion from the 'old boys' network', blatant favouritism towards males, professional jealousy, miscommunication and women being viewed as a threat. Some men seemed totally ignorant of the concept of gender equity and there were even some cases of sexism. A few respondents believed that some men still totally disregard the potential of women as leaders and saw the appointment of women in senior positions as mere tokenism and something to be tolerated only in the name of the political game.

The older male generation was most often guilty of giving their female colleagues a 'hard time' through constant criticism and an undermining of ideas proposed by women, being unapproachable and showing a reluctance to accept instructions from women. Respondents felt that they had to be on the defence all the time, fight to get their point across and work just that bit harder to prove their value to the company in this 'man's world'.

*'Top management still does what they feel like, and mostly men.'*  
*'It feels like an "old boys' network".'*  
*'There is a conservative male frame of mind.'*  
*'The next generation men will be better.'*  
*'Men are not geared to accept women.'*  
*'We are not many women, but it is still a man's world.'*  
*'They have their own kind of language – a lot of miscommunication.'*  
*'They don't respect your capabilities, especially the older males, more a generation thing.'*  
*'A lot of the older people still feel uncomfortable with females being in charge.'*  
*'At face value, the male executives are accepting, but the jokes they make are still very sexist.'*  
*'We have to work harder and prove ourselves – they don't believe that we can do it.'*  
*'I always have to defend myself.'*  
*'Our potential for leadership is not seen but politically they are doing the right thing.'*

There appeared to be a bit of a racial slant underlying some of the perceived communication problems between men and women, as African men experienced some difficulty to respect and listen to women from other racial groupings (especially the young, assertive types – they had more respect for older, experienced White women) and the older White males were often antagonistic to African women.

*'Sometimes it is a cultural issue, as African men don't talk to women of other races.'*  
*'Africans find it difficult to listen to a white woman.'*  
*'They have more respect for me as a white senior person and my experience.'*

### **5.3 THE WAY IN WHICH FEMALE MANAGERS VIEWED THEIR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In general the majority of female managers were of the opinion that they fulfill a vital and important role within the gambling industry. They perceived themselves as individuals that eagerly embraced their allocated tasks and career challenges within their key performance areas and were knowledgeable, loyal, serious about their responsibilities and accountable. They were proud of the positions they filled and their fast progress to more senior positions and perceived their appointment as managers as a confirmation of the trust placed in them by their employers.

The female executives believed they were successful in this male-dominated environment because they were women within their own right, assertive and dynamic and not scared to express their views and address challenges. They were also passionate about their jobs and actively involved in the business of the organisation, as well as empowering themselves with more knowledge on a continuous basis.

*'I am responsible for a lot of people and I take it seriously.'*

*'I learned from others, and others are learning from me.'*

*'It is proof that women can make it.'*

*'Our inputs are vital.'*

*'I do a lot of good work for the company.'*

*'It is a huge accomplishment looking at the fact that I am a female board member in a male dominated industry.'*

*'I am not scared to say what I believe.'*

*'I do the job assertively and address problems.'*

*'We have proved that we are capable and confident.'*

*'I read and empower myself with knowledge.'*

*'I have a passion for my work and my role.'*

The respondents in this study were mainly appointed in the following areas of expertise: policy and strategy (e.g. direction on new projects, location of casinos, policy formulation), compliance (e.g. licensing conditions and location of casinos), information technology, human resources (e.g. gender equity, empowerment of staff, skills development and motivation of staff, shifts roster, recruiting and appointments and promoting staff morale), finance (e.g. audit reports, accounting, revenue, corporate governance, salaries, fixed asset registers and product revenue), communication & marketing (e.g. networking, liaisoning, marketing, product changes and sales) and legal services (e.g. development of agreements).

*'I am responsible for a lot of staff working in the casinos.'*

*'I am at the heart of technological advancement in the industry.'*

*'I want to promote women by employing more where possible.'*

*'I have a lot to say when it comes to policy formulation.'*

*'I am hands on when it comes to interactions with departments both internal and external.'*

*'I make sure that operations run smoothly.'*

*'I have to partner with the right people.'*

The female managers strongly felt that they were initiating changes and adding value to their working environment due to the inherent nature of the female psyche. Apart from female executives directly influencing policies and affecting restructuring in their working environments due to the decision-making power they yielded, women also tended to effect the corporate climate within their workplaces because of their open-mindedness, unique approach to problems/challenges and a 'softer touch' and more empathetic, approachable and people-orientated attitude in general. This implied that women were often involved in addressing emotional or sensitive female issues, boosting staff morale and organising social events to improve human interaction in the organisation. Women were also more multi-skilled, responsible and loyal. Female executives viewed themselves as pioneers that could serve as icons to motivate others in the gambling industry.

*'We women believe that we put our organisations on the map.'*  
*'I am empowered, and make decisions.'*  
*'I am an ambassador for women.'*  
*'Most women see me as an icon.'*  
*'I am able to influence a number of issues and bring in a certain perspective that would not have been considered.'*  
*'I have already made a few changes and the impact is seen in the reports.'*  
*'We are more open-minded and look at all facets.'*  
*'They give me more responsibility, because they know the work will be done.'*  
*'I am easy to talk to.'*  
*'Some of the males also see me as a mother figure and are more comfortable with me.'*  
*'Boosting staff morale.'*  
*'Talking to people because women are considered to be caring and compassionate.'*

There were a small number of respondents that viewed their roles and responsibilities in a less rosy light. The consistent power struggles, lack of support and sometimes open resistance from male colleagues, preferential promotion of males and the current perceivably male-dominated top management structures made them feel vulnerable and exposed to the consistent pressure of having to over-perform at work as well as being an exemplary mother and care taker in a social context. The lack of proper personal development planning led a further feeling of disempowerment and low morale and could lead to low productivity in some instances. Dealing with the public could also be difficult as men tended to distrust the feedback given by female managers (they preferred to deal with male managers). A few female managers found it hard to control angry and aggressive male punters.

*'I find a little bit of resistance from male executives when making decisions.'*  
*'You still find stereotyped men who believe that a woman's place is in the kitchen.'*  
*'My position is still perceived to be a male dominated role.'*  
*'To show that you are capable, you need to know more.'*  
*'I feel that I put pressure on myself.'*  
*'You have to be consistent, and sometimes faced with little discrepancies.'*  
*'I have found myself learning how to swim and having been thrown in the deep end.'*  
*'It is difficult to deal with the general public.'*

When asked how they thought others would perceive them, a degree of self-satisfaction, complacency, self-righteousness and self-congratulation emerged amongst respondents. Female managers generally felt that hopefully others would also recognise them as self-assertive, dynamic and capable professionals and experts in their chosen fields, loyal, devoted and dependable, achievers that reached their set goals, role models and activists for change, but also women that retained their approachability and femininity and enjoyed good interpersonal relationships.

They believed that top management trusted them and valued their inputs and that their appointments were more based on the worth of their experience, skills and knowledge than on the gender equity pressures. To protect this hard-earned image of professionalism and permanently change the stereotype thinking of fellow workers, they thus sometimes refused to perform any task not specifically outlined in their job description or more particularly any job historically associated with a stereotype female, e.g. pouring tea and taking the minutes at meetings.

'Dynamic and strong.'

'My inputs are regarded as important.'

'They see me as a professional person doing my work.'

'I can be trusted with work, because I am capable.'

'I am confident, involved in things, skilled and assertive.'

'A dynamic woman who takes responsibility and not scared of challenges.'

'The size of the initiatives that we get, gives me a sense that I am valued.'

'I am dependable and trusted even outside of my boundaries.'

'I have become involved.'

'I give facts and have created changes.'

'I have a broad based mind.' 'I believe knowledge is power.'

'I hit the nail on the head.' 'I am able to face the bull.' 'You need to be firm.'

'I have never really struggled to get my point accepted and always given the go ahead to execute my plans.'

'I am not here because I am a woman.'

'I changed the stereotype.' 'I want to send the correct message to the males.'

'I stick to my own roles and responsibilities.'

A few female managers complained that they had experiences that hinted at the opposite, i.e. people might perceive them as not really being competent and adding value to the organisation. A serious and authoritative attitude also negatively impacted on relationships with male colleagues and the perception of female managers as potential threats also resulted in them struggling to get cooperation from the male fellow workers.

'Maybe they don't see my worth.'

'They see me as a threat.'

'I might be too bossy and serious. They might feel threatened.'

## 5.4 RECOGNITION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE COLLEAGUES

### 5.4.1 Respect and recognition received from male executives and colleagues

Respondents were divided into two camps when probed on the recognition and respect they received from their male colleagues. The majority felt that they enjoyed a healthy professional relationship with their male colleagues that was based on mutual respect and open communication channels to enhance the team spirit. This implied that they received good cooperation and feedback in general and proposals for change were accepted and instructions and decisions executed. Some female managers believed that besides having to be dynamic and self-driven, respect and trust were earned by taking responsibility for their own professional behaviour at all times and by the reciprocal demonstration of similar courtesy to their male counterparts.

'They acknowledge me and give me compliments.'

'They ask me for my advice and input.'

'They listen when I speak and take my ideas, like a meeting of the minds.'

'I see their respect in the way they approach and engage me.'

*'There is team spirit.'*

*'Most of my colleagues are male, and when I do something, I get recognition.'*

*'I have never been in a situation where I am patronized or spoken down to.'*

*'I show them respect as well.' 'I create the trust.'*

*'I always act professional and they have never taken me for granted.'*

*'It is the way I maintain myself.'*

*'What you put in is what you get back.'*

However, a fair number of respondents also perceived that their male colleagues did not really recognise them as valuable colleagues or show them the respect they felt they deserved. They felt that they were merely tolerated in the workplace, often spoken down to or always got their sentences capped by a last remark from a (traditional) male colleague, their proposals and ideas were doubted and there were no development or succession planning in place for them. Female managers often had to be very assertive and work twice as hard as their male counterparts to be seen to make an impact and there were no accolades for achieving their goals, only more responsibilities loaded on top. One respondent felt that this could be a racial scourge as White females tended to elicit more respect from their male colleagues.

*'Men don't really appreciate us.'*

*'I don't get the respect I deserve.' 'He tolerates me, because I have the knowledge.'*

*'Some do not like the fact that I am a woman in my current position.'*

*'Men are automatically acknowledged.'*

*'Certain men are still very traditional.'*

*'Everyday I still have to prove what I am capable of.'*

*'As a woman, you have to prove yourself twice as much as the men.'*

*'I found that I have to be more assertive in order to be heard.'*

*'The racial issue clouds everything because the White females are being respected and accepted.'*

#### **5.4.2 The perceived impact of communication originating from female managers**

Men tended to listen to dynamic and assertive female managers who conducted themselves professionally, spoke with authority and confidence and based their communication on sound experience, good knowledge and up-to-date facts on matters of concern. Such a communication style tended to instill a sense of trust in the female managers and created an ambient communication environment where there was mutual respect. Their instructions were readily executed and their ideas easily incorporated into policies. In such an environment meetings were frequently held to discuss matters, relationships were supportive and the team spirit was high amongst members.

*'They respect my position and knowledge.'*

*'We work as a team and discuss things.'*

*'Most of my opinions and guidance are implemented.'*

*'You get what you give.'*

*'I have ideas, consult and get the buy-in.'*

*'I motivate, but show respect.'*

*'When I speak, I know what I am talking about.' 'I know the industry.'*

*'I have the authority, knowledge and substance.'*

*'We have been together as a team for some time, and have built a trust relationship which comes with respect.'*

In some cases the female managers perceived that their male colleagues did not really listen to and acknowledged them and they often had to enforce their views on others or over-support any statement with extensive data back-up to make it convincing. This communication break-down could often be ascribed to factors like internal politics or personal agendas, personality clashes or males that felt threatened by the authoritative behaviour of female managers, stereotyped thinking or males' natural preferences to listen to men only in male-dominated work environments.

*'Sometimes they have their own agendas.'*

*'Some people don't want to listen – maybe they feel threatened.'*

*'You always get those who want to show that they can do better than you.'*

*'You always have to substantiate everything you say with data before you can be taken seriously.'*

*'They find it difficult to accept that women can say things.'*

*'It's a boy's club and very few women participating at the executive level.'*

*'It is a very male dominated environment.'*

#### **5.4.3 Relationship and communication with male colleagues**

##### **5.4.3.1 Relationship and communication with male supervisors**

The majority of female managers reflected that they enjoyed good relationships with their senior male colleagues based on a professional code of mutual trust, respect, empathy and collegial support, as well as the existence of open and effective communication channels. The mentioned that good relationships and communication they enjoyed with their male supervisors depended on the specific way in which they (females) interacted with each individual. This would entail being approachable and good listeners themselves, tailoring communication styles to personal needs, and treating their senior male colleagues like real people instead of just a supervisor.

*'We respect each other for the expert knowledge we have.'*

*'We trust each other and have good relationships.'*

*'They see what I am doing and support me to reach higher objectives.'*

*'We feel free to talk openly.'*

*'We are all in it together.'*

*'I have no problems to contact the chair and share ideas.'*

*'I practice emotional intelligence.'*

*'You read people and use different communication skills.'*

*'It depends on the way you present yourself.'*

A lack of the much needed element of mutual trust, the exclusion of females from important decision-making processes, a perceived bias against African females and the paternalistic attitudes of especially the older and more conservative male managers sometimes resulted in strained communication between males and females in the same organisation. Unprofessional and poor management styles also had a negative impact on relationships and communication.

*'They still support males.'*  
*'The old school is still very conservative.'*  
*'They will rather consult or task male colleagues.'*  
*'The perception of older male colleagues is that they are not used to women being seniors.'*  
*'If I do not approach them, they will not approach me.'*  
*'Males are pretending and we experience power struggles.'*  
*'We put in extra effort to try and get buy-in, but when it comes from females, we are doubted.'*

#### **5.4.3.2 Relationship and communication with male subordinates**

All respondents reflected that the communication and relationships with male subordinates were much easier and more relaxed. Their male subordinates were more open-minded in their acceptance and acknowledgement of the superior wisdom, experience and authoritative power of the female managers and often saw them as role models. They were cooperative and supportive even though the relationships stayed professional. Teams worked well together because relationships were based on mutual respect for capabilities, responsibilities were equally shared and co-workers empowered each other. The female managers felt that this good working relationship was, amongst others, the positive result of the emotionally intelligent and empathetic way in which they conducted themselves, shared and implemented their ideas and also used their knowledge and experience to educate their male subordinates.

*'They are open-minded.'* *'The relationship is good, open and easy.'*  
*'Excellent, and better than with the seniors.'*  
*'We can talk and sort out problems.'* *'We have an open door and talk a lot.'*  
*'We have good working relationships and try to share responsibilities.'*  
*'We help each other.'* *'We empower each other.'*  
*'Male juniors treat me with respect.'*  
*'Easier, but still authoritative, because I have the knowledge and the experience.'*  
*'I communicate to and respect them because we have to work together.'*  
*'Better, because I educate and teach them.'*  
*'I am a role model.'*

The odd exception seemed to be the strained communication/relationships between female managers and male subordinates older than themselves or junior males that experienced an inherent difficulty in accepting a woman as the boss. This could be merely due to personality clashes, socio-cultural inflexibilities or men feeling threatened by strong women in the workplace due to their own insecurities.

*'He is twice my age and always has his own ideas.'*  
*'Male juniors feel that they battle with me being a female boss.'*  
*'I may be too tough on the black guys.'*  
*'Subordinates might feel threatened by me.'*

## 5.5 STRATEGIC INVOLVEMENT AND DECISION-MAKING BY FEMALE MANAGERS

### 5.5.1 Involvement in decision-making

The true level of involvement of female managers in decision-making processes seemed to depend more on the attitude of their superiors than on the existence of structural avenues. All passionate female managers felt it was important to be informed at all times and advantageous for their careers to be involved in decision-making. The majority of female heads of departments and line managers perceived that they were reasonably involved in decision-making especially relating to their own departments and they were usually given a free reign in the implementation of new ideas. Some were consulted with senior management prior to any decision-making, whilst others were invited by their supervisors to either verbally or in writing supply some relevant input on strategic matters. Actual involvement in decision-making on executive management level was more limited in real life, except for the odd female executive who filled a strategic senior position within the organisation.

*'We are given free reign and we have to do things.'*

*'We are invited to give input.'*

*'I can argue my point and clear things out with the bosses.'*

*'I have the knowledge, skills, interest, status and experience to make decisions.'*

*'My boss comes to me with certain issues.'*

*'When it comes to taking decisions, all board members are consulted.'*

*'I can make all the strategic decisions when it comes to my department.'*

*'I have the ability to influence those who make the decisions.'*

*'I have decision and implementation power.'*

*'I am involved and make it my business.' 'I want to know and want to be informed.'*

There were, however, also a fair number of female managers that reported that they had very limited decision-making powers and too often their suggestions and/or decisions were overruled by senior or top management because of personal agendas and power struggles within the male-dominated organisation. Many a poor decision or detrimental outcome could have been avoided if male management styles or structures were more transparent and less autocratic, the mental abilities of female managers were appreciated more and they were consulted more frequently on issues relating to their line of duty.

*'They could involve us more, but there is a kind of resistance.'*

*'My decision-making powers are limited.'*

*'I don't have a voice.'*

*'I feel that I am not taken seriously, because I am female.'*

*'I am not treated as a manager, but as a normal staff member.'*

*'Our own minds make us feel artificial.'*

### 5.5.2 Acknowledgement and appreciation for inputs

Female managers who were consulted by executive management felt that their input was generally appreciated since often operational matters were referred to them for implementation due to their unique (females') guidance, foresight and resolutions.

Line managers and heads of departments were overall trusted to make inputs into the decision-making process related to the effective operation of their own departments decisions related to their departments, based on their knowledge, expertise and experience. Acknowledgement for these inputs came in the form of assigned responsibilities, constructive feedback and ideas that were implemented with positive results. Many a respondent believed that inputs given either in the form of well-prepared high-quality documents based on facts, knowledge of the matter and experience in the field or an assertive verbal communiqué were readily accepted and had a more impressive impact.

*'They acknowledged my input as a result of my expertise and skills.'*

*'They give you credit for your knowledge and experience when it is relevant to your expertise.'*

*'In my department they rely on my experience to make decisions and achieve what needs to be achieved.'*

*'My input is always requested and heard.'*

*'Often it is used or from it a new discussion will come out and will bring about change.'*

*'It depends on the way you conduct yourself and your profile by being assertive.'*

*'I back my input up with valid reasons and don't just talk for the sake of it.'*

*'I base my input on facts, and know what I am talking about.'*

Some female managers reported that a few male supervisors (and in some instances top management) were reluctant to acknowledge the input of female managers and implement their recommendations. These were individual cases that could be ascribed to the influence of non-participating management styles still practiced by some male employees and the less-than-female-friendly communication culture within male-dominated organisations.

*'They will not accept my decisions at first go, they will get opinions from others before going with my opinion.'*

*'Even when you are right, you are overridden.'*

*'It doesn't carry the same weight as the inputs given by men.'*

*'They don't trust input from females.'*

### **5.5.3 Receipt of managerial feedback**

The majority of female managers reflected that they received timeous and regular feedback because they enjoyed an interactive, open-door relationship with their superiors, regular meetings were scheduled and communication channels were effective. The female executives usually gave feedback to others. If no feedback was forthcoming, female managers made it their business to actively request the feedback and acquire the needed information to stay informed at all times. The odd few managers complained that feedback was sometimes limited or not honest because of the paternalistic attitude of their male superiors. However, the lack of feedback could usually be ascribed to ineffective management structures or procedures for supplying the necessary feedback and was not gender-related as such.

*'We have an open channel of communication.' 'Everyone gets feedback.'*

*'I interact with the manager as and when necessary.'*

*'We get feedback in Board meetings, and have an open invitation to all meetings.'*

*'He has a paternalistic attitude.' 'I struggle to get feedback from males.'*

## 5.6 BARRIERS/CHALLENGES/FRUSTRATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH BEING A FEMALE MANAGER

The responses discussed under this heading seemed to be a mere summarised reiteration of feelings expressed in the previous sections. A few female managers felt that the challenges associated with being a manager were the same for both genders and not something unique to being female. However, there were many other respondents that wanted to highlight certain issues that they regard as specific stumbling blocks for female managers in the industry.

*'I don't see my challenges from a female perspective.'*

*'I experience barriers, but not due to gender issues.'*

*'Males and females have the same challenges.'*

5.6.1 One of the main challenges respondents faced was to be taken seriously as managers and get equal opportunities in a male-dominated industry. Men (especially the older generation, as well as interculturally) were reluctant to accept a woman as an equal partner and trust and respect the judgment and strategic decision-making abilities of women in top management positions. This often led to the lack of cooperation from male colleagues, exclusion from the existing male 'cliques' and even the withholding of relevant information. This transpired because some men still attached stereotype roles to females and felt that all women were 'a step behind' and members of a so-called 'softer generation' that belongs at home and not in the boardroom.

*'It will take a while for males to actually implement gender equity mechanisms because they are threatened; it is even worse with the white males.'*

*'Sometimes when amongst the men, it is difficult to get into the clique and be accepted on a personal level.'*

*'If you are not known by people attending meetings, they assume you are the secretary or the lady to pour coffee.'*

*'The old school males do not recognise the contribution of senior women in terms of pay, succession and planning.'*

*'Lack of communication and information, and lack of cooperation from senior management.'*

*'Difficult to work with white males over 40 (old school), because of closed doors and resistance.'*

*'The industry is too male dominated, which will make it almost impossible to address gender equity.'*

*'At the top, it is still an old boy's club, and this makes it difficult to break into the club.'*

*'Because it is a male dominated industry, you will be treated with less respect overall.'*

5.6.2 Female managers also perceived that they were under constant scrutiny and had to fight a conscious daily battle to be heard, had to know so much more and work harder to prove themselves in a 'man's world' in order to gain equal acknowledgement and respect for similar work outputs and to be recognised as adding value to the organisation.

*'You have to prove yourself in a man's world.'*

*'You are always in the spot light as a female manager.'*

*'You need to fight in order to be heard.'*

*'It is a conscious, daily struggle.'*  
*'I need to prove what I can do before I can be taken seriously.'*  
*'You need to know the industry more than your male counterparts.'*  
*'Getting through to men in meetings.'*  
*'It doesn't matter how much value you are adding, you still do not get the necessary appreciation.'*

5.6.3 Apart from receiving more visible recognition for work done satisfactorily, men were also more readily promoted to senior positions even though females with suitable qualification and experience applied for the same jobs. In some cases female managers were supervised by males with lesser qualifications and experience, seriously impeding good communication and hampering progress. The perceived lack of succession plans and empowerment programmes, especially on executive management level, as well as the over-emphasis on Affirmative Action initiatives, limited some women's opportunities for promotion within the organisation. On top of all this there were certain positions that were traditionally only filled by men, e.g. to conduct inspections, making it difficult for females to break this thinking mould and gain equal appointment opportunities in these departments.

*'Not being awarded positions when they are vacant even when best suited for the position.'*  
*'Men get more recognition.'*  
*'There are no succession plans and empowerment programmes to ensure that women move up the corporate ladder.'*  
*'If a higher position would be available, a black male would be appointed.'*  
*'White women are not promoted and last in the row when it comes to appointments, they are searching for colour.'*  
*'We don't receive training, especially management training.'*  
*'Difficult to appoint women in operations, as if we won't be able to handle operations.'*

5.6.4 Some female managers found it difficult to marry their corporate responsibilities with their duties as wives and mothers and men were not always sympathetic to the physical demands imposed on a child-bearing woman. There were also some safety and security issues that incapacitated women as the ideal employees to work at night or travel after hours.

*'The challenge to attend to home duties when required.'*  
*'Men are uneasy with maternity leave.'*  
*'Sometimes difficult to travel long distances on my own on short notice.'*  
*'Private sector sometimes wants to meet at night, and this raises issues of safety.'*

5.6.5 If women allowed any relationship with a male colleague to become more personal, this could endanger or harm professional work relationships. Some female managers also found it socially less acceptable to liaise with men after hours on work related matters, even though there might be a real need for such networking interactions. The type of social function/event for employees in the gambling industry was often male-orientated and revolved around sport games more frequently enjoyed by men. At the same time unacceptable comments and jokes with a sexual undertone or connotation made female employees feel uncomfortable and isolated.

*'We tend to have personal relationships at the work place, and it is not professional anymore.'*  
*'We get bias e.g. what happens when the relationship turns sour?'*  
*'I sometimes find it difficult to liaise with males about work-related issues. It is difficult for a lady to invite a male to have a drink and chat about things.'*  
*'If it is fun at the workplace, it is usually a boy thing like golf or motor cycles.'*  
*'You do not get invited to the same social functions as the men.'*  
*'Sometimes sexual comments are made and you tend to joke with in order for you to move on.'*  
*'There is no outright sexual harassment, but you feel uncomfortable with the sexual connotation that is attached to some of the work that has to be done.'*  
*'We fail to tell men that it is not acceptable.'*

5.6.6 Some punters preferred to communicate with male managers only. Female managers sometimes found it difficult to remove difficult male punters from the casino floor without assistance.

*'Patrons would rather speak to white male executives because they think women can't solve problems.'*  
*'Sometimes I need to call a male to sort out conflict on the floor.'*

## 5.7 SUCCESSES AND ACHIEVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH BEING A FEMALE MANAGER

The respondents in this study strongly felt that there were many examples of changes or improvements in work processes or personal circumstances that they could quote as successes or achievements reached during their existing careers in the gambling industry.

5.7.1 Female managers perceived that they served as pioneers to break into a new job market and they had blazed a trail for women in the gambling industry. Not only had they initiated new key performance areas and activities in their field of expertise and developed their own job contexts and departments, but they believed they had also changed the culture of the organisation to make it more female-friendly and prove a point for the potential of female leadership. As such they were proud of their appointments and promotions and believed that it could serve as inspiration for other women. The positive impact of gender equity policies gave women access and exposure to the gambling industry.

*'I created my own job description.'*  
*'I did pioneers work for women.'*  
*'I worked to get ideas across.'*  
*'I serve as an inspiration to other females.'*  
*'I started the division from scratch.'*  
*'I changed the culture of the organisation.'*  
*'My appointment as a board member is nice. I am the only female CEO in provinces.'*  
*'I was the first female inspector in the gambling business.'*  
*'Have been able to break into a market that is different from SA.'*  
*'Involved in putting together the legal framework for one of our major developments.'*  
*'I climbed the corporate ladder quickly.'*

*'My appointment is an opportunity and a vote of confidence and to be recognised as a human being, not necessarily a woman.'*

*'Being a young woman in a board that is regulating a male dominated industry.'*

*'They could have appointed anyone else but I was appointed and had to start my section from scratch.'*

*'Female potential for leadership is identified.'*

*'Our company recognises the value of women.'*

5.7.2 Female managers felt that their active involvement in quality decision-making on the highest levels had changed the workplace and the industry. Complementing this, their passionate execution of their duties and responsibilities, their energy and willingness to 'walk the extra mile' and their creative and competent embracement of any challenge in their ways had also changed the view people had of female managers.

*'I am involved everywhere.'*

*'I made inputs on high levels.'*

*'I work much broader than only my line function.'*

*'I am part of decision-making.'*

*'The fact that I have made changes in people's lives.'*

*'I do more than what I am supposed to.'*

*'I am competent and energetic.'*

*'I enjoy the work and the challenge.'*

*'I accepted the challenge and am creative.'*

5.7.3 Female managers felt inspired by the fact that they could achieve set goals and their own objectives by applying their knowledge, experience and skills to the betterment of the organisation. In this process they could also optimise opportunities not only to grow and develop themselves to become more multi-skilled and assertive, but to live out their compassion in empowering others.

*'I achieved my goal and got the position I wanted.'*

*'I live my dream and my objectives.'*

*'I can live out my compassion.'*

*'I can apply my knowledge.'*

*'I have gone a long way and am able to plough back my experience and knowledge.'*

*'I am multi-skilled.'*

*'To share information for the betterment of the board and the work.'*

*'I get asked to do things.'*

*'Being able to share my experiences.'*

*'Being able to stand up for myself and not be seen as a woman, but a manager.'*

*'I have grown and developed and have been given the opportunities.'*

*'It has made me a stronger person.'*

5.7.4 The fact that they often received positive feedback, acknowledgement and support from their fellow workers implied that they were doing their job to expected standards and this in itself encouraged respondents. The professional working environment and (friendly) colleagues indicated to them that they were more frequently accepted and trusted as equal co-workers.

*'I get the feedback and recognition.'*  
*'They recognise my abilities.'*  
*'Board members trust me.'*  
*'People have confidence in me.'*  
*'It is a pleasure to be associated with quality.'*  
*'I deal with professional profiles.'*  
*'I like the professional environment.'*  
*'I have good relationships with everyone.'*

5.7.5 The soft skills associated with the female psyche were also more often seen as an advantage than a weakness in the organisation. These skills were therefore increasingly in demand to handle tricky negotiations and were thus instrumental in creating new job opportunities, e.g. sponsorship recruiters, but also to generally improve the effectiveness of communication in the organisation.

*'It is easier for women to work with men and to negotiate and get sponsorships.'*  
*'We bring the human element.'*  
*'We have the soft skills.'*  
*'People can talk to me.'*

5.7.6 Some of the female managers were also proud of the way they survived in the male-dominated work environment and still fulfilled their female obligations at home to lead a balanced life.

*'I have come a long way with having to balance home and work very well.'*  
*'Have survived as a woman in a male dominated industry.'*

## **5.8 CURRENT EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY**

Apart from a few respondents that claimed the opposite, the majority of female managers reflected that adequate formal training opportunities existed for advancement of work-related knowledge and performance and honing of skills needed in the workplace. Respondents either requested to attend these training programmes as their own initiatives or attendance was a prescribed requirement of the specific job position. Relevant succession planning for female managers, however, was a rare phenomenon. In the few instances where training was not readily available, limited budgets and a subtle bias to male promotion were blamed.

*'Every year we get a list of key development areas and can decide what training we want to attend.'*  
*'If I identify the area that I need development in, I can put forward a request.'*  
*'You have to attend training to go to the next level.'*  
*'Training is a high priority.'*  
*'Everyone is considered, as long as training will benefit the company.'*  
*'We are not given equal opportunities, as male seniors attend training at head office.'*  
*'Sometimes there is a budget problem.'*

However, it seemed to be a completely different story when the ready availability of forums or committees centred on female issues was concerned. Either there were very few employment equity committees or female-orientated development and empowerment training programmes, or existing women forums were poorly and infrequently organised and attended, the mandates were not clearly defined and lacked direction. Some female managers indicated that they were not allowed to attend women forum initiatives to empower them in the past because these forums were not supported by some of the senior male managers.

There was thus perceptibly a need for more forums where female employees could share ideas and experiences to motivate each other and talk about work-related problems and social issues affecting their lives, as well as training programmes specifically aimed at personal empowerment, e.g. conflict management, performance management and improvement of self-awareness, self-confidence and assertiveness. One respondent felt that such initiatives should actually be available to all employees, irrespective of gender.

*'It should be part of Social Development or Employment Equity, even HIV Committees.'*

*'We need to capacitate women.'*

*'We have to identify things to empower ourselves.'*

*'I would like to be involved, because women can encourage and motivate each other.'*

*'We used to have a women's committee in the organisation, but it got disbanded by management.'*

A few respondents felt that there was no need for these empowerment forums because female managers were already 'a step ahead'. All training programmes and forums should be well planned and budgeted for and preferentially linked to the work environment and their job descriptions.

*'They have to evaluate and validate if it is related to your work.'*

*'Inform senior management and motivate why.'*

*'We don't need a women's forum.'*

*'We will only emphasise things that are not really necessary.'*

## **5.9 LOYALTY OF APPOINTED FEMALE MANAGERS TOWARDS THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY**

Respondents were probed on the possibility that they would still be working for the gambling industry in five years' time. The majority indicated that they found the gambling industry challenging, dynamic and stimulating and would definitely stay loyal to the industry. They identified well with the industry and believed that the changing environment of this industry offered them a challenging career and excellent opportunities to grow and achieve corporate and personal goals and expand their knowledge. Many respondents in fact aspired to promotion to higher positions within the organisation, such as chairperson, board member, chief executive officer, general manager or the head of a department like training, IT, slots, finance, human resources, surveillance, marketing, etc. Only a few respondents indicated that they were actually in a comfort zone at present and did not want to optimise further advancement opportunities because they were either near retirement or content with the goals they had already achieved.

Since the female managers believed that they were appointed for their knowledge and experience, they felt that they had a lot to offer the industry and wished to make a lasting impression. They enjoyed the good exposure to the diverse, non-routine elements of this new and expanding industry on both industry and regulatory side.

*'I will still be in the gambling industry, because it is in my blood.'*  
*'I grab every opportunity and go for it.'*  
*'I want to leave footprints behind and contribute.'*  
*'There is still more to achieve.'*  
*'I am happy in my current position and have achieved what I wanted to achieve.'*  
*'I get good exposure and pick up knowledge and experience.'*  
*'It is a stimulating, different and mature environment, but flexible – a dynamic business.'*  
*'There is no routine and there are new things all the time.'*

A number of respondents indicated that they might leave the gambling environment in the foreseeable future to either pursue a career in another company or start their own business, or spend more time with their families and become involved in community work or counselling. Some of the senior female managers felt that transformation processes were too slow. These females felt they had reached a glass ceiling where they could not be promoted further to executive management positions because of the male domination of the industry and the consequent preferential appointments of males in senior positions. They also found their jobs were not stimulating any more and opportunities to personally grow any further were limited. The bottom line was thus that these respondents did not find their working environments conducive to the achievement of their personal ambitions any more.

*'The old-boy system discourages us a lot.'*  
*'You sometimes find agendas as the industry is mainly male, although the regulatory environment is better.'*  
*'The ones at the top only pull their kind up to the top.'*  
*'There are no development plans.'*  
*'I would like to have my own business e.g. corporate governance or HR consultancy.'*  
*'I am already at a very high level and would not have anywhere else to move to – and I don't want the general manager's position.'*  
*'There is no opportunity for growth.' 'My job is not fulfilling.'*  
*'It is a struggle for women to get to the top.'*

## **5.10 THE CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT FROM FEMALE COLLEAGUES, INCLUDING THOSE FEMALES EMPLOYED AT OTHER GAMBLING INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Female managers were divided on their perception of the cooperation they received from other women within and outside the organisation. In general the more authoritarian and dynamic senior female managers stated that they tended to receive recognition, respect and acknowledgement from other females within the same organisation. They described their relationships with other women as professional, cordial, supportive, warm and friendly and communication was open and direct. However, it might be true that one usually got as good as one gave. The more senior female managers did not need to be overly competitive or feel threatened by other females and were thus by nature more approachable themselves.

*'They recognise me as a figure with authority, colleague and leader.'*  
*'We are close, approachable and open.'*  
*'We have common organisational goals.'*  
*'There is a warm reception to discuss anything.'*  
*'There is a good working relationship with colleagues at the same level.'*  
*'We realise that we are on the same boat and want to support each other.'*  
*'We all stand together.'*

Lower down in the ranks the relationships amongst females were sometimes competitive (especially amongst women on the same level), stressful, non-cooperative and rife with jealousy. There were thus frequent incidences of power struggles and personality clashes, as well as gossip and unpleasant office politics to try and 'pull her down to my level'. Some women would rather support their male colleagues than empower a fellow woman, especially if they felt the other woman might be a threat to them. Junior managers also accused the senior managers of forgetting where they came from and not reaching out to advance the career of the less fortunate women. One respondent believed that these things happened because women were not mentally equipped or too inexperienced to handle their allocated positions.

A few women remarked that some women could not draw clear lines between their corporate and personal challenges and often stress from home spilled over into the office place. The associated moodiness of the affected party impacted negatively on her professional conduct in the workplace. Cultural differences could strain relationships and the perceived obvious advancement of African women by preferential promotion could also make them targets of envy and the denial of support. The odd few respondents ascribed negative attitudes towards them to their inherent competitiveness and assertive personalities that make other women hate their guts.

*'I experience a 'tug of war' as every female wants to be better than the other.'*  
*'It can be very competitive on the same level.'*  
*'Women discriminate against each other and respect men more than women.'*  
*'Some women have attitudes and they gossip.'*  
*'Women do not want to empower each other.'*  
*'When women reach senior level, they tend to forget about the others behind.'*  
*'We as women see each other as a threat.'*  
*'They are jealous in nature.'*  
*'Women tend to bring their mood and problems from home to the office and because of this, issues arise.'*  
*'I might offend others and they might hate my guts.'*

The majority of female managers did not liaise with other females in the rest of the industry. Those few that did, in general viewed these relationships as less competitive than within their own organisation and more professional. There were more open sharing of information, a comprehension of unity and a common purpose and mutual demonstration of encouragement, motivation, appreciation and support. In a few incidences feelings of jealousy, arrogance, aggressiveness and private agendas in fact spoiled this interaction with female managers in the rest of the gambling industry.

*'I experience much better relationships outside than internal.'*  
*'We feel united and have a common purpose.'*  
*'We rely on each other and share information.'*  
*'I can phone for support on how the systems work.'*  
*'They are like barking dogs, battling to find a place.'*

## 5.11 WAYS TO EMPOWER FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY

To harvest the richness of respondents' insights and feelings to the fullest, they were probed on suggestions on how to ultimately and ideally empower and develop female employees in the gambling industry.

5.11.1 As expected, the first suggestion focused on training to optimally develop women professionally and personally. These training initiatives could be multi-pronged and take shape in some of the following suggestions:

5.11.1.1 Proper and enabling induction and orientation of new female staff.

*'Introduce women to the gambling industry.'*

5.11.1.2 In-house training to enhance performance in operational, core and support functions, i.e. the offering of skills needed to perform daily tasks as listed in the job description and key performance agreements. At the same time more bursaries should be made available for female staff to pursue courses at outside training institutions that might bring new skills into the workplace to the advantage of the gambling industry.

*'Women should be encouraged to study further in order for them to be empowered.'*

5.11.1.3 Coaching and mentoring programmes performed by selected role models to monitor a staff member's progress, provide personal guidance and feedback and suggest ways to improve performances to ensure career advancement. This also implied that women should be encouraged to deliver their best at all times and recognition and acknowledgement should be freely given where it was due.

*'We need a mentorship programme to walk with the person you see as a role model.'*

*'Have a coaching system.'*

*'Women should be empowered in order to get to the top.'*

*'Get the women who made it and find women that they can mentor.'*

*'Coach and mentor juniors that currently stand out.'*

*'Encourage capable women to show their skills.'*

*'Give recognition to women in forums so that others can be aware of their outcomes.'*

*'Women need support from management and be acknowledged.'*

5.11.1.4 Regular skills audits to identify possible gaps in women's profiles that could be addressed by further training. Complementing this exercise should be the design and implementation of skills development plans and programmes for all female staff to address the identified gaps and bridge any skill deficit.

It was especially important to develop a strong middle management structure to serve as breeding ground for future executives. Examples of relevant courses that might empower women on this level were (generic) management and leadership courses to enhance managerial performances, e.g. situational leadership training and conflict management training.

*'Need to see that statistics and what kind of training is being done to get women to the top.'*

*'Look at the competency levels of women and provide them with training to address the skills they need.'*

*'We must design developmental programmes and address skill development areas.'*

*'Put together development plans that will help to empower women at all levels.'*

*'Train women to equip them for executive positions.'*

*'Create a middle management sector.'*

*'Develop a programme for women in leadership.'*

5.11.1.5 Design of effective succession plans (short, medium and long-term) for all women and the identification of junior and middle management female employees with potential, followed by specific grooming programmes to prepare these women for senior positions and future leadership.

*'We need to prepare women for senior management positions.'*

*'Groom females into the positions.'*

*'It is important to grow women within the company so that they take up those positions.'*

*'There is potential for women to be developed and empowered for senior positions.'*

*'Identify junior females, grow and promote them.'*

5.11.1.6 Training in general life and communication skills to teach women to be more confident, assertive and motivated and so enhance their interpersonal skills, as well as training in creative thinking skills to hone problem solving skills.

*'Sensitise women to be more assertive.'*

*'To become the strong women of tomorrow.'*

*'Training in communication and learning to speak your mind.'*

*'Consider self-assertive tools.'*

*'Teach them to think outside the box.'*

*'Women should know who they are and take a stand so that they can be noticed.'*

*'Soft skill training to enable them to be stronger and more confident and assertive.'*

5.11.1.7 Exchange programmes with other female employees in the gambling industry to broaden and enrich women's field of experience.

5.11.2 On-the-job development and promotion of existing female employees in the gambling industry.

5.11.2.1 Assignment of more responsibilities and tasks to female managers (even to junior staff) to give them the opportunity to prove themselves (e.g. to present information, run projects, to take part in decision-making). This should be backed up by good monitoring of their output and constructive feedback.

*'Put them in charge of programmes.'*

*'Give females a chance to prove themselves.'*

*'Give junior staff more responsibilities to apply their minds.'*

*'Women should be encouraged to take the podium during conferences.'*

5.11.2.2 More frequent forced attendance and active participation in meetings to increase exposure of female employees to decision-making processes in not only their own line function arena but other organisational matters as well.

*'Involve women in decision-making.'*

*'Let them sit on committees.'*

*'Let women participate in meetings.'*

5.11.2.3 Appointment of women in executive management positions on probation to acclimatise them to the 'hot seat' and the creation of more senior management positions that could be filled by competent women.

*'Put them in the hot seat.'*

*'Get more women in executive positions.'*

*'By creating more positions to be filled by women.'*

*'When there are vacancies, the best women should be considered.'*

*'Appoint women as heads of departments.'*

5.11.2.4 Creation of opportunities to expose female managers more to the industry as a whole.

*'Giving them the opportunity to be exposed in the industry.'*

5.11.3 Allocation of greater prominence to, definition of clear targets and monitoring of existing gender equity programmes, regular public feedback on progress by appointed regulators and conferences to raise awareness of the issue of gender equity.

*'Have tools and measures to monitor gender equity in the gambling industry, and clear targets.'*

*'Feedback should be sent to all employees as well as HR managers.'*

*'Implement the policy framework to empower women.'*

*'Gender equity should be prominent in the strategies of the Board.'*

*'Regulators should actively regulate gender equity by determining if organisations have reached quotas in employment equity.'*

*'There must be conferences and meetings to address the issue of gender equity and make people aware of it.'*

*'We should have a monitoring committee to monitor the rate at which women are being empowered by giving opportunities and training.'*

5.11.4 Establishment of more ladies' forums and organisation of social events for women where they could discuss social welfare issues and personal matters of concern to them, share experiences with other females (even outside the immediate work environment) and support and motivate each other. These events could also take the form of a business breakfast for women to exchange ideas and advise and network effectively.

*'Start a female committee where women can report matters and rectify issues that need to be addressed.'*

*'Have a gender forum to discuss sexual harassment, maternity leave, 16 days of non-violence against women and children, HIV, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, discrimination and the image of women as professionals.'*

*'Have business meetings with other women.'*

*'Let women present at breakfast meetings.'*

*'Forming an association of women to support one another and exchange ideas and give advice.'*

5.11.5 Establishment of more formal and powerful women' forums with proper representivity from all operational levels to address work-related concerns of women and share information. The constitution, mandates, policies, strategies and structures of these forums should be clearly defined.

*'Provinces should be represented.'*

*'We need support from the Board and need a mandate from National.'*

*'We have to have a forum where we can share information.'*

*'The next chairperson of GRAF (Gambling Regulatory African Foun) should be a woman and work independently.'*

*'The forum should have teeth.'*

*'It has to be from women.'*

5.11.6 More aggressive advertising of available (vacant) positions in the gambling industry and the overall marketing of the industry as an attractive career opportunity and a luring work environment. One person also suggested that women should undergo personality testing to identify and select the best woman for any particular job.

*'Making people aware of the career opportunities in the operational side and making them attractive.'*

*'The gambling industry should be a career option.'*

*'Personality analysis testing.'*

## 6. CONCLUSION

Based on the main findings, female managers still perceived the entering of the male-dominated top management levels (the so-called 'old boys' network) in the gambling industry as a challenge. Communication with especially older senior male colleagues 'from the old school' was sometimes experienced as stressful. Specific initiatives to empower female staff were either limited or non-existing, or not supported by senior/top management unless clear mandates, policies and strategies were approved and in place. Relationships with female colleagues within the same organisation were sometimes strained due to jealousy and competitiveness. Exposure to other sectors within the holistic industry was limited and empowering networking opportunities for female employees were also limited.

On the positive side it was evident that females had infiltrated different spheres of the gambling industry with great success, as many were appointed as heads of sections/departments in different fields of expertise such as human resources, finance, public relations/marketing/communication, information technology, legal services and compliance. Female managers were very passionate about their careers in the gambling industry and aspired to more senior and executive managerial positions. There were also an increasing number of dynamic females appointed in executive managerial positions who acted as pioneers and role models for the rest of the industry. The majority of female respondents had strong and dynamic personalities, accepted the responsibilities assigned to them, and were proud on their achievements so far.

Overall female employees enjoyed good relationships with female colleagues in the same organisation, as well as positive liaison with a select few female managers in the rest of the gambling industry. Suggestions as cited by respondents to empower female managers in the gambling industry ranged from training and personal development, to the allocation of more responsibilities, frequent participation in meetings to increase overall exposure, creation of promotion opportunities, grooming of selected individuals, establishment of relevant female forums with approved mandates to address specific female-related issues, and the implementation and monitoring of gender equity policies in the workplace.

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## DISCUSSION GUIDE

In-depth personal interviews

### **Qualitative research to determine the perceptions of female managers employed in the South African gambling industry with special reference to gender equity**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION AND WARM-UP**

- 1.1 Introduce yourself and the Information Management Department and thank respondents for their time.
- 1.2 Explain purpose of the interview / objective of the study and estimated time of duration (1.5 hr).
- 1.3 Explain the method of data gathering and request respondents to switch off their cell phones. Indicate that we abide by the code of ethics and that in no circumstances will a specific respondent be linked to a specific answer, unless the respondent requests this.
- 1.4 Emphasise the need for information sharing and that there are no right or wrong answers, only honest feelings, ideas and opinions unique to every individual.
- 1.5 Invite respondents to expand on topics and issues without probing but also to understand if the moderator requests that particular issues are discussed under the relevant headings or at a later stage in the interview.

Objective of the study: To gain qualitative insight, knowledge and understanding of the perceptions of female managers managers employed in the South African gambling industry with special reference to gender equity, the role they play within the working environment, acknowledgement within the industry, as well as empowerment initiatives/programmes at the workplace.

#### **2. OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER EQUITY IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY & ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYER TOWARDS THIS ISSUE**

- 2.1 When you hear the word “gender equity”, what immediately jumps to mind? What are your positive associations with this phrase? Why do you feel like this? And your negative association with the phrase 'gender equity'? Why do you say this? [Note: Approach as mind map – note spontaneous responses to get an overall positive/negative perception. Let respondent list a few.] [Note: Keep discussion on general terms. If issues that are not covered in the rest of the discussion guide are mentioned here, probe a bit more in depth.]
- 2.2 What do you think is the approach to gender equity in your immediate working environment / culture? (Avoid company politics.) Do you feel your employer is adequately addressing this issue? Why do you say this? What gender is the majority of your seniors?
- 2.3 What is the attitude of your male colleagues (i.e. male executives, male supervisors and male subordinates), to gender equity in your company/institution? Why do you feel like this?

### **3. ROLE, RESPONSIBILITIES, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / RECOGNITION & COMMUNICATION**

- 3.1 What do you think your role is within your organisation? How do you see your responsibilities? Are your job and responsibilities important to the organisation? Why?
- 3.2 Do you feel that you are duly respected by your male executives and colleagues for who you are, what you are doing, the role you are playing and your responsibilities? Do you think they properly acknowledge your contributions? Why do you feel like this?
- 3.3 Do you think your colleagues are listening when you speak? What indicates that to you? Describe your communication with the male executives and your male subordinates.
- 3.4 Do you receive managerial feedback readily or do you have to request feedback / information? What is the quality of this feedback? Does it help you in any way?
- 3.5 How would you describe your relationship with male executives within your organisation/institution? Why do you say this? And with male peers and male subordinates?
- 3.6 Do you feel that you are actively involved in decision-making within your current job description, role and designation? Why do you feel like this? Does senior management rely on your decision-making abilities? Do you feel that your input is being taken seriously and acknowledged in general? How do you know this?

### **4. CO-OPERATION FROM OTHER WOMEN**

- 4.1 Do you get adequate cooperation from female executives (top and senior management) and female colleagues within your own institution? How would you define their attitude towards you? Why do you say this? Describe the attitude and cooperation from other women outside of your organisation but still within the gambling industry (including regulatory)? Please motivate your answer.

### **5. BARRIERS / CHALLENGES / FRUSTRATIONS**

- 5.1 If you think about the daily execution of your key responsibilities/tasks as a woman in this organisation, what do you experience as barriers, challenges and frustrations?

### **6. SUCCESSES / ACHIEVEMENTS / GAINS / BENEFITS**

- 6.1 Thinking about your role and responsibilities, what do you see as your successes, and achievements as female manager? Do you think there are any gains and/or benefits to being a woman in the performance of your duties? Why do you say this?
- 6.2 Are you sometimes asked to perform activities that are not part of your job description, but rather based on your gender? What are these enforced roles and how do you feel about it?

## 7. EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GROWTH PROSPECTS

- 7.1 Do you have equal opportunity within your immediate working environment to attend any training programmes, conferences and/or courses to empower you for the tasks you have to perform? Please elaborate.
- 7.2 Are you allowed to create opportunities for yourself and other female colleagues to gain more knowledge and experience to empower yourselves? Have you done something like this already? Give examples.
- 7.3 Are you involved in any woman forum related initiatives to promote gender equity within the gambling industry? Please elaborate.
- 7.4 Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? Would you still be working for the same organisation? Why? In what capacity? Do you think your work environment is conducive to the achievement of your ultimate ambitions? Please motivate your answer.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

### INDUSTRY, LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT AND NATURE OF WORK

***[NOTE: THIS IS A PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND NOT A QUANTITATIVE OR REPRESENTATIVE DATASET OF ALL WOMEN EMPLOYED IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY.]***

Answers to these questions are necessary for statistical purposes.

1. **How many years have you been employed in the gambling industry?**
  - 1 - 3 years
  - 4 - 6 years
  - 7 - 9 years
  - 10 years and more
  
2. **Are you employed in the regulatory or industry environment?**
  - Regulator
  - Industry
  - Casino
  - Horseracing & Betting
  - Totalisators / Bookmaking
  - Bingo
  - LPM
  
3. **Indicate the nature of your work**
  - Top/Senior (executive) management
  - Human Resources
  - Finance
  - Public Relations and/or Communication/Information
  - Line functional (directly related to casino, H & B, Bingo and/or LPM activities)
  
4. **Designation**
  - Manager
  - Senior management
  - CEO (top management)
  - Board member (top management)

**5. Qualifications**

- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Other

**6. Race**

- African
- Asian
- Coloured
- White

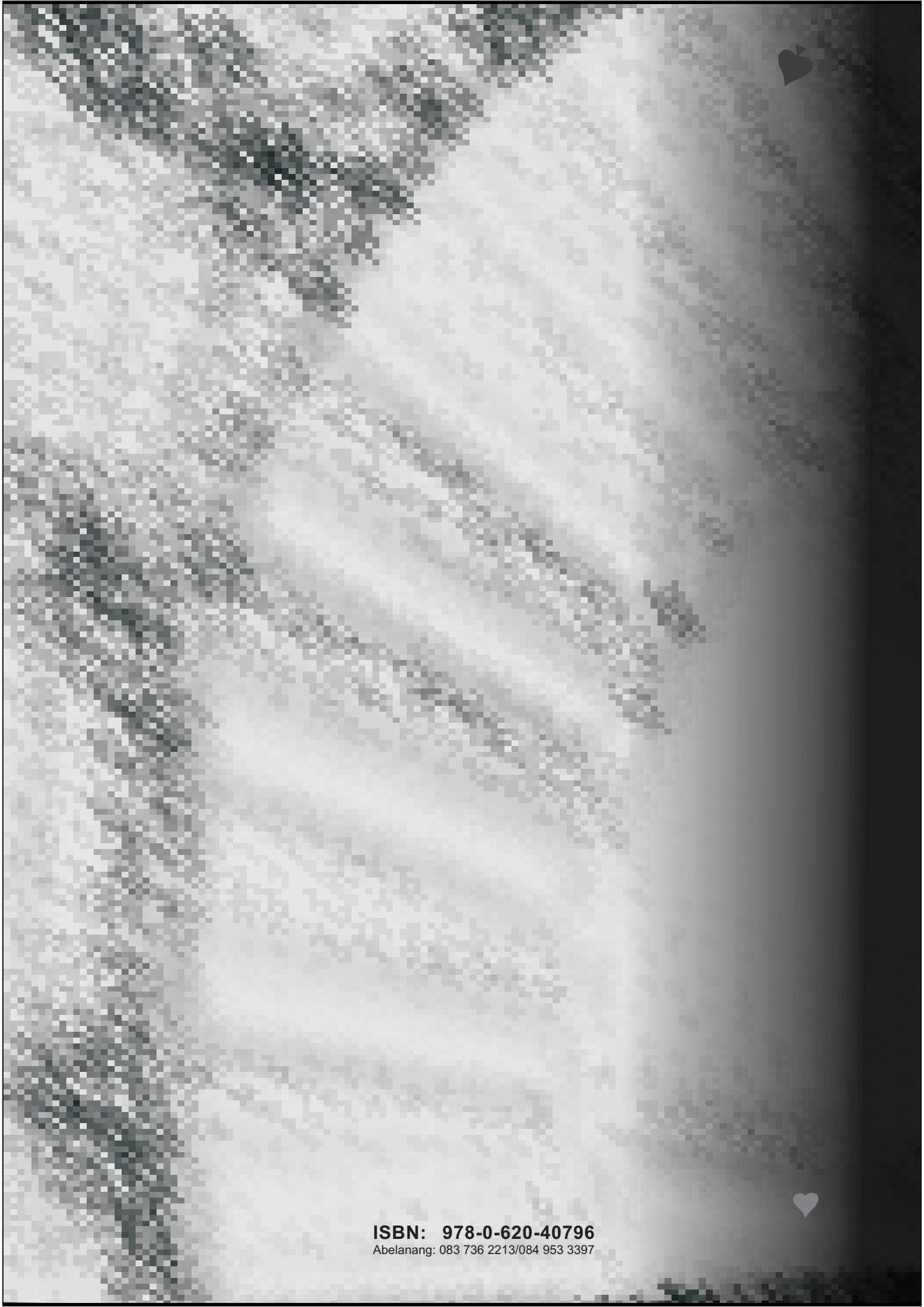
**7. Who are you reporting to?**

- Manager
- Senior management
- CEO
- Board member

**8. How many staff members are reporting to you?**

**9. Gender of immediate superior**

- Male
- Female



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