

**Exploring the potential for coaching as an approach
to support Zambian women leaders: a focus on
socio-cultural barriers**

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Abstract

The complexity of “customary cultural traditions” that characterise African women’s family obligations in addition to their work roles creates potential challenges for supporting leadership development

(Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009, p.215).

Organisations in the West have embraced coaching as an approach that can facilitate women to progress to senior executive leadership roles. Current coaching studies on women’s executive leaders are marginally increasing and focused on understanding how women can navigate glass ceiling barriers and progress to senior executive levels. By comparison, in non-Western regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa, coaching has been introduced but reflects an uneven stage of development and application. There is a perception that African women encounter significant challenges due to influences within the societal environment that impede leadership progression, yet there is limited insight as to how such influences may or may not contribute to navigating glass ceiling barriers in sub-Saharan Africa. In an underdeveloped coaching environment, such contextual perspectives could provide deeper insight into coaching women executive leaders in the region. This study critically appraises coaching literature, including insights from non-Western environments, highlighting the importance of personal experiences and narrative in appreciating socio-cultural factors affecting women leaders in Zambia.

A contextual focus is taken to explore the potential role of coaching to support women leaders in Zambia, one of 48 countries in the sub-Saharan region. Country reports on Zambia highlight that women continue to be poorly represented in senior leadership positions. With less than a decade to meet the SDG Agenda 2030 goal on gender equality, more innovative approaches are needed to accelerate women into leadership roles. This research creates a unique opportunity to gain deeper insight into women’s leadership experiences and to explore if and how coaching can play a role in accelerating women leaders. Zambian women (18) in senior executive leadership roles share their leadership stories. An indigenous research approach is applied, and data collection methods include storytelling and focus sharing groups. Particular consideration is given to understanding the challenges women leaders face within their societal environment, as well as acknowledging the pertinent leadership barriers experienced in the workplace.

Key findings reveal the prominence of women's roles in the wider community and the study concludes that individual and collective coaching should be considered when supporting women leaders in Zambia. Socio-cultural influences that supported or hindered the women's leadership progression are identified as: respect (obedience), religion, marriage rites and gender socialisation, spirituality, education; and the importance of relevant stakeholders in the wider community, such as parents and elders, in overcoming self-limiting beliefs concerned with non-conformity and fear of failure.

The study proposes that approaches modelled on principles of narrative, integral and systemic coaching could be a powerful basis on which coaches can develop coaching philosophies; and that the use of narrative through personal leadership stories, to recognise how and when socio-cultural factors can be an anchor and when they act as a barrier, is important in facilitating the coachee. The main contributions acknowledge that addressing these socio-cultural factors requires a more systemic and holistic approach that takes into consideration the wider influences within the societal environment and the proposal of a collective coaching practice framework underpinned by narrative, integral and systemic coaching principles. The strengths of this framework are in its flexibility to work with individual and collective perspectives and leadership narratives, as well as recognising the implications of wider stakeholders in the societal environment

Keywords: *Women leaders, Socio-cultural barriers, Indigenous methodology, non-Western environment*

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“Uwakwensho ubushiku, bamutasha llyo bwacha”,

“You may not immediately appreciate the assistance that is rendered to you, but with hindsight you will come to see how much you have been helped”.

Kangwa-Wilkie and Kapwepwe, 2014 p.25

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Glossary

Cultural norms	<i>Cultural norms are symbolised through cultural practices, symbols and beliefs representing a shared experience and expressed through respect for tradition and humility.</i> Source: Schwartz, 2012, p.6
Narrative Coaching	<i>Narrative coaching is a mindful, experiential and holistic approach to helping people to shift their stories in order to generate new options and new results. Narrative coaching examines narrative material and patterns in clients' 'stories' to help them identify and cross developmental thresholds.</i> Source: Drake, 2013, p.117,119
Patriarchy	<i>The manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family.</i> Source: Sultana, 2010, p.3
Storytelling	<i>Is a practice in indigenous cultures that sustains communities and validates the experiences and epistemologies of indigenous people. It is also an important research approach among indigenous scholars.</i> Source: Iseke 2013, p.559
Socialisation	<i>Socialisation begins from the moment a child enters the world. An important aspect of socialisation is the language that is used towards male and female children, as well as the attitudes and treatment afforded to male and female children.</i> Source: Carter 2014, p.244
Ubuntu	<i>A word that exists in several Bantu speaking societies of sub-Saharan Africa. At the highest level of analysis the idea reflects humanity, feelings of fellowship and kindness. The idea of Ubuntu envisages individuals and communities as a relational entity giving value, purpose and identity to the other.</i> Source: Littrell et al., 2013, p.235

Values

Benevolence values have to do with an open concern for the welfare of others expressed through behaviours such as forgiveness and responsibility.

Traditional values have to do with the acceptance, respect and commitment to cultural norms.

Source: Schwartz, 2012, p.7

Abbreviations

AECC	=	Africa Executive Coaching Council	NGOCC	=	Non-Governmental Gender Organisations Coordinating Council
AQAL	=	All Quadrants / All Levels)	NWOB	=	New Way Of Being
CAMFED	=	Campaign for Female Education	OECD	=	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CEO	=	Chief Executive Officer	PWC	=	Price Water House Coopers
CMDP	=	Coaching Model Development Process	ROI	=	Return on Investment
CWOB	=	Current Way Of Being			
FSG	=	Focus Sharing Group	SCCs	=	Small Christian Communities
GCBs	=	Glass Ceiling Barriers	SDGs	=	Sustainable Development Goals
GDP	=	Gross Domestic Product	SSA	=	Sub-Saharan Africa
GEWEL	=	Girls Education and Women's Empowerment Livelihood	UIF	=	Universal Integrative Framework
GI	=	Gender Index	UK	=	United Kingdom
IFC	=	International Coaching Federation	UN	=	United Nations
ILO	=	International Labour Organisation	UNDP	=	United Nations Development Programme
IPA	=	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis	UNESCO	=	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

NGO = Non-Governmental
Organisation

MBA = Master of Business
Administration

US = United States of America

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter one begins by detailing the problem statement. The context, rationale and research gap are presented using supportive literature, followed by key definitions pertinent to this study. The research design is outlined, and the chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis structure.

A story may be an unorthodox way to begin setting out a problem statement for a coaching and mentoring doctoral thesis. However, in this particular study, the story I am about to share warrants a place at the start because it was a key motivator in articulating my research problem and rationale. In addition, storytelling is fundamental to my research design and how I situate myself within this study.

1.1 Problem statement

ZAMBIA: Feminist Progress – More Difficult than Decolonization is an article written in 1980 by Zambian feminist Gwendoline Konie, in which she discusses her first political assignment. As a trained sociologist, Gwendoline graduated with a degree in 1962 from Swansea University, UK. At that time Zambia was still a colony of Britain. Gwendoline returned to a pre-independent Zambia in 1962, where she soon found herself in a substantive leadership role on the Legislative Council, having successfully challenged a policy that disadvantaged women applying for leadership positions. This meant she was the only woman alongside her male counterparts.

Gwendoline was a confident young woman and she went on to achieve great success in the foreign ministry as the first woman trained for the diplomatic corps. She proceeded to represent Zambia as Ambassador to Sweden, the United States of America and Germany, as well as being Chair of the United Nations (UN) Council for Namibia (AP Archive, 2015). These roles grounded her experience in senior executive leadership. She was also an entrepreneur in her own right. She seemed to have a natural talent for public speaking and relished participating in public debates. In her article, she attributed her drive for leadership to three things: parental guidance, socialisation and a determined mind-set.

Twenty-one years later she stood as a presidential candidate for the Republic of Zambia, but her bid was not successful. Reflecting on her campaign results, she rationalised that the strongest negative reaction to her candidacy was because she was a woman. Although women were in the majority, and collectively have the most voting rights, she stated that,

“We live in a very traditional society, so men and women are looked at differently. There are different expectations of women than of men, and different values are put on women than on men.” (Konie, 2001, p.742).

Konie died in March 2009, still championing the causes that were closest to her heart: women’s equality, poverty alleviation and justice for women. Gwendoline Konie was my aunt, my mother’s younger sister.

Zambia is my country of birth. It is one of 48 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (World Bank Data, 2018a). Zambian women have continued to struggle in their attainment of senior leadership positions (Mwila, 2013; Njobvu and Xiu, 2014) but Zambia has committed to support the participation of women in leadership roles by signing up to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda’s targets date back to September 2015, when the UN General Assembly adopted a revised agenda for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Omisore, 2018). Resolution 70/1 proposes seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that include societal changes at a global level (The sustainable Development Goals, United Nations General Assembly, 2015)

The social inclusion of women is at the heart of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Wahlen, 2020; UNESCO, 2017). The UN seeks to accelerate the movement of women into leadership positions by focusing on the reinforcement of equality. Empowerment for women and girls on a global scale and efforts to facilitate the involvement of women at all levels of leadership are identifiable within SDG 5, target 5.5, which is to *“Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life”* UN resolution 70/1 (The sustainable Development Goals, United Nations General Assembly, 2015, p.20)

An analysis of regional annual reports from the UN’s Eastern and Southern African office showed that women in the region are not only affected by these goals but also play an important role in achieving them when they are empowered to do so. This makes SDG 5 on gender equality a key goal in meeting the 2030 targets for the other 16 SDGs (Women and Sustainable Development Report, 2016).

Several SSA countries had significant involvement in developing the SDG goals, and therefore have a vested interest in ensuring their attainment (Shettima, 2016). The SDG goals also align with the Agenda 2063 African Union Commission framework, “The Africa we want”, which also features the inclusion of women prominently (African Union Commission, 2015). However, less than 50% of SSA

countries will be halfway to achieving the SDGs by 2030 (Wahlén, 2020). There is significant regional variation regarding the implementation of the SDG agenda globally. According to a recent Brookings Institution (2020) report, SSA has one of the lowest Gender Index (GI) measures at 51.1%, exceeding only the Middle East and North Africa which are at 50.8%. The region is surpassed by Asia and Pacific at 55.3%, Latin America at 61.9% and Europe and North America which leads with 78.6% (Equal Measures 2030, 2019). The Gender Index (GI) is a key measure that is used to review gender equality performance on a regional basis. It uses a percentage scale of contributing factors such as: economic empowerment, education, health and political representation, climate change and public finance factors, as they relate to the SDG agenda (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Barriers attributed to the societal environment could be a contributing factor to the lower GI for SSA. Begashaw (2020) states that one of the key barriers of African women attaining leadership are the societal inequalities they encounter in their everyday lives. Social inclusion is associated with ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their background, by enabling their participation at all levels of decision-making that affect their lives (Anunobi, 2002; www.un.org). Yet a lack of clarity on country initiatives that promote social inclusion is seen as one of the deficiencies in achieving the SDG goals (Begashaw, 2020). Another view is that barriers can be attributed to attitudes, perceptions and beliefs associated with cultural practices (www.worldbank.org) and the inability to embrace new ways of thinking in tackling current issues through changed mind-sets (Begashaw, 2020).

As I reflected on my aunt's story, it occurred to me that, in her pursuit of leadership, my aunt's reference to traditional values and societal view about women suggests a level of complexity linked to traditional attitudes and perceptions. Despite her confidence, qualifications and experience and being part of Zambia's early government formation, these leadership qualities alone were clearly not enough. I began to question what leadership experiences other Zambian women have had and whether such societal challenges act as barriers for Zambian women leaders.

The challenges identified in the SDG reports seems to indicate a wider problem for women leaders in SSA; Zambia is illustrative of aspects of the social inclusion challenges highlighted and presents a useful contextual example to explore. Can women in Zambia attain leadership at an accelerated pace, given these obstacles? With less than ten years to meet the SDG 2030 agenda, there is an implied urgency for more innovative contributions that can help women overcome barriers affecting them and accelerate the achievement of the SDG targets (Wahlén, 2020).

1.2 Coaching women leaders

Coaching is an emergent approach that is increasingly being used by organisations to support women in their leadership progression to senior executive levels (Centre for Creative Leadership, 2020). In March 2018, the international consulting organisation Deloitte announced its intention to increase the number of women partners to 30% by 2030. A coaching developmental programme is one mechanism the organisation has been using to support this goal, to promote inclusive talent leadership for women and to enable them to succeed at the highest executive levels globally (Deloitte University, 2014). The IGNITE initiative is an internal coaching programme at Standard Chartered bank that uses coaching to support their women executive leaders internally (Hasson, 2020). At PWC, executive coaching has been used to help women gain improved self-awareness (PWC Gender Advisory Council, 2008)

Coaching for executive leadership of women provides an opportunity for women to address “glass ceiling barriers” (GCBs) that limit their progression as leaders, such as gender stereotypes, hierarchy, lack of access to the C-suite and limited visibility within organisations (Ibarra, Ely and Kolb, 2013; Johns, 2013). The barriers that are most frequently addressed in research are associated with glass ceiling perspectives within the organisations themselves. Such barriers are associated with workplace practices and processes, such as hierarchical structures, lack of recognition of women’s leadership strengths, and limited opportunities for growth (Coleman, 2020). Other barriers are linked to workplace culture and ideology, for example the approach to unpaid work, low pay and childcare policies that favour mostly male peers (Johns, 2013). According to Laff (2007), the most critical point of stagnation for women is between middle management and senior executive roles. Coaching studies rely on knowledge about GCB’s; in fact it has been stated that coaching can help women to build self-confidence and self-esteem which are seen as beneficial in navigating GCBs (Broughton and Miller, 2009; Leimon, Moscovici, and Goodier, 2011).

Some studies state that for coaching to be truly effective, a deeper understanding of the barriers women face in becoming executive leaders is required and to be truly effective, such knowledge should be incorporated into executive coaching processes (Vinnicombe and Singh, 2003; Ely, Ibarra and Kolb, 2011; Singh, 2012). According to Grover and Furhnam (2016), most studies focus on the barriers women face within an organisation’s internal operating environment without fully appreciating the influences within its external environment and the systemic social

implications. In doing so, there is a missed opportunity for organisations to gain a deeper understanding of both internal and external barriers that women face. A closer examination of the literature suggests that in a globalised world the barriers experienced by women in leadership go beyond the familiar to the more “specific cultural and religious beliefs and values and the socioeconomic and political factors” (Cubillo and Brown, 2003:p.289) necessitating a more contextual understanding.

1.3 Applying a contextual perspective

The Cambridge dictionary defines context as “*the situation within which something exists or happens, and that can help explain it*” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) When context takes on a social dimension, it can be used to understand societal circumstances that shape individual experiences, such as culture (Shams, 2006), childhood events, family, beliefs, education, social conditioning (Institute for Women’s Leadership, 2019) and social and cultural phenomena (Burke *et al.*, 2009). This research seeks an understanding of the wider societal influences which Zambian women leaders experience and how these potentially impact their work environments.

Context is a useful mechanism to understand coaching and leadership, due to the multifaceted nature of both concepts. In terms of coaching, the notion of “*context*” has been identified as a core component of a holistic coaching engagement where the context in which coaching takes place is of equal importance to the client, coach and the coaching process (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2014). The more a coach understands about the client’s context, the easier it is to support the client in framing appropriate questions, and applying relevant listening skills (Cox, 2003). The societal and cultural environment is a core contextual consideration and is of vital importance in helping the ‘client’ within a coaching process (Shams, 2006).

Leadership theories have evolved through time, from analysing the individual leader or the environment in which the leader finds himself or herself, to articulating different interactive leadership roles in order to understand the relationship between leaders and followers (Bass, 2008). Context can therefore explain regional differences in leadership approaches. For example, Bolden and Kirk (2009) reaffirm the idea that in SSA, leadership is based on humanistic principles that are supportive of a participative leadership style. Authority and respect are also important concepts in African leadership. Leadership is often practiced in a

paternalistic manner, taking into account concern for the wellbeing of fellow individuals and embracing tolerance and forgiveness (Blunt and Jones, 1997; Sigger, Polak and Pennink, 2010).

1.4 Research gap

Coaching studies carried out by Broughton and Miller (2009) and Leimon *et al.* (2011) established that coaching women could be beneficial for business organisations in overcoming glass ceiling barriers. Other studies on coaching women for executive leadership are increasing and further insights point to additional benefits of coaching associated with self-efficacy, such as authenticity, and self-awareness, to help women counter leadership barriers in the workplace (Worth, 2012; Skinner, 2012; De Valle, 2014). In the study conducted by Leimon *et al.* (2011) one of the conclusions articulated by the authors specifically highlights that some of the coaching issues that concern women are about confidence, networking, and opportunities to learn from role models and balancing career and family. The study suggests that these are largely universal across the countries reviewed. Leadership studies on African women recognise certain similarities for example that the glass ceiling effect is a challenge for all women globally and barriers to leadership progression such as “ways of knowing” within the corporate organisations (Broughton and Miller, 2009; Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009). This suggests that coaching has advantages that can be capitalised on to support women to achieve executive leadership success (Peltier, 2011), but there is a caveat. Coaching studies on women leaders have focused on investigating organisational barriers offering limited insight into barriers within the societal environment. Although there has been some effort to understand the influences of the external environment such as family care and responsibilities from the perspective of work life balance (O'Neill, Hopkins and Bilimoria, 2015), this tends to be attuned to the organisations agenda in terms of women being able to navigate organisational labyrinths (Eagly and Carli, 2007). Cavanagh and Grant (2004) have argued that although executive coaching focuses on the organisations work-related issues, in reality the personal and professional worlds blur.

According to Schein (2001), cultures and traditions are ubiquitous part of any society. How these cultures and traditions affect a society varies. Nkomo and Ngambi, (2009: p.215) argue that the complexity of “customary cultural traditions” is still very prevalent in African societies because these traditions characterise women’s family obligations in addition to their work roles. This suggests that differentiating aspects unique to these societies are worth further investigation.

African women are subjected to the glass ceiling effect (Ndinda and Okeke-Uzodike in Kabashiki, 2014) in societies where the male leader or senior elder can often “pull rank” due to the traditions of respect, hierarchy and deference. The findings in the study by Kabashiki (2014) reveal the need to encourage women to develop leadership competencies and maintain their ability to use networking as a strategy to support themselves. Sadly, there is limited focus on pragmatic indicators on how this might be done. Another key aspect is that management models developed in the West, though universally applied, are at different phases of development in emerging regions like SSA in comparison to Europe and the USA. In addition management models are also subject to societal influences (Thiemann and April, 2007).

Studies that focus on GCBs and coaching have tended to emphasise barriers in the workplace (McGovern, Lindemann, Vergara, Murphy, Barker, Warrenfeltz, 2001; Peltier, 2011; Beattie, Kim, Hagen, Egan, Ellinger and Hamlin, 2014). There are very limited studies that discuss GCBs in relation to societal environments and cultural influences (Ganiyu, Oluwafemi, Ademola, Olatunji, 2018). There are even fewer studies that emphasise the relationship between barriers in the workplace, societal environments and how this affects women’s leadership trajectory (Sharma and Kaur, 2019). When considering workplace barriers and other barriers unrelated with work, the literature tends to treat them as separate and exclusive of each other, even though work life balance research suggests that women are impacted by both (O’Neill, Hopkins and Bilimoria, 2015). Overlooking how socio-cultural aspects within environments may or may not contribute to GCBs and what this means for women’s leadership suggests that there is rich contextual insight that coaching studies on women leaders could benefit from.

Traditional cultural practices can act as barriers to women’s development in SSA countries. Practices associated with marriage, inheritance and traditional rites of widowhood have been identified as inhibitors of senior executive women’s career advancement in Nigeria (Ganiyu *et al.*, 2018), while social norms, religious beliefs and educational level barriers have been noted as regressive for women teachers in Uganda progressing to management positions in secondary schools (Lunyolo Ayodo, Tikoko and Simatwa, 2014). In Sanyati district in Zimbabwe, research by Mwale and Dodo (2017) established that cultural values and marriage rites were prioritised as serious responsibilities for women and that any leadership roles, may impede this focus and affect the family status quo. Where women leader statistics have shown positive progression like Rwanda, although it must be noted that

Rwandese women's positive leadership growth could be shaped by the genocide of 1994 that left women in the majority at 60-70% of the population, anecdotal evidence suggests that women in decision making positions are still subject to male dominance in the home and are not particularly willing to change the status quo at home for fear of being "disloyal not just to their spouses but to their country" (Warner, 2016; BSR Report, 2017). Rwanda has also had one of the highest statistics of gender violence in SSA (Chugh, 2013). In Ethiopia, a descriptive study on women in south western Ethiopia, Bedele, shows that women aiming for public leadership are affected by socio-cultural attitudes associated with the burdens of domestic commitments (Hora, 2014). These perspectives reveal how traditional factors and cultural expectations create complexity for women in their work beyond family and community obligations (Kiamba, 2008; Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009; Abolade, 2014).

Since SSA encompasses 48 diverse countries, taking a regional focus may be helpful when addressing statistics and developmental processes for women. However to take a universal approach to evaluating the region would risk treating all SSA countries as one homogenous group, engendering ambiguity rather than clarity (Poltera and Schreiner, 2019). There is also a risk of presenting a universal approach, interpretation and application (Nkomo, 2011) thereby failing to really appreciate the diversity that makes individual countries unique. The nature of such factors is highly contextual because regional variations occur due to different historical and cultural influences, as well as differences in social structures and people's access to resources (Silver, 2015). Nkomo (2011) questions how Africa should be presented in African leadership and management studies and argues that rich insight into the variety and complexity of diverse African nations can be just as powerful in addressing the limitations in African leadership and management studies.

The convergence of several factors presents a unique opportunity to explore the potential for coaching as a mechanism to support the acceleration of women's leadership progression in Zambia. These are: the emergence of coaching as a potential mechanism to support women leaders; the heightened visibility of women's leadership issues in SSA through the SDG 5 Agenda 2030; and the focus on achieving the SDG 2030 targets in less than 10 years. Such a study could be beneficial to women executives, executive coaching practitioners, educators and government legislators in shaping meaningful and relevant leadership support for Zambian women.

1.5 Research aim and objectives

This study sets out to explore the potential for coaching to support Zambian women in their leadership progression. To support this aim, the following objectives are proposed:

1. To synthesise the contextual background of this study regarding women in Zambia highlighting important socio-cultural factors;
2. To critically review literature on coaching and leadership and appraise relevant themes concerning principles, practice and application as to potential informative insights for Zambia;
3. To identify factors influencing Zambian women leaders by exploring personal stories;
4. To articulate relevant findings and derive key recommendations that inform coaching principles and practices for Zambian women leaders' progression that have contextual resonance.

1.6 Key literature and concepts

Coaching and leadership are very complex subjects in their own right. When viewed in relation to each other there is a risk of ambiguity with the use of certain terms and definitions, especially when it comes to articulating key issues and knowledge bases. This section explains the key literature and concepts, which are fundamental to appreciating the focus and nature of this study. The section begins with an overview of leadership barriers that women face. In order to research about socio-cultural barriers and leadership it is important to position the literature on leadership barriers that women face and to define socio-cultural factors. Underlying concepts that the research draws upon are explained; and indicative sources of knowledge that inform each concepts pertinent perspectives are presented. The concepts outlined are gender and its associations with power relations, patriarchy and discourse. In relation to coaching, concepts presented are authenticity, efficacy and agency. The section concludes with an overall outline of the literature range and scope that this thesis draws upon.

1.6.1 Leadership barriers

The identification of women's leadership barriers has been a gradual process, beginning with a growing understanding of the historical influences on leadership literature and moving towards an articulation of how women lead. Articles on women's leadership have ranged from articulating gender stereotypes and social

roles (Eagly and Steffen, 1984) to recognising comparative differences that favoured male leadership traits in the workplace over women's traits and characteristics, with men viewed as dominant and competitive and women as collaborative and relational (Eagly and Johnson, 1990; Ludeman, 2009; Hadary and Henderson, 2012; Patel 2013). Other authors have articulated how women lead with reference to their leadership styles (Sandler, 2014; Leimon *et al.*, 2011) and highlighted strategies for overcoming barriers (Hadary and Henderson, 2012). The comparison between the nature of men and women leaders has played a strong part in recognising, understanding and addressing the leadership barriers that affect women within the workplace. The literature focuses on two significant barriers that hinder women's leadership progression, which have been identified as the 'glass ceiling' (Eagly, 2007) and the 'double bind' (Ely *et al.*, 2011).

The glass ceiling is a metaphor used to describe women's leadership barriers in the workplace (Eagly, 2007). The origin of the term has been recited in various forms. It was once associated with a Wall Street Journal article by Hymowitz and Schelhardt (1986). More recent articles state that a management consultant called Marilyn Loden coined the phrase in 1978 at a panel discussion considering women's leadership advancement (Loden, 2017; Vargas, 2018). Regardless of its origins, the glass ceiling continues to be a popular term used to describe an invisible barrier between middle management and senior executive roles. This invisible barrier is represented by the hurdles associated with women's career transition into senior executive leadership (Carli and Eagly, 2016).

Since the inception of this term, further insights into glass ceiling barriers have described organisational structures that are very hierarchical and noted that such structures make it difficult for women to navigate beyond middle management roles (Laff, 2007). One proposed cause of this difficulty is that women's collaborative leadership style is recognised as best suited to a flatter organisational structure, yet the reality is that women have to navigate their rise to seniority within very hierarchical and masculine cultures (Eagly, 2007; Bird, 2010). However, these studies have focused mostly on articulating organisational environments that are Western.

The 'double bind' refers to the incongruity between women's leadership strengths, which are characterised as relational, and work environments that stipulate more of an agentic approach to leadership (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Ely, *et al.*, 2011). The double bind paradox is perceived as the cause of women's self-limiting beliefs,

because some women identify only two options, *“be accommodating and nice yet be overlooked or join the men and become aggressive”* (Sandler, 2014, p.63).

Another metaphor referred to in gender studies, though not applied in this study is the ‘glass cliff’, which relates to women being in leadership positions that are risky with high odds of failing (Ryan and Haslam, 2007) for example in periods of crisis such as financial mismanagement (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2017). In addition, there is a negative perception that collaborative behaviour, that draws on strong listening skills, is seen as too soft in comparison to assertive, agentic leadership characteristics which are purported to be more efficacious for executive leadership (Beeson and Valerio, 2012). As far as the development of women’s leadership is concerned, there appear to be inconsistencies between the redeeming leadership characteristics purported to be unique to women and restraining working environments, necessitating more effective supportive approaches for women leaders.

1.6.2 Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors are understood as wider forces within cultures and societal environments. A non-exhaustive list of these forces would include attitudes and beliefs, religious or ethnic values, traditional rituals, family structures and culture (Gonzalez and Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2013) or symbols, customs and taboos (Giddens, 2006). According to Savolainen (2016), socio-cultural factors play a dual role in that as much as they assist human relations, they can act as constraints. There is a need to explain women’s roles within society and the nature of gender relations (Korkor, 2014; Mwale and Dodo, 2017). Reynolds (1991) states that socio-cultural interaction involves individuals interacting with one another or as a collective. He characterises societies as social systems that host sub-systems within which individuals interact in dyadic or collective situations suggesting that such interactions are relational.

Studies that have informed socio-cultural aspects of gender have tended to focus on the distinction between roles and responsibilities of boys and girls (Stockard, 1999), the language and attitude towards husbands with respect to marriage rites that reinforce the women’s place in the home (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2012) and how boys are raised as the born decision makers and head of the house Dibie and Dibie (2012). Skalko (2020) argues that gender is culturally relative and therefore interpretations need to be sensitive to geographical differences. There is a lack of clarity within the literature as to what extent such roles are rooted in a contextual social system (Carter, 2014) and as to what socio-cultural factors act as barriers

or not. This makes it difficult to examine the capabilities that coaching can offer without an insight into the gendered context of Zambian women leaders. To engage with such factors is to understand the reality of these interactions and the system in which individuals associate themselves (Stout-Rostron, 2013).

1.6.3 Gender

Existing literature highlights that when the concept of gender is viewed as a social construct, the importance of societal expectations preside (Smith, 2016). According to Lorber (2018), to understand the social construction of gender is to be attentive to how it is characterised by role expectations, parenting as well as work and life experiences. Gender definitions reflect psychological, biological or sociological perspectives. Mascolo (2019) argues that in defining gender along different categories there is a tendency to view the psychological, biological and social construction of gender as mutually exclusive when in effect a person reflects all these parts. A review of existing literature shows that when gender is defined as psychological, it is informed by the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis which proposes that gender is not innate but acquired (Bell, 2018). The biological perspective takes an evolutionary viewpoint on the basis that gender requires insight into the sex hormones and genes (Phillips, 2005). The sociological view refers to the manner in which boys and girls are raised incorporating behavioural attitudes on how gender evolves given the relational roles within the societal environment (Ayman and Korabik, 2010; Miller, 2016). To provide some clarity to the thesis, the concept of gender is viewed as a social construct because the focus is on understanding the societal interpretations of gender roles and aligns with studies that have focused on understanding gendered contexts (Mavin et al, 2017; Diehl and Dzubinski, 2017) and doing gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987; Stout-Rostron, 2013).

Gender as a social construct has been examined from the organisations perspective where the organisation itself is deemed as the societal group (Prethus, 1962; Mavin et al, 2017) and from the societal perspective of nation-states or world regions (Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009). There are limited insights about gender based leadership barriers where a few authors, see Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009; Diehl and Dzubinski, 2017, have attempted to distinguish between gender based leadership barriers at the individual, organisational and societal level. Based on a cross sector comparison of findings from women leaders in higher education and religious mission organisations, Diehl and Dzubinski (2017) identify such barriers along three levels micro, meso and macro. The micro

(individual) level revealed aspects of work-life conflicts associated with domestic responsibilities. The meso (organisation) level revealed barriers such as the glass cliff and salary inequity and the macro (nation-state societal level) identified factors such as cultural constraints that effect personal choice for example not being considered for a leadership role because of expectations to fulfil obligations of raising children. While the micro and meso levels have continued to inform coaching and leadership studies on women (Ibarra *et al.*, 2013; O'Neill, Hopkins and Bilimoria, 2015; Johns, 2013; Leimon *et al.*, 2011), the macro level barriers specifically around cultural context are less prominent in literature on women leaders in SSA (Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009). By focusing on socio-cultural barriers, this thesis seeks to exploit the gap on macro level insights and help coaches to understand how they can inform coaching.

Twenty-five years of gender management theory as evaluated by Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) identified that gender definitions are often associated with how roles are interpreted within a society. UNESCO has identified that the social perspective of gender dictates the boundaries between men and women, gendered behaviour in terms of roles and expectations and rules for men and women through norms and customs practiced (UNESCO Gender Equality Report, 2017). According to Koester (2015: p.2):

“gender shapes power relations at all levels of society in fact the set of roles behaviours and attitudes that society define as appropriate for men and women ‘gender’ may well be the most persistent cause, consequence and mechanism of power relations from the intimate sphere of the household to the highest levels of political decision-making”.

By Koester’s definition, the focus on what women can and cannot do within their defined gender roles in society can create a situation of powerlessness (Koester, 2015). Theoretical perspectives about social role theory as proposed by Eagly (1997) have helped to articulate the distinctions between men and women’s roles and how these inform gender stereotypes and how men and women are characterised within society. The author also argues that such distinctions can inform women status or power.

1.6.4 Patriarchy

Patriarchy is another aspect of the societal environment often identified as influential because it is practiced within a majority of patrilineal societies in Africa (Dibie and Dibie, 2012). In its broadest sense, patriarchy refers to the

“manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family” (Sultana, 2010 p.3). In Sultana’s theoretical analysis of patriarchy and women’s subordination, patriarchy alludes to hierarchical structures between male and female members in the family. Within wider gender studies, it has been extended to articulate the power structures between men and women in society (Asiyanbola, 2005). It would appear that both gender socialisation and patriarchal practices tend to favour giving men greater visibility and experience in practicing leadership, not just in the traditional setting, but within modern management practices in formal organisational settings (Nyirongo, 2014). Patriarchal systems characteristically reflect hierarchal structures that can be cohesive and compatible, but at the same time complex and difficult to navigate in today’s contemporary society. The sub-Saharan regional environment has often been described as patriarchal in terms of societal structures. Patriarchy, which is still practised in African countries, is a key concept which is used to explain the power relations between men and women in Africa (Tripp, 2013).

Patriarchy is a recurring term within research studies on gender development and the related implications of labour divisions of men and women in society. Looking at patriarchy in simplistic terms, it is viewed as the key reason for male dominance and female submissiveness (Bierema, 2002; Asiyanbola, 2005). Reeves and Baden (2000) suggest that gendered divisions of labour within formal and informal labour markets can encourage stereotyping in the types of jobs women undertake, such as carer positions and the unequal level of pay women receive in comparison to men. However, there remains a lack of clarity concerning what constitutes a patriarchal system because it is associated with numerous perspectives such as gender, ideologies, societal cultures, and research paradigms (Sultana, 2010; Steady, 2005).

1.6.5 Discourse

As Foucault argues, within societal relationships is the emergence and transformation of “things said” (Foucault 1972 p.122). Using the Foucauldian approach to discourse, the social context (Weedon, 1987) of how knowledge is created is prioritised. The concepts of gender and patriarchy are reflective of knowledge created through power relations (Koester, 2015) and socio-cultural practices (Taylor, 2006) making discourse an important concept within this thesis. In understanding the phrase “things said” the interpretation within this study is that language and words carry important meaning. Research has identified discourse through narrative when communicated as stories, (Drake, 2007; Denborough et al,

2006) and narrative analysis (Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002) where the transformation (as implied by Foucault, 1972) arises out of what is revealed through “things said”.

The complexity of societal environments means that discourse can occur in different realms, such as political or scientific (Foucault, 1972) or feminism (Fennell and Arnot, 2009). Viewed in this way, it can be difficult to decipher categories and levels of discourse. Within this study, a distinction is made between micro discourses where the focus is internal regarding interpretations of an individual nature (Van Esch, Assylkhan and Bilimoria, 2017) and macro discourses where the focus is on societal structures within the wider social context that limit or support women to attain leadership (Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009). Simon Western’s critique on discourse within coaching practice reflects a similar gap. He questions the omission of insight about the wider social context in coaching conversations and in doing so he differentiates between micro and macro discourses (Western, 2016).

1.6.6 Authenticity, self- efficacy and self- agency

Authenticity has been defined using a range of terms such as genuineness (Ibarra, 2015), being true to oneself (Vannini and Franzses, 2008). Erikson (1995) argues that authenticity requires commitment to self-values and recognition and acceptance of relational aspects attributed to social obligations. Kernis (2003) states that there is a connection between authenticity and self-esteem. In support of this view, Kernis (2003) also identifies four elements to authenticity: awareness, unbiased processing, action and relational, where relational is associated with the genuineness of the relations between an individual and others. There are also blockages to authenticity which according to Kernis (2003) can include: a lack of perception to motives and feelings or denial about personal knowledge and experience. Behaviour that is associated with this is linked to ‘fear of rejection’. Eagly (2005) argues that relational authenticity is only achieved when followers validate a leader’s set of values at the behest of a community. According to Eagly this can foster in followers personal and social allegiance that can strengthen a group, organisation or society.

According to Bandura (2008; 2009), being able to overcome failure, obstacles and challenges is a fundamental aspect of building self-efficacy. In doing so individuals need to be well attuned to their personal perceptions of how capable, they are to pursue goals (Gallagher, 2012). Self-agency on the other hand is associated with an individual’s belief that they are capable of achieving their desired goal through

their own behaviour and action (Bussey and Bandura, 1999; Bandura and Locke, 2003). Self-agency is often discussed in combination with women attaining a high level of self-efficacy not just individually but collectively as well (Dibie and Dibie, 2012; Bandura, 2001) showing how interconnected the concepts are. Underlying theories include self-efficacy theory (SET) (Bandura, 1977) and social cognitive theory (Bandura 1999).

Belief in one's abilities is also attributed to self-confidence (Oney and Oksugozlu-Guven, 2015). Where self-efficacy is linked to beliefs, goal attainment and action, self-confidence incorporates not only self-efficacy, but resilience and optimism as well (Stajkovic, 2006). Self-confidence and self-efficacy would appear to be based on similar principles but Oney and Oksugozlu-Guven (2015) outline that self-efficacy is focused on abilities and self-confidence is focused on abilities and certainty of knowledge e.g. an opinion. However, it is important to note that with experience in overcoming challenges, self-efficacy can also achieve a degree of certainty about knowledge. What Bandura refers to as Mastery (Bandura, 2008).

1.6.7 Approach to literature selection and application

The concepts outlined in this section emphasise perspectives of social psychology (Eagly and Sczesny, 2019). Theories such as social role theory (Eagly, 1997), social cognitive theory (Bussey and Bandura, 1999; 2004) and gender socialisation (Pomerantz, Ng and Wang, 2004) provide a knowledge base to explore socio-cultural barriers in the Zambian context because such theories are cognisant of the societal environment, relationships and realities as experienced by individuals and communities.

For the purpose of this research, discourse is used to engage with narratives as stories in coaching (Drake, 2007). The methodology expands on the use of stories; to capture the leadership experiences of the Zambian women (Taylor, 2006) in applying an indigenous methodology (expanded on in section 1.7 research design) and as analysis for meaning and sense making (Riessman, 2012; Boje and Jorgensen, 2008; McAdams, 1993). The coaching literature also highlights the importance of discourse as critical insight of coaching practice when the wider social context is taken into account (Western, 2016).

In discussions on coaching, I draw on David Drakes work on narrative coaching (Drake, 2007; 2009; 2014). His depiction of the diamond model speaks to aspects of meaning making and suggests that personal narratives can be positioned within larger narratives (Drake 2007). The work by Stelter (2009) on the use on narratives

in coaching and Stelter and Law (2010) on narrative collaborative coaching are equally pertinent. Using narratives as the focus, it made sense to examine coaching approaches that are responsive to narratives and are characteristic of meaning-making and acknowledge the contextual realities. These coaching approaches are narrative (Drake, 2007), integral Hunt and Divine, (2012), and systemic (Farr and Shepherd, 2018; Whittington, 2020).

Within executive coaching literature, there is research that argues in recognition of coaching that is receptive to cultural contexts and societal influences as they relate to the coachee. In this regard, global coaching (Abbott and Rosinski, 2007), the Universal Integrative Framework (UIF) (Law, Ireland and Hussain, 2007), cross-cultural kaleidoscope (Plaister-Ten, 2013) and cultural orientation framework (Rosinski, 2003) are discussed.

Section 1.6.4. Patriarchy, highlights terms such as hierarchy, stereotypes, dominance. The fact that power structures exist within patriarchy does not mean that in the case of each different societal environments, it exists and has been influenced by the same things, re-emphasising the importance of context. Consequently, there are significant risks in universalising such a dynamic phenomenon, because researchers will fail to capture its real significance. This thesis uses the concept of patriarchy to provide rich historical context to the Zambian societal system that the women leaders have been exposed to. It is important to unpick key aspects of the women's leadership stories by understanding any underlying influences of patriarchy in order to provide greater clarity for informed coaching.

Overall, it is important to clarify how the indigenous research approach has influenced my choice of literature broadly. Within the coaching chapter more specific research I reviewed related to leaders and leadership coaching in SSA. As appendix 4 (identifying steps to an indigenous methodology) shows, I read literature about leadership challenges in SSA. In doing so a complex cacophony of perspectives about the nature of societal environments in SSA became apparent. These included, colonialism, post-colonialism, patriarchy, gender, feminism, marginalisation; while worldviews were evident as critical perspectives challenging a dominant western knowledge and its appropriateness in relation to contextual environments (Bolden and Kirk, 2009; Chilisa and Tsheko, 2014; Nkomo 2011; Sultana, 2010; Fennell and Arnot 2009; Broodryk, 2006, Mbigi 1997; Geber and Keane, 2013). The challenge was to find an entry point. Coaching and leadership are complex topics in themselves so I needed a philosophical stance that would

enable me to recognise aspects of these challenging perspectives but stay true to the research aim and objectives and I reflect on this process more fully in the methodology chapter.

A key turning point was in reviewing the article from Bolden and Kirk (2009) which advocated the importance of adopting an indigenous paradigm when undertaking research on SSA. This brought me into the realm of critical perspectives such as decolonisation (Smith, 1999; Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008); indigenous ontology (Wilson, 2001; Geber and Keane 2013) and indigenous epistemology (Foley, 2003).

At the core of indigenous methodologies (explored further in chapter 4) is that knowledge created needs to be meaningful to and respectful and reciprocal of the community being researched (Smith, 1999). Therefore in selecting coaching literature for example. I focused on discussing the coaching process and relationship in order to be able to unravel elements within the process that would be meaningful given the focus on socio-cultural barriers and a non-western societal environment. Driven by an indigenous methodology, this doctoral thesis is unusual in its application of the same. It focuses less on providing a critical evaluation of existing coaching approaches and empirical testing as has been seen in several studies on women leaders and coaching (De Valle, 2014; Bonneywell, 2016; Skinner, 2012; Worth, 2012). I deliberately sought to critically examine literature that intersects with the 'macro' level discourse (Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009; Diehl and Dzubinski, 2017) as touched upon earlier in this section, otherwise the intention of respect and reciprocity of knowledge creation (Smith, 1999) is potentially compromised. I have argued that there is a research gap of 'macro' level narratives within coaching (Western, 2016).

1.7 Research design

This study applies in indigenous approach. To my knowledge, it is not a common approach to coaching and mentoring studies and deserves some clarification upfront. According to Lyles (2009, p.1),

“Indigenous research is characterised by a distinctive local phenomenon that is unique to the research target. It is also context specific and seeks to arrive at solutions that are locally driven and supportive of the local context.”

Indigenous knowledge often relies on the culture and worldviews within the given society, and indigenous paradigms incorporate methods that are appropriate for the context in which the research is taking place (Lavallee, 2009; Schroeder, 2014).

This study has gained impetus from the developing perspectives that are emphasising an insider approach when carrying out research on African countries (Bolden and Kirk, 2009). In other words the need for Africans to take the time to understand their own context and coming up with relevant solutions based on this personal knowledge and experience. This shift in thinking has resulted in an increased critique on Western approaches of knowledge that are seen as hegemonic (Steady, 2005; Nkomo, 2011). The need for studies that promote insider knowledge are increasing (Chilisa, 2020; Eckert and Rweyongoza, 2010, Kuada, 2010; Kabashiki, 2014). The Centre for Creative Leadership (CCL) states that Africa's business environment is distinctive and the key question of how relevant Western perspectives on leadership are to African societies is of particular interest in order to understand what approaches best fit this region (Centre for Creative Leadership, 2021). One of the aims of such studies appears to be to give a voice to marginalised groups, such as women, in developing African countries (Chilisa and Tsheko, 2014). This has been observed in studies on indigenous African knowledge (Jackson, 2013), African renaissance (Cossa, 2009) and African management concepts such as Ubuntu (Mbigi, 1997; Broodryk, 2006). The works of Collins (2000), Johnson-Bailey (2006) and Fennell and Arnot (2009) make a strong case for incorporating a non-Western worldview within studies on African women by focusing on understanding the nature of women's power and influence within societal structures that celebrate women's kinship and motherhood. This study sought to do this by applying an indigenous research approach.

This study uses and promotes an indigenous ontological and epistemological perspective. In terms of ontology, I recognise that contextualising phenomena in relation to socio-cultural factors is an important aspect of understanding women's leadership in Zambia. Chapters one and two are therefore focused on articulating these relationships. Indigenous epistemology is also embraced, because it supports the notion that knowledge creation is relational and that personal experience, life stories and cultural perspectives make for multiple realities (Wilson, 2008). Personal experiences, life stories and cultural context are inherent aspects of the way in which individuals can make sense of their reality and derive meaning (Creswell, 2006). I recognise that knowledge creation can be emergent and inclusive (Wilson, 2001; Kovach, 2010), but crucially I want to embrace the worldviews of my co-researchers to enable sense-making (Riessman, 2012).

The data collection methods are driven by two factors: one is to obtain rich contextual insights into the personal leadership experience of the Zambian women

participating in this study; and the second is to enable the co-researchers to share collective insight into pertinent solutions that would suit the local context.

Storytelling is the first method used in this exploratory study and there are several reasons for using this particular approach. Storytelling is an appropriate choice as it is a dynamic and distinct aspect of the Zambian culture (Cancel, 2013) - innate African knowledge is tacit in its oral traditions (Chilisa, 2012). Empirical studies have applied storytelling as an indigenous data collection method (Iseke, 2013). Currently, there is limited research using storytelling as a data collection method in coaching. Finally, this methodology is reflective of my own background as I have experienced storytelling during my childhood years in Zambia.

The second and final method is focus sharing group sessions, which are designed to be opportunities to share preliminary findings from the stories so as to openly discuss the problems and solution as a collective group. Characteristic to indigenous research is that it is relational and aligns with my epistemological stance, particularly when considering the way in which communities that still express strong oral traditions relate to one another (Kovach, 2010; White, 2010). The details of this focus group process are further described in the methodology chapter.

Narratives are inherent within personal stories (Drake, 2007). To analyse the findings, a narrative inquiry analysis is applied. This method is deemed appropriate for this study as it is best applied when reviewing the stories of a small group of individuals (Creswell, 2006). The data has been analysed using narrative inquiry in synthesising findings arising out of the narratives (Creswell, 2006; 2014). A narrative inquiry framework adapted from Ollenrenshaw and Creswell, (2002) has been used to interpret and analyse the data and acknowledges the co-creation of research (Kovach, 2005). Ethical considerations are acknowledged throughout where my co-researchers are sharing personal stories of leadership.

The local environment necessitated the use of personal contacts and word-of-mouth referrals, and so a form of snowball sampling was applied (Noy, 2008; Chilisa, 2012), which proved to be effective. This research focuses on the leadership stories of eighteen Zambian women in leadership positions, including middle management, senior executive and directorship or board level positions.

1.8 Thesis structure

The second chapter presents the research context of Zambia and the key issues associated with women's leadership. The third chapter critically reviews pertinent

literature on coaching theory and practice drawing on insights from narrative, integral and systemic coaching. In concert with the key points deduced from women's coaching studies, the literature review explores the use of narratives in coaching as a means of meaning-making and re-storying. The literature serves to question the viability of Western influenced coaching in its current form. The fourth chapter presents the methodology. The case is made for applying an indigenous methodology and following through with narrative inquiry as a research strategy. The research design is presented detailing research methods, analysis and ethical considerations. The data collection process is outlined, identifying limitations and areas of reflexivity.

The fifth chapter presents the limiting and liberating themes identified through the individual stories. In the sixth chapter, stories of complexity are presented and evaluated with supportive discussion. The seventh chapter brings together the collective contributions of the women to this research. In chapter 8 an in-depth discussion is provided of the key findings in terms of their implications for coaching. In conclusion, chapter nine revisits the main aim and key objectives and provides conclusions and recommendations and addresses theoretical, methodological, and societal contributions. An evaluation of the research is provided, before concluding by addressing key limitations of the study overall and areas for future research.

Chapter 2: The Zambian Context

Chapter one stated that Zambia offers a useful illustrative context to understand the potential role of coaching and how it could help Zambian women leaders. However, developing such insight requires an appreciation of the contextual environment in order to better understand the barriers and what opportunities coaching can potentially offer. Zambia has been struggling to accelerate women leaders into more senior positions within different sectors of society (Hudock, 2014; National Democratic Institute, 2010). In terms of labour force participation, women represent 71.7% against 80.2% for men; 18% of women are represented in parliament against 82% for men and within the civil service, 70% of civil servants are men (World Economic Forum, 2020). The country is at a critical juncture in addressing the progression of women leaders in relation to the SDG agenda 2030. In 2018, Zambia became the SDG hub for Southern Africa tasked with supporting countries in the southern region to achieve not just the SDG agenda 2030 targets but the AU targets for 2063 as well (Wahlén, 2018). This is especially pertinent given that the two relevant goals within the previous MDG agenda, to increase the number of women in parliament to 30% and achieve gender parity at all levels of education by 2015, were not met (UNDP, 2013).

This context chapter begins with an overview of Zambia as it is positioned within the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region. The legislative position of women within national gender policy and governance is outlined, as well as women's involvement in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Chapter one also highlighted that understanding the contextual environment of coachees makes it easier to support them (Cox, Bachkirova, and Clutterbuck, 2014). Systemic factors within a society provide useful knowledge for coaches to understand the coachee environment (Shams, 2006; Whittington, 2020). In this study understanding the context first is critical to ensure that where coaching might be found to be relevant it would be meaningful to be well-informed about the context in which it would be applied.

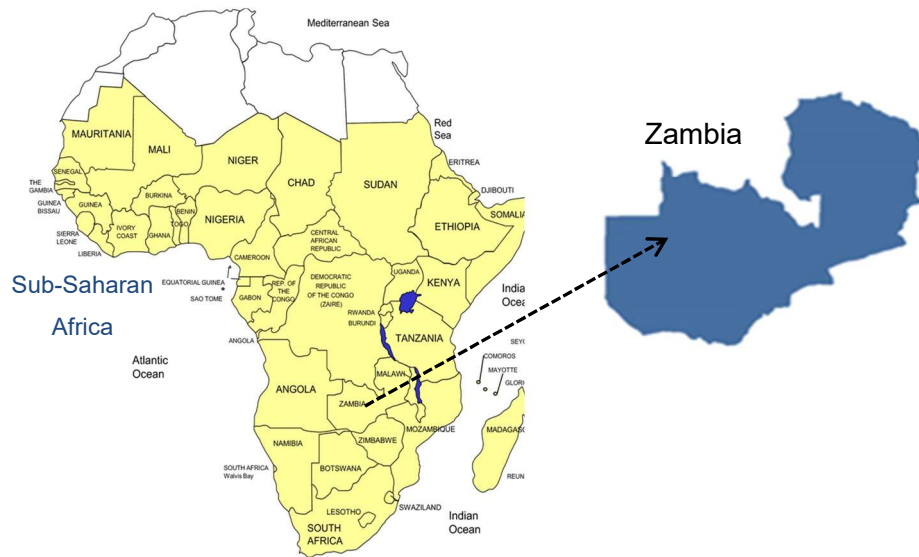
In this chapter, some of the systemic factors that are deemed relevant for understanding the coaching context are governance issues because these can provide insight about how policies and laws may influence or inform coaching legislature and ethical practices; appreciating cultural norms and values could shape how coaches identify barriers and opportunities to support the coachee; educational sector education and empowerment provide this insight. In

communicating these factors, the literature used provides both historical and contemporary perspectives to show some of the influences of the past on women's development. The chapter concludes by outlining what level of coaching may already exist in Zambia even to a limited degree. To do this would provide for more joined up contribution of the findings of this study to build on what coaching may already exist.

2.1 An overview of Zambia

Zambia is positioned in the southern part of the SSA region. It has a population of approximately 18.4 million people, according to the August 2020 census, with 45.3% living in urban areas (Worldometer, no date). Zambia measures 753,000sq/km which is approximately three times the size of the United Kingdom (www.worldpopulationreview.com). As a landlocked country, with 10 provincial regions, it shares borders with eight other SSA countries (Figure 1). To the North and South of Zambia are Congo and Zimbabwe respectively, and on the Eastern side Tanzania, Malawi and Mozambique, with Botswana, Namibia and Angola situated to the West (Figure 1). Zambia is one of two major copper producers in Africa. The GDP per capita in 2019 was US\$1,305 (World Bank, 2019), against a GDP per capita for sub-Saharan Africa of US\$1,628.74 (World Bank, 2019). In terms of how conducive it is to conduct business, a comparison of 190 economies in 2020 ranks Zambia at 85, one rank lower than South Africa, which is one of the biggest economies in the SSA region. When compared with other countries within the region, Zambia has the 5th highest ranking. The "ease of doing business score", as a percentage, reflects how a nation's economy business regulations compare with best practice globally; Zambia's score at 66.9 contrasts with a regional average of 51.8 (World Bank Group, 2020). A conducive environment for doing business can foster positive economic growth, and this requires strong local leaders' support.

Figure 1: Zambia's Location in Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: www.researchgate.net (2020)

Engaging with the topic of women leaders and coaching requires an appreciation of relevant gender statistics. Coaching studies on executive women benefit from data to understand how coaching interventions can support them, for example appreciating the attrition of women executives (Oesch and DuVernet, 2020) or identifying gaps (Davies, 2011; 2015) and developments (Rostron, 2013) at corporate executive level.

Gender statistics such as the global measures of gender inequalities emphasise that the lag in performance is associated with inequalities between men and women. One such measure of inequality is the Gini coefficient, which measures income distribution based on gender comparisons. As per the OECD statistical definition, the Gini coefficient is based on an equality percentage scale where 0 represents perfect equality and 100 perfect inequality (OECD Data, 2015). According to the World Population Review, in 2015, Zambia ranked within the lowest performing ten countries globally, with a measure of 57.1. According to the Knoema data statistics, in 2017 Zambia's Gini measure was 50.9 and in 2018 it improved further to 49.5 (Knoema World Data Atlas, 2018).

Another measure is the global gender index, which looks at gender differences between men and women across political empowerment, economic participation and opportunity, health and survival, and educational attainment factors. A score

of 0 indicates imparity and a score of 1 reflects parity. Zambia has improved significantly, from a global ranking of 116 out of 145 countries in 2015, with a score of 0.65 (World Economic Forum, 2015), to 45 out of 153 countries in 2020 and a score of 0.73 (World Economic Forum, 2020). Despite this positive jump, closer inspection of the individual factor parity/imparity scores shows that the main areas of improvement have been in economic participation and opportunity, and health and survival, with scores of 0.831 and 0.980 respectively. However, in terms of political empowerment and educational attainment, the imparity/parity scores are 0.174 and 0.938 respectively. Although the educational attainment score is close to parity, in comparison to other countries Zambia is behind and ranked 125th globally (Appendix 1).

Zambia has had a poor performance record on accelerating the development of women leaders (UNDP Report, 2013). The effort to increase the number of Zambian women in leadership appears less impressive when the 18% of women represented in parliament is viewed against an average of 24% across the sub-Saharan region (World Bank, 2018a). Other sources, such as the Commonwealth study of 12 African countries conducted in 2015 (Commonwealth Report, 2015), highlighted that at 15.7%, Zambia had the lowest representation of women as board directors when compared with Botswana at 16.9%, South Africa at 17.4% and Kenya at 19.8%. The Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, an affirmative action group for gender equality, states that more needs to be done to support women in both public and private organisations (www.lusakatimes.com, 2018).

One of the reasons for this poor performance may lie in the historical influences of organisational environments following independence. The structure of organisations in Zambia post-independence were all state controlled. The inherited structure viewed as having been very authoritarian and male dominated (Njobvu and Xiu, 2014). Privatisation of the state run institutions known as Parastatal companies only began in 1991 (Sardanis 2014). As identified in the literature review, one of the identifiable aspects of this historical legacy is that more men were working in managerial and senior management positions in Zambia than women with the exception of the Ministry of Gender (www.mgcd.gov.zm). Women were brought into these organisations very slowly, with full women cabinet ministers only being appointed in the last 7-10 years.

The key strategies to accelerate the development of women leaders has been to set gender quotas in favour of women and to encourage Zambian women to share their personal leadership stories (www.imgforhealth.org). Gender quotas continue

to be used to support the growth of Zambian women in political leadership (Pande and Ford, 2011). However, there has been less success in the corporate sector (Janjuha-Jivraj and Zaman, 2013). One strategy to increase women's presence at executive level is the implementation of quotas but Clark (2015, p.1) argues that quotas are *"highly subjective to the institutions and context in which they are implemented and cannot be a quick-fix solution"*; for a genuine sustained effort to support women's development much care and thought to implementation of these quotas is needed.

While legislation has played a part in progressing women into leadership through quota targets and constitutional changes, it appears there is more to be done. Setting quotas has been shown to be effective in other SSA countries, such as Rwanda (www.nationalgeographic.com; www.unwomen.org). According to Lee (2014), coaching is a mechanism that can play a significant part in ensuring quotas are set but are actioned and accomplished.

2.2 Governance and gender policies in Zambia

Zambia gained independence in 1964 from British colonial rule (Sardanis, 2014). Zambian women played a significant role in the campaign for nationalism, contributing to the formation of political parties and acting as political activists to influence the change to a nation state (Manda, 1992). The country inherited the colonial statutory system at independence but also retained customary laws based on local traditions. Inheriting a dual jurisprudence system of customary and statutory law has proved to be less fortuitous for women in terms of empowerment. This reflects gaps between the two legal frameworks (Shezongo-Macmillan, 2013).

Customary laws still play a strong part within Zambian society because there are over 70 diverse tribal groups within the 10 provincial regions. Both patrilineal tribes and matrilineal tribes coexist in the country (Mushibwe, 2009). In patrilineal tribes, family authority and power rests with the father, while in matrilineal tribes the power to make decisions rests with the mother as reviewed in the article Zambian family structure (Marriage and Family Encyclopedia, no date). Although Zambia has a mix of both societies, studies on Zambia seem to suggest that patriarchy is pervasive within Zambian society as a whole (Mushibwe, 2009). This could be because the dual jurisprudence system does not necessarily differentiate along patrilineal and matrilineal lines.

A donor-funded report published by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency in Zambia (2016) revealed that women's protective and equal rights

regarding property ownership lack potency within the statutory legal framework. Under statutory law, land rights have been constitutionally equal for men and women since 1995, yet land owned under customary law tends to be inherited by men. The report went on to state that at that time, “94% of land was owned under customary law” (JICA, 2016, p.ii). Another example is early marriage: traditionally girls marry as soon as they reach puberty and are drop out of school without completing their education, yet constitutionally marriage under the age of 21 is prohibited (SADC, 2009; JICA, 2016).

The contradictions between statutory and customary laws have led to criticism of the system as being disruptive and destabilising because it does little to respond to the social realities of the country (Hamalengwa and Mwewa, 2014). Customary laws come with all the traditional beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of the local environment and so the challenge arises in straddling both legal systems. The SADC Gender Protocol Report Barometer (2009) on equality established that, although discrimination on the basis of sex is prohibited under constitutional law, exceptions are made under customary law that then create loopholes for discrimination to occur (SADC, 2009). In considering coaching as a mechanism for supporting leaders to progress, these situations need to be appreciated if women are to be supported to progress their leadership.

Post-independence, women remained in a relatively subordinate position to their male counterparts in vying for full ministerial responsibilities. A small number of women did form part of the new government, but their roles tended to be at a more junior ministerial level (Krishna and Mulenga, 2008). There have been several national development plans since Zambia’s independence in 1964, with the current (seventh) plan initiated in 2017 and running until 2021. However it is the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP 2006-2010) that focused specifically on addressing the inequalities between men and women in the country. The document examined the national development system, looking at key issues such as the dual legislative system, capacity building, and economic empowerment of women and the dissemination of key information to major stakeholders (FNDP report, 2006).

Governance is considered to be a critical driver for implementing gender equality in developing regions (OECD, 2017). Since the Fifth National Development Plan, there has been some progress in setting up institutions that are working with government to drive change. Examples include the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child in 2012, which was renamed the Ministry of Gender (National Gender Policy Report, 2014:3), the National Gender Policy 2014

and the Gender Equity and Equality Act 2015. The Non-governmental Gender Organisations Coordinating Council (NGOCC) oversees the network of Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) working to improve women's empowerment and participation. Set up in 1985, the vision of NGOCC is to create *"A society where women are empowered and fully participate in social, cultural, economic and political development"* (NGOCC, no date, para 4).

2.3 Cultural norms, traditions and values

Socio-cultural factors associated with Zambian women, such as cultural norms and societal expectations that favour male authority, are claimed to be some of the principal causes of women's lack of confidence and assertiveness (Gender Status Report 2012-2014). The manner in which Zambian children are raised is similar to other African countries in that traditional rites of passage, transitional stages between birth and death, are aspects of local practices within the community (Golomski, 2012). Such transitions include naming ceremonies at birth; initiation ceremonies at puberty, marking the transition from youth to adulthood and the acquisition of community responsibilities and privileges; and marriage (www.times.ac.zm) which have a strong foundation in family building and community responsibilities. These rituals invariably require the involvement of the extended family and community, and these experiences are therefore, by nature, more collective than individual (Ampim, 2003). Another African practice that is represented in Zambia is what Ampim (2003) calls "elder rites", which allow for the transmission of wisdom and teachings from one who has lived a life of purpose that is meaningful and whose wisdom is associated with the spiritual world. The spiritual world is also associated with death rites, as the belief is that the spirit lives on (Golomski, 2012; Nwadiokwu, Nwadiokwu, Favour, Okwuazun, 2016).

Honouring parents and elders is a concept reflected in the theory of human and conformity values and associated with the moderating behaviour shown by individuals (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). In Zambia honouring parents, elders and rank (older brother or sister; man/woman) is still common practice. When you address someone older for example, prefixing someone's name with the vernacular term "Ba" is respectful and expected (www.ichibemba.com). The main aim of moderating behaviours is to maintain amiable interactions that preserve group functioning; so, restraint and non-deviation from expected norms is encouraged (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). Cultural norms are symbolised through cultural practices, symbols and beliefs representing a shared experience and expressed through respect for tradition and humility. Values presented in

connection with group conformity are benevolence and traditional values (Schwartz, 2012). Benevolence values involve an open concern for the welfare of others expressed through behaviours such as forgiveness and responsibility, whilst traditional values concern acceptance, respect and commitment to cultural norms.

Schwartz (2012) posits that, although values are ubiquitous of all peoples culturally and to a greater extent similar across heterogeneous groups of people, there is a dynamic relationship between values that needs to be recognised. For example, conformity and tradition values are similar in the aspect of taking a subservient role but differentiated in terms of the focus of this subservience. Conformity values focus on deference shown within human relations, whilst traditional values are concerned with deference towards abstract objects, customs of religion and culture, for example rites of passage.

Rites of passage, as defined by the work of the French ethnographer Alfred van Gennep (1960), focus on separation, a form of detachment from a group, and liminality, the period in which an individual transitions between one phase and the next before reengagement with the society (Cooper, 2008). Cooper (2008) posits that rites of passage involve rituals that mark the transitional stages between one phase and another. In doing so, rituals can bring about phases of renewal that occur at a cognitive level and require action, and are therefore empowering.

Marriage rites tend to be very complex, with the process involving several steps and taking some considerable time. Kyalo (2012) draws on previous anthropological and cultural studies to argue that there are legitimate reasons as to why there is such a high importance attached to the union of marriage. In Zambia, the marriage union is not just about two individuals, but great importance is attached to marriage on several levels: it creates cooperation and kinships between the family within a household, but also the extended family and wider community, to embrace and respond to issues such as orphanhood, widowhood and divorce, thereby emphasising the communal value of marriage (Kyalo, 2012, p.215; Cancel, 2013).

Stages of marriage include courting, betrothal, negotiation of the bride price and the actual marriage ceremony and often, *“failure to get married under normal circumstances (read local context) means that the person has rejected society and society rejects him in return”* (Nwadiokwu *et al.*, 2016, p.46). Ajala (2019) asserts that rites of passage provide a foundation for introspection of, the relative importance of values represented by the transitional stages is the building blocks

of the personal development process, such that a person can assess their own maturity against the collective standard.

Religion, as it is practiced in relation to the Bible teachings, is rooted in Zambia's postcolonial legacy, partly because during the colonial period the missionaries were left to run the educational provision in countries like Zambia, whilst the colonial administration focused on national administration issues (Snelson, 1993). Reference to the Bible and religion is a fundamental part of the Zambian way of life and society. The majority of the population practice Christianity, with 75% Protestant and 20% Catholic (www.worldatlas.com).

In Zambia, religion has supported group interaction; for example, women often work as a collective group to support the work of the churches through small Christian communities (SCCs), where the work ranges from visiting the sick to supporting people within the community at funerals (Rasing, 2001). Taking an example from the Catholic religion, organisations such as the Catholic Women's League use their acronym CWL to emphasise **C**oncern for others, **W**orking with others and in **L**eague with others as evidence of their collective approach to support other marginalised groups (Kalubi-wabo-Simushi, 2011). Prior to missionaries such as David Livingstone arriving in Zambia, these types of gatherings were based on ancestral beliefs with a strong connection to the spiritual world (Pauw, 2007). With the introduction of the Christian faith and depending on the perspective one takes, the Bible can be used to reinforce patriarchal structures in a negative way. Bible quotes such as *"I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man; rather she is to remain quiet"* (1 Timothy 2:12) could be used to reinforce subservience over humility with reference to women's roles in society.

It is such ways of knowing that inform coaching studies that seek to acknowledge existential thoughts in terms of values (Fusco, O'Riordan and Palmer, 2015) and worldviews in terms of ontology (Seiler, 2010; Geber and Keane, 2013).

2.4 Education and empowerment

Education, or the lack of it, is considered to be another contributing factor to the limitations that women experience in Zambia. The male to female ratio of educational attendance during the 1950s deteriorated from 3:1 to 7:1 (Manda, 1992; Snelson, 1993). Literacy statistics today still reflect similar limitations, particularly against the backdrop of global literacy trends (www.indexmundi.com, www.countryeconomy.com). With reference to Table 1, literacy rates in Zambia

show that females still lag behind their male counterparts: female literacy is 15.68% lower than male literacy, resulting in an average rate across the population of 65.00% in 1990 (where literacy is defined as age 15+ that can read and write in English). Even though, in 2018, this gap has basically halved to 7.5%, it still shows a significant difference between male and female literacy rates in Zambia. The 2015 Global Literacy Report ranks Zambia in the lower 13% of world literacy standards (www.indexmundi.com).

Table 1: Comparative Literacy Rates 1990 - 2018

Gender	1990	1999	2002	2007	2010	2018	2015
	Zambia	Zambia	Zambia	Zambia	Zambia	Zambia	Global
Female	57.36%	59.80%	61.84%	51.79%	77.75%	83.08%	82.7%
Male	73.04%	76.25%	80.91%	71.95%	88.68%	90.60%	90.0%
Total average	65.00%	68.00%	69.15%	61.43%	83.01%	86.75%	86.3%

Source: www.indexmundi.com, www.countryeconomy.com, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

Girls in Zambia have not always had a fair opportunity at a full education (i.e. primary and secondary) due to high dropout rates influenced by early marriages, pregnancies, and domestic responsibilities (Mwanza, 2015). Anne Touwen conducted PhD research on women's development in Zambia which later formed part of a research consultancy report for the Dutch volunteer organisation SNV. Twenty-eight years ago, Touwen's research identified that few women were enrolled at university level: 17% between 1984-85 (Touwen, 1990). Compared with the statistics above, it appears that early marriages and pregnancies may still be an issue preventing girls from progressing in primary school through to higher education.

One of the primary aspects of education is to introduce the learner to an appreciation of the learning environment and generates a level of curiosity that will encourage the learner to explore and add value (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2017). Post-independence, the colonial agenda was to widen the British grammar school

system in Zambia. Between the 1950s and 1970's there were 1,200 grammar schools in England and Wales compared to less than 200 today (Richardson, 2016). The British grammar school system was introduced as part of the Zambian educational system. From my own father's stories, as a student during the colonial period he learned Latin and Greek, could quote from nearly all the Shakespeare plays and was very familiar with English literature and poetry, but his education had limited relevance to and understanding of the Zambian environment. An educational system that is alien to the context in which it can be understood is disadvantageous to an individual developing critical self-awareness (Freire, 1970, 1996). Peter Snelson was a commonwealth civil servant who developed a vast understanding of Zambia's educational development and its dilemmas:

"It was not good enough to simply open scores of new schools and to set them traditional grammar school objectives. With the benefit of hindsight, one can see that we paid too much attention to quantitative and not enough to the quality of what was taught or its relevance".

(Snelson, 1993, p.177)

It is such contextual insight that may be helpful in understanding societal attitudes, structures and processes.

2.4.1 Literacy and empowerment

The disproportionate ratios in literacy rates in favour of male children have been influenced to a great extent by historical developments during the colonial period, and women have struggled to access education. Women's current position of inequality in Zambia suggests that individual women have not been in any position to be able to decide what is in their own best interests. It appears that for women to gain authority over issues affecting their own development they need to take ownership in creating answers to their problems, and in doing so need to understand the system in which they operate.

Education is seen as one of the most promising routes to empowerment for girls and women in Zambia and the following examples show some development of such promise. The Girls Education and Women's Empowerment Livelihood (GEWEL) project is one such initiative supporting the education for Zambian women through training, mentorship and monetary support to help girls stay in school. In 2017, 20,000 individuals were supported (Haidet, 2019; www.worldbank.org). Other projects using education to support the empowerment of girls and women in Zambia is CAMFED International. In August 2020, a project

called climate smart Agricultural Guide Programme was launched to support girls and youth education in agricultural knowledge and skills in collaboration with a local university. The chief in the area was instrumental in providing the land to support the young women leaders (www.camfed.org).

2.5 The extent of coaching presence in Zambia

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is appetite for coaching within Zambian organisations. However, an appreciation of the current coaching landscape in Zambia is required in order to ascertain what possible benefits coaching could reveal. The indigenous approach to this research necessitates clarity about the local coaching developments in order to be supportive of the unique environment of Zambia. Readers of this study may have questions such as: What evidence is there of current coaching provision? What stage of development is coaching within the country? What genres of coaching are emerging, if any, and in which sectors of society? What evidence is there of coaching legislation?

Coaching practitioner activity in Zambia is quite limited (Bresser, 2013) and it is difficult to ascertain specifics about coaching approaches that may be in effect to support women. Within SSA, coaching activity in Zambia lags well behind South Africa, which has the highest coaching activity in the region. In 2009, South Africa was leading with 1,600 coaches out of the 2,000–2,500 business coaches in Africa as a whole (Bresser, 2009). South Africa is one of the biggest economies in SSA and the EU's main trading partner in Africa. It has well-established trading links with Zambia (South Africa Trade Statistics, 2016). As trade develops and regional integration in SSA becomes more definitive, it may well be that management practices such as coaching will be left behind in this development, particularly for Zambia given its close proximity to South Africa.

Since the inception of this study, evidence of Zambian-owned and managed executive coaching in Zambia is beginning to emerge. Organisations such as Bridges Limited (www.bridges-limited.com) and Tuntulu (tuntulu.com) are examples, and their clients include corporate organisations operating in Zambia. Executive coaching in Zambia is also subsumed within development initiatives such as the Financial Services Development programme in Africa (FSD Africa) that has focused on using executive coaching to develop leadership skills in the financial services sector. Part of this initiative is focused on supporting women leaders in the financial sector. This is a £30 million development project funded by UK aid and FSD Africa is focused on coaching development in three key areas:

introducing coaching and the benefits of coaching to executives in financial services; fostering a coaching culture within organisations; and ensuring a professionally accredited compliment of local coaches that can undertake coaching with international standards (Africa Executive Coaching Council, 2020). Part of these funds have been used to support the sensitisation of businesses about coaching and helping to implement coaching cultures (Creative Metier, 2016).

Coaching for leadership, executives, management or business is challenging in new or developing environments because the credibility of coaching professionals relies on having an established coaching certification framework (George, 2013). Zambia is one of the countries benefitting from FSD Africa to develop executive leadership coaching. The relevance of this project to women's leadership comes from the key focus on executive coaching to support women's leadership progression in the financial sector. Since its inception FSD Africa has since launched a website and their remit is clearly focused on linking executive coaching to the development of financial institutions across SSA (Africa Executive Coaching Council, 2020). Zambia was one of the participant countries providing coach resource and coachees in a third cycle of the FSD coaching programme in 2016. The programme involved 24 coachee executives, 11 organisations from 9 countries (Career Connections and FSD Africa, 2018). With minimal data on Zambia specifically the following survey on the state of play of coaching in Africa provides some insight into the SSA region and a survey in which Zambia participated.

A recent research commissioned by the University of Stellenbosch Business School in collaboration with the Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA) reported on data that suggests that African coaching practice is informed by European practices (Terblanche, Myburgh, and Passmore, 2019). The research was informed by 349 valid responses from 19 countries with South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria providing most responses, 76%, 7% and 6% respectively. The report indicated that most of the coaches are new to coaching (under 7 years of experience) with the majority as novices with less than 12 months. Majority of the coaches have membership with the Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA) or International Coaching Federation (ICF) and 17% were not in any member organisation. In terms of professional development, the majority of coaches focused on self-development through reading coaching books (80.8%), reading coaching research (68.2%); attending webinars (67%).

The coaching approaches used in most instances is behavioural/goal focused GROW model (75.4%); solution focused coaching (43%) and cognitive behavioural coaching (39.8%). However, it should be noted that with 76% of the responses from South Africa suggesting that the use of these three approaches is skewed towards South Africa rather than being representative of all the participating African countries. The least used methods were NLP (26.6%), Transactional Analysis (19.8%), Gestalt (15.8%), Motivational interviewing (18.1%), Existential (14%), Psychodynamic (9.7%) and Transpersonal (8%). Other approaches made up 35%. What is useful to note for this study is that on the point of diverse use of coaching approaches in relation to the coaching focus, where coaching focus was concerned with diversity issues, the range of approaches used was more diverse across the 11 categories indicated above. This report focuses on coaches and how they are engaging with practice and less on the coachees.

The findings of this report seem to be an indication of how approaches of coaching are beginning to make their way into countries like Zambia. It is difficult to tell from the report to what extent there has been a deeper regard for understanding the narratives of women first and appreciating which methods of coaching are relevant in the most meaningful way to the local context. Especially that the FSD initiative is targeted at supporting women.

2.6 Chapter summary

The chapter identifies the nascent coaching environment in Zambia. There is some evidence of coaching sensitisation in Zambia through the FSD fund initiative and recognition of the leadership gap between men and women, given that the initiative is targeted at supporting women's leadership. The focus on the FSD fund though positive in terms of executive coaching development is focused predominantly on developing leadership in the financial sector and not across other sectors such as education, and business. The contextual background of Zambia shows that the environment presents some challenging socio-cultural structures as systems that make the promotion of women leaders difficult with reference to the dual legalisation, traditional values and social attitudes concerning young girls' access to education. As a centre for the SDG Africa hub for the southern Africa region, the country has an opportunity to commit to accelerating women's leadership and build on the FSD initiative.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Chapter three sets out the literature review appraised in support of this thesis. The approach to the literature and its application within this thesis was addressed in the introductory chapter. This chapter begins by outlining the data sources reviewed to identify the literature. Coaching and mentoring handbooks provided a broader range of chapters to understand the spectrum of coaching approaches, genres and contexts examples of which can be identified in Appendix 2. Within handbooks, I specifically searched for coaching literature that would be beneficial to articulating the concepts outlined in chapter 1. Of particular note were sources on coaching and diversity with a focus on gender or culture e.g. (Passmore et al, 2009). This brought critical insight into coaching in different geographical regions of the world. Online databases and journals were used to extrapolate conceptual papers and evidence based research on coaching. Statistics and data on global coaching practice was informed by global and regional coaching surveys as well as executive coaching reports e.g. Price Waterhouse Coopers. Having addressed leadership barriers in chapter 1, this chapter evaluates leadership from the perspective of executive coaching drawing on the work of e.g. Peltier, (2011); Grant *et al.*, (2010); Passmore and Fillery-Travis (2011). Narrative, integral and systemic coaching approaches were informed by research carried out by notable authors of these approaches as outlined in chapter 1 (1.6.7).

In the introductory section, 3.1 the chapter begins with an overview of the landscape of executive global coaching in order to provide a backdrop to understanding the uneven development of coaching in Western and non-Western regions of the world as alluded to in chapter 1. Section 3.2 presents literature on executive coaching for leaders highlighting some of the complexities that arise in applying different approaches and genres of coaching; the coaching process, coach and coachee characteristics and the coaching relationship. Section 3.3 provides insight into coaching women executives evaluating personal experiences, authenticity and efficacy. Section 3.4 evaluates potential coaching approaches namely narrative, integral and systemic coaching. This is followed by a critical insight into any limitations within these approaches, before concluding with the chapter summary in section 3.5.

3.1 Overview of executive coaching

Chapter two positioned the coaching landscape of Zambia as nascent in its development. Using global coaching data, this section provides a geographic insight into executive coaching in order to understand where executive coaching is used and with specific reference to women, how many have accessed executive coaching across the world's regions.

For over a decade, the use of executive coaching as a means of supporting leadership progression has increased (Sherpa Coaching, 2017). According to the most up to date study (2016) by the International Coach Federation (ICF), coaching revenue was estimated at US\$2.356 billion, with executive leaders and managers being the most coached category of clients. In 2006 the number of coaching and mentoring practitioners was 5,415; by 2016 the number of practitioners had risen to 53,300, reflecting an increase of over 800% within 10 years (International Coaching Federation and Price Water House Coopers, 2012; 2016).

An earlier Sherpa consultancy report, based on 12 years of coaching data collected in the period 2005-2017, identified that there were fewer women coachees in executive coaching, and the global annual coaching survey of 2006, based on 5,415 coaching responses, reflects a similar outcome. Of the total number of coachees that received executive coaching, 45% were women despite the fact that overall women coachees were in the majority at 54% of global clients, as indicated in the ICF survey (2016). A large number of women coachees 69% received coaching in life, vision and enhancement (ICF, 2016).

The Sherpa 2020 coaching survey identified that executive coaching is a dominant focus of current coaching practice. Historically, the United States and Europe have been leading in terms of numbers of coaching practitioners, with 40,800 coaches representing approximately 77% of the 2016 statistics. In non-Western environments, the figures equate to 12,500 coaching practitioners (23%), split between Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Oceania, Middle East and Africa (ICF, 2016). Although the data presented shows that executive coaching is a popular method being used to develop leaders in organisations, there are two areas of concern relevant to this study with respect to the research gap.

One concern is that at 45%, women have been less able to access executive coaching (ICF Survey, 2016). If fewer women are accessing executive coaching, this may be partly what has contributed to the lack of significant research insights into coaching women executives and glass ceiling barriers (Leimon *et al.*, 2010;

O'Neill *et al.*, 2015). Another concern is the relative prevalence of coaching practitioner activity in North America and Europe. The African coaching survey (Terblanche *et al.*, 2019) established that coaching in Africa is informed by European coaching approaches and methods. From the data, it appears that current coaching practice is largely informed by practitioner insights and examples from organisations and coaching practice in Western environments. Even though there are some coaching studies being undertaken in non-Western regions of the world, by comparison these are limited (Passmore, 2013; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2018). The next section addresses the gap between Western and non-Western insights into executive coaching, beginning with an appraisal of how executive coaching supports leaders.

3.2 Executive coaching for leaders

Executive coaching is distinguishable as an approach to support individuals to reach and progress their leadership at senior executive levels (Kampa-Kokesch and Anderson, 2001; Vinnicombe and Singh, 2003; Passmore and Gibbes, 2007; Grant *et al.*, 2010; Passmore and Fillery-Travis, 2011; Peltier, 2011). Women leaders are central to this study and as such the perspective on executive coaching is focused on how this type of coaching can support an individual to be moved or helped forward in a developmental manner (Carey, Philippon and Cummings, 2011) to overcome particular leadership barriers.

Developmental coaching is an ambiguous term, dependent on the context, purpose, who it's for, what theories are used and whether the focus of such coaching should be targeted towards specific elements or a holistic process (Bachkirova, 2011). In this study, the definition proposed by Cox and Jackson (2010,) is used. 'Developmental' signifies the facilitation of progressive and sustainable change whilst recognising the systems of organisation, family and society that a person operates within.

As a support mechanism, executive coaching fundamentally enables individuals to address personal and professional developmental challenges through the support of a coach (Grant, Curtayne and Burton, 2009; Grant, Passmore, Cavanagh and Parker, 2010; Grant, 2013). Other authors argue that executive coaching is distinguishable, by its limited focus on personal life issues, from career counselling or mentoring which tends to be for a longer duration, and informal mentoring where coachees are supported with emotional or behavioural issues (Feldman and Lankau, 2005). However, Grant *et al.*, 2010 stipulate that executive coaching

should not only focus on skills and competencies associated with leadership performance, but also on personal life issues where this is linked to work-life balance. They stress that the developmental aspect of coaching is important if it is to address both professional and personal limitations. The authors argue that when executive coaching is developmental, the coachee can be helped, beyond their individual self, to understand the systems in their work environment.

As a process, executive coaching can be used to support work-related development goals and organisations use this type of coaching to enable the successful transition from middle management into senior leadership positions (Stokes and Jolly, 2014). It has been stated that when coaching is applied at an executive level it serves to strengthen that developmental process more sustainably (Hopkins, O'Neill, Passarelli and Bilimoria, 2008). When executive coaching is developmental, it can support leaders in cultivating specific competencies that support their leadership role effectively, for example cross-cultural awareness skills in leading multicultural teams (Abbott, 2018).

There is evidence that identifies that such coaching is more effective than other management development training initiatives (Rekalde, Landeta, Albizu and Fernandez-Ferrin, 2017) even though leadership training and development are equally important mechanisms that can support leaders. In a study involving 100 Spanish executives and 236 HR managers of Spanish companies, Rekalde *et al.* (2017) compared executive coaching as a development and management competency training strategy against other methods of development such as attendance-based training programmes, job rotation, mentoring, e-learning course and outdoor training. They found that not only was executive coaching an effective method of management training and development but was it more effective than the other methods in terms of identifiable and enduring behaviour changes.

3.2.1 Complexity of executive coaching

The nature of executive coaching is interdisciplinary because it is underpinned by a diverse range of theoretical concepts, such as cognitive behaviour (Ducharme, 2004; Good, Yagenah and Yagenah, 2013), psychodynamics (Kilburg, 2004; Peltier, 2011), the humanistic approach or the person-centred approach (Stober, 2006; Passmore, 2007; Joseph, 2014). The wide range of genres, contexts and approaches applied within coaching (Appendix 2) show that different genres and contexts can be underpinned by a diverse range of theories and methods (Ives, 2008; Palmer and Whybrow, 2011; Bachkirova, Spence and Drake, 2016; Cox,

Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2018). Contexts can relate to who is being coached e.g. executives (Peltier, 2011), women (Broughton and Miller, 2009; Leimon *et al.*, 2010); leaders (Stokes and Jolly, 2010; George, 2013) or why they are being coached e.g. for reasons of development (Bachkirova, 2011; Jackson and Cox, 2018), career or performance (McLeod, 2003) or the focus of the coaching issue e.g. life coaching (Grant and Cavanaugh, 2018), health and well-being (Moore and Jackson, 2014) or cross-cultural (Rosinski, 2003; Plaister-Ten, 2013; Abbott, 2018). Approaches may include coaching with peers (Parker, Hall and Kram, 2008), teams (Clutterbuck, Gannon, Hayes, Iordanou, Lowe and Mackie, 2019) or groups (Ward, 2014). Such a diverse integration of knowledge and disciplines makes for an extremely rich area of study and practice insight, offering a versatile approach to work with developing leaders. At the same time this versatility is challenging and problematic when it comes to deciphering which perspective might be useful in which contexts. The growing popularity of executive coaching needs to be weighed against its complexities.

One area of complexity is that coaching terminology can be quite ambiguous. For example, coaching with regard to senior executive leadership is well documented in executive coaching literature (Passmore, 2007; Passmore and Fillery-Travis, 2011) but is also evident in literature on leadership coaching (Wise and Jacopo, 2010; Lochmiller, 2014) and workplace coaching (Jones, Woods and Guillaume, 2016), and so within these three fields, the term 'executive coaching' has been used in multiple senses. References to team coaching can be confusing, as this can refer to the context of the coaching engagement, e.g. when working with high performance teams (Hawkins, 2017), or as a method that coaches use to foster collective efficacy (Martinez, 2010). Similarly, 'goals' can refer to a technique or method in relation to the opening stages of a coaching session i.e. goal-setting (Clow and Tiernan, 2011) or a coaching approach (Ives and Cox, 2012). Individual coaching can mean coaching one person in comparison to e.g. group coaching (Muhlberger and Traut-Mattausch, 2015) but is also used as a distinguishing DNA characteristic of executive coaching (Kombarakaran, Yang, Baker and Fernandes, 2008) or to denote the type of individual coaching that takes place as part of a group coaching session (Hawkins, 2017). Myriad circumstances through which executive coaching can be understood, utilised and theorised only raises the level of importance that should be given to appreciating the local context. The next section addresses some of the issues concerning attributes of executive coaching and will focus in on some examples of this in non-Western environments.

Another area of complexity is the overlap of disciplines used in executive coaching. For example, cognitive behaviour and psychodynamics are theoretical concepts that are applied in executive coaching (Peltier, 2009; 2011) and draw from two distinct disciplines of therapy and psychology which have informed current practice (Western, 2012). There have been similar comparisons drawn between humanistic (person centred approach) and the psychodynamic approach (Owen, 1999) owing to the need for clarity between approaches. The theoretical overlap becomes even more complex for coaches in assessing executive coaching and therapy boundaries in order to ensure the coachee can be supported in a safe manner (Strickler, 2009). This has promoted a call for greater critical analysis of coaching theories in order to take advantage of the richness of its diverse application (Western, 2012).

3.2.2 Executive coaching process

Distinguishable features of executive coaching focus on the role of the coachee, the coach (Baron and Moran, 2009), the coaching relationship (Boylan and Hale, 2014) and the coaching process and outcomes (Boyce and Hernez-Broome, 2010). The leadership coaching framework (Boyce and Hernez-Broome, 2010) is a useful means of visualising the diverse components involved in developing leaders through coaching. The framework uses three elements - inputs, process and outcomes (IPO) - to present key factors that are critical to developing leaders through coaching. The inputs relate to the coach-client characteristics; the coaching process comprises the mechanics of coaching, the coaching content and coaching relationship with its requisite tools and techniques; the coaching outcomes are about reactions learning, behavioural competencies and organisational impact (Boyce and Hernez-Broome, 2010). Some of these factors align with those identified in the structural analysis of the coaching engagement by Cox, *et al.* (2014). This framework refers to the individual characteristics of the coachee and coach, coaching relationships and processes and the coaching context.

3.2.3 Characteristics of the coachee and coach

The coachee is the individual in need of support to address personal leadership limitations (Bozer, Sarros, Santora, 2014). Meeting the needs of the coachee is often dependent on understanding the nature of that person's circumstances. The societal and cultural environment is one of the main considerations identified as being of vital importance in helping a coachee (Shams, 2006). Other relevant factors include whether the coachee has prior experience of coaching, or whether

the coach should be able to manage expectations, or the coachee's educational background (Bono Purvanova *et al.*, 2009). The philosophy of coaching is built on the premise of the coachee being a self-directed learner (Cox and Jackson, 2010).

The coach is an experienced professional whose role is to help the coachee unlock their potential and overcome personal limiting behaviours hindering their leadership progression, and to encourage them to find their own solutions (Lee, 2014). The more a coach understands about the client's context, the easier it is to support the client in framing appropriate questions, and to apply relevant listening skills (Cox, 2003). In a study by Kombarakaran *et al.* (2008), where 114 coachees were coached by a cohort of 42 experienced coaches, 94% of the coachees acknowledged the professionalism and experience of their coaches in helping them to attain their goals. Passmore (2010) highlights, in a small scale grounded theory study involving coachees' perceptions of coach key behaviours, that being collaborative, communicating effectively and using a variety of focusing tools and techniques were some of the behaviours that were impactful in terms of the coachees' experience and progress. Coach characteristics can range from having undertaken assignments in different contexts, using a range of methods (Peterson, 2007) and having strong interpersonal skills (Rogers, 2016), exemplifying a multifaceted role. However, Cushion and Partington (2016, p.858) argue that there is a risk that without acknowledging context,

“some assumptions made about coach, coaches and the coaching philosophy remain unchallenged, because knowledge and skills are deemed to be neutral rather than socially and culturally constructed, experience is seen as a given and source of authentic knowledge, and not in any way problematic; and that there is a true self which exists independently of the social realm”.

The contradiction is that the characteristics of coachees and coaches that are deemed excellent in rapport-building in Western environments might be construed as negative in non-Western environments. Maintaining eye contact in the coaching process is considered appropriate and encouraged in Western coaching contexts, but considered inappropriate in non-Western cultures (Wilson, 2017) and this can create communication barriers (Zeus and Skiffington, 2002). For a country like Zambia, where the calibre and number of coaching practitioners is difficult to estimate, consideration of such nuances might be important, both for experienced coaches that choose to work in Zambia and for local novice coaches that may want to pursue a coaching profession. Understanding competencies that could be

relevant for building rapport and that are complementary to the contextual socio-cultural norms would be beneficial. In the next section, this study questions such assumptions using non-Western coaching examples.

3.2.4 The coaching relationship

A review of 533 peer-reviewed journals by Bartlett, Boylan and Hale (2014) revealed that 'relationship' and 'goals' are prominently cited words used when defining executive coaching. Given the prevalent reference to these two terms, this section focuses on evaluating these through the perspective of non-Western environments.

The coaching relationship relates to more pragmatic aspects such the number of coaching sessions, the content of the coaching programme, the competencies and tools needed, and how collaboration, rapport and trust will be managed (Boyce and Hernez-Broome, 2010). It can be described as the glue that is needed to create a conducive coaching environment, because it is the part of the coaching process that encompasses all the relevant aspects that help to foster a facilitative relationship between the coach and coachee. It has also been described as exploratory where the relationship can explore a coachees, values, environmental influences or beliefs and assumptions (Bachkirova, Sibley and Myers, 2015) aspects that appear to be relevant for Zambian women. The format of coaching is often described as being a formal one-to-one relationship (Feldman and Lankau, 2005). The authors elaborate that effective executive coaching makes use of 360-degree feedback processes and is undertaken over a limited duration.

According to Baron and Morin (2009), the one-to-one relationship, or dyad, between the coach and coachee is a critical component of a successful executive coaching engagement. Their field study analysed 31 executive coach-coachee dyads and established notable components of the coach-coachee relationship, such as the self-efficacy of the coach in facilitating learning and results, and the coachee's positive alignment with supervisor support. Cox *et al.* (2014) describe the coaching process between the coach and coachee as being one of equals. It is less about telling and more concerned with facilitation of self-reflection (Nanglia and Nanglia, 2010) which reinforces the notion that trust and rapport in the coach-coachee relationship can make for an efficacious coaching process (Bluckert, 2005). If a coaching relationship is one of equals, what could this mean for coaches and coachees in non-Western environments where power relations are an ingrained part of socio-cultural relations?

Informed by a coaching case study from Uganda, Garvey *et al.* (2018) reveal how local cultural norms in Uganda encourage obeisance and focus less on promoting empowerment and initiative, because the latter is deemed to undermine authority. In this example, the coach is perceived as an elder or parent that provides expert advice to the child (read “coachee”). Also highlighted in the case study is that the coaching relationship, from the coachee’s perspective, is one of dependency, and the terms “obedience” and “pleasing” characterise the relationship. In this example, obeisance seems to suggest underlying issues of hierarchy and power relations which could offer significant insight into the behaviour of coachees and their expectations in a coaching relationship.

A coaching study involving the cultural congruence of international coaches, using coaching styles favoured in the west with Asian coachees, revealed similar findings. Nangalia and Nangalia (2010) assert that traditions of Hinduism and Confucianism inform social hierarchy in Asia, and as such influence how the coach is perceived, in terms of role and status, and frame the expectations of local coachees. The coach is seen as a respected elder: older, more experienced and therefore able to advise and impart wisdom. The study identified that social hierarchy is a guiding principle because it arises through cultural philosophies such as Confucianism, considers collective values over individual values and exhibits distinct power relations that are hierarchical based on age (older and younger person) or gender (relations between men and women) (Nanglia and Nanglia, 2010). The authors propose a framework for cultural adaptations, which focuses on changes that challenge the fundamental premise of a coachee’s role as a facilitator. Some of the changes suggested are that the coach would need to get comfortable with the idea of being a mentor and that imparting wisdom is a function of that role. This is in contrast to the facilitator and helper who can enable the coachee to think for themselves. Another aspect in the research is the importance of experience, and the coach would need to communicate their experience, credentials and qualifications to establish credibility as the imparter of wisdom. Very pertinent to this study is the intimation that the coach would need to consider the social context and recognise the interconnected nature of a coachee’s decisions and the implications for those closest to the coachee. When research is sensitive to the diversity of the societal environment, understanding the importance of the value that individuals place towards the group rather than their own individual needs is critical to coaching engagement (Ng, 2013).

It may be too simplistic to suggest that the coach builds experience of contextual issues purely by adapting their philosophy and coaching style as the need arises. To assume that learning from what works and doesn't work is enough to build a coach's experience and range of skills to work in different cultural contexts could leave the coach frustrated and limit the coachee's development. This study takes the perspective presented by Peterson (2007) that a deeper understanding of important socio-cultural differences can help the coach to examine their own assumptions of such differences and how these can inform or shape their response in supporting a coachee more sustainably. Peterson's own experience of coaching executives in Singapore shows aspects of a nuanced approach. For example, instead of asking an open-ended question, as is characteristic of coach facilitation, examining the coaching issues in the form of an assignment helps the coach to maintain credibility in the coaching process whilst recognising and understanding the cultural differences (Peterson, 2007).

Cultural models have been used to raise awareness of the importance of the influences of socio-cultural factors such as beliefs and values on a person's behaviour personally and professionally in the workplace. The cultural orientation framework developed by Philippe Rosinki (2003) supports the view that when cross-cultural knowledge is to be harnessed, coaching can be used to leverage these cultural differences; Rosinki's Cultural Orientation Framework model has been used globally to coach cross-cultural teams. The cross-cultural kaleidoscope framework (Plaister-Ten, 2013) has been used to coach in the Asia Pacific region. Passmore (2013) presents the view that cultural models are helpful in working across different countries and with different cultural groups, but may not always accommodate all nuances of diversity within cultural groups. Groups within a geographic region may share similarities, but socio-cultural factors such as religion may mean very different experiences for coachees within the same environmental context. This places personal experiences at the core of the coaching process. According to Passmore (2013), the Universal Integrative Framework (UIF) model developed by Law, Ireland and Hussain, (2007) does show such tendencies, through the four stage coaching process of assimilation, consolidation, exploration and maturation focused on understanding the contextual cultural environment of the coachee. He argues that this enables the coach to recognise which methods resonate with coachees' values and beliefs such that both factors are not only a leverage but can facilitate the coachee to understand when they are a barrier. Another concept is the emergent strand of executive coaching known as global

coaching (Abbott and Rosinski, 2007). The authors assert that in a global world where business entities are becoming more culturally complex through geographic mergers and acquisitions, global coaching can be seen as more receptive to “broader considerations of the client’s family, friends, colleagues, team, organization, community, nation and the society in general” (p.59). Global coaching is described as holistic. The authors argue that within such an approach coachees (clients) can be supported using approaches that are contextually relevant. Some of the aspects deemed essential for effective global coaching is to be curious about other systems, comfortable with complexity and interdependence.

The attributes of executive coaching show that it reflects a fixed period of support involving several sessions. The initial phase may involve the establishment of coachee and organisational needs and work to develop an approach in support of this agenda (Stokes and Jolly, 2014). What gives structure to such a process is the setting of goals and working with the coachee to attain those goals. Working to an established agenda in executive coaching implies that a coaching session will involve a closing session to complete the coaching. In the manner described, this process becomes quite formal and indicates some form of professional coaching boundaries. Picking up on the earlier case study by Garvey *et al.*, (2018), the Ugandan coaching case study revealed that the relationship can also extend beyond the coaching session itself, with no clear start and end, because it is not uncommon for coachees to invite coaches to family events within the community. Such relations might blur the established coaching boundaries. At the same time authors such as Nanglia and Nanglia (2010) suggest that building rapport and trust in relationships may mean getting to know the coachee at a personal level i.e. discussing real issues when they feel safe enough to do so. The question of whether such situations as presented in the Ugandan case study would help to build rapport with the coachee or create blurred coaching boundaries are important points that may inform this study. The two examples also acknowledge that personal experiences can provide rich insight into how to coach in local contexts. In both the Ugandan and Asian perspectives, the experiences of the coach and coachee informed the coaching insights.

Goal-setting is a technique used within executive coaching to facilitate the coachee’s progress towards the attainment of specific targets that relate to performance improvement and change (Grant *et al.*, 2009). Goal-setting is an iterative process during the initial stages of a coaching session (Ives and Cox, 2012) and is designed to be sequential and chronological in helping the coachee

to set attainment targets linked to their coaching issue. Goal-setting should be driven by the coachee, and coaching models such as the GROW model (Whitmore, 1992) illustrate how goals can be used to facilitate coachees in taking responsibility for their achievements autonomously (Shoukry and Cox, 2018).

When goals are associated with performance improvement targets there is a temptation to view this in a linear and specifically task-focused way. However, the earlier sections have established that personal experiences are a matter of subjective thinking. Authenticity, cultural norms within a group setting, and values and beliefs are important insights for this study. Sheldon (2014) state that self-concordant goals, which reflect these aspects, are a better indicator of one's personal values and beliefs. Self-concordant goals are goals that relate to the authentic self and are in synthesis with personal values, beliefs and aspirations (Sheldon and Elliott, 1999; Mimilyavskaya, Nadolny and Koester, 2014)

Respecting a person's individuality is a core part of coaching executive leaders, and the reference to autonomy reinforces an individualistic perspective (Stratford and Freas, 2004). Shoukry (2016) argues that focusing on goals in an individualistic manner misses a critical point of perspective in social contexts where coachees do not have the freedom to determine their own options and "*are constrained psychologically and socially from pursuing their choices*" (p. 15), for example in oppressive environments involving colonialism, dictatorship or political coercion. Shoukry's study draws on learning from Egypt in the context of the Arab Spring uprising, informed by his own coaching experience which brought into focus the effect of social context on the self-perception of coachees. He argues for the development of insight into emancipation as an approach that can be participatory and empowering. In his critical review of emancipatory approaches (p.19) taken from the subject areas of feminism, critical pedagogy, learning and development and social work, some key benefits highlighted are: empowering dialogue, consciousness raising, X-role or social analysis, narrative of liberation, critical reflection, discovering new worlds and reflective action. The data generated through a six-month period of iterative coaching supervision sessions, involving 12 coaches and 22 coachees in Egypt, resulted in an emancipatory coaching framework.

There are three key steps to this model. The first involves the re-telling of narratives, where the emphasis is on raising consciousness and giving voice to the coachee's limitations and challenges through recounting their lived experiences. As a second step, renewing beliefs allows the coachee to gain a deeper

understanding not only of their internal limitations but of external limitations within their social environment, by questioning deeply embedded assumptions and beliefs. The third step, fighting back, reflects the ability of coachees to disengage from the issues created by an oppressive environment, and by doing so explore new options and reflect on appropriate action. This process of disengaging and then exploring new options is similar to Kurt Lewin's change management process in that, like the metaphorical iceberg, to institute change one must unfreeze from the current status quo, engage with the change process and critically address several limitations and challenges before refreezing to solidify the new, improved status quo (Cummings, Bridgman and Brown, 2016).

A key finding is that situations of oppression can negatively impact coachees. A coaching session might need to begin by addressing emotions of fear, victimisation and self-blame in what is termed as "a process of emotional fitness" (p.23). The use of goal-setting is still suggested as a means of encouraging self-efficacy and agency, when used by coaches that show appreciation and respect for the conversation. A key difference to current approaches is that where goal-setting starts by addressing emotions, it is not the immediate mechanism of engagement in the coaching session demonstrated in other approaches.

Beyond the study being positioned in a non-Western environment, this is of particular interest on several levels: it is indicative of the importance of understanding the wider societal environment of the coachee within a coaching process, which is important to this study on Zambia; it offers rich insight into emancipation as a mechanism that could help in coaching to address issues concerned with power relations; and it offers a framework that illustrates how coachees can liberate themselves through the use of narratives. The use of empowering dialogue reflects a similar use of the term empowerment in coaching. If the aim of coaching is empowerment, Kabeer (2015) posits that when individuals are empowered, they are not only actively engaged in making a choice but do so by confronting power relations. Although the study recognises that oppression is reviewed with respect to specific beliefs, it does not expand on particular groups e.g. women, or refer to specific beliefs or philosophies beyond the related context of the Arab Spring. There is an opportunity here to look at approaches that involve narratives, facilitate empowerment and address issues and personal and professional goals related to the organisation.

Working with narratives presents a potential approach to investigate for Zambia. Shoukry's (2016) research shows the importance of context and that there are

some forms or elements of coaching that may be particularly helpful in addressing socio-cultural contexts. The specific reference to oppression as colonialism has relevance for the Zambian context. However, a key limitation of Shoukry's study is that the research relied on understanding the coachee's perspective through the reflections of the coaches. The voices of the coachees and how they themselves consider their lived experiences is deemed to be a missing component in this research.

In executive coaching literature, a critical issue that remains contentious is: who benefits from the coaching (when the key stakeholders involve the organisation, the coach and coachee) and where should the focus be (on the coachee or the organisation)? (Athanasopoulou and Dopson, 2018). Stokes and Jolly (2018) point out that the objectives of executive coaching focus primarily on meeting the objectives of the organisation; yet coaching, as established earlier on, emphasises the importance of facilitating the coachee. In terms of coaching practice, researchers argue that executive coaching is predominantly driven by outcomes such as return on investment (ROI) (De Haan *et al.*, 2010; Western, 2012), self-efficacy and attainment of performance targets (Grant, 2014).

According to Bozer, Sarros and Santora (2013), there is a positive relationship between the self-efficacy of the coachee and improvements in job performance. However, coaching focused on the self, performance goals, productivity and personal experience reinforces what Western (2012) describes as "micro" discourses. Western (2016) describes discourse as communication which shapes dominant perspectives about social relations and norms, such that discourses define individual thinking in a manner reflective of Foucauldian discourse analysis. Western (2016, p.42) argues that there is limited critical evaluation of "macro" discourses about "wider social, theoretical and organisational influences". This line of argument extends the importance of research and case studies taking place in non-Western environments such as Egypt (Shoukry, 2016), Uganda (Garvey *et al.*, 2018), Malaysia (Nanglia and Nanglia, 2010), Hong Kong (Roth, 2017), Brazil (Da Matta and Victoria, 2013). These insights lead to coaching approaches that can learn from personal experiences, gain insight from the narratives of lived experiences (Shoukry, 2016) and can accommodate collective cultural beliefs and traditions. The next section addresses the area of concern about women executive coachees, prior to addressing possible coaching approaches that could be relevant for Zambia.

3.3 Coaching, authenticity and efficacy

For women to counter the leadership barriers they need coaching and mentoring support on aspects of self-efficacy as it relates to, relationships, and authenticity in achieving executive leadership success (Skinner, 2012; Worth, 2012; De Valle, 2014; Bonneywell 2016).

Authenticity is a key focus of the work carried out by Worth (2012) on executive women in the workplace. Worth's study identified a distinctive research gap on coaching women for authenticity, rather than addressing the authenticity of the coach. She argues that the lack of coaching for authenticity puts women in a situation of internal conflict between their own values and beliefs when viewed in concert with organisational prejudices. Based on a heuristic inquiry methodology, nine women in academia were co-researchers. The period of inquiry (thirteen months) allowed collection of data through semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis revealed that coaching can support the development of women's authenticity. The research also concluded that self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-understanding and self-esteem are critical to achieving authenticity when coaching is used as a supportive approach. This is consistent with Kernis (2003) and perspective of authenticity and self-esteem.

Skinner (2012) conducted research focused on the notion of a self-concept in leadership and, drawing on work by Ely and Rhode (2008) and Ibarra, Snook and Ramo (2008, 2010), she argues that the actions of leaders are not the only important factor. What is of equal importance is the leaders' sense of self alongside associated values, beliefs and experiences. The study involved in-depth analysis of 11 interviews with senior executive women in Australia. Key findings revealed that coaching should explore the organisational leadership environment more closely paying particular attention to factors related managing work and home issues. This is an area of research that could benefit from further insight especially if the issues at home are closely related to the achievement of performance objectives at work (O'Neill *et al.*, 2015).

Research by de Valle (2014) focused on bringing the voice of the coachee to the fore, by exploring the coaching and mentoring experiences of 12 senior women executives in the UK to elucidate the nature of coaching and mentoring interventions in helping women to develop their skills in leadership. Using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a methodology, data from semi-structured interviews was analysed. Key findings concurred with Worth's research

on coaching as a support for developing authenticity. De Valle's study identified three key stages of career progression into leadership: career growth, career development and career legacy. Mentoring is deemed as important for the career growth stage, whilst coaching is deemed to be supportive in the latter stages. A critical consideration within all these stages is the timing and support of the mentoring and coaching intervention.

Another study (UK) by Bonneywell (2016; 2017) applied a social constructionist ontology and interpretivist methodology to a case study undertaken in a global pharmaceutical organisation with an established internal coaching programme. A key aim of the study was to look at how coaching could address the low representation of women within an organisation. Unlike the previous studies mentioned, this research focused not only on individual coaching but also incorporated the perspective of group coaching. The rationale was to understand how group coaching could facilitate change within the organisation when used simultaneously with individual coaching to help women break through the glass ceiling and progress into senior leadership roles. In the context of this study, coaching is understood as "coaching a group of individuals from a similar population with the aim of growth and development and who are not working together towards a common goal" (Bonneywell, 2016, p. 27).

In analysing feedback from women coachees, their coaches, and managers of the coaching and mentoring initiative, key findings revealed that individual coaching and mentoring helped them to achieve a heightened self-awareness in relation to confidence and relational leadership issues such as conflict. Group coaching, on the other hand, revealed some interesting findings amongst the participants, referred to by Bonneywell as the "collective impact". Her participants seemed enlightened by the fact that sharing experiences in a group enabled them to feel less lonely, to share similar experiences despite their differences, to broaden their understanding of wider aspects of issues affecting women in the workplace, and to experience the benefit of giving back by sharing what they had learnt in the coaching sessions. Also important in the findings was that women felt other women's experiences enabled them to explore issues that they would not have explored through individual coaching.

These studies show how coaching can address barriers to women's progression such as organisational structures and systems, performance-related challenges and leadership competencies. The studies do provide an understanding of the more introspective issues associated with women's self-limiting beliefs. In

particular, the need for self-efficacy and greater self-awareness in addressing issues about authenticity reflects that is intrapersonal. However, references to personal values, beliefs and experiences (Skinner, 2012; Worth, 2012) do not necessarily reflect international differences.

3.3.1 Personal experiences

The methodologies used suggest that personal experiences are relevant to understanding women's position in relation to executives coaching. The use of heuristic, IPA and social constructionist reflects methods that lend themselves well to understanding the personal experiences of the women in the study and understanding their narratives. Such methods delve deeper into the meaning of narratives. Understanding personal experiences and engaging with narratives has also been associated with personal and professional development (Etherington, 2004).

Personal experiences provide a way in for coaches to understand the underlying causes of challenges that a coachee may bring to a coaching relationship (Stout-Rostron, 2009). The Habermas Domain Competence Model, as interpreted by Flaherty (1999; 2005) and Stout-Rostron (2009), looks at both the intrapersonal aspects but also examines the communal aspects. Of the three domains that are critical to engaging with the coachee, the first two domains are prioritised as relevant to this study (Figure 2). This is because the first domain which is the "I domain" is concerned with the individuals' self-knowledge and seeks to process subjective information (Flaherty, 2005). In processing subjective information, this domain assumes introspection and reflection is taking place for the particular individual.

Figure 2: The Domains of Competence

Source: Flaherty (2005, p.84 in Stout-Rostron, Sampaio and Rensburg 2014): The Domains of Competence

The second domain is concerned with the collective or community, where the societal environment, encompassing traditions, cultures and norms, requires a process of dialogue and relational interaction. This domain deals with the perspectives of empathy, reliability, openness and faith.

Another important perspective associated with community and environment is the spirituality that has been associated with African women, and specifically their ability to draw on their spiritual world of ancestors through oral traditions to create resilience in times of adversity (Wane, 2002).

The “I” and “We” domains are relevant because the literature on Zambian women seems to suggest that women’s roles are associated more with the “We” domain through their concern for the community and this is potentially a point of tension when it comes to focusing on their own personal needs.

3.4 Potential coaching approaches

Evoking stories is one way that coaches can work with coachees. In psychodynamic coaching, coaches can help clients to understand their current situation by looking for links associated with their past (Lee, 2018). The opportunity to understand Zambian women’s context through stories as narratives could help to gain some clarity about their current situation. Traditions and wisdom passed down orally through the generations suggest that narratives are inherent in the Zambian culture. This could potentially be where women could draw their strength in sharing powerful stories. In such a context narratives in coaching seems to offer some important principles to learn from.

3.4.1 Narratives in coaching

“Narrative” is a fundamental component of the coach-client relationship. Within the coaching literature, narrative has been employed with clients to identify coaching strategies for navigating experiences to facilitate change (Drake, 2014). Researchers have examined narrative as a discourse that can be deconstructed to extract meaningful insights (Boje and Jorgensen, 2008); or as personal life stories in non-Western cultures (Zilber, Tuval-Mashiach and Leiblich, 2008). Understanding life narratives as stories can help to reconstruct new perspectives

of oneself (Drake, 2009). McAdams talks about how stories can be seen as myths when they become part of a group's culture and are viewed as sacred (McAdams, 1993). These connections can enable the client to shift from prioritising beliefs that could be limiting to beliefs that could provide coherence and equilibrium.

Steltner (2009) advocates that the coachee's narrative expressed as a life story can be a powerful initiator into the coaching process. According to Stelter and Law (2010), narrative coaching can be collaborative and facilitate meaning-making. The authors outline this process, which comprises five stages. Stage one (Description p.161) involves the coach facilitating the coachee to tell their life story or relevant narrative in order to identify internalised problems. Stage two (Relational Mapping p.161) involves working with values to reveal the desired self, using plots and counter plots in the story. Stage three (Evaluation/Re-evaluation p.161) encourages self-reflection and intensifies self-awareness to facilitate what the authors term as re-authoring (similar to re-storying as in Drake, 2009). Stage four (Justification p.161) links stories, values and beliefs as identified in the coaching process to articulate a new story consistent with the coachee's strengths and aspirations. Stage five (Conclusion p.161) involves encouraging the coachee to draw conclusions about oneself in relation to values and aspirations. There are parallels between this narrative, collaborative approach and narrative coaching as outlined by Drake (2007; 2009).

Narrative coaching as interpreted by Drake (2007) builds on the theoretical underpinnings on the nature of stories (which he terms 'narratives') and how these can be used to re-story. Drake argues that individual stories are embedded in larger narratives that are contextual and communal, linked to aspects such as culture and leadership. Stories as personal narratives draw on the experiential and provide an opportunity for coaches to focus on inherent limitations that may exist for a coachee. The coach aims to mitigate these by using the coachee's strengths to reframe the story, thereby allowing them to address their limitations (Drake, 2007). He states that "narratives provide the material with which clients can better understand their narrative habits and renegotiate them as desired" (Drake, 2007, p.286). The narrative 'Diamond Model' is an example that Drake uses to demonstrate the interrelationship between the different elements of re-storying, the listener, narrator, characters (or symbolic aspects) and the story itself. See Figure 3.

Figure 3: The Narrative Diamond

Source: The Narrative Diamond adapted from Drake (2007, p.291)

The area called the “Field” is presented as the space where relational conversation takes place in co-creating new stories. What Drake’s model provides is an opportunity to address the “macro” discourses that are potentially identifiable through issues such as gender, culture, metaphors and beliefs because individual narratives are often situated within larger communal and cultural narratives (Drake, 2018). In seeking congruity between beliefs, values and responsibilities, understanding the self, enabling personal control and free will are all seen as important functions of the individual that can be empowering (Adams and Marshall, 1996). Such a model opens up opportunities to address not only the internal leadership aspects affecting an individual coachee, but also affords the coachee a framework to bring in other influences that are part of their leadership narrative.

Within Drake’s Diamond Model, factors such as gender, culture, metaphors and beliefs can be seen as external influences which impact on social roles (Drake, 2007). In essence, it requires an understanding of the psychological and the sociological factors. As chapter 1 identified, more recent women’s coaching studies reaffirm this as a critical perspective (Skinner, 2012; Worth, 2012).

More recent discussions within coaching and leadership studies are emphasising the need to provide further clarity on women’s subjective experiences as they relate to the development of their leadership capabilities (Humberd, 2011). Butcher (2012) argues that coaches need to appreciate the role of life narratives of coachees. Ultimately, this can be helpful to coaches in supporting the coachee through the coaching process especially when seeking congruity between values, beliefs and responsibilities (Adams and Marshall, 1996) which could be empowering. When the focus is on empowerment, approaching leadership as a collective engagement has been associated with transformational leadership (Jung and Sosik, 2002), a style that is definitively associated with women leaders (Ran *et al.*, 2015). Drake’s Narrative Diamond Model is driven by an individual focus. However, the collective dimension described in this study highlights the need to examine coaching models that acknowledge not just the individual, but also collective narratives as they relate to women in leadership.

Even though a coach can use individual stories told by coachees to challenge and facilitate them in rewriting their story in a way that is meaningful to support

professional development (Riessner and Du Toit, 2011). The downside to storytelling and relying on a coach for support with re-storying is that if the emphasis is on achieving a desired outcome then there is a risk of manipulative abuse to achieve the desired behavioural change. Such situations might occur when an organisation pays for an individual to be coached to achieve certain organisational targets. Identifying why the story is being told becomes critical to this process (Lapp and Carr, 2011) particularly in contexts such as Zambia where women may be challenged by a range of socio-cultural factors and may be vulnerable to achieving desired outcomes that may be contradictory to norms and customs they practice.

3.4.2 Integral coaching

Another model applied within coaching practice that would allow for deeper insight into the personal and collective perspectives of the coachee is the 'Integral Model' by Ken Wilber (2005). This model draws on an understanding of integral theory and seeks to simplify some of the complexities outlined above, in terms of what individual and collective narratives represent, in what is referred to as 'the theory of everything' (Phillips and Rejai, 2001). Wilber argues that there is a means by which complex factors that influence individuals, regardless of cultural background, can be understood in a simplified integrated mode, in order to unlock human potential. Wilber draws on human development theories of cognitive psychology and social psychology, worldviews and ontological perspectives, spirituality, and cross-cultural studies regarding collective and individual behaviours, to arrive at a model that recognises the internal aspects of an individual as well as the existential influences within a social system and its environment (Wilber, 2005, p.25). Fundamental to integral theory is that it seeks to be inclusive and comprehensive in its use of connected complex paradigms that will bring about enrichment rather than discord (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2009).

Figure 4: AQAL (All Quadrants, All Levels)

Source: Adapted from Wilber (2005, p.25-27; 2006, p.36-39 in Rostron, 2014) and Hunt and Divine (2012)

Wilber's upper left (UL) quadrant Individual interior "II" refers to the inside of the individual, focusing on the subjective self and consciousness. The upper right (UR) quadrant "IT" is the individual exterior, which focuses on the external factors of the

individual in relation to behaviour. The “We” quadrant lower left (LL), recognises the collective exterior in terms of culture and worldview. Finally, the quadrant lower right (LR) “ITS” focuses on the collective exterior and the systems an individual operates in, whether these relate to family systems, work systems, political systems or environment. Wilber (2005) argues for incorporating all perspectives in this model, including the business or organisation perspective. This suggests that the exterior quadrants need to consider the individual exterior, in terms of the human societal environment and the organisational professional environment as well. According to O’Flaherty and Everson (2009) coaching can facilitate new cognitive perspectives by recognising the interrelationship between societal and organisational environments.

Hunt and Divine (2012) have proposed an integral coaching methodology using integral theory’s ‘All Quadrants, All Levels’ (AQAL) approach to create a comprehensive coaching model that embraces multiple-perspectives and is inclusive. They argue that whilst traditional coaching offers positive solutions for coachees, such approaches tend to be focused on targeted aspects of the coachee. Their integral coaching approach challenges four critical points about traditional coaching when supporting a coachee between two positions: a Current Way of Being (CWOB) to a New Way of Being (NWOB) (Hunt, 2009a).

Figure 5: Adapted Model from Hunt

Adapted from Hunt (2009), Figure 1

The first point is that although a coachee’s self-awareness can be enabled through coaching, awareness in itself is not enough without the action of efficacy. The need for clarity on how efficacy for women can be achieved through coaching is a perspective that is shared by authors of women’s coaching studies (Skinner 2014; Worth, 2012; Bonneywell, 2016).

The second point addresses the importance of taking action in order to change behaviour. In traditional coaching, it is suggested that action is achieved through goal-setting, but this relies on sustained accountability and commitment. The question is how this is maintained once the coaching relationship ends and the coach, who is seen as the source of challenge and motivation, steps back.

Whilst this chapter has identified that discourse through narrative is fundamental to coaching conversations and presents some useful principles which could be relevant, a third point of critique from Hunt and Divine (2012) is that whilst the narratives can help to trigger new ways of seeing ones limiting behaviours and identify breakthroughs, the danger is that this can instil reliance on having a talking companion and not necessarily determine the appropriate efficacious action required to bring about change.

The fourth and final point recognises that, in order to institute change, coachees need to understand how they fit within their own systems of operation, for example organisational systems or family systems. However, understanding systems alone is insufficient to determine what skills are needed to facilitate change; coachees need to optimise these systems. Hence the founders of integral coaching argue that the critique of each of the four factors makes a valuable contribution in ensuring change for the coachee by considering all quadrants and levels (Hunt and Divine, 2012).

According to Frost (2009), the advantages of the Integral Coaching Model are that it enables a multi-dimensional approach and privileges more perspectives of the coachee, allowing for a “richer coaching territory in which to consider the complexity and diversity of associated with the coachee” (p.116). Similarly, integral theory has been used to articulate AQAL in a meaningful way. Wright (2008) addresses the (UL) quadrant with the question, “Who am I as a leader?” taking a subjective personal perspective. The (UR) quadrant focuses on the action by asking “what is my behaviour as a leader?”, the (LL) quadrant focuses on relationships with others by questioning “How do I relate to others as a leader?” and the final quadrant (LR) considers the organisational system in which leadership is taking place, “What is the environment in which I lead?”. So, we see that Integral theory can be applied to both coaching and leadership. Volckmann (2010) asserts that in coaching leaders, AQAL can provide the opportunity to coach beyond the individual and understand not just the cultural context but the interrelationship of the coachee within their culture.

Integral coaching draws its strengths from being able to work with multiple complex levels, but there remains limited clarity with the research about the detailed steps in how the coaching process can be applied when working with a coachee. For example, what does outcome look like when all quadrants are addressed? Is there an order in which the quadrants reveal information about the coachee? How are

individual/group relationships and subjective/objective perspectives reconciled in a way that supports the coachee?

3.4.3 Systemic coaching

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, systemic is described as “*what relates to or effects an entire system*”. Systemic coaching as identified by Whittington (2020) is based on the premise that a system comprises defined elements including people within which hidden dynamics such as unsaid rules, hidden allegiances exist. These elements are reflective of interdependent connections. He further states that systems are characterised by set rules which if overlooked or crossed means that conflict can arise. Coaching with systemic factors is merited with being able to address hidden dynamics and understanding what is not consciously visible, and therefore looking for hidden patterns, through mapping of interdependent connections within a system (Whittington, 2020). Oshry (2015) supports the notion that challenges that arise within organisations are influenced by the systemic context rather than the personal attributes of the individual. Being part of a system is to acknowledge that system elements are active and dynamic because there is movement in and out of the system. When people are oblivious to the relationships within the system this can result in stressful situations and disappointment. When coaching takes a systems perspective, Oshry argues that the intention is to become fully aware of the systems relationships and mechanisms; and transition from “*system blindness to system sight by addressing destructive consequences of system blindness and revealing more satisfying possibilities of system sight* (p.176). If coaches want to facilitate this transition for coachees, Oshry (2015) identifies that one of the first critical steps for a coach using systemic coaching to gain insight into one’s own systemic relationships. Mastery of ones’ own relationships can foster humility and understanding and in turn help to facilitate others in achieving mastery (p. 182).

3.4.4 Systemic coaching and constellations

Constellations is referred to as a “living map” (Whittington, 2020). The origin of systemic constellations is attributed to Bert Hellinger who developed this approach to work with families. The underlying philosophy is phenomenological and it is applied within organisational systems environments (Farr and Shephard, 2018). It has now been applied with other mapped “family constellations”. There are some key principles of successful use of constellations in coaching: being comfortable with ‘*the unknown*’ where the coach enters the system without any preconceived ideas of solutions, hence the phenomenological philosophy. The mapping takes

place in what is identified as the '*field*' in which any challenges faced by a coachee are located within the system and any revelations arise out of the system. Sometimes the solution is revealed from the least expected places suggesting complex and nonlinear patterns (Farr and Shepherd, 2018). This is consistent with elements of global coaching (Abbott and Rosinski, 2007) and creates system insight (Oshry, 2015). However the aspect of begin comfortable with the 'unknown' and letting issues within the system unfold is at odds with the structured individualistic style of executive coaching. Constellations denotes that 'the self' is acknowledged within the system as one of many parts. The strengths of constellations mapping is that it allows for different parts of the system to be occupied and in doing so greater self-awareness arises out of seeing the system from different perspectives and contexts and hence emergent possibilities (Farr and Shepherd, 2018). The authors also identify different levels of '*conscious*' within the system at the individual and collective and the related balance between individual and collective needs within the system and how rules can be supporting or limiting.

The mapping of constellations is done using physical objects that are built to represent the system and placed on the 'field' represented by a mat. The elements within the system can be everyday objects, for example sticky notes that allow different elements within the system to be labelled. There is a particular process to using constellations mapping that allows for "*subjective feelings to be revealed within the system and then accept them as a source of objective information*", (Livotova and Livotov, 2015 p. 204).

3.4.5 Systemic team coaching

Systemic coaching has also been associated with teams. When coaching addresses a collection of people in a team, the aims and focus prioritise the collective performance of all team members as stakeholders (Hawkins, 2017). Definitions of team coaching emphasise the criticality of understanding the performance and processes of teams and how performance can be improved through synthesised collective effort rather than individual contributions to the team (Hackman and Wageman, 2005; Clutterbuck, 2007). Hawkins (2017) argues that, at senior executive leadership level, these aspects, though important, need to move beyond prioritising the internal team perspective and account for learning the external perspective. This is because an organisational team does not operate in isolation but is affected by relations with its external stakeholders and in turn their stakeholders. Models such as Porter's five forces (1979) attest to the importance

of such networked interactions with external clients, e.g. customers and suppliers, internal clients, e.g. employees, and competitors. Hawkins (2017, p.76) concludes these external and internal elements require a more systemic approach to team coaching which he defines as

“the process by which a team coach works with a whole team, both when they are together and when they are apart, in order to help them improve both their collective effort performance and how they work together and also how they develop their collective leadership to more effectively engage with all their key stakeholder groups to jointly transform their wider business”.

Based on working with teams, the five disciplines systemic coaching model is proposed by Hawkins (2017, p.104) and comprises several stages. Stage one involves, **commissioning and recommissioning** to establish team aspirations and issues related to processes and performance. The second stage relies on **clarifying** e.g. collective objectives, goals and ideas on change and improvement, where the emphasis is on the richness achieved by including diverse views and emphasising collective involvement. Stage three enables **co-creation** of processes, systems and strategies to support high performance, requiring dialogue, openness to different stakeholder views and willingness to re-engineer systems and procedures, and the coach's role is as a process consultant. Stage four is about **connecting** – how the team individually and collectively engage with the wider stakeholder network, where communication and collaboration are critical. Stage five focuses on **core learning** – to support a common purpose.

A criticism of systemic coaching is that there is a lack of clarity around what is meant by systemic. Lawrence (2019) argues that significant insight is needed about systems from scientific management and organisational development before individual coaches can effectively make sense of and clarify their own individual perspectives. He argues that the philosophy of systemic coaching might reveal differences when different perspectives of systems theories are acknowledged. One example is that he distinguishes between systems that are ‘complex systemic’ where systemic patterns arise through social interaction and a holistic appreciation of the system requires the holistic inspection of local interactions of how every representative in the system contributes to the outcome. Another system he describes is ‘first order systemic’ where the organisation systems can be categorised into elements such that standing outside the system and verifying its functions is possible.

3.5 Chapter conclusions

To conclude, executive coaching presents rich diverse opportunities informed by practice. Its strengths are in its versatility and efficacy in supporting women leaders yet the blurred boundaries between underpinning theories has created a problematic vacuum in terms of theory building (Western, 2012). The emphasis on practice means that coaching philosophy remains unchallenged and there are calls for more socially constructed knowledge and insight (Cushion and Partington, 2016). In a global world and with coaching expanding beyond Western borders (Abbott and Rosinski, 2007), the implications of socio-cultural differences has become critical to challenging assumptions and facilitating coachees sustainably in the coaching process (Peterson, 2007). Context is a recurrent theme acknowledged among contributors of coaching theory and approaches (Rosinski, 2003; Plaister Ten, 2013; Abbott and Rosinski, 2007). Currently efforts to respond to the vacuum on coaching knowledge continues to be driven by coaching approaches and models that are developed in Western countries with Western philosophies with very limited research driven knowledge from non-western regions.

This perspective is juxtaposed against similar arguments identified in chapter 1 about contextual insights into glass ceiling barriers affecting women leaders' progression into senior executive roles. While some of the literature on executive coaching for women leaders lacks clarity about coaching approaches that recognise and can be responsive to such differences, the focus of these studies on the notion of self-concept and values, beliefs and experiences provides a way in which to address context (Skinner, 2012, Worth, 2012).

Narrative, integral and systemic coaching are approaches that are responsive to aspects of self-concept, and recognise and use values and beliefs and personal experiences to facilitate contextually relevant coaching interventions. Similarities of the approaches extends to their ability to deal with complexity e.g. individual and collective, or across levels of society, micro, meso and macro (Western, 2012; Diehl and Dzubinski). Socio-cultural barriers are associated with complex concepts that underpin women's leadership such as gender and patriarchy therefore such approaches are a point of entry for further exploration. A shared limitation of the approaches is in being responsive to complexity there is a risk that coaching concepts are not fully appreciated when they intersect with other complex constructs such as gender and patriarchy.

The theoretical vacuum implied and the prioritisation of contextual insights is an opportunity for this thesis to contribute to the call for more contextually informed research that can contribute to new knowledge for coaching theory and practice. Research insights from non-western environments like Zambia can help to bring clarity to the use and application of coaching. The focus on and the potential for coaching to support Zambian women in overcoming socio-cultural barriers responds to this call. In keeping with a contextual focus, the next chapter expands on the indigenous methodology.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter details the methodological research process. The outline presented in chapter one introduces the use of an indigenous research approach. The literature used in this study is drawn from mainstream academic research methods and literature on indigenous research is drawn from geographic regions of the world such as SSA (Botswana), North America (Canada) and Australasia (New Zealand and Australia). This chapter begins by outlining the role of the researcher in researching experiences and the relevance to the chosen approach. Justification for the ontological, epistemological and axiological approach is outlined and followed by a description of my research community. Details of the data collection and analysis process are provided, before concluding with a reflexive overview and stating the ethical considerations and limitations.

4.1 The role of the researcher in indigenous research

Experiences can be researched from different research paradigms that emphasise understanding personal experiences through multiple realities (Creswell, 2000). The research approach taken here is of an exploratory nature, the purpose being to gain insight into the lived experiences of the co-researchers (Creswell, 2012). *“Participants provide the starting point and through them you try to understand and interpret what is occurring and why”* (Altinay, Paraskevas and Jang, 2015, p.88). Such an approach recognises that participant knowledge is critical to this interpretation, and that knowledge relates to the societal environment in this case that of Zambian women leader’s experience (Hughes, 2002; Gergen, 2009). Participant knowledge is therefore subjective. The context chapter revealed socio-cultural issues related to Zambian women, and how personal experiences can potentially offer greater insight.

In studies involving personal experiences, the role of the researcher is important, whether as an author or witness of the research (Smith and Osborn, 2007; Willig, 2013). Clarity concerning the justification for taking an indigenous approach is important. When personal experiences are important to the study other approaches such as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), may also be applicable and Appendix 3 details some key characteristics of IPA. An important reason for choosing an indigenous approach is predominantly justified because it allows me to situate myself within the research. Situating oneself within research about one’s own cultural community is a distinguishable feature of indigenous research (Steinhauer, 2001, Walker and Aritz, 2015). Indigenous studies highlight

that when indigenous researchers are part of the community, they have the opportunity to be empathetic to protocols concerning how knowledge is obtained, shared or used within that community. They can also assess what values are important in how this knowledge is obtained, for example when considering ethical research practices (Nicholls, 2009). Indigenous researchers can communicate their ethnicity in terms of the heritage and cultural values shared with the cultural research setting and group (Hart, 2010).

My personal connection to Zambia and as a woman means that I share some similarities with members of the research community that I have focused this study on. This is an important point of immersion in this research. In indigenous research studies, the relationship between a researcher from within the research community and the means by which knowledge is created and shared is particularly relevant, because of the personal relational connection to the context (Kovach, 2007). Indigenous research can provide a basis to recognise specific ethical cultural values that are shared with that group and need to be honoured e.g. nuances in communication where hierarchy plays an important role, or recognising ethical values associated with protocols of group conformity or cohesion (Kovach, 2010). For my research, I felt that my knowledge and upbringing in Zambia would be complementary to devising a research approach that would reflect relevance to my research group. For example, I have been raised in the culture of oral traditions; stories have been an important part of how traditional knowledge, cultural practices and ancestral information has been passed down to me and this has shaped my worldview growing up.

Another reason for choosing an indigenous methodology was that it was the one approach that I felt could cope with the complex issues I needed to address for this research. Critical feedback on my research paradigm (Appendix 4) showed that I needed to review how complex perspectives of coaching, leadership, Zambian women, colonialism, patriarchy and socio-cultural factors could be addressed without creating points of tension and contradiction within my methodology.

Overall, my position is that I am strongly connected to the research topic as I have personal knowledge about the environment I am researching. I also share similar experiences to the women I engaged with in that I am a Zambian woman who has held a leadership position. I grew up embedded in a culture reflecting Ubuntu values which emphasise the aim of communities living in harmony, practising humility, generosity, modesty and friendliness (Broodryk, 2006). It has been stated that these values are part of management practice in Zambia (Gatrell and Swan,

2008; Newenham-Kahindi, 2009). As a Zambian woman I recognise the societal roles I grew up with and still practice these values. Therefore, by embracing an indigenous research approach I can relate a core aspect of my own upbringing to an indigenous worldview such as Ubuntu. This made me feel more connected to the research and the issues facing women in Zambia which were identified in chapter two.

4.1.1 Indigenous research approach

An indigenous research perspective shows an appreciation of decolonising methodologies (Smith, 1999). There is an increasing literature base on indigenous research methodologies (Smith, 1999; Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008). A Google Scholar search using the term “indigenous research” revealed 10,900 articles between 1999 and 2015 but the strongest increase has been in the last five years, with 10,600 articles between 2016 and 2020, demonstrating growing relevance within academic discussions (Chilisa and Tsheko, 2014). Instrumental to the emergence of indigenous methodologies is Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s book *“Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples”*. This book has been critical to positioning the indigenous perspective within the post-modernist research paradigm (Smith, 1999; 2012). Her main criticism, at the time of her seminal work, was that established research methodologies that have been used to research native communities have been employed in a manner that has failed to involve their participants (Smith, 2012). She advocates the need for alternative insights for researching and developing knowledge of people that are native to a community in a way that is meaningful and respectful of the knowledge generated within the community. In indigenous research, meaning is understood as being interrelated and dynamic (Getty, 2010). Kovach (2010) asserts that indigenous knowledge is acquired through a dynamic process that is relational and fluid.

My understanding of ‘decolonising’ is that established research methodologies, mainly developed from a western cultural viewpoint, do not in themselves lack robustness, but may fall short when it comes to using these methodologies in contexts where the tenets of knowledge and ideologies are inconsistent with those from a western cultural perspective. Smith (2012) points out that it is less about western research methodologies being ‘good’ or ‘bad’ in essence and more about inappropriate methodologies being used in indigenous contexts. This could explain why indigenous research has been viewed as an approach that promotes a “best fit of methodologies” that are sensitive to the indigenous community and context e.g. “in-situ” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008), métissage and bricolage (Lowen-

Trudeau, 2012), and “Afrikology” (Chilisa, Major and Khudu-Petersen, 2017). Writing from her position as a native of the Ngāti Awa tribe of New Zealand, Smith (2012) has influenced African writers such as Bagele Chilisa of Botswana, who have extended this knowledge to address how decolonising methods can support meaningful research in Africa (Chilisa, 2020), making this an appropriate consideration for this study. A key limitation in this approach is that there is a lack of clarity about how non-indigenous researchers go about researching indigenous communities and how they might situate themselves in the research (Getty, 2010). Equally, the reference to applying “best fit of methodologies” may be difficult for researchers who are not indigenous to a community as they may be less sensitive about what methodologies are genuine and sensitive.

4.2 Ontology, epistemology and axiology

This section elaborates on my ontological, epistemological and axiological perspectives within this study.

The ontology question is associated with the nature of reality and a person’s interpretation of that reality from their own perspective. I identify my ontology as indigenous. In indigenous research, ontology is also referred to as an individual’s worldview (Wilson, 2001). Worldview is how people see and interpret the world around them in an emotive way, incorporating sensing, feeling and believing (Teater, 2014). Indigenous realities also consider other aspects such as the spiritual world (Foley, 2003). In relation to coaching and leadership research, Geber and Keane (2013, p.8) provide a strong argument for extending the research paradigms in coaching to include the African worldview of Ubuntu because:

“[there is] a need to include the African paradigm of Ubuntu in coaching research, coach training and leadership coaching given the previous marginalisation of African cultural knowledge and worldview”.

Epistemology is concerned with how a person discovers the nature of their reality (Wilson, 2001). The nature of reality from an African perspective is discovered through collective wisdom of proverbs (Chakanza, 2000). Smylie, Martin, Kaplan-Myrth, Steel, Tait and Hogg, (2004) state that wisdom as indigenous knowledge is formed through a relational process that involves sharing stories. As the basis of knowledge creation, these stories are ways of imparting knowledge on indigenous processes and values; for example, proverbs that provide advice on marriage rites and behaviour (Bennett, 1995). My epistemology supports the idea that gender

researched in relation to coaching and leadership emphasises relational interaction and reflects socially constructed processes. Such relational processes can be about how members of a community understand gender (Kalu, 1996).

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The table below outlines the elements that have informed my ontological and epistemological perspectives. Shawn Wilson (2000) identified that in engaging with indigenous research there are questions that need to be addressed in implementing an indigenous research paradigm, I have used such questions to outline the characteristics of indigenous research. Ontology and epistemology are the same (appendix 3) because both are informed by highly relational knowledge

and experiences. Relationships and shared knowledge are evident both in how I think about my reality and what I believe is real in the world.

Table 2: The characteristics of an Indigenous Paradigm

The characteristics of an Indigenous Paradigm:	
Ontology How did I think about my reality? How do I know what I know?	I am Zambian and have grown up and been immersed in the Zambian culture. I have been raised in a culture where spirituality and religion are experienced through a church community. The knowledge I have acquired is shared and acquired through oral traditions and teachings passed down through parents and elders. Stories are what keep these traditions alive. I am passing this on to the next generation of family members. I have experienced interconnectedness through rites of passage such as marriage. I associate myself with this reality and recognise that reciprocity of these relationships are what give meaning to my reality. I cannot disentangle myself from this reality that is relational
Epistemology What do I believe is real in the world?	I believe in the values and traditions that are defined by my upbringing following Ubuntu principles. The relationships within my community in Zambia are reflective of this worldview through the way we interact collectively in raising children, looking after elders and extended family members
Methods applied How am I using my ways of thinking?	I have recognised that storytelling; collective conversations as they occur in my church community are familiar means of communication within the Zambian society. Seeking advice from those more experienced is commonly practiced. Showing respect for one another through communication, using respectful prefixes when addressing someone older or more experienced are part of my upbringing. I recognise these aspects as important within Zambian society.
Axiology What morals and ethics I am applying?	Important elements I bring to the research are about showing respect to the women within this research, using methods that are contextually relevant
Sources: Getty (2010); Karki (2016); Kovach (2010); Lavlee (2009); Wilson (2000)	

In terms of methods applied, familiar processes and systems of communication that are contextually relevant to Zambian are presented and discussed in section 4.5.

Axiological considerations are about considering others (Schwandt, 1998). The morals, values and ethics associated with research therefore become critical aspects of human inquiry, but also a defining aspect of research quality in terms of the authenticity of the research (Hart, 2010). The use of personal experiences as stories is a part of this axiological consideration. Care was taken to choose and apply methods that were relevant for the Zambian context.

4.3 My research community

This section presents the women that were co-researchers in this study. Acknowledgement is also given to the wider research community contributions from the doctoral team support as well as informal conversations with family, and

colleagues within my personal network. This is in keeping with my indigenous ontological and epistemological position outlined in Table 2.

4.3.1 Doctoral support and informal conversations

The initial stages of refining the research involved consultation with my Director of Studies and second supervisor (supervisory team), colleagues on the Doctorate of Coaching and Mentoring programme (DCAM), and contacts in Zambia. The supervisory team and DCAM colleagues were instrumental in challenging my initial thinking, and critical to addressing key issues concerning the research paradigm, methodology and ethical processes (Appendix 4) presents some ideas following such a process of constructive reflection. I was asked uncomfortable, yet necessary, challenging questions about articulating the critical lens of the study and being very clear what an indigenous focus entailed in terms of the methodology applied.

Informal conversations took place within my personal network of Zambian colleagues and family members. These conversations included a Zambian woman as coach recommended by one of the women participating in this study. The conversation helped me to refine the context chapter on socio-cultural factors affecting Zambian women. Other informal conversations with men and women in my network proved useful in enabling recommendations for potential research co-researchers. The conversations were important in establishing the interest and importance of the research topic, which strengthened my level of motivation in conducting the study. The conversations were also helpful in informing the participant recruitment process.

Other informal consultations were carried out with within my immediate family (sisters and brothers) and within my extended family (e.g. cousins). I used the opportunities at family events to talk about my research. In these consultations people could relate to their own experiences or to those of people close to them, about Zambian women's experiences in leadership. This was evident in their responses: six women within this circle of contacts gave feedback about how relevant they found the topic to their own individual circumstances. The women immediately identified societal issues which I could relate to, such as the extended family attending funerals, as playing a key role. Some of the notes which guided and supported my research were as a result of these consultations (see Appendix 5).

4.3.2 Women Co-researchers

Zambian women in senior executive leadership roles are the focus of the study and this allowed for a diversity of women within different professional sectors and with professional backgrounds. 23 women were contacted and, of these, 18 agreed to participate (Table 3) and one agreed to be part of the pilot review. Although 18 women may be viewed as a small sample size, a review of indigenous and non-indigenous studies which have applied storytelling reveals that sample sizes are relatively small, for example 11 indigenous women graduates in White (2010). The women's coaching studies reviewed in chapter three also demonstrate the use of smaller samples of women participants. Skinner (2012) had nine, Worth (2012) 11, and De Valle (2014) 12. The criterion applied was that co-researchers needed to have completed at least six months in their current senior leadership role. As leadership stories can span several roles, past and current experiences were also considered to be relevant aspects of their stories.

Table 3 indicates the range of sectors and positions of the 18 executive women leaders. The women had been in post for a minimum of one year and the women's positions were all at senior executive level with the exception of Mwila, Khondwani, Mutale and Mutinta who were at the cusp of senior management to senior executive level. However the roles in themselves were decision –making roles. For example as Deputy Director, Mutinta had responsibility for projects in one of the largest health districts in the country.

The women's sector job titles ranged from organisational roles in global and International positions, board level C-suite, and senior executives at regional and national level. The sectors and/or institutions included: banking, NGOs, financial, logistics and health sector, government and regulatory boards. The most senior positions were at Board level as Chairperson.

Age, marital status and parental status were not direct questions in the structured prompts used to capture the stories (Appendix 7), so aspects of marital and parental status came through in the stories as part of their experiences and while some women mentioned their husbands and children as part of the stories others did not. Verbal confirmation was provided that the women had been in the role for more than six months at the start of the session.

Table 3: Women Co-researchers

No of Participants	Name	Leadership Position	Sector
1	Chanda	Board Chair	Banking
2	Chibwe	Head of Project	International NGO
3	Chileshe	Board Chair	Financial Sector
4	Chilufya	Director Human Resources	Banking
5	Chiti	Consultant Doctor	Health Sector Government
6	Chola	Company Secretary	Regulatory
7	Kaela	Board Chair	Government Board
8	Kondwani	Branch Manager	Banking
9	Lubi	Director Bank Division	Banking
10	Luwi	Director of Finance	Regulatory
11	Musonda	General Manager	International NGO
12	Mutale	Senior Manager Customer Services	Banking
13	Mutinta	Deputy Director Health	Health Sector Government
14	Mwansa	General Manager Zambia	Logistics
15	Mwenya	Legal Counsel	Regulatory Board
16	Mwila	Head of Customer Services	Telecommunications
17	Mwitwa	Head of Africa global Division	Global Finance
18	Thandiwe	Company Secretary	Banking

Source: Author (2016)

The pilot story was undertaken with the key purpose of providing a framework for structures and prompts, and to identify any communication protocols of a cultural nature e.g. respecting age and rank as articulated in the context chapter (section 2.3). The pilot was intended as a face-to-face interview to align with the storytelling process, but due to inability to find a mutually agreeable time, the pilot was conducted via telephone and lasted for 60 minutes. The comments, as shown in Table 4, helped to inform changes to the ethical considerations and the research design overall. The pilot story was provided by a Zambian executive woman who works in London but was born and raised in Zambia, and regularly works in Zambia and other parts of West and Southern Africa as part of her senior executive role. The process helped to clarify several issues (Table 4), such as communication with co-researchers when capturing their stories, and confirmed some literature I needed to engage with.

Table 4: Changes informed by the pilot study

Pilot conducted November 2015: revisions to inform research process	
1. Concern about how to accord respect to my co-researchers. As a Zambian, addressing women who are older or with more experience, using the prefix “Ba” is part of my upbringing.	Chansa is older than I am, and I found I needed to use the prefix “Ba” in front of her name even though we were speaking in English. Respect applied in this way reaffirmed the relational focus of the study.
2. Helped me to confirm literature I needed to include e.g. women’s leadership characteristics, styles.	Although Chansa had training to support her promotion into a leadership position, she spoke about how having a role model was important. She also spoke about supporting others.
3. Helped me to clarify some of the prompts.	Leadership style, leadership challenges, traditional roots morals and values and leadership style.
4. Some of the challenges gave me an insight into the key words that needed to be considered at the analysis stage	E.g. respect, leadership challenges

Source: Author (2016)

4.3.3 Engaging the women to be part of the study

The informal conversations helped to identify potential women to invite to the research. A combination of snowball sampling and word-of-mouth proved to be the best way to invite the women. The initial invitations were sent via email using snowball sampling (Appendix 6). This process has been used in other indigenous studies by Noy (2008) and Chilisa (2012). The first snowball sampling email communication was sent two weeks before travelling to Zambia. On arrival in Zambia, text messaging and phone communication proved to be the most effective way to reconfirm dates and times of meetings.

Three women were recruited through snowball sampling, eight women through referrals from informal conversations with family members, and five were direct contacts from my Zambian network. Attending the 7am church service at my old parish, St Ignatius Catholic Church in Lusaka, I was able to catch up with friends; mostly women I had not seen for a long time. I used to be a key member in the church doing cleaning, Sunday readings and participating in volunteer community group duties for the St Vincent de Paul Society, so I had a connection with the

church community. Sharing my research meant I was alerted to women leaders within the community and advised to contact them, and in some cases the women I spoke to offered to pass on my contact details. Some of the names of the women that were recommended were people known through my extended family network and others were recognisable from their public profiles within the community. Hence the final two women were confirmed through word-of-mouth.

4.4 Research strategy

This study adopts a narrative inquiry research strategy. Table 5 below articulates how narrative inquiry was applied. The factors of comparison identify where the current research aligns with narrative inquiry, particularly in its focus on experiences and in the use of stories. The analysis also involves the development of themes and use of re-storying.

When narrative inquiry is about the lived experience of individuals told as stories, the storytelling involves a personal narrative being communicated to a listener (Creswell, 2006; 2014). According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), narrative inquiry can reflect both phenomenon and method, where phenomenon is representative of the story and method (inquiry) focuses on characterising the phenomenon. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) offer important guidelines in using narrative inquiry, for example: enabling best fit, capturing context in stories of the phenomenon, and method. It is important that the research is collaborative between researchers in such a way that there is both connectedness and shared purpose (Hogan 1988 in Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). A pivotal guideline of narrative inquiry applied to this thesis was achieving the best fit in capturing the context of the stories in order to present them as authentically as possible. This approach provides clarity. The stories are therefore referred to as the lived experiences of the women (Riessman, 2008).

Table 5: Characteristics of narrative enquiry research and its application in this study

4.5 Data collection methods

According to Kovach (2010), effective indigenous research should aim for congruency between the indigenous paradigm and the methods employed. This exploratory study incorporated two data collection methods: the first was storytelling, and the second used a conversational method (Kovach, 2010) which is referred to as the Focus Sharing Group (FSG) for this study.

4.5.1 Storytelling

In SSA, meaning is often derived from experiences through oral storytelling (Seehawer, 2018). My aunt's leadership story provided an avenue for me to use stories as a means to explore other women's leadership. Hiles Cermak and Chrz, (2017, p.157) states that: *"Stories are ubiquitous, fundamental to the social and cultural processes that organise and structure human behaviour and experience."* Several empirical studies incorporating an indigenous approach have applied storytelling as a data collection method, particularly when this is an inherent way in which the indigenous societies relate to one another. This is also how knowledge is shared and passed down through generations, connecting the past with the future (Kovach, 2010; White, 2010; Smith, 2012; Iseke, 2013).

Storytelling in Africa is entertaining and memorable, yet the power of the stories lies in the capacity to reinforce an African perspective and to be instructive in moral teachings (Tuwe, 2016). Stories are the medium by which cultural traditions within a societal environment are passed on and can be communicated through words, song, dance or all three (Cancel, 2013); they can heighten creativity and imagination and can be a learning tool that enables reasoning and understanding of knowledge and wisdom (Chinyowa 2004 in Tuwe, 2016). Stories have equal relevance when used to explore gender, leadership and coaching (Drake, 2013; Njobvu and Xiu, 2014).

In Zambia, storytelling is a dynamic and distinct aspect of Zambian culture, and other African societies that rely on traditional oral wisdom communicated through African folklore and proverbs (Taylor, 2006; Wilkie-Kangwa and Kapwepwe, 2014). It is also reflective of the oral traditions of Zambian society (Cancel, 2013). In Zambia the sharing and listening is done face-to-face, gathered together with others. Structure and prompts are used to mark the beginning of a story and to signal attentiveness. In the Zambian vernacular *Chinyanja*, a story begins with

“Panali” (once upon a time...) and the audience responds with “Tilitonse” (we are together...) to show they are attentive and ready to listen (Banda, 2015).

The prompts and structure shown in Appendix 7 helped to start the story, maintain the flow of conversation and bring focus to areas that could be explored in greater depth. Appendix 7 also shows that the prompts were focused on opening up conversation with the participants. I chose to start with leadership questions to understand the roles, challenges and successes. Outlining leadership in this way helped me to bring in prompts around customs and norms in relation to the each leader’s work environment. Questions concerning family were designed to bring in aspects of parenting and the extended family. Being a Zambian I found the ability to identify these prompts much easier as I myself was familiar with such aspects reinforcing the relevance of the indigenous approach. In most cases the session ran for one hour. The language of communication was English, although it was not unusual to hear phrases and expressed in vernacular.

4.5.2 Capturing the stories

The stories were captured between mid-May and June 2015. In order to replicate the **genuineness** of storytelling as it occurs in Zambia, the women were asked to engage in a face-to-face conversation. Traditionally, the storytelling setting is an open place (Cancel, 2013). However, modern life pressures meant that the stories were captured in a variety of settings, in order to respect the co-researchers’ time and schedules. The ‘participant’ sheet before each meeting, detailing the focus of the study, the process of capturing the data and the estimated duration of the meeting (Appendix 8). Some settings were in office spaces or the hotel lobby, but there were several meetings that took place in the women’s homes. In one instance I was invited to join the family meal before sitting down to listen to the personal story.

Being flexible regarding where the interviews took place was important to ensure all the stories were captured. Co-researchers ensured there were no disturbances during the conversation, and stories were shared from start to finish without interruption. All the personal stories were audio recorded (with co-researchers informed of this both in advance of the meeting and at the start). All the women consented to recording the interview (Appendix 9).

Following greetings and thanking the women for participating, each session started with an introduction about my research profile and interest, and the research

purpose was clarified. This gave the opportunity for the women to ask questions about the process and focus of the study. Ethical protocols pertaining to confidentiality were communicated (Appendix 9). It was also made clear that each participant had the right to stop the recording if they felt they wanted to say something confidential. After the interview the women were thanked for participating in the study.

4.5.3 Focus sharing group (conversational method)

“Orality as a means of transmitting knowledge and upholds the relational which is necessary to maintain a collectivist tradition”.

Kovach (2010, p.42)

This quote is used to refer to sharing within focus groups as a conversational method which respects relational protocol. In African societies, conversation in circles (also known as “talking circles”) is commonplace. Here the contributions of each group member are listened to, respected, and used as a basis to form collective knowledge - between the older and younger generation, for example (Chilisa and Tsheko, 2014). Kovach (2010) identifies distinctive characteristics that relate to the conversational method for co-researchers in a group. The relevant characteristics identify that the method is linked to particular tribal knowledge.

“Indigenous research recognises that indigenous communities develop shared ways of knowing guided by how they view the world, themselves and the connection between the two”

Snow, et al. (2016, p.359)

This kind of collective interaction is common in Zambia. For example, women often get together as a group to discuss how they can support churches through small Christian communities (SCCs) by visiting the sick, supporting people within the community at funerals and so on (Rasing, 2001). Church groups such as the Catholic Women’s League (Kalubi-wabo-Simushi, 2011) and other traditional groups that come together for traditional ceremonies, such as marriage rites, reflect such collective practices. This is where women meet and interact with each other and share their stories of experience as well as knowledge. The effectiveness of shared experiences within and for groups or communities of women is what this research used.

Applying the conversational method through a focus sharing group (FSG) was deemed consistent with the relational process of the indigenous methodology of study. Stewart *et al.* (2007) highlight that focus groups are reflective of a common interest among the group members gathered and will involve the researcher as moderator where group sizes are between eight and 12 people. The authors say that this method is recommended for qualitative data and is particularly beneficial for exploratory studies; however, the limitation of such an approach is the inability to generalise findings where group sizes are smaller. The live nature of group discussions can make it challenging to manage dominant group members and encourage more reserved group members. The next section shows the research analysis framework applied.

4.5.4 Capturing the group conversations

The FSG sessions took place on January, 27th, 2016. This was a key step in the indigenous process because it allowed me to go back to my Co-researchers and share the collective thoughts that were identified through the stories. A key characteristic of indigenous research is to feed into the process the opportunity for co-creation of stories (Kovach, 2010). Allowing the women to engage with this step was important and indicative of the relational approach that was intended. By gaining their contribution the outcome of the research would be more meaningful to the context.

For logistical convenience, the sessions were held at a central office space in a frequented business location within Lusaka. I used a combination of calling directly text messaging and emails to invite the women to the focus groups. Nine women confirmed but of these, three were then unable to attend due to unexpected commitments on the morning of the sessions. In consideration of work schedules and personal commitments, two FSG sessions were organised on different days.

Three women attended the first session and although not all the women knew each other, some were acquainted through previous personal encounters. Those who knew each other were able to converse before the group sharing session began and so the session started positively in terms of introductions and greetings. Three women formed part of the second session and this time the women were more than just acquaintances and the level of interaction was such that one participant asked me to share a soft copy of her interview script with the other two women by email.

Both sessions began with me introducing myself again to the participants and reconnecting by saying thank you. I had prepared PowerPoint slides to share the preliminary findings and using these I began by revisiting the purpose of the study and explaining the reason for the FSG. The preliminary findings of the personal stories were presented with a hard copy made available. The women were also given copies of their transcribed stories. An opportunity was given to choose whether the session was recorded or not, and the preferred option was not to record. The decision not to record was welcomed and allowed for a free flow of conversation and in effect reflected the way communication would normally happen when women meet as a group as highlighted section 4.2. I did encourage the participants to write down notes that they felt were important. These written notes were obtained from participants and supported the analysis of the collective contributions. In the first session one of the women who is a Board Secretary offered to take summarised notes, which proved to be really helpful. Personal shorthand notes from both sessions were also used to capture feedback, suggestions and solutions on the preliminary findings (see Appendix 10). These notes formed the key findings presented in chapter 7.

In writing up the notes I initially summarised all the notes together. In bringing together the themes I referred back to the literature review on coaching and the contextual literature to establish connections between the points made and the interpretation and meaning of these points. The process involved checking and cross checking between the notes and the literature. For example a theme that is identified in chapter 7 is *"Fear of Failure"* I arrived at this theme because I put similar comments together that mentioned anything to do with failure, mistake or embarrassment. Literature e.g. Bandura, 2008). I recognised the verity of the women's comments around failure as this narrative was familiar to me as well through my childhood. Applying an indigenous methodology meant that I could relate to the issues with a shared understanding.

4.6 Data analysis

Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) review two approaches to the narrative analysis of personal stories, identified as the 'problem-based' and 'three-dimensional' space approaches. The authors identify that the problem-based approach is characterised by five key steps: 1) **audiotaping and transcribing** the stories; 2) **reading and re-reading the stories** to familiarise oneself with the data; 3) **colour-**

coding the transcripts to identify specific aspects (for example characters of the story, settings, problems and resolutions; 4) **graphically ordering** the coloured elements; and 5) **sequential representation** of the events to reveal the resolution to the problem.

The three-dimensional approach applies the following key steps: 1) **Interaction**, where the personal stories are analysed, including both the storyteller's experiences and their interaction with other people; 2) **continuity**, where past and present experiences are acknowledged as well as the implications for future experiences, and 3) **situation or place needs (read context)**, which involves a review of specific circumstances in the storyteller's contextual environment.

The analytical process of narrative inquiry involves familiarising oneself with the data through audiotaping, reading and re-reading, colour coding or organisation of the data. Both methods involve the process of "re-storying" (Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002). The authors state that the initial stages of reviewing data in both approaches are similar, therefore it is sensible to combine steps 1-3 of the problem-based approach. The initial stages involved listening to the stories during transcription and looking for similarities and differences between the group participants and their leadership issues through reading and re-reading.

Analysing the narrative of stories enabled the identification of themes to allow for meaning-making (Riessman, 2008), and listening to the audiotapes presented a significant opportunity to maintain trustworthiness in the analysis and sense-making process. The three-dimensional approach allowed for a fuller analysis of both personal and social relational issues, as well as recognising the context in a particular manner by looking for very specific examples. Identified themes were re-ordered into the three broad areas of the three-dimensional space approach: ***interaction, continuity and context***. These themes are used to interpret and analyse the data, acknowledging the co-creation with research participants (Kovach, 2005).

Table 6: Analysis of Stories and Focus Sharing Group - Three-Dimensional Space Narrative Structure

Source: Adapted from Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002)

4.6.1 Transcription and management of the data

This section outlines the research process undertaken. Phase 1 focuses on the individual stories and Phase 2 revisits the analysis framework to show how the individual stories and FSG outputs were analysed and aggregated in order to inform the findings and discussion.

In phase one, the first step in analysing the stories began with personally transcribing the interviews. In this way it was possible to note and appreciate intonation, emphasis, laughter, surprise and pauses within the stories. Listening to my own voice expressions helped me to be more reflexive regarding my own subconscious bias. Laughter from myself and the women participants was a regular feature within the conversations, as we could relate to recognisable contextual issues (Appendix 11). Situations such as this demonstrate the relational approach that occurred.

All 18 interviews were listened to. Ten interviews were transcribed by the researcher to allow for a personal in-depth understanding of the stories. Due to time constraints, the remaining eight interviews were transcribed using a professional transcriber. The transcriptions and recordings were revisited continually to familiarise myself with the key issues, listen for intonation and verify key themes. Using the problem-based approach steps identified in Table 6, I looked for similarities, differences and complexities. Colour coding was effective to identify key themes in the early stages of analysis. As figure 6 and figure 7 show, the colour coding was used to highlight sections of the narratives that related to one or more of the categories (personal, social, past, present, future and context). Each category had a colour that was associated with the relevant narrative section. In this example from Chibwe the importance of the three dimensional framework is highlighted. The categories In this case green was highlighted because Chibwe was talking about raising children and helping them to develop. I associated this with socialisation processes. The grey highlighted a future wish, implication therefore linked to restorying. Turquoise highlighted aspects related to gender, in this case gender roles and perception of the Zambian woman's role.

Figure 6: Categories of the three dimensional approach

Extract: Participant ~~Chibwe~~ Head of Project International NGO

Interview Date: May, 2015

Time: PM Location: Lusaka Arcades Shopping Centre

Interview Colour codes:

Yellow	:(~~personal~~) tensions, internalised struggles, reactions
Turquoise:	:(~~Personal~~ /Social) gender roles, values and education
Green	:(~~past~~) socialisation processes
Purple	:(~~present~~) leadership issues and challenges
Grey	:(~~future~~) ~~Restorying~~ , implications, plot lines
Red	:(~~context~~) individual & collective implications of societal environment

Figure 7: Colour coding individual stories

■: I would simply put it this way. If you want a tree to bend in the direction that you want it to you have to sort of tie the rope and make it bend in that direction when it's still small because once it's a big tree, you can't do anything. Therefore what I am saying is for the young females I think everything should start as early as we can possibly start. If we are going to start giving them direction when they are more or less when they are like big girls they are already exposed. They will just think 'oh how out-dated this person is'. ~~Therefore, we~~ have to start early. I really do not have a definition of early at this moment but I think it is something that can be looked at. There are a lot of things that are happening around the female girl child. Before their mind is so spoiled when they are still sort of clean, that is the time we should start giving them direction and hoping that they will pick it up so that by the time they are big women like me they will actually know what it is that will help them.

■: One thing that I have learned over the years is that when you are a leader and a woman there is something hidden in there which actually also tells you to say you are actually also a mother. You don't bring that aspect completely but as you manage people you have to be a leader, you have to draw a line to become a boss, but at the same time you also have to be silent and be a mother. So a combination of all those actually has helped me to get over certain hurdles on my journey not everyone is

This resulted in the following preliminary findings categories (Appendix 13): the appendix shows the breakdown of the collated issues under each topic. For example the issue of socialisation was discussed under societal issues and contradictions alongside any other socialisation issues identified

- Characteristics and profiles of participants
- Sectors that participants are working in
- Leadership challenges experienced
- Strategies that worked in leadership roles
- Leadership styles
- Societal issues and contradictions
- Developmental areas within leadership

These categories were a key aspect of the group sharing sessions and reinforced the reciprocal nature of feeding back findings to the participants. Reading the transcripts repeatedly, I was able to identify the key themes using the three-dimensional approach to narrative analysis. The colour coding allowed me to identify specific contextual issues and re-storying enabled consideration of voice expressions to give voice to my co-researchers in the most authentic way possible (Appendices 12 and 14).

Phase two involved the identification of themes. Table 7 below highlights the analysis framework applied and shows how the key themes were derived. These three dimensions enabled analysis of the women's personal experience of leadership within an organisation but also enabled an analysis of the external systems within the societal environment which were the areas identified for exploration in the literature conceptual map detailed in chapter two. Continuity enabled analysis of past influences on the women's leadership, for example their upbringing, in terms of current challenges and future implications at a personal level. Continuity also allowed for the analysis of implications for women within wider Zambian society.

Table 7: Current study - key issues identified in the analysis

Table 7: Current Study - key issues identified in the analysis

Personal	Social	Past	Present	Future	Context/ Place
Women's values, challenged when striving for leadership attainment. Process of achieving leadership might be construed as outside group norms, creating personal tensions and internalised struggles, reactions and moral dispositions.	Socialisation processes, rites of passage e.g. marriage Hierarchy and male authority and how this affect gender roles, values and education	Gender roles, family values, educational development and personal strengths as influenced by socialisation processes, hierarchy and male authority	Identifying current leadership challenges and reactions to these challenges	Re-storying for implications and plot lines as informed by the personal and social sections, and leadership challenges	Individual and collective considerations for women's leadership development and implications for coaching in relation to the societal environment in Zambia, as informed by the elements in the personal, social past, present and future sections of this table.

Source: Adapted from Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002)

4.7 Reflexivity, ethics and quality

The key reflexive and ethical considerations addressed in the next section were instrumental in managing the limitations of both the conversational focus groups and the storytelling process. Reflexivity begins with the conscious examination of paradigm assumptions and the specific attention given to research strategies and methods, as well as how the interviews are conducted and analysed (Hiles *et al.*, 2017). It is important to articulate values and note any biases that could be present (Creswell, 2007). A strong argument for adopting an indigenous ontology and epistemology was attributed to honouring critical aspects such as the values and ethics considered in designing and executing this research. It was therefore important to acknowledge my own personal beliefs and values, my position as a Zambian woman, and my leadership role and career development in Zambia. It is also important to acknowledge that when inviting the women to participate in the study via word-of-mouth, using contacts, family and friends meant that some of the women were known to me, either from their public profile or through extended family or my church.

Ethical considerations were reviewed in terms of the institutional research conditions of Oxford Brookes University and the formal thesis process requirements (Appendix 15). The ethical approach is considered from an indigenous viewpoint and takes account of value systems relevant to the context. Research ethics that are important to indigenous research identify respect, accountability to the participants and the research process as critical components (Wilson, 2000; Schroeder, 2014).

According to Weber-Pillax (2004), being respectful and accountable within an indigenous study is an integral aspect of the researcher's approach to co-researchers, and the wider community that may be affected by the project. Significant care and attention was given in terms of how the participants were approached; and information obtained, analysed and fed back to the community. According to Hart (2010) respect is a commonly cited value within indigenous research. In this research, including the preliminary feedback within the FSG sessions demonstrated efforts to be respectful to my co-researchers.

Settling on an indigenous research approach was, in itself, an ethical consideration with respect to the women participating. It was important to acknowledge the cultural context and apply methods that Zambian women would find appropriate and that would honour each personal "story". Reciprocity is part of Zambian culture, seen through the accepted practice of living with extended family, and sharing is reflected through meals and traditional ceremonies of marriage and death (Taylor, 2006). Relational accountability is also important and refers to aspects such as "*how is the researcher fulfilling their role?*" (Wilson, 2000, p.178) and what Weber-Pillax (2004, p. 80) refers to "*the natural laws and principles of ethics*" (for example, sharing and respect).

One of the challenges of narrative research methods is reliability and validity. Narrative studies use trustworthiness as a quality check, as the subjective nature of narrative data makes it challenging to identify the validity (Loh, 2013). In evidencing the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), Loh highlights trustworthiness criteria and techniques such as member checks as a means of ensuring internal credibility. Member checks involve thematic findings to be related back to the co-researchers in the event that clarification of context or interpretation is needed (Loh, 2013). Citing Creswell (2009), Loh articulates that member checks are one way to re-engage research participants, allowing them to add context to the themes

identified or provide alternative viewpoints. However, Loh goes on to qualify this point and asserts that this type of member checking can also allow the researcher to extend the analysis and interpretation of the participants and incorporate this in the analysis (Loh, 2013).

The focus sharing group sessions served an equivalent of member checks and allowed for a level of internal credibility to be acknowledged. Academic/ethical research considerations were focused on the procedural administrative issues of managing the research and the duty of care to the participants, given that they were sharing personal stories. For example, the snowball sampling process relied on my own network at the first stage of recruitment, with subsequent referrals made to interested participants. The participant sheet gave referral contacts the choice to opt in to ensure that participation was voluntary (Appendix 8). The consent form presented an open and transparent process of how the data would be collected and used within this study (Appendix 9).

Personal stories can sometimes highlight or invoke very difficult situations for the storyteller. A plan of action for dealing with this was put in place by recognising relevant institutions within the research location to which the women could be referred in any such eventuality.

4.8 Methodological limitations

The contextual nature of this study meant that there are limitations that need to be considered in relation to location and focus. Participants were all based in the capital city, Lusaka, so were not representative of other geographical regions in Zambia. Leadership experiences could be significantly different e.g. in more remote locations reflecting different complexities. In justifying an indigenous methodology, the importance of the relational characteristics of such an approach is critical to ensuring aspects of trustworthiness and creating opportunities to reengage with my co-researchers e.g. member checking. However, time and cost constraints meant that member checking only took place once, as not all researchers could attend the FSG sessions and there was no opportunity to run alternative iterative sessions. The opportunity to run several iterative sessions may have refined the collective contributions further.

Arguably my co-researchers all live in the suburbs of a major town or have lived and had some experience and exposure to international environments. Their profiles may at first glance reflect the social status of women that are privileged

and have grown up in the city. This is true to some extent, as the findings reveal in the next chapters that these women's experiences may be quite different to women in the rural areas. However, it is also important to note that in some instances the leadership journey for the women in this study did not necessarily begin from a background of privilege; they grew up in and experienced challenging circumstances before their circumstances may have changed.

4.9 Chapter summary

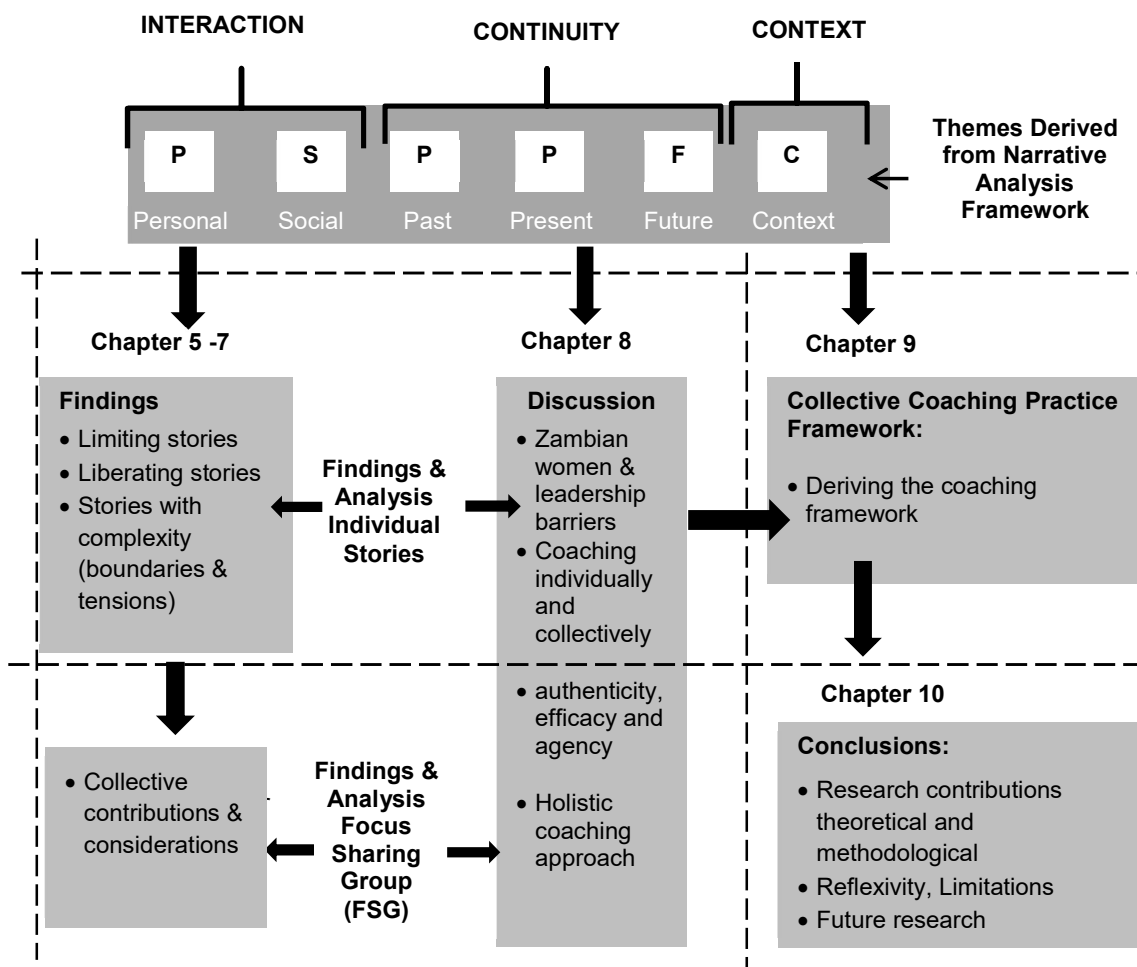
Overall, this chapter communicates the importance of using an indigenous approach, which relies on exploring participant experiences, in undertaking this study. The researcher's role as empathetic and knowledgeable about Zambia reinforces the justification for choosing an indigenous approach over alternative options such as IPA. This positioning is indicative of the data collection methods selected and applied which were storytelling and focus sharing group (conversational method) underpinned by a narrative inquiry research strategy and narrative analysis of the data. It is also indicative of the type of ethical and quality considerations that were relevant, in particular, how participants were approached and the flexibility required which enabled a switch from snowball sampling to word-of-mouth, or respecting the choice not to record the session and take notes. This proved to be more conducive to the context. The nature of the sample group of women invited time constraints in not being able to undertake iterative FSG sessions, and these limitations are acknowledged.

Chapter 5: Limiting and Liberating Stories

The next five chapters present the findings (5-7), discussion (8) and conclusions (9) (Figure 8). The themes addressed in the findings chapters focus on limiting and liberating stories, stories with complexity and the FSG contributions. In each of the findings chapters, themes extracted from the analysis are presented and supported by relevant extracts from the personal stories and collective contributions. Each themed section is consolidated with a brief discussion before concluding with an overall summary.

Chapter five begins with an overview of the women's personal attributes and characteristics (5.1) followed by analysis of the stories and FSG findings, which are organised to highlight limiting stories (5.2) and liberating stories (5.3).

Figure 8: Relationship between Narrative Framework of Analysis and Findings



5.1 The co-researcher community

This section is an acknowledgement of the support received from the women in this research and, by way of respecting the indigenous research approach, the women are presented using a combination of my perceptions, noted when listening to and transcribing the stories, and factual details gleaned from their stories (Appendix 11). In a manner consistent with the conversational method (Kovach, 2010), the women within this study are introduced to show connection and relationship between researcher and participants. In keeping with University ethical protocols, the women are not referred to by their real names but with alternative Zambian names as presented in the methodology chapter: Chanda, Chibwe, Chileshe, Chilufya, Chiti, Chola, Kaela, Kondwani, Lubi, Luwi, Musonda, Mutale, Mutinta, Mwansa, Mwenya, Mwila, Mwitwa and Thandiwe.

5.1.1 Personal attributes, education and life perspectives

The purpose of this section is less about providing generic profiles and more focused on giving a flavour of characteristic insights that are helpful in getting to know and understand the women involved (the personal attributes of the women are also presented in Appendix 16). The women are well-educated, and their educational accomplishments range from first degrees to postgraduate level education; in most cases a Master's qualification as an MBA or specialist Masters. Other forms of education included professional development courses. In the stories, there are frequent references to parents (including uncles/aunts and grandparents acting in a parental role) and the encouragement and support the women received in pursuing and completing their education.

Being well-educated does not necessarily reflect a privileged background for all of the women. Chanda and Mwitwa were orphaned early in their childhood but had strong family support that enabled them to move forward in their achievements. This is consistent with the contextual chapter literature on orphanhood (Kyalo, 2012).

In terms of life perspectives, what stands out about the women is they all made reference to helping others. They had a sense of obligation to the wider community either in supporting other individuals (Chola, Mutale); extended family (Chiti and Chanda); mentoring other women (Chilufya); sharing knowledge and experience (Chileshe); or the desire to make a difference in society (Chibwe). In listening to the women and transcribing the stories, listening to the tone of voice, I identified prominent words that were mentioned or that I associated with their character such as: forthright, resilient, positive thinker, motivated, caring and open, articulate, confidence, sincere, committed, assertive, honest, straightforward, self-starter, candid, person of integrity and fearless, some of which (e.g. resilient, confidence, open, honest) have been identified in studies on how successful women lead (Hadary and Henderson, 2012).

Approximately one third of the women who participated mentioned specific coaching experience(s) (Chola, Chilufya, Thandiwe, Mwitwa and Musonda). The type of coaching described was team coaching (Chola), one-to-one executive coaching (Mwitwa, Thandiwe and Musonda) and group coaching (Thandiwe) (Appendix 17). The experiences show some aspects about team coaching such as the importance of having everyone on board and the reference to the cultural setting of family. The conversations by the coach in the team intervention seemed to be more directive, as they involved the coach talking about work and personal lives and the coach sharing a personal story. The one-to-one coaching seemed to be as described in the literature dyadic and focused on getting the coachee to drive the process. In Thandiwe's case it is not clear if this was a group coaching session alongside the individual coaching.

The leadership paths of the women are as diverse as their job roles and work sectors suggest. For most of the women their narratives reflect varied challenges and obstacles in their leadership journeys but also resilience and strength in overcoming challenges. These are presented in the subsequent sections as limiting and liberating stories,

5.2 The limiting stories

The literature review established that the narrative diamond model (Drake, 2007) can be a powerful means of identifying self-limiting beliefs. Presenting the limiting stories is instrumental in articulating the challenging factors that seem to have affected the women in charting their leadership. The three broader themes

presented within these limiting stories are: gender stereotypes, non-conformity and rejection, and personal development factors for coaching.

5.2.1 Gender stereotypes

Several women in their stories specifically identified the nature of gender stereotypes and how socialisation processes for boys and girls may be contributing to the challenges that women face in their adult years. Particular insights on gender stereotypes included the difference in encouragement of boys to be great achievers and girls to be more reserved. Religion is used as a reference point for how gender roles are defined. This appears to foster an expectation that women should be subservient and is suggestive of gender power relations that favour the male child. In terms of raising children Mwitwa stated:

“... the way we raise children in this country, the majority of our girls and boys are not encouraged to believe that they are two equal human beings and that our expectation of each of them is exactly the same: high, whether you are a girl or a boy; humility, whether you are a girl or a boy; achieve, strive for the best whether you are a boy or a girl”.

Chilufya's felt that such stereotypes seem to be reinforced through religious interpretation. In an example from her pioneering work on leadership mentoring workshops with 12-18 year-old Zambian females, she states:

“...there was a girl who came back after the first day very excited and she said, ‘we need to do this with the boys as well’, so we asked her why and she said, ‘well when I went home and I told them [family] what I was doing, my brother [who was a couple of years older than her], said to me that I will always be subject to him because the Bible says that is my place and I mustn't aspire to more than that’... she was angry she felt it wasn't right or fair, which was interesting because that was the first time she had consciously realised that there were different expectations for her”.

Chanda felt that cultural connotations associated with gender stereotypes do affect leaders when these go unchallenged because there is an acceptance of the current status quo by both men and women:

“...the society and cultural connotations of our community impact leadership...because I find that generally you find that both sexes are

influenced by it. Women feel that only a man can be an authority and men validate that”.

The phrase “*not challenged*” seems to suggest reticence. This may explain the blurred boundaries between roles at home and roles within the workplace that Lubi alludes to. She identified how these differentiated roles develop behaviour that may be very difficult to change in a professional organisational context:

“...In fact culture plays a very big role. Most of the times us women are expected to be reserved and always behind our brothers... So even when you come into the workplace you really have to be deliberate to come out of that cultural context to really push yourself forward and to be at par with men. So it does play a big role”.

Being “*deliberate to come out of the cultural context*” suggests a conscious effort to change behaviour. Men’s authority in Zambia is a recognised aspect of Zambian culture (Dover, 2005). The extent to which women may feel they have to behave this way because of how they are raised is difficult to decipher. Musonda acknowledged that men may be just as affected by the societal environment as women:

“I know sometimes [there are men] who really just don’t [help] ... Men may not respect us sometimes when we are in these positions [professional positions] because of their background as well. I mean it’s a male-dominated kind of culture...”

A conversation between Musonda and her husband indicates that there is a strong likelihood that this behaviour, for some men, is occurring at a subconscious level and that this is the behaviour that they are carrying forward into the workplace:

“...so some don’t even know that they’re doing that...because it’s something that they’ve grown up with. Some do it consciously...”

AK ...you mean the men?

M: “Yeah, the men...they won’t know, I mean these are discussions I’ve had with my husband. Sometimes he tells me... ‘You know, some of the things that you talk about - I don’t even see them that way because I was raised like that’”.

The comments Musonda makes here and her husband's reference to his own upbringing shows the type of mind-set around gender stereotypes that may be affecting Zambian women leaders in the workplace. Chanda felt that this mind-set is influenced and driven by parents and elders:

“...the mind-set is being developed in the home at the needs of our parents and grandparents.

The role that parents and elders have in the lives of their children stands out as a key factor in gender stereotyping. This is seen as significant in the formation of the mind-set and suggests that socialisation processes and religious beliefs are potentially powerful processes that reinforce the persistence of gender stereotypes. Carter (2014, p.244) articulates the role of parents in providing cues and that “this is internalised early on and serves as a foundation for subsequent interactions”. By differentiating between boys and girls, boundaries become defined and could become the embodied standards that are measured against the self.

The gender expectations outlined in the findings act as a barrier affecting the women. The fact that socio-cultural factors such as religious beliefs and values can act as barriers (Cubillo and Brown, 2003), they are at the same time an important part of Zambian society and this seems to add another level of complexity to understanding and navigating gender stereotypes. When religion is used as a basis to pick and choose how these roles are interpreted within society, this may be reinforcing negative power relations between men and women. Boys are raised as the born decision-makers and heads of their houses (Dibie and Dibie, 2012). Gender socialisation focuses on how these roles and responsibilities are distinct to boys and girls and their expected activities within their societal environment (Stockard, 1999).

5.2.2 Non-conformity and rejection

Some of the stories indicate that there are very high expectations that marriage, as a rite of passage, defines women and the level of respect they are accorded. In other stories, there was a sense that there was an ‘either/or’ choice between marriage and a career, rather than both aspirations being seen as achievable in a complementary way. Chanda felt that marriage expectations can limit women's own sense of career achievement. If women believe that are not equipped to take

the necessary risks to succeed beyond the labels society assigns to them, they are in danger of being held back in discovering their leadership potential:

"I think my granny's dying wish would have been to see me walk down the aisle. Society sets you up like that and unfortunately for us in Zambia our culture does the same. So when women go to work, they are coming to work because they have a need to earn a living, not to make a career, very few of us go in to make a career".

One of the reasons for this situation could be that socio-cultural expectations identify marriage as a defining characteristic and aim of the Zambian woman's role. As chapter two established, marriage rites are of great importance within Zambian society. The passing on of marriage traditions and teachings is done by elders that are, in some tribal groups, selected by a mother, as I have experienced myself. While the specific details of marriage rites were not shared in the stories, Chola alludes to the fact that this aspect of Zambian culture is part of the societal environment she grew up with. She thinks that women might be affected because of a subconscious need to be taken care of:

"One of the challenges many women face today is that you get married because of this Cinderella complex, you have a certain notion about marriage and the kind of life that you will lead.... You can be a strong woman but you can be brought down by a man and then you can't assert yourself to rise to your full potential, so all those things are factors that really affect us unless you have an opportunity to get up or read or see someone who will tell you get up you can do this. It happens, there are a lot of women who are professionals who are just there hiding under your husband's shadow. There is nobody to tell you how to get out, nobody to tell you how to do these things or how to live around such environments"

The 'Cinderella complex' is a phrase coined by Colette Dowling in 1989 describing women's fear of independence because of an unconscious need to be looked after, and this prevents them from rising to their full potential.

The women's views show a connection between traditional values and society's stereotypical expectations of a Zambian women. According to Chanda, if you are not married it seems society punishes women for not conforming to these expectations:

“...you are not complete if you are not a married woman. Half the time I have been disrespected in my [leadership] roles... it’s because I was a single woman...they didn’t care about my capability etc. One man actually said ‘how can you trust her if she is not even married?’”.

This becomes more complex for women when individual choices about marriage (for whatever reason) do not conform to societal expectations. Chanda’s situation illustrates how remaining unmarried attracted a negative response and impacted on how Chanda was perceived as a professional, it seemed it was less about what she could bring to the role; as though by not being married she was a failure in some way. She goes on to say that:

“...women want to remain married and have children and the respect that goes with that. Society sets you up like that and unfortunately for us in Zambia our culture does the same. My granny used to tell me that a woman’s job is to get married, find a nice husband, and have children. If you work, fine, but get married” and even though her career success enabled her to invest in her first house, her grandmother’s response was *“...‘what a beautiful house, if only there was a man!’”.*

These stories highlighted that marriage and career do not seem to be given the same level of importance, and this may be reinforcing women’s focus on settling for marriage as their primary goal in life and not taking opportunities to progress their careers when they arise. For example, Mwila talks about how she prioritised marriage and not her career:

“...I got married so young... you don’t know yourself enough and you get swallowed up in the whole marriage. For me it took me a good 10 years to realise that, you know, there’s more for me [as an individual] and decided to further my education”.

Chola suggests the strong traditional teachings of marriage do not necessarily take into consideration individual needs and aspirations:

“...‘the traditionalist’ you know, your mother, will find people to teach you about marriage... it is such theory, it doesn’t touch on the kind of person you are and the kind of person you are marrying”.

The use of term *“traditionalist”* is significant here because it represents the high value that society places on maintaining marriage traditions, potentially to the point

of being ill-equipped to embrace alternative options beyond their personal responsibilities in the home and community, for example with Lubi:

“...many times when we get married there is that tendency to feel like you have arrived, until maybe something happens, which it did to me, when I lost my husband things just changed”.

Marriage perspectives revealed that the societal perception of the respected Zambian woman's role seems to be dependent on the ability or inability to fulfil gender role responsibilities of marriage, bearing children and keeping the home (Njobvu and Xiu, 2014; Nyirongo, 2014). However, if women are deemed to be turning down big career opportunities because they are not married, this works against women's career progressions to executive leadership. This creates a situation of gender bias that reflects social limitations and perhaps, in a more subtle manner, it could undermine a woman's confidence to aim higher. This type of subtle yet invisible barrier is what has been referred to as a 'second generation gender bias (Ibarra *et al.*, 2013, p.8), where second generation bias is reflected in pervasive aspects of the workplace rather than deliberate intention to exclude. Bias that is subtle and undetected means that both women and men may be oblivious to such pervasive barriers, and there is an opportunity to use coaching to understand some of the narratives concerning such gender-based stereotypes. In a recent study involving 12 women participants in the UK, Opoku and Williams (2018) highlighted that second generation bias was a barrier to career development and leadership. In an area that is still developing, Ibarra *et al.* (2013) advocate increased understanding and education around second generation bias. However, current literature is still focused on the internal organisation.

5.2.3 Personal developmental factors for coaching

When the women spoke about their leadership challenges, with specific reference to coaching, they were prompted to talk about their personal developmental needs at the current stage of their career growth which might be areas to be coached on. Lubi spoke about feeling isolated and mentioned that benefiting from networking groups and sharing insights is something she needed support in:

Lubi: “Being coached on? In my opinion... I am sure there are quite a number of areas. I think maybe I can talk about when we are working like this sometimes it feels kind of isolated and one tends to spend so much time on your job, so we need to create that atmosphere of networking,

relationships and things like that. That is what I have noticed. I would find that useful”.

AK: *“Are you talking about networking with your peers?”*

Lubi: *“Yes I am talking about my peers and other people at the lower levels that I want to help. However you find that you are always giving, giving but you are not receiving yourself and you are not being assisted”.*

Chileshe spoke about being able to understand how to influence people in a manner that reflects guidance and support:

“Hmmm, I think it’s really about coaching in influencing, in try to influence people to do what needs to get done. I am looking at it as a universe where everybody is doing something and I am in one corner, I don’t know what is happening in the other corner. However I would want to be able to influence in getting things done. In this economy so much needs to be done, especially business”.

When I asked Thandiwe to expand on what she felt she might need to be coached on, her response was about her developmental needs with respect to breaking the glass ceiling in pursuit of her next substantive role:

“It would be breaking the glass ceiling, you know. Maybe let’s go back. As women we are quite hard on ourselves, even when we have achieved something we think ‘no this is not the end game, I still have to get up there’ and I am one of those people. No achievement is good enough for me. I have studied throughout my career.... But even when I have achieved it, what next? I am at that stage where I am saying ‘ok I am just below Director Level and I need to get to Director Level’. However, the reality of the situation is unless I completely move away from my profession there really is no way for me to get there and the structure is limiting, there is no job that I can do at the Director level unless they just decided to make me a Director. Every other position has a hierarchy but mine doesn’t That is where I need the coaching ...how do I get there? So I am asking my friends...where are the contacts and what do I need to do?”

For Mwansa, it was more about coaching for her management style in leading people:

“I think how to put myself in the other person’s shoes and therefore behave and react to certain things in that way, and not be impatient because the other person can’t see the solution I see. I think it’s ‘this so easy, right, so why can’t they see it?’ This is still an area that would help me because I sometimes get impatient and can’t understand why the person is thinking like this when it’s very clear”.

For Mwansa, Thandiwe, Lubi and Chileshe, it seems that they are receptive to being supported to develop further. The issues they identify here are limitation in networking, feeling isolated and lack of promotional opportunities, which are similar to perspectives identified in coaching (Leimon *et al.*, 2011) and leadership (Hadary and Henderson, 2012) literature, showing some synthesis with women working in Western-influenced organisations.

5.3 The liberating stories

A number of the women (Chanda, Chileshe, Mutale and Chiti) pointed out that their success, in part, was due to their parent(s) playing a pivotal role in getting them to focus on education, school and achieving to the best of their ability alongside other personal aspirations. The positive references to education are an empowering mechanism. Encouragement, spirituality and faith, professionalism, values and community support helped some of the women build confidence and develop resilience.

5.3.1 Education and parental support as empowering mechanisms

For some of the women, this empowerment was linked to education. The importance of getting an education and being knowledgeable was a key theme in their stories. Recounting early childhood stories, the women highlighted the influential parent or elder that encouraged them to persist with their education. Although Chanda’s grandmother may have felt that marriage was important, an education was just as important:

“My grandmother would say a woman’s job was to get married, but she was just as passionate about me going to school, getting an education and getting a good job”.

In most cases it was with the notion that the women needed to strive to be independent and, in certain instances, for example, in Chileshe’s case, she was encouraged her to learn and supported her education:

“...Long before it became a trend, I [was] a recipient of affirmative action. My father made sure I went to school; first he taught me at home. He would make time for me; he would teach me English when everybody didn't know what it was. He would buy me books. In fact, he sold his car at one point to send me to school. So that is how determined he believed in supporting me”.

For Mutale, education was encouraged to reduce the dependency of having to marry in order to be looked after; the point being that a good education would facilitate that independence:

“...for me, my father would say you know you need to get educated, make sure you do very well in school you know not just going to school so you can have some minimal level of education. You have to be able to look after yourself to stand on your own you know you are not going to look for a man to look after you”.

In both Chileshe's and Mutale's cases, education was encouraged and supported with the purpose of enabling them to achieve beyond their expected societal obligations as women, suggesting that they were deliberately encouraged to achieve beyond the societal expectation of marriage as their ultimate goal in life. In these two examples, the women's parents were educated. However, even where parents didn't have the privilege of an education themselves, they still promoted educational knowledge as a core part of their daughter's upbringing. Chiti recalled:

“...my earliest memories are always of my mum, she never had much of an education, but she realised the importance of education and she worked hard”.

Education appears to have influenced Mutale. She acknowledged that an international education and the timing of the education abroad have influenced her perspective on Zambian culture and also how she leads:

“...one of the things that have had an influence on me as well is because I went to school outside the country [Canada] so I think that has an impact on how I view Zambian culture. It was in my early 20s when I was really beginning to know who I was, so it has had an impact”.

In Mutale's case, the age at which she was exposed to a different culture (early 20s), played a key part in her receptiveness to new experiences and how they

shaped her thinking. Her specific reference to going to school outside the country means she had a point of comparison between the cultures in Canada and Zambia. Parental support was important, and this type of encouragement at an early age is also what spurred Chileshe to want to achieve more for herself, including an MBA (Appendix 16):

“...it was the specific push and encouragement that I got from my Dad, the recognition that I got that really spurred me on. This education that I had acquired was not enough, it led me into a mind-set, where I told myself it wasn't enough”.

An important finding is that education had an empowering effect and helped to shape Mutale and Chileshe's perspectives who they are and who they wanted to be. In Chileshe's case, education empowered her to aim for a higher goal. Another important aspect is that there is recognition of the influence of education at an early age. Early educational development, particularly for girls, is seen as positive for women's future contribution in the formal work environment (Mwanza, 2015).

Another important finding is the importance attached to the parental role (father, grandmother and mother). All four women make specific reference to the encouragement of parents in getting an education. Parental advice and support in education were seen as critical to the development of the women in their early childhood, particularly in framing positive messages (about education). It is evident from the individual extracts that education opened up choices beyond marriage expectations and encouraged them to work to be independent (e.g. Mutale). It also shows the high value that the parents attached to knowledge development for their daughters. The positive narrative of encouragement and focus on strongest values and competencies has been associated with positive psychology (Seligman and Csikzentmihalyi, 2000).

5.3.2 Spirituality and faith as anchors

Religious faith was noted in the co-researcher stories as being an important part of their value system and as a source of strength when facing challenges. This section uses the terms religion, faith and spirituality as the terms were used by the women in their stories. The use of the terms may have nuanced meanings, but in this section I use these terms to reflect the focus on God, Christian beliefs, philosophical beliefs, worldviews, and association with ancestral spirits. Luwi's, Mwenya's and Mwitwa's insights show the influence that such values can have on

reinforcing self-agency, self-confidence and personal value systems. With reference to a personal value system, Luwi identified the role that faith has in her ability to lead ethically:

“...I must bring into play here the fact that I am a person of faith. So that in terms of ethics, other than professional ethics, my faith does play a major role. It would be easy to say yes to certain things perhaps and say ok, no one will find out let me just say yes, but then there is my faith as well. That is very important to me”.

In some stories I was able to pick up on repeated references to religion and probe these.

AK: *“I did pick up on the fact that you mentioned religion a couple of times and you mentioned ethics and values. To what extent has religion played a key part in how you lead?”*

Mwenya: *“It has played a central part. In fact, when I talked about the value system, really at the end of the day all the principles that I have regarding my work emanates from my religious upbringing and also my own religious uptake of the reason behind who I am.”*

I had another opportunity to probe about religion when listening to Mwitwa, who felt that religion through use of the Bible has an important role to play in leadership.

AK: *“Religion obviously plays a big part in your life as you have referred to this several times. To what extent do you think religion has played a part in your leadership? How have you used it...how do you use religion?”*

Mwitwa: *“So there are...books that I absolutely love and I read and re-read every year. One is the Bible. I think it is the greatest book on management that there is today. In the Bible there are battles, there are corporate struggles.... everything that you need is in the Bible. If you read it and really interpret it for yourself and re-read it there are lessons and those lessons feed how you go into a corporate board room but they also feed you in terms of having the strength and the discernment to be able to manage your life. So the Bible is a great resource for me.”*

In terms of how Mwitwa uses the Bible, she quoted a favourite Bible verse she has used when she needed to build courage and self-confidence, taken from the book of Joshua, 1 Chronicles: 28 – “David also said to Solomon his son, be strong and

courageous and do the works, do not be afraid or discouraged for the Lord my God is with you”.

“So honestly Anna even when I am going into the board room, there are some interviews, board room situations you are walking into...I will go in there with my technical knowledge and then I will put on my armour, my spiritual armour, but you have to have your technical knowledge”.

For Lubi, her religious faith was an anchor in the face of challenges concerning her job promotion:

“Yes of course I do. As a Christian I believe that God is sovereign and everything that happens is according to God’s will even when I face challenges... I do use that as an anchor in what I do”.

Although religion was seen as limiting factor in the earlier stories, in this case there is a sense from these contributions that religious faith and spirituality can be a source of empowerment to overcome difficult and challenging situations. A key finding identified is how faith is used as an anchor to support women in challenging situations. The use of the term “spiritual armour” (Mwitwa) can be interpreted as facilitating self-confidence. Mwitwa also recognises the importance of being prepared i.e. with technical knowledge, where technical knowledge seems to refer to the practical tools she needed and spiritual knowledge to the cognitive process of problem solving, when religion underpins all personal principles (Mwenya). For these women religious faith and being spiritual is strongly connected to their personal values and there is a suggestion that these factors help to empower the women in navigating their leadership. When spirituality is embedded in worldviews, Integral coaching (Hunt and Divine, 2012) is supportive of such realities. This is a recent shift to recognising what spirituality and religion can contribute to executive coaching practice (Allen and Fry, 2019). The authors argue that workplace pluralism with respect to changes in the religious demographic landscape provides an opportunity to understand overlaps between spirituality and religion as these relate to organisational life and leadership. Elliott (2010) states that in an evolving world, how such beliefs and worldviews influence the coach’s position in a coaching relationship deserves consideration.

5.3.3 Overcoming barriers in the workplace

Professionalism refers to how individual behaviour, personal values and knowledge are played out in relation to a particular undertaking, and this has significant implications for an individual's reputation (Valente, 2014). The women's stories make consistent reference to the importance of being professional in leadership. The term "*professionalism*" was seen as a key aspect that could transcend socio-cultural tensions. In terms of professional behaviour, Luwi was emphatic that women should not have to use femininity to gain favours, but equally they should not be made to feel subservient in the workplace due to socio-cultural expectations, but that they should be treated professionally:

"... I would say a BIG NO to women who want to use their femininity to gain themselves favours and to gain a step up [promotion]...our culture is one where the woman is subservient to the man and some people would expect that as a women among male directors you should be subservient, again I say NO! We are all [men and women] here as professionals serving the nation, so don't start kowtowing".

"...maintaining a good reputation is very important, it will see you through all manner of things. It will get you jobs. Once people know you are professional you are reliable, you are consistent in your delivery, that will take you a long way, so reputation is key and that covers both within organisations and well as with your social life".

According to Mwitwa, she establishes boundaries in order to project a professional approach:

"... [It's about setting] those boundaries and you have to adhere by those standards...and once you do that it's very easy to deflect things that don't fit within [those boundaries]. [For example] if the guys said to me after a hard day, let's go out to dinner or for drinks I would say no guys I really don't feel like it, because I knew that by going out for drinks I was putting myself outside of the boundary".

It is evident that values such as respect can be challenging but have also a positive aspect depending on the context, whether they are viewed from a communal perspective or on an individual basis. The term 'personal values' refers to values used by an individual. The women gave examples of how they were able to

overcome the leadership tensions outlined above because they were able to fall back on personal values that they were raised with, and the values mentioned incorporated honesty, integrity, ethics, hard work, reliability, compassion, empathy and humility. In Mwenya's case she felt that the value system she had been raised with was very significant in decision-making:

"...my own principles as a person, the value system that I had grown up in of honesty, integrity, fairness in dealing with people are the relevant issues that I should take into account when making a decision or in giving advice".

Musonda's experience in leadership is that honesty is a key value:

"...people never really tell the truth, you know we don't want to tell people that 'you haven't done well in this area...and these are the reasons' and yet it's not like you're attacking - you're just trying to help somebody".

"... be honest in your dealings and if you haven't done something you're better off saying 'I didn't do it'. This is reflective of her upbringing and with reference to her mother she states "...if you lied [to my mother] I mean your punishment was like triple what it would have been if you had just been honest".

For Chiti, honesty helped her to manage disciplinary issues in situations concerning 'respectful avoidance':

"...I learned that being open and forthright, you know, was easier than maybe umm, what can I say? Rather than going behind somebody's back and talking amongst other seniors, I found it easier to confront the issue head on. I think in the end even my senior colleagues had a lot of respect for me for that".

One of the stories stressed the importance of knowledge. The women acquired knowledge through education and further professional development. In Mwila's case it supported her ability to project professional behaviour and to be respected in her professional role; being knowledgeable meant that she was able to be confident and not bullied into silence:

"... my confidence comes from knowing what I'm talking about. You need to be very knowledgeable...because there are certain leaders who bully you into silence if you don't know what you're talking about. They will literally shoot you down and intimidate you, so you have to be very confident".

The earlier examples showed the difficulties of maintaining personal and professional boundaries. The term balance was used when discussing challenges that the women faced. Mwitwa's situation really emphasises this dilemma:

"... I always look at my life in a two-pronged way: there is my personal life which includes my culture, who I am, my family [all those things] and then there is a professional life. In many ways they overlap, but sometimes they can also be polar opposites".

Finding a balance has no set solution, but when asked how this might be achieved when women need to network with counterparts or clients who are men over dinner or lunch, Mwitwa expands on how this can be achieved:

AK: "... I mean in terms of, you know the corporate environment, to what extent can women given our context say, 'Joe lets discuss this over dinner'".

Mwitwa: "Very rarely, you know Anna..., I would do the come home for dinner, but I would say bring your wife which made a big difference because, again balancing my image as the Zambian woman when I am going to meet these wives at some kitchen part ... or something, and then they would say "oh she is the one who is always having our husbands at her house", so the answer for me was bring your wives ...and then at 9.30pm dinner is over. So these are some of the techniques and some of the management tools that nobody taught me...we need to transfer them to our women without turning them into what they are not".

Mwitwa's reference to techniques and management tools that are not taught supports the importance of role models and how women can perhaps help each other. Her reference to transferring knowledge is indicative of a wider care and concern for others. In addition, the kitchen parties that Mwitwa refers to are part of the marriage rites of passage and to be called out at such an event by other women is an example of the type of non-conformity and rejection (5.2.2) that can affect women. A recurring message in the stories is that the women sought to find a balance between their personal and professional roles. Mwitwa believes:

"... Women struggle when we try to separate them [cultural traditions and professionalism] rather than balance them and manage them. I look at this particular issue as if I were on a see-saw, so if you need to do some hard

things on a see-saw, you need to put your feet into the ground to get the momentum to raise it off, as you come back to land you soften the landing and I think that in every situation in life whether it is in the home place or in the board room you have to play both. It's actually an advantage if you learn to manage. There is a hard streak in women just as much as there is a soft one".

Mwila makes particular reference to asserting herself in a non-confrontational way between wifely duties at home and commitment to complete further study for her professional career goals. Simply being confrontational at home is not effective; she states that:

"we need to be smart... [Men] are not ready to hear these things".

Her example shows how she found the balance:

"...You know during the week I get home very late, by 19.00hrs so I will go out of my way to cook nice food [for my husband] on the weekend. During the week, I have help because I can't get home after 19.00hrs and start cooking supper and bathe myself and still look at my books, it's a bit much. So, it's those types of situations...in the beginning, [if the food wasn't properly cooked I would say] 'oh sorry I'll look into it'. You know just...that kind of subtle assertiveness of 'I hear you, but I'm not going to change things because I need this'".

These gendered roles incorporating which tasks and responsibilities a woman or man does at home is still very strongly embedded in Zambian society. A critical insight was given by Luwi when asked the following:

AK: *"...do you feel that you would project a very different persona in the office to home?"*

Luwi: *"...necessarily so I suppose because at home with my husband, equal we are but our roles are different and in those roles he normally takes the leadership, he is basically the head".*

AK: *"...so the context is completely different?"*

Luwi: *"...the [work] context is completely different. Here [at work] we are all Directors and heads of particular functions and to deliver there is no one in particular who can then claim to have headship over another".*

In Luwi's case it appears that, while she acknowledges the egalitarian view of equality between human beings (in this case with her husband), she believes that in the home each individual is undertaking the naturally occurring duties in their respective "job roles" as a husband or wife. The home roles, as described, suggest complement and harmony reflective of Ubuntu practices (Broodryk, 2006) rather than validating gender stereotypes. However, in the work context, it is very clear for her that this role should be egalitarian at all levels because there is a common organisational focus.

Chibwe seems to indicate that the strengths of nurturing behaviour, listening, offering advice and being compassionate, are sometimes necessary in a work context. The reference to drawing a line and becoming a boss indicates that beyond nurturing there is also a need to be firm. So, there would appear to be some internal role switching required allowing for this line to be drawn in maintaining leadership authority.

"...One thing that I have learned over the years is that when you are a leader and a woman there is something hidden in there which actually also tells you to say you are actually also a mother. You don't bring that aspect completely but as you manage people you have to be a leader, you have to draw a line to become a boss, but at the same time you also have to be silent and be a mother [listening, offering advice, being compassionate]"

In the home setting, nurturing behaviour is encouraged. Chiti took on her brother's two children without reservation because he could no longer provide for them. This is part of Zambian tradition; it is not uncommon to be raised by the extended family when the need arises. In Mwitwa's case, when her father died her extended family took her and her siblings in.

However, Luwi states that subordinates sometimes play on women's characteristic nurturing behaviour in appealing for a favourable decision for their personal gain:

"... I know that in the earlier years, say for example negotiations with the union...they [the employees] would always appeal to me as a mother and say, 'you know you are a mother' and I think over the years they have learned that much as they may think that I am a mother, at the end of the day, whilst we of course have to have a human face, we merely have to be professional"

The women's stories showed that the extended family is multi-generational and ever present within the family home. Chileshe points out that this is a situation that is part of the daily life:

"...it's the way we live, and if we live the way we do then we live in a multi-generational environment. At home you have your grandmother; your mother; your parents and dependants so you are already there [in the situation]. Living like that is a financial drain it has pressure on your little salary and as a result you are unable to make your ends meet, so how are you going to work with that?"

At home, showing compassion and kindness without question is done with natural care and concern. However, it can create tensions due to elements such as financial obligations to the extended multi-generational family. This can have a negative impact professionally due to the financial pressures this can create. Chiti states:

"... [the extended family can be] a stumbling block sometimes because of the expectations put on you".

Some of the issues identified here, such as the extended family and sensitivities in how one networks with male business colleagues, are still aspects that appear to shape women's workplace experiences. The balance between understanding when traditions and values can be helpful and when they act as a barrier is important.

5.3.4 Collective engagement

Some of the stories emphasised the importance of collective achievements, whether through family, church or professional networks. Lubi spoke about how the family structure she grew up in was always about sharing and working together in a collective manner:

"I think one of the issues is that for me I was always taught to be very mindful of others. I was always told 'when you have, you need to share'...Those things shaped me in how I lead my people. I grew up in a very big family and it was always about working together. It was always about teamwork".

According to Lubi this has had a significant influence on her leadership style, which she recognises is about teamwork and collaboration:

Lubi: *“My leadership style is a mix (laughs). I am one person that consults, so consultation is part of my leadership. I don’t sit here and do everything. If I have something I can call on my peer Directors. I do consult even my deputies. For example, ‘this thing has come so what do you think?’ I also prefer working as a team. Those are the two major aspects of my leadership.”*

AK: *“Do you feel it has come naturally as a part of what you do at home?”*

Lubi: *“Precisely, that came naturally that is what I do at home even at Church. I am a Christian and even in the Church circles that is how things are, one is concerned about others, you want others to come to Christ and share things and move the work of God forward and I also brought that into my circular situation.”*

In Mutinta’s case, the collective is something she felt she developed because of her upbringing and this has translated to her work within her roles in public health:

“As I came from a very big family people came from all walks of life to live with us, they had their own issues. The way I was brought up not to look down on anybody it was easy for me to go to a compound or slum area and discuss the options of what we are trying to do to sort out their health. You kind of understand or it makes you understand when we talk about public health being about what is happening in the community”.

These two examples show to some extent how upbringing has reinforced values such as compassion, care, sharing and collaboration. These are values that have been associated with Ubuntu philosophy (Broodryk, 2006) and show that the collective approach to doing things has played an important part in Lubi and Mutinta’s leadership roles and shapes their worldviews (Geber and Keane, 2013). Mutinta’s reference to accommodating people from all walks of life, discussing options together with the local people in the compounds, Lubi’s use of the word teamwork and her tendency to consult others in a collaborative manner are indicative of aspects of team coaching (Hawkins, 2017).

5.3.5 Inspiration through role models

Role models are an important aspect for women to help them move into more substantive leadership roles (Jayachandran, 2015). Chilfuya’s comment about women opting out of opportunities for leadership in Zambia suggests that the lack

of visible role models is a limitation. In the case of young Zambian girls in rural communities, this is exacerbated because their communities are not representative of the highest levels that women can aspire to and achieve:

"I think what doesn't help is that we limit ourselves as women. So we are sort of opting out at every turn. Because a woman doesn't believe she can ever be an MD and we see it especially with the younger girls and I can imagine in the rural areas as well it must be very bad when the most senior person in your community is maybe a teacher or a nurse, so for them that is their dream, you know that is their dream and even then it is not a very attractive dream given the way teachers live and the quality of life that umm men are able to offer them, you know".

Role models, particularly in parents and those close to us, can be very inspiring. In Chilufya's case her mother was someone she looked up to and her mother's career achievements were a measure of the success that is possible as a woman:

"... my mum was a very much a go getter, she was the first woman to be an executive director for the family planning association for the corporate world. I looked up to her and it made such a significant impression on me".

Lubi recognised that she could be a role model within her own circle of influence at the church:

"Even young ladies, you can have programmes. I run a mentorship kind of programme in my church circles. I do it for the young professionals that have been working for 2-3 years. We just get together to discuss a number of issues that arise on the job and just try to guide them. So you allow them to participate in the discussion and bring examples from the office and the sharing of ideas to create that kind of atmosphere where they are able to express themselves and exchange what happens from their respective offices."

Mutinta encouraged other women to follow her lead and emulate her through shadowing.

"most of the people in my team are younger than I am and I have to keep telling them that if they think I am doing a good thing they should follow in my footsteps, shadow me..."

For Chola it was important to use her own experience and knowledge to help her younger sister:

“Right now, my young sister has learned from my experiences. She’s learning from me much earlier and she is financially disciplined and is using her finances wisely to buy land. You can actually see that she has challenges at work but I can give her advice about how to approach certain management situations”

The importance of support and encouragement from home seems to be a powerful part of the leadership journey. Education has been liberating and empowering in allowing the women to be able to gain technical knowledge and work expertise. Values have a prominent role and this allows the women to be authentic, by staying true to their personal values. The reference to shared knowledge and experiences with others and relations with extended family is consistent with the collective nature of women’s engagement in the wider community (Muchiri, 2011). This collective nature seems to be a valuable part of what defines the women’s lived experience.

5.4 Chapter Summary

The chapter provides focus on the leadership challenges and strategies that the women in this study have faced during their leadership journeys. The limiting stories show that some of the challenges arise due to socio-cultural factors concerning socialisation, the role of parents and elders, and aspects such as marriage rites. These factors seem to be affecting women in the workplace in having to choose between conformity and non-conformity in relation to cultural norms and values. This points towards subtle unseen barriers suggestive of second generation bias. The personal development factors identified by the women revealed similarities with factors identified in mainstream literature on women executive leaders, namely: feeling isolated, limited networking opportunities and lack of promotional opportunities. The liberating stories show the importance of parents and elders in supporting them in their educational development, and the role that personal values, spirituality and religion can play in building self-confidence and resilience to face certain leadership challenges. The importance of the collective is expressed through the women’s reference to collaboration, teamwork and the nature of their roles within the extended family.

Equally relevant is the aspiration to support others and being appreciative of insight from others, acknowledging the capacity for leaders to act as role models.

Chapter 6: Stories with Complexity

This chapter addresses the factors that created dissonance due to the level of complexity in how they are viewed and interpreted in context. The themes explored here are respect, goal-setting, compassion and commitment and provide insight into how women experience the work place and professional practice.

6.1 Respect as deference and obeisance

Contributions are provided from Mwenya, Mwansa, Chibwe, Thandiwe, Chilfuya, Mutinta and Mutale. Their stories highlighted the importance of recognising the values instilled as part of their childhood and that parents played a significant part in reinforcing these values and ensuring they were practised. Mwenya noted that:

“... it is important for young people to realise the importance of growing up with the right values, and of course by ‘right values’ I mean values which are instilled in them by their parents, or whoever their guardians might be at the time, in their best interests, that will help them to cope with life later, and of course those values... to do with hard work, respect, self-confidence, are very important....”.

Amongst other values deemed important, such as hard work, resilience, compassion, humility, humanness and empathy, respect was the most prominent value mentioned in the context of the wider society. It was repeated 91 times within the individual stories. The manner in which the women referred to **‘respect’** suggested that it is viewed as a core value within Zambian society, particularly in communication and relations with elders, between a husband and wife, in managing people, and in terms of a mother’s role. Mwansa highlighted that:

“...in the African tradition, the big factor that we have and that we are brought up with, especially in Zambia, is to have respect for everyone, not just for elders...”.

Chibwe’s comments show how difficult this can be when communicating with elders:

“...for us to start answering an elderly person when they say you should do something was taboo, and those things have helped to shape me”.

Chola shared the same sentiment:

"I can tell you, for instance, when growing up you don't answer your parents back".

With specific reference to the workplace, respect as a value raised some negative implications for some of the women. Although Mutinta felt that showing respect for age or experience was useful, she felt it could also be seen as a sign of weakness. In Mutinta's case, she was a general practitioner entering a medical department where she needed to build up her knowledge base first, so leading a diverse district with nurses and clinicians who knew more meant she had to find a balance between respect and authority. Mutinta states:

"...respect for elders and older people, and others who are not older in age but older in experience, [when] they know something better than you...you are doing it because you want to learn and you respect that person's experience, that has helped me quite a bit. [However]...from my own experience...showing too much respect for those that know better [has sometimes been] taken as a sign of weakness."

In Mutale's case, although her role was as a senior manager, junior male employees (in terms of age and position) didn't show respect, as revealed in her communication with a particular male colleague:

"...in as much as you have a particular [senior] role when somebody, a male [junior], says something you have to be careful on how you address them because you are a woman".

Mwila voiced, from her own experience, how practicing respect in the form of traditional values can perpetuate women's inability to speak up:

"Respect is a good thing, but respect should not clamp down speaking your mind and your opinion...because even in the corporate world you will not do it. Even when you know you're right or ...sometimes you can say the wrong thing but you should be comfortable enough to say it and be told you're wrong".

Contra to women being accorded respect in their cultural roles, it appears that women do not receive the same level of respect in the workplace, even when age might warrant that the women, being older, should be respected (Mutale). From a values perspective, the reference to respect as not talking back, but listening when spoken to, is suggestive of gender power relations. In a work situation, not

speaking up could be indicative of moderating behaviour consistent with conformity values (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). This could have implications regarding the nature of the coaching process and the role of the coach and coachee where respect as obeisance is associated with managing hierarchical relationships and receiving expert knowledge (Nanglia and Nanglia, 2010; Garvey *et al.*, 2018). This may require a coach to understand when a non-directive or directive approach to coaching might be needed.

6.2 Respect with reference to resilience, strength and achievement

Respect is also important in terms of acknowledging women's capabilities in their mothering and nurturing role. Women are respected for their resilience in bearing children and the associated roles of motherhood in general. This seemed to be acknowledged in a positive, respectful and accommodating manner by men. In Thandiwe's case, respect for her resilience as a woman was evident in the pride shown by her uncle during her pregnancy:

"I remember when I had my first child I worked until the very last day and came straight from my office, went home and the very next morning I delivered a baby. My uncle was so proud of me. 'This is the way it should be done, you are a strong woman, and very resilient'... It's something that is applauded in our society".

According to Chilufya:

"A lot of our men recognise that, here in Zambia, motherhood and having a child is such a sacred thing in our society, ...when I was expecting my first child I used to be so exhausted, literally falling asleep sitting and the guys would tell me 'just go home we will cover for you...'"

Chilufya supports the continued practice of recognising women's contributions in those roles, because the respect is hard-earned, and feels that it is important for women to be given due recognition within society. She ensures the young girls on her mentoring programme are aware of the need to respect women in all spheres, in their personal and professional capacities:

"I think respect is something that we really need to maintain because it's not usually extended to women outside of their role as a mother or wife. It is one thing that I think we should continue because [when others for example call me aunty] they are trying to demonstrate to me that they are

being respectful which a lot of women have to fight for in the workplace. So I think respect is the one thing that we shouldn't be too quick to let go of. Respect [is the] one thing that we are at risk of losing in our culture. I have seen it a lot especially with this generation...it's a social media culture. There are no boundaries, so one thing that I try to tell the girls [mentees] is that we have to be mindful that in our society women are respected within a certain role as a mother, as a wife, but in the offices women are not. A man will walk in and they will say 'this is the new boss' and they will respect him immediately, but as a woman you have to earn that respect. You know you have to work harder than them; you know, jump hoops and so on, for the people to respect you".

She believes that small things like using women's professional titles e.g. Dr. can be an important acknowledgement of their achievement in a respectful way:

"So I am telling them that you have to be mindful that these women have worked so hard to get where they are, when you take away their title, whether it's Dr or whatever it is, it can be experienced as disrespect".

These contributions show that although women have received respect due to their achievements, strengths, positive characteristics outside of the workplace, these are not the competencies on which they are encouraged and promoted to senior leadership roles. In their homes and communities, women are recognised for the important contributions they make, but in the organisational context their strengths and competencies are overlooked (Nyirongo, 2014) and do not seem to be acknowledged with the same level of seriousness. The lack of recognition of the key strengths and capabilities women bring to the workplace could be because they do not align with strengths that are associated with leadership styles and traits in the workplace which are more masculine (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell and Ristikari, 2011). Recognising gender differences has been the focus of debate in literature on coaching (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Ludeman, 2009) and leadership (Patel, 2013).

6.3 Compassion, commitment and the extended family

In the home, showing compassion and kindness without question is done with natural care and concern. However, it can create tensions due to elements such as financial obligations to the extended multi-generational family. This can have a

negative impact professionally due to the financial pressures this creates. Chiti states

“... [the extended family can be] a stumbling block sometimes because of the expectations put on you”.

Chiti took on her brother's two children without reservation because he could no longer provide for them. This is part of Zambian tradition. I recall from childhood that in vernacular I used the same word “mayo” which means “mother” to address my biological mother and my mother's sisters. I also knew that my aunts had a duty of care for me as I have now for my siblings' children. The women's stories showed that the extended family is multi-generational and ever present within the family home. Chileshe points out that this situation is part of daily life:

“...it's the way we live, and if we live the way we do then we live in a multi-generational environment. At home you have your grandmother; your mother; your parents and dependants so you are already there [in the situation]. Living like that is a financial drain, it has pressure on your little salary and as a result you are unable to make your ends meet, so how are you going to work with that”.

For Chanda, being orphaned at an early age meant that the extended family demonstrated a sense of obligation and took her and her siblings into their home without question:

“...If you look at the Zambian context and the extended family, when my mother died, we [the siblings] were in all these homes being raised by a very extended family. So it [the extended family] works, whether it works well or not is not the point but it works”.

Chileshe explains the financial burden of the extended family of one her subordinates:

“...you know you have this extended system [extended family] that is weighing down on you financially and you are unable to free yourself to do the work that you are supposed to do to my satisfaction as your supervisor... living like that is a financial drain, it has pressure on your little salary and as a result you are unable to make your ends meet, so how are you going to work with that. I understand that you are going to look after your brother and that you have to pay rental fees for your Dad, you have to

do this. So for you to get over this, because you can't change it, what if you reorganised yourself in this way”.

In terms of help, the support of the extended family is a very positive aspect of the cultural environment because it enabled some women to go and complete further studies and develop themselves without having to worry about childcare. Chilufya was able to study successfully for her Master's despite a having a small six-month old son:

“...when I went to do my Master's, my son was six months and my mother and my mother-in-law looked after my son because I didn't go with him. I didn't worry, I knew he was fine. Or when her child was ill she knew she could just drop the child off at her sister's or mother's house without having to negotiate babysitting, 'I can drop my kids at my sister's, I won't even call her, and I will leave them at the gate and drive off, even at my Mum's'.”

The inconsistencies highlighted in the complex stories are similar to the complexities of double bind barriers (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Ely, Ibarra and Kolb, 2011). The double bind paradox can create self-limiting beliefs because some women identify only two options, *“be accommodating and nice yet be overlooked or join the men and become aggressive”* (Sandler, 2014, p.63). For the women in this study, such complexities may create self-limiting beliefs where the binary options are potentially either to preserve cultural practices that are a fundamental representation of their roles in the community, or to side-step such practices and be rejected. This is an aspect that coaches would need to be aware of. Acknowledging a complementary link between socio-cultural roles outside of work and women's abilities in the workplace could be an important step forward in an area of research that is limited (Grover and Furnham, 2016).

6.4 Goal-setting in and outside the work place

'Goal-setting' and 'professionalism' were words used repeatedly by the women, with reference to strategies in the workplace and how to use goal-setting to enhance career development and organisational performance. This may be due to the women working in organisations that use goal-setting as part of established Western management practices (e.g. banks, hospitals). When referring to goal-setting on a personal level, in terms of upbringing in Zambia, stories from Musonda and Chibwe suggest that individual goal-setting is more challenging.

In relation to the workplace, Chilufya and the women articulated goal-setting as what needs to be achieved. They also identified that relevant strategies [measures] need to be in place to achieve this. According to Chilufya:

“...if you are very clear about your goals, you need to come up with a strategy and support system that will help you achieve that”.

For Kaela, setting goals is something she incorporates consistently when it comes to resolving problems:

“...I’m looking after a very big organisation. And I’m looking after a lot of people ...when I’m going to solve a problem...I go there setting a target, setting a goal and come out with a solution and I’ve never failed”.

Musonda believes that goal setting is not instilled individually as a specific aspect of Zambian upbringing:

“Although for me in the situation of this project, I mean we all know our goals, but ...it’s something that we were never brought up with. Maybe I could say that because we don’t seem to know what we want to be. I mean as we are growing up, we don’t really set out our goals for ourselves. So I think that it’s a big problem. Yeah. So if you don’t have it at a personal level, even when you work for a company, you don’t...really don’t appreciate, you don’t buy into the vision because it’s not something that you are used to.... So even at your personal level... so I think you are right, I would say it’s because of goal-setting, yeah, yeah”.

Musonda’s strong focus on achieving the set goals as CEO of her project was in stark contrast to her opinion about goal-setting in Zambia. She stated that if you are not used to goal setting on a personal level, then it will be difficult to achieve on a professional level and that this has a strong impact on the current work culture in Zambia. One possible indication of personal limitations in goal-setting could be linked to the fact that the expectations in a traditional context have no set boundaries, particularly when considering issues such as the extended family. According to Chibwe:

“...tradition [Zambian] usually hasn’t got very set deliverables they just go on and on and on”.

Goal-setting is understood to involve a clear aim, where effort is expended and there is an exact outcome that can be measured or reviewed (Rouillard, 2003).

The example of the financial burden of the extended family and dependants shared earlier would seem to suggest that the multi-generational family commitments might make it difficult for some women to set individual goals. This could be due to the collective nature of the extended family circle that focuses more on the “we” and not the “I”, as defined in the Ubuntu philosophy (Thiemann and April, 2007; Khomba, 2011). As such, women like Mwenya attached great significance to the importance of setting personal goals that are career oriented:

“...it’s very important for young people to pay attention and to map out their future careers for themselves even as they are growing up”.

The findings on goal-setting present an interesting dynamic. From a professional perspective, the women here felt personal goal-setting was important, emphasising a more individualistic and intrapersonal viewpoint in addressing workplace goals. On another level, it was felt that the traditional norms of extended family commitments and values such as compassion make it difficult to practice personal goal-setting because it is not innate to the cultural setting. The incongruity that arises presents contradictory and supportive perspectives. The recognition that personal goals are important in supporting intrapersonal development is one of the key reasons for engaging executive coaches (Lore, 2002). But the cautious view about using such an approach in non-Western environments (Western, 2012; Shoukry, 2016) is inconsistent with the women’s expressed preference for goal-setting. However, this needs to be appreciated in relation to the uniqueness of each non-Western environmental, historical and cultural context. Complexity seems to arise when personal goals are in conflict with deeply embedded values and traditions. The assumption here is that there is a dynamic interplay between the personal self and the collective self, which creates an opportunity to explore a more balanced approach to addressing the socio-cultural barriers. This could be more advantageous in addressing individual and collective needs as outlined in team coaching (Hawkins, 2017).

6.5 Chapter summary

The chapter has highlighted that paradoxical situations where values and traditions can be both positive and negative are reflective of the complexity of the societal environment in Zambia. The desire to preserve values and traditions, versus the need to challenge, was expressed with reference to respect and compassion, and showed the importance of understanding the women’s personal and collective

needs. On the other hand, the preference for setting personal goals points towards an opportunity to help the women in addressing intrapersonal developmental leadership needs.

Chapter 7: The Collective Contributions

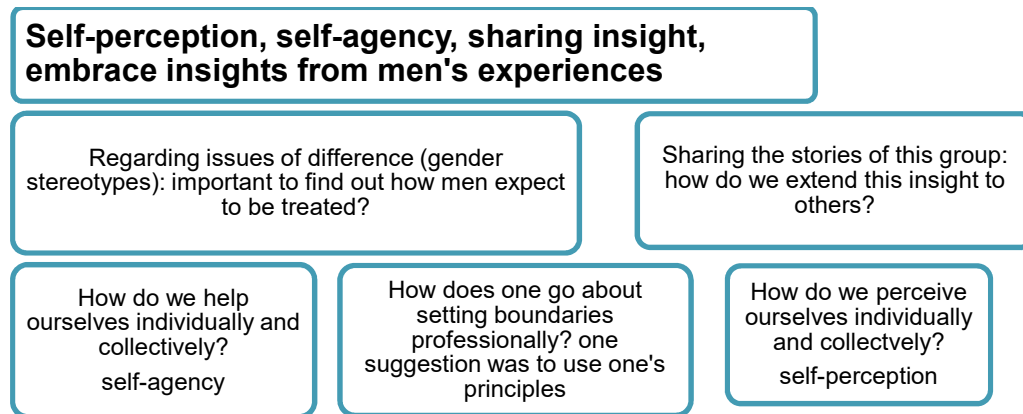
This chapter presents the findings from the Focus Sharing Group (FSG) sessions, summarised below. The contributions are drawn from the face-to-face sessions. Coming together for the focus sharing group enabled the women to expand on personal experiences and insights while reflecting on their challenges and on strategies that can help Zambian women. The nature of these contributions is collective, therefore the findings have been reorganised into five sections to give synthesis to earlier findings communicated in chapter 5 and 6. Each section heading represents the main theme that was extracted out of the specific contributions that the women made namely: self-perception self- efficacy and personal agency, fear of failure and rejection, conviction driving need and capabilities and traditional values and stakeholders. Within these sections, actual quotes, comments, suggestions made by the women that relate to the specific theme in question are shared.

The next section starts with communicating reflective questions posed within the group sessions. These questions were focused on the self, gender stereotypes and how to help others. This is followed by insights on self-limiting beliefs, most specifically regarding fear of failure. Subsequent sections focus on conviction and capabilities, traditional values and the role of stakeholders, concluding with advice to future women leaders.

7.1 Self-perception, self-efficacy and personal agency

The themes of self-perception, self-efficacy and personal agency arose out of the FSG sessions. Figure 9 shows the questions that concerned the group. The questions posed were split between intrapersonal issues related to the self in terms of perception, efficacy and agency. The phrases *“perceive ourselves”* and *“helping ourselves”* seem to highlight efficacious and agentic action both individually and collectively. Sharing stories seems to be identified as one way to start engaging with the issues of the self. The reference to ways of sharing insights is an acknowledgement of the collaborative concern.

Figure 9: Moving forward



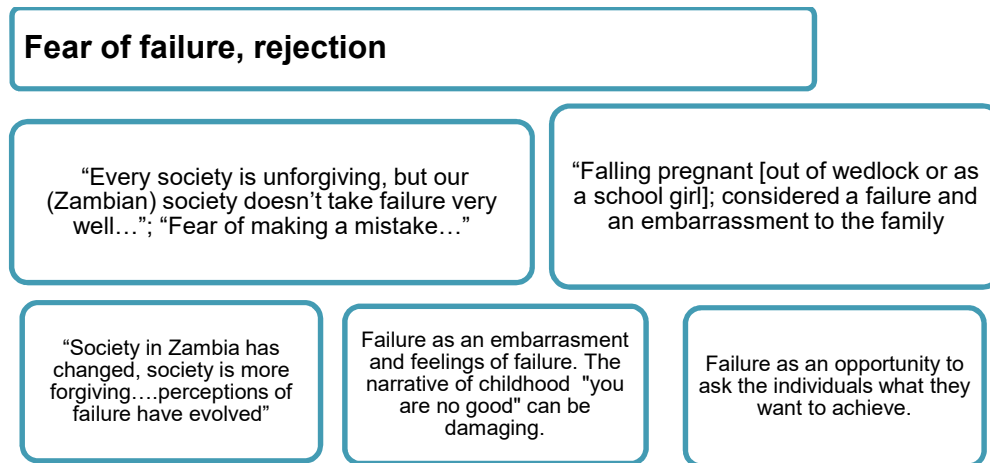
Source: Author

The women felt that getting a better understanding of gender stereotypes and differences between men and women requires joint dialogue with men. Such openness to incorporate a wider discussion is indicative of harmony and consensus which could be attributed to embedded Ubuntu practices (Broodryk, 2006), but also suggestive of women's leadership style, which has been described as consensus-seeking (Hadary and Henderson, 2012) and being informed through discussion and collaboration (Eagly, 2007).

7.2 Fear of failure as an opportunity

An important aspect for coaching is the recognition that failure can be seen as an opportunity to identify new learning for the individual. Mastery of self-efficacy is associated with overcoming failure (Bandura, 2008). In addressing the issues of fear, failure and rejection in the FSG sessions, the women felt that failure and feelings of failure play a fundamental part in inhibiting women's development. The words "*embarrassment and feelings of failure*" are cognitive patterns of thinking that are negative, and it was felt that this can potentially be damaging when failure becomes the focus. There is also the sentiment that Zambian society's perception of failure are evolving, "*more forgiving*".

Figure 10: Fear of failure, rejection



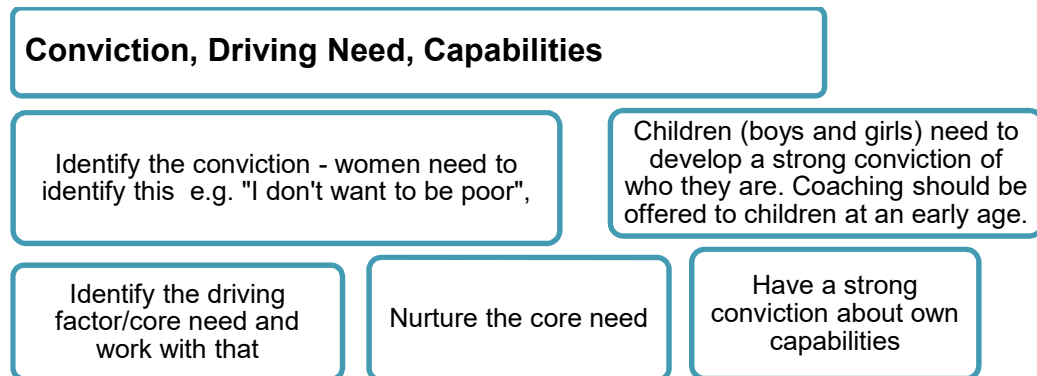
Source: Author

The women recognise that parents and those with a parental role are critical to the process of helping children at an early age to develop greater self-awareness. This is consistent with research in leadership studies on role identification and raising children using cues and values that bring out dispositions about men and women's roles (Ely and Kolb, 2011). In a similar way, this is how women's professional roles are understood within women's executive coaching (Skinner, 2012; 2014). The wisdom of elders is often encompassed in the proverbs and stories of oral traditions (Taylor, 2006) and these could be an effective means of reinforcing positive narratives (Law, 2019) through psychological coaching approaches that support adult development (Palmer and Whybrow, 2007).

7.3 Conviction, driving need and capabilities

In developing the self, the women used the word conviction repeatedly. It seemed important that women recognise their driving needs and capabilities. The inclusion of children highlights women's mothering instinct, their altruistic characteristics (Muchiri, 2011) and concern beyond their own challenges. The idea that it is important for both children and women to know who they are aligns with earlier comments on self-perception. The individual stories showed that positive narratives of encouragement from parents (5.3.1) were instrumental in helping the women to overcome barriers. Helping children to develop a strong conviction of who they are and what they can achieve through positive socialisation narratives could support the cultivation of agency and empowerment (Kabeer, 2015).

Figure 11: Developing the self



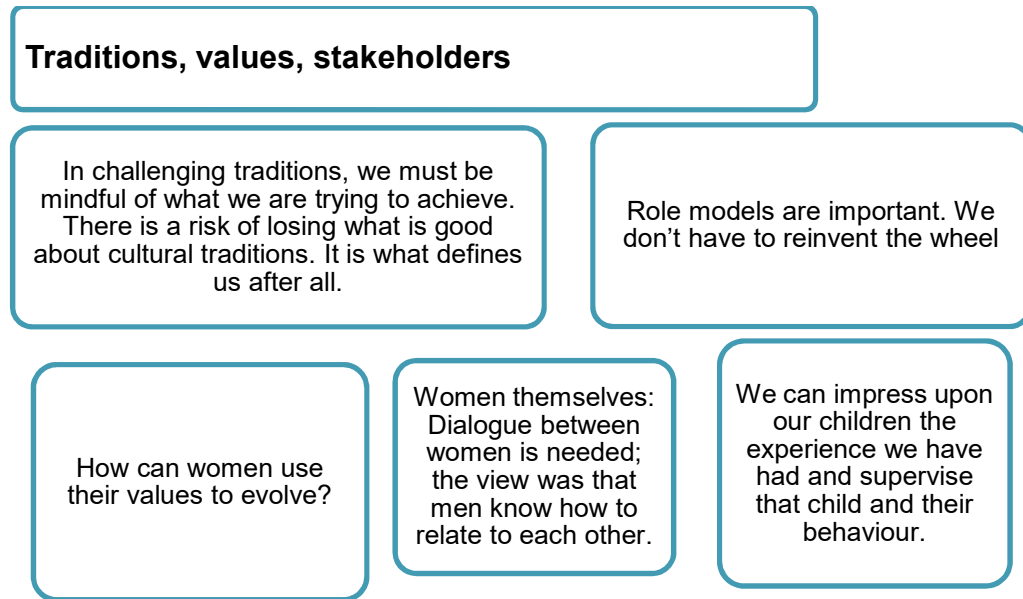
Source: Author

In Figure 11, the term conviction is referred to several times. The women felt that having a strong conviction of oneself is an important driving factor in what one can become. Conviction here seems to be about inner belief and suggests a sense of self-agency and taking an intrapersonal stance. Given the importance established about collective engagement, the challenge arises in distinguishing how the women can be intrapersonal and agentic and still remain true to important communal values. This may call for differentiated coaching approaches that can support intrapersonal needs, and coaching that can relate to the collective strengths of the women, as has been identified in team leadership coaching (Hawkins, 2017).

7.4 Traditional values and the role of stakeholders

The reference to using traditions to evolve leadership suggests women want to retain traditions that can be supportive. The findings above show that although there are some challenges that arise in relation to traditional marriage rites and values, there was also a sense of fear of losing what is good about these traditions. Life contexts have become modern and challenging, impacting on how cultural values are being perceived (Igboin, 2011).

Figure 12: Traditional values and the importance of other stakeholders beyond parents



Source: Author

The reference to dialogue between women creates an opportunity to use discourse as narratives to evolve community traditions and values in a more meaningful way when they are socially constructed and negotiated between individuals (Law, 2018). Personal and social values appear to be embedded in how the Zambian women enacted leadership in their personal and professional and community roles. Social values e.g. compassion, respect, humility, deserve particular attention. Coaching with social values can enable a more holistic understanding of how women lead (Eagly, 2013).

7.5 Future women leaders

The women expressed a sense of duty to inform others and share insights, which is a complementary finding in relation to research on the importance of role models for women who are aspiring to leadership progression (Leimon *et al.*, 2011; De Valle, 2014; Hora, 2014). The women felt that sharing experiential insights can help others to avoid making similar mistakes. Figure 12 exemplifies some of this role model behaviour through the open contribution of advice and strategies for upcoming women.

Figure 13: Advice and strategies (from the women) for upcoming women leaders

-
1. At a personal or Board level, even a wrong decision is valuable information to know where you are. It's ok!
 2. Keep being professional to be distinguishable
 3. Evolving is inevitable and taking opportunities that come our way increases knowledge
 4. Regular prayer helps to manage your own fear
 5. Listing your boundaries, push back and respond when these are breached
 6. Be honest enough to admit you don't know
 7. Know your needs to achieve goals
 8. Have the courage of your convictions
 9. Don't focus on extraneous influences

Source: Author

The advice reveals themes of authenticity, strong mindset, visibility, needs and goals. The statements 1 and 6 allude to a sense of authenticity. Admitting a lack of knowledge or making a mistake is a way to assess what you know and don't know. The opportunity to learn from mistakes is one that is attributed to women's leadership approach (Hadary and Henderson, 2012). Statements 5, 7, 8 and 9 allude to having and cultivating a strong mindset. The words focus, courage, achieve goals and push back are suggestive of agency and efficacy in managing oneself. Statement 2 and 3 reflect aspects of being open to opportunity, a decision that is often hindered by challenging hierarchical organisational structures and obstacles (Eagly, 2003; Carli and Eagly, 2016). Finally, statement 4 makes reference to the spiritual mindset, showing how important this is to overcoming obstacles.

7.6 Chapter summary

The opportunity for the women to reflect together generated significant insight about self-limiting beliefs that can hinder progress, such as failure and embarrassment. Personal and social values seem to have an important role to play in creating the balance between challenging traditions that affect women leaders adversely, hindering progress, and preservation of traditions that are helpful. Using personal experiential insight reflected on as a collective group is seen as a way of working to identifying what traditions and values should be preserved and which ones can evolve. Advice for women moving forward alludes to authenticity, strong mindset, visibility, needs and goals.

This chapter begins by discussing Zambian women and their leadership development in relation to identified socio-cultural barriers and considers how this can inform coaching when addressing GCBs. The individual and collective contributions established the usefulness of appreciating women as individuals as well as a collective group, and so this chapter discusses the implications for coaching individually and collectively. Considering aspects of self-perception and the desire to be more agentic and efficacious creates the platform to discuss authenticity, efficacy and agency from personal, professional and collective perspectives, before proposing fundamental principles that would need consideration when coaching women leaders in Zambia. The chapter concludes by proposing a framework designed to address the issues identified.

Chapter 8: Discussion

This chapter begins by discussing Zambian women leaders and identified socio-cultural barrier and considers how this can inform coaching when addressing GCBs. The individual and collective contributions established the usefulness of appreciating women as individuals as well as a collective group, and so this chapter discusses the implications for coaching individually and collectively. Considering aspects of self-perception and the desire to be more agentic and efficacious creates the platform to discuss authenticity, efficacy and agency from personal, professional and collective perspectives, before proposing fundamental principles that would need consideration when coaching women leaders in Zambia. The chapter concludes by appraising all the critical points in support of the research aim.

8.1 Zambian women and leadership development

“Context impacts on coaching (and mentoring) practice on a number of levels, producing functional complexities which are seldom explored” (Cox, 2003, p.9). This research acknowledges that the contextual environment of Zambia does have implications for the leadership progression of the women in this study, and responds to the call for extending, acknowledging and exploring social factors in the external environment (Grover and Furnham, 2016). The women’s experiences in this study revealed that oral traditions, values and beliefs are a pervasive aspect of their societal roles and they do affect their leadership progress (Nkomo and Ngambi, 2009). As the women navigate between personal, professional and collective, a significant revelation was that traditions and values, though important, present contradictory challenges and create some complexity (Kuumba, 2006). The findings revealed that perception of self with regard to limiting belief such as fear of failure is of important consideration in supporting Zambian.

Beyond glass ceiling barriers (GCBs) that have been identified to date (Eagly, 2007; Ibarra *et al.*, 2013; O’Neill *et al.*, 2015), both the individual and collective findings show that the women are affected by personal and social values related to contextual socio-cultural factors. These include gender stereotypes and socialisation, respect, marriage rites, religion, spirituality and Ubuntu philosophy (compassion, caring, collectiveness). Socio-cultural factors concerning socialisation, marriage rites and religion as impediments to women’s leadership have been identified in other studies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (Korkor, 2014;

Mwale and Dodo, 2017; Ganiyu *et al.*, 2018). This strengthens the case for expanding research on GCBs, to move beyond an internal organisational focus to understanding wider systemic factors within the environments that organisations operate in (Sharma and Kaur, 2019). This combined understanding could inform more perceptive interventions for women's executive leadership trajectories in Zambia. Coaches would need to appreciate these distinctive barriers and be prepared to engage and understand how they can influence the coaching process. In acknowledging such barriers, coaches can challenge their own assumptions (Peterson, 2007; Cushion and Partington, 2016). This is fundamental when coaching seeks to address systemic factors (Whittington, 2020).

Gender socialisation, through the formation and engenderment of gender stereotypes, is one of the barriers identified. This barrier is closely associated with parents and their use of narratives, influencing how gender stereotypes are perceived, interpreted and practised, both at home and in the workplace. The emphasis on influences on mindset at an early age indicates scope for a new focus concerning the age at which coaching could be introduced to address issues associated with gender stereotypes. Currently it has been identified that executive leadership coaching is most effective at the stage of middle to senior management and C-suite (Laff, 2007). Knowing when it would be most effective to receive coaching could shift the coaching intervention from being a reactive mechanism, addressing a gender gap and responding to the SDG agenda 2030, to being a more sustainable mechanism for the social change and development that the SDG agenda 2030 is calling for. This would also be more pertinent to the African Union agenda 2063 which focuses on sustainable development and collective prosperity for the region (African Union Commission report, no date). Current efforts are focused on education and helping young girls to develop greater efficacy and agency earlier on. The GEWEL project (Haidet, 2019; World Bank, 2018b), CAMFED initiative (Camfed, 2020) and the mentoring programme set up by Chilufya are examples of how mentoring is being used to support girls, but there is limited knowledge on coaching for girls of the same age.

The findings established that values expressed by the women are prioritised around conformity values of deference/obedience, through respect for elders and parents. The traditional values concerned are religion, spirituality and rites of passage, primarily marriage (Schwartz, 2012). The values are based on the

communal characteristics of Ubuntu practices, where compassion and care are emphasised. These are examples of what Schwartz terms as benevolence values, involving an open concern for the welfare of others seen through extended family practices, emphasising a social dimension. Conformity and traditional values were prioritised very highly by the women. Therefore, values are part of the women's personal and professional and community roles, and these values deserve attention in a coaching process. In the Focus Sharing Group (FSG) contributions, the question 'how do we use our values to evolve?' was posed.

It has been established that coaching women for authenticity can be supported by an appreciation of personal values and beliefs and women's response to organisational bias (Worth, 2012). Where authenticity is defined by the harmony between daily actions and fundamental values and beliefs (Ruderman and Ohlott, 2005), the focus on personal values in addressing authenticity through coaching presents an opportunity to extend current research on coaching women to understand what communal values can contribute to this. These findings also contribute to research concerning coaching with values. Eagly (2013) has argued that women need to take a more holistic view as to how they lead due to their affinity to endorse social values, e.g. benevolence, in leading ethically. The evidence shared in her research supports the need for a shift not only in understanding how women can use their personal and social values in developing their own leadership effectively, but also to address the link between values, attitudes and wider social responsibility within societies (Eagly, 2013). Some of the values expressed by the women, such as compassion and sharing, are contained within the Ubuntu philosophy (Broodryk, 2006) and calls to embrace other world views such as Ubuntu in coaching (Geber and Keane, 2013) and leadership (Blunt and Jones, 1997; April and April, 2007) are supported by this study. This research has shown that Ubuntu philosophy and values are evident in how the women in this study have practiced their leadership, personally, professionally and within the community. This contextual knowledge can assist coaches in developing their coaching philosophy (Cushion and Partington, 2016) and can guide stages of the coaching process such as goal-setting. Characterised as dyadic, goal-setting can be complex within a collective setting (Geber and Keane, 2013). The authors state that incorporating worldviews through the coaching process can help coaches to understand how the coachees position themselves in relation to collective

responsibility, or how spiritual guidance and faith may influence how challenges are resolved.

8.2 Coaching individually and collectively

There appears to be a need to consider coaching women on two levels: individually and collectively. The women seek support on issues such as networking, feeling isolated and identifying promotional opportunities. The need to be mindful of the intrapersonal issues that may need a one-to-one coaching approach should not be ignored. At the same time, the findings show that collective (communal and community) aspects identified are implicit in references to the involvement of parents, sharing knowledge and experience, having role models and the social concern for how children are raised.

The findings on goal-setting present an interesting dynamic. The nature of goal-setting in Zambia may require a more nuanced understanding, given the conflicts about goal-setting highlighted in chapter five. On a professional level, the women felt personal goal-setting was important, emphasising a more individualistic and intrapersonal viewpoint in addressing workplace goals. On another level, it was felt that the traditional norms of extended family commitments, and values such as compassion, make it difficult to practice personal goal-setting because it is not innate to the cultural setting. The incongruity that arises presents contradictory and supportive perspectives.

The recognition that personal goals are important in supporting intrapersonal development is one of the key reasons for engaging executive coaches (Lore, 2002). However, the cautious view about working with goals is that non-Western environments may not lend themselves well to such an individualistic approach (Western, 2012; Shoukry, 2016). Hence, the findings regarding goal-setting in the workplace (6.4) are inconsistent with the women's expressed preference for goal-setting. However, this needs to be appreciated in relation to the uniqueness of each non-Western environmental context, history and culture; Shoukry's work was focused on social contexts where personal choice may be constrained. Complexity seems to arise when the personal goals conflict with deeply embedded values and traditions. The assumption here is that there is a dynamic interplay between the personal self and the collective self, or the individual narrative and larger social narrative, which creates an opportunity to explore a more balanced approach to leadership development that may be more advantageous in addressing individual

and collective needs as has been articulated with respect to team coaching (Hawkins, 2017) and group coaching (Bonneywell, 2016).

Previous studies show that the collective context has enabled coachees to tell new narratives that are uplifting and emancipatory, in coaching (Steltner, Nielsen and Wickman, 2011). The findings recognise that women would benefit from developing in a collective way to share their personal insights and contribute to dialogue on issues such as gender stereotypes. Systemic aspects of development lend themselves well to adopting team coaching (Clutterbuck, 2014) and to taking a more holistic approach, by incorporating the 5 disciplines of Commissioning, Clarifying, Co-creating, Connecting and Core learning (Hawkins, 2017). The finding that women want to share their learning and experience is articulated in communicating strengths. Theories such as cognitive behavioural, solution focused and positive psychology focus on how strengths can be deployed pragmatically (Stokes and Jolly, 2014). Such theories are also used in team coaching (Clutterbuck, 2014). By the same token, it would be prudent to be aware that systemic issues, such as gender stereotypes and traditional values, can create points of tension (chapter six) and there is potential for dysfunction within the group, which is one of the challenges that team coaching faces (Clutterbuck, 2014).

The findings highlight the key stakeholders such as parents, but in taking a collective approach, the systemic issues affecting women also put responsibility for women's development in the hands of other stakeholders, including national organisations such as Non-Governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) and international development organisations such as CAMFED and GEWEL, as examples, as well as church groups, community elders and preservers of tradition (e.g. chiefs and chieftainesses). A systemic approach to team coaching also recognises that beyond the team members, team coach and organisation in which the team operates, it is also important to engage with external stakeholders (Hawkins, 2017). Research has highlighted that the best teams were coached individually and collectively. In evidenced research, the best teams were coached individually and as a team, using not only coaching experts, but peers and executive leaders (Hawkins, 2017).

The findings contribute to research on dominant discourses and narratives, and the importance of re-telling these narratives and re-storying to increase self-awareness (Stelter and Law, 2010). The principles of narrative coaching (Drake,

2007; 2010), integral coaching and systemic coaching present a powerful basis on which to base coaching principles when collective engagement is also necessitated. With no fully established coaching culture in Zambia at the present time, there is an opportunity to address issues that affect the whole community, without a presupposed agenda of what may or may not work.

Narrative coaching also offers relevant principles. The findings established that there are some dominant discourses within Zambian society about marriage, education and values and examined how these influence socialisation and gender roles. The Narrative Diamond principles could work well in an individual coaching engagement where the focus is on helping the women to a point where their individual narrative sits within the larger communal cultural narrative (Drake, 2018). Being able to make connections between individual and collective narratives might help coachees to gain clarity on points of contradiction between their individual values and collective customs and norms. Distinguishing one's own narratives within dominant larger narratives can make for a clearer identification of where contradictions may be present and open up other avenues for finding new narratives (Drake, 2007).

8.3 Self-efficacy and self-agency

The findings also revealed that the manner in which male and female children are raised is highly entrenched within Zambian societal norms, and the fear of being ostracised should they deviate from these established cultural norms in their communities needs significant consideration (Littrell, 2011). Acknowledging these contextual situations in non-Western environments like Zambia reveals a wider range of inequities beyond the “double bind” debate regarding the duality of male and female leadership differences and power structures within organisations.

Women in Zambia are not just dealing with (personal and professional); when their work and influence in the community is taken into account, this study proposes that the collective perspective is of high importance. Having a third dimension to consider increases the need to be mindful of socio-cultural barriers. The third role that Zambian women practice, as mothers of the community, is less obvious, yet is a critical component in understanding the limitations and opportunities available to Zambian women in context. This study supports the existence of a “triple bind” that exists between the individual women's own limitations, organisational barriers and societal barriers. The way women interact in Zambia and the nature of

socialisation systems as described by the women has provided new insight on paying attention to the interplay between personal, professional, collective and societal factors and tensions arise when managing these boundaries (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2017)

The professional perspective has been the focus of women's studies on coaching, mainly investigating the attitudinal aspects of women's leadership (Kyriakidou, 2011; Skinner, 2014). In this study, the recognition of bonds of kinship between the individual and the extended family is relevant to how children develop in Zambia. The parental influence in socialisation raises another consideration about respect as obeisance, which would need to be considered carefully in a coach-coachee relationship. This has an important implication concerning hierarchy within Zambian society, considering the role of the parent/elder and also the importance attached to experience when passing on wisdom of traditions and values. The importance attached to hierarchy is not dissimilar to other non-Western environments such as Uganda (Garvey *et al.*, 2018), and where this is strongly embedded there are implications particularly in terms of a coachee's expectation of the coach as being more experienced and/or older (Nangalia and Nangalia, 2010). This reinforces the need to understand the context of the coachee in the coaching process, so that a coach's position and philosophy is relevant and meaningful. The findings about the nature of gender stereotypes, hierarchy and power relations contributes to deeper insight about gender roles in the coach-coachee matching process (Baron and Morin, 2009; Bozer *et al.*, 2014).

The parent, elder or community leader, is an important custodian of oral traditions and values and how these are passed down to support communal practices and conformity. This means they are an important stakeholder in the societal structure of Zambia. The opportunity for coaching to be informed by such custodians, with the support of women role models such as the women portrayed in this study, is strongly advocated. Such an approach has significant implications for training, to ensure that such coaching is ethical and credible, that it can serve as a basis to contribute to any further coaching standards that are developed through organisations such as the Africa Executive Coaching Council (AECC) (Africa Executive Coaching Council, 2020), and that it aligns with relevant practices in the societal structure that are sensitive to the communities that are recipients of such coaching.

Barriers that engender limiting beliefs, such as fear of failure and rejection, or a lack of conviction creating anxiety due to balancing intrapersonal developmental aims and collective values, demonstrate the importance of self-perception, efficacy and agency (Skinner, 2012; Worth, 2012; De Valle, 2014; Bonneywell, 2016).

8.4 The potential role of coaching in the context of Zambia

The discussion on Zambian women leaders, coaching individually and collectively, narrative principles and discourse, efficacy and agency, shows that there are multiple levels that need to be considered for Zambian women's leadership development. There is also a degree of complexity around the triple bind that is unique. There is a sense that there are numerous parts to women's leadership in Zambia that are best understood when all interconnected parts are also considered. A one dimensional view of coaching may be able to respond to some aspects of individual need, but by missing the relational interconnections, a coach may fail to be responsive to others in a way that could help women holistically. There is an increased possibility of this happening given that the findings have indicated a strong connection and embeddedness of individual narratives within collective narratives; intrapersonal needs within communal aspirations and self-agency within group conformity. This context shows that, at this point in time, Zambia might benefit from a broader coaching framework of practice that seeks to be holistic and systemic in its principles of application. It should also be adaptable and flexible to work with coaching approaches that are responsive to narrative principles, such as narrative coaching and collective intervention e.g. team coaching or group coaching.

This section proposes that a broader perspective on such coaching principles, drawing on the integral model (Hunt, 2009a), would be essential. Given the importance of the wider systemic issues affecting the women in this study, a case is also made for understanding how systemic coaching could support such a coaching framework of practice (Ives, 2008; Whittington, 2020).

A key outcome of this study is a better appreciation of the interaction between the elements of the triple bind, by bringing together the principles of narrative therapy, narrative coaching and narrative collaborative coaching, and the integral coaching model, to better articulate how the ambiguities represented by the triple bind can be understood and addressed in a supportive manner for Zambian women in their leadership development. Chapter two established that the integral model of

coaching lends itself well to connecting complex paradigms for enrichment (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2009). The Integral approach to coaching (Hunt 2009a; Hunt and Divine, 2012) takes a holistic view, on the basis that it can help coachees to navigate across ambiguous boundaries from a CWOB (current way of being) to a NWOB (new way of being) (Hunt, 2009a). It is a model that is worth serious consideration because it privileges numerous perspectives of the coachee. Having a broader basis to recognise complexities within the coachee's own environmental space is highly beneficial for coaches (Frost, 2009). It is a model that has been applied in SSA countries such as South Africa and Nigeria (www.thecoachingcentre.co.za). However, this study seeks to go further than supporting the coachee by recognising the numerous perspectives (Hunt, 2009a). This study uses the Integral AQAL model to propose principles that inform the basis for a holistic coaching practice for developing Zambian women leaders. The ability to work with the individual narratives of the coachee from a personal, professional and collective perspective can be captured in such a framework, but so can the more dominant larger narratives.

It is apparent that the nature of Zambian women's leadership is indicative of a highly intricate systemic environment. This study proposes that for a holistic approach to have a chance of success, a systemic perspective is needed; one that provides a platform to engage with collective narratives as well as the individual narratives embedded within. This study found that the nature of women's leadership is represented by interconnected socio-cultural factors that are underpinned by women's roles in a personal, professional and collective capacity, and that these connections are not easily extricated from each other because of the way that women see themselves in relation to their societal group. These findings highlight that appreciating a systemic perspective is critical to understanding women's leadership challenges and the barriers that arise. A systemic approach to coaching is designed to do much the same in making the coachee aware of undiscovered behaviour patterns, and it encourages openness and creativity in dealing with complex contextual and unforeseeable issues (Ives, 2008) and challenge hidden assumptions (Whittington, 2020).

An extension of systemic coaching is the use of constellations and the visualisation of a spatial three-dimensional map, consisting of members (people) within that system and elements such as culture. The aim is to generate illuminating insights,

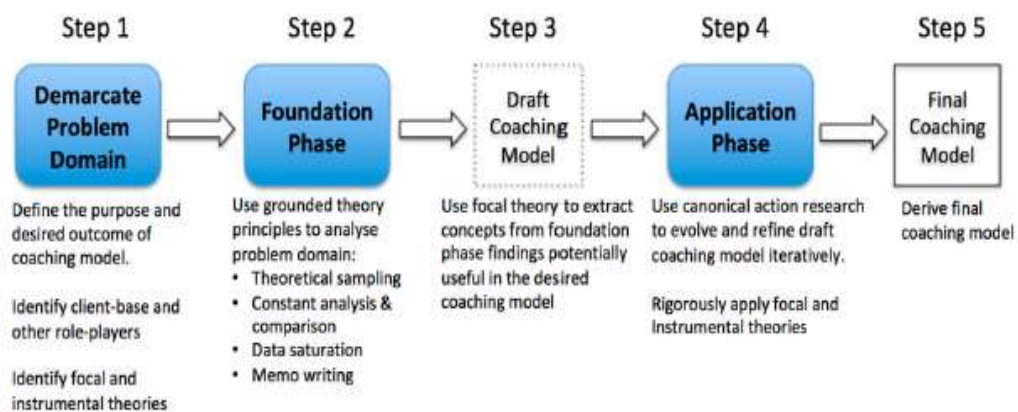
where the system reveals itself in terms of answers to what may be seen as complex and unresolvable issues (Whittington, 2020).

Taking a broader systemic view in coaching would allow for more conclusive identification of the initiatives that can support social inclusion, which was one of the deficiencies identified in relation to SDG 5 (Begashaw, 2020). Such an approach could be catalytic, because it requires the consensus and dialogue that befits a community of practice where sharing experiences and mapping knowledge are essential in overcoming challenges (Wenger, 2010). Within communities of practice, there is the potential to have challenging conversations about GCBs and socio-cultural factors that affect women as leaders. An advantage to doing this is that these conversations need not be siloed within each stakeholder's contextual domain (business organisations, NGOs, developmental agencies, personal homes, coaching businesses and associations). Taking a collective engagement perspective also puts emphasis on addressing how the systemic dimension within coaching allows for a more collaborative approach to understanding and developing coaching in parts of the world where it is not yet developed. Insight from studies can contribute to shaping the focus of this knowledge meaningfully (Wenger, 2010).

Chapter 9: The Collective Coaching Practice Framework

Frameworks are an effective way to provide knowledgeable insight for coach practitioners. The Input Process Output framework (IPO) discussed in the literature chapter (section 3. 2.3) is one that provides a clear overview of coaching coach-client characteristics (inputs); mechanics of coaching and requisite techniques and tools (process) and reactions, learning, behavioural competencies and organisational impact (outcomes) (Boyce and Hernez-Broome, 2010). Recent research by Terblanche (2020) advocates a 5 step coaching model derivation process (CMDP) (see figure 14) that can help to embed more rigour in coaching frameworks or models that are developed out of empirically based research for specific “problem domains” (p.52). He specifically highlights the importance of “staying close to the evidence” (p.48).

Figure 14: Coaching Model Derivation Process



Source: The CDMP for coaching model development Terblanche (2020 p.47)

The framework that arises out of this thesis is called the collective coaching practice framework (CCP) and it is presented using the CDMP approach as presented in figure 14). Although the CDMP uses the word model as against framework and the author recognises that these are used interchangeably within research. In step 1, it is important to clarify the intended recipients of the coaching, the intended use and desired outcomes as well as relevant literature that informs the context. Step 2 refers to the foundation phase where the iterative process of analysis informed by grounded theory principles is advocated to be able to divulge important elements for the coaching process. In this research, input from my

research community, storytelling and focus sharing groups support this stage and feed the findings into the process. Step 3 aims to derive a draft coaching model informed by the foundation phase and step 4 defines an action research phase of application that is iterative and dynamic. It is important to note that this study is exploratory and so instead of testing a draft framework, I undertake a reflexive phase in order to arrive at the final framework. Therefore step 3 and 4 in my presentation of the framework are collapsed into a single step called the 'reflexive phase'. This enabled me to stay close to the key issues identified in the findings. In step 5, I present the CCP framework. Therefore, the adapted CDMP steps are 1) Demarcating the problem domain; 2) Foundation phase; 3) reflexive phase; 4) Final model

9.1 Demarcating the problem domain

The purpose of the CCP framework and expected outcome is to inform coaching practice to support Zambian women leaders to overcome socio-cultural barriers that can hinder executive leadership progression. The coaching framework is needed to help coaches to understand the nature of the environment that the women associate themselves with (Sunny Rostron, 2013). The coachees identified are the Zambian women in executive leadership roles or seeking to progress to executive leadership roles. The theories that are informative about such barriers are social role theory (Eagly, 1997) social psychology (Eagly and Sczesny, 2019), social construction of gender (Lorber, 2018), social cognitive theory (Kussey and Bandura, 1999; 2004), and gender socialisation (Pomerantz, Ng and Wang, 2004). A notable research outcome of the thesis was that in the Zambian context, socio-cultural barriers do arise out of the distinctions made about gender role differences (Stockard, 1999; Lorber, 2018). Yet there are also other barriers that are informed by the societal attitudes, beliefs, traditions and values (Gonzalez and Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2013). While these factors can support relational interaction they can also be constraining (Savolainen, 2016). Stories were used as narratives to engage with contextual realities and the coaching approaches evaluated that are deemed responsive were narrative (Drake, 2007), integral (Hunt and Divine, 2012) and systemic coaching (Whittington, 2020). The strengths of narrative coaching lie in its use and application of 'storying and restorying' to co-create alternative stories; Integral coaching provides a basis to see the individual more holistically by applying the all quadrants, all levels (AQAL) which allows a coachee to distinguish between the self 'I' and others 'We'. Systemic coaching has its strengths in its

ability to take a systems approach and create opportunities to appreciate different perspectives within the system (Farr and Shepheard, 2018; Oshry, 2015)

9.2 Foundation phase

Applying an indigenous methodology meant leadership stories could be used as a basis for meaning-making (Denborough et al., 2006). Through the women's stories and the application of discourse and narrative concepts, I was able to divulge emergent themes situated in 'micro discourses' (Van Esch, Assylkhan and Bilimoria, 2017) about personal limiting beliefs such as non-conformity as well as liberating ones about spirituality and faith. At the same time, the 'macro discourses' in both the individual stories and the FSG revealed emergent themes about complexity and paradox such as the role of values e.g. respect in managing power relations in a hierarchical structure. The diversity of the women leader's roles and the sectors they operate in provided for rich data. The indigenous approach enabled different levels of engagement with the data through the pilot study; doctoral community, my personal network (Zambia), listening to and transcribing the stories, narrative analysis using the problem based and three dimensional approach (Ollerenshaw and Creswell, 2002), sharing preliminary themes with co-researchers as a focus sharing group (FSG). This all helped to inform alternative narratives along the principles of co-creation of knowledge (Kovach, 2010). The findings that fed into the CCP framework emerged as categories of the self; personal and professional, the collective and as part of the wider community of stakeholders. The latter, 'the wider community stakeholders' was revealed in the stories when women referred to parents, extended family and church groups. Table 8 below presents key themes that arose out of the findings according to the categories outlined above.

Table 8: Findings foundation phase

Categories/ Levels AQAL, Holistic, systems		Findings Informed by analysis of narratives as stories – highly contextual. Systemic context	Discourse Level
Personal The self/individual subjective self	Change can result from insights that are drawn from the coachee re-storying, re-authoring (Drake, 2007) current way of being (CWOB) to New Way of Being (NWOB) (Hunt and Divine, 2012)	Personal values, oral traditions, beliefs & socialisation, mindset, fear of failure (narrative of parents/ elders), support and encouragement for education, issues affecting work-life balance Intrapersonal focus,	Micro
Professional The self	Change can result from insights that are drawn from the coachee Behaviour, action strength and limitations: greater self-awareness, efficacy, agency, role model behaviour	Second generation bias, linked to socio-cultural factors, isolated, respect (obedience). Change driven by action.	Meso
Collective We, collective	Discourse with others provides new insights and creates new realities, worldviews	Worldview, Ubuntu values, Religion, Rites of passage, extended family, cultural stories. Dialogue and new insights possible through narrative coaching	Macro
Societal 'We' wider societal environment	Change can be achieved when coachee can optimise all the systems that they operate in	Social system environment, represented by family systems, political systems(legislation equality, dual system, education), work systems Key stakeholders: Government, educators, Church groups, NGO, development organisations, role models, organisations	

Within the categories column, personal, professional, collective and societal are identified as sub-systems and that these operate within the wider societal system (Farr and Shepherd, 2018). The wider system is represented by the holistic interpretation of all quadrants; all levels (Hunt and Divine) and the systemic constellations 'field' (Whittington, 2020). Within the sub-systems, narratives occur at the micro, meso and macro level and with a systemic perspective; the insights gleaned from these levels should be seen as dynamic and can be influenced by each other in a way that provides new insight (Oshry, 2015).

9.3 Reflexive phase

In undertaking this study, an important point from the outset was to be able to explore coaching without a predetermined approach being more relevant than others for the Zambian context. The situation needed to inform the outcome. It is evident from this thesis that there is no one specific coaching approach that lends itself exclusively to the situation of Zambian women leaders. Instead there is a combination of approaches that present realistic potential. Therefore a key conclusion is the promotion of a collective coaching practice (CCP) framework rather than any one specific coaching approach. An important part in developing this framework involved my own reflexive thought and engagement using the systemic constellations principles. In an attempt to be true to the indigenous process of situating myself within this research, the creation of the framework presented in this chapter was informed by engaging with the principles of systemic coaching and constellations. I felt it was important to understand how a coach (in this case myself), could potentially engage with the complexities identified through the women's stories and in practice how some of the contradictions concerning traditional values might be shared through narratives. After all mastery of a coach's own systemic relationship can foster humility and understanding (Oshry, 2015). This opportunity arose following the collection of data to challenge my own assumptions about how Zambian women such as those represented in this study could be supported.

In July 2018, I attended a workshop on developing one's coaching practice through the application of systemic and embodied learning principles. I used this research and the findings as the reference point. The core objective of the workshop was to gain clarity on a current issue by showing hidden dynamics and interrelationships. The session also provided the opportunity for self-coaching and self-supervision. Mapping called 3-D, as applied in systemic coaching and constellations, was employed in this workshop. With hindsight, the reflexive insights I gained give some indication of how the CCP framework could evolve. Figure 14 shows steps 1-3, an abridged version of how I reflected on the issues and the insights that emphasised the need to undertake a more systemic view.

In step 1, the focus was on identifying the issue of concern: how can my coaching support leaders in sustainable human resource development? I decided to present the issue within a broader framework to avoid narrowing my thinking. In this phase,

I reviewed how it felt to be the coachee (the leader), in order to identify their constellation. Using 3-D mapping, I selected figures that represented elements within the systemic environment, as informed by my findings. The system used a combination of pawns, figurines and objects. The post-it notes were used to name the objects within the system and what they represented.

The pawns marked in yellow were representative of the leaders in society that are looking for solutions. The pawn marked in red is myself, as coach; the red figurine represented men as a collective group; the white figurine represented women as a collective group; and the smaller figurines in yellow and blue represented the children in the system. The stones represented the stories about tradition, culture and knowledge exchange (limiting, liberating and complex stories) and the grey pillar (green) represented leadership challenges: frustrations but also opportunities.

Systemic coaching and constellation principles

Step 1: representing the current system and the key parts of the system

Dots:

- White: traditional values customs and beliefs
- Yellow: Leaders
- Red: Coach
- Green: leadership challenges
- Figurines:
 - Red represents men collectively
 - White represents women collectively
 - Smaller figures yellow and blue represent children



Source: Author

In step 2, I positioned myself in the system and saw myself in a facilitating and collaborative role. In this role, I felt it would be important to have an overview of the whole system, with the main focus on understanding the challenges that are preventing leaders from developing effectively. The leaders are positioned equidistant to myself, suggesting a more collaborative approach rather than a

hierarchical dynamic of coach as expert and leaders (coachees) as non-experts. This emphasised that the leaders are the experts in their own right about their own system, traditions and values and are in position to challenge my assumptions. The grey pillar with a green dot represented the narratives about leadership stories positioned as currently insurmountable issues by which the women, men and children in society are affected. The second grey pillar with the blue dot represented the new liberating stories within the system, of opportunity and reduced challenges.

Systemic coaching and constellation principles

Step 2:

Dots: Blue representing desired system positive change, managed challenges

- different angle showing the middle pillar higher representing insurmountable challenges in the current system
- the smaller pillar as the desired system when these challenges are broken down and more manageable based on collective consensus as informed by the different stakeholder narratives.
- Coach positioned equidistant to leader coachees to show collaboration



Source: Author

In step 3, the new system is revealed, represented by retaining the desired leadership position through the facilitation of dialogue and collective sharing with stories. The new liberating stories were represented by the new post-it notes marked with purple, orange and brown dots.

Systemic coaching and constellation principles

Step 3:

These are the liberating narratives of the stakeholders and represented groups. The larger grey pillar (green dot) is removed and the focus is on a sustainable development focus harnessing helpful traditional narratives and re-storying unhelpful narratives.

Dots:

Purple: Children: free and able in relation to mindset

Orange: Women as self-assured, proud about their identities, indicating more agentic behaviour

Brown: Men as capable and comfortable



Source: Author

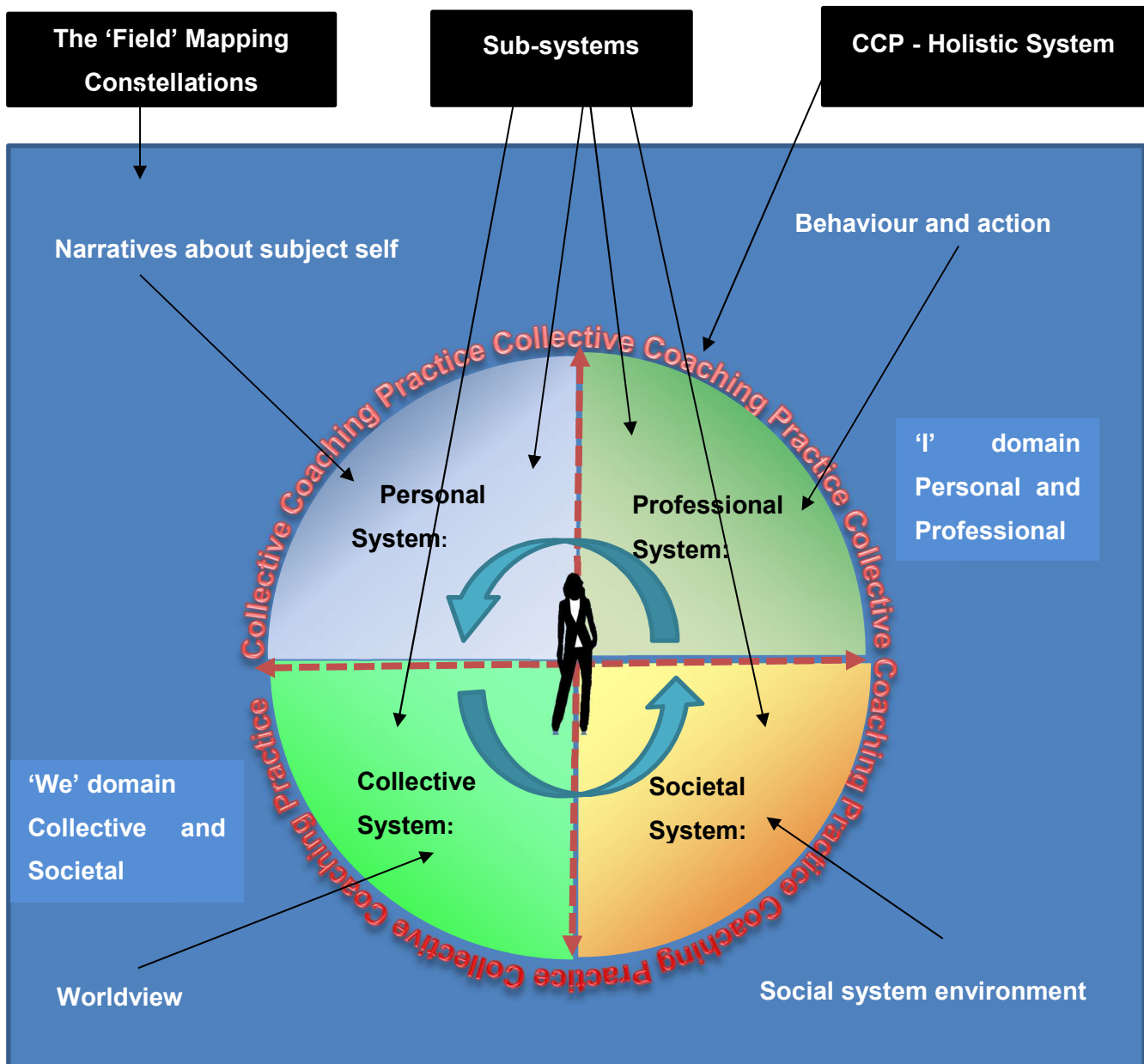
In summary, the reflective process helped to consolidate the framework. Narrative engagement between different stakeholders in the community could go beyond acknowledging the multiple perspectives of the coachee to appreciating the inter-relational connections indicated by the four dimensions: personal (informed by personal values); social (informed by social values); professional (in relation to the organisation); and collective (within the community). Examples of the type of connected verbal narratives that can respond to this collective dimension might be dialogue between women to encourage networking and the important dialogue with men to understand their narrative on gender stereotypes (FSG contributions). This would help to support social participation as a community (Wenger, 2009). The FSG contributions established that women would like to re-story the narrative around traditions and values and evolve these in a way that preserves what is important.

9.4 Final Framework

The CCP framework presented below could create the space needed to have such conversations meaningfully. It has been Informed by previous versions of the Integral model (Hunt, 2009a), systemic coaching and constellations; (Whittington, 2020) and the narrative diamond model (Drake, 2007). The four sections outlined in the framework are depicted as sub-systems (personal, professional, collective and societal) , positioned in the top left quadrant, top right quadrant bottom left quadrant and bottom right quadrant respectively. These sub-systems are

positioned in the bigger system called the '*Field*' (Livotova and Livotov, 2015). The personal represents the subjective self (Hunt and Divine, 2012), the professional self (Skinner, 2012). These two quadrants are both situated in the "I" domain as informed by integral coaching. The collective incorporates worldview and the societal represents the social system. The two quadrants are both situated in the "We" domain. It may be important that the focus on supporting women leaders to overcome barriers should be through a collective coaching practice (CCP) framework. The justification for this framework is in acknowledging that, for the context of Zambia, collective interaction is not just between coach and coachee, but should also recognise the influences of other key stakeholders within the community that have a role to play in addressing the leadership complexities and barriers shared in this study. In acknowledging wider systemic barriers, coaches can challenge their own assumptions. Systemic coaching and constellations supports the notion that coaches are just as susceptible to their own systems and hidden dynamics and can benefit from this process as well Whittington, 2020; Oshry, 2015). The discussion noted that using systemic team coaching and group coaching would be appropriate in working with women as a collective group. However, taking a broader macro view of the collective system within which the women's individual systems operate could contribute to understanding how systemic coaching and constellations would work in a wider more complex system with multiple stakeholders, and where hidden assumptions and dynamics are fundamental to the preservation of traditions and values. The framework is presented below drawing on the phases of step 1-3. In presenting the framework I use some of the findings from my co-researchers to demonstrate how the framework could potentially be used within each of the sub-systems. While this does not replicate the coaching process it provides coaches with a starting point in the CCP's use and application.

Figure 15: Collective Coaching Practice Framework



9.4.1 Personal sub-system

The first sub-system '*personal*', represents the coachee's perception of self in relation to their personal life situation, informed by the values, traditions and parental narratives that influence the person's roles and behaviour. Here the person expresses their own narrative, offering insight into who they are and what influences their life patterns, values and beliefs. The personal side of the coachee can be supported using methods such as the Narrative Diamond (Drake, 2007). The focus is on one-to-one interaction to help the coachee re-story or re-author

and visualise strengths (personal anchors). By being more focused on the self, the process takes an intrapersonal perspective. Mwitwa talked about spirituality as an support of strength:

“when I am going into the board room, there are some interviews, board room situations you are walking into...I will go in there with my technical knowledge and then I will put on my armour, my spiritual armour...”

At the same time, there is an opportunity for the coach to appreciate the context of the coachee as informed by their values and beliefs and how this may influence the coach’s position in a coaching relationship. The use of the metaphor “*spiritual armour*” is consistent with Drake’s approach to establishing meaning-making through the use of metaphor (see narrative diamond, Fig 3, p.55).

9.4.2 Professional sub-system

The second sub-system ‘*professional*’, refers to the coachee’s perception of self in relation to their job role and behaviour within a work context. This is an opportunity to gain insight into how the coachee experiences the organisational environment and to appreciate the nature of the interaction with respect to organisational barriers. The focus is on understanding the contextual environment of the organisation in relation to women leader’s progression. The opportunity to engage with both personal and work-related issues has become more apparent in addressing work/life balance challenges (O’Neill *et al.*, 2015).

“... I always look at my life in a two-pronged way: there is my personal life, which includes my culture, who I am, my family [all those things] and then there is a professional life. In many ways they overlap”

Understanding what cultural aspect of the personal life are and where the boundaries overlap with the professional life and how this translates into behaviour in the workplace would be important.

9.4.3 Collective Sub-system

The third sub-system, ‘*collective*’, encompasses the shared values, traditions and beliefs that drive customs norms. It represents an enabling platform for narrative conversations about how to address issues that are associated with non-conformity and rejection and creating new narratives that can affirm traditions and values that should be preserved. Re-storying as a collective group, where the relevant stakeholders are involved, has the potential to be quite powerful in re-

storying narratives concerning the socialisation of children and rites of passage for marriage. Chanda's viewpoint on marriage highlights some of the tensions that could inform coaches about how culture is understood and practiced.

"...you are not complete if you are not a married woman. Half the time I have been disrespected in my [leadership] roles... it's because I was a single woman...they didn't care about my capability etc. One man actually said 'how can you trust her if she is not even married?'" Women want to remain married and have children and the respect that goes with that. Society sets you up like that and unfortunately, for us in Zambia our culture does the same".

For non-Zambian coaches unfamiliar with cultural practices and traditions of marriage this may be new insight for them to work with. In traditional executive coaching, the focus might only be that Chanda is not getting support from male colleagues. However, by appreciating contextual narrative an opportunity is presented for the coach to recognise elements within the '*collective system*' that are influencing the coachee's '*professional system*' and in doing so the coach can potentially facilitate the coachee to identify behaviour and action through restorying. The system constellations approach also recognises that new insight can be achieved by bringing in the perspective of the other role players within the collective system, e.g. the men.

In the focus sharing group, one of the contributions was that,

"In challenging traditions, we must be mindful of what we are trying to achieve. There is a risk of losing what is good about cultural traditions. It is what defines us after all".

It might be important to know this as a coach because it would be important for the coachee to clarify what is good about cultural traditions that needs to be preserved in creating new realities or worldviews (Hunt, 2009)

9.4.4 Societal sub-system

The fourth sub-system '*societal*', represents the narratives between the various stakeholders. This can allow for the recognition of ambiguities between elements of the external environment (e.g. legislators, church groups, and traditional systems of chiefdoms) and professional work environments that women may

experience. Some of these conversations are happening currently through organisations such as the NGOCC, as detailed in the context chapter.

9.4.5 Limitations of the framework

In proposing the CCP framework there are some key limitations to consider. The first is that the framework relies solely on engaging with narratives and there are implications in the coaching process in terms of length of the coaching process and period of contracting that may need to be considered. Reflexivity and restorying could be a limitation for executive coaching engagements that are designed to very specific goals and outcomes. Local coaches would need to undergo training in the appropriate coaching philosophies to be able to undertake coaching with a high regard to the coachee's well-being and safety.

9.4.6 Conclusions

The way narrative has been used in this study, to identify socio-cultural barriers that women in Zambia face, extends understanding on the use of narrative to understanding social roles (Drake, 2007). Equally evident was how the women's individual narratives were part of a larger communal and cultural narrative (Drake, 2018). The nature of the collective narrative (FSG contributions) extends knowledge on the collective impact of shared insights (Bonneywell, 2016). The CCP framework shows how the individual narrative could be addressed, but also how the collective narrative could be captured for increased insight.

By acknowledging the important roles of wider stakeholders The collective dimension articulated in this study contributes to knowledge on team coaching, as collective leadership engagement (Hawkins, 2017), and systemic team coaching (Hawkins, 2017). In this study, the individual narratives within the collective narrative show that there is an appreciation of how individual coaching and collective coaching could be beneficial contributing to findings from Bonneywell (2016) on combined coaching.

The opportunity that such collective sharing creates, in terms of the social participation of key stakeholders, is characteristic of a developing community of practice where dialogue, shared resources and histories support the relational process (Wenger, 2009). This could open up opportunities to develop stronger communities of coaching practice and a pragmatic application of coaching, enabling coaches to learn from each other and collaborate, whether they are Zambian or international coaches. Such a community of practice could help to

shape relevant coaching education and ethical coaching practices and protocols that are contextually appropriate and can inform coaching accreditation and certification for Zambia.

The concepts of spirituality, religion and worldviews such as Ubuntu have a place within coaching, as they can help to extend knowledge particularly in the realm of inclusivity and diversity (Passmore, 2013). At a time when international migration has increased, organisations globally will need to continue to develop more inclusive strategies for talent development. International migration has risen significantly. In 2000, international migrant numbers were 173,588,441 compared to 271,642,105 today, showing an increase of 56.5%. In 2019, 74% of migrants were working age, between 20 and 64 years, and within this group 48% (International Organisation for Migration, 2020) and a significant proportion of immigrants into Europe have been from Africa. Therefore, such knowledge and understanding could help to shape coaching practice in Western organisations, extending knowledge on coaching practices and theories that influence societal change (Shoukry, 2017) and the facilitation of coaching in challenging social contexts (Shoukry and Cox, 2018).

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This research set out to explore if and how coaching can help Zambian women to overcome socio-cultural barriers. This study identified that Zambian women leaders are struggling to get into executive leadership positions and there is a sense that socio-cultural factors may be hindering their ability to progress at pace, which is necessary to bridge the gender gap in synthesis with the UN SDG agenda 2030 goal 5 on gender equality. Chapter one identified that coaching is an innovative mechanism that is increasingly being used to support women in addressing Glass Ceiling Barriers (GCBs) and facilitating women in achieving executive leadership positions. Given the diversity and complexity of Sub-Saharan African (SSA) nations, personal appreciation and insight on Zambia enabled a more pertinent contextual focus on this country. Through personal appreciation and insight into the country context, the rationale established that coaching insights regarding GCBs reflect limited understanding of barriers in non-Western environments such as Zambia. This chapter begins by revisiting the key objectives of the study to articulate how these have been met.

The first aim was to synthesise the contextual background of this study regarding women in Zambia, highlighting important socio-cultural factors. The context chapter established that socio-cultural structures and systems within Zambian society which are viewed as potentially challenging for Zambian women leaders are linked to customary laws, traditional values and social attitudes. Quota legislation has not had the impact that will see Zambia meeting SDG 5. At the same time, it was identified that coaching practice in Zambia is limited, and that to use coaching in an innovative way required an understanding of what coaching offers.

The second aim was to critically review literature on coaching and leadership and appraise relevant themes concerning principles, practice and application as to potential informative insights. It was alluded to above that the presence of GCB barriers that may be influenced by socio-cultural factors is a critical consideration in addressing women's leadership progression in Zambia. To this end, the second aim focused on problematising the literature on coaching theories and executive coaching attributes through a non-Western lens. The chapter intimated that there are limited insights into executive coaching in non-Western environments and on women executive coachees in general. To simply start with a preconceived idea of coaching, without assessing the context, seemed to lack rigour and relevance in

understanding if and how coaching can help Zambian women progress. By problematising the coaching literature through a non-Western lens, the study identified that personal experiences through stories, values, beliefs, collective support and empowerment are important factors. These factors have been identified in current studies on coaching women executives, but relevant studies are limited and lack insight on international differences. In terms of coaching approaches, problematic issues, e.g. hierarchy and dependency in the coaching process, were identified as factors that warrant closer inspection in non-Western environments. This allowed an exploration of possible coaching approaches that could be explored in the context of Zambian women, namely: narrative based approaches such as narrative coaching, holistic approaches such as integral coaching and systemic coaching constellations.

The third aim was to identify factors influencing Zambian women leaders by exploring their personal stories. This provided an opportunity to explore new ground in applying an indigenous research approach that is often applied in non-Western environments where researchers investigate their own communities. This aim was insightful about dominant narratives within Zambia that are affecting women in their leadership progression such as socialisation, rites of passage (marriage), values, education and managing psychological boundaries associated with self-limiting beliefs.

The fourth aim was to articulate relevant findings and derive key recommendations that inform coaching principles and practices for Zambian women leaders' progression that have contextual resonance. This aim was met by discussing how these discourses can inform the formation and development of coaching interventions to support Zambian women. Analysis of the findings identified limiting stories, liberating stories and stories with complexity, as well as collective contributions. The findings showed that attention should be paid to supporting women to address self-limiting beliefs, such as failure, and the role of personal and social values in navigating personal, professional, social and collective issues and spaces. They also revealed the importance of balancing the individual/collective dichotomy in relation to traditional values and rites of passage. A coaching practice is proposed that focuses on holistic and systemic principles and is distinct in its emphasis on the collective. This chapter presents key concluding points and

discusses contributions to knowledge, evaluates points of reflexivity that supported this study and finally addresses limitations and areas for future research.

The main focus of this study was to explore if and how coaching can play a role in supporting Zambian women leaders. This study maintains that when coaching is approached on the basis of a collective community practice that appreciates the holistic nature of women's roles and the wider systemic influences, it has the potential to support women in their leadership progression and to be a liberating mechanism for women to attain executive leadership by overcoming self-limiting beliefs associated with socio-cultural barriers.

10.1 Contributions to knowledge

It is important to highlight that the nature of these contributions are limited in their ability to be applied in a generalised manner; instead, the contextual references offer an opportunity to contribute to provoking new ways of understanding women's leadership when socio-cultural factors are a prevalent aspect of their development. This chapter focuses on the broader contributions of the systemic environment in relation to coaching, as well as discussing theoretical and methodological contributions. The key contributions addressed are: 1) providing the right platform for narrative engagement 2) indigenous research 3) human development theories. Following the contributions to knowledge, recommendations are made in relation to Zambia and the SDG 5 agenda 2030, and how women leaders can be supported through coaching.

10.1.1 Narratives and having a platform for dialogue

Chapter eight established that, in acknowledging wider systemic barriers, coaches can challenge their own assumptions. Systemic coaching and constellations support the notion that coaches are just as susceptible to their own systems and hidden dynamics and can benefit from this process as well (Oshry, 2015). The discussion noted that using systemic team coaching would be appropriate in working with women as a collective group. However, taking a broader macro view of the collective system which the women's individual systems operate could contribute to understanding how systemic coaching and constellations would work in a wider more complex system with multiple stakeholders, and where hidden assumptions and dynamics and fundamental to the preservation of traditions and values; a point that has been identified as important by the women in this study.

A contribution of the CCP framework is that, because it is associated with a range of complex narratives occurring at different levels of interaction within and between stakeholders, it is important to establish a neutral space where difficult conversations can be presented and understood. The importance of narratives in this study is very apparent. It is the means by which women told their stories; it is also the means by which limiting and liberating insights about their leadership were expressed, as well as the complexity of their societal roles. What the women's narratives revealed was that such conversations about their leadership challenges are clearly not taking place in the workplace, as the women made little or no reference to this. However, the Focus Sharing Group (FSG) findings revealed that this type of engaged dialogue needs to occur not just inside the organisation but within the wider external environment. Dialogue creates an opportunity to educate all stakeholders within the organisation (employees, employers, executive coaches and recruiters); as long as barriers are associated with socio-cultural factors this study argues that it is important to promote dialogue with stakeholders in the wider external environment that are part of this interconnected socio-cultural system.

The coaching philosophy has the potential to provide pragmatic timely solutions, despite ubiquitous deep-seated factors within society. Using coaching with a CCP framework presents an opportunity to operate in what Nkomo (2011) terms as the 'third' space or Drake (2007) refers to as the 'field'. Through applying a CCP framework in Zambia, this study concludes that CCP can represent this 'third' space, where interconnected issues can be explored and new insights revealed. In such contexts, focus on externalising the problem or three-dimensional mapping through systemic coaching and constellations (Whittington, 2020) should be prioritised. Carey and Russell (2004, para. 4) state that "externalising locates problems not within individuals, but as products of culture and history", where the ability to separate the person from the problem can not only allow the individual to deal with self-limiting beliefs such as failure or even shame, but whole communities to address crisis issues that affect them.

10.1.2 Indigenous research

Indigenous knowledge is tacit in its oral traditions, rituals, beliefs and values (Chilisa, 2012). The terms "deconstruction" and "decolonisation" have continued to gain prominence within research on indigenous communities; not just African communities, but also Chinese, Australian Aborigine, Maori, Canadian Inuit and

Metis peoples. This approach enables indigenous communities to have their own voice on issues that affect their contextual environment (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Lowan-Trudeau, 2012). Research on indigenous knowledge, indigenous worldviews and epistemology, indigenous communities and indigenous methodologies (Wilson, 2008; Lavallee, 2009; Hart, 2010; Geber and Keane, 2013) exemplifies the increasing importance to the communities themselves to understand what works for them.

The strengths of using this approach have been in using methods that are contextually relevant such as storytelling. Working with the women as co-researchers enabled me to bring them into the research process. Taking their suggestions on board, instead of the researcher providing these suggestions, evidenced co-creation and was an important outcome of research using an indigenous approach. Recommendations are also informed by the contributions. As the focus on indigenous methodologies continues to develop within mainstream academic research, this study may serve as a useful guide for their use and application in similar studies.

This study has shown that women are a key group within communities, and that they are in the best position to champion their own causes and apply learning from their own experiences to their own situations to raise important and challenging issues (Craven *et al.*, 2016). Such research creates opportunities to appreciate the local contextual insights arising out of local knowledge that can enable businesses to understand where they need to focus sustainable development within the indigenous communities in which they operate. If worldviews are associated with human beliefs as well as values and morals (Hart, 2010), then perhaps this study can be insightful for other Zambian researchers or researchers in SSA that want to be authentic to their own cultural way of knowing. This can provide an opportunity for Africans to apply an African lens to address local issues in a meaningful way (Gukwe, 2006). Craven *et al.* (2016, p.35) refer to the “substantive synergistic” advantages that indigenous worldviews and Western research combined can have for “thriving indigenous futures”.

Social research scholars have emphasised the need for further use of narrative approaches (Kovach, 2010). The findings, through the use of storytelling and life stories, did allow the women to recognise that contextual solutions, e.g. the structure, timing and content of socialisation processes in raising children, can help

to identify useful measures, not just for coaching women currently experiencing leadership dilemmas but the future generation of women leaders. The stories provided rich data. I chose to use structured prompts in capturing the stories, but with hindsight applied the narrative inquiry structure of past, present and future.

10.1.3 Human development theories in relation to efficacy and agency

This study shows that in re-storying (Drake, 2007) and re-authoring (Stelter and Law, 2010) through narratives, the re-construction of new stories can be achieved (McAdams, 1993; Drake, 2009). Understanding the dynamics of the coachee's personal situation requires a broader scope in coaching, to encapsulate multiple perspectives of the coachee's environment.

The way women interact in Zambia and the nature of socialisation systems, as described by the women, have provided new insight about paying attention to the interplay between personal/social, professional and collective perspectives, and determining the nature of tensions that arise in managing these boundaries. Previous research in women's studies on coaching has focused mainly on investigating the attitudinal aspects of women's leadership (Kyriakidou, 2012; Skinner, 2014) rather than the relational aspects.

Where socio-cultural barriers act as a limitation for women leaders in their career progression, reconstructing new stories might be important, not only to address issues of the self at a personal level, but to acknowledge when the re-construction of the collective stories needs to be considered in tandem. There are lessons that could be learned from combined individual and group coaching, as identified by Bonneywell (2016), and from individual and team coaching (Hawkins, 2017). However, such a process would need to consider the time factor in working with collective stories, because involving other stakeholders may require a more iterative process when the focus is on meaning-making which would require deeper reflection (Drake, 2007).

This study has also highlighted that human development theories present a useful way of understanding women's leadership and related issues of bias and stereotypes. Theories such as social cognitive learning (Bandura, 2001), social learning development (Vygotsky, 1896-1934 in Kouzlin, 2015) could help to understand the role of self-agency and self-efficacy in relation to women's leadership progression. Studies on coaching women executives increasingly reflect this and advocate the importance of coaches in working with such

knowledge to support women leaders (Ibarra *et al.*, 2013; Skinner, 2014; De Valle, 2014; Bonneywell, 2017). These theories seem to be important in helping women and can serve as a basis for coaches to understand dynamic coachee experiences.

The implications of social cognitive learning on agentic behaviour indicate a potential to understand women's agency within a leadership context (Bussey and Bandura, 1999; Bandura, 2001). These findings do contribute to Bandura's (1971) work in the areas of social learning theory, where social cognitive theory supports the interface between the psychological aspects of gender formation and the societal systems within daily life (Bandura, 1997). The findings show how important it is to understand the relational enactment within a collective group and how the self is defined in relation to this group (Jung and Sosik, 2002).

10.2 Zambia SDG 5 2030

A key focus of this study was how coaching could support women leaders in Zambia to accelerate their progress to senior executive leadership, with the SDG Agenda 2030 in mind. The barriers associated with attitudes, perceptions and beliefs connected to cultural practice (www.worldbank.org) are evident in this study and strongly associated with socio-cultural factors that are linked to group norms and practices. The results chapters (5-7) identify some of these factors. Naming these factors provides some clarity about which practices require prioritisation to support women to attain senior leadership positions in a way that is sensitive to both organisational and societal environments.

This is consistent with studies that call for a need to recognise the role that socio-cultural factors have on the development of women leaders (Grover and Furnham, 2016; Ganiyu *et al.*, 2018). The identification of such factors can help coaches to build knowledge on issues that are important in non-Western environments like Zambia. In relation to other countries within SSA, there is also an opportunity to begin to understand where they may be similarities or differences in the nature and type of socio-cultural factors. For example, widowhood was not identified by the women in this study in the review of GCBs and the societal environment, but there were similarities with other factors such as marriage practices. There were similarities with the study in Uganda (Lunyolo *et al.*, 2014) in relation to educational level barriers and religious beliefs. Widening knowledge of such factors allows developmental agencies that are involved in supporting women leaders to develop more targeted initiatives in relation to the SDG goals (Begashaw, 2020).

The pragmatic application of the CCP framework would require the support of institutions at a national level, such as the Ministry for Gender, Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs and the NGOCC, as well as developmental agencies involved in developing women leaders. Coaching bodies and institutions establishing coaching initiatives focused on women leaders, such as the FSD initiative, would also have a contribution to make, given the current efforts in addressing the support of women in the economic sector. Other stakeholders, such as church groups, would also be important to the dialogue.

10.3 Reflexivity

To my knowledge, this is the first empirical study that has sought to connect the relevance of coaching as an approach to developing Zambian women for leadership while focusing on barriers within the societal environment (as a contextual situation). Applying an indigenous research approach to the topic of coaching women executive leaders is, to my knowledge, a unique contribution to current coaching studies of this nature. The insight into indigenous methodologies has been instrumental in supporting this approach (Chilisa and Ntseane, 2010; Chilisa, 2012). The use of stories to understand traditional teachings is familiar to me through my childhood. It was a process I resonated with and, with hindsight, this has really allowed me to appreciate the women's stories, not just through the transcribed text but by listening to the tone expressions of surprise, concern or frustration that women expressed through their stories (Appendix 11).

I am a Zambian woman, familiar with the environment of my co-researchers, and in undertaking the research I found that I could be empathetic to the situations that women addressed, such as marriage. Going through the traditional rites of passage meant I could be empathetic to discussions about this. I felt very passionate about this topic from its inception and some of this passion was fuelled by the frustration I have felt in looking for relevant coaching and leadership examples that reflect the Zambian or SSA context. I found myself in accord with a number of articles I was reading that have emphasised the need for the African region as a whole to engage in critical thought and to develop its own thought processes based on indigenous traditions of leadership (Gumede, 2017). One way is for researchers to be conscious of using research methods that will empower their research participants within their own research context (Smith, 1999, 2012; Shoukry and Cox, 2018).

This level of thought process made me begin to appreciate what has been instilled in terms of my own cultural heritage and how it has informed my own career development. This meant that I could not ignore the opportunity to focus on a methodology that would help me to better understand my home country context of Zambia. The application of an indigenous perspective to this study required a much deeper appreciation of how critical discourses can provide a platform for Zambian women's leadership voices. I began to question why there seemed to be more evidence of articles pointing towards the negative aspects of Zambian and African leadership (Kuada, 2010). This kind of questioning enabled me to engage with critical reading about gender and leadership, critical perspectives of colonialism and patriarchy, and related insights on power, oppression and domination (Freire, 1970; 1996; Foley, 2003; Bolden and Kirk, 2009; Nkomo, 2011; Shoukry, 2016). Overall, I found that justifying an indigenous approach proved to be quite challenging. My education and work life had, up until that point, been focused on understanding mainstream academic research methodologies such as positivism and interpretivism.

10.4 Limitations of the study

The nature of research based on smaller samples group means that the findings of this study cannot be generalised, as they are only relevant in their particular context; however, they can be used inductively in theory building (Shamir, 2013, p.351). Methodologically, the sample size was relatively small. However, having 18 women co-researchers is consistent with sample sizes of similar studies.

As with similar studies on gender and coaching, geographical limitations are acknowledged (Skinner, 2012). Due to time and logistical constraints in conducting the research in Zambia, it was difficult to increase the sample size beyond the 18 individual women's stories. The opportunity to run two more FSG discussions might have helped me to present the CCP framework and refine it further. A follow-up to this study would necessitate such a commitment and would be consistent with an indigenous research approach of reciprocity.

This study did not involve women leaders from a cross-section of Zambian society, for example in more remote towns and locations where the circumstances of women's leadership stories could potentially be different and varied, depending on the environment and circumstances.

10.5 Areas for future research

There are several coaching approaches that could further inform the CCP framework and provide deeper insight. Such approaches include ontological coaching and existential coaching. These are potentially appropriate due to the importance of religion, spirituality and worldviews, especially given that the use of narratives and values is consistent with these two approaches (Spinelli, 2010; Vogel, 2012; Seiler, 2014; Drake, 2017).

The challenges highlighted in the limiting stories are complex and abstract, so consideration would need to be given to working with goals in a way that is complementary and not competing (Grant, 2018). Self-concordant goals could be a way forward in helping Zambian women, because they are goals that align with personal values. There is evidence of the applicability of self-concordant goals not just in Western but also in non-Western cultures (Sheldon *et al.*, 2004). However, such applicability would need to be further researched, given that the non-Western environments in this study drew samples from Taiwan, China and South Korea.

In relation to the CCP framework, while the platform for dialogue is promoted, the framework itself does not fully engage with aspect of coaching practice and professional accreditation of those who would be involved in coaching. The option to use such a framework in establishing a distinctive collective community practice would require the framework to be put into practice and tested.

In order to gain a clearer understanding of the diversity of socio-cultural barriers in other parts of SSA, more contextual studies of this nature are needed to gain an appreciation of the range, scope and diversity of these factors and to the extent to which they act as personal anchors or barriers. Alongside this, more studies on coaching of women in SSA countries would complement such knowledge and help to highlight some best practice examples. The literature on SSA countries in relation to coaching and leadership continues to grow but more pertinent studies, such as the one undertaken by the University of Stellenbosch and COMENSA, are needed, not just in executive coaching but other approaches of coaching as well.

10.6 Overall summary

With this framework, there is a unique opportunity for coaches to sensitise themselves to the complex circumstances of Zambian women, in terms of having a clearer understanding of where tensions can occur in managing boundaries. For

coachees, the opportunity to overcome socio-cultural barriers in a holistic manner offers significant potential. For a country like Zambia, where it is currently difficult to determine the calibre and number of coaching practitioners, such a framework would be important in driving a national coaching agenda for women leaders that is more connected and catalytic with respect to accelerating gender targets for the SDG agenda 2030 and AU 2063.

Coaching has significant potential to make a difference for the development of Zambian women leaders when it is done in a holistic manner. Appreciating the approaches and methods that resonate with coachees' personal and social values is important, particularly when these can be an anchor of support and liberation for achievement, but also when values can be an impediment to change (Law *et al.*, 2007). This heightened level of self-awareness can be beneficial in enabling women to promote and preserve those socio-cultural attitudes and traditions that are self-efficacious and empowering, and evolving those that limit agency to create new social norms that are responsive to work and home environments. In this developmental stage of coaching practice in Zambia, the collective coaching practice approach can enable the development of coaching in a way that is accessible not just to organisations, coaches and coachees but to wider stakeholders, and hopefully foster a more sustainable coaching ethos in Zambia.

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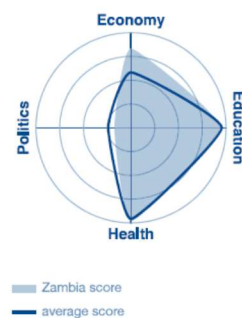
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Parity/Imparity Scores Zambia - Educational Attainment



Global Gender Gap Index

	2006 score	2020 score
Economic participation and opportunity	85 0.636	45 0.731
Educational attainment	64 0.602	7 0.831
Health and survival	100 0.843	125 0.938
Political empowerment	102 0.963	1 0.980
	43 0.135	80 0.174

COUNTRY SCORE CARD

	rank	score	avg	female	male	f/m	distance to parity
Economic participation and opportunity	7	0.831	0.582				
Labour force participation rate, %	43	0.894	0.661	71.7	80.2	0.89	
Wage equality for similar work, 1-7 (best)	42	0.707	0.613	-	-	4.95	
Estimated earned income, int'l \$ 1,000	1	1.000	0.499	3.8	3.7	1.02	
Legislators, senior officials and managers, %	n/a	-	0.356	-	-	-	
Professional and technical workers, %	106	0.740	0.756	42.5	57.5	0.74	
Educational attainment	125	0.938	0.954				
Literacy rate, %	108	0.917	0.899	83.1	90.6	0.92	
Enrolment in primary education, %	1	1.000	0.757	84.9	81.4	1.04	
Enrolment in secondary education, %	n/a	-	0.954	-	-	-	
Enrolment in tertiary education, %	123	0.737	0.931	3.5	4.8	0.74	
Health and survival	1	0.980	0.958				
Sex ratio at birth, %	1	0.944	0.925	-	-	0.97	
Healthy life expectancy, years	1	1.060	1.034	56.0	52.6	1.06	
Political empowerment	80	0.174	0.239				
Women in parliament, %	101	0.219	0.298	18.0	82.0	0.22	
Women in ministerial positions, %	37	0.429	0.255	30.0	70.0	0.43	
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)	73	0.000	0.190	0.0	50.0	0.00	

Appendix 2: Genres, Approaches and Contexts of Coaching

AUTHORS AND CATEGORY (Methods, Coaching Approaches, Genres, Context, Philosophies)		DETAIL
Ives (2008) Stober & Grant (2006)	Coaching Approaches	humanistic, behaviour based, adult development, cognitive coaching, adult learning, positive psychology, adventure based, systemic approach, goal oriented
Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck (2014; 2018)	Genres/Context	skills performance, developmental, transformational, executive and leadership, manager as coach, team coaching, peer coaching, life coaching, career coaching, cross cultural coaching, internal coaching, health & wellness
Cox, Bachkirova & Clutterbuck (2014; 2018)	Coaching Approaches:	psychodynamic, cognitive behavioural, solution focussed, person-centered, Gestalt, existential, ontological, transpersonal, NLP, positive psychology, narrative, transactional analysis
Bachkirova, Spence & Drake (2017)	Context	Detail: cross cultural coaching, group and team coaching, coaching in relationships, coaching in education, coaching in healthcare
Palmer & Whybrow (2019)	Approach in combination with genres/context	psychology of coaching: Approach in combination with genres/context/ cognitive behavioural, existential, Gestalt, narrative, NLP, person centered, psychodynamic, solution focussed

Source: Author

Appendix 3: Interpretivist and Indigenous Research Paradigms

Interpretivist	Indigenous
• Personal experience and context important in sense-making of given phenomena • Hermeneutical influences (Heidegger, 1889-1976) • Multiple realities recognised and attitudes and beliefs are embedded in knowledge creation • Researcher acknowledges biases	• Multiple realities, process of relationships, ontology is the same as epistemology in that they are both informed by highly relational knowledge and experiences. • Knowledge is not in things but rather relationships (includes relationships with the environment, spiritual, interpersonal) • Respectful, reciprocal, privileging of indigenous values, beneficial to community, local context, storytelling and sharing circles

Adapted from |

- Schroeder, R., (2014), Exploring critical and indigenous research methods with a Research Community: part II – The Landing,
- <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2014/exploring-the-landing/>
- Cuthbertson, L. M., Robb, Y.A and Blair, S (2019), Theory and application of research principles and philosophical underpinning for a study utilising interpretative phenomenological Analysis,
- Reiners, G.M. (2010), Understanding the differences between Husserl's (descriptive) and Heidegger's (interpretive) phenomenological research

Appendix 4: Steps to developing an indigenous methodology

Application of feedback from reviewer comments on the Professional Doctoral Programme at Oxford Brookes University

Does the research takes account of current work in the field and recent empirical work

- Bringing in post-colonialism as a critical lens, Think about using Ubuntu world view with regard to concepts of leadership, 4 comments supporting post-colonialist view point
- Anthropological studies on women gender in Africa
- Very broad, narrow down.
- Perhaps pragmatist approach, 4 comments suggesting this
- Good coverage of literature
- Research gap - good reference
- Why are women the drivers of development in SSA?
- Ensure leadership coaching models literature is prominent enough

Reflexive comments:

I did address the concept of Ubuntu as a worldview in the context of my research topic. This has since been consolidated by reading articles such as "Extending the worldview of coaching research and practice in Southern Africa: the concept of Ubuntu, (Geber and Keane, 2013). The article expands on the aspect of Ubuntu coaching and leadership for Southern Africa. I still feel however that the literature on gender and leadership probably needs to be more succinctly articulated. Further research on the topic of indigenous research studies has created the opportunity to review the methodology much more closely and begin to reflexively engage with the concept of indigenous paradigms and post colonialism would provide a pertinent "critical" lens" as indicated in the comments above. The indigenous research reviewed is limited as this appears to be a developing research paradigm with many complexities in terms of terminology, level of reflexivity required, (Getty, 2009; Hart 2010).

Have the paradigm and research approach been sufficiently justified?

Reviewer comments:

- Complex research approach, be careful of applying too many approaches, challenges to write methodology, potential conflicts and tensions
- Clearer understanding of participant group needed, what are the boundaries between women leaders in different contexts (NGO's, organisations, communities)
- A lot going on: survey interviews, narrative, phenomenological case study
- Initial survey good idea, confused between semi structured and narrative (latter is less structured)

Reflexive comments:

The research approach was influenced by what approaches I had seen in the literature with reference to leadership development and leadership coaching in sub-Saharan Africa. One article in particular Bolden and Kirk (2009) was significant in refocusing my perspective onto Ubuntu a world view and the need for research that has an indigenous paradigm. However, I have realised that that my ontological and epistemological stance is the key to providing an approach that best reflects my research framework. On further reading it is quite challenging to pre-empt where the tension might be with different approaches but I take the reviewers point in relation to having a clearer methodology that can be written up in an open manner. Given the focus on post-colonialism and the indigenous research paradigm, I have to rethink the method(s) I use to capture the participants experiences as semi-structured and narrative in retrospect are not complimentary methods. I have also been challenged about the issues of establishing rapport if I use a narrative method. I feel the topic itself will be significant to women themselves and if I use an indigenous research paradigm, it is important that I adopt a data collection method that is ethically considerate of the research participants (Hart, 2010) and perhaps story telling in terms of Zambian women telling their life story about leadership would be more appropriate as storytelling is indigenous to Zambian society.

Klenert, A., (2014), Extract from doctoral design assessment, P57515, submitted Friday 11th July, 2014

Appendix 5: Informal Consultation Notes

requires each country to do specific issues.

- Gender equity.
- Accountable Leadership
- In the home women are leaders
 - 1. Not acknowledged. Subtle influence guiding making decisions. Ready to step back.
- Schiz
 - In the home. Inganda mwanakazi.
 - Give when its in the home.

Zambia at a critical point
Address its issues and build

— Debates Corrup Justification for
 Climate An insider
 Change approach

- Sustainable dev. goals.
requires each country to do specific issues.
- Gender equity.

Appendix 6: Referral Letter to Recruit Co-researchers

Dear [Name],

I have been contacted by a professional Zambian colleague Anna Klenert who is conducting doctoral research at Oxford Brookes University, in the UK. The research topic concerns the "development of Zambian female leaders in senior executive positions through coaching, with a specific focus on narrative coaching". This research group of Zambian female senior executives is quite specific and requires the use of a professional network to find the right participants that meet the profile of a Zambian female, in a senior executive position for a minimum of 6 months.

I can confirm that I am not a member of Anna Klenert's research team and my contacting you is to let you know about the research in case you might be interested in taking part. Please note that it is entirely your decision whether you choose to be part of this research. Your participation is voluntary and in no way affects my professional working relationship with you or your organisation. You can confirm interest to participate by: emailing for full details of the research study to the principal investigator: Anna Klenert, Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom. email: aklenert@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for your time,

Kind regards

XXXX

Appendix 7: Overview of Structured Prompts

What Role Can Coaching Play? Developing African Women in Leaders: the context of Zambia

Interview time: 60-90 minutes

1. Introduction:

2. Current leadership position:

- background to achieving position,
- successes & challenges within position

3. Previous leadership position(s):

- most relevant previous leadership
- successes & challenges within leadership position(s)

4. Considering Zambian cultural values and norms:

- your most significant/respected cultural values/norms
- your role within the extended family/wider community
- personal leadership experience to date
- defining personal leadership style
- most significant personal successes and challenges

5. Indigenous perspective of Zambian women as role models

- implications if any of cultural values and norms for future women leaders transitioning into senior executive roles

6. Experience of coaching in support of your leadership development

- what type of coaching have you experienced

- which Zambian coaching company or consultant(s) have you used
- most helpful aspects of coaching
- most limiting aspects of coaching

7. Conclusion

- reconfirm contact details for any issues arising after the interview

Appendix 8: Participant Information Sheet

Researcher: Anna Klenert



Address: Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University, Wheatley campus,
Oxford OX33 1HX, United Kingdom

Email: aklenert@brookes.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 483820

Study title

Developing female leadership in Zambia through narrative coaching

Invitation paragraph

'You are being invited to take part in a research study because you are a Zambian female senior executive and you have been working in your current role for a minimum of 6 months. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully'.

What is the purpose of the study?

The main purpose of the study is to explore the leadership experiences of Zambian women leaders using narrative coaching in order to develop a coaching framework that addresses the Zambian context. Leadership development for women is high on the agenda for sub-Saharan Africa and specifically Zambia. Zambia lags behind in terms of initiatives that can support women in leadership positions. One of the key issues identified as contributing to this latent development is the lack of research that reflects the Zambian context and indigenous values. The research draws on the role of the contextual nature of Zambian cultural norms and traditions. The research is designed to run between March and September, 2015 with full completion scheduled for May, 2016.

Why have I been invited to participate?

Following your expressed interest by email to participate in the research, you are being invited to share your leadership story in an interview lasting between 60-90 minutes maximum. You are one of 15 participants that have been asked to contribute to the study.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time if you deem it necessary. 'It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason'.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you have received an email or email referral letter you can confirm your interest to participate in the study by emailing for full details of the research study to the principal investigator: Anna Klenert, Faculty of Business, Wheatley campus, Oxford OX33 1HX, email: aklenert@brookes.ac.uk.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Once you have indicated your interest to participate you will be contacted to set up an appropriate meeting time. The data collection method being used is story telling. You are being invited to recount your personal leadership story based on your experiences as a leader. The meeting will take between 60-90 minutes. The meeting will be followed by an email to present the summary of your story to verify if this has been captured accurately. In order to represent your personal story accurately we may repeat the follow-up email to discuss any changes made. It is anticipated that reviewing the interview summary will take no more than 30 minutes. The story will be documented using audio recording to ensure accuracy of your story. This information will be securely kept in accordance with University regulations and the data protection act 1998.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will be able to have access to the findings of the study once published. You will be also contributing to a very important topic that affects current and future women leaders in Zambia and sub-Saharan Africa. You will be able to have access to the findings of the draft framework feedback once published. You will be also contributing to a very important topic that affects current and future women leaders in Zambia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All the information you share as part of this study will be collected, collated and stored in the strictest confidence. Confidentiality and privacy will be ensured in a respectful manner in acknowledgement of the personal leadership story being told (subject to legal limitations).

Data generated by the study must be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity. The research material will be kept for safe storage in paper and or audio/electronic form for up to a period of ten years after completion of the research study.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this study will form part of my thesis for the Doctorate of Coaching and Mentoring. The Thesis will be available from Oxford Brookes Library with a summary of the findings available on request through the contact details provided.

Who is organising and funding the research?

I am conducting the research as a part-time student of Oxford Brookes University. The research is being supervised by Dr Juliette Koning, Reader, Oxford Brookes University, Faculty of Business, Wheatley campus, Oxford OX33 1HX. email: j.koning@brookes.ac.uk, Tel: +44 (0) 1865 485613 and Dr Adrian Myers, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Business, Wheatley campus, Oxford OX33 1HX. email: amyers@brookes.ac.uk, Tel: +44 (0) 1865 485936

Who has reviewed the study?

The research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for further Information?

In the event that you have any additional queries or questions please feel free to contact the principal investigator: Anna Klenert using the contact details provided above. In the event that you have any concerns about the manner in which the study has been conducted please direct any queries to the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read through the information sheet.

Date: February 10th, 2015

Appendix 9: Consent Form

Full title of Project: What Role Can Coaching Play? Developing Zambian Women Leaders: the context of Zambia

Name, position and contact address of Researcher: Anna Klenert, Oxford Brookes University, Faculty of Business, Wheatley campus, Oxford OX33 1HX, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 483820, email: aklenerts@brookes.ac.uk

Please initial box

1. I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded.

☐

2. I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

☐

3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

☐

Please initial box

Yes

No

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐☐

5. I agree to the use of de-identified quotes in publications

☐☐

6. I agree that my data gathered in this study may be stored
(after it has been de-identified) in a specialist data centre
and may be used for future research.

☐☐

Name of Participant
Signature

Date

Name of Researcher
Signature

Date

Appendix 10: Focus Sharing Group – Participant Notes/Researcher Notes

downside of goals
 all about confidence
 Not looking at competencies
 Women as statistics
 Challenges - responsiveness of the audience, work notes / direct reports / extended family
 Needs driven approach - what are women copying for goals to achieve
 What is the first needed

Dialogue between women
 Men can relate around a table
 Everybody
 Women

Dealing with overconfidence

SPIRIT PRAYER → helps to manage your own past
 setting boundaries → not too chimney?
 → sometimes goes against your character
 → be clear on expectations
 → put in a process to engage
 → take a systems approach
 is addressing needs
 → lifting the boundaries & pull back - expand

Team focus as achieve objectives, transformation approach

→ Be honest enough to admit you don't know, needs to achieve goals
 → How do we help ourselves?
 → " " pioneer ourselves
 → Have the courage of your convictions
 → Don't focus on external influences
 → Positive narrative
 → Find the core need of an individual
 → Receptiveness of the audience

Argument on Goals

→ could be mentorship model be more useful
 → build confidence & expertise
 → infuse in a leadership model into audience
 → our mother's generation were pioneers
 → need home grown solutions
 → can the research help us to navigate through the paradigms of leadership context
 → is there a unique solution
 → a qualitative research project as this is chalking through unknown areas
 → career path - should you take opportunities or plan with the skill in mind?
 → Am I too soft??
 → issues of difference - how do men expect it be treated
 → networking without compromising traditional roles
 → don't give it up
 → keep being professional & be challenging
 → be non-complacent - don't want to get

Goals for

Generational

Socialisation start at a young age

Rhetoric / narrative you are too good

→ coaching to have strong conviction of who you are

Being

Emotional / mental support

Down to family leadership

Being

The conviction that don't want to be poor

What is the conviction

→ What is the driving factor (internal)

→ Core / ^{Base} need of the individual

→ Nurture at the core need

Appendix 11: Voice Expressions and Reflective Notes

"...the hindrance I found was being taught that as a woman you shouldn't talk too much. Don't nag, don't be out there. It brings, it brought...for me it brought a certain level of anti-social behaviour. Okay. Because your focus should be more at home and not out there. Like you know, good woman is not out there. That is no good for somebody who needs to network and know what's going on and why things are going the way they're going. The being anti-social and not being out there is no good in the corporate world, where you need to network. Not speaking out, being respectful, it's good to teach children to be respectful.

Respect is a good thing, but respect should not clamp down speaking your mind and your opinion because even in the corporate world you will not do it. Even when you know you are right or you should. Sometimes you can say the wrong thing but you should be comfortable enough to say it and be told you're wrong. Those bring in conflicts for, especially for women. I think. Because our men folk don't seem to suffer from this issue of when should I speak, when should I not speak, should I speak? We...I hate confrontation, I hated it but now I had to get confrontational. Where did I learn that because like a woman you know you don't do those things, you don't nag and then you find these males in the corporate world, you adopt the same posture? They conflict with who you need to be.

Reflective Notes:

- Being told don't talk too much, don't nag linked to antisocial behaviour.
- Not being vocal in any way works against networking?
- Respect is a good thing but it shouldn't prevent one from stating personal opinions and speaking one's mind.
- Being able to put one's opinion across as a fundamental right?
- Impression that men don't seem to suffer from the indecision of stating their own opinion
- Being confrontational went against her preferred leadership style
- Adopting the same approaches as men in conflict with true self.

I can relate to the traditional context that Mwila describes about avoiding confrontation and this being in conflict with the true self.

Appendix 12: Example of Colour Coding to Identify Themes

Extract: Participant ~~Chibwe~~ Head of Project International NGO

Interview Date: May, 2015

Time: PM Location: Lusaka Arcades Shopping Centre

Interview Colour codes:

Yellow	:(~~personal~~) tensions, internalised struggles, reactions
Turquoise:	:(~~Personal~~ /Social) gender roles, values and education
Green	:(~~past~~) socialisation processes
Purple	:(~~present~~) leadership issues and challenges
Grey	:(~~future~~) ~~Restorying~~ , implications, plot lines
Red	:(~~context~~) individual & collective implications of societal environment

■: I would simply put it this way. If you want a tree to bend in the direction that you want it to you have to sort of tie the rope and make it bend in that direction when it's still small because once it's a big tree, you can't do anything. Therefore what I am saying is for the young females I think everything should start as early as we can possibly start. If we are going to start giving them direction when they are more or less when they are like big girls they are already exposed. They will just think 'oh how out-dated this person is'. ~~Therefore we~~ have to start early. I really do not have a definition of early at this moment but I think it is something that can be looked at. There are a lot of things that are happening around the female girl child. Before their mind is so spoiled when they are still sort of clean, that is the time we should start giving them direction and hoping that they will pick it up so that by the time they are big women like me they will actually know what it is that will help them.

■: One thing that I have learned over the years is that when you are a leader and a woman there is something hidden in there which actually also tells you to say you are actually also a mother. You don't bring that aspect completely but as you manage people you have to be a leader, you have to draw a line to become a boss, but at the same time you also have to be silent and be a mother. So a combination of all those actually has helped me to get over certain hurdles on my journey not everyone is

Appendix 13: Extract Preliminary Findings Shared with Women Co-researchers

Focus Group Wednesday 27th /Thursday 28th January, 2016

Venue: Mambilima Road Lusaka Time: 10.30-11.45; Format of Focus Group: Presentation

1: Overview of project focus; personal perspective to the research; Presentation 2:

Findings Focus group discussion:



Findings: Characteristics and profile of participants

- Sectors: medical, regulatory, banking, NGO's, /Project funded, International institution, government institutions.
- Characteristics: self-driven, hard-working, well educated to post graduate level, with combined management training courses, grew into role and/or headhunted or chance opportunity was taken up, majority have had mentoring, a few have had coaching (team coaching, individual coaching).

FSG Contributions



Findings: Strategies that worked in leadership roles

- Individual level: assertiveness, effective communication, networking, being a role model (work colleagues and within immediate family), resilience, perseverance, professionalism, knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, being empathetic, regular prayer, setting boundaries and being honest about expectations from subordinates.
- Organisational level: open door policy, collaborating, team focus rather than individual focus, professionalism in following systems and organizational protocol in resolving problematic situations, in managing people engaging with the whole person.

FSG Contributions



Findings: Leadership challenges experienced

- Generic globally: work/life balance, hierarchy, male dominated organisations at executive level, visibility, time out to start a family
- Contextual to Zambia: respect, age / dealing with older subordinates and male superiors, being too soft

FSG Contributions



Findings: Socio-cultural elements some contradictions

- The role of the parent as encouraging figure head also the person involved in the socialisation process?
- Marriage at the expense of a career?
- The extended family: help or hindrance?

FSG Contributions



Findings: developmental areas

- Financial management – in coping with the demands of an extended family
- Mindset, career development instead of just focused on marriage “development”
- Goal setting
- “Self-doubting thoughts”
- Corporate politics
- Confidence
- Diplomacy
- Networking

FSG Contributions



Findings: Leadership styles

- Compassionate but forthright
- Transformational
- Flexible and adaptable
- Open door policy/visionary
- Hands on - (can do what subordinates can do, learned bottom up)
- Empower people – share knowledge
- Collaborative/Participative

FSG Contributions

Appendix 14: Restorying – Three-Dimensional Narrative Analysis

Restorying: Musonda – CEO

Past: leadership challenges and education section

Musonda came across as a very welcoming and open person at the interview. With an economics background, her experience within government and as a national development planner she identified herself as being more of a technocrat with strong analytical thinking. As a CEO of the project she found she needed less of the technocrat experience and more managerial know how and lacking the requisite people management skills proved to be quite challenging.

M: This job, 60% is managing people and only 40% technical. So finding a balance because where I was coming from I did more of the technical work...this is what I enjoyed doing ... being analytical but that's not what is required of a CEO. Basically it's all this management of people, basically knowing issues that you should focus on, the strategic issues. And it does take a bit of time really. It's not something that is easy.

Past: Education, expert professional knowledge, Strengths (implications for coaching section)

As she related her story, she came across as extremely knowledgeable and astute and in listening to her voice what struck me was how passionate she was not just about the job but about making a difference to improve the social conditions of Zambia through her leadership. Clearly the work she was involved in with water sanitation and drainage was very important not just to the Zambia but to her as well (I sensed this in the manner in which she described her role and the degree of information she gave about the project itself).

M: I was within a ministerial dept. in National Planning for 17 years up to a level of Deputy Director in the Department. And during that time my ministerial dept. was in discussion with the funding government...

AK ...yes...

M ...about having a support in the area of really reducing poverty and bringing about economic growth... I mean this is an xxx initiative where they've been supporting low-income countries that have a number of issues with regard to stimulating growth in their countries, yeah. So

Personal: Tensions of leading with morals and values

Musonda admitted that she is a very candid person and that this stems back to her upbringing where her parents raised them to value honesty, integrity and not lie. She learned in her childhood years that admitting to having made a mistake or done something wrong was easier than being found out to have lied by her parents. As a result some of the people challenges she faced were due to tensions in managing staff that struggled to admit the truth and admit failings. Efforts at constructive criticism with staff where performance needed to be improved due to key deliverable performance objectives that were not met or fixed deadlines that were missed proved to be extremely challenging.

M So what we've been trying to do is just to develop a performance management system and obviously what people are accountable for such as targets, there are timelines. Candid discussion is very uncommon in this country. I mean this is what I've seen. Yeah.

AK Why do you say that? Uncommon?

M From my background where I'm coming from, even just from others, people never really tell people the truth. You know we don't want to tell people that you haven't done well in this area. These are the reasons and it's not like you're attacking - you're just trying to help somebody. [From experience in Government] We did this ... appraisal system which was never really implemented because people don't want to...have difficult discussions..... When you start a conversation, even

Appendix 15: Ethics Approval

Dr [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Department of Business and Management

Faculty of Business

Wheatley Campus

2 February 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

UREC Registration No: 150891

Developing female leadership in Zambia through narrative coaching

Thank you for your email of 12 February 2015 outlining your response to the points raised in my previous letter for your study and attaching the revised documents. I am pleased to inform you that, on this basis, I have given approval for the study to begin.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Deputy Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc [REDACTED] Second Supervisor

Anna Klenert, Research Student

[REDACTED] Research Ethics Officer

[REDACTED] Research Degrees Team

[REDACTED] UREC Administrator

Appendix 16: Profiles of Women Co-researchers

Profiles and Personalities	
1. Chanda, Board Chair, Banking	Chanda's character reflected a very resilient and assertive persona almost fearless. She was driven from an early age following the death of her mother. Although she had extended family to support, she realised very quickly she needed to be independent. She has had very senior roles heading up companies prior to her current role as Board Chair.
2. Chibwe, Head of Project, International NGO	Chibwe presented herself as a very forthright person who has a quiet confidence but is very resilient. She seemed to be unaware of her own successes until this was brought to her attention, she exuded a very authentic persona. Her role within the health sector showed that her interests go beyond simply the satisfaction of doing a good job on a project but she is also keen to make a difference to society at a national level.
3. Chileshe, Board Chair, Financial Sector	Chileshe came across as an extremely motivated positive thinker. She spoke very passionately about her career development and from her own description of herself it was evident that she has an inquiring mind and a self-confessed book worm. I was fascinated by her background and how much her drive and ambition seemed to be down to her father's key focus to see her develop to the best of her potential. She was very open about giving advice and didn't seem to hold back about sharing her knowledge experience if it will be of use to someone else. 10 years in Banking, Has an MBA
4. Chilufya, Director Human Resources, Banking Sector	Chilufya gave the impression of a very calm, articulate woman. Influenced by her education and experiences abroad and in Zambia she never saw her gender as a limiting her leadership potential. Any obstacles she faced which she has overcome have been based on her own ability and resilience. It was only as she advanced in her career in different organisations that she became more aware to the issues that women were dealing with. As Director of HR even more so. She is a self-starter and founder of an active mentoring programme for upcoming women leaders.
5. Chiti, Consultant Doctor, Health Sector Government	Chiti came across as very caring and open. She invited me to have dinner with her family before having the interview. Her background reflects a woman who has had to fend for herself at an early age. She has opened her home to not only raise her daughter but her brother's children as well which speaks for her motherly instinct and compassion. As a consultant Doctor her leadership role was leading a team of Clinical doctors at a national teaching hospital.
6. Chola, Company Secretary, Regulatory	Chola came across as a very driven individual that is always seeking to improve not just herself but others in her journey. Her leadership role arose through her own abilities to network with people she knew that were aware of her capabilities as a lawyer. What stood out for me about Chola was that she is passionate about getting children to be made aware that there are no limits to their ability and to their choice of career.
7. Kaela, Board Chair, Government Board	Kaela, gave the impression of a woman who is very resilient. Having overcome very personal circumstances, her moto is about never fearing to show your capabilities, values and strengths and that it's important to putting oneself out there. Her values are focused on being open and humble towards everyone not matter what their station in life. She attributed much of her character and ideals to her upbringing.
8. Kondwani, Branch Manager, Banking	An honest and straightforward woman. She came across as someone who values authenticity in herself and in others. Her experiences of leadership were progressive in one company and showed that she is a very dedicated and consistent person. Her principles about professionalism in the work place seemed very important to how she carried herself in the workplace.

Profiles and Personalities

9. Lubi, Director Banking Sector a very calm person. She can across as thoughtful and considerate when she spoke about her work in mentoring other young women in her church group. What stood out about Lubi was her measured approach to developing herself, through persistence, learning and building knowledge. Comes across as a strong technocrat due to her role in Banking. As a widow she has had to work extremely hard to take on the leadership within the family and providing for the family, so came across as very resilient.

10. Luwi, Director of Finance, Regulatory

Luwi came across as having an inner strength and a high level of resilience. She maintained her position as the only women on the regulatory board for a period of 10 years.

11. Musonda, General Manager, International NGO

Musonda came across as a very welcoming and open person at the interview. With an economics background, her experience within government and as a national development planner she identified herself as being more of a technocrat with strong analytical thinking. Running a 5 year project with a huge fund she is very candid about the need for her to be professional goal oriented and ethical on her role as CEO.

12. Mutale, Senior Manager, Customer Services Banking

Mutale came across as very sincere and committed to her role as a communicator and comes across as very passionate about helping people and a competent problem solver. In her leadership role she indicated that it was important for her to really understand the other person's perspective when working with her staff in order to help them to succeed in their roles. She has strong values about respect, kindness. Mutale demonstrated self-determination and grew up knowing that her primary goal was just to get marriage, she learned early on that a good education and knowing what she wanted for herself was important.

13. Mutinta, Deputy Director Health, Health Sector Government

Mutinta came across as fearless, willing to take on new challenges and try new things. Her attitude towards leadership reflected more of a collective approach of collaboration and team work. She attributed this to her upbringing. Important to her are the values of respect and community learned through the cultural context of home. Her natural affinity to be caring is reflected in her professional role in the health sector.

14. Mwansa, General Manager Zambia, Logistics

Mwansa came across as someone who thrives on challenge and so her perception on professional development was one of looking to see how much further she could go. Her self-drive was very evident in the projections she saw about where her career should take her. Her confidence was reflected in her view that women should not fear to take risks. Important to her were values of respect, a good education and the input of parents.

15. Mwenya, Legal Counsel, Regulatory Board

Mwenya came across as someone who has very strong principles about upbringing and the role that parents can play in guiding children with the right values. Her own upbringing was important in how she developed self-confidence. Her leadership style is reflected as consultative and team oriented.

16. Mwila, Head of Customer Services, Telecommunications

Mwila came across as an very introspective person who reflects deeply about things and uses this to help drive her next steps. She was very open in her conversations about mistakes and challenges. She pushes herself to learn about things she does not understand and is proactive in seeking mentoring support when she feels she needs it.

Profiles and Personalities

17. Mwitwa, Head of Africa global Division, Global Finance

Mwitwa came across as an extremely determined woman and resilient. Honest and precise in her articulation being professional through her own values such as respect. She values the culture the family and traditions offer for support. She also came across as very motherly and committed to making a difference for anyone who she takes under her wing.

18. Thandiwe, Company Secretary, Banking

Self-driven, always learning and developing herself. At the time of our meeting she was completing her MBA and had just undertaken her next professional development courses. She came across as very optimistic and resilient. She doesn't give up and is open to opportunity. Is focused on what she can contribute to give back to society.

Appendix 17: Coaching related experiences

Chola

Team style intervention to resolving a work related issue

A CEO who had risen through the ranks was having problems asserting themselves with existing team: The coach listened to the problem and related issues back to the team:

Chola: the coach gave a talk heard the problems we outlined to her. The coach spoke to management and spoke with different members of staff to get to the bottom of what was going on and was able to pick out what the problems were.

Chola: the coach gave us a talk about work, about our personal lives, gave us a talk as a wake up call her story other people's stories and life is about giving your best shot.

The coach pointed out that the team spent most of the time at work so they should make it work make it happen just make sure that you are happy no one forces you to have a job if you don't want you can leave. She just said it the way it was.

The coach carried out two or three session and then introduce a team game.

Chola: each person had an occasion to tell every single workmate to tell them what you hate about them and what you like about them. And what you don't like you will bury and going forward you will tell someone when they do something you don't like and don't keep it. Eventually whenever someone came forward to complain about someone else we would say have you spoken to them? In the institution we now just have the beautiful family environment. There is a lot of team work and everyone is able to talk with everyone and according each one the necessary respect.

Follow-up to coaching:

Chola: Later on we did some team building workshops. After that we tried to continue (as coaching isn't cheap) The problem has been sorted out so we now try to do other team building activities such as aerobics or have a chat or someone will come to talk to us.

One-to One Coaching

There was one earlier just when I joined and someone had been doing this management coaching this for the director, I and my other colleague there was some kind of coaching. It wasn't the first time we were experiencing that.

Anna: How did you find that intervention? Was it useful?

Chola: Personally not so as much. I can hardly remember what it was about to was more management based. The other one I can remember because it was quite effective. It did sort out a big problem that we had.

Anna: What was it she did that was effective? I know you played the game but what was it that made it

Chilufya: One to one coaching/career coaching

I have a lot mentors and coaches throughout my career and life. Even now there are people who I will bounce certain ideas off. Let me thin. I had a coach last year and what she was

really coaching me on was just the next steps, then next thing. I have sort of reached a swing around career so what next? So I worked with her on that so really for me it's around career, what next. I have done this so what do I really want to do next then how. It's really around career. That would be the main thing.

Thandiwe: Not clear if this was one or one or group coaching or combined

Thandiwe: One of the things I have learned to do is to accept my leadership style. that is one thing that really had challenged me all along, because when we come into the corporate world we all want to be aggressive like the men be domineering because we think that is what leadership means. But one of my mentors previously board chairman ... came to see me in my office and wanted to get to know me and I told him He said no you don't have to be like that just be who you are/ I then went on a coaching programme (abroad) and they assessed me and profiled me. They said to me that is just where I fit in and with that sort of more laid back and gentle approach to leadership I can still achieve what I want to achieve. So that is one of things that help me, recognising that this is who I am and I don't have to try to be anyone else.

Mwitwa: Form of Peer Coaching or Mentoring?

Mwitwa: I also have a personal board...it's a group of 3, for the last three years.

Anna: ...and how do you use this personal board, is it really to be self-reflective or to seek advice or a combination of the two.

Mwitwa: It's a support and challenge.

Anna: Which you feel you need?

Mwitwa: I need, I need, because you can get very complacent in life so we meet at the beginning of the year and questions such as, what are you planning to do this year professionally, personally and half way through the year we meet again and how have you done and why have you not done this, so ok you have done well on this and maybe you need to change track here because the world around you is changing and its very helpful.

Anna: You are prepared to take the criticism?

Mwitwa: I deliberately chose some really hard people, because of that. I deliberately chose some really hard people because you can cope with the nice things in life, its learning to cope with the hard things in life.

Musonda: One-to-One Executive Coaching

Musonda: I'm having coaching now which started like a month, let me say, two, three months ago... from the recommendations that came out of that team building exercise. I mean I thought that I needed to follow up with some coaching. And some of the things that...I mean the same thing I told you about what's been a key challenge for me, is getting people to deliver and deliver on time and deliver quality...

Musonda ...outputs. I mean that's been a big problem for me. Things get delayed sometimes because they have to be re-**worked** completely. So I discussed with this guy who came... he's been coaching I mean for a number of organisations, senior management...

Musonda ...so we started a coaching session...and we did it for just like 4 sessions and then the coach went away...before that I didn't have any coaching sessions.

Anna: Okay...have you found it helpful?

Musonda: I think it's very helpful. I think that we need to...yeah go through, yeah benefit from these coaching sessions

Musonda: ...so then we talk about different options, the coach would send me some videos, I mean situations that the coach has dealt with. Obviously I have to be more proactive myself, how do I want to approach this, this issue. So we talk about this is what I want to take, approach this matter ...and then eventually I would implement.