

DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



**AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IN YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT WITH TECHNOLOGY ENTREPRENURSHIP**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration in
The Faculty of Management Sciences at the
Durban University of Technology

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Date

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DECLARATION

This study is the original work of the author and has not otherwise been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to any university. Where use has been made of the work of others, such has been duly acknowledged in the text.

6 October 2021

Signature (R Murugan)

Date

ABSTRACT

The inadequate participation of youth in business activities is disturbing in the light of the high rate of unemployment together with an education system that is not aligned to the needs of the economy. As a result, the majority of the youth prefer seeking employment and earning a salary rather than embarking on a business career which could be financially more beneficial to the individual, his/her family and the wider community

The study aims to determine how entrepreneurship education coupled with the necessary coaching and mentoring can fulfil the primary role of preparing young South Africans to contribute towards the economic growth of the country and the prosperity of its people by engaging in entrepreneurial activities. This study leverages my entrepreneurial experience to mentor nascent entrepreneurs to collaborate in knowledge gathering, information sharing and business networking using ICT.

Using the autoethnographic approach, the study explores my experiences in entrepreneurship from my early childhood as an observer in the family business and later as an entrepreneur highlighting my successes and failures. To ensure that my business experiences could make a difference in society, I have undertaken to mentor a group of aspiring youth entrepreneurs to add to their knowledge and experience. This could help ensure that they are sustainable in business, contributing to the growth of the economy through job creation amongst the unemployed and generating wealth for the alleviation of poverty in the community.

A mixed methods approach guides the direction, collection and analysis of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in this study. The main premise for the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination is that it provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone would have achieved. Here autoethnography becomes a powerful tool in feeling and practically putting one's self in the other's shoes, which otherwise would be logically analysed and clinically reviewed.

The results suggest that youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is compromised by high levels of bureaucracy thereby limiting access to finance, a shortage of skills and

a general lack of innovative thinking making the country less competitive on the international stage. The youth should be exposed to entrepreneurship education from primary and secondary school so that entrepreneurial orientation and intention are developed early, thereby ensuring that the aspiring entrepreneur is psychologically competent for a career in business.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to APPA and AMMA

Thank You for the simple lessons in ethical business practice ...

&

For the love and support when I had to pick myself up and continue the journey...

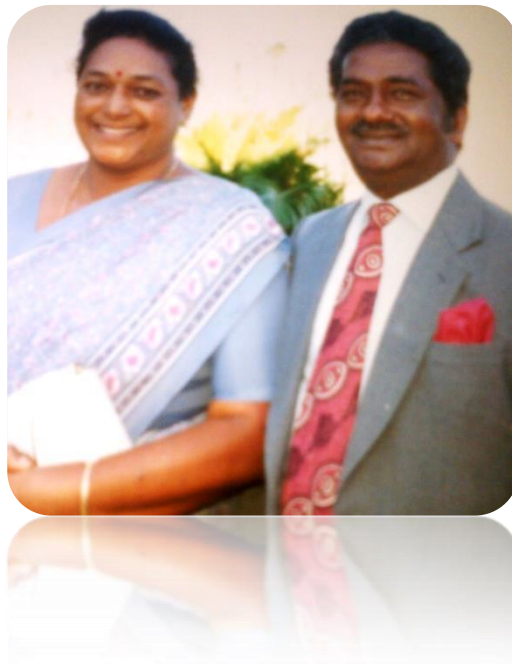


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AE:	Autoethnography
BRICS:	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
CSR:	Corporate social responsibility
DTI:	Department of Trade and Industry
EDP:	Entrepreneurship Development Programme
EI:	Entrepreneurial intention
EO:	Entrepreneurial orientation
EU:	European Union
GDP:	Gross domestic product
GEM:	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor.
ICT:	Information and communications technology
ILO:	International Labour Organization
MGD:	Millennium Development Goals
MOOCs:	Massive Open Online Courses
NDP:	National Development Plan
NYDA:	National Youth Development Agency
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SEDA:	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SMME:	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
TAL:	Technology assisted learning
TEA:	Total Economic Activity
UN:	United Nations

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present an introduction and an overview of the study. The chapter commences with a relevant background to the study, followed by an overview of the background to my entrepreneurial journey and its influence on this study. The chapter states the research problem, research objectives and the research methodology followed in the study. This chapter includes the delimitations of the study and concludes with the contributions of the study and a chapter outline.

1.1.1 An overview of my journey

This autoethnographic study explores my experiences in entrepreneurship from my early childhood, observing my father in business as a tailor, to the time I entered the commercial world myself as a businessperson, experiencing high and low points. The tensions created by the challenges faced by my father, its impact on our family life and my personal experiences in business later in life had significantly influenced me. I would like to use my experiences to make a difference in society by helping aspiring entrepreneurs through business coaching and mentoring.

I chose autoethnography as the research method of this study as it gave me the opportunity to reflect on and give meaning to my experiences as an entrepreneur. The study lends itself to an autoethnographic approach since it seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experiences in order to understand cultural experience (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2010:1).

My experiences, though profound, would have been forgotten had it not been for autoethnography. Now, they could sensitise readers to issues that were shrouded in silence, as well as deepen my capacity to empathise with people (Denzin, 1989:136). Furthermore, no other genre would have captured the emotions as autoethnography would (Couser, 1997:27).

Ellis and Bochner (2000:737) state that one's experiences are stories not just of the past, but as an avenue to shape the future. I believe that valuable lessons could be learned from these experiences, which could contribute to the SMME sector in South Africa. To ensure that my business experiences could make a difference in society, I

have undertaken to mentor a group of aspiring youth entrepreneurs to add to their sustainability so that they could contribute to the growth of the economy through job creation amongst the unemployed.

1.1.2 Background to the study

The institutional context within which my father conducted his business was under restrictive apartheid laws in the Greyville district just outside the Durban CBD. The business arena in the 1960s and 1970s were restrictive for many non-white businesses concerning the business location, trading hours and the restrictions within each particular trade. All these measures were aimed at ensuring that non-whites did not have an edge over their white business counterparts. During this period, I observed the restrictive conditions under which non-white businesses were run in terms of apartheid legislation. Some businesses thrived whilst many others struggled yet persevered under trying circumstances.

However, to stay in business, the present generation of entrepreneurs has a different set of challenges, despite the support and technological advances in communication. To address this, Gwija et al. (2014:165) suggest that the youth should acquire education and in particular pursue entrepreneurial careers so that they can gain the necessary intellectual, psychological and practical skills of entrepreneurship.

It is my desire to share my experiences and knowledge in entrepreneurship with aspiring youth entrepreneurs. After telling my story, I listen to the stories of my mentees and give them an opportunity to learn from the mistakes of the past and help them map out a sound business strategy for the future. As a reflexive genre of writing, autoethnography situates the self within the context of culture and studies one's experience along with that of others (Duarte, 2007:66). My own experience then becomes the object of investigation, as one is fully committed to and immersed in the group one studies (Ellis and Bochner, 2000:738). Autoethnography then becomes a powerful tool in seeing, feeling and practically "putting one's self in the other's shoes", which otherwise would be logically analysed, making the issues distant, cold and detached (Capel, 2012:668).

The significance of helping the youth succeed in business is highlighted by Steenkamp, van der Merwe and Athayde (2011:48) who state that youth entrepreneurship contributes to growth in an economy by providing employment, increasing the state coffers through employee and business taxes and placing money in the hands of consumers to spend. It also improves the general standard of living in a society, which reduces crime, poverty and social unrest. Consequently, it is vitally important for youth enterprises to succeed for the wellbeing of society.

1.1.3 Previous studies

There is presently a considerable body of research available that suggests the importance of this field of study. Many researchers, (Maas and Herrington 2006; Luke, Verreyne and Kearins, 2007; Fatoki, 2014; Gilmore, 2009) in the field agree that the youth (ages 18-35 years) who pursue entrepreneurial careers could make a significant impact on unemployment, which presently stands at 31.1% (StatsSA: 2020). Unlike many earlier works on youth entrepreneurship where attention had been given almost exclusively to the role that young aspiring business people could play in job creation and poverty alleviation, little attention was being paid to how this could be achieved. This study proposes that the youth who show an interest in business should be given the necessary support to ensure their survival.

Worldwide interest in developing entrepreneurial education and initiatives has seen rapid growth because entrepreneurship is considered a generator of national prosperity and competitiveness (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven, 2004; Martinez et al., 2010). In most developed and developing countries there is an inclination to view entrepreneurship and business education as the panacea for economic stagnation and unemployment (Matlay, 2005).

Moufhe and Du Toit (2011:10) found that entrepreneurship students recognise a stronger influence coming from entrepreneurial role models on their choice of business as a career option than non-entrepreneurship students. This finding is in keeping with previous empirical research that role models influence potential entrepreneurs' desires to go into business rather than seek employment (Brennan et al., 2003; Fayolle et al., 2006; Van Auken, Fry and Stephens, 2006 as cited in Moufhe and Du Toit, 2011:6). Using business mentoring as a platform, the present study proposes that aspiring entrepreneurs be coached and mentored on best

practices in business as well as giving emerging young entrepreneurs the necessary exposure to the business world and the necessary support to ensure sustainability in a challenging environment.

1.2 A research gap that needs to be filled

Whilst identifying the research problem, a research gap is discovered which justifies the study leading to key questions being asked for which answers were sought. Consequently, this justifies the need for further investigation on the topic thereby adding value to an area of immense interest in academic and business circles presently.

1.2.1 The research problem

The limited participation of youth in business activities is worrying in the light of the high rate of unemployment coupled with an education system that is not addressing the needs of the economy (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162). It has been argued extensively that entrepreneurship education and training must fulfil a primary role in preparing young South Africans to contribute towards economic growth (Isaacs et al., 2007:613).

However, complacency amongst some youth entrepreneurs and their inability to be proactive in forging business networks and collaborative relationships is a major problem. Therefore, the introduction of information and communication technology is seen as a vital component in knowledge dissemination and networking.

1.2.2 Justification for the study

A brief literature survey has revealed that there is a significant body of scholarly works on youth development and youth entrepreneurship. However, the influence of business coaching and mentoring on youth entrepreneurship is an area that requires further research. This study investigates the influence of mentoring, including the role of technology in promoting business skills, business networking and online business.

I explore the discussion further to incorporate my own experiences in business. I did not believe that these experiences would have such a powerful impact just by looking back with a new set of lenses. However, what seemed to have passed by as seemingly mundane are now considered important as rich details of my past are excavated. It would also be an opportunity for me as the researcher to create resonance— “me too” moments for the readers along the way.

1.2.3 Research questions

The following research questions have been identified:

- How can the fostering of youth entrepreneurship contribute to the alleviation of unemployment and poverty in the country?
- What role can ICT play in business networking and the growth of new businesses?
- What practical contribution could the mentorship programme make to the business success of budding entrepreneurs?
- How could the mentoring of new entrepreneurs be sustained to contribute to the continued growth of the SMME sector beyond the present study?

1.2.4 Contribution of the study

The study contributed in the following ways:

- The influence that entrepreneurship has on job creation and poverty alleviation in the community;
- The influence that economic prosperity brings to society in the form of social stability and the general wellbeing of the people;
- Improved literacy and enhanced business knowledge among the youth and the community as a whole through online learning;

- Extensions in business networking and increase in online business activities as the youth are exposed to different aspects of business on the World Wide Web.

1.3 FOCUS OF THE RESEARCH

The content, outlining the aim of the study and the objectives that have been identified, are discussed below. Thereafter, the structure giving a summary of each chapter is presented. This is followed by a discussion of the methodology employed together with the delimitations identified, culminating with an evaluation of the overall study

1.3.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to use my experience as an entrepreneur to mentor would-be entrepreneurs using technology to share information and build business networks for growth and sustainability.

The following objectives were formulated to realise the aim of the study and to address the research problem:

- to explore my entrepreneurial journey and highlight the successes/failures and the lessons derived from these experiences;
- to promote co-operation amongst youth entrepreneurs in knowledge gathering, information sharing and business networking;
- to investigate innovative ways in which ICT can help facilitate an effective mentoring programme on a sustainable basis; and
- to create a model that could contribute to the development and growth of the SMME sector to contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation.

1.3.2 Research Methodology

As a methodology, a mixed methods approach guides the direction, collection and analysis of a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in this study. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:5), the main premise for the use of quantitative and

qualitative approaches in combination is that it provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone would not have achieved.

The first phase of the study is a qualitative exploration with an autoethnographic design of my entrepreneurial journey highlighting my business experiences as an observer and a participant in later life. Here autoethnography becomes a powerful tool in feeling and practically putting one's self in the other's shoes, which otherwise would be logically analysed, making the issues distant (Capel, 2012:668). I learnt that if you want to tell a story in a scholarly manner, this is where you begin. Ellis (2004:26) believes that ultimately, you do not choose autoethnography it chooses you.

The primary purpose of the second stage was to conduct a mentorship programme embedded in an action research format with aspiring youth entrepreneurs. Using a quantitative questionnaire, their general perception of entrepreneurship is assessed. Thereafter, they were taken through a structured programme targeting best practices in business over a period of three months, which also included online collaboration. How they were going to respond to this initiative was unknown because we do not start research with answers. The researcher is an unbiased observer who knows not what he will discover (Johnson, 2008:29).

The design of the study is one of a convergent parallel design where data is collected and analysed as two independent strands of qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. There is an unequal priority of the two strands with emphasis being given to the qualitative segment. The results are then mixed during the overall interpretation, looking for convergence, divergence or relationships of the two sources.

1.3.3 Delimitations of the study

Some unavoidable limitations were identified during the research process.

- The time that was allocated to each of the mentees for face-to-face sessions could not be implemented according to plan because of social distancing according to Covid 19 protocols.

- With provisions being made for group discussions in a classroom setting and the unforeseen change to online contact could have also influenced the overall outcome of the mentoring programme.

It is beyond the scope of this study to continue the mentoring of participants who are engaged in or are contemplating starting a business. However, efforts are being made to direct those seeking advice to relevant support structures available.

1.4 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The structure of the study consists of the following chapters:

1.4.1 Chapter One: Introduction and Problem orientation

This chapter delineates the background to the study whilst making reference to previous studies around the topic under investigation. It outlines the aims of the study and lists the key research questions. The research method employed is also given a brief introduction. Finally, the structure of the study is outlined giving a synopsis of the key areas in each chapter.

1.4.2 Chapter Two: Autoethnography and Business mentoring

In this chapter, the autoethnographic method and its origins are discussed. Reflexivity in social research and its relevance to the present study are described. The excavation of the self, whilst maintaining autoethnographic rigour is also discussed. Furthermore, the role of the family business in promoting entrepreneurship by serving as a nursery for the next generation of entrepreneurs is given detailed attention. The role of the founding patriarch in establishing the business and succession planning is also outlined. The chapter concludes with a discussion on business coaching/ mentoring as well as the role of technology in e-mentoring and guided e-learning to promote business education.

1.4.3 Chapter Three: Mindfulness and digital connectivity

This chapter discusses the mindfulness philosophy giving the eastern and western perspectives. It also defines organisational mindfulness and mindless organisations

together with how business culture is developed. Entrepreneurs are advised how to mindfully respond to opportunities and threats as well as how mindfulness could be applied to addressing the stress of business life. The chapter also delves into how knowledge is created and shared in the digital era together with the social impact of ICT. Suggestions are also made on how nascent entrepreneurs could benefit from connectivism through online learning in business.

1.4.4 Chapter Four: The theory of youth entrepreneurship

This chapter unpacks the key theme of this study, namely youth entrepreneurship and its importance to the socio-economic landscape in South Africa. It also highlights the role that the youth in business could play in job creation, poverty alleviation and at the same time positively influencing the political stability in the country. Consequently, the role of the government is highlighted in actively working towards creating an enabling environment for the establishment of new businesses by youth who fall into the 18-35 age categories.

1.4.5 Chapter Five: Research methodology

In this chapter, the research methodology that was most appropriate for an autoethnographic study is discussed. The rationale for a mixed methods study together with a plan for the research design is outlined. Furthermore, the philosophical worldviews that guide the direction of the research process are discussed. Although it is a mixed methods study, it does have a qualitative bias, which includes an action research segment.

1.4.6 Chapter Six: Highlights of my autoethnographic journey

In this chapter, I discuss the reasons for choosing autoethnography as the genre for conducting this study. I analyse myself as a social construct, having been exposed to apartheid and its policies of racial segregation for all facets of life. Of particular relevance, are my early experiences in entrepreneurship at our family business. Here I discuss my observations of my father conducting his tailoring business, the challenges he faced and how these experiences impacted our lives as a family. These personal details were quite painful to reveal, but an autoethnographic study requires openness to authenticate the story being told. Emanating from these

experiences in business, I discuss my desire to spread entrepreneurship among the youth as a means of addressing poverty and unemployment in our communities.

1.4.7 Chapter Seven: Mentoring: an action research approach

This chapter reflects on the mentoring phase of the study, which is an important aspect in promoting entrepreneurship among the youth. I also outline how action research fits into the mixed methods study and contributes to the qualitative data. My relationship with the participants as co-researchers in the study is also described. The design of the action research plan outlining the various stages as well as the mentoring sessions are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the influence of ICT in the action research phase.

1.4.8 Chapter Eight: Research analysis

In this chapter, the strategies for collecting and analysing mixed methods data are discussed. The mixing strategies and the drawing of meta-inferences from the integration of the two strands are also outlined. The quantitative analyses of the pre-mentoring questionnaire followed by the interpretation of the findings depicted in graphs are presented. Thereafter, the qualitative analyses of the post-mentoring questionnaire using NVivo 10 computer software together with the interpretation of the findings are outlined. Finally, the research questions are answered after the integration of the qualitative and quantitative data sets.

1.4.9 Chapter Nine: Conclusions and recommendations

In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations are combined into a comprehensive report presented in separate sections. The conclusions section sums up the key points of the discussion incorporating the significant outcomes of the investigation. Since its main function is to round off the story of the project, the contents relate directly to the aims of the project as stated earlier in this chapter. The conclusions also indicate the extent to which the aims have been achieved, summarising the key findings or outcomes.

The recommendations section acknowledges the limitations of the study and consequently makes suggestions on how these could be remedied. Whilst it highlights the significance and usefulness of the present study, recommendations

are also made for future research to improve on related problems beyond the scope of this study.

1.5 EVALUATION

Sometimes the impetus for writing autoethnography comes from a desire to remember and honour the past (Ellis, 2004:233). Here autoethnography enables me to journey back in time to collect lived past experiences which shaped my life and destiny and to share these with an audience (Eisner, 1997:259). The voluntary participation of the group of youth in this study stems from their desire to become business owners and employers rather than employees.

During the mentorship programme that was conducted over a period of three months, the mentees were exposed to a wide range of subjects associated with cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset as well as best practices in business. This exercise had given us an opportunity to analyse and seek alternative perspectives to better understand entrepreneurship and bring improvements to business practice.

After sharing my experiences with the mentees, allowing them to find meaning and resonance in my stories, they freely engaged in the discussion. Unfortunately, the face-to-face meetings that were planned could not take place owing to social distancing because of the Covid 19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the online engagements were encouraging, and the mentees showed encouraging signs of changes in business outlook and stronger requests to keep the online network open.

There is some evidence to suggest that the youth would seriously consider entrepreneurship as a career option if they were given the support that would lead to an entrepreneurial orientation and intention. Youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is impaired by high levels of bureaucracy limiting access to finance, a shortage of skills in the country and a general lack of innovation making the country less competitive on the international stage (Steenkamp, van der Merwe and Athayde 2011:49).

1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter served as an introduction to and overview of the study, by providing relevant of its structure and content. The chapter further presented the research problem, aim, objectives and the methodology that was followed in the study. The contribution of the study as well as the chapter outline for the study was also presented. The next chapter gives a detailed account of autoethnography as a research genre as well as the role of family businesses in promoting entrepreneurship among their children in particular and society in general. This is followed by a discussion on the concept of coaching and mentoring, illustrating its relevance to the present study.

CHAPTER TWO: AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC VIEW OF MENTORING IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This is an autoethnographic study that traces my family background and my experiences in entrepreneurship and how I coach and mentor aspiring entrepreneurs to make a success of their business ventures. With autoethnography being a relatively new genre in academic research methodology, it is appropriate to give a better understanding of what this method of qualitative research represents. As highly personalised accounts, I would attempt an objective assessment of the advantages of using autoethnography in this study. Coming from a family of survivalist entrepreneurs, I was exposed to life in business together with its various challenges from a very early age. Therefore, it would be appropriate for me to explore the dynamics of a family business and how an entrepreneurial mind-set is cultivated from an early age.

This study has afforded me the opportunity to explore aspects of my early life that were long forgotten and now I am beginning to excavate my memory to find resonance in this investigation. Now, I view our visionary founding fathers who established small enterprises under trying conditions because of their desire for independence and the possibility of financial freedom, in a new light. Consequently, I examine the contribution of family businesses to the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, which are so significant in business success. Finally, an assessment is made of coaching and mentoring as a business tool, given the challenges entrepreneurs experience and how timely intervention of a coach/mentor could save the business from possible failure.

2.2 AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

In this section, I examine the autoethnographic method in qualitative research and delve into techniques of self-analysis in the process of data mining. I also delve into the validity of the criticism on autoethnography for its rigour and creativity in its quest to find greater acceptance and resonance among its readers.

2.2.1 Autoethnography and its origins

According to Ellis and Bochner (2000:739), autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of research and writing that displays multiple layers of consciousness connecting the personal to the cultural. Autoethnography is a relatively recent development of ethnography. It is the anthropologist, Karl Heider who was credited as being the first to use the term, autoethnography when he studied the Dani people and published an article, *What do People Do? Dani Auto-Ethnography* (1975). It was the beginning of a new era in academic research and heralded the introduction of a new genre that gave the writer more space to situate him/herself in the middle of the study.

Thereafter, David Hayano (1979) modified the term to incorporate cultural studies in which the researcher is an insider with an intimate knowledge of the group that is studied, as well as combining ethnography and autobiography (Ellis and Bochner, 2000:741). The seminal work of Caroline Ellis, *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography* (2004) is considered by many qualitative researchers as the most comprehensive contemporary reference devoted solely to the study of autoethnography.

In this genre, there is a large degree of latitude with respect to conducting autoethnography and the type of result that the writer/researcher is working towards. Autoethnographers vary in their style of writing with some placing emphasis on any one of the following aspects: auto (self), ethno (social-cultural connection) and graphy (application of the research process) (Reed-Danahay, 1997:18). The precise nature of an autoethnography can vary, depending on which of these three elements is in focus (Wall, 2006). In this study, the ethnographic component of the methodology is emphasised thereby highlighting the researcher's socio-cultural connection.

2.2.2 The autoethnographical method

Autoethnography has been referred to by a variety of descriptions such as lived experience (Ellis and Bochner, 2000:739); self-narratives that critiques situatedness of self (Spry, 2001:710); reflexive ethnography (Ellis, 2004:16); experiential texts (Denzin, 1997:1) and autobiographical ethnography (Reed-Danahay, 1997:16).

Autoethnographies are highly personalised accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding (Sparkes, 2000:21). An autoethnography allows you to identify with the culture (Pelias, 2003:372). This means that the writer uses his/her experience to resonate with that of the people under observation. Consequently, through autoethnography, the reader is expected to get a better understanding of others by reflecting on the self in social action with others (Wall, 2006:2). Autoethnography is aptly described by Reed-Danahay (1997:145) as research that connects the personal to the cultural, placing the self within a social context.

2.2.2.1 Choosing a Research Topic

The choice of a research topic for an autoethnographer is usually personal. It generally deals with a subject that has resonance with the researcher on a deep level. Ellis (2004:16) appropriately describes how an autoethnographer's initial engagement with a research topic occurs with the discovery of an intense interest, a passionate concern that is not only personally meaningful but has broader social implications.

This is a two-stage autoethnographic study that explores my experiences in entrepreneurship from my early childhood, observing my father in business, to the time I entered the commercial world myself. The tensions created by the challenges faced by my father, its influence on our family life and my personal experiences in business later in life had significantly affected me.

As an emergent form of qualitative research inquiry, an autoethnographer asks the primary question: *"How does my own experience of this culture connect with and offer insights about this culture, situation, event, and way of life?"* (Patton, 2002:84). This is a unique feature of autoethnography because researchers are generally expected to be disengaged and independent of their investigation.

The use of narrative analysis allows stories to stand alone as a worthy documentary experience that could be analysed for connections between cultural and social patterns, thus, providing insight into the cultural meaning and social significance of a particular event (Pichon, 2013:5).

The researcher situates him/herself in the midst of the culture and searches for resonance to find meaning. Autoethnographic research method allows the author to write in a highly personalised style, drawing on his/her experience to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon.

2.2.2.2 Reflexivity in social research

Smith (2005:69) adds that autoethnography is beneficial in exploring subjectivity and writing reflectively and introspectively about a subject that is close to the heart. This opens possibilities for the development of a critical reflexivity wherein the self might come to be understood in terms of the social processes that mediate lived experience within the material realities of individuals (Hickey and Austin, 2007:21).

Autoethnography is grounded in postmodern philosophy and is linked to the growing debate about reflexivity and voice in social research. The intention of autoethnography is to acknowledge the inextricable link between the personal and the cultural and to make room for non-traditional forms of inquiry and expression (Pichon, 2013:1). The essence of postmodernism is that many ways of knowing and inquiring are legitimate and that no one way is privileged (Wall, 2006:2).

2.2.3 THE SELF IN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Unlike other methods of research, the role of the researcher in autoethnography (AE) is very pronounced. Not only am I a researcher reflecting on my life and the experiences that moulded me, but I also look at how these experiences could influence the culture around me and bring about improvements.

2.2.3.1 Self-Analysis: The Excavation of the Self

According to Glesne (2006:199), autoethnography begins with the self with the personal biography using narratives of the self, which then goes on to say something about the larger cultural setting. Similarly, Ellis (2004:10) sees autoethnography as research writing, story and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political. What autoethnography opens is an opportunity for dialogue between the researcher and the social practices that they have engaged in

their existence. This translates into an interrogation of the lived experiences via memory work and a sense-making of the self. (Hickey and Austin, 2007:21).

Central here is the reflexive recounting of the self as a socially constructed entity in which participants are encouraged to interrogate rigorously the social construction of their identities via socio-economic and political challenges that they have experienced (Hickey and Austin, 2007:22). According to Morrison (1984:385), the deliberate act of remembering specific life experiences grounded on the socio-economic and political platforms forms the principal database from which the participants analyse their identities and experiences. Readers are invited to think with the story rather than about it (Ellis and Bochner, 2000:740).

2.2.3.2 Social Analysis: For a Social Betterment Orientation

It has been with the unfolding of the postmodern era and the ascendancy of the tenets of the poststructuralist theory that the power of the individual, the significance of the self as a new source of evidence and data for qualitative research has gained prominence (Hickey and Austin, 2007:21). Through the active intervention of the researcher, the autoethnographic study is expected to reveal a society that is better understood as well as having benefitted in some way from the study.

Of the many purposes to which autoethnographic approaches have and might be put, the view of autoethnography promoted by Jones (2005) seems to offer the greatest possibility of developing a social betterment orientation. Jones (2005:763) views autoethnography, as a critical intervention in social, political and cultural life that can move writers and readers, tellers and listeners into a space of dialogue, debate and change. Spry (2001:710) concurs suggesting that autoethnography functions as a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts with the intention of improving the lot of cultural members. Reinelt (1998:285) asserts that autoethnography operates as radical democratic politics – a politics committed to creating space for dialogue and debate that initiates and shapes social change.

2.2.4 DATA FOR AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

As a qualitative study, the data for autoethnography will come from a variety of sources. This is unlike a quantitative study, which is narrower in focus. However, it is precisely the adoption of wide-angle lenses and a broader focus that attracts criticisms to autoethnography.

2.2.4.1 Data sources

Data in autoethnography traditionally come from memory, interviews, participant observation, field notes, documents and artefact analysis. The data sources accessed by autoethnographers have followed these traditions for the most part (Wall, 2008:45).

Muncey (2005:10) added some concrete assistance to the question of how to do autoethnography, suggesting the use of snapshots, artefacts, documents, metaphors, and psychological and literal journeys as techniques for reflecting on and conveying experiences, emotions, and behaviours that portray a more complete view of life. Consequently, the researcher has a direct and active involvement in the research process. Autoethnography, as an innovative, emerging style of social science writing, draws on the researcher's observations and connection with a particular social setting, but also includes the researcher's personal experiences of the cultural phenomenon being studied (Sambrook, et al., 2014:174).

2.2.4.2 Questioning authenticity of data

Critics of autoethnography have persistently questioned the legitimacy of data for this genre of research because of the role of the self in the study. Wall (2008:45) made an interesting observation in response that unless data about personal experiences are collected and transformed by another researcher they failed to qualify as legitimate. This is the case despite the researcher giving a first-hand account of the phenomenon under investigation. Data were collected and analysed concurrently with data being categorised into groups and themes in order to identify similarities and differences.

2.2.4.3 Giving meaning to experience

Evidence, like experience, for a performative autoethnographer, is not in itself knowledge since experience means nothing until it is analysed, interpreted and given meaning (Spry, 2009:603). The researcher's active involvement in creating new knowledge is significant because of its personal nature. Combining auto data with traditional ethnographic study means the researcher contributes new knowledge on the dynamism and relevance of the subject being researched (Sambrook, et al., 2014:172).

Increasingly, researchers (Smith, 2005; Wall, 2006) see a need to incorporate the self into research as a means of exploring socio-cultural issues, as well as relieving the researchers from having to speak for others, because the *self* is the source of data. (Pichon, 2013:4). Data analysis consists of thorough discussion, introspection, and thought (immersion and incubation) until themes and meanings emerge. Ultimately, empirical research is similar to most forms of qualitative research, since it focuses on experience and meaning and uses similar data sets and analysis techniques that are intensely personal and introspective (Wall, 2006:5).

2.2.5 AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC RIGOUR

Despite the criticism of the presence of self in autoethnographic studies, every attempt is made in good autoethnographic studies to ensure academic rigour and creativity. In the present study, every effort has been made to fulfil these research requirements.

2.2.5.1 Concealing the self

According to Freeman (2015:918), in most traditional forms of research, the researcher's self is generally hidden and camouflaged within the representation of other academic sources. Even present day research employing positivist methodology fails to capture the dynamism and deeply personal accounts (Kahn, 1990, as cited in Sambrook, et al., 2014:172). Freeman (2015:918) adds that the writer's self has traditionally been omitted from all forms of research with the exception of autoethnography. It is assumed that being confined to being a mere observer from a reasonable distance would ensure a fair degree of detachment

resulting in academic rigour since research is only considered good enough when the researcher is an outsider looking in.

2.2.5.2 Acknowledging the presence of the self

According to Denzin (1994:6), some well-established qualitative research methods are met with resistance because they are seen as falling short in comparison to quantitative methods where the emphasis is placed on the traditional notions of objectivity, validity and rationality.

Whilst some academics may object to the degree of subjectivity in the study, others contend that the demand for complete objectivity is not possible. Coffey, (1999) and Atkinson (2006) disagree since they further add that it is being progressively acknowledged that researchers will always bring some of themselves into their studies making absolute objectivity out of reach. Rather than considering subjectivity and deep personal participation as weaknesses, encouraging researchers to have a broader perspective on knowledge creation could lead to a better understanding of how other researchers relate to their work (Jones, 2012 as cited in Sambrook et al., 2014:172).

2.2.5.3 Encouraging creativity with rigour

Ellis (2004:119) acknowledged that autoethnography does not proceed in a linear manner because it is complex and is not conducted according to a set format. Ellis (2004:120) further compares autoethnography to being sent into the woods without a compass but the freedom to move in any direction. The researcher is given ample latitude to conduct the investigation and write a layered account as observed. While autoethnography allows the researcher the space for creativity in telling his/her story, steps must be taken to maintain a high standard of academic rigour in collecting and analysing the data.

Richardson (2000:12) suggests that the following questions should be asked by researchers assessing the data before them:

- Does this piece of evidence make a meaningful contribution to the social science viewpoints?

- Is there enough data for the reader to make judgements about the researcher's awareness of the subject at hand?
- Does the investigation have aesthetic value?
- Does it adequately express the lived experiences?
- What impact does the story have on the reader?

In answering these questions positively, the researcher ensures that the research process is rigorous and authentic. Douglass and Moustakas (1985:40) conclude that the aim of this exercise is to promote and inspire researchers to approach their questions and challenges with deep respect, so that the whole research exercise affirms imagination, sensitivity, self-reflection, with valid ways in knowledge creation and sociological change.

2.2.6 AUTOETHNOGRAPHY SHOWS LIMITATIONS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Quantitative research as the dominant scientific research paradigm is limited in its data sources. By comparison, autoethnography as a qualitative method is more versatile and multifaceted in its approach to data acquisition. This in turn highlights the need to mix the two sources for a richer research experience.

2.2.6.1 Utility value of Autoethnography

With the use of the autoethnographic methodology, a few limitations of the quantitative research method are revealed. Autoethnography, because of its varied data sources, is able to capture nuances that no other research method would.

The utility value of autoethnography in investigating and the intimately personal nature of the study reveal a great deal to strengthen the argument in favour of qualitative research. Sambrook (2014:172) states that in this regard two contributions to the existing knowledge base could be made. First, we recognise the limitations of traditional approaches that are dominated by a quantitative methodology that fail to capture the emotions and experiences of the researcher and

second by capturing and weaving together both participants and researcher's experiences, we yield greater insight into the study.

Autoethnography also allows researchers to gather various types of data from sources that quantitative analysts may not consider because autoethnography allows for flexibility in the research method, which is lacking in the rigid quantitative tradition (Hubbell, 1994). Of even greater significance is that researchers may collect both qualitative and quantitative data from various sources to complete an autoethnographic study (Pichon, 2013:6).

2.2.6.2 Exploring other sources of knowledge

By interrogating the dominant scientific research paradigm and showing the relevance of other methodologies, it is possible to include other sources of knowledge derived from evocative stories and experiences and contributing to our understanding of the social order (Wall, 2006:3). By emphasising the power of research and excavating within ourselves, we are able to contribute to the creation of new knowledge that would influence society and bring changes to the world.

Alvesson (2003:167) contends that it is difficult to make a thorough study of something one is intimately involved in. With autoethnography, the researcher's experience becomes the topic under investigation as a narrative written in the first person voice rather than a detached abstract to create new categorical knowledge from one's own experience. Whilst the positivist tradition is well-rooted in the academic research world, the interpretivist researchers, despite being well established, are constantly requested to defend their research as being a valid science (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

2.2.6.3 Questioning the dominance of positivism

The objective of postmodernism is not to eliminate the traditional scientific methods but to question its dominance and to demonstrate that it is possible to gain knowledge in many ways (Wall 2006:2). Consequently, we see the growing popularity of autoethnography as a genre of qualitative research in producing new

knowledge. Critics of the scientific tradition have called for the abandonment of rationality, objectivity and validity to move social science beyond the focus on its methodology towards social research with more benefits (Bochner, 2001). This has been important in breaking down the façade of objectivity and freedom from bias in the dominant positivist paradigm, lending support for qualitative research as an authentic method of producing new knowledge (Wall, 2006:6).

Historically, writing has been divided into two genres: literary and scientific. The goal of personal narrative as research is to fuse the form with the content and the literary with the scientific, to create a social scientific art form, thereby revealing the hand of the researcher/author who created the work. (Ellis and Bochner, 2000).

2.2.7 DEFENCE OF AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Despite the criticisms, the popularity of autoethnography continues to grow as researchers look at ways of giving more of their opinions and feelings about the subject under investigation.

2.2.7.1 Entering the world of the writer

Academic convention has always suggested the neutrality of the researcher. However, in autoethnography, the idea of research as a neutral endeavour is abandoned in favour of a self-reflective procedure that explores the researcher's perspective on the investigation at hand (Freeman, 2015:918).

In an autoethnographic narrative, the writer tells the story and invites the reader into his/her world to experience the emotions with the complex details (Ellis, 1999:232). Wolcott (1999:137) continues the description by stating that the goal is to convey a patchwork of feelings, experiences, emotions and behaviours that depict a more complete view of life within the subject under investigation. Moreover, the reader should also become a participant who engages with the storyline on a deeper level -- morally, aesthetically and intellectually (Richardson, 2000). The reader finds resonance in the writing that is presented and may be able to identify with the storyline on a personal level.

2.2.7.2 Analysis through reflexivity

To reflect on an event means to give meaning to it as experienced by the individual reporting it. Therefore, reflection is a calculative, cognitive activity in which a person deliberately moves towards a particular understanding of an experience (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith, 2004:22). This gives the reader a unique perspective, which he/she would not have experienced in any other research genre. In traditional scientific reporting, objective distance seems to protect researchers from emotional and intimate details (Muncey, 2005:42).

Traditionally, the researcher appears dispassionate and essentially an objective observer (Freeman, 2015:927). In autoethnography, the researcher is actively and emotionally involved in his craft. He/she has personally experienced the events that are being described and gives the reader intimate details which only an autoethnographic study allows in academic research.

2.2.8 LIMITATIONS OF AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Owing to the subjective nature of autoethnography, this genre of research has been questioned for its standards of objectivity and validity as well as its authenticity as a research paradigm. However, autoethnographers remain steadfast in the practice of their craft and adhering strictly to the principles of good qualitative research.

2.2.8.1 Subjectivity contaminates

The use of the self as a source of data has been frequently questioned and criticised for lack of validity (Denzin and Lincoln, 1995:349). It has also been stated that autoethnographic research is often too self-indulgent, introspective and narcissistic (Coffey, 1999). Settelmaier and Taylor (2002:70) contend that academia is still concerned about potential contamination through subjectivity. Duncan (2004:147) describes autoethnography as sentimental, unscientific and the product of the excesses of postmodernism thereby rendering research in this genre unscholarly.

Autoethnography is criticised for being more reliant on personal writing styles that evoke emotional responses from the readers, but it is also claimed that AE offers limited reflection on scholarly analysis or the researcher's justification for the study.

Freeman (2015:927) states that although research features such as objectivity and the potential to generalise are advocated, the narration of lived experiences as authentic methodology in the scientific community of academia remains somewhat controversial. Thames (1993:320) concludes that there are pitfalls in doing critical autoethnography that threaten the scientific merit of a study which includes seeing only what serves the research purpose, passion as opposed to science and making claims beyond the evidence.

2.2.8.2 Autoethnographers remain defiant

Autoethnography continues to struggle for acceptance in the academic community. Therefore, it is important for researchers to use the method and share their experiences with others (Wall, 2008:40). In this way, there would be greater acceptance of this genre among readers and more academics could adopt it as a research tool.

Despite the challenges facing autoethnographers, Sambrook, et al. (2014:172) propose the use of a contemporary and somewhat contentious form of ethnography: autoethnography that weaves together the researcher's and participants' personal experiences to illuminate the phenomenon under inquiry. Essentially, these authors are urging others to go ahead and write autoethnographically.

Bochner (2001:132) suggests that rigorous methodology and generalisability are not necessarily that which we should attain. The author further urges the reader to think of the life being expressed in a narrative not merely as data to be analysed and categorised but as a story to be respected and engaged because we should not prematurely brush aside the particulars to get to the general.

2.2.9 ESTABLISHING TRUTH IN THE DIGITAL ERA

In the digital era, there are several conflicting versions of the truth as technology is increasingly used to believably alter the perceptions of reality. Technology has even fatally altered our trust in the photograph as an accurate record of events or things. This reality does question the applicability of quantitative research practices under these circumstances.

2.2.9.1 Truth compromised

The demand for absolute validity and uncontaminated facts have been severely compromised in this digital era. Freeman (2015:916) observes that changes for all of us have been the huge rise of digital socialisation and the endless array of electronic outlets to express anyone and everyone's versions of the truth. Today truth is negotiable in all arenas because it has democratised global communications in the ways that it has and continues to do so on an even larger scale by the day.

Journalists, bloggers see themselves as playing active and vital roles in collecting and disseminating news and information. They participate actively in content formation in ways that shape the public narrative on issues ranging from celebrity deaths and a country's reasons for going to war to local authority lawsuits and innuendo camouflaged as authentic reporting (Freeman 2015:920). Ellis and Bochner, (2000:268) conclude that there is no longer the misconception of absolute methodological certainty with one dominant research paradigm deciding what does and does not constitute validity.

2.2.10 SUMMARY

There is no doubt that one could seriously endeavour to reconstruct the truth of a life lived with the objective of opening up the past for interrogation in the present in order to contribute to greater self-awareness and self-understanding. How I am today being in part the result of how I have acted, believed, rejected, ignored and embraced certain views of the world, and my worldviews have not been the sole creations of myself, but the outcomes of the array of social forces that have acted upon me (Hickey and Austin, 2007:21).

As we seek the answer, there is a lot of room to do interesting and innovative work on both sides of the divide, and there does not have to be this winner-take-all mentality (Bochner, 2001:134). Knowledge does not have to result from research to be worthwhile, and personal stories should have their place alongside research in contributing to what we know about the world in which we live (Wall, 2006:11).

The next section introduces the concept of the family business and its role in the socio-economic development of communities. Its contribution to the introduction of entrepreneurship among the youth and the empowerment of women are also explored. These aspects have relevance to the topic under investigation.

2.3 THE FAMILY BUSINESS

The family business has been traditionally viewed as a training ground for the children of the business owners to learn their very first lessons in entrepreneurship. As the second-generation of business people, they have an advantage since they are exposed to various aspects of the business at an early impressionable age.

2.3.1 Promoting entrepreneurship within the family

Family businesses around the world form the foundation of the economy in both developing and developed countries (Poutziouris, 2006:3). By contributing to the coffers of the state, these enterprises are indirectly contributing to the community upliftment and social stability (Collins et al., 2013:454). They are also the creators of much-needed jobs for the unemployed in general, and the youth in particular. In this regard, the role played by family-owned businesses in the economy of most countries cannot be ignored. Rogoff and Heck (2003:559) conclude that the family is the oxygen that feeds the fire of entrepreneurship in most countries. The role of the family business is, therefore, very significant in creating entrepreneurial mindsets and employment both within and outside family circles.

2.3.2 Impact of the family business

In a developed economy, like that of the United States of America, Family businesses constitute a significant proportion of the business environment. It is estimated that approximately 80 percent of the total 15 million businesses in the USA are family businesses (Lussier and Sonfield, 2004:47). In Latin America, family enterprises make up between 80 and 95% of all businesses and in Asia as well as Europe, at least 80% of businesses are family-owned or family-controlled (Poza and Daugherty, 2013:1). This is noteworthy considering that South American economies are developing in comparison to those of the north and the South African economy is on a similar level of development as its Latin American counterparts.

In a developed economy like the United Kingdom, small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) play a vital role in contributing to making their currency the strongest in the world. Approximately 70% of companies that employ between 1 to 9 workers in the UK are family businesses and account for 62% of small enterprises that employ 10 to 49 people (Koladkiewicz, 2013:156).

In South Africa, the SMME sector is constantly driven to promote entrepreneurship among the unemployed youth with the view to creating much-needed jobs that could alleviate poverty and unemployment. The number of SMMEs in South Africa had increased by 3% from 2.18 million in 2008 to 2.25 million in 2015 (Bureau for Economic Research, 2016). Although this constitutes an increase, it is not significant enough to reduce unemployment that stands at a staggering 29.1% (Statistics S.A., 2019).

The growth and development of family-run enterprises into major organisations is also noted with optimism with estimates classifying approximately 35% of Fortune 500 companies as family dominated (Carsrud, 1994:1). Howorth et al. (2008) conclude that family firms represent between 75 and 95% of firms registered worldwide and account for up to 65% of GDP (Kjellman, 2014:195).

2.3.3 The First-Generation of the Family Business

Credit should always be given to the founding fathers for their visionary leadership in the family's entrepreneurial pursuits. In the face of intense challenges, they had chosen to go the route of embarking on a business venture as opposed to getting a job, which was generally the choice of the majority of people. These pioneering entrepreneurs would have had to break new ground and establish new businesses under very trying conditions.

The founding fathers might have had special technical ability and/or business acumen that are necessary for the creation of the business. The first-generation saw venture creation as their responsibility for creating wealth, which was transferred to and secured for the next generation. Aronoff (1998:36) describes the running of the first-generation family venture as a team management structure that would include

parents and children in the business, all making equal and participative contributions to important decision-making.

2.3.3.1 From Entrepreneurship to Copreneurship

Running a family business has its fair share of challenges. The majority of businesses are copreneurial or family enterprises where the contribution of all family members is crucial for the business survival into the next generation (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Al-Dajani et al., 2014:220). Several researchers of family businesses have analysed the differences in paternalistic versus professional management styles of running a business. As family enterprises mature, they evolve from an informal, paternalistic style of leadership to a more formal and professional operation (Filbeck and Lee, 2000:201).

Fraboni and Saltstone (1990 as cited in Smith, 2014:152) add that first-generation entrepreneurs are more suspicious, assertive, creative, and reserved than second-generation entrepreneurs who were generally more trusting, humble, practical, and outgoing than first-generation entrepreneurs. The founding fathers are often reluctant to initiate managerial changes that include professional advisory services with decentralised administrative structures (Fernandez and Nieto, 2005:79). This low level of flexibility and general contempt for change (Koladkiewicz, 2013:159) is not a formula for continued business success, as the evidence to follow would illustrate. The descendants of the founder would face different challenges to sustain the business when they take on the leadership (Lussier and Sonfield, 2004:48). Therefore, the succession plan should be implemented early to ensure a smooth transition.

2.3.4 The second-generation of entrepreneurs

The second-generation of entrepreneurs usually has a different set of challenges in taking the business forward. Building on the foundation of the first-generation, a son can praise his father's entrepreneurial achievements and construct an illuminating story, which spans an entire generation. Generally, second-generation entrepreneurial stories are more humble, since they integrate the founding hero's story and build upon and recognise their parents' contribution to the family's entrepreneurial achievements (Smith, 2014:159).

On closer examination of research, there is ample evidence to suggest that there is an increased probability of an individual becoming involved in entrepreneurship if there is a family background in business ownership (Kirkwood, 2007:40). The second-generation entrepreneurs either continue the business initiative of the first-generation or become initiators of new enterprises since they were raised in a home where they were exposed to entrepreneurial thinking. It must be stressed that second-generation stories are not about denying the hard-working founding father but showing their independence as well as resourcefulness by enabling them to build their own entrepreneurial stories and not rely on the impressive past of the family (Smith, 2014:163).

Although the new owners might have acquired the businesses through inheritance, they go on to build on that firm foundation if they are sufficiently motivated and adequately resourced (Goffee, 1996:38). The experience that they might have acquired during their formative years growing up in the business environment and performing little tasks would prove invaluable in the years when they take control of the business.

Ultimately, the children of successful entrepreneurs have a choice of whether to become dependent on the past or to sever ties and assert their independence. Their strategic decisions will, in turn, influence what type of entrepreneur stories they can tell because first and second-generation stories are told for different reasons (Smith, 2014:161).

2.3.4.1 Playing roles

In the light of the intergenerational entrepreneurship discussion, I examine roles as a social construction that influences an individual's interpretation within the social interface. Bjursell and Backvall, (2011:158) maintain that the many roles that individuals within the family unit play, brings with it, role specific behavioural expectations which influences and guides individual interpretations in social interaction. Children raised in a family that runs a business, are generally expected to take over the business when the patriarch retires.

In running the business, the second-generation entrepreneur may continue to emulate the founding father in running the organisation or if he/she is innovative enough, may introduce new ideas. Bjursell and Backvall, (2011:160) labels the situation as role innovation which is performed when individuals find new ways to act in a role, for example, in the family business or role conservation which might entail emulating the parents' managerial style. In either situation, the environment one finds one's self in influences one.

It may not always be so straightforward to hand over the baton to one's children as the natural heirs to the family business. The seeds of disappointment are sewn for many frustrated pioneering entrepreneurs who discover that they are unable to interest their offspring in their business (Levinson, 1983:73). In not all situations are the succeeding generation entrepreneurial in their outlook. Cultural assumptions will also play a significant role in shaping individuals' work ethic and business-related goals concerning, for example, the accumulation of personal wealth, exposure to personal risk, search for recognition, status and personal fulfilment (Hunt, 1992).

Whatever their goals might be, it would be surprising if these goals did not play a role in shaping the character of any business which they might establish or inherit (Goffee, 1996:40).

2.3.4.2 Preparing second-generation for business

The second-generation is in many ways fortunate since they have some foundation upon which to continue the family business or build their new enterprise. Because of more knowledge and a greater range of skills that second-generation may possess by virtue of the exposure in the digital era, they become impatient to initiate change given the array of business opportunities that they see (Memili and Welsh, 2012). Their tolerance for risk is much greater than the previous generation and they are willing to leverage the opportunities presented. This is definitely a different brand of entrepreneurs who might have more knowledge and be exposed to a greater range of skills because of their exposure to ICT and whose business reach goes beyond that of their predecessors across the globe.

McConaughy and Phillips (1999:127) studied large publicly owned founding family-controlled companies and concluded that descendent-controlled firms were more

professionally run than were founder-controlled firms. The next generation has the knowledge of how to run the business having developed a skilled identity by participating in the community of practice (Hamilton, 2011:17). This usually gave them the edge over peers who did not have a similar background.

Enlightened owners are highly geared to market opportunities, give priority to profit maximisation and take pride in their ownership of efficient and, frequently, quite complex organisational structures. They develop meritocratic rather than paternal relations with their employees, offering a “fair wage” in return for a “fair day’s work” (Goffee, 1996:38).

2.3.4.3 Failures in family businesses

Most family businesses fail after one generation. Among those that survive, the family influence diminishes. Data from the USA indicate that of the 10% of family businesses that survive to a third generation, only one in ten has a family member still involved in management (International Centre for Family Enterprises, Montreal cited in Goffee, 1996:40). Generational entrepreneur stories of family businesses told from different perspectives make inspiring and sometimes heart-breaking reading (Smith, 2014:161). How a second-generation businessperson builds upon the foundation of the first and avoids becoming another statistic in the growing list of failed start-ups is indeed a great achievement in the business world.

However, for the vast number of failures, there are also success stories to report on. Despite the challenges faced, there are family businesses that have survived the harsh realities of the business world. These enterprises might have been very conservative in their approach or probably just kept their heads above water and survived from month to month.

2.3.5 Entrepreneurial learning

Learning entrepreneurial skills is crucial to ensure business success. Running a business on instinct alone is insufficient when one considers the volatility of the business environment. Therefore, there is a need for an array of skills to meet different challenges on a daily basis; skills that could be acquired from a wide range of sources in preparation for a successful role in the family business.

2.3.5.1 Family as a breeding ground for new enterprises

Entrepreneurial learning is defined here as the acquisition and development of the propensity, skills and abilities to found, join or grow a business venture. (Hamilton, 2011:9). It is already established that family businesses are a vital component of developed and under-developed economies. However, it is also widely accepted that new businesses have a very high failure rate, and many do not go beyond the first-generation for a number of reasons.

Whilst the effort to get off the ground for start-ups is immense because of the lack of capital and a proven business model, there is a growing perception among business researchers that focus be placed on businesses that are already operational and which, with additional support, could transition and survive to second- and third-generation (Craig and Dibrell, 2006:277). If these businesses have survived despite the hostile conditions, they must be encouraged to ensure that they do not become another statistic of a failed start-up. McConaughy et al. (2001:33) agree that family enterprises can provide the support and space that would create the ideal breeding ground for the creation of new enterprises. There is growing evidence that new businesses are generated as offshoots of existing family business (Dibrell and Craig, 2006:5).

2.3.5.2 Motivations for becoming entrepreneurs

The decision to become an entrepreneur is often complex and varied and it has also been the focus of many studies over time (McClelland and Swail, 2005:43). The most common reasons for becoming an entrepreneur are the desire for independence and autonomy, monetary benefits, an alternative to getting a job and reasons related to the family. However, the desire for independence and autonomy is often viewed as the main motivating factor for becoming an entrepreneur (Kirkwood, 2007:41).

As members of Generation X, the youth of today have matured into an ambitious, independent, and self-sufficient generation of individuals who are anything but irresponsible when it comes to family and working towards their goals (Coughlin and Wong, 2003:25). With their superior knowledge of technology, they can network beyond

traditional boundaries, which give them an advantage particularly over competitors who lacked ICT knowledge.

2.3.5.3 Socially situated learning in entrepreneurship

In a study conducted by Lave and Wenger (1991:27) to examine the concept of intergenerational entrepreneurial learning in family businesses, empirical data is derived from analysing the founders and second-generation entrepreneurs in five family businesses. A conceptual framework was developed from a socially situated learning perspective. This perspective suggests that learning is an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991:31).

Several business theorists have alluded to the social elements that characterise entrepreneurial learning, particularly with reference to networking relationships. Gibb (1997:16) describes the learning environment for small family businesses as embedded within the transactional and business relationship networks of the suppliers, customers, bankers, staff as well as family members, business associations and peers. Similarly, Hines and Thorpe (1995:680) argue that a complex network of entrepreneurial learning agents exists and that experience shapes learning that would have an impact on the business in the end.

The situated learning theory supports an examination of entrepreneurial learning by emphasising the social and relational contexts. The intention is to challenge the dominant understanding of entrepreneurial learning as being primarily an individual endeavour and by demonstrating empirically that it is embedded in social practice (Hamilton, 2011:10). Learning through participation in social engagement is an on-going process of everyday family and business life, giving legitimacy through increased participation and knowledge acquired via the engagement (Hamilton, 2011:17).

2.3.5.4 From Intuition to cognitive learning in entrepreneurship

Innovation and intuition are also often mentioned when speaking of entrepreneurship, which leads us to believe that schools should start preparing for

how they can deal with intuition that is sometimes called hidden intelligence (Kjellman, 2014:200). If schools can ignite the entrepreneurial spark in young children, theoretical learning could follow as they grow. Corbett (2005:474) also points to the large body of research in the field of entrepreneurship undertaken by those adopting a cognitive perspective. The author further underlines its value, pointing out that learning in relation to entrepreneurial processes has been neglected, and calls for a deeper examination of cognitive learning.

Several family business researchers have concluded that as they grow and move into subsequent generations, family businesses are more likely to engage in more sophisticated forms of budgeting, forecasting, cash flow analysis and modelling which requires a combination of socially situated learning and cognitive knowledge (Lussier and Sonfield, 2004:49).

2.3.6 ROLE OF PATRIARCHY IN THE BUSINESS

The founding father establishes most family businesses. As head of the family, his objectives were to see to the material needs of the family and running a business was considered an ideal platform in sustaining the family's financial stability. Invariably other members of the family were drawn into the business and this is how the next generation began to acquire the entrepreneurial skills.

2.3.6.1 The powerful founder

A significant number of family businesses, although comparatively small, involve very complex interrelationships between two separate but intimately linked social systems, namely the family and the business (Goffee and Scase, 1985:231). The husband and wife as a team are copreneurial meaning that the husband and wife take the marital relationship further and enter into business with the objective of satisfying the needs of the family. This would also include other members of the family who may be involved at various levels in the business.

Schein (1985:224) describes the founder-owner of a prosperous family business as one who delegates and retains tight control, but the subordinates are tolerant of any inconsistency because the boss is all too powerful to be confronted. Many begin as

entrepreneurial owners, exploiting a market opportunity but failing to develop management control systems that can cope with growth (Goffee, 1996:39). As a result, this could prove detrimental to the future development of the business and could signal the downfall of the business. A founding father who has invested his own capital in the business and is not very trusting to engage the services of outside professionals in an advisory capacity. He may be unaware of new business trends that could help the business grow.

2.3.6.2 The paternal owners

Goffee (1996:41) contends that paternal owners tend to take a serious view of the social aspects of business. They see themselves as having a social and moral obligation to employees, which constitute an unwritten psychological contract that delivers welfare in return for employee loyalty. He further suggests that paternal owners do not simply run profit-making enterprises; they also see themselves as having social responsibilities for employees, customers and the wider society (Goffee, 1996:42). Ensuring the sustainability of a growing enterprise requires a visionary founder who is able to generate and communicate a practical winning culture that gives the members direction for coping in a dynamic business environment (Goffee, 1996: 39).

2.3.7 ROLE OF MATRIARCHY / WOMEN IN FAMILY BUSINESS

Women have traditionally played a supportive role in a family business, giving the patriarch moral backing. They also served as the link between the patriarch business leader and the children whom she encourages to make their contribution to business growth and success. The woman's contribution to the family business is often downplayed, but her presence and tacit knowledge often surprised others.

2.3.7.1 Women as Copreneurs

As copreneurs, women give the family business stability through moral support. Critical studies have shown that despite the active role of women in family businesses together with their spouses, their participation still displays gender bias and dominance of masculinity (Bjursell and Backvall, 2011:156).

Robert Smith (2014) as cited in Al-Dajani et al. (2014:223) confronts the traditional reflections of family businesses as entrepreneurship stories, and challenges researchers to critically consider how we portray women in family businesses and how we narrate their stories. Whilst women may play a prominent role in family business entrepreneurship, there is still a tendency for much of the existing literature to conceptualise women in the family business as marginalised through the forces of patriarchy or paternalism (Hamilton, 2006:9). The matriarch may give the patriarch much moral support during tough economic times, but their contributions are not always welcome. In general, women are portrayed as outsiders or intruders to this field and are detrimentally positioned in deficit (Taylor and Marlow, 2009), which undermines the existing and potential contribution that women as both entrepreneurs and family business members make to the economy and society.

2.3.7.2 Women-owned businesses

The innovative spirit of women is often seen when they engage in small home-based or part-time business to add to the family coffers. Such businesses may provide an important (additional) income as well as scope for self-fulfilment and personal autonomy, but these business activities are viewed as secondary to their primary roles as wives and mothers.

According to Brush (1992:243) ultimately, the performance of the women-owned business is perceived as sub-standard, condemned for being smaller, risk-averse, lacking growth potential and dismissed as illegitimate because they are run on a small scale (Goffee, 1996:42). Whether the matriarch decides to get into business on her own or join the family business, the decision to do so is often done in collaboration with family members. This has been referred to as a family embeddedness perspective where people are part of networks of social relations and do not decide to start a business in a vacuum (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003:577).

2.3.7.3 The invisible women in the family business

Whether she is the face of the enterprise or an invisible figure who is a constant source of inspiration and information, the woman in the family business is an

undoubted force to acknowledge. Recent literature shows that women continue to be portrayed as nameless nobodies in the family business despite their contribution to the success of the enterprise (Ahl, 2002:1). Bjursell and Backvall (2011:154) conducted an extensive study of women in business as well as mothers, and their findings provide empirical insights into how the mother's role is taken for granted while the business role is approached as problematic in portrayals of women in the family business.

Marlow (2013:95) quite appropriately summarises the situation stating that almost every detrimental business term possible has visited upon the hapless female entrepreneur (as cited in Al-Dajani et al., 2014:221). Fortunately, this perception is gradually changing as women take their rightful place and play their roles equally well both at home and in business. A growing body of research on women in family business indicates that the role of women is changing from passive, family-oriented roles to active, business-oriented roles (Bjursell and Backvall, 2011:156).

Researchers are now acknowledging the relevance of the invisible women, not because women make a unique contribution, but also their role as stewards in successful generational enterprises (Poza and Messer, 2001:27). Women play a key role in the creation of family wealth, but they are ignored and marginalised from management and ownership (Mulholland, 2003:125). However, where the criticism stems from is that the family is seldom discussed from sociological perspectives that consider how the social environment affects entrepreneurs (Hurley, 1999). Instead, the business is viewed solely as an entity that stands apart and whose only purpose is to maximise profits.

2.3.8 SUCCESSION PLANNING

There will come a time when the founding father has to hand over the reins to the next generation. The handing over process is certainly not an overnight occurrence. The successor has to be groomed for the position so that he/she is adequately experienced and emotionally prepared to take on this responsibility.

2.3.8.1 Handing over the baton

According to Sonfield and Lussier (2002:124), succession planning enjoys the most attention of all literature on family businesses because of the difficulty that the founding fathers experience in letting go of the reins of control and inadequate preparation for leadership that the incoming generation of family members have.

Although the positive effects of intergenerational transformation in leadership are expected as the baton is passed on from the departing leadership to the next generation, the transition may not always be a smooth one. Koladkiewicz (2013: 159) believes the use of their own financial resources in setting up the business could perhaps be the reason for the hesitancy of the business owner to hand over the baton for fears of losing control.

Comparing succession planning and development in family and non-family business show that the family firms prefer more personal relationship based successor development, while non-family firms utilise more formal, and task based methods. The family business exhibits a subjective, emotive bias whilst the latter is objective and clinical.

The heroic figure of the entrepreneur is not only presented as a man but also the conceptual construction of the family business with more emphasis on the business than on the family thereby ignoring the cultural, historical and emotional dynamics intertwined in business and family life (Katila, 2002 as cited in Al-Dajani et al. (2014:223). The complex process of succession might be informed by the understanding of the importance of the social nature of the business and the extent of participation in the family business over time (Hamilton, 2011: 8).

2.3.8.2 Succession planning and intergenerational dynamics

Successful family businesses can pass down the enterprises from one generation to another. This succession is regarded as the ultimate delegation of authority from one generation to the next (Lansberg, 1998). One generation participates in, develops the business, and is joined by others who eventually supplant that first-generation.

There is continuity and, at the same time, discontinuity in that process. The cycles of reproduction and transformation ensure the survival of the family business as it seeks to reconstitute itself as a community of practice in the next generation. At the same time, however, it must be transformed as it moves from one social, historical, technological, cultural context to another (Hamilton, 2011: 18).

Cycles of reproduction and transformation of the family and the business are conceptualised as overlapping communities of practice then they are engaged in a generative process of producing their own future (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 57). That generative process implies continuity and enduring practice. However, as social, cultural, technological contexts change over time, they must also entail discontinuity and new practice. A view exists that whilst incremental change is possible, radical change is difficult in communities of practice (Hamilton, 2011:12)

2.3.9 SHIFTING PARADIGMS

Thomas Kuhn (1962) gave *paradigm* its contemporary meaning when he adopted the word to refer to the set of practices that define a scientific discipline at any particular period. A paradigm shift can be characterised as a movement away from the old explanations that no longer explains reality, resulting in a redefinition of boundaries due to the emergence of a new model or way of thinking and perceiving the world (Kuhn, 1962). It is argued that as society moves further into the twenty-first century it can no longer carry on business as usual by making small incremental changes to the way things are done (Collins et al., 2014: 449).

Collins et al. (2014:445) state that business schools need to begin to engage with family businesses through embracing the next generation from families in business by developing policy that will support them in a positive way. Family dynamics continue to dominate this question, especially as less than a quarter of family businesses survive to the second-generation, and only about a seventh survive to the third generation (Leach and Bogod, 1999).

This study introduces conceptual frameworks that capture the social complexity of intergenerational entrepreneurial learning and contributes an empirical illustration of situated learning theory within the context of the family business (Hamilton, 2011: 8).

According to the evidence presented by various authors, one of the main reasons for explaining the high failure rates of first and second-generation family businesses is their incapacity to manage the complexity of an emotionally burdened process of ownership and management of the family business from one generation to the next (Sonfield and Lussier, 2002; Hamilton, 2011; Al-Dajani et al., 2014)

2.3.10 SUMMARY

Gibb (2002:233) argued that a broader approach to embedding entrepreneurship education in the youth is needed and that business schools alone could not be relied upon to deliver entrepreneurship education and that a wider approach involving a range of stakeholders is needed. The family could also play a vital role in providing the bedrock upon which the entrepreneurial foundation of the country is built. Schools could build on this and business schools could take it to the next level. Collins et al. (2013:448) suggested that educators should also consider the family in the business as they already had the entrepreneurial intuition and just needed the impetus to educate the next generation of professionals and business advisors.

The next section explores how entrepreneurs cope in a highly competitive business environment through the engagement of business coaches and mentors to help inexperienced personnel gain the necessary skills that could help make informed business decisions to ensure the sustainability of the enterprise.

2.4 COACHING AND MENTORING IN BUSINESS

Business coaching and mentoring have become increasingly popular in recent times to meet the challenges of a volatile business world. The support offered by coaches and mentors is invaluable when one considers how their input could positively influence business outcomes.

2.4.1 COACHING AS A BUSINESS TOOL

The current global business environment is indeed a highly competitive arena for companies to survive and prosper. They have to create efficiencies to improve their

overall offerings, which could ultimately give them an edge over competitors (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:423).

To meet this challenge, progressive organisations are placing increasing emphasis on empowering their staff through coaching and mentoring as learning and empowering tools to achieve the business objectives (Phillips, 1994:19). One of the pioneers in this field, Galway (2000:86), has consistently demonstrated that coaching has offered opportunities for personal and professional improvement not only in sport but also in the field of business and education with highly successful results.

Just as in sport and academics, coaching in business is becoming increasingly relevant in an ever-changing global business environment that necessitates continuous improvement of employee development to accommodate the volatility and complexity of change taking place. As a business tool, coaching and mentoring do have proven impact on the business objectives as illustrated by numerous experts in the field (Bluckert, 2005; Green and Grant, 2003; Mc Kevitt and Marshall, 2015).

From a practical perspective, coaching and mentoring facilitate the implementation of various pre-determined improvement measures that are designed to increase business competitiveness (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:423). It also does inspire personal and professional development whilst indirectly enhancing the profitability and sustainability of the organisation. The ultimate purpose of coaching, consist of enhanced well-being and functioning that may lead to individual and organizational success.

2.4.1.1 Coaching to counter resistance to change

New business entrants would prefer a stable business scenario where they would be able to profit from the first day of setting up. However, the business environment is constantly in a state of fluctuation that necessitates adjustments to the business strategy on a regular basis. As change catalysts, coaches assist to facilitate the transition during turbulent times. Whilst there may be an inherent resistance to change within the organisation, it is the coach or the mentor who could minimise the

associated stress and make this process less painful (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:423).

Lee (2003) cited in Bluckert (2005:174) states that coaches are able to shift their focus across different experiences that they might have had and bring to the arena a range of appropriate actions, cognitions, systemic thinking in order to address the challenges of his/her protégé. Rock and Donde (2008:11) add that there is a great deal of emotional change that takes place during organisational transition, which may require implementing new learning through insight and action which could be ably handled by an experienced coach. Coaching helps to enable people to adapt willingly to change for by its very nature, all learning entails change (Phillips, 1994:20).

A coaching culture within the organisation can also create a platform for creativity, planning and problem solving (King and Eaton, 1999:145). Ultimately, the coach is there to ensure the personal and career development of the individual as well as the growth and sustainability of the organisation (Broadbridge, 1999:237).

2.4.1.2 Staff development and training

It is quite common for managers to confuse staff development and training with coaching and mentoring. Staff development and training in business circles may be ongoing or conducted when time and budgetary constraints permit. It is in many ways relatively different from coaching and mentoring and does possess certain unique features that make it quite distinct from traditional staff development and training practices.

Thus, coaching as a method is designed to “help to learn” rather than to “help to teach” (Whitmore, 2003:96), it means one has to re-learn what one has already learned through experience. Unlike staff development and training, which is more informative with a facilitator from the outside, coaching is aimed at facilitating a response from the coachee/protégé based on experiences in their business environment.

Unlike staff training, coaching allows a fair degree of adaptability and flexibility to business conditions when the need arises. Salazar et al. (2012:426) add that the coaching programmes deviate from classical training systems based on homogeneous and predetermined techniques in two primary ways: first, it is tied to business characteristics and situations and second, it is adapted to the potential and to the deficits of the individuals being coached.

2.4.1.3 Difference between coaching and mentoring

In some entrepreneurship literature, the terms coaching, and mentoring are used interchangeably (Pegg, 1999; Britton, 2015; King and Eaton, 1999). In others they are depicted as distinct relationships with coaching being a short-term association designed to improve current performance through the acquisition of skills while mentoring is considered a voluntary relationship focusing on long-term goals and capabilities (D'Abate et al., 2003; Clutterbuck, 2004; Audet and Couteret, 2012).

Quite often, the term coaching is grouped with mentoring and training as well as counselling. There could be no distinction drawn here and the activities could be informally grouped into any one of these categories. However, in terms of its adaptability and flexibility to the business environment, coaching is not governed by predetermined methods or bound to business characteristics and situations but is adapted to the potential and shortcomings of the individual being coached (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:426). Mentoring helps protégés to learn and develop and takes a longer-term perspective focusing on the individual's career whilst coaching highlights a more immediate transformation based focus (Tabbron, et al., 1997:6). Mentoring, on the other hand, is also a process for the informal transmission of knowledge social capital and psychosocial support that is perceived by the recipient as relevant to personal and professional development (Bozeman and Feeney, 2007:731).

Given the time constraints of this study, the emphasis will be on coaching aspiring youth entrepreneurs. However, these participants are encouraged to continue the relationship within the network beyond the present study where they could be associated with other experienced business executives who could possibly mentor them over a longer period.

2.4.2 EVOLVEMENT OF COACHING

Coaching and mentoring has changed significantly with the availability of digital technology. Experienced business coaches are engaged to share their wealth of knowledge through a variety of media, which may include face-to-face meetings, video conferencing, short electronic messaging or a mobile phone call. When in doubt a coach/mentor is easily accessible.

2.4.2.1 Business coaching

According to Clawson (1996:8), the prevalence of the bureaucratic management style had placed much emphasis on controlling employees to do the job well with no questions asked or opinions sought which left a bitter feeling in them as unthinking, unfeeling beings.

Today the paradigm in business has shifted as hierarchical structures are dismantled, paving the way for collaborative teams to emerge. These teams are encouraged to continuously improve so that the business is competitive, profitable and sustainable. Coaches are engaged in various businesses to ensure the success of the enterprise. Whistle athletes and actors have for generations placed great value on coaching to improve performance, budding entrepreneurs are now more than ever before turning to coaches to steer them through the challenging on the way to business success (King and Eaton, 1999:145)

Coaching involves a highly confidential relationship between the protégé and a coach. It focusses on interpersonal and intrapersonal matters from visioning and planning to teamwork and execution (Greene and Grant, 2003). An outcome-based activity builds on the successes of every step on this journey. In essence, it is this reflective process and the resultant benefits that the coachee/protégé can derive from the feedback and experience of the coach that matters (Bluckert, 2005:171).

Unlike other supervisory or managerial roles, in this collaborative relationship, the coach does not have any direct authority over the coachee (Bozer et al., 2014:882). It is a voluntary association in which both parties engage based on mutual respect.

2.4.2.2 The coaching process

Coaching is an open-ended process that analyses the current situation and then defines the plan of action and the goal to be achieved after taking into account the personal, organisational and external resources available (King and Eaton, 1999:145). Business coaching focuses on providing a process through which clients can solve their own problems rather than providing or developing solutions for them. Therefore, the term “coaching” is used to focus activities on processes of empowering, developing, supporting and removing obstacles rather than on being prescriptive, directive or controlling as is more characteristic of the practice of consulting (Ellinger and Bolstrom, 2002).

According to Ingleton (2013:290), one requires great listening skills to be a good coach for the silence in coaching can produce the best outcomes. Being a good listener rather than prescribing solutions at every turn is the hallmark of a good coach. The promise of coaching does not provide instant solutions, but rather promotes learning, career and interpersonal development, behavioural change, improved productivity and leadership over time as the relationship moves into a mentoring phase that is less formal. (De Haan et al., 2011).

In this learning process, the coach's ability to ask facilitating questions plays an important role in developing his/her protégé. The coaches have to use a facilitating technique to make the coachee learn to question their own methods and solutions. Above all, the coach should not provide the solutions but facilitate the coachees' response and their potentials to develop their own ideas (Alstrup, 2000:166).

Zeus and Skeffington (2002) contend that coachee/protégé is the focus of attention in this exercise because coaching is geared towards transformation and behavioural modifications that are brought about by new, adaptive action that supports the desired transformation.

2.4.2.3 Matching coach and coachee

Whilst one might be a brilliant practitioner, one may not necessarily be a great teacher. Leaders may have natural talent that brought them phenomenal success.

However, they may lack the patience to share their knowledge with students. Therefore, Pegg (1999:136) suggests that the chemistry between coach and coachee must be right before they embark on this journey. Therefore, matching a coach and coachee is of utmost importance if the whole exercise of coaching is going to be successful.

A coach or mentor with a proven record of accomplishment usually commands great respect and is sought after by aspiring, young individuals. If taken under the wing of a reputable entrepreneurial coach, the protégé receives customised support during the coaching period. The coach will focus on his/her overall business performance with the view to improving appropriate behaviour and making the most of the individual's potential to assume new responsibilities and face the daily challenges of business with confidence (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:425).

To achieve this success, the coachee receives individualised and practical support throughout the entire coaching process. This support is focused on improving behaviours, making the most of one's potential, assuming new responsibilities, facing different situations within the daily routine and ultimately improving one's overall performance. In the process, many skills pertinent to coaching are practised and fine-tuned such as active listening, questioning, demonstrating understanding and expressing empathy (Bluckert, 2005:176).

Therefore, the concepts of choice and responsibility are crucial, as the effectiveness of the process depends on both the coach's contribution as well as the coachee's eagerness to change. This may entail a readiness to set aside pre-established habits of thinking that could possibly restrict the implementation of new business strategies but would certainly demand a willingness to modify the way things are done in the business (Vidal-Salazar et al., 2012:429).

2.4.3 THE COACHING AGREEMENT

A clearly laid out agreement is an essential basis for a sound mentoring relationship. It includes a development plan, confidentiality requirement, the duration of the relationship, frequency of the meetings, time spent on mentoring activities by each

party, and the overall role of the coach. The policies and procedures should include a format for contracting, a requirement of confidentiality, meeting and feedback guidelines and a duration limit for the formal programme (Veal, 1996:18). The participants must agree on what they are prepared to do in their role and what they are not prepared to do in their role. Clear contracting provides the platform for achieving success.

Most coaches and coachees meet for performance planning, coaching, and feedback sessions. How frequently they meet is determined by the agreement, the nature of the relationship between as well as the geographical proximity between them. Now with the availability of the internet distance is no longer relevant as they could communicate more often whenever needed. (Clegg et al., 2005:218). Rather than being based on expert advice related to the nature of a particular business, coaching is designed to be non-directive, in that its focus is usually on skilful questioning in order to help businesses find their own solutions (Hill, 1998 as cited in Clegg et al., 2005:219). Where there is a problem, the coach could step in and offer advice.

2.4.4 E-MENTORING

Even traditional coaching and mentoring are influenced by digital technology. It is no longer necessary for mentor and mentee to find the time to meet face-to-face. They can regularly and informally contact each other, share vital bits of information, and keep the channels of communication and learning open to ensure the flow of information, ideas and feedback.

2.4.4.1 The Me-Time Generation

The World Wide Web has given birth to an explosion of social networking platforms such as Facebook (www.facebook.com), Twitter (twitter.com), and YouTube (www.youtube.com) which is dominated by the youth or the iPod generation (Bamford, 2011:151). However, the addictive nature and global extent of its influence have also attracted older generations to sites such as LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) and Facebook. These are invaluable sites for developing and promoting one's business networks. Bamford (2011:154) asks whether people talking about

themselves and their problems are a core human need or is time for reflection and feedback an absolute requirement?

It is evident that the desire for dedicated “I time” and social networking is increasing. This trend has also crept into the workspace with employees craving the opportunity to talk about their needs, hopes, job challenges and career followed by honest, constructive feedback.

2.4.4.2 Technology at the heart of guided learning

The challenges of time, cost and inconvenience are overcome by introducing technology to the mentoring effort. This also facilitated a just-in-time approach that provides an instant connection between the mentor and his protégé thereby introducing the concept of a new e-mentoring paradigm. Bamford (2011:152). What was traditionally a face-to-face meeting between the two parties after long intervals is now conducted on a more frequent basis using ICT. The mentee is kept informed and updated and does not have to wait for the next meeting to enquire about an urgent issue. Depending on the nature of the relationship, the mentor is at hand almost every day.

At the heart of the e-mentoring model is the use of web-enabled and mobile technology, which facilitates communication and speed learning that could be directed by the mentor through self-discovery by the mentee him/herself (Bamford, 2011:152). The online learning opportunities for coachees and mentees are a revolutionary step in the whole coaching and mentoring narrative that is no less profound (Bloch, 1995:20).

2.4.4.3 Advantages of E-mentoring

According to Hunt (2005:9), e-mentoring is a recent development and is already showing significant advantages over more traditional forms. E-communication can be very liberating for both participants and some of the traditional difficulties in face-to-face mentoring, such as power differences, gender and race issues are simply not present in a virtual environment. Hunt (2005:10) adds that the asynchronous nature

of e-mails allows individuals time to reflect before responding and geographic location, time and costly meetings are no longer an issue (Hunt, 2005:8).

Furthermore, there are assertions that informal associations are more effective for career progression and motivation than any formal system could achieve (Nicholson, 1996), and at the same time, protégées perceive greater psychological benefits and receive more frequent communication in casually arranged contacts (Fagenson-Eland et al., 1997:36).

One critical feature of e-mentoring is the possible presence of a webcam, which facilitates face-to-face or eye-to-eye contact that is maintained throughout the mentoring engagement. This is an essential component of creating and maintaining rapport between mentor and mentee despite the physical distance between the two individuals (Bamford, 2011:153).

2.4.5 COACHING AND SMME

In the European Union, the role of small enterprises is very significant with roughly 99% of them classified as small to medium businesses (Lawless et al., 2012). However, despite the importance of SMMEs, there is relatively little research on mentoring in small businesses (Mc Kevitt and Marshall, 2015: 263). If coaching and mentoring play such a significant role in the growth and development of SMMEs as we have illustrated thus far, then greater attention should be devoted to this neglected area.

2.4.5.1 Challenges experienced by small businesses

The needs of small business owners are multifaceted. Small businesses have to confront the challenges and opportunities of new venture creation through managing and sustaining the organisation (Cope, 2005; Motwani et al., 2006). Start-ups are usually faced with a high degree of problems owing to the liabilities of being new (Roper and Scott, 2009), which include insufficient capital, poor cash flow, ineffective marketing strategies and a new brand that has to compete with more established names.

Even more established SMMEs are also engaging in firefighting on a daily basis owing to a number of factors that may/may not be adequately addressed or even beyond their control. These entrepreneurs may lack the necessary skills to engage in financial planning or develop a business strategy that could take the enterprise to the next level (Mc Kevitt and Marshall, 2015:264). Many of the problems are either preventable or could be addressed if given the correct and timely advice.

2.4.5.2 Coaching and mentoring as a response to the challenges

Governments throughout the world have recognised the impact small business development initiatives could have on the socio-economic development of the people (Bisk, 2002). There is awareness of the challenges that this sector faces and the constant need for support to sustain them. There is a growing popularity of coaching and mentoring in support of fledgling enterprises.

The context in which SMMEs operate has led to a preference for informal support such as coaching and mentoring instead of formal business management development programmes. One study found that psychosocial support outweighs career support (Waters et al., 2002). This finding is consistent with other studies that place the value of mentoring to small firms as enhancing their ability to cope with change (Mc Kevitt and Marshall, 2015:264).

Entrepreneurial coaching as a collaborative relationship between a reputable business executive or coach and an aspiring entrepreneur or coachee/protégé can be a very beneficial association that could help sustain a fledgling enterprise. A committed relationship could have a lasting impact on the protégé's business and personal life (Bluckert, 2005:173).

2.4.5.3 Feedback

Feedback is a vital component of the coaching and mentoring process. Feedback provided by the coach or mentor is an important cognitive and behavioural mechanism (Kluger and DeNisi, 1996). Some researchers state that feedback is perceived as being more accurate, more valuable, and is more likely to be accepted and responded to positively when the source of the feedback is highly credible (Steelman et al., 2004:132). Boyce et al. (2010) found that credible coaches must be

dependable and have relevant work experience. Receiving feedback within the context of a credible relationship provides an important platform for both personal and professional development (Grant et al., 2010).

The job of a coach is to help protégés understand how their behaviours may be going off the rail and to suggest appropriate alternative behaviours that will ensure long-term success (Clegg et al., 2005:219). Whilst the professionalism of the mentor cannot be underestimated, the role of the mentee is equally crucial for the success of the exercise. For the coaching to work both mentor and mentee need to take equal responsibility (Bamford, 2011:155). Mentees were encouraged to establish rapport, plan, record and give feedback to their mentor on a regular basis (Bamford, 2011:155)

Bluckert (2005:176) asserts that giving feedback in a diplomatic way is important as is the capacity to receive feedback in a non-defensive manner for people in these groups to learn the important art of how to influence and be influenced which exhibits traces of emotional intelligence. This learning process is also through the communication of goals, descriptions and demonstrations of appropriate behaviours, and the provision of feedback on progress, achievements, and gaps between actual performances and desired ones (Sue-Chan et al., 2012). According to Bamford (2011:154), e-mentoring feedback could be seamless and convenient in the present business environment. Given that the present generation of youth has a distinct preference for digitally presented information, the two-way communication between protégé and coach/ mentor is quick and efficient. It also gives the respondent time to ponder over the feedback and reply after careful consideration of the criticisms.

2.4.6 MENTOR-MENTEE MATCHING.

Just as the matching of a coach and coachee is considered important, matching the mentor and mentee is also significant and should be carried out with recognition for the shared experiences. Sound relationships are built around similar characteristics and the ability of the mentor to empathise. Johnson et al. (1999) add that matching is crucial because the relationship that develops is the key to successful mentoring. A mentor who is accorded the respect that he/she may command as a result of his/her

business acumen will certainly have a profound influence over an aspiring entrepreneur.

A sound relationship will contribute to the altering of thinking patterns and the promotion of new business perspectives in the mentee, as well as the professional growth and confidence to face up to new challenges that may be presented (Salazar et al., 2012:427). If such relationships could grow across the sector, the ramifications could be quite far-reaching for the growth of small businesses.

2.4.6.1 Suitability for mentoring

A very successful business executive may not have the patience to take on a protégé under his/her wing. At the same time, an aspiring entrepreneur may be overly confident and not always willing to listen to the advice of the mentor. Such a scenario is doomed to failure from the outset.

Tabbron, et al. (1997:8) suggest that those who are not well suited to making mentoring relationships work well are classified as follows:

- *the fixer* who is just too self-centred and believe in sorting out things themselves;
- *the bureaucrat* who is too rule-bound and controlling to consider a different approach;
- *the pleaser* who believes in a cosy relationship and not confronting; and
- *the talker* who does not believe in active listening or developing rapport.

It is not the responsibility of the mentor to direct but to advise and offer possible alternatives for dealing with a business issue. It is entirely up to the mentee to implement or reject any advice that has been offered.

2.4.6.2 Mentoring women

Much of the literature reviewed thus far revealed that the role of women in business has been underemphasised. Women could make a significant contribution to the development of SMMEs if given the opportunity. Hammond (1988) contends that mentoring may offer a very valuable management development tool for women in particular as they attempt to overcome those difficulties that have thus far hindered

their career development in the business arena. Mumford (1985) suggests that owing to the lack of mentoring for women, the development of their careers in business have been stunted.

In a study conducted by Bell (2014:35), it was found that the recession of 2008 was painful for many businesses in difficulty not because they were bad businesses, but because the business owners did not have the skills, support and education needed to structure them to survive. Given the support, women in business could prosper and make their mark. Clutterbuck and Devine (1987:145) contend that the most important benefits of mentoring for female protégées are their opportunities to prove themselves and their capabilities as well as their increased visibility in relation to their roles within organisations.

According to Clutterbuck and Devine (1987:154), mentors help to build the female mentee's self-confidence and self-image whilst providing career guidance and feedback on the effectiveness on their management styles. Broadbridge (1999:239) asserts that mentors can also help to lessen occupational stress experienced by professional women who may not have a peer group support structure within the organisation to rely on for psychological care.

In some instances, mentors have been criticised as being less productive in cross-gender situations, primarily owing to complications of sexual attraction and gossip, which may permeate the organisation's grapevine and destroy the effectiveness and professionalism of mentoring relationships (Clawson, 1996: 9).

2.4.7 TEAM AND GROUP COACHING

As organisational structures flatten and electronic networks expand, divisional boundaries within the business units are disappearing. This has given rise to open interaction among people from different departments. Therefore, the focus of coaching and mentoring has shifted from the individual to the group as a unit. The swing is away from personal developmental schedules towards team or group development as more individuals look to their team members for inspiration and support (Clawson, 1996:13).

In his seminal book, Clutterbuck (1987 as cited in Britton, 2015:118) defined team coaching as helping the team improve performance, and the processes by which performance is achieved, through reflection and dialogue. The advantage of group and team coaching is that it offers many opportunities to scale coaching throughout the organisation by introducing practices that could help develop a coaching culture and strengthen the business capacity (Britton, 2015:117)

In-group coaching the focus is on goal setting, deepening awareness, supporting action and creating accountability to strengthening individuals within the group (Britton, 2013:18). Whether an individual or a group is coached, it is imperative to keep in mind these matters when embarking on intensifying the coaching conversation. Coaching may not be a solution for all groups. When skills need to be developed in a group or individual it is important to turn to training or when a performance issue is at play, performance management solutions are required.

Britton (2015:119) suggests that another key area for exploration with each individual is their coachability. Are they ready to engage in the coaching process, and take responsibility for their learning and action? Whilst the coach collaborates with the group in identifying limiting beliefs and fine-tuning the vision, individuals within the group ought to be accountable for the goals by giving full attention to the exercise.

2.4.7.1 E-communication within the group

E-mentoring of the group requires the building of a community within which the participants can communicate in confidence and share information. However, e-mentoring programmes have to strike a balance between technology and people for mentoring is and should remain a very personal experience (Hunt, 2005:8). Technology should help to further the coaching and mentoring objectives.

These online meetings facilitate support for one another over a geographically dispersed area. A blogging site could make provision for a forum to share experiences, make suggestions and receive feedback. This proved to be a useful means of gathering anecdotal feedback and generally communicating across the group, postulates Rawlinson (2007:158).

2.4.7.2 Need for psychological competences in coaches

Coaching is not a one-off event but a journey of discovery through a series of conversations and interactions taking place over a period (Britton, 2015:117). On a journey, circumstances can change, and the destination may need to be reviewed with the ongoing support of a coach to integrate the new information and modify strategies and goals (King and Eaton, 1999:146).

According to Bluckert (2005:177), there is growing acceptance that psychological competence is critical for the success of coaching engagements. Some core assumptions that should always be borne in mind by any coach before engaging with a protégé are that people know more than they think they know; every person has resources for improving performance; useful questions are worth more than commands and every setback represents a learning opportunity (Bluckert, 2005:174).

Wasylyshyn (2003) suggests that the coach should possess good listening skills, show empathy and patience whilst exhibiting adaptability for analytical problem-solving with creativity and a little good humour. Auerbach (2002) includes unconditional positive regard as well as acceptance of emotions and being non-judgmental at the same time, while MODOONO (2002) developed a self-assessment inventory for coaches which included the ability to read another's underlying emotions and capacity to monitor own feelings when dealing with others.

Bluckert (2005:182) goes on to make a significant point that coaches with a strong psychological background but who lack corporate knowledge and awareness tend to turn coaching into therapy. Conversely, coaches from a corporate background who lack psychological-mindedness may fail to engage with personal issues and focus too heavily on skills acquisition and problem-solving. A coach's effectiveness is based on the competences related to emotional intelligence, on the ability to make detailed observations, and on the quality of the interactions with the coachee.

2.4.7.3 Benefits of coaching and mentoring to the protégé

Career advancement is perhaps the most apparent benefit for the coachee/protégée. Mentoring has been viewed as a fundamental tool for advancing the career of individuals (Clutterbuck, 1991; Wright and Werther, 1991). Protégés are able to candidly discuss work-related issues with their mentors uncover their strengths and weaknesses as well as expand their natural talents and learn how to set job goals (Broadbridge, 1999:239). Coaching and mentoring has also shown to cultivate in the protégé an increased sense of commitment and loyalty to the organisation (Gray, 1989; Scandura, 1997), resulting in a reduction in turnover (Broadbridge, 1999:240).

2.5 SUMMARY

In a world where no one, however talented, can expect a job for life, career management skills such as self-marketing have become crucial. The “safe house” provided by a coaching or mentoring relationship is probably the most appropriate environment in which individuals can learn to market themselves (Bloch, 1995:20). Business coaching as a collaborative relationship between experienced coaches and entrepreneurial leaders, focussing on business goals, entrepreneur development, and contribution to organisational growth is gaining popularity in business circles.

The inclusion of technology has added a new dimension to the coaching initiative. Geographic distance between coach and coachee is no longer an interruption in lines of communication between the two. They are just a mouse click away from each other and if even eye contact could be made via a webcam to keep the warmth of the relationship. The possibilities of improving the protégé’s business knowledge are also facilitated by the vast array of free online courses.

Judging from the literature presented above, there is hope that the youth entrepreneur could make a success of his/her business venture if given the support and encouragement that coaches and mentors could offer. Every effort to nurture them in their vulnerable state should be made if we are to see an increase in the number of start-ups surviving in business.

In Chapter Three, the theory of mindfulness is discussed, showing its relevance to youth entrepreneurship. This is followed by an analysis of the theory of connectivity and its influence on business communication and networking.

CHAPTER THREE MINDFULNESS AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As an autoethnographic study encompassing youth entrepreneurship and mindfully applying digital technology to business networking with online learning, the following three theories were developed because of their relevance to the present study:

- the theory and practice of mindfulness;
- the theory of connectivity and digital learning; and
- the theory of youth entrepreneurship

Mindfulness is considered one of the most effective ways of creating greater awareness of the environment and one's thought processes whilst paying more attention to detail. These attributes could help any would-be entrepreneur as it influences the cognitive processes both personally and in one's career, which in turn affects the quality of one's decisions.

Connectivism and digital learning have been ushered in by the technological revolution that is sweeping across the globe today. Not only have the personal lives of everyone being touched by the digital wave, but business too has been affected in many ways. The vast presence of the Internet has even changed the traditional way in which business is conducted and how knowledge is shared as business students are interacting with colleagues from other parts of the world and finding information online to enrich their learning experience.

With a positive entrepreneurial attitude, the possibilities of achieving success in business are improved if the youth could take advantage of the opportunities presented. A successful entrepreneur is an asset to him/herself, to the community for the services he/she renders and to the national economy for contributing to its growth. The theory of youth entrepreneurship will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Four.

3.2 THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS

The practice of mindfulness is achieving greater acceptance as a tool that promotes a deeper understanding of personal and organisational life. Those that engage in this practice are said to be more creative in their problem-solving and receptive to the environment they find themselves in. Despite its origins in the east, mindfulness is making a huge impact on the business arena in the west.

3.2.1 Mindfulness: An overview

Mindfulness is being promoted as an effective practice in making the best decisions in one's personal and business life. According to Ndubisi (2012:600), the mindful approach in human cognition can produce quality decisions in one's personal life and at an organisational level since it could lead to an improvement in capacity to develop effective solutions that would better serve the business objectives.

Weick and Sutcliffe (2006:401) assert that mindfulness enables captains of business to improve their competencies in order to respond swiftly and effectively to diverse and constantly changing stimuli, which necessitates a wide range of responses. Moreover, mindfulness encourages individuals to be more receptive by paying more attention to details (Brown et al., 2007:272) thereby sharpening one's ability to take timely actions that could best serve one both personally and professionally (Weick et al., 1999:87). This approach helps us understand why things happen the way they do, and instructs us on how to manage ourselves, particularly in challenging times.

Mindfulness, which is the opposite of mindlessness, is our capacity for self-awareness and self-knowing (Khisty, 2010:115). If we appreciate that the mind is the foundation of all that we create, then only will we recognise the importance of mindfulness. Through the practice of mindfulness, we can develop the mental proficiency needed to shape our personal and business destinies (Khisty, 2010:117). According to Langer (1989:137), research suggests that the organisations' capacity to achieve reasonable performance and required outcomes in an ever-changing environment depends on their thinking, information gathering, perception of the world around them and the ability to change their perspectives to reflect the situation at hand (Langer, 1989:140).

3.2.2 ORIGINS OF THE MINDFULNESS PHILOSOPHY

Tracing the roots of the mindfulness concept reveals an interesting blend of meditative practices searching for inner peace in the east whilst westerners emphasise the conscious processing of information to uncover quality outcomes that would contribute to better decision making.

3.2.2.1 Eastern and Western mindfulness

Weick and Putnam (2006:280) insisted that mindfulness means something quite different in Eastern and Western thought in terms of practice and outcome. Brown and Ryan (2003:216) add that research on individual mindfulness consists of two perspectives—the Western and Eastern perspectives with each of these perspectives placing emphasis on different aspects of mental activity. Nevertheless, whichever viewpoint one adopts, the benefits that one would derive could leave a lasting impression on the individual.

3.2.2.2 The Eastern view

The Eastern perspective on mindfulness has its foundations in Buddhist thought (Weick and Putnam, 2006:286). From this perspective, mindfulness is receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experiences occurring both internally and externally (Brown and Ryan, 2003:211), or moment-to-moment, nonreactive, non-judgmental awareness (Weick & Putnam, 2006 cited in Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:722). An essential idea in Buddhist practice is for the mind to become fully open and empty by freeing itself from the grip of disorganised thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and preoccupations with the past or the future that stand in the way of becoming fully present in the here and now; the term for this condition is mindfulness (Borker, 2013:43).

The Eastern view perceives mindfulness in terms of a meditative attitude focusing on inner experiences of the ongoing process of awareness (Langer, 1989:702). The aim is to attain a mind that is free of all thoughts that distract it from realising inner peace and tranquillity. Borker (2013:43) adds that mindfulness, according to this philosophy, involves the process of grounding the mind within the body. When the mind is fully in the present moment, mind and body are in balance and the mind is

open and emptied of distractions which is what Buddhist teachings called the “pure mind.” (Borker, 2013:44).

Regardless of perspective, studies of individual mindfulness show that mindfulness curtails negative functioning and enhances positive outcomes in several important aspects of life including mental health, physical health, behavioural regulation, and interpersonal relationships (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:722).

3.2.2.3 The Western view

The Western perspective on mindfulness is principally derived from the works of Harvard psychologist, Ellen Langer (1989; 2000; 2005). For Langer, mindfulness is expressed through vigorously differentiating and refining existing categories of information (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:722). The Western perspective means that this approach is a variant of an information-processing style (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006:123). The dominant view on mindfulness in the Western tradition focuses on contents of the mind, rather than on processes of the mind, as in the Eastern, Buddhist tradition (Langer 1989:138). It asks what the dominant thoughts are at present and investigates how these thoughts influence one’s actions.

In the Western view, people act less mindfully when they hold on to past experiences and act instinctively by just holding on to conventional thoughts and a single perspective without considering other possibilities that may exist (Langer, 1989:202). Mindfulness instead would mean that one has to switch modes of thinking and then arrive at the best possible outcome by making provision for multiple perspectives.

3.2.3 MINDFUL AND MINDLESS INDIVIDUALS

There is a vast difference in the way mindful and mindless individuals conduct themselves in both personal and professional settings. One could easily read from their body language and verbal expressions where an individual stand. According to Ndubisi (2014:247), when engaging in any activity, mindful individuals are well motivated and analyse problems from a wider variety of perspectives and are able to adapt with ease. On the other hand, mindless individuals are less motivated; respond very apathetically and mechanically by adopting familiar routine perspectives (Levinthal and Rerup, 2006 cited in Bayraktar and Ndubisi, 2104:29).

3.2.3.1 Mindful individuals

Capel (2012:671) describes mindful individuals as being generally, creative individuals who tend to be independent yet strongly collaborative, have a humanist approach with a strong ethical purpose that exhibits a firm emotional investment in their work. By contrast, Langer (1997:4) states that being mindless, colloquially speaking, is like being “*on automatic pilot*”. Mindfulness may directly foster well-being by providing additional fullness and richness to experience, and mindfulness may indirectly enhance well-being by facilitating healthy self-regulatory behaviour (Brown and Ryan, 2003; Brown et al., 2007; Shapiro and Schwartz, 2000 cited in Howell and Buro, 2011:1008).

A mindful individual's approach to circumstances usually emphasises openness to novelty and maintains a flexible attitude to prevailing conditions whilst a mindless individual's attitude assumes the habitual, routine-based and taken for granted stance (Bjurstrom, 2012:702). A mindful individual also emphasises the need to show respect and connect effortlessly with parties involved in any form of relationship including business, social, and interpersonal (Ali and Ndubisi, 2011:147). This quality is useful in conflict handling and management; a quality that is crucial in any business relationship (Matanda and Ndubisi, 2011:69).

A study conducted by Rerup (2005) investigates how mindfulness and the impact of previous experience on the entrepreneur's ability to discover and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities are directly linked to mindful practices (Gordon and Schaller, 2014:13). Mindful entrepreneurs can better interpret the results of the market analysis and process the outcomes in a more informed and unbiased manner (Gordon and Schaller, 2014:15). Capel (2012:666) concludes that even for students of business, mindful experiential learning practices are effective strategies for improving the quality and overall performance of their entrepreneurial activities whereas mindless approaches will achieve the exact opposite.

3.2.3.2 Mindless individuals

According to Keng, Smoski, and Robins (2011:19), many people have a tendency to adopt mindsets and behavioural patterns from others since they simply do not think

about developing their own. As they engage in this mindless adoption process, they fail to question the reasons, motives and circumstances under which those mindsets and behaviours were developed. Instead, they blindly adopt them. Weick et al. (1999:90) note that when less cognitive processes are triggered, the characteristics of the person's thinking is one of mindlessness showing excessive reliance on past categories with a fixation on a single perspective without an awareness of perspectives that could be different and better (Levinthal and Rerup, 2006:502).

Kahneman (2003:697) contends that there is a natural inclination for individuals to recognise and interpret information in accordance with pre-set notions derived from their experiences. These categories or cognitive representations allow mindless individuals to easily process information in a given situation they may neglect to consider alternative ideas and perspectives more relevant to new situations (Kahneman, 2003:699). What these mindless individuals fail to realise is that the present situation could be very different and, therefore, the decision taken may be inappropriate to the given situation.

3.2.3.3 Comparing mindful and mindless individuals

Langer and Moldoveanu (2000:7) emphasise that the ability of entrepreneurs and organisations to achieve consistent performance in a changing environment depends on how they think, gather information, scan the environment around them, and be able to change their perspective to reflect the prevailing conditions, on a consistent basis (Langer, 1989:172). By contrast, mindless behaviour is dictated by rules and routines that are more likely to reflect a one-size-fits all perspective irrespective of the changing circumstances. Langer (1989:1997) refers to this type of information processing as mindlessness, acting on automatic pilot, excluding attention to innovative ideas and fixating on a single perspective (cited in Hutzschenreuter et al., 2014:119).

Education is an area where mindlessness seems to proliferate. This is because of mind-sets that hamper rather than help us to learn (Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000:12). Even if we had to encourage entrepreneurial learning, adopting a mindless perspective would not yield appropriate business thinking and strategies that are

varied, open and creatively aligned to changing business environments (Capel, 2012:668). While mindfulness accentuates novelty in response to varying and unique circumstances, mindlessness emphasises continuity as a mechanism to preserve accumulated experience (Malhotra et al., 2012:3).

3.2.4 ORGANISATIONAL MINDFULNESS AND MINDLESS ORGANISATION

An organisation has a mind of its own that reflects the prevailing thinking patterns, which could be either a productive mindful one or a routinised mindless one. Whichever route the management consciously or unconsciously adopts will ultimately determine the level of success achieved. Consequently, mindful organisational thinking should be encouraged at all times to navigate through the obstacles that litter the business landscape.

3.2.4.1 An Overview of a Thinking Organisation

Whilst mindfulness has traditionally been discussed on an individual level, researchers like Weick et al. (1999), Rerup (2004), Weick and Sutcliffe (2006), and Levinthal and Rerup (2006) have applied it to an organisational level where learning is defined as change in the organisation's behaviour as it acquires experience (cited in Hutzschenreuter et al., 2014:1120).

Hence, organisational mindfulness can be defined as the extent to which an organisation captures details about emerging threats and creates a capability to swiftly act in response to these new realities (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:723). Mindlessness generally occurs when the organisation is inattentive to possible failures, unexpected events and emerging threats that could overwhelm them (Malhotra et al., 2012:3).

Generally, organisational mindfulness is vital to achieving the strategic objectives as well as the overall mission, by facilitating collaboration within the organisations (Malhotra et al., 2012:4). The practice of mindfulness may become necessary because the organisations encounter unforeseen circumstances which may entail a deviation from the original plans or the organisations may identify a new opportunity that was not previously recognised (Levinthal and Rerup, 2006 cited in Bayraktar

and Ndubisi, 2104:28). Therefore, mindfully acting in concert, the organisation could address the threat of seize the opportunity.

Mindfulness in organisations is linked with increased creativity, reduced burnout among role players, paying more attention to details and greater sensitivity to the present environment with greater resistance to mistakes (Malhotra et al., 2012:5). These experiences are accumulated by routinely reflecting on practices, which are generally stored within individuals. Knowledge articulation, which is the sharing of such knowledge with other members of the organisation through project reviews or mentoring efforts, is essential (Hutzschenreuter et al., 2014:1120).

3.2.4.2 Probing organisational mindfulness

Organisational mindfulness refers to the extent to which a business captures detailed information about emerging opportunities or threats and creates a capability to swiftly act in response to these factors (Weick et al., 1999; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2001; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006 cited in Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:722). Organisational mindfulness and mindful organising have strategic and operational benefits, respectively as illustrated in the framework below. Langer (1989:139) developed a cognitive framework for understanding mindfulness in the process of market analysis through:

- the creation of new categories (flexibility and creativity);
- openness to novelty (new information);
- attention to context (changes in the market environment); and
- awareness of multiple perspectives (versus fixation on one opinion).

Ray et al. (2011) contend that organisational mindfulness is apparent when leaders create cultures that encourage rich thinking and proficiency for timely action. In this regard, Vogus and Sutcliffe (2012:722) make three important claims about organisational mindfulness:

- it results from top-down processes;
- it creates the context for thinking and action on the front line; and
- it is a relatively enduring property of an organisation, like culture.

According to Vogus and Sutcliffe (2012:756), this means that leaders impress the importance of mindfulness on subordinates, which in turn motivates them to act more mindfully, from which emerges a culture of mindfulness that pervades every level of the business from its vision right down to individual members.

3.2.4.3 Mindless organisations reacting to threats

Langer (1989:138) had suggested that in organisations that are generally mindless, mindfulness is more likely to emerge when negative events are experienced that requires new attention. Weick et al. (1999:85) added that failure encourages mindfulness; asserting that failure does lead to a greater degree of mindfulness during which, information is more closely inspected and assumptions about cause-effect relationships are questioned.

Starbuck and Milliken (1988:330) have contended that success breeds confidence for when an organisation succeeds, the management usually attributes this to themselves. Hutzschenreuter et al. (2014:1121) sum up the situation aptly stating that as the organisation grows more confident of their own abilities, skills and procedures, they become over-confident. They trust the procedures and believe that they need to routinely focus on the most important events and ignore the least significant ones (Hutzschenreuter et al., 2014:1122).

According to Hutzschenreuter et al. (2014:1122) success can also be problematic just like failure since it could breed a false sense of security since success consciousness may influence future business activities that may be performed mindlessly. After success stories, managers are likely to become mindless, paying less attention to some specific tasks and relying on familiar routines, justifying their strategy as one that eliminates unnecessary effort and redundancy (Hutzschenreuter et al. 2014:1123). Therefore, in light of successful experiences, previous mindfulness could be followed by less mindful behaviour (Langer and Piper, 1987:46). Hence, one might say that the firm has become a victim of its own success (Miller, 1994:25).

According to Vogus and Sutcliffe (2012:729), transformational leadership is a leadership style that specifically holds the potential for imprinting organisational mindfulness and influencing mindful organising. The commitment to employee

welfare and empowerment of a transformational nature enables employees to think independently and collaboratively, voice their opinions and apply their knowledge in the best interest of the organisation (Sutcliffe, 2006:63).

3.2.4.4 Routines could be good for the business

According to Langer (1989:139), traditionally, routines have been considered to be mindless. However, more recent work suggests that organisational mindfulness can be embodied in routines (Levinthal and Rerup, 2006:6). In other words, organisational mindfulness originates from the extent and richness of well-rehearsed routines. More specifically, routines create a context for organisational mindfulness by setting an expectation. (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012:722). Responding appropriately to opportunities or threats in a routinised manner could also be beneficial if it is well rehearsed as a reaction.

Levitt and March (1988:380) have contended that knowledge is stored in routine practices which may be defined as the rules, procedures, strategies, and technologies around which the organisations function. Routines guide behaviour and cognition, which in turn make the knowledge (Levitt and March, 1988 cited in Hutzschenreuter et al., 2014:1120).

As noted earlier, mindful organisations are more open to new information and novelty (Owusu-Frimpong and Nwankwo, 2012:680), have greater ability to respond flexibly to environmental changes and a capacity to take timely actions (Weick et al., 1999:85). Furthermore, mindfulness allows businesses to broaden their environmental scanning (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006), continuously learn and improve beyond established routines and experiences (cited in Bjurström, 2012:699).

3.2.5 DEVELOPING A MINDFUL BUSINESS CULTURE

Bayraktar and Ndubisi (2104:27) contend that organisational mindfulness helps businesses to respond to the opportunities and threats presented by the competitive international business environment. While mindfulness leads to enhanced executive functioning, heightened self-regulation and improved relationships; mindlessness promotes automatic, habitual or impulsive responses (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Brown et al., 2007:36).

3.2.5.1 Mindful entrepreneurs are proactive

A mindful strategy requires the business to relentlessly learn and spread out beyond established routines, experiences and thinking (Bjurström, 2012:699). Mindfulness enables entrepreneurs to focus unreservedly and be totally focused on the present with whatever they are doing or experiencing. In business, mindfulness offers more effective communication because it also promotes improved interpersonal relations at all levels among divergent units (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006:520). All these factors are extremely vital for a sound business environment.

According to Capel (2012:667), mindfulness can also add to resourcefulness and innovativeness in learning and practising business philosophies among ambitious young entrepreneurs. This would encourage them to believe in themselves and pursue their dreams which is made possible by incorporating the following:

- openness to novelty (ability to reason about new kinds of stimuli);
- alertness to distinction (ability to compare, contrast, and make judgments);
- sensitivity to different contexts (aware of situations/people and the changes);
- awareness of multiple perspectives (seeing things from different angles); and
- orientation in the present (paying attention to the immediate situation) (Sternberg, 2000:16 cited in Capel, 2012:669).

3.2.5.2 Mindfulness and some challenges facing SMMEs

SMMEs play a significant role in worldwide economic growth through their contribution to employment, industrial productivity and income generation (Bayraktar and Ndubisi, 2010:41). However, with advances in information and communication technology, SMMEs are seriously considering a strategy of internationalising because of aggressive competition and limited opportunities in domestic markets. At the same time, one cannot lose sight of the numerous challenges in international expansion such as inadequate financial resources; sizes; the lack of experience doing business on an international scale and limited knowledge of doing business across cultures.

Owusu-Frimpong and Nwankwo (2012:690) contend that financial resources and size are less relevant for mindful organisations in their pursuit of global opportunities. According to Bayraktar and Ndubisi (2104:41), the higher the level of organisational mindfulness, the lesser the significance of financial resources and company size for global extension. Ultimately, a thinking organisation has a fresh approach to conducting business with a greater sense of skill and a superior ability to think out of the box.

The likelihood of mindful SMMEs surviving on the international stage is better because mindful organisations are more amenable to new information and novelty (Owusu-Frimpong and Nwankwo, 2012; Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006). Mindfulness offers a superior ability to respond to environmental changes (Argote, 2006) and have a larger capacity to take timely actions (Weick et al., 1999) because mindfulness allows organisations to broaden environmental scanning (Weick and Sutcliffe, 2006 cited in Bayraktar and Ndubisi, 2104:41).

3.2.6 STRESS OF BUSINESS LIFE

Business stress is ever-present. Entrepreneurs would acknowledge that their work is highly stressful at all times; be it when sales are very good and what steps should be taken to maintain the trend or when recession strikes, and figures are alarming. The business environment is always volatile with changes possible overnight. Hence, the stress associated with uncertainty is pervasive.

3.2.6.1 Deriving benefits from stress

It is widely accepted that a stressful business environment could have a negative effect on the entrepreneur. However, Garland et al. (2015:297) maintain that positive re-examination of a stressful event may involve reframing it as inherently meaningful for personal growth and development amidst adversity to develop resilience. A positive review is not a defence mechanism used to subdue unwanted experience. On the contrary, it is an active management strategy that involves direct contemplation of the challenges presented (Folkman, 1997:1). Young entrepreneurs are encouraged to embrace these challenges as normal occurrences in the business environment and employ mindful creativity to overcome them.

Garland et al. (2014) state that when experiencing stressful episodes, mindfulness can serve the individual well by diverting attention from negativity and maladaptive habits. In this way, stress is regulated, and the impact of stress is reduced. Caldwell et al. (2010:433) add that by being involved in mindfulness-related programmes, one's self-regulatory capacity is automatically boosted.

Overall, the benefit of mindfulness to the entrepreneur and the organisation is far-reaching. To an entrepreneur, the benefits of mindfulness can be depicted with improved skills in focus, problem-solving, relationship building, and stress reduction (Leland, 2015:23). The benefits of mindfulness could be seen in different spheres of life. Just as coaches of team sports could use mindfulness to help members work together collaboratively instead of competing amongst themselves, businesses could also encourage sharing of information and striving to achieve organisational goals in a collaborative spirit (Leland, 2015:26).

3.2.6.2 Mindful techniques for combating business stress

Since stress is ever prevalent in the business environment, it is useful to have some techniques to relieve stress in the toolkit. The following methods could prove quite helpful should the business executive or the line manager finds himself/herself experiencing stress

3.2.6.2.1 Mindful listening

Listening skills are also crucial in life. Only mindfulness can lead one to focus on listening actively, listening accurately, and listening for meaning – and these practices, in turn, will minimise poor listening habits like mind wandering, thinking ahead, and multitasking while listening (Goh, 2012:12).

To achieve mindful listening, it is imperative that the listener must avoid interrupting the speaker with questions or comments and give undivided attention to the speaker (Borker, 2013:46). Interrupting, turning away to start preparing one's own response at the expense of listening to a speaker is typical of a competitive discourse where attention is focused on what should be said in response (Borker, 2013:45). Whilst mindful listening can increase one's capacity for comprehending the content communicated, this can lead to greater sensitivity to one's surrounding and the

people in that environment (Langer and Moldoveanu, 2000:10). By its very nature, mindful listening is empathetic and shows mutual respect and compassion to the person who is speaking which is empowering and gratifying to the speaker (Borker, 2013:45).

3.2.6.2.2 Mindful silence

Mindful silence is in keeping with the Buddhist tradition and encompasses a period of silence which is considered to be very healing, facilitating calmness to deliver healing benefits to one's body. The stress of business life can take its toll on individual entrepreneurs. However, a period of mindful silence can have a soothing effect on one's mind and body resulting in much-improved decision making.

After a period of mindful silence, one feels completely refreshed and ready to take on one's task with a new sense of vitality and enthusiasm; even the decisions taken are of a better quality as they were arrived at after deliberate, mindful cognitive processing (Borker, 2013:40). Also, the willingness of one, to be perfectly silent and to listen to another individual with full attention including words, gestures, feelings, empowers the person speaking and the person listening (Borker, 2013:41). This also helps to improve relationships since active listening does imply that respect is being shown.

3.2.6.2.3 Mindful relaxation

Another major benefit in the mindfulness toolkit is in the area of relaxation and turning inward in preparation for outward action. According to Marques (2015:20), self-reflection is a guaranteed way of staying mindful and preventing ourselves from mindless actions. It can serve as a powerful thread that weaves our past, present and future together revealing that in the bigger scheme, many of our setbacks are necessary parts of the puzzle in life (Marques, 2015:21). It is necessary to recharge the mind with the calm and openness of mindfulness amidst the chaos of the business world. This is a key skill any entrepreneur needs to develop in order to ensure his/her longevity in the field of business.

3.2.6.2.4 Assessing the mindfulness toolkit

Mindfulness training has become very widespread in the west by popularising meditative practices and focusing on the elimination of maladaptive habits with detachment from negative states of mind by cultivating adaptive behaviour through positive states of mind (Garland et al., 2015:293). The foundation for success in all these areas lies in the practices of mindful listening, silence and relaxation. These practices allow one to experience empathy and openness to others and respect for fellow beings as everyone wants full attention and respond positively to this behaviour trait (Borker, 2013:52).

3.2.7 RESPONDING TO OPPORTUNITIES AND TREATS

It is important for an entrepreneur to respond to opportunities and threats in an informed and timeous manner. It is only when he/she is mindful can such a response take place. An automatic mindless response could be detrimental to the organisation if decisions were not adequately informed.

3.2.7.1 Mindfulness interrupts automatic responses.

Malhotra et al. (2012:608) asserts that a mindful mode of operation embraces a receptive state of mind that creates awareness that leads to being present to reality, rather than responding to it mindlessly or habitually processes it through conceptual filters. Therefore, mindfulness interrupts automatic reactions and allows for cognisant reflection. Garland et al. (2015:297) add that by interrupting the scripted habitual reactions to a challenge, it is possible to re-evaluate the context with a more present-minded analysis.

Therefore, premeditated responses ensure that the organisation undertakes internal and external scanning to analyse the ever-changing business environments. They include environmental scanning, organisational learning, market responsiveness, innovation, use of new technologies and networking activities (Simon, 1996; Matlay and Fletcher, 2000; Nkongolo-Bakenda, 2004; Nkongolo-Bakenda et al., 2010 cited in Bayraktar and Ndubisi, 2104:37). Ultimately, the decision of the entrepreneur to capitalise on a commercial opportunity is linked to his/her perception and evaluation of that opportunity (Gordon and Schaller, 2014:9).

3.2.7.2 The psychology of entrepreneurial decision-making

Mindfulness as a skill can be developed and improved with practice thereby improving task performance in dynamic decision-making environments (Dane, 2011 cited in Gordon and Schaller, 2014:9). There is suggestive evidence that organisational mindfulness is associated with innovation (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2012: 722). Contrary to operating in an automatic or routinised style, mindfulness encompasses the application of novel approaches, procedures and methods to identify and process information leading to cognitive processing that is most likely to deviate from past habitual practices (Gordon and Schaller, 2014:15).

Thus, mindfulness provides a buffer from immediate, automatic reactive working memory (Teasdale and Chaskalson, 2011:6). Mindfulness is not a skill that some individuals have, and others lack. All humans have the aptitude for mindfulness, which is rooted in human nature but requires considerable effort to realize a high degree of mindfulness (Brown and Cordon, 2009 cited in Hutzschenreuter et al. 2014:1119).

3.2.8 MINDFUL STUDIES AND ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING

A budding entrepreneur should start to sharpen his/her mindfulness skills early in his/her business career because of the far-reaching implications as already illustrated. Mindfully learning a skill, mindfully interacting with business associates and mindfully de-stressing will all contribute to successfully running a business.

3.2.8.1 Students of entrepreneurship being mindful

As defined by Pintrich (2000:453), self-regulated learning is the active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then endeavour to regulate, and control their thinking, motivation, and behaviour. Student's procrastination or the propensity to delay commencement or completion of important tasks is commonly viewed as a failure of self-regulation and is linked with negative outcomes such as lower achievement (Howell and Buro, 2011:1008). Therefore, a mindful approach to studies will result in a very different and positive outcome.

3.2.8.2 Learning skills and academic performance

At the very heart of mindfulness is focus, which is crucial to academic success. Leland (2015:20) posits that focus improves with practice and students trained in mindfulness can better focus on the task or lesson at hand and filter out distractions. Being calm and focusing on the present, students are able to improve their study habits, planning, and organisational skills through mindfulness. Mindfulness training enhances memory and concentration while reducing mind wandering or daydreaming (Docksai, 2013 cited in Leland, 2015:20). Capel (2006:669) suggests how mindfulness can improve one's overall self-image and confidence whilst at the same time enhancing the learning experience.

3.2.8.3 Entrepreneurial thinking

According to Cunneen and Mankelow (2007 cited in Gordon and Schaller, 2014:9), entrepreneurial thinking is the primary method by which an entrepreneur acquires information about an opportunity and relevant market conditions. Opportunity evaluation and the later decision to exploit that opportunity are dependent upon the cognitive processing of information relevant to the opportunity. Gordon and Schaller (2014:12) describe that entrepreneurial cognition was originally highlighted with the works of Kirzner (1973, 1983), who proposed the *theory of entrepreneurial alertness* which emphasised the ability of the entrepreneur to recognise the presence of opportunities and the ability to capitalise on them timeously.

Langer (1989:62) specifies the concept of mindfulness as a state of active awareness characterised by the persistent creation and refinement of knowledge; together with an openness to new information, and a willingness to view multiple perspectives (Levinthal and Rerup, 2006:502). Mitchell et al. (2002:97) further defined cognition in the entrepreneurial context as the knowledge that people use to make assessments, judgments, or decisions about opportunity evaluation, venture creation, and growth. Lightsey (2006) postulates that resilience can be taught through psychological interventions, whilst Van Breda (2001) suggests that mindfulness-based training may be an effective intervention for increasing resilience (cited in Keye and Pidgeon, 2013:2).

3.2.9 REFLECTING ON THE PAST AND CONTEMPLATING THE FUTURE

Whilst mindfulness focuses on establishing ourselves in the present, it does not mean that we cannot reflect on the past and contemplate the future. If we are firmly grounded in the present moment, and the future becomes the objective of our mindfulness; whatever steps we take in the present, will ensure that such a future becomes a reality. Therefore, Khisty (2010:119) maintains that the best way to take care of the future is to mindfully focus on the present moment. Self-reflection is a definite way of staying mindful and precluding us from mindless actions. If it becomes a regular part of our life, self-reflection serves as a dominant thread that weaves our past, present and future together. We are able to see the larger picture and understand that many of our setbacks are essential parts of the puzzle that completes our life experience (Marques, 2015:20).

The next section introduces the theory of connectivism and digital learning, which illustrates the influence that technology, has had on the business environment in how business is conducted as well as the opportunities that technology presents for entrepreneurial learning and business expansion.

3.3 THEORY OF CONNECTIVISM AND DIGITAL LEARNING

Digital technology has connected people around the world from a hut in a rural village to a high-rise building in a financial capital across the globe. The opportunities that this network of connections present to ordinary people is indeed astounding. Today online business, e-learning, or social networking is becoming increasingly popular among people from different strata of society.

3.3.1 THE GROWTH OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology is playing a pivotal role in connecting people on all continents and promoting online learning in previously inaccessible areas. Even commerce and industry are influenced by this technological revolution enabling people to trade across national boundaries. The world has become a global village and anyone who lives anywhere is just a mouse click away.

3.3.1.1 The exponential growth of technology

Information communication technology (ICT) is growing at an exponential rate bringing with it many fascinating links between the physical and virtual world. Ko and Rossen (2010) add that people from various countries have exciting new learning platforms that offer online learning opportunities in a vast array of fields. Information and communication technology can also make an important developmental impact because it can overcome barriers of social, economic and geographical isolation; increasing access to information and education, that enable people to participate in decisions that affect their lives (Sesan, 2009:1).

Modern society, with its scientific and technological improvements, has seen a rapid rise in freely available knowledge for all those who can access it. Goldie (2016:1064) contends that the emergence of the ever-present Internet, has provided access to a wide range of opportunities for new forms of communication and knowledge sharing inside and outside of formal educational institutions. If participants could see the benefits of networking for the cross-fertilization of ideas, enhanced collaboration, improved access to investors and new markets, then an economic boom that would benefit people around the world could be a reality.

3.3.2 BENEFITS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING

Much of our thinking will determine the direction our business will take. Whether we continue to run our businesses traditionally from behind the counter or whether we embrace technology and implement practices that could take our business beyond our national boundaries into cyberspace, is dependent on how we mindfully perceive this new reality.

3.3.2.1 Sharing experiences through technology

Today geographically dispersed students of business can work together and share their experiences on various platforms. This is made possible through the progress in ICT. According to Guthrie (2010:82), synergies are boundless when astute tutoring and experiential learning combine with technology-based systems giving access to a wide range of educational opportunities. Many young people have access to the Internet, even if they do not have access to school-based entrepreneurship courses.

According to McFarland (2017:271), e-learning in entrepreneurship may enable them to make an impact in the world of commerce. All they require is a computer with internet connectivity to tap into a new world of knowledge and sharing.

3.3.2.2 Link between education and entrepreneurship

There is evidence that demonstrates a positive link between education and entrepreneurship. Research indicates that education has the most profound effect on the likelihood of students starting a business (Raposo et al., 2008:485) and that entrepreneurship education encourages entrepreneurial intentions.

Formal entrepreneurship education affects the attitudes of students, which in turn directs them towards certain future careers. Steenkamp et al. (2011:46) support this thought by maintaining that while technological skills can be attained during tertiary education, the attitudinal and motivational aspects of entrepreneurship need to be developed much earlier.

3.3.2.3 Factors for success in entrepreneurial skills

According to the BIS Research Report, 2015:27 (cited in McFarland, 2017:271) there are five key elements, which are likely to enable the successful delivery of entrepreneurship skills initiatives within an organisation:

- experiential rather than didactic learning, supported by suitable theoretical knowledge;
- participation of both the individual and the organisation;
- group learning involving teams;
- delivery within a wider business support system rather than a stand-alone training programme; and
- encourage some degree of commitment from participants

Acquiring the relevant business skill has to be a collaborative effort with all role-players within the organisation. Consequently, a culture of learning permeates all levels of the organisation thereby making it a *Learning Organisation*. This results in greater commitment of all role players who deriving equal benefit.

3.3.2.4 The evolving nature of knowledge today

Cabiria (2012:1) contends that for most of human history, knowledge had a long and stable shelf life but with the advances in ICT, information, and knowledge generated, has a much shorter half-life, often measured in months rather than generations. According to Cabiria (2012:2), not only must content delivery options evolve, so too must the learning paradigms with a connectivist learning model addressing the effect of technology on learning environments by placing the emphasis on the student-information relationship rather than the student-teacher relationship. This shift is indeed significant in the learning paradigm. This is how technology has influenced teaching and learning with greater emphasis being placed on how the online student interacts on the Internet with the teacher merely being assigned a facilitating role Cabiria (2012:4). Ultimately, the acquisition of knowledge and the pursuit of opportunities are dependent on how one navigates the World Wide Web.

3.3.2.5 Theory of connectivism

Cabiria (2012:3) asserts that knowledge today is extensive, fluid, and networked necessitating a paradigm shift to accommodate the new learning theory of connectivism. Bell (2011:100) postulates that today learning is a process of connecting people to each other and information resources by integrating technology into formal and informal learning leading to the creation of new knowledge.

If existing theories no longer fully explain learning, then new theories need to be developed. These may build on existing theories without totally replacing them. Consequently, connectivism is seen as the most prominent of the network learning theories that have been developed for e-learning environments (Goldie, 2016:1064).

In proposing connectivism as a learning theory for the digital age, Siemens (2004) characterises connectivism as a successor to behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Siemens (2006) identifies three limitations in the aforementioned theories: their intrapersonal opinion of learning; their failure to address the learning that is located within technology and organisations; and their lack of contribution to the value judgments that need to be made in knowledge-rich environments. Regardless of whether it is a theory or not there is acknowledgement that

connectivism is a fresh way of conceptualising learning in the digital age (Bell, 2011:14).

3.3.2.6 Criticism of connectivism

Theories can be complementary. Kop and Hill (2008:1) argue that connectivism is not a learning theory, but a 21st century skillset which ushered in a paradigm shift that is acknowledged; however, its contributions do not merit its treatment as a new and freestanding theory.

None of the models stemming from different theories or paradigms is the most appropriate under the circumstances, but each improves our understanding of the learning process. Bell (2003:64) adds that we have to understand the strengths and limitations of each learning theory to optimise their use in appropriate situations since these philosophically disjointed theories such as behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism, following their own trajectories with occasional overlaps; but it opens the way for a theory that facilitates technology-enabled learning (Bell, 2011:98).

3.3.3 KNOWLEDGE IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The concept of knowledge in the digital era is significantly different when compared to knowledge in earlier periods. Knowledge today is dynamic and constantly changing whilst knowledge had previously been stable with a long life span.

3.3.3.1 Today knowledge flows

According to Goldie (2016:1065), knowledge is viewed as a process, fluid and dynamic flowing through networks of humans and their devices and as it streams through the network, it is open to multiple interpretations and change. Siemens (2006) adds that knowledge resides within networks without any individual necessarily possessing it and it can be stored in a variety of digital formats. Connectivism proposes that learning may also reside in non-human appliances where it may be stored and manipulated by technology (Siemens, 2004).

3.3.3.2 Changing nature of knowledge

Since information is constantly changing, its relevance will be affected by new contributions made to the field. Students need to be able to access new information, evaluate its' relevance and make decisions based on the information acquired. According to Goldie (2016:1064), the ability to seek out current information and filter secondary information are considered important skills that contribute to learning. The learning process is cyclical as learners connect to a network to find and share new information, modify their beliefs in terms of their new learning, then reconnect to share their new understandings and find further information (Goldie, 2016:1066).

Drucker (1994:95) argues that in the evolving economy, knowledge is the primary resource for individuals and the economy overall; adding, that improving knowledge worker productivity is the greatest challenge of the 21st century. Today knowledge is fundamentally social, personal, flexible, dynamic, decentralised, ubiquitous, networked, and complex in nature (Chatti et al. 2010:81).

Siemens (2006) observed that knowledge is developing faster, and it changes more quickly. Siemens (2006) adds that over the last several decades, more of our knowledge has shifted to soft knowledge, as many knowledge elements do not have time to harden before they are replaced or amended. Goldie (2016:1066) concludes that in connectivism there is no real concept of transferring knowledge or building knowledge since it emerges from the connections that are formed during network activity of filtering information to make meaning.

3.3.4 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The government has a significant role to play in the promotion of connectivism. They have to ensure that greater effort is applied to the construction of infrastructure for internet connectivity and that the price of data should be affordable for the masses. The government should also ensure that an enabling environment is created to promote the use of ICT in schools as well as in government services for improved efficiency.

3.3.4.1 The government as employer

According to Adeniyi-Kie (2004:1), in most developing countries, the government is the largest employer of labour, absorbing over 60%-75% of the labour force, which in the long-run produces inefficiency in the economy that lacks healthy competition and proper supervision that is found in the private sector. Under these conditions, graduates generally believe that a job in government services offers security and stability for the rest of their working lives.

In SA, the government should be encouraging youth who have left school or graduated from universities to engage in business by creating incentive schemes to attract them. There is a lack of interest to get into business because of the perceived risk attached and entrepreneurship found primarily in informal businesses.

3.3.4.2 Government support

Governments can play a vital role in encouraging youth participation in digital learning by focusing on ICT innovation at schools. The government should also create an enabling environment for youth participation in business and academia together with aspiring entrepreneurs in the ICT ecosystem.

In this context, many governments introduced a number of instruments to support SMME development, through the creation of technology incubators and hubs. The South African government can also help by developing the necessary infrastructure for internet connectivity and ensuring that the cost of data is kept as low as possible so that it is affordable and is widely available.

3.3.5 ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN BUSINESS

Commenting on the important role of entrepreneurs as innovators, Berglund (2005) states that they disrupt prevailing conditions in the markets through innovation, thereby changing various economic benchmarks. Therefore, entrepreneurs not only increase competition in the market through the application of existing technologies in innovative ways, but they also create wealth, jobs and socio-economic stability (Cassim et al., 2014:30).

3.3.5.1 Entrepreneurship in emerging economies

Turker and Selcuk (2009:142) posit that entrepreneurial activities have a multi-faceted impact on technological innovation and provide employment opportunities for the unemployed whilst increasing the organisation's competitiveness. Small and medium-sized enterprises with visionary entrepreneurs are critical to ensuring economic growth in a sustainable and inclusive manner. SMMEs also represent a vital source of economic growth in developed industrialised countries, as well as in emerging economies.

Gilmore (2009:324) affirms that youth entrepreneurship does not just create jobs for the youth but also brings to the market place such assets as fresh thinking, enthusiasm, loyalty and the vast knowledge of technology. Therefore, the introduction of ICT has transformed the way business is transacted with changes in the global economy, changes in the movement of goods and services and changes in the potential size of market share. Gilmore (2009:326) further adds that entrepreneurs need to develop skills for generating effective strategies to facilitate change initiatives but must also be able to manage them.

3.3.5.2 Role of ICT in SMMEs

The currency of the digital era is knowledge and technology with the new economy emphatically placing priority on human capital as the new resource currency of the 21st century. ICT can provide effective tools to support economic activities, especially mobile phones, computers, and the Internet, which have become essential to develop business and enhance competitiveness. Martinez and Nguyen (2014:3) are of the opinion that the high penetration of mobile phones in developing countries and the increased affordability of internet services have brought about unprecedented opportunities for people to leverage these technologies to start and grow businesses. Sesan (2009:1) maintains that technology is no longer a mere enabler, it is now central to the way we work, live and play; we should, therefore, acknowledge its presence and cooperate with the technological revolution that is transcending national boundaries and sweeping across the globe.

3.3.6 SOCIAL IMPACT OF ICT

The social impact of technology is changing on a regular basis with innovations being introduced all the time. However, the major concern is the speed at which people are adopting these technologies for their benefit. The gap between those that adopt technology and those that do not is ever-widening leaving behind a large segment of society that is technologically disadvantaged.

3.3.6.1 Impact on the family and the community

Just as the proliferation of technology is influencing business, so too are the communities affected by the change sweeping through. Adeniyi-Kie (2004:2) contend that for every person who is employed in any developing nation, at least 4 to 6 family members are affected or have their livelihood improved because, in most developing countries, the extended and communal family system is still in existence. Entrepreneurship is a strong creator of jobs in developing countries and should be strongly encouraged by the government and international organisations like the UNO and ILO. Greater initiatives should be taken to spread the positive message of entrepreneurship among the people through schools, religious organisations and influential leaders in the community.

McFarland (2017:260) asserts that the control of knowledge is a form of oppression when only certain groups have access to certain knowledge. When entrepreneurial and business literacy education is lacking and if the lack of internet access is the reason then it is an injustice because for many people this knowledge will be their only chance of avoiding poverty (McFarland, 2017:267). ICT may increase opportunities for powerful and transformative learning experiences that will radically transform individuals, communities and nations (Bolger et al., 2011:37).

3.3.6.2 ICT to promote entrepreneurship and economic growth

We are witnessing how ICT-related entrepreneurs, SMMEs, and start-ups are brought together in a global network focused on maximising the benefits that innovative ICT solutions can make to society with special emphasis on the role that these business play to create new, stable jobs (ITU).

Technology does hold the potential to strengthen development efforts by providing a platform for socio-economic growth and by changing the nature of business and employment in countries where strategic use is made of ICT opportunities. The youth must learn to move from activism to action and realise that we are the architects of our own future. There must be collaboration within the continent to break the cycle of underdevelopment and accelerate freedom by ICT enabled changes.

3.3.7 CONNECTIVISM AND EDUCATION

Technology is changing the face of education as we are all connected, and in a position, to share resources and skills all around the world. This is an unprecedented development that is revolutionising learning at all levels and every effort must be made to encourage the youth to participate in this revolution.

3.3.7.1 Connectivism as a learning theory

Traditionally, formal learning often ended when school did. Historically, the pace at which society and jobs changed was often very slow, paced over generations. According to Cabiria (2012:1), knowledge had stability and longevity; educational systems were also stable and long-lasting presenting a scenario that typically lasted a lifetime.

However, in the 21st century, it is quite different with the world evolving at an increasingly fast pace. Since it is impossible to experience and learn everything, a student can share and learn through collaboration. The sheer amount of data available makes it impossible to know everything. Therefore, being able to tap into huge databases of knowledge at a mouse click empowers a learner to seek relevant knowledge whenever there is a need. Duke et al. (2013:7) conclude that connectivism can be defined as actionable knowledge since knowing where to find knowledge may be more important than answering how or what that knowledge embraces.

3.3.7.2 Bringing experiences and content together

Goldie (2016:1065) contends that in the connectivist model the learning community is described as a node, which is always part of a larger network. Nodes may also be organisations, libraries, web sites, journals, databases or any other sources of information (Goldie, 2016:1066). One would search for the node most likely to give the most relevant information that one seeks at precisely the moment one needs it. In business decision making, pertinent data is invaluable.

At its core, connectivism states that knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and consequently that learning consists of the ability to navigate the vast constellation of networks (Bell, 2009:6). For any aspiring entrepreneur, acquiring the skills of tapping into the networks is priceless since the relevant information obtained leads to the correct decision and ultimately business profitability and sustainability.

McFarland (2017:270) states that these learning communities scattered around the globe function regardless of where one is located. Whether one is intimately involved or operating just on the periphery, one has access to interesting information about e-learning. According to Siemens (2004), the connectivist theory is relevant for the digital age, since individuals learn, cooperate and work together in a networked environment that offers business opportunities way beyond traditional business thinking.

3.3.8 MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCs)

The availability of massive open online courses (MOOCs) is making education freely available to people all around the world that have internet access. Quality business education could be accessed at no cost to the student but all it requires is dedication and a deep desire to empower oneself.

3.3.8.1 MOOCs have changed the way we learn

The massive open online courses (MOOCs) have drastically changed the way we learn as well as how we teach. According to Yousef et al. (2014:9), the main aim of

MOOCs is to provide new opportunities to a massive number of learners to attend free online courses from anywhere in the world. Cabiria (2012:1) adds that what we are witnessing today is the dawn of a new era that will predominate education for a long time to come with the launch of several MOOC platforms to introduce e-learning as a tool. Today, the dream of acquiring a business education, which one was hitherto precluded from doing owing to a lack of funds, can be a reality for many.

An analysis of the acronym, MOOC spells out its significance in the overall scheme of e-learning. Its relevance to business education is beyond reproach as internationally acclaimed universities and academics are making available study material for the benefit of all.

- **Massive:** In MOOCs, massive reflects the number of course participants as well as the massive number of courses on offer. While most of the MOOCs had a few hundred participants, some courses reached over 150 000 registrations (Allen and Seaman, 2013 cited in Yousef et al., 2014:9).
- **Open:** In the context of MOOCs, it refers to providing a learning experience that is open to a vast number of participants around the globe regardless of their location, age, income, and level of education, without any entry requirements or fees (Schuwer et al., 2013:1).
- **Online:** the term online refers to the accessibility of these courses from anywhere in the world via an internet connection to provide synchronous (all participating at the same time) as well as asynchronous (engage in study at your convenience) interaction among the course participants (Brown, 2013:239).
- **Courses:** the courses range in number and diversity across all fields and are professionally designed by academics and experts in the field.

One implication of students becoming connected learners is that learning will neither be confined to the physical classroom nor to the virtual classroom (Bell, 2009:6). This new phenomenon is encouraging and supporting business students to move beyond institutional and national boundaries into previously unprecedented levels of

collaboration with great potential for growth and prosperity. The implication for the aspiring entrepreneurs is the availability of a vast number of business courses that could be taken, as well as the possibility of online collaboration in business opportunities with other like-minded individuals in other parts of the world.

3.3.8.2 What makes up a MOOCs platform

Today online study endeavours offer various possibilities for collaboration across continents through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Students are free to design their own learning process and seek out information to supplement their own learning needs. They also support each other through formal forums and informal study groups (Cabiria, 2012:6).

Cabiria (2012:3) has summarised the various elements that make up a typical MOOC platform:

- **Teachers:** facilitate the learning process through finding relevant content and administering assessments based on learning objectives;
- **Students:** anyone who has an interest in a learning area can be enrolled in a formal degree programme, or just learn by mere curiosity;
- **Topic:** is explored through the connectivist quartet of student, teacher, content, and context, which is infused throughout the learning network;
- **Content:** exists in a variety of locations and formats and is accessible through a variety of technological and social means.

MOOCs are now leading the new revolution of technology-enhanced learning (TEL), by providing new opportunities to a massive number of learners to attend free online courses (Yousef et al., 2014:9). Learners and students are free to enrol if they have a computer and internet connection. Business qualifications could be earned through leading platforms at little or no cost to the student.

3.3.8.3 Learning opportunities are underutilised

Social networking platforms are popular among the youth. However, many are unaware of online learning environments that are available via social networks. Consequently, opportunities for self-directed learning with technology remain

underutilised (Bolger et al., 2011:40). With the increased processing capabilities of computers, the Internet and mobile devices, the need for and creation of new knowledge has exploded exponentially. Yet many individuals are still not a part of this knowledge revolution.

According to Biggiero (2007:7), one of the main goals of knowledge management systems is to provide a space for collaboration in which knowledge can be effortlessly created and converted from one form to another. However, it is a challenge for a large number of students to have access to the necessary tools to engage in e-learning. As desktops and laptops are becoming online classrooms, the government should assist by making it easier for students to acquire the necessary hardware. Even the price of data for internet access should be lowered substantially in line with international standards. This would ensure that a greater number of people engage in online learning.

Cabiria (2012:2) concludes that the 'half-life of knowledge' describes how knowledge becomes obsolete over a shorter period whilst at the same time, new information doubles every 18 months. Consequently, if one has not entered the realm of cyberspace and become a part of the knowledge revolution, it would soon be discovered that one's knowledge base is irrelevant and obsolete.

3.3.9 ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION

As the business world sees changes periodically, so will one's knowledge become obsolete, necessitating a renewal of information, which is essential if one, is to keep abreast of the changes. All it requires is a desire to learn and an attitude that embraces change.

3.3.9.1 The changing nature of education in the digital era

According to Henry et al. (2005:99), there is evidence that entrepreneurs may learn less from the conventional didactic approaches typical of the traditional educational system whilst a task-oriented approach focused on real business problems from a wide range of online sources would be more beneficial (McFarland, 2017:269).

Guthrie (2010:82) states that as technologies are increasingly integrated into curricula, there is a growing need for the development of strategies to create collaborative, interactive and relevant information within the framework of experiential learning. Henry et al. (2005:99) add that with the knowledge acquired, entrepreneurs are able to identify and evaluate business opportunities; gather the necessary resources to take advantage of the opportunity.

3.3.9.2 A reluctance to embrace digital learning

According to Bolger et al. (2011:37), a number of our learning institutions have very conservatively embraced online learning technologies to supplement the traditional classroom experience e.g., uploading information online that complement classroom lessons. Many are also yet to fully leverage the potential of asynchronous learning opportunities that are facilitated in an online learning environment.

At the speed, digital technology is evolving, and knowledge becoming obsolete, learners could painfully discover that with their basic knowledge of ICT, they are ill-equipped to be a part of the digital revolution. With the global onset of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and the immense opportunities that are being presented, it would be unfortunate if our youth were unable to capitalise on these owing to a lack of relevant skills to successfully navigate the networks.

Little, (2001:204) concludes that e-learning has the potential to make a significant difference to individual and organisational performance. The objective is to concentrate on the three key attributes of any successful organisation: people, process and technology... how to empower people with the relevant skills and information; how to improve processes with the latest trends and how to utilise technology as a competitive tool (Little, 2001:205). Increasingly, investment in people is seen as the key to differentiate between successful and unsuccessful organisations.

3.3.10 THE THEORY OF CONNECTIVISM: A REASSESSMENT

From the preceding discussion, one sees the relevance of connectivism as a learning theory in the digital era. Yet the debate on its applicability as a fully-fledged theory is still under discussion despite its significant contributions.

3.3.10.1 The theory status of connectivism

Duke et al. (2013:4) assert that the theory of connectivism as developed by George Siemens and Stephen Downes in an attempt to disapprove the boundaries of behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism. Thus, connectivism has started a debate over whether it is a learning theory, instructional theory or merely a pedagogical view. Bell (2011:101) in turn asked whether connectivism could alone provide a theory to inform learning together with its technology support? Bell (2011:103) further enquired what other theories could support change in the use of technology in teaching and learning? Duke et al. (2013:4) further state that a theory generally comprises a large body of information that may be true or untrue, but what is important is whether it is useful or not useful for explaining or predicting behaviour.

3.3.10.2 Knowledge creation is ongoing

According to Duke et al. (2013:6), knowledge is created through collaboration on current ideas as seen from a present reality and as time progresses this knowledge will evolve but in order to continue learning one has to remain connected to the network. Within the vast constellation of networks, one would find information that presents a diversity of opinions that one could select to form bodies of knowledge. However, one has to have the skill of accessing and selecting the relevant information to satisfy one's personal needs.

Chatti et al. (2010:82) state that to the learner, outside knowledge is more important than his or her existing state of knowing. Therefore, the primary skill required in this knowledge revolution is how to access relevant information when needed. Siemens (2004) adds the advantage is that the learner can remain current on any topic through the connections they have created and be linked to people with a common goal to promote and sustain an organised flow of knowledge. All it requires is the skill to tap in to derive the benefits.

3.3.10.3 Shifting the dynamics

Therefore, with the change that is continually developing through technology, institutions and schools are experiencing the heavy burden of transformation (Siemens, 2006:3) which they are reluctant to implement given the relative stability under which they operated. Through connectivism, new technologies are disrupting the learning process by shifting the dynamic of teacher-to-student to one of student to-information (Siemens, 2006:3).

According to Cabiria (2012:3), connectivism recognises that information is extremely fluid, resides in several locations, often disorganised which the student has to find, assess then give meaning to develop into useful knowledge. The teacher's role in this entire process is facilitative which is far removed from the traditional role of the teacher. Siemens (2004) adds that because of the networked society, globalisation, and the constant changes to information, educators need to develop new ways to produce learning materials which usually needs references beyond the usual textbooks (Ally, 2004:139).

3.3.11 The debate continues...

The debate on the status of connectivism continues although its impact remains quite profound. Form the theories of learning that were analysed earlier, connectivism appears the most relevant to the times. However, it continues to be denied the fully-fledged status of a learning theory.

A closer examination of the principles of connectivism gives one the opportunity to make a self-assessment of its significance. Goldie (2016:1064) summarises the principles of connectivism as proposed by Siemens (2005) as follows:

- learning and knowledge rest in diversity of opinion;
- learning is a process of connecting specialised nodes or information sources;
- learning may reside in non-human appliances;
- capacity to know is more critical than what is currently known;
- nurturing and maintaining connections to facilitate continual learning;
- ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill;

- accurate, up-to-date knowledge is the aim of all connectivist learning; and
- decision-making is a learning process in itself.

Connectivism makes the assertion that “the pipe is more important than the content within the pipe” (Siemens, 2005). Having internet access makes all the difference in our quest for knowledge because it is an assurance that we would get the information we are searching for. As Siemens (2004) posits that, our ability to learn what we need for tomorrow is more important than what we know today. When knowledge is needed, but not known, the ability to plug into sources to meet the requirements becomes vital (Chatti et al. 2010:82).

Ally (2007) contends that connectivism can be utilised as an essential instructional guide to develop previous learning theories for their application to a global network, but not as a standalone learning theory. Duke et al. (2013:8) conclude that the debate over the status of George Siemens and Stephen Downes' theory of connectivism (2008) will continue to be discussed for many years. It is unquestionably an important school of thought directly associated with the use of technology in the learning process today.

The next chapter introduces the theory of youth entrepreneurship which expands on the role of the youth in business and the possible influence this could have on the economy as well as the socio-political landscape through the creation of jobs, and the upliftment of the community.

CHAPTER FOUR

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Youth entrepreneurship is widely recognised as a solution to youth unemployment in both the developed and underdeveloped economies. It is believed that the youth entering into business would not just be a catalyst for job creation and economic growth but would also contribute to the development of the community. The socio-political benefits could also be quite significant since it will not only give the youth financial independence but will also have an influence on the community in many ways which could lead to much needed social stability in troubled economic times.

4.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

According to Maas and Herrington (2006:6), entrepreneurship is a significant component of the solution to South Africa's developmental issues. Entrepreneurship is fundamental to the growth of the South African economy and its future socio-political stability. Luke, Verreynne and Kearins (2007:316) add that entrepreneurs in their ventures can also enjoy benefits such as independence, financial rewards and job security amongst other things.

Van Praag and Versloot (2007:354) identify the economic benefits of entrepreneurship in four main categories, namely:

- employment generation;
- innovation;
- productivity and growth; and
- increasing individuals' utility levels.

According to Fatoki (2014:125) small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) are expected to be an important vehicle to address the challenges of job creation, sustainable economic growth, equitable distribution of income and the overall stimulation of economic development in South Africa.

Gilmore (2009:321) further states that small business development for low-income youth is seen as a tool to address the increasing wealth gap; it also offers youth the tangible and intangible benefits of actively participating in the economic life of their

communities. Young people creating their jobs are a direct means of addressing the youth unemployment problem. Young people who design and operate their businesses become owners and employers instead of employees, job seekers, and unemployed individuals.

4.2.1 The social impact of entrepreneurship

Apart from the monetary benefits of business, it also influences entrepreneurs and the community as a whole. Apartheid did deny the masses socio-economic rights. According to the Western Cape Status of the Youth Report (2008:1), people's confidence and self-esteem suffered because non-white people were not encouraged to engage in critical thinking, questioning and entrepreneurial education during the apartheid period. Choto et al. (2014:95) conclude that apartheid education deliberately instilled into many South Africans a mentality of being workers and did not encourage them to run successful entrepreneurial ventures.

Malebana (2014:133) affirms that the entrepreneurial expectations of the youth include financial rewards, independence, personal rewards and family security. Individuals are more likely to have strong intentions of starting a business that they are personally capable of running which would result in achieving these outcomes, especially when it is approved and positively valued by those close to them (Malebana, 2014:135). The support and encouragement of family would strengthen the entrepreneurial intentions of would-be business owners.

Entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship, improves the general standard of society as a whole, which in turn leads to political stability and national security (Mutezo, 2005:33). Youth entrepreneurship reduces crime, poverty and income inequality, which indirectly induces an environment for national and regional economic growth and development (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162). It is common knowledge that unemployment is a problem that is faced by both developing and developed countries of the world. However, a more disturbing issue is the alarming number of youths between the ages of 18 and 35 who are unemployed and engaging in anti-social activities such as alcohol and drug abuse and other criminal deeds to pass their time (Kenechukwu, 2015:1).

4.2.2 Role of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs)

Abor and Quartey (2010:39) note that SMMEs in South Africa produce up to 57 %of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and provide about 60% of all employment. Whether in developing countries or low-income communities many young people need to work to survive. To address this problem, the persistent question regarding youth employment is constantly asked: how can young people with few job skills and less education find work? One answer to this question is enabling young people to utilise their unique skills and experiences to create their jobs through youth entrepreneurship (Gilmore, 2009:323).

By developing an enterprise, young people learn that their ideas and dreams can come be realised, and in the process, add value to others. Gilmore (2009:325) asserts that exposure to others who recognise their skills and ideas empowers young people with the confidence to dream and develop their ideas. As entrepreneurs, these individuals are likely to employ unemployed youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds thereby benefitting the community.

4.2.3 Theories explaining entrepreneurship

Many theories have been proposed to explain entrepreneurship. Sharma and Chrisman (2007:84) identified two distinct schools of thoughts in defining entrepreneurship; namely, entrepreneurship focusing on characteristics such as creativity, innovation, growth and uniqueness and entrepreneurship focusing on the outcomes such as the creation of value (Choto et al., 2014:94).

Focusing on the characteristics, Rwigema and Venter (2004:6) suggest that entrepreneurship is the processing, organising, launching and nurturing of a business opportunity into a potentially high growth venture in an unstable environment. Stevenson and Jarillo (1990:17) regard entrepreneurship as a process of pursuing opportunities by individuals either on their own or within organisations (cited in Choto et al., 2014:96)

Therefore, one's intention will largely explain one's behaviour. Entrepreneurial intentions are the first step in the process of venture creation. The underlying assumptions of this theory are that much of human behaviour is planned and therefore, preceded by intention towards that behaviour. Human beings are rational

and make use of information available to them when making decisions. The theory of planned behaviour will be discussed later in the chapter.

4.3 TRANSFORMING THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECONOMY

South Africa is one of the strongest economies on the African continent. Yet the level of entrepreneurship is comparatively low when likened to other economies of a similar size. For the country to become competitive steps have to be taken by the government as well as aspiring entrepreneurs in preparation for business success.

4.3.1 Striving towards a developed economy

Entrepreneurship is often cited as a vital tool that facilitates the transformation of a country's economy from a developing one to a developed one; from a low-income society into a high-income technology-based society (Naudè, 2008 cited in Cassim et al., 2014:30).

According to Abor and Quartey (2010:6), entrepreneurs can be described as efficient job creators, the seeds of big businesses and the fuel of national economic engines, especially in a developing country like South Africa. Naudè (2010) affirms the position that entrepreneurs are the main vehicle for economic development, adding that as the number of entrepreneurs in an economy grows, so does the economy (cited in Cassim et al., 2014:31).

4.3.2 A policy framework for economic development

What is needed first is the development of a policy framework. The objectives in a developing economy like South Africa are wide-ranging from economic development to alleviating poverty to encouraging entrepreneurs that could become internationally competitive.

Emerging from their research, Stevenson and Lundström (2005:60) developed the following policy priorities, which they then fit into a policy framework. The main principles of the framework are:

- entrepreneurship promotion: promoting an entrepreneurship culture;
- entrepreneurship education: promoting entrepreneurship in schools;

- the environment for start-ups: reducing barriers to entry, obstacles to business and tax reform;
- start-up and seed capital financing: providing loans for new businesses and seed capital; and
- business support measures for start-ups: providing support, such as incubators and networks.

This framework serves to identify the different categories of activities that must be addressed in preparing and supporting the youth entrepreneurs before they engage in business. Adequately, observing these steps could ensure profitability and sustainability in business.

4.3.3. Why entrepreneurship is necessary

Since the birth of democracy in 1994, the South African Government has recognised the importance of adopting an enabling environment for the start and development of SMMEs. Measures have been put in place to ensure the seamless entry of aspiring entrepreneurs into the business arena. However, there is still a degree of apathy among the youth to be self-employed. Covin and Slevin (1989:75) find that firms operating in hostile competitive environments, characterised by intense rivalry among them tend to adopt innovations with greater frequency than firms operating in more benign competitive settings (Fatoki, 2014:126). Consequently, a culture of competitiveness and increased risk-taking need to be instilled in new entrepreneurs who are focused on business success.

Entrepreneurship can influence economic performance at three different levels, namely individual, organisational and societal levels (Wennekers, Uhlaner and Thurik, 2002:3). On an individual level, entrepreneurs affect their economic performance as they earn a salary, to support themselves and their families. On a firm level, the business pays taxes and spend money on production and operating costs. On a social level, the entrepreneurs employ people who would have been unemployed, and these people earn a salary and pay taxes thereby positively influencing the economic development of a country or region (Meyer, 2014:282).

According to Linan et al. (2005:1) and Dempsey (2009:2), entrepreneurship aids economic growth, economic competitiveness, economic independence, self-esteem, job creation, social welfare of any country, as well as political stability and national security of a country. Fatoki and Chindoga (2011:162) add that given the turbulent past of the country, these benefits are worth striving towards for a better life for all citizens. Competing as equals, the business world will offer not just monetary rewards, but also opportunities to contribute to the stability of the community and country at large.

4.3.4 How global trends influence South Africa

Gilmore (2009:322) maintains that small businesses are the foundation of economic growth and development, producing 60% to 80% of all new jobs created in the United States economy since the 1990s. These are the trends in a developed economy and if emulated successfully, the consequences could be very encouraging for a developing economy like South Africa. Entrepreneurs ought to be given the necessary support to ensure they survive the crucial first few years of operation before they are on the road to real growth.

However, we need to begin much earlier to ensure the correct mindset is created for our budding entrepreneurs. There is a need for students to develop entrepreneurial competencies when the youth are still at school and in the universities. Stoof (2005:12) defines competency as the combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required to perform a task. Seabela and Fatoki (2014:376) further report that a large body of literature suggests that competencies are necessary for the development and survival of business ventures.

4.3.5 The evolving entrepreneurial strategy in South Africa

South Africa's strategy to promote entrepreneurship is spearheaded by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Small Business Development. Cassim et al. (2014:34) state that they aim to foster a more enabling environment for the development of SMMEs with the main thrust of the strategy being on improving access to small business support and information, strengthening small business advocacy, and reducing obstacles for effective service delivery.

According to Gordon-Davis and Cumberlege (2007:8), there is a need for the South African business environment to acknowledge the crucial role which youth entrepreneurs can play in improving not only their wellbeing but also that of their country's economy. If the environment is enabling, then we need ambitious entrepreneurs with the necessary entrepreneurial intention to boldly step into the business arena.

However, Choto et al. (2014:93) state that these youth entrepreneurs reiterate their need for financial support, infrastructural support and favourable government regulations if they are to succeed in business and have any greater impact on economic growth through employment creation and poverty reduction. Herrington et al. (2009:1) point out that the growing number of unemployed youths in South Africa places an additional burden on the limited government budget. Nevertheless, with the youth being in business and employing others, it would help to achieve economic independence and reduce their reliance on state welfare whilst at the same time ensuring taxes are paid thereby contributing to government revenue.

4.3.6 The imperative of sustaining youth entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is considered the most common powerful economic force across the globe (Kuratko, 2014:10) and as a result the inability of many young people in the country to access paid employment during and after they have graduated calls for entrepreneurship education and training because of its capacity to enable the business start-up to flourish (Keat et al., 2011:206).

Thus, the importance of the emergence and sustainability of entrepreneurship development, particularly among the youth is indisputable. Significantly, Nicolaides (2011:1044) affirms that entrepreneurs are the ones who use their creativity and innovation to assemble new technologies, products and services, to meet society's needs. Gwija et al. (2014:166) suggest that entrepreneurs are capable of transforming the socio-economic landscape, through the creation and exploitation of new opportunities in the market.

4.4 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The government can play an important role in facilitating entrepreneurship among the youth. This can be done in several ways to ensure that the environment for

business is conducive so that start-ups could flourish, serve the community and assist the government in creating socio-economic stability.

4.4.1 Promoting sustainable economic development

According to Cassim et al. (2014:27), the current global financial crisis has emphasised the inadequacies of industrial policy alone to promote sustainable economic growth and development. The favoured approach of many governments, in focusing exclusively on industrial policy to promote economic growth, cannot be pursued any longer, particularly if the objective is to reduce unemployment and poverty (Cassim et al., 2014:29).

However, OECD (2011) has primarily noted two serious limitations to effective entrepreneurship policy. First, the regulatory environment, especially in terms of tax and access to finance, often negate strategies that aim to encourage people to become entrepreneurs (OECD, 2011). Further, the stringent laws precluding youth from business participation need to be reviewed.

The stimulation of the SMME sector is central to South Africa in the global competitiveness race. The authorities need to hasten the development and adoption of policies that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship (Cassim et al., 2014:32). By liberalising policy, fellow BRICS partners, India and China have shown how they have achieved positive growth rates of up to 10% in some quarters (Chidambaram, 2011:1). South Africa's projected growth rate for the last quarter of 2019 was 0.5% (Stats SA 2019).

4.4.2. Government agencies promoting business

The rationale for government intervention in South Africa would, therefore, be to correct the race-based distortions of the past through economic growth and development and increased social inclusion (Smallbone, 2010). In this way, there would not only be economic stability and racial harmony but also the political will to promote a positive image of the country to potential international investors.

The South African government views the development of SMMEs as a mechanism through which it can create jobs, promote economic growth and equity in the country (DTI, 2005 and 2010). There is broad consensus on the delivery of enterprise

supporting tools of government with agencies like Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA); the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and its various entrepreneurship development initiatives (CDE, 2007). SEDA's mission is to develop, support and promote small enterprises throughout the country, ensuring their growth and sustainability in partnership with various role players, including global partners, who make international best practices available to local entrepreneurs (SEDA, 2011).

The Government of South Africa has put the issue of graduate entrepreneurship high on its agenda. The new policy and institutional frameworks have been introduced. According to Fatoki (2010:88), the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was launched in 2008 with the primary objective of improving entrepreneurship and reducing youth and graduate unemployment in South Africa.

4.4.3 Enabling environment for entrepreneurship

According to Ashley-Cotleur, King and Solomon (2009:24) several individual factors motivate a person's decision to become an entrepreneur which can generally be categorised as demographic variables or psychological factors. Demographic variables that influence entrepreneurship activities include gender as pointed out by Matthews and Moser (1995:42). Women in society in particular have had a difficult path to cross in achieving entrepreneurial success.

Awang et al. (2010:132) point out that the ability of any business to stay competitive is directly related to its intensity to take a calculated risk. Hung and Chiang (2010:257) point out that by reducing the number of challenges and regulations in the business environment, the government would be facilitating risk-taking by the new entrepreneurs. Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen (2009:201) similarly point out that the DTI through its endeavours to promote the country's economic growth, wealth and job creation has made significant strides.

The regulations implemented by the South African Government have in the past created huge administrative burdens and high costs when starting a business. These discourage entrepreneurs from starting a sustainable business venture (World Bank, 2010). International evidence has shown that the regulatory environment has a greater stimulus on the survival and growth of new entrepreneurial ventures (Choto

et al., 2014:96). The newly established Department of Small Business Development is further evidence that the government is giving priority to the SMME sector.

According to Cogburn and Adeya (2000) cited in Ekeledo and Bewayo (2009:64), ICT infrastructure is also a challenge in business operations as poor communication infrastructure results in poor access to important information, poor communication networks which are essential for the success of an entrepreneurial venture. (Choto et al., 2014:96). Reducing the cost of internet connectivity can also ensure that a wider circle of aspiring entrepreneurs could engage in online learning and business collaboration.

For the majority of start-up businesses, the journey is seldom smooth. In the first few years, it is a frantic battle for survival. According to Choto et al. (2014:67), survivalist entrepreneurs cannot sustain the level of drive and determination that entrepreneurial success requires for they see themselves as being unable to influence the outcome of their lives. Therefore, there is a need for business incubators to assist survivalist entrepreneurs in building an entrepreneurial mindset. Consequently, government agencies like the NYDA and SEDA need to play a more active role in nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit in budding entrepreneurs to ensure their sustainability and their progress beyond the survivalist stage.

4.5 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOB CREATION

The high unemployment rate among the youth, in particular, is of great concern to parents and leaders across the nation alike. Even if they are ill-equipped with the necessary skills to enter the job market, they could utilise their talents and go into business instead of being reliant on the government for a job.

4.5.1 Call for the restructuring of the education system

According to Ehighebolo and Ogie-Aitsabokhai (2014:201), restructuring of the educational system is the key to the successful reduction of youth unemployment in Africa as innovations must be made in tertiary institutions that will produce the skills a growing economy requires. As already illustrated earlier, our education system is inadequate and insufficiently aligned with the needs of the labour market. Therefore, the restructuring should be seriously considered in light of these developments.

Gwija et al. (2014:166) contend that training in effective business development services has been reported as a possible solution for some of the challenges that entrepreneurs confront. Therefore, entrepreneurship education and training will indeed provide some insight into how business should be conducted to sustain profitability.

Pittaway and Cope (2007:479) believe that university education may have an influential role in persuading young people to consider entrepreneurship, especially within the South African context given the level of economic development and range of commercial opportunities (Isaacs et al., 2007:616). Therefore, university graduates, as well as matriculants will benefit from proper entrepreneurial skills. What South Africa needs is a generation of employers and not a generation of employees (Gwija et al., 2014:168). By going into business, they will employ people instead of going out and seeking employment themselves.

4.5.2 Job prospects in South Africa

South Africa is an economic powerhouse on the African continent, yet it has one of the highest rates of unemployment and poverty experienced by its citizens with demands for economic reform by civilians being heard of regularly (Cassim et al., 2014:30). According to Statistics SA (2019), approximately 29.6% of the working-age population is unemployed which is significantly higher than the global average of 5.1% (ILO:2018). These figures reveal a very critical situation and the government alone cannot be expected to create jobs. Without the involvement of SMMEs, South Africa runs the risks of economic stagnation.

Herrington, Kew and Kew (2010) in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) South African Report mention that given the inability of the public sector to accommodate the ever-increasing number of job seekers in South Africa, the spotlight now falls on entrepreneurship and new firm creation with its vast potential for contributing to economic growth and job creation. Fatoki (2010:87) contends that with a growing economy desperately in need of skilled labour, unemployment among graduates is supposed to fall. However, this is not the case as unemployment has risen among young graduates. Gilmore (2009:321) concludes that a generation without the hope of a stable job is a burden for the whole of society as poor

employment in the early stages of a young person's career can harm job prospects for life

4.5.3 Unemployment statistics

Youth unemployment is a global problem. The urgency of this problem and its impacts on communities are clear from the United Nations' initiative to address youth unemployment as one of its Millennium Development Goals (Gilmore, 2009:323).

Unemployment is part of the reality of many South Africans, with the official unemployment rate of the country at 29.6%, and a youth unemployment rate of more than 55.2% (Stats SA, 2019). Globally, the average unemployment rate is approximately 5.1%, ranking South Africa at 169th out of 202 countries (Meyer, 2014:281). This reality creates fear among young graduates, as they too could become a part of these statistics. Creating awareness among students to become entrepreneurs is believed to be one solution to reduce unemployment. (Meyer, 2014:281).

4.6 ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

For an unemployed youth with tertiary education, the only hope of achieving independence and seeing to the material needs of his family is by getting into business and earning his/her own money. Entrepreneurship appears to be the only way to overcome poverty amidst the rising tide of unemployment.

4.6.1 The South African scenario

As already illustrated, there are numerous interventions aimed at entrepreneurship for poverty alleviation and job creation. Cassim et al. (2014:29) further reports that whilst these steps are laudable, it is suggested that more emphasis should be focused on stimulating the growth of existing businesses and encouraging innovation for real entrepreneurship in the country. Businesses that are struggling to survive should be given the necessary support to ensure they overcome the critical period of their development.

Nevertheless, poverty alleviation, unemployment reduction, and the creation of a favourable business environment for youth to participate fully and meaningfully in the country's economy remain the challenge in South Africa (DTI, 2009; NYDA, 2011).

This could imply that a large percentage of young people in South Africa living in poverty. These conditions could negatively affect them and their family's standard of living (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162). As a result, criminal activities may occur (Mahadea et al., 2011:67; Mkoka, 2012:10), low self-esteem may persist, which could result in a negative perception of life (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:163). Unfortunately, for the less advantaged individuals if these circumstances continue to persist there is little hope.

4.6.2 The global poverty scenario

Youth unemployment is a global and national problem with implications for families and communities. According to Gilmore (2009:328), youth disconnection from the formal labour market creates greater instability in their communities. Therefore, every attempt should be made to keep them a part of the formal economy for the benefit of all.

Poverty is still a global problem, and the reduction thereof is one of the main priorities of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) declared by the United Nations in 2000 (UN, 2003). Poverty also influences education levels negatively. Maas and Herrington (2006:56) indicate that a lack of financial support is a major contributor to the low Total Economic Activity (TEA) rate in South Africa. Pretorius and Shaw (2004, cited in Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:163) observe that a large percentage of the failure of entrepreneurial ventures in South Africa is attributed to inadequate capital structure or resource poverty.

4.6.3 If unchecked, the poverty legacy could continue...

As a result, young, educated people are forced into selling snacks, fruit and vegetable, airtime, cosmetics, and other goods on the streets of major cities. Some engage in illegal activities such as stealing, armed robbery, internet scams, dealing in substances such as drugs, and prostitution (Ehighebolo and Ogie-Aitsabokhai 2014:199). The social ills that accompany poverty are too serious to be left unchecked contributing to the degradation of society and political instability.

Perhaps this is the reason why numerous African countries have also acknowledged entrepreneurship as a mechanism to address the unemployment problem (Nafukho and Muyia, 2009:96). This could mean that a majority of young people in South

Africa live in impoverished conditions, which may result in low standards of living (Fatoki and Chindoga 2011:163). The persistence of this situation may not auger well for the poor, as the next generation may have no choice but to bear the poverty legacy. Morrow et al. (2005) caution that poverty tends to reproduce itself among children and young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds (cited in Gwija et al., 2014:166).

4.7 TOTAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (TEA) OF SOUTH AFRICANS

The Total Economic Activity (TEA) of South Africans, in general, remains comparatively low by international standards. They are more inclined to be job hunting rather than engaging in any form of entrepreneurial activity. This has adverse implications for the communities and the nation as a whole since this rating does influence the country's position in the international business arena.

4.7.1 TEA: A brief definition

According to Herrington et al. (2010:27), TEA is a measure of people in the 18-64 age group who are actively involved in the start-up process of a business or those managing a business less than forty-two months old. The TEA rate in South Africa in 2008 was 7.8%, which is significantly below the average of 13.2% for the countries that participated in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) annual review (Herrington, 2009:16).

Therefore, the TEA rate of any country is a true reflection of their entrepreneurial activity which also indicates how they compare with other economies of a similar size. It also allows the country to assess the position and take steps to make improvements and become more competitive.

4.7.2 South Africa's TEA

Turton and Herrington (2012:6) posit that South Africa's Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate decreased from 9.1% in 2011 to 7.3% in 2012. South Africa's TEA is significantly below the average of efficiency-driven countries, which is at 14.3%. According to Seabela and Fatoki (2014:375), this indicates that South Africa is consistently below average in early-stage entrepreneurial activity relative to countries with a similar economic development level.

Besides, the number of potential entrepreneurs in South Africa is below international standards. Potential entrepreneurs as defined by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) are those who perceive good business opportunities and believe that they have entrepreneurial capabilities. Potential entrepreneurs could include students in high schools and universities. Turton and Herrington (2012:8) add that South Africa's rate of perceived opportunities stands at 36% which is below the average for efficiency-driven economies at 41%.

In South Africa, both latent and actual entrepreneurship is very low by international standards. Orford et al. (2003:166) conclude that the TEA, which is an estimate of the number of working-age adults involved in starting or operating businesses is one of the lowest in the world. There has to be a drastic change in the attitude of South Africans towards the idea of entrepreneurship if we are going to be making any significant impact on trade and industry at a national level before we could be globally competitive.

4.7.3 Implications of a low TEA rating for South Africa

The TEA rates of South Africa from 2002 to 2012 had been below the average of all participating countries (Malebana, 2014:130). A country at South Africa's stage of economic development would be expected to have a TEA rate in the order of 13%, almost double South Africa's TEA rate of 7.8% (Turton and Herrington, 2012). According to Dhilwayo (2008:329), graduate unemployment is particularly high as there are too many graduates for a few graduate jobs.

According to Herrington et al. (2009), South Africa, in 2008 ranked 23rd out of 43 countries, with a TEA rate below the average rate (10.6%) of all participating countries. South Africa's TEA rate of 7.8% is significantly lower than the average for all efficiency-driven economies at 11.4% as well as the average for all middle to low-income countries, where South Africa belongs at 13.2% (GEM, 2009). Von Broembsen, Wood and Herrington (2005:14) conclude that youth in South Africa are far less likely to start their businesses compared to those from other countries.

4.8 SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Women have made substantial progress in the business world since the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994. The constitution had made provision for the

status of women to be elevated thereby ensuring that woman even benefitted in the commercial arena. However, cultural constraints have hindered the progress of women in business as men continue to dominate the business world.

4.8.1 Women entering the business world.

For women in African society to enter into business has always been a struggle. They had to endure cultural restrictions in patriarchal societies and were generally subservient in a male-dominated household. However, Grant (1996:166) observed that being raised in a family that is entrepreneurial significantly influences individuals' intentions to start their businesses. Fatoki (2010:89) proposed that having role models is also a major factor in wanting to start a business since having self-employed parents as mentors and guides for children starting their businesses is a huge advantage.

According to Ashley-Cotleur et al. (2009 cited in Fletcher, 2011:66), extrinsic motivators for women entrepreneurs will include expected monetary rewards whilst intrinsic rewards will centre around the satisfaction of being one's boss, being more in control of your destiny, and having ultimate responsibility for the success of the venture.

4.8.2 Cyberfeminism: an empowering tool for women entrepreneurs

Cyberfeminism is a woman-centred perspective that advocates women's use of ICT for empowerment. Today there are several opportunities for women to gain exposure on social media via ICT. Beninger et al. (2014:16) assert that this could lead to empowering women in entrepreneurship in emerging economies via online learning and business networking. The vast window of opportunity offered by ICT is a firm foundation to build an enterprise that could grow from a rural village to become an international brand.

The entrepreneurial intention may be the primary condition for business venturing, but it is not sufficient by itself. Romijn (1989:10) suggests that the average small entrepreneur will need to look after the day-to-day running of his/her business, for which routine management skills are necessary; this management capability becomes increasingly vital as the enterprise grows. Therefore, it becomes necessary

to continually up-skill one's self that one could concurrently achieve through online learning.

4.9 ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION

Entrepreneurial education is becoming very popular today with an ever-increasing number of institutions offering a range of business courses from a basic business programme to a master's degree in business administration. However, there is a call for business education to be introduced earlier at the primary school level so that the entrepreneurial intentions of the youth could be instilled at an earlier age. This could be consolidated at the secondary and tertiary levels thereby ensuring that the youth are mentally prepared to take on the challenges of the business world.

4.9.1 Some of the challenges faced

Isaacs et al. (2007:614) found that some 60% of high schools in South Africa offered no entrepreneurship exposure at all despite it being a learning outcome of the Economic and Management Sciences curriculum. This clearly illustrates that the curriculum as well as the needs of society and the business world are not aligned. According to the Global Practice in Incubation Policy Development and Implementation (2010), there is a gap in entrepreneurial training, suggesting that the education systems in South Africa do not encourage entrepreneurship as a career and it is seen as something that people can do when they fail to secure a job or do not have a profession.

Western Cape Status of the Youth Report (2008) suggests that entrepreneurship education can have a significant influence on entrepreneurial self-confidence, entrepreneurs understanding of financials, the desire to start own business and the desire to undertake further education in business (cited in Choto et al., 2014:95). When learners are exposed to business and its offerings to improve one's life, the possibility of them getting involved in entrepreneurial activity, later on, is greatly increased.

4.9.2 Entrepreneurial educations should begin early

The schooling systems should be able to prepare learners with business knowledge and influence their attitude towards entrepreneurship. Von Broembsen et al.

(2005:16), and Herrington, Kew and Kew (2010 cited in Mahadea et al., 2011:69) concur that although we can encourage an individual to start a business, the education system remains the most important factor (Isaacs et al., 2007:613).

There is a dire need for a model for entrepreneurship education embedded in curricula from primary through secondary and further to higher education. (Pretorius, 2008:63) argues that South Africa is no exception as learning institutions at all levels come under pressure to develop and provide entrepreneurial skills. Cassim et al. (2014:37) observe that only a small proportion of institutions are offering any significant entrepreneurship training and encouraging higher education institutions to strengthen the entrepreneurial culture. In addition, Dhillwayo (2008:335) suggests that such training and education should be experiential as conceptualised in work-integrated learning.

4.9.3 Unemployed graduates in business

According to Fatoki (2010:88), graduates constitute a potential source of would-be entrepreneurs because of the high unemployment caused by limited opportunities in the government and private sectors in South Africa. For people with tertiary education and skills, it seems that a natural step to take is to get into business if a graduate cannot find a job. However, Fatoki (2010:89) believes that this is not the situation because there are environmental differences between developed and developing countries; for instance, crime is much higher in South Africa than in most developed countries and this may affect the entrepreneurial intention of graduates. Therefore, it is important to identify factors affecting graduate intentions to start a business by identifying barriers that need to be removed to facilitate their entry into the business.

Mahadea et al. (2011:67-68) argue that based on the dynamic labour conditions in South Africa, many young people will not find jobs after completing their secondary education and should, therefore, consider self-employment as an option, instead of hunting for wage employment. Entrepreneurship is also seen as part of a knowledge economy, meaning that entrepreneurship education can be extremely beneficial for the creation of new knowledge-based, graduate-led ventures (Meyer, 2014:282). It also offers those opportunities to achieve financial freedom and independence (Raguž and Mati, 2011:43).

4.9.4 Role of Universities in business education

Ndedi (2009:467) acknowledges that entrepreneurship education is being provided in several institutions of higher learning in South Africa. However, they need to deal with the issue of unemployment by developing business incubators within the universities to assist students in linking theoretical training with practical exposure (Gwija et al., 2014:12). Graduates from universities should be equipped with entrepreneurial skills to create more jobs rather than seeking employment; stressing that a generation of employers would be of greater help than that of employees (Sandrock, 2011 cited in Gwija et al., 2014:12).

Fatoki (2010:89) adds that university students could also participate in research on entrepreneurial intent as the findings can contribute to policies for public decision-makers who develop support programmes for entrepreneurship. It is believed that introducing Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP) to students as early as their first year of study will create a culture to become self-employed thereby improving the chances of them getting into business (Meyer, 2014:281).

4.9.5 Overall benefits of entrepreneurship education

According to Mitchell et al. (2002:9), entrepreneurial cognitions are described as the knowledge structures that people use to make assessments, judgments, or decisions involving opportunity evaluation, venture creation, and growth. The objective is to raise the awareness of entrepreneurship as a career option for the youth teaching them the value of entrepreneurial skills in their career endeavours (Grant, 2015:50).

Gilmore (2009:325) contends that in addition to providing needed jobs for unemployed youth, entrepreneurship also enhances academic success and self-empowerment since it is a means of connecting youth to school, community, and work. In addition, Jesselyn and Mitchell (2006:352) state that the entrepreneurship education approach has the objective of developing job-creators who would take calculated risks, break new grounds and innovate, instead of job-seekers who might find themselves joining the army of the unemployed, after having graduated or left tertiary schooling environment.

4.9.6 Concluding remarks on entrepreneurial education

Nafukho and Muyia (2009:108) believe that investing in entrepreneurship education and training is one of the best strategic approaches, which any country may pioneer to advance its human capital, and consequently aid socio-economic development (Gwija et al., 2014:165). The benefits of entrepreneurial activities can be used to enhance the socio-economic lives of individuals as well as the economic development of the country (Kenechukwu, 2015:1).

According to Nicolaides (2011:1049), the legacy of Apartheid and inferior quality education that was provided to non-white South Africans in the country meant that most of the people would have very limited opportunities to acquire qualities and skills that enable the setting up of and successfully manage an entrepreneurial venture. Nevertheless, since the early 1990s, entrepreneurship education has gained popularity in South Africa, with numerous entrepreneurship programmes and courses being offered at the tertiary level (Jesselyn and Mitchell, 2006:355).

4.10 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

An individual's entrepreneurial intention could form the bedrock of his/her business success. One's intention is the inner conviction to get into business to realise some heartfelt goals, leaving no room for failure. With this kind of mindset, any aspiring entrepreneur enters the business world on the right footing. To assess whether the youth have the desire to start a business, entrepreneurial intent is measured as it is deemed to be the single best predictor of behaviour (Ajzen, 2005:1) and the most powerful predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour (Autio et al., 2001:146).

4.10.1 Beginning with an Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO)

According to Van Geenhuizen et al (2008), aspiring entrepreneurs need to imbibe the dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO), which include autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness. These cores attributes form the very foundation of any aspiring entrepreneur's business psyche.

Covin and Lumpkin (2011) note that EO is a process through which individuals pursue entrepreneurial opportunities to innovate without regard to the level and

nature of currently available resources (cited in Fatoki, 2014:126). The entrepreneur needs to be optimistic about overcoming challenges. However, he/she must also be mindful and realistic about the business potential to overcome hurdles.

4.10.2 Entrepreneurial Intention (EI): A brief definition

Entrepreneurial intentions are defined as an individual's conscious awareness and conviction to start a new venture shortly (Nieuwenhuizen and Swanepoel, 2015:2). In recent years, the popularity of entrepreneurial intention models has increased considerably as a valuable approach for examining the factors that influence individuals' choice for an entrepreneurial career over conventional employment (Sesen, 2013; Schwarz, 2009; Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006).

Entrepreneurship is considered an intentionally planned behaviour (Linan, Nabi and Krueger, 2013:136). There has to be a great deal of thought put into the business concept and research into the feasibility of the idea. If one intends to go into business, one has to be cognisant of the challenges that lie ahead before taking the step into the arena. Just suddenly deciding to go into business because one cannot find a job could be a very costly decision. Committing a large sum of capital to a business idea that is not well researched is not just a poor business decision but a foolish one as well.

Hence, entrepreneurial intentions precede entrepreneurial action (Ajzen, 2005; Kolvereid and Isaksen, 2006; Douglas, 2013). The intention to get into business would have occupied a unique place in the heart and mind of an aspiring entrepreneur. The business concept would have been incubated over a period and at an opportune moment, plans could be executed. Fatoki (2010:88) suggests that entrepreneurial intentions can also be described as one's judgments about the likelihood of owning one's own business.

4.10.3 Entrepreneurial Intention among South Africans

Moriano et al. (2012) suggested that the low entrepreneurial activity rates and intention levels call for research regarding what could be the determinants of entrepreneurship in South Africa. This call is being continuously responded to as the entrepreneurial intention of South African students has been researched by several authors (Farrington, Venter and Neethling, 2012; Malebana, 2012; Urban, 2012;

Nieuwenhuizen and Swanepoel, 2015). They conclude that, overall, the level of entrepreneurial intention in South Africa remains low and there are many reasons for this.

Some of the obstacles to the entrepreneurial intention of South African graduates are lack of capital, technical skills, support, risk, and crime (Fatoki, 2010:87). Due to the existence of these burdensome regulatory requirements in South Africa, entrepreneurs find it difficult to register a business, hence the existence of survivalist entrepreneurs (Choto et al., 2014:96). However, the contributions of government agencies like the DTI and NYDA to remove these obstacles should be considered. DTI on the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprises (DTI, 2007) focuses on developing an enabling environment for entrepreneurs by reducing the regulatory constraints facing entrepreneurs and small firms.

Malebana (2014:132) asserts that capitalising on any business opportunity depends on the entrepreneurs' perceptions regarding its expected value. Ajzen (2005) adds that people develop attitudes from the beliefs they hold about the consequences of getting involved. The intention to engage in commercial pursuits coupled with the prevalence of an enabling environment will undoubtedly facilitate the entry of more new business start-ups with a better chance of survival.

4.10.4 The Theory of Planned Behaviour

Malebana (2014:131) regard the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) as the most influential framework for the prediction of human behaviour where intentions are reported as good predictors of behaviour when it is under the person's control (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005:174). According to the TPB, an individual's intention to start a business can be predicted with high accuracy from the attitude towards the venture, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2005; 2012).

According to Krueger, et al. (2000:411), the entrepreneurial intentions can be predicted from perceived desirability, perceived feasibility and propensity to act when individuals feel attracted to the act of starting a business; they believe that they are personally capable of starting a business and are inclined to act on the desire to start an enterprise. Douglas and Fitzsimmons (2013:128) assert that attitudes towards independence, income and ownership were found to be related to entrepreneurial

intentions. Schwarz et al. (2009) found that the intention to start a business is primarily influenced by the individual's attitudes towards entrepreneurship (cited in Malebana, 2014:132).

4.11 ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETENCIES

The traditional perception of running a business from behind the counter and serving customers who walked in, offering whatever was in stock, is long outdated. Today the need to prepare oneself mentally for entrepreneurship is being emphasised since the business arena is becoming more competitive, the demand for appropriate knowledge, behaviours and attitudes becomes a necessity.

Therefore, focusing on entrepreneurship is one of the numerous solutions to reduce youth and graduate unemployment in South Africa with competency being an important element in opportunity identification and timeous commencement of new business ventures (Seabela and Fatoki, 2014:376).

4.11.1 Opportunity competency is key

According to Dixon et al. (2005:369), entrepreneurial competencies also include, self-management, administration, decision skill, leadership recognition, opportunity development and organisational skills. According to Li (2009:76), opportunity competency is the ability to recognise and envision taking advantage of opportunities, which comprises of the entrepreneurial activities in spotting opportunities, actively seeking new opportunities, and developing the opportunities. Opportunity recognition is a central feature of entrepreneurship.

De Tienne and Chandler (2004:62), state that the opportunity identification literature indicates four ways in which opportunities are identified which are active search, passive search, fortuitous discovery, and creation of opportunities. The active search and fortuitous discovery adopt the perspective that opportunities exist, and it is the job of the entrepreneur to uncover these opportunities whilst the creation perspective argues that opportunities are a product of one's mind (Seabela and Fatoki, 2014:377). Therefore, the relevance of Mindfulness in one's business outlook cannot be overlooked.

4.11.2 Strategic competency gives the big picture

Strategic competency requires the entrepreneur to have a vision or the big picture in mind for their business, having clear goals, and implementing strategies to achieve the vision and goals (Seabela and Fatoki, 2014:377). In addition, Romijn (1989:10) outlines the list of psychological attributes associated with entrepreneurial behaviour which includes self-confidence, task-result orientation, risk-taking ability, creativity, and future-orientation

Ehighebolo and Ogie-Aitsabokhai (2014:201) conclude that with the relevant entrepreneurship education comes a stronger focus on the needs of the enterprise; an understanding of the need for initiative and creative problem-solving involving teamwork and cooperation.

4.12 BUSINESS NETWORKING

Business networking is considered one of the most important activities any entrepreneur can engage in to expand his/her business skills in many ways. They have the opportunity to meet coaches/mentors that are in business or have retired and can impart their knowledge to help the youth learn the skills needed in commercial activities as well as develop self-belief to be successful in business (Gilmore, 2009:324). With confidence will come the desire to improve their knowledge of entrepreneurship so that they can maximise the opportunities that come their way.

4.12.1 Business Networks are helpful

A young entrepreneur who is under the guidance of a well-established coach/mentor may have access to his/her vast network of business colleagues, suppliers as well as other businesses. To a new business, this is an invaluable source of information and opportunity to meet like-minded associates and possibly tap into prospects.

Larson and Starr (1993:9) posit that just as the business grows and the needs evolve, so too will the network evolve in keeping with the changing needs of the business as entrepreneurial networks change over time. Network changes are seen as a response to changing entrepreneurial requirements because establishing and developing a business requires different contacts and resources over time (Casson

and Della Giusta, 2007; Johannsson, 1988 cited in Jonsson, 2014:197). Consequently, firms seek out and develop a broader base of new relationships with the potential to provide new resources. However, as firms overcome the liability of newness (Stinchcombe, 1965), new players become willing to engage with them as the network becomes more intentionally managed (cited in Hite and Hesterly, 2001).

4.12.2 Network diversity to expand influence

Jonsson (2014:198) postulates that diversities increase the probability that the entrepreneur will find a business whose resources and skills fit those sought after by the entrepreneur. Network diversity presents the opportunity for individuals from different industries and businesses to meet. This is even more important for the business in the development stage since they are on the lookout for new resources and markets (Jonsson, 2014:200). Diversity of networks also delivers diversity in information (McEvily and Zaheer, 1999), fosters innovation (Elfring and Hulsink, 2007) and promotes access to opportunities (Batjargal, 2003), whilst enabling the entrepreneur to connect to different network clusters (cited in Jonsson, 2014:198).

4.12.3 Building social capital and establishing trust

According to Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998 cited in Jonsson, 2014:198), in the context of entrepreneurial networks, social capital has been defined as the sum of actual and potential resources that are embedded within the network of relationships. Research has pointed to the importance of entrepreneurial networks and of building social capital in the new venture creation process (De Carolis and Saporito, 2006:46).

According to Jonsson (2014:200), owing to the limited internal resources available to small enterprises, the entrepreneurs must ensure that external relationships are sound to access much-needed resources. Social capital can be developed only through social interaction. Therefore, the relational dimension of social capital is important in obtaining access to resources that are available through the network structure (Jonsson, 2014:202).

4.13 SURVIVALIST BUSINESSES

Choto et al. (2014:93) postulate that until recently survivalist entrepreneurs were viewed as having little or no significant impact on economic growth whilst attention was focused on the well-established businesses, which were regarded as the main players for economic growth and development.

Given that the majority of these businesses do not prosper despite the growth aspirations of survivalist entrepreneurs and the challenge they face, Beats (2013:56) thinks that the government and business schools should not pay attention to survivalist entrepreneurship, rather they should focus on supporting high-impact businesses (cited in Choto et al., 2014:94).

4.13.1 Who are survivalist entrepreneurs?

According to Jesselyn (2006:355), survivalist entrepreneurs are those who run and manage businesses due to being unable to find employment in the formal sector, but who have to find alternative ways to survive. Their income levels are generally low with their business ventures usually requiring minimal capital to start.

Survivalist entrepreneurs are those individuals who view going into business as merely a means of economic survival since they depend on the profits from the business from one day to the next to keep them going with very little long-term wealth. Choto et al. (2014:94) classify survivalist entrepreneurs into three categories which are: producers such as tailors, shoemakers, subsistence farmers; distributors such as street vendors and hawkers and service providers such as repair services, taxi operators and backyard mechanics.

4.13.2 Moving beyond survival

Light and Rosenstein (1995 cited in Valenzuela, 2000:1) identified two types of survivalist entrepreneurs which are value entrepreneurs and disadvantaged entrepreneurs. Value entrepreneurs are those that choose self-employment instead of a low paying job for many reasons such as independence and social status whilst disadvantaged survivalist entrepreneurs are those who undertake self-employment due to earning higher returns for their talents in self-employment than in wages or not having other options of employment (Choto et al., 2014:94)

Although survivalist entrepreneurs constitute a significant and growing proportion of entrepreneurs in South Africa, their exact number is not known. Despite the trying circumstances under which they conduct business, these entrepreneurs do offer employment opportunities to a large number of people in the informal sector.

Due to operating on a small scale, the activities of survivalist entrepreneurs are usually low income-generating activities; hence, they do not make sufficient funds for growth. Possible solutions to the challenges identified above include improving small business support infrastructure (Gwija et al., 2014), building networks (Xesha, Iwu and Slabbert, 2014) and establishing government policies that focus on small businesses (Fatoki, 2014 cited in Choto et al., 2014:96).

4.13.3 Survivalists: Unaware of their potential

Naudè (2011:46) asserts that survivalist entrepreneurs are isolated from markets because of the perception that they add no value to economic development whilst promoting entrepreneurial activities in the informal sector is not worthwhile due to uncertainty whether they add to economic growth. Naudè (2011:47) further suggests that the apparent irrelevance of survivalist businesspersons is the danger they may suffer unintended negative consequences like patronage, corruption and continue with inefficient, low-profit businesses. Grant (2005:50) concluded that it is widely believed that entrepreneurship is not just taught but has to be experienced and whilst acquiring the knowledge, they should be given the necessary support so that their contribution to the national economy could be significant in the years ahead.

4.13.4 Give survivalist entrepreneurs a second chance

Endeavour SA (2010:5) adds that the cultural norms in South Africa do not support entrepreneurs who have failed. This stereotype thinking is not conducive to promoting an entrepreneurial mindset amongst citizens. Failed entrepreneurs have attacks on various fronts, family and friends may dissociate from them, the press will give them bad publicity and even banks will not consider their requests.

Choto et al. (2014:93) advise that survivalist entrepreneurs should not be discriminated against in their quest for entrepreneurial success because they face many challenges along the way. They should be given the necessary backing as

they do make an important contribution to the economic development of the communities in which they operate.

4.14 DERIVING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FROM CSR

The act of giving back to the community through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes is a novel way of deriving benefits for the business in return. Although the resources of a small business may be limited, a percentage invested in a CSR initiative could bring huge returns in community goodwill and business growth.

4.14.1 CSR: growing in importance

During the past decade, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has gained importance globally, through the responsible behaviour of firms (Sarbutts, 2003:341). However, CSR in small to medium enterprises has received relatively little attention (Jenkins, 2006:241; Williamson et al., 2006:318). These small businesses are directly involved in the communities they serve and have many opportunities to generate goodwill. There are recent studies that suggest that competitive advantages can result in SMMEs through ethical practices and a higher level of corporate integrity (Avram and Kuhne, 2008:463).

The challenges facing newly established SMMEs are well known. They may have a cash flow problem that precludes them from embarking on a CSR programme. However, any initiative, irrespective of cost, would give the business the desired exposure. Avram and Kuhne (2008:464) suggest that some of the main factors that prevent them from engaging in any social activities centre on limited human and financial resources.

According to Williamson et al. (2006:320), the importance of embedding social responsibility activities within the strategic framework of the business, irrespective of the size of the initiative, will yield good returns because this will not only enhance the benefits of socially responsible business behaviour but will also help companies to focus their resources on pertinent issues.

4.14.2 Lessons from the EU experience

According to Avram and Kuhne (2008:464), in the European Union (EU), more than 20 million enterprises can be classified as SMMEs, representing more than 99% of all European businesses. Most of them are not in direct competition with large enterprises, because of their limited resources (Hong and Jeong, 2006:293). Nevertheless, they account for 66% of the total employment and 60% of the EU's gross domestic product, whilst being a major source of innovation and prosperity (Williamson et al., 2006:319).

Microenterprises play an important role in reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality in South Africa (Fatoki, 2014:128). The social impact of SMMEs is evident. Therefore, every attempt should be made to ensure that they remain sustainable over a longer period and their growth should continue to impact the community they do business in. The youth could, therefore, be positive agents for change in their communities, leaders to fellow youth, and innovators for their community's economic development if given the opportunities to develop positive decision-making skills and to experience the relevance of their contributions to their communities. Porter and Kramer (2006:92) aptly sum up the CSR agenda by stating that SMMEs are neither responsible for the problems of the world nor do they have the resources to solve them all. However, each company can identify some social problem it is best suited to help solve and from that derive the best possible competitive advantage.

4.15 PRESENT CHALLENGES LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Having noted the challenges that aspiring entrepreneurs could face, the following points summarise the possible solutions to the hurdles that they may encounter:

- **Finance assistance could be the seeds of entrepreneurship...**

Helping the youth to develop their business concept and giving them the necessary financial aid is crucial in motivating aspiring entrepreneurs to develop their business and contribute to the overall TEA rate in South Africa.

- **Overcoming the fear of failure...**

The fear of failure with the possibility of embarrassment prevents people with ideas from venturing into business. Many young entrepreneurs become risk-averse

because of their social environment with the community and the extended family viewing failure in business scornfully. In reply, they should improve their knowledge and strengthen their appetite for risk so that they are ready to respond when opportunity knocks.

- **Crime and corruption as a stumbling block...**

Crime can be one of the barriers to graduates entering the business field. With bribery and corruption so rife together with the flood of counterfeit goods, the formal economy does face challenges on this front. Therefore, the authorities must be encouraged to improve policing to curtail illegal business activities and ensure free trade.

- **Introducing business education early...**

The lack of appropriate business education and training is one of the reasons for the low level of business activity and the high failure rate of new ventures. Steps should be taken to introduce entrepreneurial education from primary school going into secondary so that their choice of business-related programmes comes naturally at the tertiary level.

- **Awareness of government initiatives to help youth entrepreneurs**

The Department of Small Business Development and Trade and Industry is actively engaged in promoting SMMEs. Government agencies like SEDA and NYDA have been formed to encourage youth and graduate entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, many aspiring entrepreneurs are not aware of these government programmes specifically designed to help them leading to a perception that there is a lack of government support for entrepreneurship in South Africa.

- **Wealth creation to overcome poverty...**

Family and friends discourage young graduates, who could become entrepreneurs because they need to create wealth through business is not considered as a priority, but instead greater emphasis is placed on earning a salary. In addition, building a savings culture and accumulating wealth should become a priority to ensure that succeeding generations can escape the spiral of poverty that entraps a large percentage of South Africans.

- **Dispelling the get-a-job mentality...**

The general perception of the youth is to get an academic qualification so that one is suitably qualified for the job market. Furthermore, the culture of dependence is high among South Africans as they expect the government to be creating employment and ensuring their social security. Graduates need to develop their entrepreneurial intention, utilising their qualification and talents to create a business concept that could prove profitable to themselves and beneficial to the community.

Chapter Five gives a detailed account of the mixed methods research that this study has adopted, outlining the steps taken in the quantitative and qualitative phases of the research and the action research segment, all within the autoethnographic genre.

CHAPTER FIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This autoethnographic study reflects on my journey as an entrepreneur by systematically analysing personal experiences and giving meaning to cultural experiences along the way. These experiences would have been shrouded in silence and forgotten had it not been for this study, which presented a new opportunity to re-examine the past with a new set of lenses. With an emphasis on different opinions, emotions and observations, the study has a strong qualitative bias with the researcher heavily involved in the different phases. However, the introduction of a mixed-method approach incorporating qualitative and quantitative designs ensured that the study offered more rigour adding to more valid and reliable findings.

The study also has a segment that is dedicated to action research during which qualitative and quantitative data is gathered from participants who are mentored on business by the researcher. Nevertheless, collecting data alone does not constitute research because there is no contribution to new knowledge creation. However, the systematic process of collecting, analysing, and mixing of data gives credibility and meaning to the research findings.

This chapter discusses the details of the research methodology adopted for this study. The first section describes research reasoning and justifies adopting the methodology. It includes a discussion of research paradigms to demonstrate the philosophical underpinnings of the study. The survey questionnaire and data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations are elucidated. The chapter concludes with a summary of the methodological aspects.

5.2 PARADIGM WARS

The paradigm wars reflected the division of the academic research community into two camps based on their diverse output. However, these differences were short-lived as they found common ground and merged their respective qualities to give richness to research today.

5.2.1 Two research cultures

According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003:3), the 'paradigm wars', which focused on the philosophical differences between the positivist/post-positivist paradigms on the one hand and the constructivist / interpretivist paradigms on the other, raged from the 1970s to the 1990s. Sieber (1973:1335) adds that a disturbing characteristic of the paradigm wars has been the deep divide between the two orientations giving rise to two research cultures, one claiming the superiority of rich observational data and the other the merits of hard generalisable data. According to Sachadeva (2008:34), the idea that these two perspectives are incompatible with each other because they originate from diverse experiences and cultures, is rejected by the post-positivists who believe that each of us constructs our view of the world based on individual perceptions of it.

Smith and Heshusius (1986:36) contend that, whereas quantitative research assumes a positivist perspective looking for objective truths, qualitative research assumes a standpoint focusing on social reality striving to interpret subjective experience. Small (2011:77) adds that critics claim that these respective logics are not compatible since one cannot simultaneously be a positivist and an interpretivist.

Today, academic researchers are calling for a move beyond the narrow thinking of quantitative versus qualitative research arguments because, as acknowledged by mixed methods research, both quantitative and qualitative research are important and complement each other in their offering to the research process. Therefore, the objective of mixed methods research is not to substitute the approach but rather to draw from strengths and minimise the weaknesses within a single study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15).

5.2.2 Comparing Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Research

Guba (1990:27) maintains that the struggle for dominance of one paradigm over others is immaterial as each paradigm offers its own merits to complete the research picture. Creswell (1994:176) identifies several schools of thought in the paradigm debate with the purists at one end who assert that the methods should not be mixed and the pragmatists on the opposite end who argue against a false separation between the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms to promote the use of

both approaches (Cameron, 2011:89). Research problems suited for mixed methods are those in which one data source may be inadequate to explain the findings and a secondary method is required to enhance the primary method within a theoretical framework (Creswell and Plano Clarke, 2011:8).

5.2.3 Mixed methods paradigm

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003:16) call mixed methods the 'third methodological movement' whilst Mingers (2003:46) refers to the ceasefire of the paradigm wars and the beginning of a new dawn in research. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:14) mention mixed methods research as a research paradigm whose time has come, while Cameron and Miller (2007) use the metaphor of the phoenix to elucidate the emergence of mixed methods as the third methodological movement, arising from the ashes of the paradigm wars.

Once researchers have positioned themselves paradigmatically and moved into the interface between philosophy and methodology, the process issues then come into play. This is Praxis -- the practical application of theory. The most important issues in this regard are the praxis related to methodology and data integration in mixed methods research (Cameron, 2011:89). For maximum benefit to be derived from a mixed-method approach, the timing of the integration is crucial.

5.3 DESIGN PLAN FOR THE STUDY

The plan of this study outlining the nature of the problem being investigated, categorising the deficiencies of past research, identifying the audience that the study is aimed at and the procedure that is followed in data gathering, analysis and integration are outlined below.

5.3.1 Introduction

This autoethnographic study traces my experiences in business and my desire to share my entrepreneurial knowledge with the youth who have intentions of starting businesses of their own. The study also investigates how digital technology could influence online learning and business networking among the youth.

The study is introduced by defining the main problem that is being investigated after having surveyed past research on the problem and identified the gaps in this area of

study. The deficiencies in earlier research are highlighted and how this would be addressed in the present study is outlined. The audience that would benefit most from the study and the problem being addressed is identified.

5.3.1.1 Research problem

The problem centres on the limited participation of youth in business activities, which is a major concern in the light of the high rate of unemployment, coupled with an education system that is not addressing the needs of the economy (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162). It has been argued extensively that entrepreneurship education and training must fulfil a primary role in preparing young South Africans to contribute towards job creation and economic growth (Isaacs et al., 2007:613). The study focuses on how youth could be encouraged to engage in entrepreneurial activity and contribute to easing unemployment in the country.

5.3.1.2 Past research about the problem

There is a large body of information on youth entrepreneurship and research covering this topic is still very popular. The role of entrepreneurship continues to draw interest in both developed and developing economies in addressing youth unemployment. However, greater attention should be given to the problem in the South African context with particular emphasis on coaching/mentoring aspiring entrepreneurs to help them remain sustainable for a longer period.

5.3.1.3 Deficiencies in past research:

Past research has shown deficiencies in business coaching/mentoring as well as the lack of basic business skills at the school level. The present study is an autoethnographic account that traces my entrepreneurial journey and my decision to give back to society in the form of business coaching of the youth who have an interest in business, as well as promoting online business education and business networking among the youth.

5.3.1.4 Expected contribution of the study

A cross-section of interested parties could benefit from the discussion emanating from this study, which includes the following:

- youth who have limited entrepreneurial exposure and training;
- policymakers whose decisions have an impact on youth development;
- school principals who should place greater emphasis on entrepreneurship earlier in a learner's career;
- parents who would encourage their children to see entrepreneurship as a viable alternative to job seeking; and
- businesses and retired business executives who could play a role in coaching and mentoring aspiring young entrepreneurs.

5.3.2 STUDY METHOD AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The section briefly explains the reasons for adopting a mixed-method approach to this study and identifies the research questions that the study will answer.

5.3.2.1 Rationale for a mixed-method study

Since this is an autoethnographic study, the primary approach is qualitative with the quantitative element being supportive for the purposes of triangulation. The overall goal of the mixed-method study is to expand and strengthen the conclusions of the study and thereby contribute to the richness of the knowledge that emerges. On a practical level, pragmatism offers the researcher the autonomy to select the best approach to answer the research question by seeking a balance between subjectivity and objectivity throughout the study.

5.3.2.2 Identification of the research questions:

The following research questions were identified:

- How can the fostering of youth entrepreneurship contribute to the alleviation of unemployment and poverty in the country?
- What role can information communication technology (ICT) play in promoting online learning and fostering business networking?

- What contribution could the mentorship programme make to the success of youth entrepreneurs?
- How could the mentoring of new entrepreneurs be sustained to contribute to the continued growth of the SMME sector beyond the present study?
- How important is, risk-taking if one is to exploit a business opportunity?

5.3.3 RESEARCH LITERATURE

The following aspects are relevant to this study. Related literature on these aspects has been consulted and presented under the literature review of Chapters two, three and four.

5.3.3.1 Autoethnography

Since this genre is relatively new in academic research, an in-depth account of its key characteristics and the advantages, as well as the disadvantages of its usage, is discussed. Its relevance to the present study is illustrated both theoretically and practically as well as the rigour and creativity of this qualitative method is depicted.

5.3.3.2 Family business

Family businesses around the world are the foundation of economies in both developing and developed countries. Traditionally, it was viewed as a nursery for young aspiring entrepreneurs where their very first lessons in business are learnt. The significance of family businesses in promoting entrepreneurship as well as the need for schools to encourage entrepreneurial thinking is given extensive attention.

5.3.3.3 Coaching and mentoring

Today coaching and mentoring are considered empowering tools that most aspiring entrepreneurs require to achieve their business dreams. The concept of coaching and the role of mentors are discussed. The application of these theories against a backdrop of coaching sessions is undertaken with a group of would-be businesspersons to assess its impact on entrepreneurial thinking.

5.3.3.4 Theory and practice of mindfulness

The practice of mindfulness and its business application is given particular attention. Mindfulness as opposed to mindlessness is most relevant in difficult times by improving one's capacity for awareness and self-knowing. How this contributes to making the best decisions in one's personal and business life is carefully examined.

5.3.3.5 Theory of digital learning

Digital technology has connected people around the world from developing to developed countries. The opportunities that this network of connections present to ordinary people with an online business, e-learning, or social networking is immense. People who were previously isolated in remote, inaccessible areas now have opportunities that are just a mouse click away.

5.3.3.6 Theory of youth entrepreneurship

The theory of youth entrepreneurship is examined its influence on the lives of the youth, their families and the community at large are discussed. Entrepreneurship is fundamental to the growth of the South African economy and its future socio-political stability since it could contribute to the reduction of unemployment among the youth giving them much needed independence financial rewards and job security.

5.3.4 PROCEDURES

The following procedures were followed:

5.3.4.1 Identify research paradigms

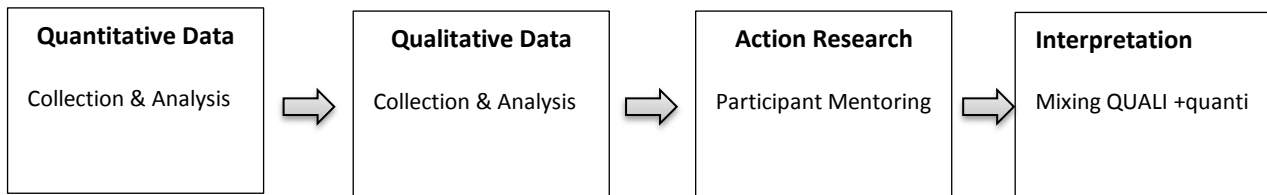
The worldview or paradigm in academic research is the general philosophical direction that the researcher introduces. In this study, the following four paradigms have relevance:

- Post positivism
- Constructivism
- Pragmatism
- Transformative

The paradigms are explained in Table 5.1.

5.3.4.2 Visual model of mixed methods approach

Table 5. 1 Model of Mixed Methods of this Study



Adapted from: Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:69)

5.3.4.3 Type of research design within each method:

- Explanatory sequential design – consists of a larger quantitative phase followed by a smaller qualitative phase to explain the quantitative results.
- Exploratory sequential design – is characterised by a primary qualitative phase which is followed by a smaller quantitative phase that serves to generalise the qualitative findings to a wider population.
- Convergent design – sometimes called convergent parallel or concurrent triangulation design that gives equal priority to the qualitative and quantitative data that are combined in the interpretation phase to arrive at Meta inferences.

5.3.4.4 Data collection within each step:

In this study, these steps yielded the following data types:

- Pre-mentorship Questionnaire (closed-ended) – quantitative data
- Autoethnographic – depicting nodal moments in the writer's life- qualitative data
- Post- mentorship Interview schedule (open-ended) – qualitative data
- Action research – mentoring of participants – data collection via observation, discussion, interviews – qualitative data

5.3.4.5 Sampling strategy and the researcher's role:

A non-probability sampling technique was adopted. This sample was not determined by chance but rather by personal convenience and selection on the following criteria:

- all participants had to be classified as youth between the ages of 18-35 years;
- they had to have an interest in entrepreneurship to start their own business;
- they were willing to participate in the mentorship programme over six weeks with the provision that they were free to leave at any time;
- the sample size was fixed at 30 participants.

5.3.4.6 Sequencing of data collection:

The data collection was done in the following order:

Step 1: This being an autoethnographic study, begins with the researcher outlining his life experiences in business by highlighting nodal moments: (Qualitative data)

Step 2: Administer pre mentorship questionnaire to gauge participants' perception of business in general: (Quantitative data).

Step 3: Action research – mentorship programme that is aimed at behavioural and attitudinal changes towards business: (Qualitative data).

Step 4: Administer post mentorship questionnaire to gauge the degree of change that was brought about after coaching/mentoring: (Qualitative data).

5.3.4.7 Relative emphasis on qualitative/quantitative:

This is predominantly a qualitative study with the quantitative phase offering a supporting role to validate the qualitative findings.

5.3.4.8 Approach to validity and verification:

Since this is a mixed-method autoethnographic study with a qualitative bias, the focus is on how validity is applied to a study in which the researcher is an active participant. According to Maxwell (1992:59), there has to be a revision in classifying the concept of validity in qualitative research to add rigour and authenticate findings

of the study; for example, descriptive validity assesses the factual accuracy as presented by the researcher and interpretative validity assesses the level of understanding of a perspective with meaning attached. These criteria were applied.

5.3.4.9 Overall organization of the integrated findings and anticipated results:

After having collected both forms of data the researcher seeks to compare both forms of information to discover congruent findings. The bulk of the information which consists of qualitative data are classified according to themes and compared with the statistical data in the quantitative analysis. This is systematically mixed and depicted as a comprehensive report that is supported by graphs and tables in answer to the original research questions that were asked at the beginning of the study.

5.3.5 Research instruments

The following research instruments were used in the study and have been included in the appendices:

- Pre Mentoring questionnaire: Quantitative Analysis (Appendix A)
- Mentoring Agreement (Appendix B)
- Post Mentoring questionnaire: Qualitative Analysis (Appendix B)

5.4 PHILOSOPHICAL WORLDVIEWS

5.4.1 Reflecting the researcher's beliefs in the study

According to Creswell (2014:35), the worldview in academic research is a general philosophical direction that a researcher brings to a study with his/her beliefs interwoven into the research study and ultimately influencing the research process in choosing qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approaches.

In this study, I have chosen to use the term worldview as meaning a basic set of beliefs that guide action (Guba, 1990:17). Others have called them paradigms (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011; Mertens, 2010); epistemologies and ontologies (Crony, 1998). The following four worldviews or paradigms are discussed and their influence on this study is explored.

Table 5. 2 Philosophical worldviews of Present Study

POST POSITIVISM	CONSTRUCTIVISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determination• Reductionism• Empirical observation and measurement• Theory verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding• Multiple participant meaning• Social and historical construction• Theory generation
TRANSFORMATIVE	PRAGMATISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political• Power and justice oriented• Collaborative• Change-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consequences of action• Problem-centred• Pluralistic• Real-world practice oriented

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2014:37)

5.4.2 Post positivist worldview

Creswell (2014:35) asserts that the post-positivist paradigm is known for the traditional form of research choosing quantitative research more than qualitative and stating that we cannot be confident about our claims to knowledge when studying human behaviour.

They were called post-positivists because they represent the thinking after positivism and challenge the traditional notion of the absolute truth of knowledge (Phillips and Burbules, 2000:122). The knowledge that emerges through a postpositivist lens is based on careful observation and measurement of reality by presenting numeric measures of observations and studying the behaviour of individuals which is paramount for a post-positivist (Creswell, 2014:36).

Phillips and Burbules (2000:124), highlight the following key assumptions of the post positivists:

- absolute truth can never be found as evidence derived is fallible and imperfect making absolute knowledge speculative;
- research is the process of making claims and then refining the standpoints;

- the researcher collects information on instruments completed by the participants which become the data that shapes knowledge; and
- objectivity is an essential aspect of quantitative inquiry in the researcher's quest for validity and reliability.

5.4.3 Constructivist Worldview

Creswell (2014:34) states constructivism, often combined with interpretivism, is a perspective that is associated with qualitative research, which contends that people seek to understand the world in which they live and develop subjective meanings around their experiences.

The researcher relies largely on the participants' interpretations of the situation being studied with more open-ended questioning, allowing the researcher to listen carefully to what is said and, thereafter, assigning meaning to the situation under investigation (Creswell, 2014:36). Thus, constructivist researchers often address the interaction among people by focusing on contexts in which they live and work to better understand their historical and cultural backgrounds.

In discussing constructivism, Crotty (1998) identified the following assumptions:

- people construct meanings through their association and qualitative researchers use open-ended questions to derive participants' views;
- people make sense of the world grounded on socio-historical perspectives;
- constructivists interpret findings according to their own experiences and background; and
- with qualitative research being mainly inductive, the researcher generates meaning from the data collected.

5.4.4 Transformative Worldview

According to Creswell (2014:36), the transformative worldview originated from researchers who felt the post-positivist imposed philosophies that did not accommodate marginalised individuals of society or matters pertaining to power, social justice, discrimination, and oppression.

Mertens (2010:126) contends that a transformative worldview holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront social oppression thereby giving marginalised people a voice. With an empowerment agenda for reform, the researcher proceeds collaboratively with the participants in the study, raising their consciousness and advancing their transformation agenda to improve lives in society.

Mertens (2011:195) offers the following summary of key features of the transformative paradigm:

- it emphasises the study of lives and experiences of groups that have been traditionally marginalised by oppressors proposing strategies to challenge;
- the research focuses on inequities based on gender, race, socioeconomic class resulting in an unequal power relationship; and
- the research in the transformative worldview links political and social action to these inequities.

5.4.5 The Pragmatic Worldview

The pragmatists state that instead of focusing on methods, researchers should emphasise the problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem (Rossman and Wilson, 1985:627). As advocates of mixed methods studies, Patton (1990), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) emphasise the importance of this worldview in social science research together with the use of mixed-method approaches to derive knowledge.

Cherryholmes (1992:16) provides some key features of the pragmatist worldview as follows:

- pragmatism is not committed to any one philosophy, but see the relevance of mixed methods, drawing from both quantitative and qualitative traditions;
- researchers have the freedom to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet their needs; and

- pragmatists agree that research always occurs in social, historical, political, and other social circumstances; therefore, proposes the use of mixed methods.

5.4.6 SUMMARY

The philosophical assumptions would guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data as well as the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches in the research process. As a mixed-method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011:5). Regardless of which philosophical position the researcher chooses for a mixed methods study, the methods should be consistent with this philosophy and its tenets should underpin all aspects of the research process (Halcomb and Hickman, 2015:6).

5.5 RESEARCH DESIGNS

The importance of the research design and some of the challenges that the researcher could face are outlined below. The significance of selecting the appropriate design for a particular study is also discussed.

5.5.1 The significance of the research design

According to Creswell (2014:4), the research design which could be referred to as the plan or proposal to conduct research, incorporates the philosophical worldview, strategies of inquiry and specific method or procedure of research. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:142) add that research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach that offers detailed procedures in the research process. This process outlines the steps that are taken to decide how suitable data for this study would be integrated by asking meaningful questions that bring together research and innovation (Devlin, 2018:72).

Hakim (2000:1) observes that design is primarily concerned with the aims, intentions and plans within the practical constraint of location, time and financial resources. Creswell (2014:58) believes that researchers must question the knowledge claims and reflect upon the strategies they intend to use which will, in turn, inform the methods (cited in Almalki, 2016:290). Halcomb and Hickman (2015:6) conclude that

it is important that the researcher understands the underpinnings and its implications of the designs before embarking on the research.

5.5.2. Challenges of mixed methods research study

There are a few challenges that a researcher could face when employing mixed methods for a research study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:62) state that the researcher must be aware of his/her own skills sets and can manage the demands of employing mixed methods. Perhaps the most urgent challenge is deciding which research design is most appropriate for your particular study, which depends on where your project stands on the continuum of research approaches. Johnson et and Christensen (2008:252) ask whether the approach be purely mixed which gives equal status to both quantitative and qualitative paradigm or will it be dominated by either approach?

Newman-Benz (1998:45) state that qualitative and quantitative methods must not be viewed as opposites or dichotomies as they represent different ends on a continuum. A study tends to be qualitative than quantitative or vice versa. Mixed methods research resides in the middle of this continuum because it integrates elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2008:4)

5.5.3 SELECTION OF A RESEARCH DESIGN

The following are the popular research designs that most mixed method researchers may adopt:

5.5.3.1 The explanatory sequential design

According to Doyle, Brady and Byrne (2016:627), the explanatory sequential design involves a larger quantitative phase followed by a smaller qualitative phase to explain the quantitative results. Here the data collection and analysis usually occur sequentially, and the quantitative results guide the development of the qualitative phase where the quantitative phase is normally dominant. The explanatory sequential design is relatively straightforward with distinct sequential phases of data collection.

5.5.3.2 The exploratory sequential design

The exploratory sequential design on the other hand is characterised by a major qualitative phase with the quantitative phase playing the secondary role. The qualitative phase is useful in identifying unknown variables and in developing theories or hypotheses (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011:23).

The quantitative phase can serve to test the instrument or generalise the qualitative results to a wider population. Importance in an exploratory design depends on the purpose of its use; if used to develop a theory, the qualitative phase is dominant, but if used to develop and test an instrument the quantitative phase takes precedence (Doyle, Brady and Byrne, 2016:626). This design is most appropriate for the present study because of the emphasis on the qualitative phase.

5.5.3.3 The convergent design

The convergent design sometimes called the convergent parallel or concurrent triangulation design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Creswell et al., 2003), addresses one all-encompassing research question used primarily when researchers are looking for merging ideas to offer a more complete understanding of events or ideas (cited in Doyle, 2015:106).

In this design, quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously but remain separate because the findings of one phase are not dependent on the results of the other (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011:36). Equal priority is allocated to the quantitative and qualitative data and results are combined in the interpretation phase of the research process where meta-inferences are developed (Doyle, Brady and Byrne, 2016:626).

5.5.4 QUANTITATIVE DESIGNS

The main characteristics of the quantitative design are outlined below, and two designs of this approach are discussed.

5.5.4.1 Quantitative deductive approach

Quantitative research is a deductive approach in research and quantitative researchers perceive the world as being outside of themselves; as an independent,

objective reality. Although this phase of the research design plays a secondary role, it does, however, add to the rigour of the study.

For this study, I focus on the following two designs of the quantitative approaches:

5.5.4.1.1 Experimental research

According to Creswell (2014:42), the experimental research is a quantitative research design that endeavours to determine whether a particular action influences an outcome in which the researcher administers an experiment to one group and withhold it from the other; thereafter investigating how both groups scored on an outcome.

A similar method is used in this study to gauge the changes that had taken place in the business outlook of the participants after they had been exposed to a period of coaching / mentoring.

5.5.4.1.2 Survey research:

The survey research provides a quantitative or numerical description of the opinions or attitudes of the sample population. It uses questionnaires or structured interviews for the collection of data with the primary intention of generalising from a sample of a population

In this study, questionnaires were used to collect statistical data by administering a pre-mentoring questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions which are aimed at ascertaining the degree of entrepreneurial awareness among the participants before entering the mentorship programme.

5.5.5 QUALITATIVE DESIGNS

The main characteristics of the qualitative design are outlined below, and three designs of this approach are discussed.

5.5.5.1 Qualitative approach.

Holliday (2007 cited in Creswell, 2014:4) states that qualitative research highlights the exploration and understanding of meaning people ascribe to a social problem. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe this approach as gaining a perspective from

investigating issues in a specific context and the meaning the people ascribe to them by drawing from the experiences and opinions of participants (cited in Almalki, 2016:290).

This approach values individuality, culture, and social justice which provides both its rich context and content which is so significant to this research study. As an autoethnographic study, the approach is a narrative of my experiences in business, together with the experiences of others I have observed and finally shared with the participants to allow them to find resonance and derive lessons.

5.5.5.2 Qualitative designs for the present study

The following qualitative research designs are considered for this study:

5.5.5.2.1 Narrative research

This is the design of a study in which the researcher investigates the lives of people by asking them to relate stories about their past. The researcher thereafter relates this information as a chronological narrative, combining the opinions from the participant's life with that of the researcher in a collaborative account (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:154).

5.5.5.2.2 Phenomenological research

It is a design in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of people as described by the participants (Creswell, 2014:42). This description involves the experiences of several participants with the design having a strong philosophical underpinning. The present study highlights the concept of racial segregation and its influence on business together with the struggle for social justice and free trade.

5.5.5.2.3 Ethnography

This is a design where the researcher studies the behaviours and actions of a cultural group over a period by collecting data through observations and interviews. Although self is a source of data, it is important to maintain rigorous methods of data collection and analysis (Duncan, 2004:28). Data may also include observations, journals, pictures, questionnaires, and other important data sources (Patton, 2002:12). This study includes an action research segment which offers to mentor the

group of aspiring entrepreneurs during which their entrepreneurial attitude and behaviour are closely observed.

5.5.5.2.4 Triangulation

The division between the quantitative and qualitative camps include different standpoints of objectivity and subjectivity in research. Survey-based researchers argue that measurement allows us to transcend our subjectivity whilst open-ended data analyses do not (Bradley and Schaefer 1998:108)

Some researchers state that qualitative methods are more faithful than the quantitative methods to the social sciences (Gergen and Gergen 2000:1027) since they allow data to develop more freely from the perception under observation. The dominant principle of mixed methods research is the combined use of quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011:5)

5.5.6 MIXED METHODS DESIGNS

The mixed-method design, which outlines how the weaknesses in research are dealt with together with the design most relevant to this study are discussed below.

5.5.6.1 Addressing the weaknesses in research

Mixed methods originate from the notion that all methods have bias and weaknesses. However, the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data counterbalances the weaknesses of each data source. Qualitative data tends to be open-ended responses whilst quantitative data usually includes closed-ended responses on questionnaires.

Creswell (2014:43) outlines how mixed methods design are expanded through the following procedures:

- integrating quantitative and qualitative data into one database could be used to check the accuracy or validity of the other database;
- one database could help explain the other and analyse different types of questions than the other; and

- One database could build on whatever was revealed by the other during the study.

5.5.6.2 Mixed methods design minimises bias

All methods have limitations, researchers felt that biases that are inherent in any one method could neutralise the biases of the other methods. Triangulating data and seeking convergence across the qualitative and quantitative design is becoming a common practice among researchers.

This design could also serve a larger, transformative purpose to give voice to the voiceless marginalised groups, such as women, ethnic/racial minorities, members of gay and lesbian communities, people with disabilities, and the poor (Mertens, 2003:124). In this study, the following two mixed-method designs have relevance:

5.5.6.2.1 Concurrent mixed methods design

Here the researcher merges quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the investigator collects both forms of data at the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. Also, in this design, the smaller quantitative data is embedded within the larger qualitative data set to adequately answer the research questions. According to Creswell and Garrett (2008:321), the qualitative addresses the process while the quantitative addresses the outcomes.

5.5.6.2.2 Transformative mixed methods design

In this study, the transformation agenda is the overarching perspective within the design that contains both quantitative and qualitative data. This lens provides a framework for data collection methods aimed at transformation among all participants including the researcher who is deeply involved in the research process at all levels. The researcher, in reflecting on his own experiences in business, uses the opportunity to engage with the participants through a structured programme of coaching/mentoring the selected group. The objective of the exercise is to align attitudes to the business that would lead towards increased entrepreneurship among the youth, transforming the get-a-job mentality and increasing the ability to create employment for fellow youth.

Table 5. 3 Reasons for using mixed methods research designs

Research Design	Process	Purpose	Level of Interaction	Priority
Convergent parallel (concurrent)	Qualitative Quantitative	To obtain different but complementary to answer a single research question	Data collected and analysed independently.	Equal
Sequential explanatory	QUANT / qual	Qualitative data are collected to explain the Quantitative findings	Quantitative data frames qualitative data collection	Quantitative dominant
Sequential exploratory	QUALI/ quanti	Quantitative data builds on qualitative findings to provide generalisability	Qualitative data frames quanti data collection	Qualitative dominant.
Embedded Nested /	QUALI (quanti) OR QUANTI (quali)	To obtain different data to answer a complementary research question	Embedded dataset provides answers to a complementary research question.	Can be either Qualitative or Quantitative dominant.

Halcomb and Hickman (2015:7)

5.6 RESEARCH METHOD

In this section, the research method in each of the procedures is discussed and analysed to illustrate how the mixing of the quantitative and qualitative data will give a more balanced outcome of the study. However, Morse (2015) suggests that the quantitative/qualitative imbalance will correct itself with time, but there is still the risk that the qualitative mixed methods research will continue to be dwarfed by quantitative research and will continue to play a secondary role in terms of importance and function (Giddings, 2006; Hesse-Biber et al., 2015 cited in Doyle, Brady and Byrne, 2016:632).

This study runs contrary to that opinion because it gives prominence to the qualitative study as a worthy contribution to academic research through its emphasis on aspects of research that the quantitative method neglects. It also makes a

valuable contribution to the creation of new knowledge by including new research genres like autoethnography. This study adopts pragmatism which is the most frequently identified alternative paradigm on which mixed methods researchers base their work. The convenience of pragmatism is that it aims to find a middle ground between philosophical positioning (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:45).

5.6.1 Quantitative Method

The quest for absolute objectivity as demanded by the positivist tradition was gradually eroded as the constructivists were making an impact. This gave rise to the post-positivists who acknowledged that absolute objectivity free of human bias was impossible.

5.6.1.1 Emphasising objectivity

Creswell (2003:11) have stated that a common mixed-method design aims for triangulation whereby the objective is to validate quantitative statistical results with qualitative data. This mixed-method approach also takes the positivistic version that social reality is objective, and the goal is to confirm the original quantitative findings.

Brannon (2005:15) adds that the common procedure in mixed methods studies situates the qualitative component in the secondary role to the larger quantitative survey. The view is supported by Bahl and Milne (2007:198) who argue that most studies adopt a positivist orientation where the qualitative component plays a supportive role.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:14) state that most quantitative researchers believe social science inquiry must be objective with researchers eliminating their bias and emotionally detaching themselves from the study. Silverman (2001:12) adds that the main elements of quantitative research are, fixed, detached, value-free, surveys whilst Kumar (2011:21) concludes that quantitative research design is more structured, rigid, and predetermined to guarantee validity and reliability of the data.

5.6.1.2 Positivism

According to Sachadeva (2008:36), the positivists, by using deductive reasoning aimed to hypothesise theories which they could test because they believed that being able to observe and measure the subject matter under investigation is the

main focus of scientific research. Positivists further maintain that social science ought to be treated in the same way that physical scientists treat physical phenomena (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). These researchers have also called for neutrality and a formal writing style using the impersonal style in describing social phenomena (Tashakkori, Teddlie and Teddlie, 1998:164).

However, positivists realised that absolute objectivity was not possible given the social nature of research and the bias conveyed through language. This movement was vital in breaking down the façade of objectivity, allowing the development of the qualitative research method with reliance on greater subjectivity (Wall, 2006:2).

5.6.1.3 Post-positivism

According to Ellingson (2017:67), most post-positivists acknowledge that pure truth, untainted by language, and human bias is impossible and maintain that the quest for neutral research is not possible. Creswell, (2014: 40) asserts that knowledge resulting from a postpositivist perspective is based on careful observation and measurement of that reality and it is the numeric measurements of what has been observed is of importance to the post positivists.

Whilst methodological purists may demand putting aside biases and beliefs and seeing the world as it is, Sachadeva (2008:34) concludes that our best hope for realizing objectivity is to triangulate across multiple fallible perspectives for objectivity. Consequently, this study illustrates that one of the methods that could make a valuable contribution from the qualitative perspective in knowledge creation is autoethnography.

5.6.2 QUALITATIVE METHOD

Since this study is primarily a qualitative study with an autoethnographic lens, a detailed discussion on this research methodology is essential to appreciate its relevance to the nature of the present study.

5.6.2.1 Qualitative research method: A definition

Qualitative research is an approach for exploring the nature of a social problem. This research encompasses framing questions and processes for gathering and analysing data inductively from specific to general themes as well as interpreting and

giving meaning to the data (Creswell, 2014:36). Kumar (2011:21) proposes that the main emphasis of qualitative research is to explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings and attitudes, benefits and experiences of a group of people within a socially constructed reality.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:27) add that qualitative researchers explore historical, explanatory, and narrative aspects concerning the cultural, economic, and societal context. The qualitative approach attempts to understand how researchers derive meaning from their social world which is created through social interactions of people around them (Hesse-Biber, 2010:455).

Qualitative researchers support an interpretivist paradigm and state that reality that is time-and context-free generalisations are not possible because the subjective researcher is the only source of that reality (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:14). Consequently, qualitative research primarily reflects values to empower and give voice to respondents as this approach privileges the inquiry into human meaning-making (Hesse-Biber, 2010:455).

5.6.2.2 Qualitative research and reflexivity

An autoethnographer's opening approach is typically guided by his/her lived experiences, previous knowledge of the subject under scrutiny and familiarity with the location of the story (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte, 2012:5). Ethnographers are mainly interested in how cultural meanings are analysed to find answers to social problems that affected the community under investigation (Chambers, 2000:856).

Richardson (2000:154) states that unlike the quantitative method, which is primarily interpreted through tables, figures, and graphs, a qualitative study, convey its findings through the text that includes the writer's personal opinions. Watson (2011:205) adds that the ethnographic style of writing reflects the writer's contemplation of and involvement with the people in that social setting within the overall cultural framework of that community (cited in Sambrook, Jones and Doloriert, 2013:174). Through reflexivity, the researcher can objectively and transparently observe, as well as straightforwardly report his/her observations

(Alvesson et al., 2008 in Cole, 2013:52). This contributes to the rigour of the study and adds to the credibility of ethnography as a genre of academic research.

5.6.2.3 Growth and creativity of Autoethnography

Tapping on the memory of the writer, autoethnography is a narrative of his/her experiences that are trailed by an introspective dialogue that brings to the fore the writer's academic voice which analytically teases out the accounts in sense-making (Ryan, 2012:546).

Since the primary source of data is the self, the researcher must uphold rigorous research procedures in the data collection and analysis (Duncan, 2004; Holt, 2003). The data gathering methods include participant observation, reflective writing, interviews, gathering documents and artefacts (Wall, 2006:5). Autoethnography collects material from personal journals, pictures, newspaper articles, and interviews with family and friends (Hughes and Pennington, 2017:169).

The reader is expected to relate to the narrative in a way and this study could perhaps provide a lens through which the reader will see his/her experiences in a more comparable light through which he/she finds resonance in the writer's account. Experience alone cannot be recognised as evidence of knowledge since experience is pointless until it is interpreted. Consequently, for an autoethnographer, the important stance of the researcher constitutes praxis of evidence and analysis (Spry, 2009:603).

Data should also be organised, coded, and systematically analysed and presented in a narrative format (Patton, 2002), incorporating the cultural meaning and social significance of events (Pichon, 2013:5) thereby revealing the storytelling tradition. Smith (2005) contends that autoethnography is advantageous in exploring subjectivity, writing reflectively and introspectively about something close to the heart (cited in Pichon, 2013:5).

Laslett (1999 cited in Wall, 2008:39) autoethnography is the intersection of the personal and the societal, offering a new vantage point from which a unique contribution to social science could be made. Subjectivity and personal involvement may be considered a weakness; however, researchers should be encouraged to

engage in this way because it contributes to social understanding (Sambrook, Jones and Doloriert, 2013:173).

5.6.3 MIXED METHODS

Social research is becoming intricate and interdisciplinary leading to many researchers complementing one approach with another thereby promoting collaboration and arriving at a superior research outcome (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:16). The most important issue in this respect is the praxis related to the gathering of both text and numeric data and being analytically proficient with both statistical procedures and interpretive analysis (Cameron, 2011:109).

5.6.3.1 Integrative analyses

According to Small (2011:76), two separate analytical approaches make the study complementary showing a more comprehensive picture of the research problem than one perspective alone would. Pluye and Hong, (2014:30) contend that by focusing on only qualitative or quantitative methods, researchers would exclude important evidence since mixing methods combines the power of stories and the power of numbers. Mertens (2011:195) adds that multi-methods research allows for an understanding of the phenomenon under investigating more fully than would be anticipated with a single method.

Pluye and Hong (2014:30) offer three main reasons for mixing methods as follows:

- First, researchers may need qualitative methods to interpret quantitative results;
- Second, they may need quantitative methods to generalize qualitative findings; and
- Third, they may concurrently need both methods to better understand a new phenomenon (qualitative methods) and to measure its magnitude, trends, causes, and effects (quantitative methods).

5.6.3.2 Relevance of mixed methods in this study

With reference to my autoethnographic narrative, I see the relevance of a mixed-method approach as an appropriate tool to assess the attitude of aspiring youth entrepreneurs in using business to promote social change. From a transformative perspective, it could be used to:

- identify the prevailing attitudes of the youth towards entrepreneurship;
- assess their belief in the possibility of using entrepreneurial opportunities to address social injustice and economic imbalance; and
- include reciprocity in the design of the study by leaving the participants better off after the research study in terms of increased knowledge, capacity, or changes in attitude towards entrepreneurship and business in general.

5.6.3.3 Time orientation in this study

According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007:290), mixed-method designs employ time orientation as its foundation which states that the qualitative and quantitative phases occur at the same time making the steps independent (this is, concurrent) or whether these two phases take place one after the other meaning that the second phase is dependent on the first phase (this is, sequential).

In this study, the phases are conducted concurrently or independently. Since the objective in selecting a mixed methods research is triangulation, a concurrent design would be suitable as the quantitative and qualitative data can be triangulated (Creswell et al., 2003:217). In concurrently collecting both data sets, the researcher seeks to compare both forms of information to look for congruent findings (for example, how the themes recognised in the qualitative data compare with the statistical data in the quantitative analysis (Creswell et al., 2003:21). Regardless of where researchers position themselves on the methodological continuum— from being a positivist on one end to an interpretivist at the other end—all research reflect and construct cultural meanings (Ellingson, 2017:66).

TABLE 5.3: SUMMARY OF THE MIXED-METHOD RESEARCH PROCESS OF THIS STUDY

PROCEDURE	QUALITATIVE APPROACH	QUANTITATIVE APPROACH	MIXED METHOD APPROACH
Philosophical Assumptions	Constructivism	Post-positivism	Pragmatism
Strategies of Inquiry Employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phenomenology • Participatory • Ethnography • Narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequential • Concurrent • Transformative
Methods Employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autoethnography • Questionnaire: Open-ended • Action Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire: Closed-ended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and Closed-ended questions. • Qualitative and Quantitative data and analysis
Practices of Research Used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrates personal experiences • Brings personal values into the study • Studies the context or settings of participants • Interprets thematic data • Collaborates with participants • Creates agenda for change or reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the variables to study • Relates the variables to the questions • Observes and measures information numerically • Employs statistical analysis and statistical interpretation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects both Qualitative and quantitative data • Develops a rationale for mixing • Presents a visual picture of the procedure in the study • Statistical and textual analysis • Integrates both sets of data at the end of the study.

Adapted from Creswell (2008:16)

5.7 VALIDITY

The concept of validity is very important in research particularly for a qualitative study with an autoethnographic bias. A review of traditional methods of validating research is also undertaken with suggestions of relevant guidelines for a qualitative study.

5.7.1 A reflection of the truth

Validity is a challenge to determine whether the explanation of an event is sound or whether a certain description is a truthful reflection. Leedy (1997:32) adds that validity is concerned with the soundness and effectiveness of the measuring instrument used in the study. Since this is a mixed-method autoethnographic study

with a qualitative bias, the focus here is on how validity is applied to a study in which the researcher is an active participant. Qualitative studies have been consistently criticised for being highly subjective. However, its contribution to academic research and knowledge creation is acknowledged.

5.7.2 A new qualitative appraisal

Denzin and Lincoln (2005:20) have argued for a serious review of the terms: validity, reliability and generalisability concerning the qualitative paradigm. Various methodologists are suggesting new ways of appraising qualitative research in the post-structural period. Lincoln and Guba (1990:22) suggest that the solution could be partly addressed by reconceptualising old-style validity concepts by different labels.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) presented the following in place of quantitative concepts:

- credibility (in place of internal validity);
- transferability (in place of external validity);
- dependability (in place of reliability); and
- Confirmability (in placement for objectivity).

Maxwell (1992) has presented a revision in classifying the concept of validity in qualitative research with the following:

- descriptive validity (factual accuracy as presented by the researcher);
- interpretive validity (the level of understanding of a viewpoint with meanings attached); and
- evaluative validity (the degree to which an evaluation can be applied to the study, as opposed to a graphic, interpretive, or explanatory one).

5.7.3 Validity in Autoethnography

Tullis-Owen et al. (2009:179) assert that memory is fallible making it impossible to precisely recall or report on how events were lived and experienced. We accept that individuals who have experienced the same event may express a different story about what happened. Consequently, when terms such as reliability, validity, and

generalisability are applied to autoethnography, the context and meaning of these terms are transformed (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011:10).

For autoethnographers, validity takes on a different meaning as it seeks to authenticate a story. It must evoke in the reader a sense that the experience described is believable and possible; that the re-presentation of the story could be true. What is of real importance is whether the story allows the reader to enter the subjective world of the author to see the world from his/her perspective; ensuring that the story is logical by allowing the reader and writer to find an association in their lives.

Lavelle et al. (2013:272) state that whilst the use of mixed methods can be seen to enhance validity, it is still necessary for the qualitative researchers to be rigorous in their approach to a study. In this study, every attempt has been made to maintain the rigour and conform to the principles of academic research through triangulation.

5.8 RELIABILITY

This section asks when a study can be considered reliable and suggests ways of assessing the reliability of a study. Particular attention is also given to how autoethnography handles the sensitive issue of reliability.

5.8.1 Trustworthiness of findings

According to Aczel and Sounderpandian (2006:219), the extent to which conclusions are trustworthy over a period and an accurate representation of the total population under examination are referred to as reliability.

Golafshani (2003:6) states that the research instrument is said to be reliable if the results of the study can be replicated under similar circumstances. Silverman (2013:284) concurs stating that reliability attempts to prove that empirical research can be trusted to provide the same results consistently if the survey is administered frequently under similar conditions.

5.8.2 Reliability in Autoethnography

Bochner (2002:86) states that in autoethnography, the question of reliability is directly linked to the trustworthiness of the storyteller by asking whether he/she had

these experiences described and are the evidence presented plausible? Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011:10) further ask whether the narrator adopted the literary license to exaggerate the story to the point of fictionalising than presenting a truthful account?

An autoethnography is judged in terms of how useful a story is to the reader (Bochner, 2002) in terms of ways to improve the lives of participants, readers and the writer as well (cited in Ellis, 2004:124). In this study, I as the author have made every endeavour to ensure that the narrative is true to my experiences as depicted. In this way, I attempted to ensure that the lives of the participants are positively influenced, that the readers find resonance in my story and that I experience a sense of accomplishment in sharing my experiences for the betterment of the youth in the community.

5.9 GENERALISABILITY

On completion of a study, the question often asked is: Are the findings generalisable? Researchers would state that certain conditions have to be met before the findings could be generalised. Generalising in autoethnography is particularly difficult given the unique nature of each study.

5.9.1 All researchers generalise

Virtually all researchers whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods specialists will make some form of generalisation during the interpretation phase be it statistical or analytic generalisations (Firestone, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

5.9.2 Generalising in autoethnography

According to Ellis and Bochner (2000), generalisability is also important to autoethnographers but not in the traditional sense of research in social science. Here the focus of generalisability changes as it moves to the readers who are called upon to determine if the story speaks to them about their experiences or the lives of others, they may know. Ellis et al. (2011:10) conclude that readers provide validation by comparing their lives to the writer's, analysing the similarities and differences of their respective lives and the feeling that these stories may evoke.

The generalising process is in no way mechanical (Miles and Huberman, 1994:55). Indeed, generalisation represents an active process of reflection if the story is to have any meaningful significance (Greenwood and Levin, 2000:89). Since all findings are context-bound, certain conditions must be met before any findings are generalised. Only after one is adequately aware of the new context and the extent to which the new context differs from that which generated the interpretation, can one generalise. The researcher should also reflect very carefully on the consequences that the generalisation may have.

5.10 SAMPLE

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007:281) state that sampling which is the process of selecting a segment that is representative of a whole is an important step in the research process because it determines the quality of inferences made by the researcher based on the underlying findings. Sampling can be classified into two types: probability and non-probability sampling techniques.

5.10.1 Probability and non-probability sampling

Babbie (2005:196) states that in probability sampling every member has an equal chance of being selected. Any sampling technique in which the selection of the sample items is not determined by chance, but rather by personal convenience, expert judgement, is called non-probability sampling.

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007:287) maintain that if the goal is not to generalise to a population but to gain insights into a phenomenon, then the researcher purposefully selects participants and settings for this phase of the research to maximise understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Here, individuals, groups, and settings are considered for selection if they are "information-rich" (Patton, 1990:169). These criteria have been used in selecting participants for the present study.

5.10.2 Sample size

Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007:288) state that in deciding how to select the samples for a mixed methods study, the researcher must first ascertain the appropriate size for the study since this determines the extent to which the

investigation can make statistical as well as analytical generalisations. A small sample is usually associated with qualitative research and large samples being linked to quantitative studies.

5.10.3 Mixed methods sampling

According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007:292), once the choice about the mixed method time orientation has been made, the next step is to select a mixed methods sampling design. Here two criteria are used, namely time orientation (this is, concurrent versus sequential) and the relationship of the qualitative and quantitative samples.

5.10.4 Sampling for the present study

In this study, a parallel relationship is used, indicating that the same sample members participate in both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007:294).

The researcher administers a pre-coaching/mentoring questionnaire, which surveys entrepreneurial attitudes, and business strategies among aspiring entrepreneurs. At the same time, the action research, which would be discussed in Chapter Seven, commences during which the participants are observed and their general attitude, as well as their readiness for engaging in business, is assessed. After a period of ongoing engagement, the programme ends with the administering of a post-coaching/mentoring questionnaire to gauge the degree of transformation from the initial engagement. This segment of the study, running simultaneously, would yield the quantitative and qualitative data for the mixed-method research.

Finally, sampling design helps to determine the extent to which researchers can generalise their findings and make what Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003:687) refer to as "meta-inferences;" namely, the term given to describe the integration of generalisable inferences derived from findings stemming from the qualitative and quantitative components of a mixed methods study (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007:282).

5.11 CONCLUSION

This autoethnographic study has evoked emotions, self-consciousness and introspections yet the methodology remained loyal to the principles of academic rigour, validity and reliability. This was made possible by adopting a mixed-method approach, which facilitated the emergence of a more balanced picture.

This chapter discussed the details of the research methodology adopted for this study. The chapter discussed the reasoning behind the research method and the philosophical underpinnings of the research were explained. The qualitative and quantitative method research approaches were explained and the motivation for the methodology was elucidated. The survey questionnaire, data collection procedures and analysis in the study were outlined. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER SIX MENTORING: AN ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, two transfer instruments, storytelling and mentoring are discussed with emphasis on how knowledge can be leveraged by the participants of the study. The objective is to improve the mentees tacit knowledge leading to the development of core competencies that are necessary for entrepreneurial success.

The mentoring programme, which is an important component of this study, was conducted over twelve weeks including both face-to-face and online engagements. The mentees were required to fill in a pre-mentoring questionnaire to assess their overall business sense as novices. After the period of mentoring, they were asked to fill in a post-mentoring questionnaire which was used to gauge any changes that might have taken place after having completed the mentoring programme.

6.2 Action research and the potential for change

Action research, as defined by Reason and Bradbury (2001:1) is a democratic research process that seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions of significance to individuals and their communities. Ivankova and Wingo (2018:981) add that the emphasis on solving practical problems to improve practice or develop people has contributed to the popularity of action research.

Action research is a form of a self-reflective enquiry conducted by participants in a social setting to improve their understanding of its significance (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:162 cited in Krumsvik, 2012:209). The relevance of action research to this mixed-method study becomes apparent as the research problem is analysed to seek improvements, followed by a process of planned interventions for change and evaluation (Metcalf and Humphreys, 2002:437).

It is in this context that I as researcher-mentor embarked on the next phase of the autoethnographic study, which included the mentorship programme. Since storytelling is a key element in an ethnographic study, it was appropriate for me to begin my association with this group of 30 aspiring entrepreneurs by telling them about my entrepreneurial journey. It was an ideal opportunity to share my stories in

business with these novices, which laid the platform for them to gradually emerge and discuss their expectations and ambitions in business.

6.3 Action research finding a place in mixed methods

As action researchers, we attempt to link the two worlds of theory and praxis, and in the process find an opportunity to offer a practical solution to the community for a problem that requires urgent attention. In this study, we aim to find a solution to the limited role that the youth play in entrepreneurship and examine how this could reduce the crisis in youth unemployment.

6.3.1 Action research challenges positivism

Action research challenges the positivistic assertions that research must remain objective so that it could claim credibility (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire, 2003:11). Unlike traditional scientific research that seeks generalisable explanations applicable to all and action research concentrates on specific situations with localised solutions. Stringer (2007:1) states that action research further maintains that knowledge is socially constructed and embedded in value systems that promote human interaction, which challenges unjust and undemocratic socio-economic and political practices

Now we have co-researchers from the local community participating in this study and co-producing solutions to problems that have particular relevance to local needs. According to Roberts and Dick (2003:260), action research is viewed as an umbrella paradigm consisting of a host of approaches of inquiry or, a 'meta-methodology' that allows a variety of methods to be used under its guiding principles (Foth, 2006:207).

6.3.2 Combining action research and mixed methods

The similarities between mixed methods and action research make integration justifiable and possible. According to Ivankova and Wingo (2018:978), combining the two methods produces scientifically rigorous results by integrating qualitative data with quantitative conclusions to appraise action intervention, evaluation, and monitoring. Mixed methods and action research both rely on pragmatism as one of the philosophical paradigms underlying these approaches. As already illustrated in chapter five, pragmatism rejects the notion that quantitative and qualitative

approaches are incompatible; whilst justifying the integration of the two data sets within a mixed methods study.

The utility of the mixed methods approach is heightened by its methodological flexibility to intersect and integrate with other research approaches such as action research (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016:124) by adding an innovative methodology to address complex problems of a practical nature (Ivankova, 2015 cited in Ivankova and Wingo, 2018:979). When joined with mixed methods, action research develops an appreciation for data-driven decision making (Lyons and De Franco, 2010:149) and delivers a strong case for developing evidence-based plans for improvement (Tomal, 2010:36).

Table 6 1 Common Characteristics of Mixed Methods and Action Research

Common Characteristics of Mixed Methods and Action Research	
Philosophical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a pragmatic philosophical foundation • Applies a transformative/ advocacy lens seeking social justice • Combines outsider-insider perspective
Conceptual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiming at providing comprehensive information • Moving from exploratory to explanatory and to confirmatory in a dialectical manner.
Procedural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow principles of systematic research inquiry • Using quantitative and qualitative methods • Following a cyclical process consisting of clearly defined study phases.

Source: Ivankova (2015:36)

6.4 STORYTELLING

Storytelling has been an integral part of this study and continues in this phase by asking the mentees to share experiences in business they might have had. Whilst this was an opportunity to socialise and get to know each other, it also served as an

opportunity for the mentor to gauge the levels of business activities that the aspiring entrepreneurs had engaged in before this assembly.

6.4.1 The lessons from stories

In keeping with the autoethnographic approach of this study, storytelling is also an important method in the transfer of knowledge. Mentees were called upon to share their experiences with the group. In this way, we did not just share experiences, but we also found resonance in each other's stories. According to Swap et al. (2001:104), stories, particularly those that are readily identified with, are particularly powerful for transferring data-rich in tacit knowledge. Furthermore, business norms and values can be readily communicated through the narrative with its lessons.

As noted earlier, knowledge about skills and domain content relies on more explicit, means of communication rather than on stories. However, informal learning occurs in multiple ways, but we selected two interrelated tools for study and reflection: mentoring and storytelling. These tools were used to promote the transfer of the tacit dimensions of knowledge through mentoring and storytelling (Swap et al., 2001:95).

6.4.2 Telling my story

When I first met the group, comprising of 34 individuals made up of an equal number of males and females, I was surprised at how apathetic some of them were about starting their own business. After listening to them, I realised that the fear of failure in business was the reason for their indifference. It also dawned on me that a great deal of effort was required of me to sustain their interest and see this project to its conclusion.

I always considered myself a good storyteller from my earlier days as a schoolteacher and now I had the opportunity to test my ability. I also learnt from a learned person that when your story comes from the heart, you have earned the right to say it. I began with this group of business mentees by describing my entrepreneurial journey from my early days observing my father in his tailoring business. He was an artisan who worked hard but made very little profit to show for his efforts. I had to be very careful in how I shared my story with these young business aspirants. By sharing my experiences, I was hoping that they would find

meaning and resonance whilst accepting that setbacks are a part of the business landscape from which lessons must be derived; but the journey must continue.

I was well aware that the success of this mentoring programme could make a significant contribution to the SMME sector in the local community. The mentees would also be encouraged to share their knowledge and mentor other budding entrepreneurs as they journey towards success. It was important to sustain their interest and keep them focused on the programme.

6.5 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

In action research, the researcher plays a very significant role of researcher/facilitator and in this study one of a mentor as well. Each of these roles has a distinct function, which, if carried out according to its definition, would yield credible outcomes for the study.

6.5.1 The research facilitator

According to Stringer (2007:24), in action research, the role of the researcher is not one of an expert who does all the research with the research assistant merely playing a supportive role. He/she becomes the facilitator who acts as a catalyst to assist all participants in clearly defining the problem and give them all the support as they work towards effective solutions to the problem at hand.

As the researcher leading the investigation in this study, my role goes beyond being a mere catalyst for change. My objective is to enable the participants to develop their analysis of the situation, consider their findings and plan how they implement the change they had set out to achieve (Stringer, 2007:26). If it was their objective to engage in some form of business, a plan should be taking some form in their minds as they are being exposed to new concepts in the mentoring programme.

6.5.2 The research collaborator

Since collaboration is a key characteristic of this approach, my role as mentee-researcher is important to ensure that there is an ongoing collaboration among all stakeholders culminating in the successful completion of the project. I had committed to ensuring that the participants are constantly informed of progress and where challenges were faced, I ensured that they were satisfactorily resolved.

Hinchey (2008:1) cautioned that care should be taken to ensure that the researcher's motives do not compromise that of the participants. As co-researchers, these participants had to be assured that their contributions were valued. An overenthusiastic or individualistic researcher could be a liability to the study as the participants could be reduced to insignificant role players (Le May and Lathlean, 2001:506).

6.6 RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTICIPANTS

Maintaining sound relationships with the participants for the duration of this phase is crucial since it could influence the quality of the data that comes out of this collaborative exercise.

6.6.1 Setting joint goals with participants

According to Rajaram (2007 cited in Gullion and Ellis, 2014:64), researchers and participants should outline joint goals and ambitions for the research project early in the collaborative process. The researcher must ensure active communication throughout the study is maintained so that the social change objectives are met.

Action research also has the potential to change the social and personal dynamics of the research environments so that the process enhances the lives of all involved (Stringer, 2007:21). It forges a good spirit of camaraderie among all stakeholders who begin to believe that they are working for the common good of all stakeholders. Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire (2003:14) conclude that it has the transformative influence of enhancing the value of the participatory research processes.

6.6.2 Transparency and open communication

From the very beginning, I as the researcher had committed myself to ensure transparency and encouraged open communication between all participants and myself. Since they were drawn from the community to contribute as co-researchers, their local knowledge was automatically privileged owing to their close association with the local population (Smith et al., 2010 cited in Gullion and Ellis, 2014:63)

My relationship with the participants has given rise to a new vision of the business world with a new perspective of all its challenges and complexities. In this

collaborative relationship that was forged, I was able to get a deeper understanding of their fears and aspirations as entrepreneurs. I then took a decision that my role as research facilitator in this context would be more facilitative and less directive (Stringer, 2007:11). In so doing, the participants would always have a voice which would ensure the free exchange of information as well as giving opportunities to contribute to the research process. By communicating openly, jointly identifying common goals and acknowledging the power differentials, this segment of the study placed greater emphasis on research praxis, than giving validity to the knowledge generated through theory (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire, 2003:14).

6.6.3 Stages in the action research design

The four stages in the action research cycle together with the activities in each stage for the present study are depicted below:

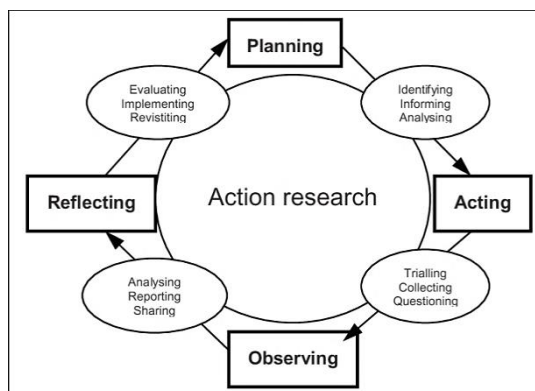


Figure 6. 1 The four stages of the action research cycle

- **Planning:**

The problem under investigation is first analysed and all stakeholders are informed about the objectives. The necessary resources for the investigation are identified.

- **Acting:**

After collecting relevant data, the first possible solution is tried. Then questions are asked about the relevance of this approach.

- Observing:

After analysing the research environment, findings are shared with other stakeholders and areas of concern are discussed.

- Reflecting

Evaluate the initial findings and implement necessary changes. Thereafter, revisit areas not aligned to objectives.

6.7. MENTORING PROGRAMME

The mentoring programme was one of the highlights of this study. It was challenging as much as it was rewarding. Sustaining the interest of the mentees amidst the Covid 19 pandemic meant making adjustments to the original plan. However, it did present an opportunity to introduce online learning much earlier than anticipated. The lessons learnt from using technology would certainly be invaluable in the post-Covid 19 periods.

6.7.1 Providing guidance and support

According to Campbell and Campbell (1997 cited in Crisp and Cruz, 2009:527), mentoring is a set of behaviours in which experienced members provide guidance and support to less experienced novices to increase their likelihood of becoming successful in their endeavours. The intention to improve an existing situation means that the participants ought to be better off after the study than before. The idea that the mentoring programme would progress through a series of stages within the context of simulated business relationships was well-received by all mentee-participants. Mentoring relationships may be informal or formal, long-term or short-lived, planned or spontaneous (Luna and Cullen, 1995:29). Informal mentoring relationships are not structured or managed but develop naturally (Chao et al., 1992:16).

6.7.2 Action research and mentoring

The study was aligned with the framework outlined by Le May and Lathlean (2001:503) as follows:

- *it is educative*: we use this potential to raise awareness of entrepreneurial learning among the mentees;
- *it deals with individuals in social groups*: we engage the mentees as representatives of the community to promote business activities that would impact the community and bring about socio-economic transformation;
- *it is problem-focused, context-specific and future-oriented*: we have identified the business-related problem; its impact on the youth and how their entrepreneurial activities could shape the future;
- *it involves a change intervention*: we aim to see changes in employment prospects among the youth, the increase in business activities and improved stability in community life; and
- *it seeks improvement and involvement*: we envisage an improvement in the employment opportunities as well as greater community involvement in the local economy.

According to Schockett and Haring-Hidore (1985:62), provision must be made within the mentoring sessions that involve discussions of fears and uncertainties as well as taking appropriate steps in building a mentee's self-confidence. Active listening to identify problem areas and offer encouragement where possible is also part of the mentoring experience in offering psychological and emotional support (Crisp and Cruz, 2009:539).

The format of the mentoring sessions ensured that the mentees were active participants because a major objective of this exercise was building their self-confidence and transforming their mindset about entrepreneurship. Furthermore, with this study taking an autoethnographic approach, I had to ensure that I did not dominate the proceeding. In this action research phase, I had to also ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation to maintain their commitment throughout the project which

was just as challenging as securing their initial consent. (Le May and Lathlean, 2001:505).

6.7.3 The mentoring sessions

The arrangement meant that I as the mentor would address the group as a unit, but individuals were encouraged to communicate with me whenever the need arose. The discussion for each session would revolve around a topic that they would have a week to prepare. Relevant reading material was sent to all via e-mail, and they were encouraged to actively engage in discussion around the topic of the day.

6.7.3.1 Mentoring agreement

A laid out mentoring agreement is essential for a sound mentoring relationship. It includes a development plan, confidentiality clauses, the duration of the relationship and frequency of the meetings, time to be invested in mentoring activities by each party, and the overall role of the mentor/coach. (For Mentoring Agreement, see Appendix B).

All participants were asked to sign the agreement and were reminded that they were free to leave the programme at any stage should they so desire. The group had jointly agreed on meeting for six sessions over twelve weeks. Mentees were given the reading material for each session two weeks before the meeting as preparation for each mentoring gathering.

6.7.3.2 Pre-mentoring questionnaire

At the first session, all participants were asked to fill in the pre-mentoring questionnaire. This survey document which consisted of closed-ended questions had presented the quantitative data for this mixed-method study. Its purpose was to gauge the entrepreneurial attitudes and survey the general business skills that the mentees possessed. (See Appendix A for a copy of the pre-mentoring questionnaire).

6.7.3.3 Mentoring process

The mentoring sessions were initially lively discussions that took place at a venue that was conveniently located. My objective initially was to assess their needs and

offer them content that would sustain their interests. I was also observant in getting to know the active participants but also looked out for the quieter ones whose confidence levels were still developing. I ensured that I did not dominate discussions from the very beginning because I had decided that my role should be more facilitative than directive.

After the second session, the programme had to be adjusted. This was necessary because of the Covid 19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns. After what looked like a very promising start, was now likely to be abandoned. Fortunately, a few mentees suggested that we go online and continue the programme with a few adjustments to the format. This online option was certainly not ideal but under the prevailing circumstances, it was the only alternative. We were fortunate since the WhatsApp application was the common messaging application, which was easily accessible and facilitated the transfer of various media such as images, text messaging, audio and video clips.

6.7.3.4 Post-mentoring questionnaire

At the end of the mentoring programme, it was time to assess the mentees' perception of business in general. This survey consisting of open-ended questions that gave the participants the freedom to express themselves on a range of themes. The findings contributed to the qualitative data of the study. The main objective of this exercise was to assess any attitudinal and behavioural changes that might have taken place since the mentoring initiative started. (See Appendix C for a copy of the post-mentoring questionnaire).

6.8 CHALLENGES IN ACTION RESEARCH

There are a few challenges that action researchers are confronted with such as its applicability and generalisability to a wider audience as well as the researcher ensuring that the objectives are adhered to and their motives kept in check.

6.8.1 Generalising the findings

According to Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire (2003:25), one of the limitations of action research is its applicability in a local context and the challenge of introducing social transformation on a larger scale and offering the benefits over a

larger area. Whilst the findings may be unique to these participants, I believe that the nature of the discussion applies to a wider audience in many parts of the world where the levels of youth unemployment and youth entrepreneurship are a major concern. If the socio-economic circumstances match those of the present study, then the possibility of generalising the findings becomes more likely.

Le May and Lathlean (2001:504) state that the motives of the researcher may limit the potential of empowerment and emancipation associated with this design. To counter the possibility of this limitation, I had emphasised at every opportunity that the coaching/mentoring programme was aimed at ensuring that the participants are empowered to handle the challenges of the business environment. The idea behind the promotion of business networking was to emancipate the protégés from the fear of walking this road to entrepreneurial success alone. I further stressed that their successes in business would not just benefit themselves but would also contribute to the economic emancipation of their families and their communities at large.

Trainee entrepreneurs are not expected to learn their craft overnight. They will pass through various stages of knowledge acquisition along the way. Even for the mentors working with beginners is a challenge as they are expected to bridge the gap in their knowledge and skills set but they must have the patience to work with these youth (Swap et al., 2001:101).

6.8.2 Using reflective practice

Both mixed methods and action research entails reflection about the next step that is grounded in the results from the previous step. Greene (2007:128) states that there is a need for reflection on practical issues, including the study design, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods as well as analysis and strategies for integrating the data before the findings are presented.

The synergistic combining of mixed methods and action research has the following major advantages:

- it allows for addressing a practical issue in a systematic and dialectical manner by using multiple perspectives to produce credible and valid results (Ivankova, 2015, 2017), such as the introduction appropriate of topics for

discussion among the mentees and gauging their responses before introducing an appropriate follow-up unit and

- it improves the transition of research findings into practice by generating opportunities for engaging stakeholders into significant outcomes (Ivankova and Wingo (2018:986) such as introducing mentees to profitable business opportunities by introducing them to wider networks where opportunities could be identified.

6.9 KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

In the association between the researcher and participants, new knowledge is created for the benefit of all the stakeholders. The researcher-mentor goes on to use the findings to answer the research questions whilst the mentees will use their new-found knowledge to important decisions that could be life-changing for many people.

6.9.1 Attempting to bridge the knowledge gap

Entrepreneurs who rely almost exclusively on their own experiences to acquire knowledge soon find that they are restricted in their ability to identify business opportunities, but they could go further by associating with a mentor

A mentor may not be able to identify the fragmentary experience of the mentee and how this gap could be bridged over time. If the gap is wide, it would require greater effort from both mentor and mentee which could lead to frustration and a break in communication. I found that a great deal of skill and patience is required in attempting to appreciate the mentee's level of understanding so that the necessary information could be fed in the correct dosages and couched at a pace that was not overwhelming (Swap et al., 2001:108).

According to St. Jean and Mathieu (2015:99), it is through the opportunity that entrepreneurial intention can be translated into action leading to business creation. Therefore, this study focuses on improving the youth's ability to identify and exploit business opportunities with the knowledge he/she acquires during the mentoring sessions.

6.9.2 The co-creation of knowledge

In the association between mentor and mentees, knowledge is co-created in a non-hierarchical partnership, to solve a socio-economic problem. Youth members in the local community who are interested in starting a business are called upon to make their contribution by joining the mentorship programme. The exercise did help in improving their entrepreneurial ability and in preparing them to serve their community.

According to Gullion and Ellis (2014:63), there are two ways in which knowledge can be created and transferred; the first is internalisation which relates to learning by doing and the second is socialisation which relates to sharing experiences and creating tacit knowledge. Swap et al. (2001:97) states that this internalisation and socialisation of knowledge generally occur through informal processes. St. Jean and Mathieu (2015) add that by helping to analyse data from different perspectives, the researcher/mentor is likely to increase the ability of the mentee to recognise opportunities and therefore, acts as an opportunity broker.

6.9.3 The informal transfer of knowledge

According to Swap et al. (2001:98) people drink in knowledge informally and, at times, unconsciously; they learn incidentally while chatting or observing their colleagues and sharing general reading material. Therefore, knowledge transfer can occur even in the absence of deliberate intention to teach or learn. However, experienced individuals can help novices interpret events, understand the technology and business processes.

From my experiences as a mentor-researcher, I found that the mentoring process is aptly described by the acts of socialisation and internalisation, the acts of sharing and learning. This informal knowledge dissemination has been more serendipitous than planned. An opportunity to share and inform can arise at any time. According to Swap et al. (2001:95), over time, this knowledge will mature into tacit knowledge which are intangible assets built up over a period in the heads, hands and hearts of people.

Since the participants were functioning at different levels on the mentorship programme, it was necessary to customise individual lessons to meet the entrepreneurial developmental needs of each mentee. With the enthusiasm of most of the participants being high, I felt that this was necessary to address individual needs to sustain their interest and commitment to the project.

6.10 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

The role of ICT in our everyday life has undoubtedly increased in the last decade. The speed at which information is shared across the globe is becoming fast with the advent of 5G technology. Together with these innovations, come numerous business opportunities that could be exploited if the requisite skills with the proper tools are available.

6.10.1 Action research and technology

Action research is not an orderly activity proceeding step-by-step for the researcher and participants may have to work backwards, repeating processes and rethinking interpretations resulting in radical changes (Stringer, 2007:9). In this regard, technology makes it possible to disseminate information speedily across a wide area and effect changes that would have taken much longer using traditional methods.

It should also be noted that network action research does not mean that the entire research momentum is driven by technology. Whilst technology is becoming a part of our everyday life, action researchers have to take into account that some communities may still be in the process of acquiring ICT access and usage (Foth, 2006:210). The cost of data is still beyond the reach of many people with 59.6% of the urban population in South Africa having internet access and only 2% of rural homesteads connected (Stats SA, 2020).

6.10.2 The ubiquity of the Internet

Technology and the Internet, in particular, have become part of everyday life in the developed world (Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 2002). The ubiquity of the Internet

and the widespread use of mobile phones and other network technologies afford communication patterns that change the character and quality of community interaction and engagement (Foth, 2006:206). The Internet permits the interchange of business information in real-time communication among all stakeholders (Fallows, 2004; Horrigan, 2001; Rice, 2002 cited in Foth, 2006:207). For those without internet access, it might be a case of missed opportunities.

6.10.3 Exploiting business opportunities

According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000:56), the creation of a business is dependent on identifying and timeously exploiting a business opportunity in a particular business environment. Fuentes et al. (2010:136) state that strong social network ties positively influence opportunity exploitation since entrepreneurs are more inclined to establish a business if close relationships are sustained with other business people or if they are supported by business associations. It would foster business establishment by identifying encouraging opportunities, and at the same time, it could lessen the fear of investing time and resources in these opportunities.

Social interactions with other like-minded people enable the aspiring entrepreneur to seek relevant information that is necessary for deciding to exploit an opportunity. Participants could work through each of the stages by exploring the details of their activities through the process of observation reflection and action (Stringer, 2007:9).

6.11 SELF-EFFICACY

Action research is an effective form of phenomenology, focusing on people's actual lived experiences and together with hermeneutics, which incorporates the meaning people attach to events in their lives; we have a perfect combination that makes this research exercise so meaningful.

6.11.1 Overcoming business scepticism

Self-efficacy perception is a cognitive variable that influences the opportunity identification process (Krueger and Dickson, 1994:385). The decision to exploit a business opportunity is usually taken in unpredictable circumstances with uncertainty surrounding the outcomes. However, individuals with high self-efficacy and optimism are more inclined to exploit opportunities as they take business decisions amidst

mounting scepticism (Shane and Venkataraman 2000:218). Entrepreneurs with high self-efficacy believe that they can succeed when opportunities arise regardless of the prevailing business sentiment (Mitchell and Shepherd, 2010:138).

Just as fear is a negative emotion that prevents the exploitation of opportunities (Welppe et al. 2012:123), having a strong sense of self-efficacy gives confidence to execute a plan. Self-efficacy beliefs are central to the opportunity exploitation phase (St. Jean et al., 2016:101). This attribute could be latent in our aspiring entrepreneurs, but their association with mentors could build their confidence and strengthen these qualities necessary for business success.

6.11.2 Self-efficacy in opportunity recognition

The intention to start a business is certainly a necessity. However, it may not be sufficient to explain how opportunities are identified and exploited to ensure business success. St. Jean et al. (2016:102) assert that self-efficacy in opportunity recognition can also help start the process. Whilst getting encouragement from home at an early age could be an advantage, the overall knowledge of the novice entrepreneur together with the support structures derived from the mentoring and business networks would be an added advantage. This collaborative approach using creative communication styles could build a positive network that enables diverse groups of people to work harmoniously and achieve set objectives (Stringer, 2007:21).

6.12 ACTION RESEARCH AND ETHICS

There are a few ethical considerations that need to be adhered to when conducting action research. Since there is the active involvement of other participants as co-researchers, their active involvement should always be maintained to ensure credible outcomes.

6.12.1 The ethics associated with action research

Several ethical dilemmas are associated with the process of action research. According to Winter (1996:1), the most significant is the need for ongoing work to remain visible and the researchers to be open to suggestions from others, since any failure to do this may minimise the potential for equality and empowerment linked to this design. To do this effectively, it may be necessary to gain permission to access

several data sources so that the cyclical nature of this inquiry can be maintained with minimum difficulty. (Le May and Lathlean, 2001:507).

The communication strategies of network action research assist in maintaining a trustworthy level of accountability and rigour by making the research process, observations and interpretations public as well as encouraging discussions and opening the platform for challenging research findings by community participants. (Foth, 2006:222).

6.13 COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

Done with care, action research is mutually beneficial to the researcher-mentor and community partners as the relationship of trust develop. The commitment to change is derived from the desire to improve the social and economic life of communities through increased entrepreneurial activities of the youth.

6.13.1 A shared commitment to democratic social change

Kasl and Yorks (2002:16) state that by working in collaboration with other participants can achieve the most and grow to appreciate the interrelatedness that created a power greater than a sum of individual powers. Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire (2003:14) add that working collaboratively with others leads not only to community changes but also to personal changes in the action researcher. Whatever the uncertainties, there seems to be tolerance because there is a commitment to changing the world in some positive way (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood and Maguire, 2003:21).

6.13.2 Potential transformative impact of the study

Although mentors can help foster entrepreneurship and enhance the entrepreneur's competencies through learning, it appears that little research has focussed on mentoring and its impact on the entrepreneurial process leading to the start-up (St. Jean et al., 2016:98). Consequently, the potential impact of the present study is enormous given the number of mentees actively engaged as co-researchers.

A supportive network of collaborative relationships is being nurtured to provide stakeholders with ongoing support and resource. Solutions that emerge from the research process become much more sustainable enabling people to maintain the

momentum of their activity over an extended period, providing access to information and support that builds the power of the people in many different ways (Stringer, 2007:21)

6.14 CONCLUSION

Action research places a strong focus on people-centred and participatory research method with emphasis on practical outcomes to assess its quality and rigour as opposed to publishing results and theorising research findings. (Foth, 2006:221). Action research empowers research practitioners and helps heal the divide between research and practice. Whilst the results in action research are not intended to be generalisable beyond the community being addressed, there may be similarities in social conditions that make the findings generalisable. Rowell (2005:34) adds that the findings presented could demonstrate the value of creating local or regional forums for the sharing of action research results given the universal nature of the problem being investigated and similarities in circumstances.

Mixed methods research is often cited as offering itself to a transformative-emancipatory framework (Mertens, 2011:195). A transformative mixed methods approach is often viewed as rooted in participatory action research because mixed methods studies produce knowledge that reflects the power and social relations in society thereby offering people the tools to improve conditions (Ivankova and Wingo, 2018:985).

Chapter Seven traces my autoethnographic journey over the last half-century. It surveys my experiences in business both as an observer and a participant, highlighting the successes as well as failures and how these factors have influenced my life.

CHAPTER SEVEN: AUTOETHNOGRAPHY: MY ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

On this reflexive journey dating back to my childhood, I trace my steps in the entrepreneurial field as an observer while growing up, exploring nodal moments that have influenced my passage through life over the years in different ways. There are people who have had an indelible influence on my outlook on life and shaped me into the individual I am today. The socio-political environment under which we lived in the 1960s and 1970s also influenced our standard of living because of the limited opportunities we had. The business world was also very restrictive with apartheid policies defining how business should be conducted and demanded strict adherence to these laws.

This narrative, written in the first-person confronts experiences about my past that may not be so flattering. However, reflecting on personal experiences, it aims to understand society with its challenges, and I am in a position to interpret the challenges faced at that time.

In keeping with the autoethnographic tradition, I write free of academic jargon and I offer a narrative on entrepreneurship embedded in autobiography with the intention of benefitting self and culture by mentoring a group of aspiring entrepreneurs. Auto ethnographically constructed narratives are very personalised, revealing texts in which the writer tells the story about his/her lived experiences in relation to the cultural setting. The writer also resists the temptation to interpret the story asking the reader to sensitively "re-live" the events with the writer (Richardson, 2000:11).

Most often, autoethnographers write about "epiphanies" or remembered moments perceived to have significantly impacted the trajectory of a person's life (Bochner and Ellis, 1992:154). My experiences during the period under review still evoke great emotions that have motivated me to analyse the nodal moments and celebrate the achievements as well as reflect on the failures with a more discerning mind. I outline nodal moments that have significantly impacted my entrepreneurial outlook including the high and low points in my business life and the lessons derived.

7.2 DOING AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Autoethnography involves reflection which is an active cognitive activity that intentionally transports one to a particular experience focusing the lens on oneself and then the people who become the topic for investigation. The findings are then written into a heartfelt story.

7.2.1 Focusing the lens on self

In this genre, the lens focuses on the researcher as well as the subject under investigation. Ryan (2012:545) affirms that sometimes it is easier to write from a distance as a detached observer than to expose oneself to public scrutiny. I do believe that this form of research generates a great deal of fear and self-doubt. Ellis (1999:672) maintains that the emotional pain that one experiences mean that the real work has only begun.

I found that writing as a method of enquiry enabled me to delve deeper into issues that were previously considered too private to discuss. Writing personal stories can be in a way therapeutic for the author to find meaning in the story and eradicate the burden of keeping the story within. My story had been locked in for over half a century but is now given a platform to be aired. I found this exercise healing since the story presented depicts new traces of self-awareness and an overall sense of empowerment.

7.2.2 Writing personal stories

Autoethnography is a method of learning about and understanding lived experience to benefit self, society, community and culture, but to do otherwise risks being an exercise in self-centeredness (Doty, 2010:1049). The self can have a strong presence without dominating the story. It was my intention from the outset that the pain experienced by my father and myself in our business life should benefit other budding entrepreneurs by informing via the stories to prevent similar setbacks in their entrepreneurial journeys.

I view the lives of these inexperienced business aspirants in an empathising manner making the narrative meaningful and heartfelt. I feel their pain and celebrate their successes. Ellis (1999:676) reminds us that it is important to think with a story rather

than just about it. Thinking with a story allows one to resonate with the story, reflect on it and become a part of it. Here, I am the vulnerable observer (Behar, 1996:1) and the ultimate participant (Merton, 1998:18).

Researchers will acknowledge the vulnerability experienced by the auto ethnographer in revealing himself/herself and, not having control over how readers will interpret what was said or not being able to take back what was said thereby feeling that one's life is being critiqued (Wall 2008:41). Although it can be cathartic as we write to make sense of ourselves and our experiences, the risk associated with the exposure does create an uneasiness. Nevertheless, I concur with Mitchell and Webber (2005:4) who say that many scholars do not realise the richness and depth of the research produced by "looking inwards" and its scholarship value.

7.3 WHO AM I?

Ellis (2004:120) contends that autoethnography does not proceed in a linear fashion since it is complex and can be likened to being sent into the woods without a compass. My experiences have been multidimensional and as I delve deeper into my life, I am presented with a new opportunity for self-discovery.

7.3.1 The self as a social construct

How I am today is in part the result of how I have acted, believed, rejected and embraced certain views of the world. My worldview has not been the sole creations of myself, but the consequences of interactions between myself and the array of social forces that have acted upon me and moulded me into the person that I am today (Austin, 2005 cited in Hickey, 2007:25). My outlook to life is guided by these experiences and I believe that society could benefit from the knowledge that I have accumulated over the years. It is my entrepreneurial experiences, both successes and failures, which would be of great value to aspiring entrepreneurs in the community.

I am on a mission to reconstruct the story of a life lived. I open my past entrepreneurial journey for interrogation in the present and in this way contribute to greater self-awareness. I realised that the successes and failures alike, ought to be given equal attention because they were all part of the journey.

I believe that if these experiences are meaningful, they should be given back to enrich the culture from which they originate. Therefore, I desire to share my knowledge with aspiring entrepreneurs to inspire them to enter the business world.

7.3.2 Our lives as storytellers

We live our lives as storytellers and story listeners; storytellers make sense of their own experiences through constructing stories that they share with others, either sustaining or transforming cultural stories to bring about changes in society (Ellingson, 2017:66). Understanding research that is moulded through academic storytelling excavates prospects for evaluating knowledge because they are embedded in society's main form of communication, which is storytelling. My message is inherent in my story and I say it without interpreting, leaving it entirely to the reader to decipher.

I want this story to be entrepreneurially oriented, personal, lived, reflexive and scholarly (Fletcher, 2011:67). I hope the autoethnography that follows will resonate with a wider academic audience to create what could be termed the "ah-ha" moment which aligns well with entrepreneurial praxis (Hesse-Biber, 2007 cited in Ryan, 2012:546). An important concern in my storytelling is interpreting the voice of my audience through their responses. It is my fervent desire that they find meaning and derive lessons from my stories.

Whilst autoethnography makes explicit the voice of the researcher in the text, it is not for the purpose of self-absorption or narcissism (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009 cited in Ryan, 2012:545). As a self-narrative, my account is primarily focused on the situatedness of the self in the social context. In this study, I concentrate on reclaiming and recreating a story of suppressed personal history that is enclosed in pain (Christou, 2009:38).

7.4 FAMILY BUSINESS: A NURSERY FOR ENTREPRENEURS

The apartheid government did not encourage entrepreneurship as a career for non-white youth because they were expected to serve the system, sell their labour and occupy a position of subservience. Even at that early age, I found it so unjust that we

could not choose a career in entrepreneurship with specialised training because prosperity among the people could pose a threat to white domination.

As a result of those experiences, I as the autoethnographer did try to privilege the marginalised reader by rejecting the dominant paradigm of that period (Butz, 2018:4). The goal was to highlight the importance of emancipatory social solidarity and ultimately the realisation of a more equitable social arrangement (Hickey, 2007:22). We had to overcome the psychological barriers that the system imposed upon us. At the same time, I believed that we were entitled to a more just business arrangement given that we contributed to the economic growth of the province and the country as a whole.

My father, who was an excellent tailor, learnt his craft whilst in the family business. He worked very hard to please the family and satisfy our needs, but he often fell short in his efforts because of circumstances beyond his control. At the time, I observed that there were many tailors in the neighbourhood who competed fiercely for a small customer base. At the time peoples' limited resources meant that they had clothing stitched only for special occasions. This situation did influence the business and our family circumstances because of inadequate income.

I do believe that the limited opportunities and resultant loss of income did often cause financial crises in our family business. This directly affected the intergenerational transfer of wealth since the parental net worth significantly affected the wealth prospects of their children (Gilmore, 2009:321). There was no wealth that could be carried over so that the next generation could continue the business or take the family entrepreneurial legacy to a new level.

At the end, when my father decided to close the business because the authorities demanded the demolition of residential and business premises to make way for racially segregated zones, it was indeed a sad event in our family. There was no profit to show from the closure of a business and my father had to seek employment. All he had was a debt which the proceeds of his new employment had to service for a few years thereafter.

I do believe that the apartheid policy of forced removals into racially segregated residential and commercial zones had caused heartache and suffering for many non-white communities. The forced closure of our business left a lasting impression on

me. I recall walking daily past my father's abandoned business premises on my way to school for a few months after the closure. It was sad to see the abandoned building and I often thought about how the turn of events had influenced our entire family life. It might have been very different had there been unrestricted trade free of apartheid laws.

7.5 LESSONS IN LIFE AND BUSINESS

The lessons from this period were painful, yet significant because they were lessons in life and business. As a researcher, I realised that it is not necessary for knowledge to originate from research alone to be relevant. Personal stories should also be given a space to contribute to our overall knowledge of the world. Autoethnography makes it possible to bring these stories with all its complexities into the open by enhancing the awareness for justice and advocating for social change.

Through the narration of my story, I open an ethnographic dialogue between myself as the narrator and the people who find resonance in my story. They may be readers who are interested in the history of the period or aspiring entrepreneurs who are searching for business ideas from the experiences of others. The message is clear; entrepreneurship will level the playing fields for socio-economic emancipation and community wellbeing.

7.5.1 Life under apartheid in the 1960s and 1970s

As a child of the 1960s, through my situatedness, I am well positioned and suited to produce an authentic representation of my world in that period. I agree with Ginwright (2010:10) since I believe that my autoethnography served less as an academic obligation and more as a strategy for healing from the pain experienced each day. According to Spry (2010:455), the ethnographer plays a critical role in taking the readers below the surface, disrupting the status quo and unsettling neutrality by revealing underlying operations of power and control.

With the advent of democracy in 1994, came the liberalising of business practice and removal of trade restrictions; yet we observe that the youth have still not embraced entrepreneurship in their droves. Perhaps they have not seen business as an emancipator from poverty or they do not believe in their ability to run a business because they are still trapped in a past, which emphasised the get-a-job mentality.

If that is the case, then it is time for the awakening of historically marginalised people to engage in the transformation of the social order through improvement in their socio-economic conditions. Shaull (1972 cited in Hickey, 2007:21) suggests embracing the term conscientisation referring to learning to perceive social political and economic contradictions and take action against the unequal elements.

For me, the objective of writing is to do justice with my words to the people at the very heart of what I write. My story should create greater awareness among the youth about the possibilities that could be achieved by embracing entrepreneurship to address the inequalities and injustice suffered by the people under apartheid. However, that has not ended given the high rate of unemployment in the country today.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:166), a narrative of this nature could be seen as a source of empowerment and a form of opposition to the dominant paradigm from which springs the credibility and transferability of my story. The relevance of my proposal to mentor young aspiring entrepreneurs is abundantly evident.

The struggles that are articulated and affirmed through the stories have more to do with the peoples' collective sense of survival rooted in common suffering and in overcoming struggles (Camangian, 2010:197). The value in sharing stories of struggle was that rapport developed in their mutual understanding of their common circumstances. As the stories unfold and resonance found, we recognise that we should not leave a paradigm unchallenged simply because it is dominant (Zuber-Skerritt and Farquhar, 2002:103).

7.6 PEOPLE WHO HAVE INFLUENCED ME

According to Spry (2009:603), introspection of the researcher is a way through which the researcher comments which translates into an interrogation of the lived experiences via memory work. Coffey (1999:127), affirms that during ethnographic work, memories are gathered about the experiences of being there with the social actors in the field, adding that ethnography is an act of memory because observation and the resulting story cannot be separated from the memories that shape them.

I had a sense of anxiety arising from the tension between proceeding with an academic project and telling a story about my life that was inextricably entangled

with my family. Although I speak exclusively from my perspective, I also automatically reveal things about my family and circle of friends that could be considered private (Wall, 2008:49). Nevertheless, I decided to go ahead because of the therapeutic value leading to rising levels of self-confidence.

7.6.1 My Mother: the visionary

Possibly the greatest influence in shaping my life from childhood well into adulthood had been my Mother whom I affectionately referred to as Amma. Despite her limited formal schooling, Amma was always eager to improve herself, by listening to the radio or reading whatever interested her. English novelist, Thomas Hardy was one of her favourites having read all his books. She was very practical in her approach and always assured us that the challenges our family faced would come to pass. All Amma would say is that we had to work hard, stay focused on our studies and leave the rest to her. My four sisters and I had implicit faith in Amma's suggestions and carried out her instructions diligently. She was the matriarch who commanded respect.

Any family that relied solely on a survivalist business for income had to look to a secondary source of revenue should the primary source not deliver. Amma was our safety net whenever there was a shortfall, and her entrepreneurial instincts would surface, aimed at making a profit that could supplement the household income. Whether it was selling woman's garments or blending her spices and packaging them off at a reasonable profit, Amma was up to the task and delivered at all times. What remains indelible in my mind from this period was her sense of honesty in her transactions for she believed in the presence of a Higher Power that looked upon her transactions and rewarded her with further business if she conducted herself honestly. She unknowingly instilled in me the idea of ethical business practice.

Our notion of growing was informed by our positionality in the social margins. To grow and progress meant to overcome personal and social struggles. How we lived and where we lived determined our status in society. If you left your destiny in the hands of the apartheid government, you would be forcibly evicted to a township according to your race. If you desired better, you would have to pay the price and Amma was prepared to make that sacrifice for the entire family.

7.6.2 My Father: A survivalist entrepreneur

Much of my disciplining had come from my father whom I lovingly referred to as Appa. He was a hard man whose outlook on life was shaped, largely, by his unfortunate childhood. Having lost both his parents, by the time he was 16 years old, Appa had to take on the responsibility of continuing the family business from where his parents had left. It was a daunting task for a teenager who had to master his craft as a tailor in a short space of time to sustain the business.

Visiting the tailor shop regularly after my day at school gave me a glimpse of how garments were made, how customers bargained for discounts and the profits that were realised at the end of the day. I soon recognised that this business demanded hard work with a very small return for an investment in your time. I often looked around at other businesses and frequently visited the shop belonging to my friend's dad. I was always impressed with the way these businesses were run and often wondered why we could not run our business in this way. I recall that Appa's business was often in a survivalist mode; there were times the rent could not be met or payments to suppliers were not done. All these factors had a negative impact on the home front with Amma being called upon to bail out the primary business with her meagre income.

Appa worked hard but the successes in the business were too few to mention. When we did experience those sweet spots, there was joy throughout the entire household. Unfortunately, these joyous occasions were so infrequent that we would replay the last one repeatedly in our minds. As an adult, I spent a great deal of time with Appa talking on a range of subjects and getting to understand his business philosophy. I found that he was always content and believed that he was always entitled to enjoy the fruits of his labour first before any payments could be made to creditors. I knew that this attitude was bound to keep him perpetually in survival mode and I also knew that it would be difficult to change his way of conducting business.

I recall his last days as a time of considerable emotional turmoil. Appa was confined to bed as a result of diabetic neuropathy but he was in good spirit with his mental faculties intact. I would visit him daily and we would talk business because he was keen to know how I was getting on. I was still recovering from my business setback and I did not want to worry him with my predicament. I intended to keep his spirits up

and show him that we valued his opinion. We talked and I listened to his advice even if I had heard the story previously! I always reminded him that I was waiting for him to get back on his feet so that we could proceed with the project we were discussing. This always lit up his face and he would assure me that we would start the following week. I was always hopeful that he would walk again, but our conversations were not the same. Appa was slipping away, and it saddened us immensely.

7.6.3 VMG: A light in the darkness

Although autoethnographic work is presented as a personal narrative, the genre does more than simply tell a story, as it offers some valuable insights. Some of these insights I had acquired from my association with people who had serendipitously crossed my path. Many were willing to help me get back on track; some offering a shoulder to lean on even if they knew little about business, others being critical despite having elementary knowledge of business themselves. Despite their shortcomings, they were all appreciated for the support in my dark hour.

It is, perhaps, my friendship with an octogenarian who was once a very successful entrepreneur himself, that help me understand how to handle failure. The gentleman, whom I shall refer to as VMG, was well known in business and cultural circles. Our relationship, which was based on mutual respect, lasted many years until his sudden passing late into his 90s. I was always impressed with his long arduous journey to business success, and I found his involvement in sporting and cultural activities most illuminating. VMG and I would spend long periods together in discussion and I realised that he appreciated the attention that I had given him. Since I was willing to listen, he was willing to share his insights on business and other relevant issues.

VMG was a self-made entrepreneur who started with no capital but with solid backing from the matriarchal figure of the family, his loyal wife. Together they had run a stall at the Indian Market in Victoria Street, Durban, specialising in spices and groceries. They grew the business which expanded rapidly to include his three sons. VMG shared some insights into the reasons for the success of his business. He was too modest to label them his secrets of success but emphasised that certain steps must be undertaken by the entrepreneur. He had absolute faith in his wife's ability to read the business environment and advise him. He listened to her wise counsel which was uncharacteristic for businesses run by powerful patriarchs at that time.

VMG also stressed that whilst the business was important and one had to work hard, attention had to be given to the physical and spiritual aspects of one's being. To this end, he ensured that he was in peak shape through regular exercising and moderate eating habits. His spiritual life was also well rounded with regular prayer services and his service to the community in education and cultural matters are indeed renowned.

I found so much of inspiration in my discussions with him and the knowledge I derived has certainly helped me in embarking on the second phase of my entrepreneurial journey. I am truly grateful to have met people like VMG when I did.

7.7 MY DESIRE TO SPREAD ENTREPRENEURSHIP

According to Butz (2018:18), self-representations should not be too self-absorbed, then its real purpose is lost. To be successfully persuasive, the ethnographer must situate him/herself in relation to wider society incorporating a receptive audience that identifies with the subject under investigation.

Having attained democracy over 25 years ago, the youth of South Africa have not been fully liberated from the shackles of poverty and unemployment. Their economic emancipation will only be complete once they are productively engaged in activities that bring prosperity to themselves, their families and the community. I desire to contribute to this goal by creating greater awareness of entrepreneurship among the youth as a panacea for the instability in society. On a deeper level, Hickey (2007:22) views that this goal as drawing awareness of the significance of emancipatory social solidarity that could lead to the realisation of a more equitable and non-exploitative social arrangement that the new South African constitution promised.

I realised that if I were to play a meaningful role in promoting entrepreneurship, I would have to ensure a move away from self-centeredness to collective consideration to foster interpersonal communication and intercultural compassion (Camangian, 2010:184). I suppose that the challenges I experienced in the business enable me to empathetically embrace the nascent youth entrepreneurs in the mentorship programme.

7.8 NETWORKS

My fascination with networks was that they provided an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals with common interests and shared vision. In the brief period that I had been in business, I found networking with my close circle of business associates had led to new relationships that revealed further opportunities. However, I also discovered that being more collaborative rather than competitive would ensure that these relationships endure. Consequently, whilst remaining loyal to the ideas of social embeddedness, I am keen to promote a socioeconomic framing that challenges traditional development patterns of entrepreneurship and emphasise collaboration and economic interdependencies as opposed to being excessively competitive (Johannsson, 1990)

I am truly optimistic about the potential of the youth successfully engaging in business activities should they possess the appropriate knowledge from an early age, be given the guidance and support of mentors, develop a co-operative spirit among fellow entrepreneurs and widen their network of business associates. I am convinced of the possibility of local entrepreneurial networks bridging national and international markets to give our budding entrepreneurs the exposure that could make them successful (Fletcher, 2011:68). I fundamentally believe in equality among people and wanted to be part of an initiative that could help achieve greater economic equality by highlighting the opportunities associated with entrepreneurship (Erikson, 2008:627).

7.9 CRITICISM OF AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Coffey (1999) refers to autoethnography as self-indulgent and narcissistic and Atkinson (1997 cited in Doloriert and Sambrook, 2009:28) criticises it for being a romantic construction of the self. By using self as a source of data, autoethnography has been criticised for being self-indulgent, introspective, and individualised (Atkinson, 1997; Sparkes, 2000; Wall, 2006:8).

I concur with Burnier (2006:414) with the suggestion that autoethnographic writing should be personal and scholarly, evocative and analytical, descriptive and theoretical when it is done well. Autoethnography as a personal narrative has been criticised for accentuating the therapeutic at the expense of the analytical (Atkinson,

1997). An essential objective of this critical paradigm is to liberate and expose social injustice. The search for “truth” is not a goal of this perspective, rather reality is assumed to always be “representational” rather than “real” or “truthful” (Hesse-Biber, 2010:455).

Autoethnography allowed me a medium to examine the forces that were integral to the creation of myself (Christou, 2009:39). Furthermore, autoethnography questions the legitimacy of knowledge which does not integrate the details of personal experiences, and it has uncertainties about the ability of conventional academic research to represent effectively the relationship between personal experience and larger social and cultural phenomena (Butz, 2018:6).

7.10 CONCLUSIONS

I hope that the discussion I have presented about the challenges I faced will inform future autoethnographers and inspire them to share their experiences and reflections as we move toward a greater understanding of this empowering and compelling method. Whilst it might be traumatic in part, it remains a methodology of the heart (Pelias, 2004 cited in Doloriert and Sambrook, 2009:27). Riedmann (1993:147) summarises that autoethnographers are showing a growing desire to resist sterile research entering a culture, exploiting cultural members and then recklessly leaving to write about the culture for monetary or professional gain, while disregarding relational ties to the people under investigation. This study had the aim of using the researcher's business experience to mentor youth from the community that found resonance in the story. To assess the value and potential contribution of my narrative, I sought feedback from my mentees, and I was overwhelmed by their responses. I soon realised that these youth would gladly embrace any progressive step and serve their families and community if they were given the encouragement and support that they needed.

Ellis (1999:674) concludes that our lives are unique, but they are also typical and generalisable since we all participate in a limited number of cultures and institutions. Readers are constantly testing a story's generalisability as they ask if it speaks to them about their experience or the lives of others, they know. My story does find resonance among many because of the high rate of business failures. Hopefully, this study will contribute to addressing that issue.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the two-phase research findings separately and then integrating the dominant qualitative strand with the quantitative strand offering support for triangulation purposes. Through the analysis of numeric and textual data, the researcher was able to draw on his personal experiences in business, which was the foundation of the mentorship programme. The chapter concludes with the answering of the research questions, which the study had set out to investigate.

8.2 DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

In general, there are three data analysis strategies in mixed methods research:

- concurrent mixed analysis—both qualitative and quantitative data are analysed simultaneously;
- sequential qualitative-quantitative data analysis—qualitative data analysis is followed by quantitative data analysis; and
- sequential quantitative—qualitative data analysis—quantitative data analysis is followed by qualitative data analysis (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998:58).

The concurrent mixed analysis is relevant for this study. The pre mentoring questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions was first analysed. This was followed by an action research phase that involved discussion and observation of participants that contributed to the qualitative data. The administering of the post-mentoring questionnaire with its open-ended questions also added to the qualitative data. This was analysed using the NVivo 10 software.

8.3 PRE-MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

The pre-mentoring questionnaire was administered among a group of 32 volunteers who were interested in establishing their own businesses. They were also prepared to participate in a mentoring programme over a period of 12 weeks. The pre-mentoring questionnaire was designed to ascertain their levels of understanding of business practice, their readiness to get into business and their level of commitment

to sustaining a start-up business. The analysis of the pre-mentoring questionnaire revealed the following information:

8.3.1. Business experience

Business experience originating from family background appears to give the mentees some encouragement in embarking on a career in entrepreneurship.

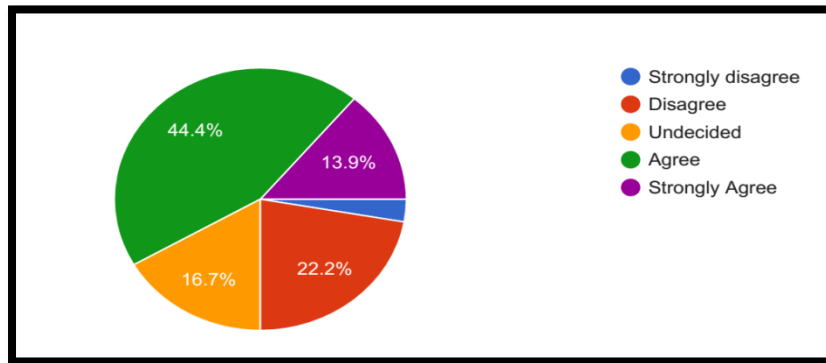


Figure 8. 1 Entrepreneurship is very strong in my extended family

8.3.1.1 Entrepreneurship is very strong in my extended family:

This question revealed that 44.4% of the participants agreed and 13.9% strongly agreed that the entrepreneurship trait was strong in their family. This indicated that a large number have an inclination to embark on business as a career if this attribute could be nurtured from an early age. According to Poutziouris (2006:3), family businesses around the world form the foundation of the economy in both developing and developed countries.

8.3.1.2 Business as a career option being discussed:

Only 22.2% agreed and 11.1% strongly agreed that business as a career option was discussed in the family; an indication that the participants were not encouraged to get into business despite there probably was a strong history in the family. Kirkwood (2007:40) states that there is ample evidence to suggest that there is an increased probability of an individual becoming involved in entrepreneurship if there is a family background in business ownership.

8.3.1.3 Source of business knowledge

Of the participants, 63.9% both strongly disagree and disagree that they received most of their business knowledge from school. This is an indication that a large percentage was exposed to business ideas outside school either informally or at the tertiary level. Isaacs et al. (2007:614) found that some 60% of high schools offered no entrepreneurship exposure at all despite it being a learning outcome of the Economic and Management Sciences curriculum.

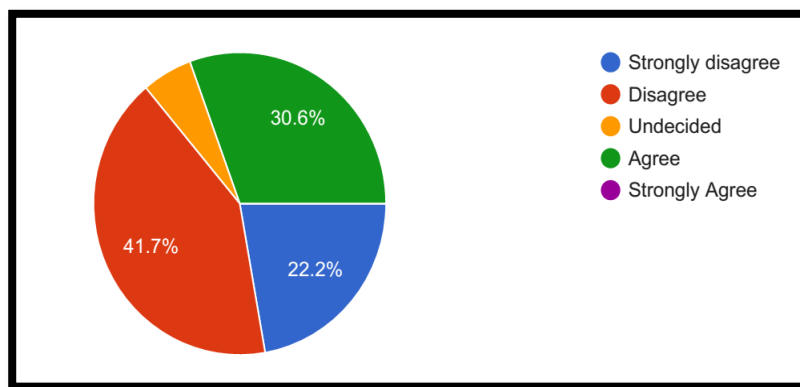


Figure 8. 2 Source of business knowledge

8.3.2 Integration of entrepreneurial traits

The majority of participants considered the acquisition of entrepreneurial traits very important, with coaching and mentoring as well as training and development high on the list of priorities

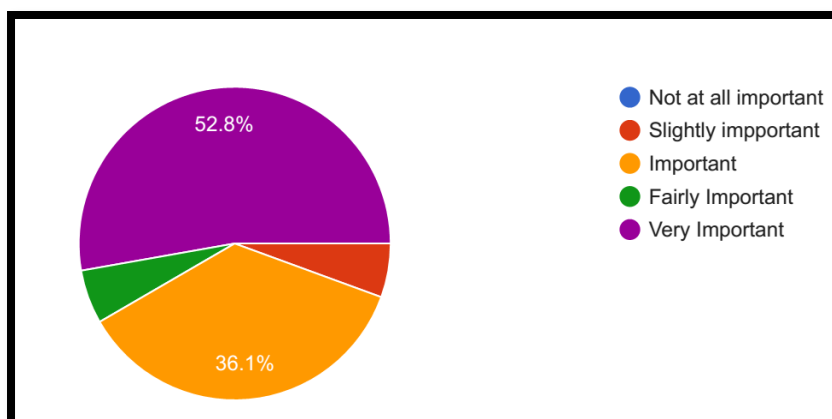


Figure 8. 3 Entrepreneurship as a school subject

8.3.2.1 Entrepreneurship as a school subject

The response indicates that 88.9% considered entrepreneurship as a subject at school either very important or important. This shows the relevance that the participants attach to the subject of entrepreneurship although many had previously indicated that they had not learnt about the subject at school. According to Raposo et al. (2008:489), education has the most profound effect on the likelihood of students starting a business with entrepreneurship education encourages entrepreneurial intentions.

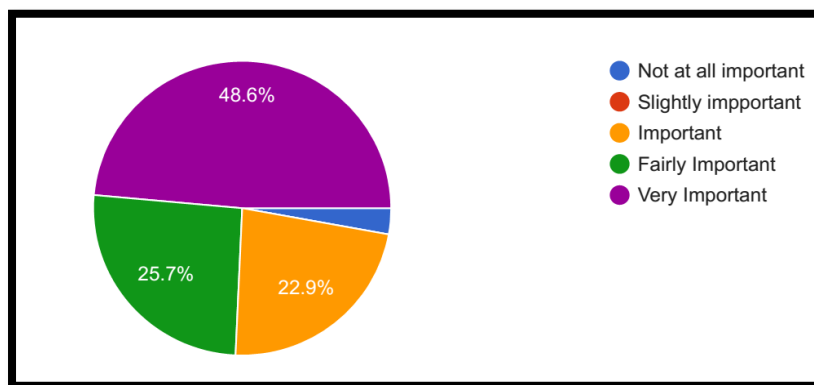


Figure 8. 4 Coaching and mentoring

8.3.2.2 Coaching and mentoring

Of the participants, 48.6% considered coaching and mentoring very important with 22.9% stating that it was important; a further 25.7% considered it fairly important. As a whole the majority place importance, in varying degrees, on coaching and mentoring. Coaching and mentoring is also a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital and psychosocial support that is relevant to the personal and professional development of the coachee/mentee (Bozeman and Feeney, 2007:731).

8.3.2.3 Training and development:

All participants considered training and development to be significant, ranging from very important to fairly important. This is a clear indication of their desire to have the necessary training in this field as they consider it essential. Gibb (2006:136) notes that the importance of a model of entrepreneurship education embedded in the

curricula from primary through secondary and higher education with South African learning institutions at all levels coming under pressure to develop and provide entrepreneurial skills (Pretorius, 2008:236).

8.3.2.4 Business assistance and support:

The desire for assistance in setting up the business or support to sustain the business was considered very important to fairly important by all participants. This illustrates the value that the aspiring entrepreneurs attach to any help in ensuring their business success. Choto et al. (2014:96) state that survivalist entrepreneurs lack the ability to sustain the level of drive and determination that entrepreneurial success requires; therefore, there is a need for business incubators to assist survivalist entrepreneurs in building an entrepreneurial mind-set.

8.3.2.5. Business networking

The majority of participants, (63.9% -very important) and (19.4% - fairly important) place business networking high on the list of priorities. This is significant since the participants acknowledge that there may be other role players who could contribute to the success of their business. Research has pointed to the importance of entrepreneurial networks and of building social capital to the new venture creation process (Baron and Markman, 2003; De Carolis and Saporito, 2006).

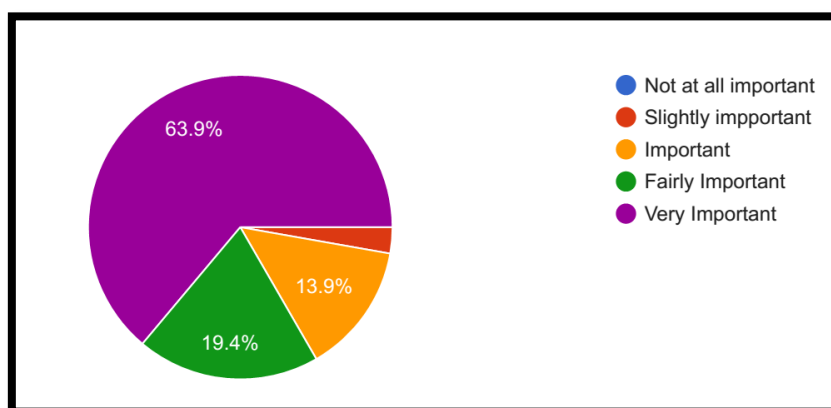


Figure 8. 5 Business networking

8.3.2.6 Use of ICT

The results show that 94.3% of participants identify ICT usage as very important to fairly important. This response was expected given that the participants are youth who are familiar with ICT and its various applications that could make business communication easier and effective. Business networking has taken a completely new meaning in the digital age with opportunities for expanding one's reach through a wider network of business associates through the use of electronic communication.

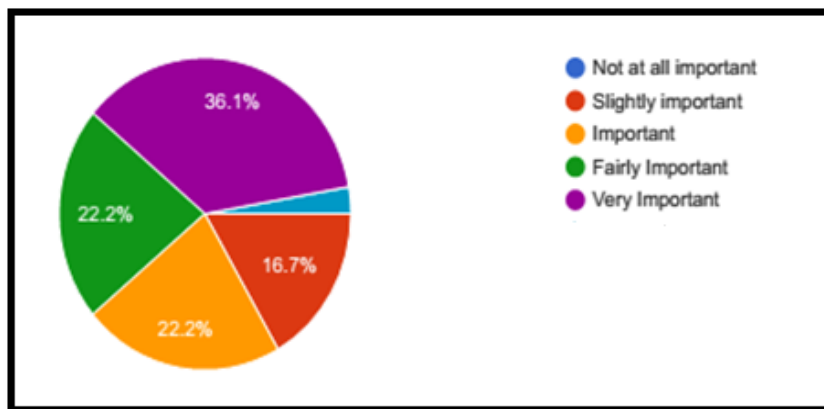


Figure 8. 6 Use of ICT

8.3.2.7 Own business website:

The majority of participants (97.7%) considered the business having its own website as “very important” to “fairly important”. This indicates the high priority they place on a website as a business tool. Sesan (2009:1) maintains that technology is no longer a mere enabler, it is now central to the way one works, lives and plays; one should therefore acknowledge its presence and cooperate with the technological revolution that is transcending national boundaries and sweeping across the globe.

8.3.2.8 Taking risk

The response to risk-taking was varied with 36.1% considering it very important and 16.7% stating it is slightly important. This response could be attributed to the limited understanding that participants have of risk-taking in business and how risk should be perceived. Entrepreneurship requires one to take calculated risks and innovate. Vogus and Sutcliffe (2012: 726) state that where there are challenges and threats in the business environment, mindfulness is the most significant way of responding.

Thus, mindfulness provides a buffer from immediate, automatic reactive working memory to a calculated response (Teasdale and Chaskalson, 2011:110).

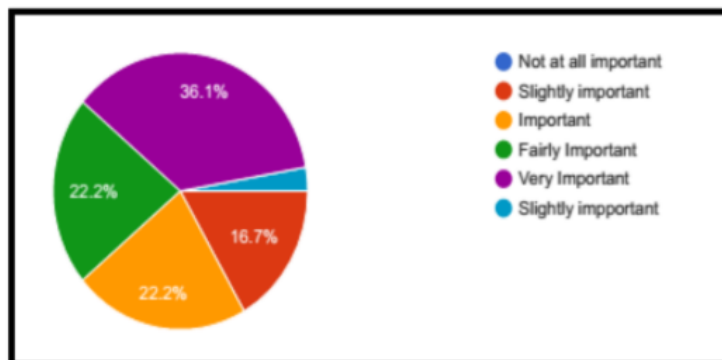


Figure 8. 7 Risk-taking

8.3.2.9 Identifying and evaluating business opportunities

The majority of participants, 58.3%, felt that being able to identify and evaluate business opportunities was very important. This is significant given that business success is dependent on identifying an opportunity and benefitting from it. Bayraktar and Ndubisi (2104:27) contend that mindfulness also helps businesses to respond to the opportunities and threats presented by the competitive business environment. Being mindful also ensures that response to opportunities is fast and decisive.

8.3.2.10 Realistic and measurable objectives:

Of the participants, 58.3% and 19.4% stated that the setting of realistic and measurable objectives was very important to fairly important respectively. This is a positive indication since any organisation needs a road map to guide it along the arduous journey. Entrepreneurship is considered to be an intentionally planned behaviour (Linan, Nabi and Krueger, 2013:136). There has to be a great deal of thought put into the business concept and research into the feasibility of the idea with planning for both the long term and short term.

8.3.2.11 Market analysis and research:

The majority of the responses, 69.4 % (very important) and 13.9% (fairly important) indicated that market analysis and research was essential to the business. This shows that the participants see the significance of analysing the markets before

decisions are taken. Langer and Moldoveanu (2000:7) emphasise that the ability of entrepreneurs to achieve consistent performance in a changing environment depends on how they think, gather information, scan the environment around them, and be able to change their perspective to reflect the prevailing conditions.

8.4 QUALITIES OF ENTREPRENEURS

The participants agreed that an entrepreneur should possess certain qualities so that they could be well equipped to engage in entrepreneurship. They also agreed that those who lacked these strengths should take the necessary steps to acquire them.

8.4.1 Creativity and innovation:

Results indicate that 94.4 % of the participants placed a high premium on creativity and innovation. The significance of this high percentage shows the importance the aspiring entrepreneurs attached to these resourceful traits, which could result in a unique business concept being developed. According to Ndubisi (2012:600), a mindful approach to business can produce quality decisions in one's business and personal life. It could lead to an improvement in capacity to develop multiple effective solutions that would better serve the business objectives than the routine-based management initiatives.

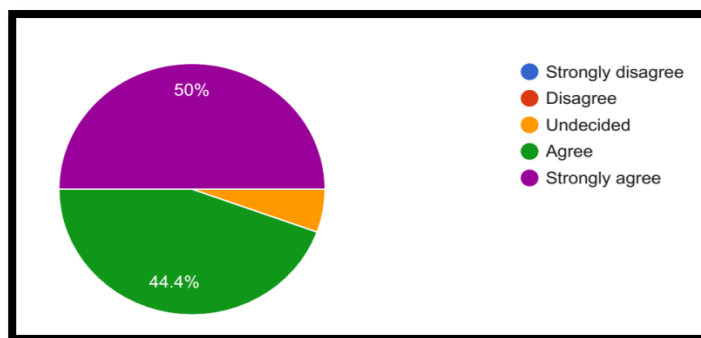


Figure 8. 8 Creativity and innovation

8.4.2 Initiative taking ability:

All the participants either strongly agreed (66.7%) or agreed (33.3%) that the initiative must be taken by the novice entrepreneurs in order to get started. This shows they all agree that being proactive is a requirement for business success. Gwija et al. (2014:168) affirm that South Africa needs a generation of employers and

not a generation of employees. Therefore, by taking the initiative and going into business they will employ people instead of going out and seeking employment themselves.

8.4.3 Problem-solving attitude:

Of the participants, 94.4% strongly agreed or agreed that the right attitude towards problem-solving in business was necessary. The significance of this attribute indicated that the participants saw the need to address problems and seek solutions as they arise. Stevenson and Landstrom (2007:75) contend that governments are looking to entrepreneurs to address a range of problems including poverty alleviation, employment generation, labour force integration, social cohesion, innovation and wealth creation.

8.4.4 Money management skills

With regard to the managing of finances, 76.5% strongly agreed and 20.6% agreed that they were relevant for any business. With most start-ups experiencing cash-flow problems early in the life of the business, paying attention to this skill would probably ensure a longer life span for the business. Meyer (2014:282) contends that the entrepreneurs employ unemployed people who earn a salary and pay taxes whilst the entrepreneur has to make a profit, pay suppliers, pay taxes and draw a salary for him/herself. All these require good money management skills.

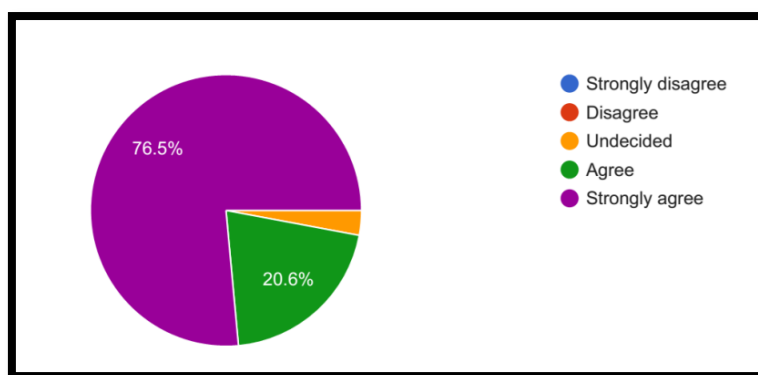


Figure 8. 9 Good money management skills

8.4.5 Good time management skills:

The participants placed good time management skills high on the list of priorities with 80% strongly agreeing and 16% agreeing about its importance. This is crucial in business; timeously capitalising on opportunities, ensuring payments are made on time or even strictly adhering to business hours shows the seriousness with which business is conducted. Mindfulness enables entrepreneurs to focus unreservedly and be totally focused on the present with whatever they are doing or experiencing. This ensures that their information is current, decisions are promptly executed, and all role-players are looking at the same business objectives.

8.4.6. Recordkeeping:

Over 97% of participants agreed that thorough record keeping was necessary for the business from the very beginning. In any business, records reflect its transactions, which include income, expenditure, agreements with associates or banking records. All these records need to be meticulously maintained because they affect the smooth running of the business. There is also the need to ensure that traditional record keeping is supplemented with the electronic paperless cloud storage of records which adds a new dimension to a storage and retrieval system.

8.5 STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS VENTURE

The participants gave various reasons for starting a business which ranged from a desire to earn more money, the influence and encouragement of family and friends to a fear of unemployment.

8.5.1 Fear of unemployment

Over 75% of the participants agree in varying degrees that they do have a fear of unemployment. With the current unemployment rate at 30.1% (Stats SA: 2020), the fear of being a part of the jobless masses is legitimate as the economy shows little signs of growth amidst the Covid 19 pandemic. However, there could be other underlying reasons for this fear, which should be effectively addressed. Fatoki (2010:87) suggests that unemployment has risen among young graduates and

better-educated people. The fear of unemployment is not unfounded. A generation without the hope of a stable job is a burden for the whole of society as poor employment in the early stages of a young person's career can harm job prospects for life (Gilmore 2009:321).

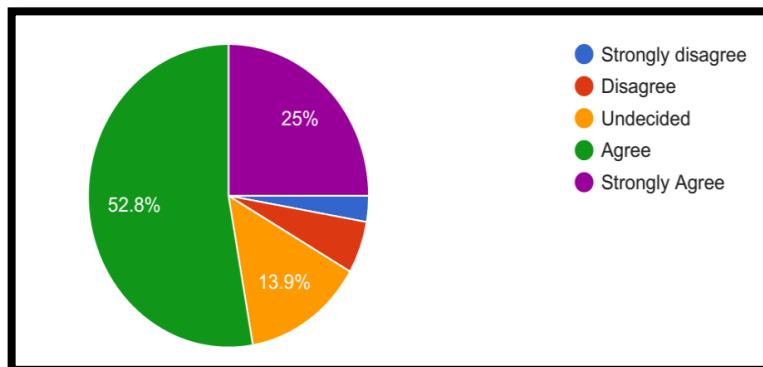


Figure 8. 10 Fear of unemployment

8.5.2 Desire to earn more money

This desire was very strong among 37.1% of the participants with a further 51.4% also agreeing. Many stated that a salaried job determined their standard of living with very little room for luxuries beyond the budget. They did concede that by engaging in business and working hard would it be possible to earn more money.

According to Cassim et al. (2014:30), entrepreneurship is often cited as a crucial tool that facilitates the transformation of a country's economy from a developing one to a developed one; from a low-income society into a high-income technology-based society. The monetary benefits go beyond the entrepreneur, influencing the community and offering a host of other benefits.

8.5.3 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction appears to be low among a significant number, namely 55.5%. However, 16.7% are undecided and a further 25% are happy in their present employment. A number of participants who had little job satisfaction indicated that business was an option they were considering. There are various benefits of being in business. Entrepreneurs in their individual ventures have also enjoyed benefits such

as independence, financial rewards and job security amongst other things (Luke, Verreyne and Kearins, 2007:316).

8.5.4 Influence of family and friends

Although the majority stated, (19.4% strongly agree and 44.4% agree) that the influence of family and friends in deciding to get into business is strong, 27.8% was undecided about the idea of starting their own business. This could be ascribed to a number of reasons with fear and a lack of support being factors. McConaughy et al. (2001) agree that family can provide the support and space that would create the ideal breeding ground for the creation of new enterprises. There is growing evidence that new businesses are being generated as offshoots of the existing family business (Dibrell and Craig, 2006:5).

8.5.5 Self-employment or independence

The majority of participants (85.8%) had shown a desire to secure self-employment and independence by engaging in their own business. However, 11.4% had indicated that they were undecided and a further 2.8% had no intention at all of getting involved in business. For those entering the business world, they find that it offers them opportunities to achieve financial freedom and independence

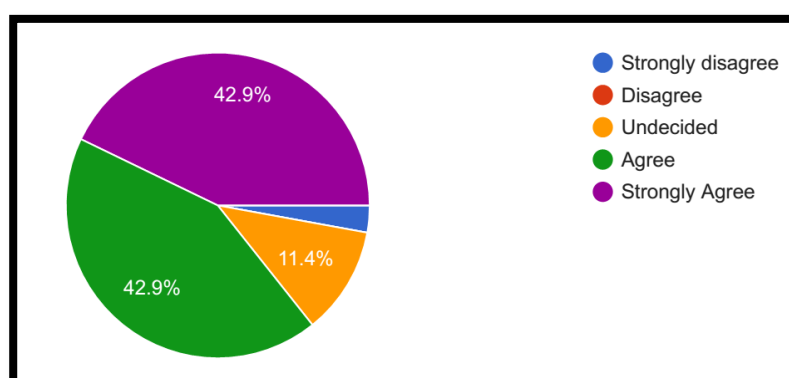


Figure 8. 11 To secure self-employment or independence

8.5.6 Social status and prestige:

Although 34.3% agreed that their participation in business would bring them social status and prestige, 20% were undecided with 22.9% disagreeing and 17.1% strongly disagreeing that they are motivated to get into business for these reasons.

According to Gilmore (2009:322), prestige and status go beyond one's personal needs. Youth entrepreneurship gives one the opportunity to address major issues like racial disparities in wealth acquisition, growth, and transfer as it is also a potential path toward racial and economic justice for low-income youth of colour (Gilmore 2009:322).

8.5.7 Talent and business

Over 90% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they would like to make use of their own talent and build a business around it. This is a positive starting point since encouragement is given to those who engage in activities that they are passionate about. It is more likely for one to make a business success of a passion than of something one is not very familiar with. Mahadea et al. (2011:68) argue that on the basis of the dynamic labour conditions in South Africa, many young people will not find jobs after completing their secondary education and should therefore use their talents and consider self-employment as an option, instead of hunting for wage employment.

8.5.8 Getting a salaried job

The idea of opting for a salaried job instead of engaging in business is considered by a number of the participants for a number of reasons. Many are influenced by the bad experience of others; some have difficulty coping with risk and others fear failure in business.

8.5.9 Experiences of others in business

Whilst 63.9% strongly agree or agree that they had heard of bad experiences of other businesses that are influencing their decision to enter the business arena, 19.4% are undecided and 16.7% disagree that the bad experiences of others would influence their decision to get into business. However, they seem to lack the burning

entrepreneurial desire to take the bold step forward. Therefore, it is important for aspiring entrepreneur to imbibe the dimensions of Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) which include autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness (Van Geenhuizen et al., 2008).

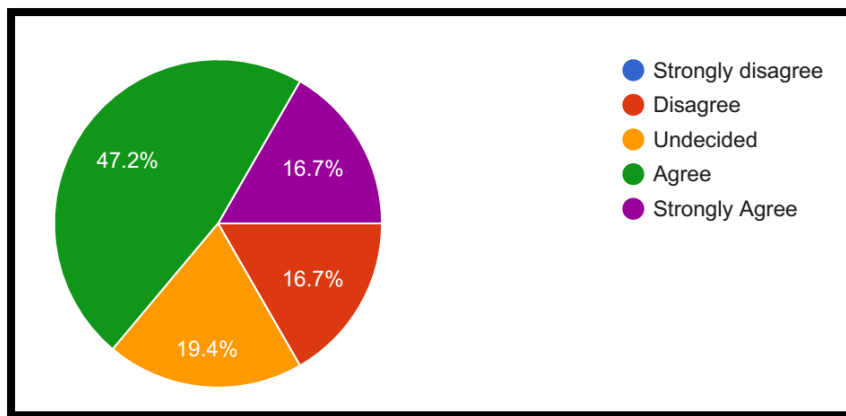


Figure 8. 12 Experiences of others in business

8.5.10 Coping with risk:

The majority of participants, (86.1%) have indicated that they have difficulty coping with risk. This is significant given that risk is always present in the business environment. Therefore, these aspiring entrepreneurs need to be looking at ways to strengthen themselves psychologically in preparation for a career in business. Coaching and mentoring could contribute to the solution in this regard. Grant (2015:49) alludes that governments in developed and developing economies have also recognised the positive economic impact of the entrepreneur and taken steps to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour. Therefore, the youth need to become more receptive to the possibilities inherent in entrepreneurship as a career option to overcome their fear and difficulty coping with risk.

8.5.11 Family responsibilities

The fear of not being able to earn a constant source of income has led 36.1% to strongly agree and 55.6% to agree to get a salary job. How this fear is overcome in business will depend on factors such as good money management, sound business advice, strong marketing and hard work to name a few. At the same time getting a job could be difficult with unemployment at 31.1% (Stats SA:2020). Gilmore

(2009:328) suggests that youth disconnection from the formal labour market creates greater instability in the communities where these youth live. Therefore, entrepreneurship could be the answer to a constant source of income.

8.5.12 Failure in business

The majority of the participants, namely 88.8% had indicated that the fear of failure in business was influencing them in getting a salaried job as opposed to starting a business. Fear, for various reasons, appear to be a major impediment in facilitating the smooth passage of aspiring youth into the business world. Grant (2015:50) suggests that the objective should be to raise the awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable career option for the youth, teaching them the value of entrepreneurial skills in both personal and career endeavours.

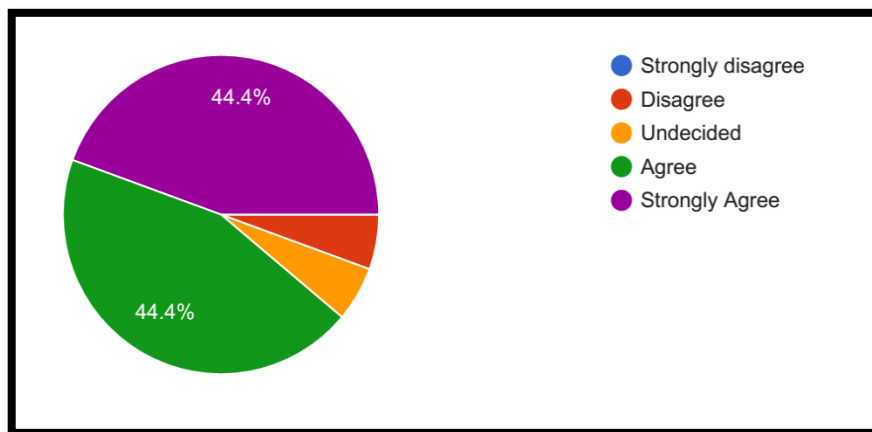


Figure 8. 13 Fear of failure in business

8.5.13 Information about business operations

A very large percentage of the participants, 44.4% (agree) and 38.9% (strongly agree) indicated that a lack of information about business operations has prompted them to opt for a salaried job. This is an indication of the significance that the dissemination of business information and the sharing of relevant business knowledge could have on novice youth entrepreneurs. It could enlighten them and encourage them to consider entrepreneurship as a career option. Cassim et al. (2014:37) suggest that more institutions should offer entrepreneurship training

covering motivation and entrepreneurial skills encouraging higher education institutions to strengthen an entrepreneurial culture.

8.5.14 Contribution to society

Many of the participants showed a positive attitude towards contributing to society beyond offering goods or services. They saw themselves as agents in job creation for the unemployed and contributing to the general wellbeing of the community.

8.5.15 Contribution to the community

The results indicate that 33.3% strongly agree and 55.6% agree that their businesses should make a valuable contribution in different ways to the community in which they do business. This is significant since a large percentage do not only see themselves as only profiting from the customers but would also like to give back to the community by adding value to their lives as part of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative. According to Goffee (1996:42), business owners do not simply run profit-making enterprises; they also see themselves as having social responsibilities for employees, customers and the wider society. The benefits of such an attitude could be far-reaching for the business.

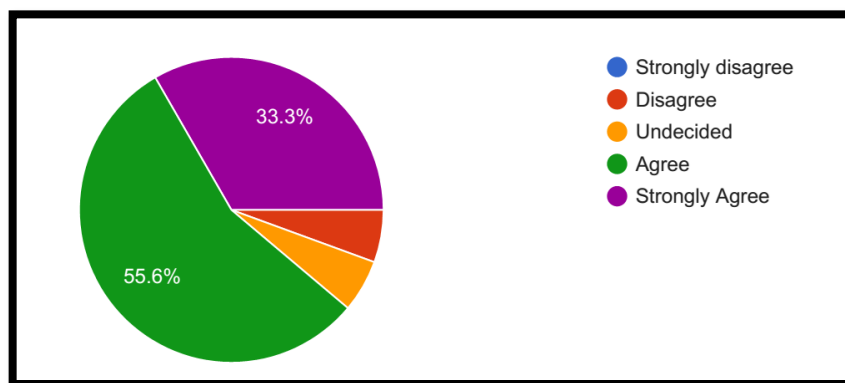


Figure 8. 14 It is vital for my business to contribute to the community

8.5.16 Profit maximisation

Over 86% disagreed that they should make maximum profit at all times even when their customers are experiencing tough times. This is an example of ethical business practice where profit maximisation is not the objective at all times. A good example

could be found where some businesses are assisting and giving back to the community during the present Covid 19 pandemic whilst others are capitalising on the emergency situation and making exorbitant profits for protective gear.

Malebana (2014:132) asserts that capitalising on any business opportunity depends on entrepreneurs' perceptions regarding its expected value. Ajzen (2005) adds that people develop attitudes derived from the beliefs they hold about the consequences of such engagement. It is, therefore, important to assess the long term benefits of placing profit maximisation high on the list of priorities.

8.5.17 Agent for job creation in the community

Although 62.2% either agree or strongly agree that they are important agents for the creation of jobs in the community, over 30% do not agree that they have a responsibility towards the unemployed youth in the community they serve. This attitude may arise from the perception that as businesses they are in the community to sell a product or render a service whilst contributing to the greater good of society was not their responsibility. Youth entrepreneurship reduces crime, poverty and income inequality which indirectly induces an environment for national and regional economic and development (Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162). All these positive factors indirectly stem from job creation.

8.5.18 Paying a bribe to secure business

Although 66.9% either disagree or strongly disagree that a bribe is justifiable in securing business, 19.4% agree and 11.1% strongly agree that it is acceptable to bribe someone when trying to conclude a transaction. This is an ethical dilemma that the youth entrepreneurs are faced with presently owing to bribery and corruption cases that they are exposed to in the media on a daily basis.

According to Marques, (2015:19), mindful entrepreneurs have a tendency to cognitively categorise situations more positively than mindless entrepreneurs who may be blinded by the possibility of making a lot of money and not considering the possibility of financial and reputational losses.

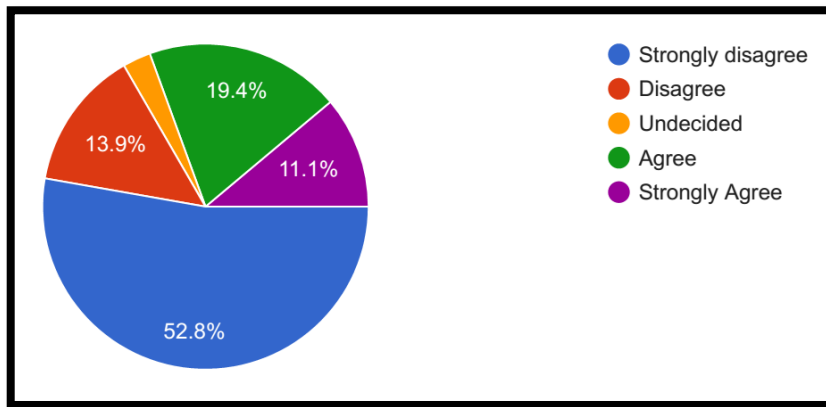


Figure 8. 15 Paying a bribe to secure business

8.5.19 Taxes to South African Revenue Services

Whilst the majority, 77.8% are in agreement that the business should pay the taxes due to the receiver of revenue, over 22% do not believe that the revenue services should receive payment when due. This is not only an ethical predicament, but it could also shorten the lifespan of the business if it loses customers for being non-compliant in term of its tax obligations and the resultant adverse publicity it may receive.

Herrington et al. (2009) point out that the growing body of unemployed youths in South Africa places an additional burden on limited government budget used to combat anti-social activities such as alcohol and drug abuse together with other criminal deeds in their pass time. However, if taxes are collected and put to better use, society as a whole benefit.

8.6 SUMMARY

The pre-mentoring questionnaire gave an indication of the general entrepreneurial perception held by the participants prior to engaging in the mentorship programme. The survey gave an indication of their strengths and areas of weakness. Their business experience and the influence of family and friends in encouraging them to embark on a career in entrepreneurship as well as gauging their opinions on coaching and mentoring, business networking, and their propensity for risk were surveyed. Questions pertaining to their fear of unemployment, desire to earn more money and getting into business for social status and prestige were also asked.

Overall, this questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions that served to target the mentorship programme. It also helped to build the relationship between myself as the researcher/mentor and the mentee/participants. We had planned to be in contact over a period of three months. It was essential that cordial relationships were developed early to ensure the success of the programme.

8.7 POST-MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

The original plan to meet once every two weeks to conduct the mentorship programme had to be changed owing to the Covid 19 pandemic and restrictions placed on social gatherings under lockdown protocols. It was unanimously decided to begin online communication for which minor adjustments had to be made. This resulted in more contact with individuals than with the group as a whole. The details of the programme are contained in Chapter Six.

The post-mentoring questionnaire was administered online and 22 of the original 34 participants who remained, completed the survey. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions which formed the bulk of the qualitative data together with the observation report generated from the action research segment.

NVivo 10 software was used to analyse the qualitative data. It has several advantages and may considerably improve the quality of research. The analysis of qualitative data is much easier and produces analyses that are more detailed. This software significantly decreases manual tasks and allows the researcher more time to discover tendencies, identify themes and derive conclusions.

The following tool feature prominently in the NVivo analysis:

[illegible]

8.7.1.1 Word cloud:

business	learn	people	time	knowledge	improve	risk	make	way	answer	good	employ	well	give	forming	listen	market	prefer		
		ethical	important	ideas	meet	others	know	youth	understa	like	ensure	relation	best	informat	may	must	things		
	coach									person	entrepre	research	build	guidan	guide	job	long	one	
		face	network	experience	need		skills	provide	ask	problems				commu	sessio	always	approac	becom	better
										possible	learnt	success		custom	solve	facilita	keep	mistak	opport
	help					solution	questions	get	profits										
mentor		share	practices	interactive	online					create	new	taking	engage		greater	proce	resour	together	
						feedback	think	response	arrive	discussio	use	believe	given	allow	issues	readir	ting	venture	want

8.7.1.2 Tree Map

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relation to each other. Larger areas display at the top left of the chart whilst smaller rectangles are displayed toward the bottom right.

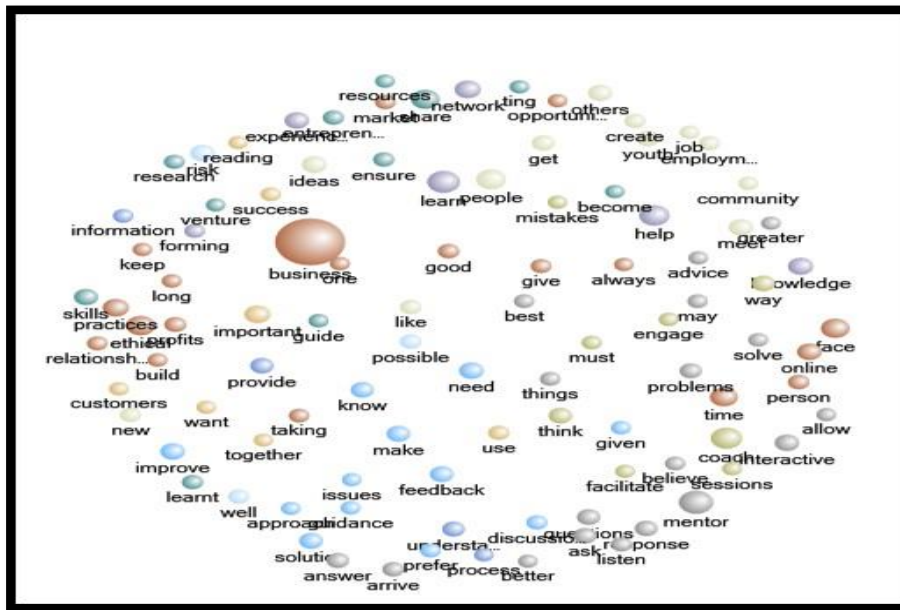


Figure 8. 18 Cluster Analysis

8.7.1.3 Cluster Analysis

Cluster analysis is an exploratory technique that you can use to visualise patterns in your project by grouping sources or nodes that share similar words, similar attribute values, or are coded similarly by nodes. Cluster analysis diagrams provide a graphical representation of sources or nodes to make it easy to see similarities and differences. Sources or nodes in the cluster analysis diagram that appear close together are more similar than those that are far apart.

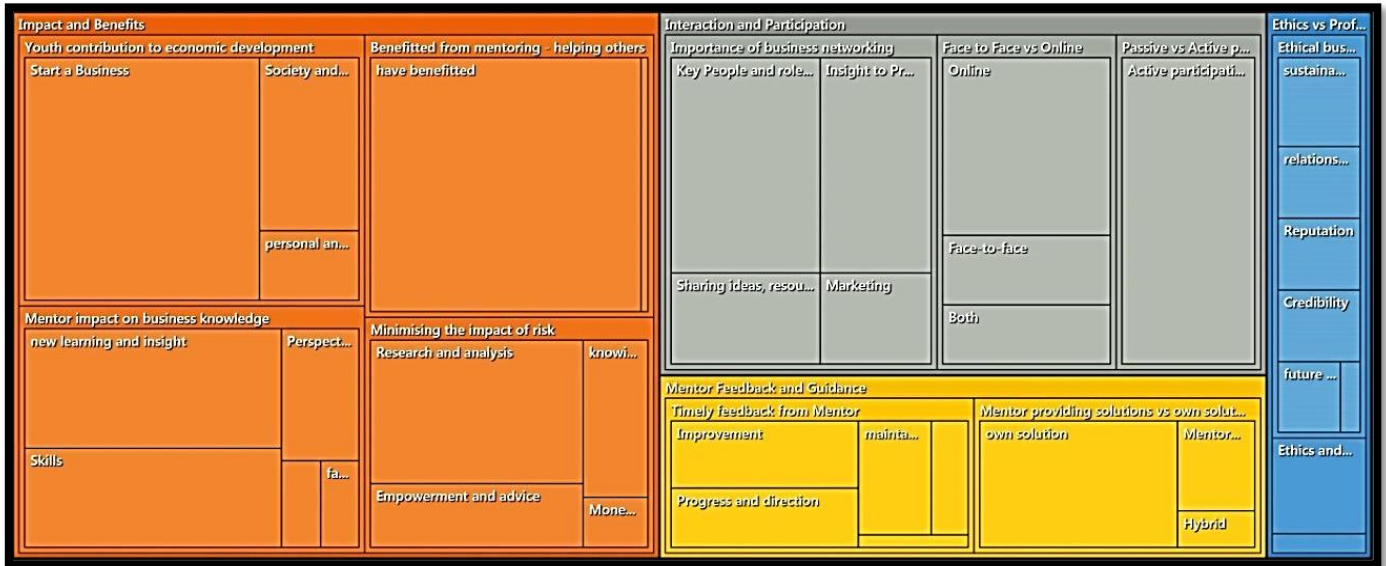


Figure 8. 19 Hierarchy Chart

8.7.1.4 Hierarchy Chart

Hierarchy charts are most useful when you want an overview of data showing multiple levels at once. A tree map could be used to view and compare size of different aspects of data. However, it is easier to compare rectangles than curved segments; so, a hierarchy chart could be used to compare lots of data. In this chart “Impact and Benefits” appear as the largest theme; followed by “Interaction and Participation”.

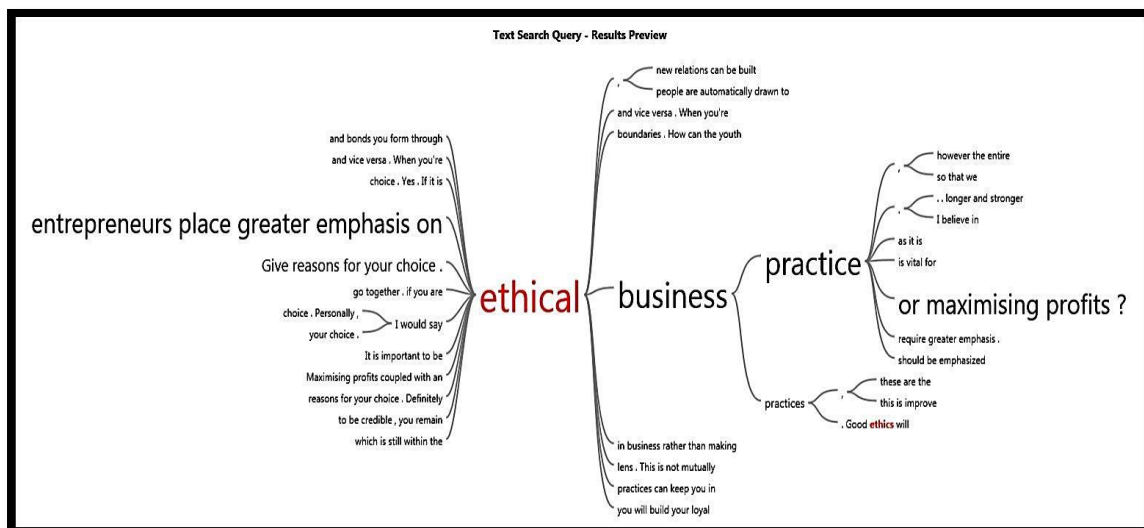


Figure 8. 20 Word Tree

8.7.1.5 Word Tree

The word tree shows the results as a tree with branches representing the numerous contexts in which the word or phrase could be found. In addition, recurring themes or phrases around a particular word may be found. The font size indicates the number of times the word or phrase had appeared. The word “ethical” is widely used word in the survey in Figure 8.18.

8.7.2 OBSERVATION REPORT

The study makes a strong contribution to the field of youth entrepreneurship. The economy is in need of more entrepreneurs and this study tackles it from the key aspect of mentorship. Entrepreneurship is a learnt skill. Therefore, mentorship plays a key role to bring out the entrepreneurs in people who choose this trajectory. The results confirm the mentorship adds value to potential entrepreneurs. It brings various benefits and a positive impact on individuals and their contribution as entrepreneurs.

8.7.2.1 Biographical data and gender distribution

Of the 30 participants who had commenced the mentorship programme, 22 remained and had completed the post mentorship survey. The result shows that there were more females than male participants which can imply that females are keen on becoming entrepreneurs and this also speaks to gender equity issues.

- **Age, marital status and qualification of participants**

A large number of participants, namely 8 were above the age of 21 with the majority, namely 12 over the age of 25. This indicated that the maturity levels of participants are high. Their marital status indicated that the majority were single with over 80% of participants bring either graduates or postgraduates, indicating that the majority of the participants are highly qualified and coming from the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

8.8 ANALYSIS OF THEMES

The analysis of the data has generated 4 key themes each of which are informed by a host of subthemes. The themes are as follows:

- Interaction and Participation
- Mentor Feedback and Guidance
- Ethics versus Profitability
- Impact and Benefits

8.8.1 THEME 1: INTERACTION AND PARTICIPATION

This theme examined the crucial area of mentor-mentee interaction. The data indicated that participants favoured interaction and participation as a means of continuous communication and learning. This finding is informed by 3 subthemes which are unpacked below:

- **Online versus Face-to-Face**

This subtheme examined which approach was more favoured when it came to mentoring programmes. Clegg et al. (2005:218) contend that the relationship between mentor and mentee as well as the geographical proximity between them has changed; with the availability of the Internet, distance is no longer relevant as they could communicate more often whenever needed (Clegg et al., 2005:219).

- **Online**

The majority of the participants favoured an online approach. Various reasons were advanced which appeared logical given that the majority of youth are digital natives. The factors that influenced this view were as follows:

- **Time**

This was the most highly ranked factor since online platforms were shown to be easily accessible at any time and fitting into the participants' schedules.

Mentee 10: *No... Sometimes online interactions may enable more contact time when face-to-face contact time is limited due to busy schedules.*

Mentee 5: *No, I believe that making time for face-to-face coaching is sometimes difficult, therefore the use of technology and online mentoring programmes is advantageous to busy individuals.*

Mentee 7: *Not necessarily, although face-to-face is more personal and it's easier to explain concepts in person, given busy days and time restrictions it's not always easy to meet in person in which case online mentoring is a good alternative.*

- **Easy access and flexible**

Technology also brought the key aspect of flexibility into focus. This meant that engagement did not always have to follow a formal approach but a more casual and informal one as well. It also meant that one could engage at almost any time irrespective of location. Even traditional coaching and mentoring have been influenced by digital technology. It is no longer necessary for mentor and mentee to find the time to meet face-to-face as they can regularly and informally contact each other, share vital bits of information (Bamford, 2011:152)

Mentee 12: *No, I believe that it is possible to have [a] coaching session online. I also think one should be able to chat to a mentor when needed not only formally.*

Mentee 21: *No. we can make a call to the mentor when you need his advice. We can also use skype to be in touch.*

Mentee 6: *With the advancement in technology, online coaching would be the preferred method that can be accessed at any given time.*

- **Video conferencing**

Video was also favoured as a means of communication since it also gave a personal touch to online platforms.

- **Interactive**

Video conferencing was also interactive and contained all the elements of a face-to-face interview in real-time. This also facilitated a just-in-time approach that provides an instant connection between the mentor and his protégé thereby introducing the concept of a new e-mentoring paradigm (Bamford, 2011:152).

Mentee 3: *Having said that the digital interaction should be completed using a video platform so that the program can still be interactive.*

- **Personal touch**

Video calling also promoted a personal touch whereby mentees would be able to note the body language of the mentors rather than just seeing text or hearing, his/her voice. This plays a role in understanding content.

Mentee 3: *Also, the coaching can become more personal and things like tone and body language can be interpreted and adjusted to ensure a smooth and efficient coaching session is completed.*

- **Sudden Changes**

Sudden and unanticipated changes such as the COVID-19 lockdown made it very necessary to look at online options.

Mentee 1: *Digital meetings are convenient and during the national lock-down its impossible to have face-to-face meetings.*

- **Before going Face-to-Face**

Online platforms could be used as flexible and convenient platforms to raise concerns before actually engaging in face-to-face interaction.

Mentee 7: *Online mentoring could be more convenient if you have concerns before a face-to-face appointment.*

- **Face-to-face**

However, some participants still preferred the traditional face-to-face approach. This method of communication has its advantages and disadvantages. Face-to-face interaction brought the following physical interaction:

- **Better interaction**

Two participants felt that their interaction was heightened in physical face-to-face interaction due to coach facilitation.

Mentee 11: *And it enables a person to interact with the mentor in a better way.*

Mentee 18: *The presence of a coach allows an interactive session.*

- **Personalised**

Relating to the above, the interaction felt more personalised when the traditional face-to-face approach was used.

Mentee 11: *Yes. Face-to-face interaction is the most effective way to ensure effective mentorship. It promotes a personal touch*

- **Discussions and responses**

One respondent felt that more discussion took place as the mentor could gauge responses from the mentees.

Mentee 18: *It should be face to face. This will help with discussions -- gauge responses.*

- **Increased learning**

One respondent felt that their learning increased on physical platforms due to interaction with the mentor.

Mentee 11: *And it enables a person to interact with the mentor in a better way.*

Mentee 18: *The presence of a coach allows an interactive session.*

- **Practice mixed with theory**

Another respondent asserted that the theory learnt could be applied better via a physical approach

Mentee 20: *No, I think both a practical and theoretical approach to mentorship is of greater value. Some things are best learnt by physically doing it.*

- **Both approaches preferred**

There were, however, a further few that preferred 'both' approaches. Some favoured a blended approach. According to Hunt (2005:9), e-mentoring is a recent development and is already showing significant advantages over more traditional forms. E-communication can be very liberating for both participants and some of the traditional difficulties in face-to-face mentoring, such as power differences, gender and race issues are simply not present in a virtual environment.

- **Blended approach**

A blended approach entailed both methods with traditional face-to-face and online approach could be done thereby giving all mentees their preferred choice of interaction.

Mentee 14: *A mixture of both face-to-face and online would be the best option.*

Mentee 15: *No, there could be a mixture of both online and face-to-face interaction.it would give some flexibility and allow there to be a personal touch, which could have a greater impact.*

Mentee 3: *No, mentoring programmes should comprise of both face-to-face interaction as well as digital interaction as sometimes it is not possible to meet in person.*

- **Interaction**

Both physical and online methods would create the added quality of interaction, as it would not just be one method only.

Mentee 22: *No.it should have a bit of both. More Interaction would be beneficial.*

Mentee 8: *No. Coaching/mentoring programmes should also be online as well as face-to-face interaction.*

- **Passive versus active participation**

This subtheme examined whether mentors should facilitate sessions primarily by asking the questions and listening to responses or if they should make all the suggestions while the mentees sat passively and took note.

All respondent favoured and supported the ‘Active Participation’ approach. However, Pegg (1999:136) suggests that the chemistry between coach and coachee must be right before they embark on this journey. Therefore, matching a coach and coachee is of utmost importance if the whole exercise of coaching is going to be successful.

The following reasons were advanced for choosing the active participation approach:

- **Listening and understanding**

This was a high-ranking subtheme, as respondents believed that only through listening could the mentor obtain a better understanding. Listening to mentees responses promote an understanding of their problems and context. When the mentor listened, it promoted understanding and appreciation of the situation.

Mentee 10: *Both...it's important for the mentor to listen as well as talk. By doing this all your questions will be answered with a greater understanding.*

Mentee 20: *It depends on the questions being asked. Because sitting in a mentorship, I am there to learn. The mentor can only facilitate and ask questions based on the info we provide.*

- **Asking and listening**

This allowed the mentor to identify with mentees. This type of interactivity could facilitate better and more appropriate responses rather than generic ones. According to Ingleton (2013:290), one requires great listening skills to be a good coach for the silence in coaching can produce the best outcomes. Being a good listener rather than prescribing solutions at every turn is the hallmark of a good coach.

Mentee 7: *I think asking questions and listening to the responses is better because it's more interactive and the mentors can understand the person and advise them appropriately.*

Mentee 11: *I believe in the process of the mentor asking questions, listening to our responses and we will arrive at [a] consensus together. It has worked for me in the past.*

Mentee 9: *They should facilitate sessions by asking all the questions and listen to your response.*

- **Interactive**

In a group setting, there would be more interactivity and exchange of ideas. This would be possible since there would be a two-way communication process, rather than one-directional only. Mentees would feel comfortable to express themselves.

Mentee 14: *An interactive lesson is the best lesson, both facilitator and student should participate.*

Mentee 21: *I think it should be a two-way discussion. We must also be able to ask the coach questions.*

Mentee 4: *Should be interactive engagement sessions. Coach must listen to us too.*

- **Mentor define the context and open discussion**

Some participants felt that the mentor should lead the discussion, especially in the preliminary stages. The mentor could share his/her knowledge; then open the floor for questions, which could spark further discussion.

Mentee 15: *In the early stages of the coaching, the mentor should lead sessions*

Mentee 16: *I think coaches should facilitate by sharing their knowledge, and giving appropriate feedback based on the interactive class discussions. That way, more learning takes place.*

Mentee 19: *No. we need to exchange ideas. Let the coach have his say and we can then engage with me giving my point of view.*

- **Mentor guidance**

Relating to the above, the mentor could provide the guidance that was needed by mentees to ensure that they have an initial understanding, following which they could then ask questions. In addition, students asking questions could allow the mentor to provide guidance where necessary. In this learning process, the coach's ability to ask facilitating questions plays an important role in developing his/her protégé. The coaches have to use a facilitating technique to make the coachee learn to question their own methods and solutions. Above all, the coach should not provide the solutions but facilitate the coachees' response and their potentials to develop their own ideas (Alstrup, 2000:166).

Mentee 17: *Yes, they can then correct my thought processes and advise me accordingly.*

Mentee 3: *Enough guidance must be provided first before the coach asks questions. This will ensure that the mentees are equipped with enough information to build their understanding and ask questions.*

- **Joint learning between both parties**

The question and answer approach could facilitate joint learning between both parties. Just as how the students wished to learn from the mentors, similarly, the mentor would also be able to learn from students, which could promote joint solutions.

Mentee 6: *In as much as the mentor is there to facilitate and impart knowledge, he/she can also learn from the student, hence sessions ought to be interactive and joint solutions found.*

Mentee 8: *No. I believe coaches/mentors should allow for joint discussions.*

- **Importance of business networking**

These key subthemes relate to participation and interaction and examine the concept of networking and its implication on upcoming entrepreneurs. It was found that business networking is seen to be widely supported due to a range of benefits that it can offer.

Just as the business grows and the needs evolve, so too will the network evolve in keeping with the changing needs of the business. Entrepreneurial networks change over time (Larson and Starr, 1993:154). Network change is seen as a response to changing entrepreneurial requirements because establishing and developing a business requires different contacts and resources over time (Casson and Della Giusta, 2007; Johannisson, 1988 cited in Jonsson, 2014:197).

- **Insight to Problems and Solutions**

Business networking could enable mentees to gain insight into business processes, risks, opportunities and challenges, whilst at the same time learning how to deal with them.

- **Risks**

One can learn from the experiences of more experienced entrepreneurs about the risks in business and how these should be handled to minimise the adverse impacts. According to Levinthal and Rerup (2006:505), a mindful approach to business would recognise the difficulty of anticipating all problems well in advance but the mindful method of thriving in all situations ensures their survival.

Mentee 11: *Yes. By networking with businesses, you get to know the dangers,*

Mentee 8: *Get to know the dangers,*

Mentee 9: *Ask them the risks they had to overcome and could possibly inspire you.*

- **Opportunities**

Opportunities can also be identified during such networking and suggestions could be made on how to exploit those opportunities. According to Li (2009:16), opportunity competency is the ability to recognize and envision taking advantage of

opportunities. Opportunity competency comprises the entrepreneurial activities in spotting opportunities, actively seeking new opportunities, and developing the opportunities.

Mentee 14: *Helps to find opportunities and broadens one's knowledge.*

Mentee 15: *Or identify new opportunities.*

- **Continuous learning**

Relating to the above, it allows for students to continuously learn from others experiences and how to avoid risk and mistakes and attain best practices in business. More opportunities to learn are opening. According to Ehighebolo and Ogie-Aitsabokhai (2014:199), the African youth cannot be confined to an obsolete education system and frustrate themselves by being unemployed. The opportunities for learning online have opened a new avenue for those interested in engaging in studies to boost their skills in entrepreneurship.

Mentee 1: *Yes, we can learn from others' mistakes/successes.*

Mentee 4: *business best practices.*

Mentee 6: *learn what would be safe and what is risky.*

Mentee 7: *Yes, business networking is important because you can learn from others.*

- **Key People and role Players**

Networking allows entrepreneurs to meet key people and role players which can bring various benefits.

- **Role players**

Such role players include suppliers, clients, providers, and recognised people in the business arena. The aspiring entrepreneurs will have to be actively participating in the network to meet suppliers, potential customers, financiers and other influential individuals who could contribute to the growth of their business.

Mentee 10: *Meet suppliers, credit providers.*

Mentee 11: *...and the big players in the field.*

Mentee 14: *Yes, by networking, it is opening up and begin communicating with other business people, like your suppliers or clients.*

Mentee 19: *names of suppliers, where to get finance, contacts.*

Mentee 6: *Supply chain role players,*

- **Experienced people**

They can also have the opportunity to meet experienced business people and learn considerably about business from them. This can serve as guidance, real-life experience, opportunities for growth, and cohesion with people having similar business goals.

Mentee 12: *Yes, it is important to know people who can guide you.*

Mentee 6: *Networking in business is critical to your success. You get to meet like-minded people who have a wealth of experience.*

Mentee 7: *and experience can help you grow your business in ways you may not have previously considered.*

Mentee 9: *Yes, meeting people and engaging in people who have same goals as you or who have achieved your goals can give you a great advantage as you can seek advice.*

- **Promoting networking and relationship building**

There is always a need to build relationships with various stakeholders and influential people who could add value to the business. Building networks beyond the immediate circle of associates is also advised. Diversity of network ties also conveys diversity in information (McEvily and Zaheer, 1999), fosters innovation (Elfring and Hulsink, 2007) and promotes access to opportunities (Batjargal, 2003). Moreover, diversity creates opportunities for bridging (Burt, 2005), thus enabling the entrepreneur to connect to different network clusters (Hite, 2005 cited in Jonsson, 2014:198).

Mentee 3: *Yes, it is always useful to find out what people do and develop a relationship with them.*

Mentee 21: *Yes, it is a good opportunity to meet other business people who can introduce you to other networks.*

- **Exposure**

Networking also allows for considerable exposure of entrepreneurs to other business people, which can lead to the growth of one's business knowledge.

Mentee 13: *Yes, you will get to meet new people, which will expand the name of your business.*

Mentee 6: *Yes, the larger the network the more exposure.*

- **Sharing ideas, resources and information**

Business networking allows entrepreneurs to be able to share. These include ideas, information and even resources. People can use networks to share ideas and assess the viability of such ideas with similar minded business people.

Mentee 16: *Yes, it is important to have a network of associates to share ideas.*

Mentee 19: *Yes, I think business networking is very important because we get to meet other business people who could share ideas.*

Mentee 20: *it is always good to share ideas and insights with other like-minded people.*

- **Resources and Information**

Similarly, resources could also be shared amongst business people within the network to promote business growth.

Mentee 5: *Learn more and share more.*

Mentee 6: *Sharing information,*

Mentee 7: *Sharing resources and experience can help you grow your business in ways you may not have previously considered.*

8.8.1.1 Summary

Theme One examined the critical area of mentor-mentee interaction. The data indicated that participants favoured interaction and participation as a means of continuous communication and learning. There were preferences for face-to-face engagements, and some felt it was more personal. Others preferred online

communication as it was more convenient. However, the circumstances surround the Covid 19 social distancing did not make personal contact as originally planned, possible.

8.8.2 THEME 2: MENTOR FEEDBACK AND GUIDANCE

This theme examines the aspect of mentor, guidance and feedback. This is an important theme as both are inter-related and plays a key role in the development of mentees. It was informed by two themes unpacked below:

- **Timely feedback from Mentor**

This subtheme explains the importance of timely feedback and most participants felt that timely feedback was very important and mandatory. Feedback is a vital component of the coaching and mentoring process with feedback provided by the coach or mentor being an important cognitive and behavioural mechanism (Kluger and DeNisi, 1996).

Participants give the following reasons for its perceived importance:

- **Improvement**

This was the most highly ranked factor as participants saw improvement as a key derivative of timely feedback. This was due to the following:

- **Address weaknesses and problems**

Timely feedback would allow participants the immediate opportunity to address and rectify their weaknesses and problems. This would save time and prevent the escalation of problems.

Mentee 10: *Yes, so that any problems can be addressed immediately.*

Mentee 19: *Yes, feedback is important to me because I would like to know where the problem areas are, and I can make adjustments before it is too late.*

Mentee 6: *Yes, if I am seeking clarity from my mentor, it is possibly very urgent and if he takes too long, I would be wasting time. His prompt response affects how I address whatever issue pops up.*

Mentee 22: *Yes, so I can work quickly to solve problems to avoid costly mistakes. Feedback tells you that you are on track.*

- **Continuous improvement**

Relating to the above, timely feedback could promote continuous improvement as the feedback can be used to assess areas of improvement and capitalise on them. According to Grant et al. (2010:58), receiving feedback within the context of a credible relationship provides an important platform for both personal and professional development.

Mentee 15: *Yes. It is important to receive timely feedback. If there needs to be a change/improvement, then it should be done early.*

Mentee 18: *Yes. It will give me guidance as to where I need to improve*

Mentee 9: *Yes. I like to know feedback after an activity or task so I know where I can improve and the earlier, I know; the more time I have to improve.*

- **Progress and direction**

This was the highest-ranked factor as feedback could serve to monitor and promote ongoing progress and keep mentees going in the right direction.

- **Progress and efficiency**

Mentees will be able to progress quicker with their work if feedback is given timeously. It can also serve to assess how far they have come and taken on new approaches to situations. With the use of ICT, it does not have to be face-to-face to be effective and timeous.

Mentee 14: *Yes, the quicker I get a response the more productive I can be in a shorter period of time.*

Mentee 18: *... and how I can have a fresh approach to situations.*

Mentee 21: *Yes, feedback is important because we want to know how we are doing in the mentoring programme and we can make adjustments where necessary.*

Mentee 6: *Yes, feedback is always helpful to assess your progress and know what you can improve on.*

- **Being on the right track**

Similarly, mentees will know if they are on the right track with their work and not making or dwelling on mistakes.

Mentee 6: *Timeous feedback is essential, as it is important to know whether I am on the right track.*

Mentee 8: *Yes, timely feedback is vitally important to me. Feedback can guide me on any mishaps or wrongdoings.*

- **Maintain understanding and relations**

Timely feedback also promotes understanding and relationships between student and mentor, in the following ways:

- **Evaluation**

Feedback can assist in evaluating current mentorship, as well as the students work, from an external perspective.

Mentee 3: *Yes, feedback is critical, and most people neglect this. Feedback helps understand the evaluation of the current mentorship.*

Mentee 4: *Yes, they are able to assess from the outside looking in. Tell us what changes are needed.*

- **Trust, respect and reassurance**

Timeous feedback can ensure that the mentor is showing initiative and interest in the mentee's work, which builds trust and respect both ways.

Mentee 6: *In this way, the coach/student relationship is based on trust and respect.*

Mentee 7: *It is also helpful to have regular feedback from your mentor to know that he is checking up on your progress is reassuring.*

- **Decision making**

Timely feedback promotes decision-making for students as students rely on the mentor's response to the outcome of a specific problem/issue.

Mentee 5: *Yes, one usually turns to their mentor to help with decision making and the response given often influence the outcomes. Therefore, a timely response is important.*

- **Time and Relevance**

It is also important to keep feedback relevant to time. Long turnaround times can lead to outdated feedback. Therefore, it is important that the lines of communication between mentor and mentee are kept open even when the mentee has developed into an experienced entrepreneur.

- **Up to date information**

Timely feedback ensures that the respondent obtains up-to-date information which is vital in the current epoch.

Mentee 1: *Of course, information that is delayed is of no value to me.*

- **Time = Money**

As the old saying goes “Time is money”, hence a long turnaround time for feedback could cost one monetarily as well.

Mentee 16: *Yes, because time is money. Being held back while waiting for information can be costly to my business and me.*

Mentee 2: *Yes. Time is money.*

- **Mentor providing solutions versus own solutions**

This subtheme examines whether the mentor should help the mentee to solve business problems by providing the solutions or should the mentee prefer to arrive at the answer by themselves.

- **Own solution**

The majority of the participants supported the option that they should be left to arrive at the solution by themselves. This was a positive finding as it showed the desire to apply initiative through learning and application of knowledge acquired.

- **Advice and assistance**

The mentor's role should primarily be about advice and assistance on how to solve the problem. This is due to his/her knowledge and experience. Upon receiving the advice, the mentees attempt to solve the problem themselves.

Mentee 10: *It would be good to get advice from the mentor just in case there are any steps that may have been missed out.*

Mentee 16: *The mentor should offer me advice on how to handle the problems that arise. I will then be able to think broadly about what to do.*

Mentee 7: *Mentors should advise or assist with directions on how to solve business problems, but I would prefer to be able to arrive at the answer on my own.*

- **Guidance**

Similarly, some participants felt that the mentor should primarily provide guidance to solving the problem and not the solution. The student should approach the mentor with the problem and discussions should take place based on the mentor's experience.

Mentee 20: *I would prefer the mentor offering me guidance, by discussing the issue with me. If I arrive at a solution with the guidance of my mentor, I am learning from someone who knows better than I do.*

Mentee 6: *He should hear my approach and offer guidance if it does not sound like a good approach, make suggestions.*

Mentee 8: *I believe the mentor should continuously guide me in any business-related issues or queries.*

- **Application of knowledge**

The knowledge gained by the mentee from the mentor can be applied to the problem in order to solve the problem, thereby showing a good application of theoretical and practical knowledge.

Mentee 19: *I would like to listen to the mentor and arrive at the solution to the problem on my own.*

Mentee 6: *I would prefer to try to solve the answer on my own using practical and theoretical knowledge.*

- **Learning and skills development**

By attempting to solve the problem on their own, students/mentees will be able to promote their own learning and heighten their skills and abilities.

Mentee 11: *We should be enabled to arrive at the answer on our own because that will enable a learning curve.*

Mentee 18: *I would like to arrive at the answer on my own as expecting the answer will not sharpen my critical and analytical skills.*

- **Mentor provide solutions**

However, three participants felt that the mentors should provide solutions. This was for the following reasons:

- **Save time**

Receiving solutions from the mentor will save time.

- **Helps in future situations**

One respondent felt that the solution should come from the mentor and the next time the student is faced with this situation; they will know what to do.

- **Best suited**

The mentor can provide the solution whilst the mentee chooses which best suit their situation.

- **Experience and judgement**

The mentor has experience and knowledge and therefore his/her judgement is trusted by the student/mentee.

8.8.2.1 Summary

Theme two examines the aspect of mentoring that leads to the mentor giving guidance and timely feedback. It is an important theme because it strengthens the relationship between mentor and mentee, which is crucial for building trust. Whilst some of the participants preferred to make their own decisions in the mentoring relationship, others felt that the mentor with his/her vast experience should make the decision as it saves time and could be the right one. Many felt that there was room for continuous improvement as long as the mentoring relationship continued.

8.8.3 THEME 3: ETHICS VERSUS PROFITABILITY

This theme examines a relevant construct which is a current reality in the country and even globally. This is the concept of ethics in the business and whether entrepreneurs should place greater emphasis on ethical business practice or maximising profits. Ethical business practice was most supported and highest ranked.

- **On being ethical in all business transactions**

The majority of participants were of the opinion that all business transactions should be conducted in an ethical manner. However, there were respondents who felt that they were justified in engaging in bribery to secure business and various government departments were cited for doing business in this way. Most participants felt that ethical business practice was key, and this was informed by the following:

- **Sustainability - long term**

Ethical business practices could ensure that business was sustainable in the long run. This is because people will have high regard for an ethical business practice and will form long-term relationships, which can produce long-term profits leading to sustainability.

Mentee 14: *Ethical business practices, this will improve the future of the business*

Mentee 4: *Ethical business practices, these are the cornerstone of sustainable business*

Mentee 7: *Ethical business practice should be emphasised because the relationships and bonds you form through ethical practices can keep you in high esteem and provide long term profits,*

Mentee 9: *Ethical business practice as it is imperative in order for a business to gain a profit and be operating in the long run.*

- **Relationships**

Relating to the above, relationships become more trusting and concrete with others -- clients, suppliers and role players -- when they are built on trust and ethics. This again can lead to profits and other benefits.

Mentee 10: *Ethical business practice...longer and stronger relationships are built.*

Mentee 7: *Ethical business practice should be emphasised because the relationships and bonds you form through ethical practices can keep you in high esteem and provide long term profits.*

Mentee 8: *Yes. If it is ethical, new relations can be built which can be beneficial to all.*

- **Credibility**

Focusing on ethics will build the credibility of the business. This can lead to the following:

- **Market credibility and share**

The business can gain credibility in its space and this can lead to increased market share.

Mentee 2: *Ethics will ensure credibility in the market place, which will improve market share.*

- **More opportunities**

Building on these strengths ensures that credibility will improve opportunities for business growth.

Mentee 6: *If you want to be credible, you remain ethical and vice versa. When you're ethical, people are automatically drawn to you and you would have more business opportunities, clients, patrons, etc.*

- **Success**

Relating to the above, ethics can bring business success through credibility.

Mentee 1: *Of course, ethics play a huge if not pivotal role in business practice.*

Mentee 19: *Ethical business practice is vital for every business if you are to succeed*

- **Reputation**

Ethical practice will enhance the reputation of the business and this will promote profitability and growth.

Mentee 13: *Ethical business practices. Good ethics will give the business a good name.*

Mentee 19: *A bad reputation will destroy a business and profits will fall leading to possible closure.*

Mentee 21: *It is important to be ethical in business rather than making big profits. Your reputation in business is far more important and it takes a long time to build one.*

- **Future damage**

Being ethical can prevent future damage to the business whether in the form of reputation, image or sustainability.

Mentee 16: *Definitely, ethical business practice. I believe in doing things ethically because if you do not, it ends up costing you later.*

Mentee 19: *A bad reputation will destroy a business and profits will fall leading to possible closure.*

Mentee 20: *I would say ethical business practice require greater emphasis. If you are doing things unethically, it can be costly later. It is always better to do things above board.*

- **Ethics and profitability**

Five participants that felt that both aspects are equally important. Participants felt that if the business is seen as ethical, then more people will do business with the organisation thereby promoting profitability. Hence, both factors should be aligned.

Mentee 15: *I think both go together. if you are ethical you will build your loyal customer base, and this will lead to increased profits.*

Mentee 17: *I think both are important. I want to do things right, legally. While also being able to make the most money.*

Mentee 18: *It should be both. One should lose sight of ethics and morals when pursuing a business venture. Integrity and honesty is of prime importance in business as trust is important in creating business bonds.*

Mentee 22: *Both, if we focus on these two goals the business will be successful. Nobody wants to do business with unethical people .and nobody wants to run a loss in business, so the two goals should be looked at together.*

Mentee 3: *Maximising profits coupled with an ethical lens. This is not mutually exclusive but should be focus on together. Entrepreneurs should focus on a business case that reveals the best profits which is still within the ethical boundaries.*

8.8.3.1 Summary

Theme three examines a construct most relevant to a current reality in the country and even globally, ethical business practice. Participants were asked about various

aspects of ethics in business and whether entrepreneurs should place greater emphasis on ethical business practice or maximising profits. Ethical business practice was most supported and highest ranked by the majority of the participants. Associated with ethical business practice is the building of sound business relationships with suppliers and customers which could contribute to the reputation of the business and the long term sustainability of the enterprise. The majority of participants agreed that one's longevity in business is dependent on one's reputation.

8.8.4 THEME 4: IMPACT AND BENEFITS

This was by far the largest theme as it measured the impact and benefits of mentorship. Benefits and impact must be determined to know if mentorship is effective or not. This was informed by the following:

- **Mentor impact on business knowledge**

This key subtheme examines the impact of the mentor on mentees business knowledge.

- **Skills**

Skills was a highly ranked subtheme indicating the importance mentees attached to skills acquisition. This was informed by the following:

- **Customer relations**

This aspect was highly ranked as mentees saw the importance of good customer relations in promoting the business.

Mentee 20: *I'm more aware of the skills required to build relationships with my customers.*

Mentee 2: *People skills are of utmost importance, as my customers make the business a success.*

Mentee 22: *He has highlighted important skills I should have and how to use it and also how to go about improving the skills and what kind of books I should be reading.*

- **Marketing**

Marketing knowledge and skills were gained, and this is important as all businesses need to be appropriately positioned in order to benefit from the exposure.

Mentee 17: *How to tap into the correct markets.*

Mentee 5: *Increase knowledge of marketing.*

Mentee 6: *I have learned that the location of a business is key. Study your target group and provide for their needs accordingly.*

- **Reading**

Emphasis on reading as well knowing what to read to gain more knowledge on business was also highlighted by one respondent.

Mentee 22: *Mentor has highlighted important skills I should have and how to use it and also how to go about improving the skills and what kind of books I should be reading.*

- **New learning and insight**

The mentors did provide new insights and learning that contributed to the improvement of the mentees' knowledge in the following ways:

- **Improvement of knowledge from current zone**

Some participants clearly asserted that they were in a 'comfort zone' of knowledge whereby they felt that they knew everything about the business. This however changed through the mentorship and much more insights were gained during the mentoring process.

Mentee 1: *Before I had coaching /mentoring, I felt that I knew everything and that my experience was sufficient.*

Mentee 10: *Yes... gained a lot of insight. I learnt a lot and I was exposed to online learning.*

Mentee 14: *This has improved my knowledge as I have learnt a great deal about business.*

Mentee 2: *Have learnt in the time that we spent together.*

- **Business processes and knowledge**

Participants gained more insight into business processes and overall business knowledge.

Mentee 11: *My mentor has improved my business knowledge by having discussions and debates with me.*

Mentee 17: *The coach provided great information of the entire business process.*

- **Learning from a more knowledgeable and experienced person**

Participants learnt from the mentor who was more experienced in business and this facilitated knowledge transfer in the following ways:

- **Experiences**

The mentor brought the crucial knowledge derived from his/her experience. This went beyond just the textbook knowledge but encompassing real-life experiences and examples in business.

Mentee 15: *The mentor has shared his learning experiences in business. every experience is a learning experience and a positive mindset is important.*

Mentee 16: *I have learned a lot from the experiences he has shared.*

Mentee 19: *I learnt a lot from the coach. They have a lot of experience in business, and we can learn from their experience if we are new in business.*

Mentee 4: *Given me more insight from experienced professionals.*

- **Practical learning**

It also provided an opportunity for practical learning. Entrepreneurship requires practical application and not just theoretical knowledge.

Mentee 1: *I am able to learn from other business ventures.*

Mentee 21: *He has shared his experiences in business, and these were good lessons for us. The knowledge could be used to solve similar problems.*

Mentee 8: *I have learnt a great deal of knowledge that can help improve and grow my business in the future.*

- **Mindset**

It helped create a positive mindset for students in relation to business.

Mentee 15: *Every experience is a learning experience, and a positive mindset is important.*

- **Mistakes**

The Mentor also conveyed his own mistakes made from their experiences, which allows mentees to learn from these mistakes.

Mentee 16: *It is valuable to an entrepreneur to learn from the mistakes of others and work towards following a recipe for success.*

- **Perspectives, thinking and understanding**

It allows mentees to develop new perspectives, critical thinking and deeper understanding. It changes the mentee's perception of business which helped to allay their fears about failures in business to an extent.

- **Different perspectives**

It gave mentees different perspectives on how to approach business.

Mentee 1: *Coaching has opened up my view on different perspectives of business.*

Mentee 7: *and they were able to show me different angles to approach situations.*

- **Critical thinking and the bigger picture**

It also allowed mentees to be able to exercise critical thinking for decision-making and the ability to look at the bigger picture in business.

Mentee 8: *to think critically and wisely before making hasty decisions.*

Mentee 9: *They have given me sense of direction, which allowed me to see the bigger picture.*

- **Understanding**

Overall, it promoted a deeper understanding of business and this included processes and solutions.

Mentee 18: *gave me a better understanding of business concepts.*

Mentee 3: *The coach understood that I was looking for specific solutions to business ideas that I had.*

- **Failures, risks and successes**

It taught participants about business risks, and failure and success factors that influence business outcomes.

Mentee 1: *The failures and successes of other businesses from which I learnt.*

Mentee 20: *The risks involved if I do not pay attention to certain areas of the business.*

- **Motivation and networking**

The mentoring made mentees feel motivated during times of struggle, and in turn, made them want to keep in contact with the mentor.

Mentee 2: *Must be able to network with [a] coach often.*

Mentee 9: *They have helped during times I have struggled which allowed me to get back up.*

Minimising the impact of risk

This was also an important subtheme as it spoke to the realities of risk that is faced by entrepreneurs. Therefore, mitigating risk becomes a key benefit that can have a positive impact on business. The following was found on ways to mitigate risk and this was discovered via the mentorship programme.

- **Research and analysis**

This was the highest-ranked subtheme and was seen as positive as it showed that mentees became more research minded towards business. This was informed by the following:

- **Viability**

Research allows one to be able to determine the viability of a business opportunity. This was an important step to take before investing time, money and resources into any business idea.

Mentee 11: *Before starting or venturing into a business, the necessary research must be conducted, to ensure that you are prepared for all risk factors.*

Mentee 12: *By doing research to ensure, my business is viable.*

Mentee 14: *By conducting research before venturing on a business idea.*

Mentee 6: *The entrepreneur would have to do in-depth and long-term research and be aware of the pros and cons.*

- **Investment**

Researching before investing money was also critical to prevent losses.

Mentee 10: *Do thorough research before investing.*

Mentee 18: *Do thorough research before investing any money.*

- **Operations**

It was also good to do research at a practical level in terms of researching the actual processes and operations of a business. This will allow one to know how the business actually works.

Mentee 17: *I need to know my business and how it operates, really well.*

Mentee 20: *Do as much reading and research as possible on the nature of my business and on running a business overall.*

- **Situation analysis**

A situational analysis was also very important as it allowed for students to be aware of risks affecting their business. This could be done via SWOT analysis or other analysis techniques inclusive of risk monitoring and forecasting.

Mentee 14: *Consider the risks that the business may face and find solutions to overcome these risks.*

Mentee 2: *Conducting a proper analysis and forecasting for the future of the business.*

Mentee 15: *It's important to do a SWOT analysis.*

Mentee 20: *I would conduct a swot analysis to understand the strengths and weaknesses of my business and address them, so there are no gaps.*

Mentee 5: *analysing situations and thinking of all the possible solutions.*

- **Calculated decisions**

Based on the above, it allowed students to take calculated decisions, which is important in business.

Mentee 10: *weigh out all the pros and cons.*

Mentee 5: *By making calculated decisions,*

Mentee 7: *making educated and well thought out business decisions can reduce the effects/ impacts risk will have on your business.*

- **Knowing your business risks**

Mentorship taught the students the value of knowing the business they are interested in. this would give the entrepreneur the opportunity to respond timeously to any threat that the business may face.

- **Proactive Preparation**

By knowing your business, one could proactively confront any risks that may arise. This can play a role in avoiding or addressing risks before they could surprise the business.

Mentee 15: *Read up about possible risks in your field.*

Mentee 16: *Thorough understanding of my business and the potential risks that can present themselves is needed. If I am prepared, then I can avoid any issues before they arise.*

Mentee 9: *Identify all the possible risks so that I can try to be prepared.*

- **Risk versus Reward**

It was always good to determine the risk versus reward ratio in business before investing time or financial resources on an opportunity.

Mentee 4: *Ascertain risk to rewards to the business and mitigate risk by ensuring that tested methods.*

- **Empowerment and advice**

Empowerment through knowledge and advice from the mentor and other business people from the network also served to mitigate risks.

- **Learning from others**

Learning from other experienced business people was a key source of empowerment. This entailed learning from other people's experiences and speaking to them to clarify any doubts that you may have.

Mentee 17: *Learning from other people will help to minimise risk.*

Mentee 22: *Read about people's experiences and learn from those mistakes.*

Mentee 6: *speak to experts; ask for advice from honest and reliable sources.*

Mentee 8: *We all need to be mindful of the dangers and learn for the network.*

- **Mentor**

Participants supported the notion of having a mentor and continuously tap into this reservoir of knowledge.

Mentee 1: *Adopt a mentor to assist*

Mentee 17: *Knowledge is power. I will learn from my coach and from other learned people*

- **Sharing information**

One respondent felt that sharing information with each other created awareness of risks.

Mentee 8: *By sharing information and acting timeously can help minimise the impact of risk on businesses.*

- **Money management**

A very important part of empowerment related to money management. Many small business experience problems stemming from poor management of financial resources.

- **Loans and debt**

It is important not to get into too much debt and therefore loans and interest needed to be carefully selected and monitored.

Mentee 2: *Keep an eye on any business loan taken which includes the magnitude of it and the interest-bearing cost and monitor if it will drown the business at some point.*

- **Liaising with experienced people in finance management**

It was also important to speak to financial practitioners and/or other experienced business people on how to manage finances.

Mentee 3: *The greatest risk for me is finance so I will speak to the bank as well as experienced people in the field of expertise to ensure that I am well prepared for the future risks that may come up.*

- **Youth contribution to economic development**

This key subtheme was critical as it addresses a current concern relating to the youth of the country. It examined how youth should contribute to economic development. The following was revealed:

- **Start a Business**

This was a highly ranked subtheme and emphasised the need for the youth to start businesses in order as a means of improving their personal lives as well as to make their contribution to society. Youth needed to take the initiative and become self-starting business people. It was informed by the following:

- **Taking initiative to start**

The youth should take the initiative to start a business and become entrepreneurs rather than waiting for handouts.

Mentee 1: *Start their own businesses and not wait for Govt. to provide them with handouts.*

Mentee 12: *By starting [a] small business.*

Mentee 14: *The youth can start their own businesses too.*

Mentee 6: *If the youth become entrepreneurs and start businesses.*

Mentee 7: *Youth can be encouraged to create their own businesses and therefore fulfil needs that have not previously been met.*

- **New ideas**

The youth must be encouraged to think up fresh ideas and be innovative. Technological solutions can also be considered in the current business climate.

Mentee 11: *The youth also provide fresh, innovative ideas.*

Mentee 20: *By taking any idea, reasonable idea and turning it into a business venture. Whether it is a product or service. They will be fulfilling a need, even if it is on a small scale.*

Mentee 4: *Youth bring in fresh new approaches and ideas, and new technology solution.*

- **Turning ideas into business**

The youth can also turn their ideas into a business venture after they have done the necessary research and explored the viability of a business idea.

Mentee 16: *Any idea or concept can be built to form a successful business.*

Mentee 20: *By taking any idea, reasonable idea and turning it into a business venture.*

- **Education and knowledge**

The youth should be encouraged to attain education and/or knowledge especially in the area of business that they are interested in.

Mentee 1: *Firstly, they can ensure that they educate themselves.*

Mentee 2: *gaining much knowledge in their industry of choice.*

Mentee 5: *By educating themselves and the people around them.*

- **Employment creation**

By starting their own business, the youth can create employment opportunities for other unemployed people in their community.

- **Job opportunities for others**

This was one of the highest-ranked factors as a great deal of emphasis was placed on how the youth could best serve their communities. Creating job opportunities for others could lower the unemployment rate and build the local economy.

Mentee 10: *They can start up their own business, and in that way, creating greater job opportunities.*

Mentee 11: *By starting businesses, the youth create jobs for others in the country.*

Mentee 14: *Encourage employment of others in the business.*

Mentee 15: *Entrepreneurship helps job creation.*

Mentee 19: *The youth can create businesses that can contribute to the growth of the community by employing other unemployed people.*

Mentee 21: *They can also employ other youth in their business, and this can help reduce unemployment.*

- **Encourage others to become entrepreneurs**

After considering becoming entrepreneurs, they should also encourage others to do the same.

Mentee 11: *They also inspire other youth to follow in their footsteps.*

Mentee 16: *This encourages others to do the same whilst also encouraging employment.*

- **Realistic problems and customer needs**

Their business ideas must be realistic and problem-solving which can be informed by customer needs.

- **Solve realistic problems**

Their business ideas must aim to solve real problems in society.

Mentee 3: *The business idea must seek to solve a real problem and it will be successful.*

- **Customer response and research**

Solving problems through business can actually come from knowing what customer needs or are looking for and business can respond accordingly.

Mentee 3: *Monitor how customers are responding and then pivot based on the customer's response.*

- **Society and Economy development**

The youth must consider the economic development of the community in their business objectives. This was informed by the following:

- **Society development and social ills eradication**

The youth must play a role in the social development of communities which entails making efforts to eradicate social ills such as crime, poverty, unemployment.

Mentee 15: *it improves society- youth become more responsible.*

Mentee 18: *Keeps children off the street.*

Mentee 2: *Eliminate social evils in society.*

Mentee 19: *By employing other unemployed people and uplifting the community by offering much-needed service.*

Mentee 21: *The youth can engage in business and improve the community they live in. They can also employ other youth in their business, and this can help reduce unemployment.*

- **Taxes and economy**

The youth can start a business; employ others who can in turn contribute to taxes which promotes socio-economic growth. Businesses can also contribute to the tax coffers thereby promoting economic development.

Mentee 17: *By creating their businesses they are able to stimulate trade.*

Mentee 6: *They create employment for others. All of these people in turn pay taxes.*

Mentee 7: *They can also contribute to paying taxes and in turn contribute to the economic growth of the country.*

Mentee 8: *Youth can contribute to the economic development of South Africa, by starting their own businesses.*

- **Skills development and sharing**

The youth should learn skills and share them with the community.

Mentee 5: Learning skills and developing the community by sharing these skills.

- **Benefitted from mentoring and helping others**

This key subtheme examined whether student did benefit from the mentorship and how they could help other upcoming entrepreneurs develop their business skills.

All participants, with the exception of one, affirmed that they benefitted from the mentorship programmes. This subtheme unpacks how all of those that benefitted intend to help others.

- **Networking and meetings**

Mentees considered networking to be the best way that they could link up with other aspiring entrepreneurs and share ideas.

- **Business Networks**

This was the primary methods and consisted of business blogs, breakfasts, seminars networking with others interested in business.

Mentee 11: *Yes. By forming business networks in an area.*

Mentee 15: *Create a business network/blog to share experiences.*

Mentee 18: *Business breakfast,*

Mentee 6: *Networking with others in the business field is imperative. Hence, keeping in contact is important - meeting socially.*

Mentee 8: *Network with one another.*

- **Entrepreneurial groups**

This was also a highly favoured approach of creating entrepreneurial groups to share knowledge, give support and help each other.

Mentee 16: *Yes, I would like to form support groups for other up and coming businesses to share our knowledge, our hurdles as well as to network.*

Mentee 20: *Form support groups in which we can learn and help each other.*

Mentee 7: *Yes, I would. It is important to help others where you can, and this can be done by forming groups with other experienced and up-and-coming entrepreneurs to facilitate conversations to assist others and provide a platform for people to ask questions and learn from each other.*

- **Online platforms**

Online platforms were also looked at methods of networking and communicating. This included webinars, online meetings and emails.

Mentee 18: *webinars.*

Mentee 8: *Online/ meet regularly.*

Mentee 9: *give them my email address if they need help with specific situations.*

- **Experiences and ideas**

These networks can be ideal for sharing ideas and experiences in business.

Mentee 19: *We could form a network of entrepreneurs and share ideas.*

Mentee 5: *share experience.*

Mentee 6: *sharing business ideas.*

- **Provide knowledge, resources and direction**

This was also a highly ranked subtheme when it came to participants benefiting other upcoming entrepreneurs.

- **Resources**

This was the most highly ranked factor, as many participants would opt to share their resources to promote other entrepreneur growth.

Mentee 10: *Yes...by sharing resources.*

Mentee 19: *learning resources, business contacts and customers.*

Mentee 21: *I can also share my resources.*

Mentee 3: *I will guide others by sharing any material.*

Mentee 6: *accessing resources online, etc.*

- **Skills**

Participants were willing to share their skills with others. The collaborative relationship is good for business relations.

Mentee 13: *Yes, by guiding them with skills that I have learnt.*

Mentee 14: *Yes, by guiding them with the skills that I have learnt.*

Mentee 19: *Yes, I would like to coach other new business people so that they could learn new skills.*

Mentee 3: *If I do not have all the answers, I will point them into the direction where they can receive the help that they need to develop their business skills.*

- **Knowledge**

Developing others knowledge and helping them find solutions from their own knowledge gained through mentorship was equally important.

Mentee 17: *and to sharpen their knowledge from what I have learned.*

Mentee 21: *Yes, I would definitely help another up and coming entrepreneur by giving advice and including him in our network.*

Mentee 3: *or knowledge that I have to help provide a solution that they are looking for.*

- **Experiences**

With the building on knowledge, came the aspect of sharing their experiences with others.

Mentee 20: *I'm grateful for the guidance I have received. I would network with other entrepreneurs and share my information and experiences at meetings.*

- **Progression for others**

It was important to consider the progress of others. We can help others grow, and in the process, we can benefit from their growth and prosperity.

- **Promoting the growth of others**

It was important to provide ways and means for others to grow.

Mentee 4: *Yes, provide the same value to others to grow.*

- **Benefit to others**

Participants wanted others to equally benefit from mentorship as they did.

Mentee 6: *I would want others to benefit from this kind of programme just as I have.*

- **Mentor referral**

Two participants asserted that they would refer their mentor to upcoming entrepreneurs for coaching and development.

Mentee 15: *Yes, I would. I would refer my coach to them.*

Mentee 22: *Yes, I would recommend my coach to others.*

8.8.4.1 Summary

Theme 4 is by far the most significant theme as it measures the impact and benefits of mentorship. This is to assess the effectiveness of the mentorship programme in terms of the knowledge that the mentees acquired and the skill that they have learnt to make them effective entrepreneurs. Also assessed was their ability to read the business environment and make decisions regarding risk, money management and collaboration with others. The discussion also revolved around starting new businesses and turning new ideas into businesses. The concept of corporate social responsibility and giving back to society in the form of job creation and community improvement was given attention.

8.9 SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL RESULTS

In order to assess the success of the research study, it would be appropriate to review the questions that this study set out to investigate and evaluate the extent to which the findings had adequately answered them. The main objective of the study was to gauge how the mentorship programme had influenced the mentees and the transformation that might have taken place during the mentoring period.

In answering the research questions, I as the researcher, take into account the findings of the pre and post mentoring questionnaire, my observation of mentee behaviour during the action research phase and my informal conversations with the mentees during the research period.

The following questions were asked at the beginning of the study:

- ***What practical contribution could the mentorship programme make to the business success of budding entrepreneurs?***

Despite 12 out of 34 participants dropping out of the programme, 22 had successfully completed the post-mentoring questionnaire, which is an indication that the mentoring did stimulate renewed interest in entrepreneurship among the participating youth. Of the 22 mentees, 21 indicated that they had benefitted from the programme and had learnt various aspects of business that they had not been exposed to previously. Despite the limited contact, the mentees found that at the heart of the e-mentoring model is the use of web-enabled and mobile technology, which, being digital natives, they are very familiar with. This facilitated communication and speed learning directed by the mentor and through self-discovery the mentees received knowledge wherever they were (Bamford, 2011:152).

The mentorship created the support structure that aspiring entrepreneurs yearn for as they cautiously enter the business arena. The online learning opportunities for mentees are a revolutionary step in the whole coaching and mentoring narrative that is no less profound (Bloch, 1995:20).

- ***How can the fostering of youth entrepreneurship contribute to the alleviation of unemployment and poverty in the country?***

My initial impression in engaging the youth participants was that they were unaware that their role in business could contribute to reducing unemployment and poverty. When they did discover how this was possible, there was a new sense of commitment to this objective. When they realised that youth entrepreneurship aids economic growth, economic competitiveness, economic independence, self-esteem, job creation, social welfare of any country, as well as political stability and national security of a country, there was a new sense of responsibility placed on their shoulders (Dempsey, 2009:2; Fatoki and Chindoga, 2011:162).

What the country needs are young people who design and operate their own businesses; youth who become owners and employers instead of employees, job seekers, and unemployed people. Youth entrepreneurial development is a viable means of addressing youth unemployment and related social problems (Gilmore, 2009:324).

The exposure that the youth received during the mentorship had instilled in them both entrepreneurial ideals and community spirit which augurs well for a nation so desperate to address the rising tide of youth unemployment and the resultant socio-political instability.

- ***What role can ICT play in business networking and in promoting the growth of new businesses?***

All the mentees agree that communication technologies are playing an increasingly important role in various facets of business. They have indicated in their feedback their faith in the Internet as a business tool. In this age of connectivism knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and consequently, that learning consists of the ability to navigate the vast constellation of networks (Bell, 2009:6).

According to Siemens (2004), the connectivist theory is relevant for the digital age, since individuals learn, cooperate and work together in a networked environment. The mentees have the tools, techniques and theories to help them successfully navigate the business world.

The discussion of entrepreneurial learning is focused on the idea of gaining entrepreneurial skills through experience that entrepreneurs gain from learning by doing (Cope and Watts, 2000 cited in McFarland, 2017:269). The mentees have discovered a treasure trove of knowledge that is waiting to be accessed on the world wide web. Whatever information or skill needed to grow their business is just a mouse click away.

- ***How can the culture of mentoring aspiring entrepreneurs be sustained to contribute to the continued growth of the SMME sector?***

The findings of the study indicated that mentoring is crucial in promoting entrepreneurship among the youth. It brings to light the advantages of being in business as opposed to being in a salaried job. According to Gilmore (2009:324), youth entrepreneurship does not just create jobs for the youth but also brings to the market place such assets as fresh thinking, enthusiasm, loyalty and the vast knowledge of technology.

With youth entrepreneurs as innovators, they disrupt prevailing conditions in the markets through their creativity thereby changing various economic benchmarks and enabling growth within the economy (Berglund, 2005:256).

The SMME sector still represents a vital source of economic growth in developing countries. If the youth could dominate this sector, see the benefits of networking for the cross-pollination of ideas, collaborate with youth in other distant countries, access capital and new markets, then South Africa will be on the road to an economic boom.

8.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the empirical research results obtained for this study. The study was divided into two phases with the first phase focusing on the participants' knowledge and perception of business in general. This was assessed through the pre-mentoring questionnaire comprising of closed-ended questions.

The mentorship programme that followed had to revert to an online format owing to the Covid 19 pandemic. Although this was a deviation from the original plan, conducting the programme gave us a unique opportunity to test the new meeting software and working in a virtual environment. The second phase consisting of the action research stage and the post-mentoring questionnaire gave an opportunity to observe overt behaviour, see changes in attitudes towards business, note levels of confidence rise and detect new levels of desire in the mentees to pursue entrepreneurship as a career option.

In the next chapter, the conclusions on this study are drawn and recommendations are made regarding future research on the subject.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL FUTURE RESEARCH

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the study and is organised into seven sections. Section 9.1 provides the chapter outline. Section 9.2 provides a summary review of the study outlining the aim of the study and describing the layout and content of the various chapters. Section 9.3 outlines the achievement of theoretical and empirical objectives. In Section 9.4, the suggested recommendations are stated based on the results. The contribution of the study is highlighted in Section 9.5. The limitations of the study are acknowledged in Section 9.6. In Section 9.7, the gap for new research in the field of youth entrepreneurship is identified. Finally, the chapter provides the overall conclusion to the study in Section 9.8.

9.2 REVIEW OF STUDY

The study is reviewed in terms of the research problem identified, the aim of the research study, the research methodology employed and a description of the contents of each of the chapters.

9.2.1 The aim of the study and research problem identified

The aim of this autoethnographic study is to use my experiences as an entrepreneur to mentor nascent entrepreneurs using technology to share information and build business networks for the growth and sustainability of their businesses.

The research problem is linked to the limited participation of youth in business activities amidst high unemployment together with an education system that is not aligned to the needs of the economy. Key questions the study asks revolve around youth entrepreneurship and the alleviation of unemployment and poverty; the role of ICT in business networking and mentoring of budding entrepreneurs.

9.2.2 Research Methodology

A mixed methods approach for the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data was adopted. The design of the study is one of a convergent

parallel design where data is collected and analysed as two independent strands of qualitative and quantitative data at the same time. There is an unequal priority of the two strands with emphasis on the qualitative segment. The mixed methods approach provides a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone would not have achieved.

9.2.3 Structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of the following nine chapters:

- **Chapter One: Introduction and Problem orientation**

This chapter outlines the background to the study with reference to previous studies, identifies a research gap in relation to the topic under investigation and gives justification for the present study. It further outlines the aims of the study together with the research questions. A summary of the main ideas in each chapter is also presented.

- **Chapter Two: Autoethnography and Business mentoring**

With this being an autoethnographic study, the ethnographic method is discussed highlighting the relevance of reflexivity in social research in general and the present study in particular. Also discussed in this chapter is the role of the family business in promoting entrepreneurship while serving as a breeding ground for the next generation of entrepreneurs. The chapter concludes with a discussion on business coaching/ mentoring as well as the role of technology in e-mentoring and guided e-learning to promote business education.

- **Chapter Three: Mindfulness and digital connectivity**

This chapter discusses the mindfulness philosophy and practice. Also examined is its influence on business culture and how mindlessness adversely affects business and the quality of decisions made in response to opportunities and threats. The chapter also explores how knowledge is created and shared on the digital landscape together with the social impact of information communication technology. Suggestions are made on how aspiring entrepreneurs could benefit from connectivism through online learning in business and promoting their businesses through networking.

- **Chapter Four The theory of youth entrepreneurship**

In this chapter, the key theme of youth entrepreneurship and its significance to the socio-economic setting in South Africa is discussed. Highlighted is the role the youth could play in job creation and poverty alleviation whilst contributing to the socio-political stability of the country at the same time. The role that the government could play in creating an enabling ecosystem that facilitates the seamless creation of youth enterprises is also placed under review in the chapter.

- **Chapter Five Research methodology**

In this chapter, the research methodology most appropriate for an autoethnographic study is discussed. The rationale for a mixed methods study, outlining a plan for the research design is presented. In addition, the philosophical worldviews that guided the path of the research process are discussed. Whilst this is a mixed methods study, it does have a qualitative bias, which includes an action research segment.

- **Chapter Six Some highlights of my autoethnographic journey**

Here I discuss the reasons for choosing autoethnography as the genre for conducting this study. I analyse myself as a social construct, having been exposed to apartheid and its policies of racial segregation. My early experiences in entrepreneurship in the family business is of particular relevance. I discuss my observations of my father conducting his tailoring business, the challenges he faced and how these experiences influenced our lives as a family. Emanating from these experiences in business, I discuss my desire to spread entrepreneurship among the youth as a way of addressing poverty and unemployment in our communities.

- **Chapter Seven Mentoring: an action research approach**

This chapter reflects on the mentoring phase of the study which is an important aspect in promoting entrepreneurship among the youth. I also outline how action research fits into the mixed methods study and contributes to the qualitative data. The designs of the action research plan outlining the various stages as well as the mentoring sessions are discussed. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the influence of ICT in the action research phase.

- **Chapter Eight Research analysis**

Here the strategies for collecting and analysing mixed methods data are discussed. The mixing of the qualitative and quantitative strands and the extraction of meta-inferences from the integration of the two segments are also outlined. The quantitative analyses of the pre-mentoring questionnaire followed by the interpretation of the findings depicted in graphs are presented. Thereafter, the qualitative analysis of the post-mentoring questionnaire using NVivo 10 computer software together with the interpretation of the findings is outlined.

- **Chapter Nine: Conclusions and recommendations**

In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations are combined into a comprehensive report presented in separate sections. The conclusions section sums up the key points of the discussion incorporating the significant outcomes of the investigation. Since its main function is to round off the story of the project, the contents relate directly to the aims of the project. The conclusions also indicate the extent to which the aims have been achieved. The recommendations section acknowledges the limitations of the study and consequently makes suggestions on how these could be remedied. Whilst it highlights the significance and usefulness of the present study, recommendations are also made for future research to improve on related problems beyond the scope of this study.

9.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

An assessment of the objectives and the degree to which they have been achieved is justified at this stage of the study. The following objectives were set at the beginning of the study:

9.3.1 To explore my entrepreneurial journey and highlight the successes/failures and the lessons derived from these experiences.

As an autoethnographic researcher, I surveyed my entrepreneurial experiences as an observer in the family business, later as an entrepreneur myself in business and more recently as an observer of business trends among youth in the community. The study seamlessly assumed an ethnographic approach since it describes and

analyses my personal experiences and subsequently analysed cultural experiences, thereby giving me a clearer perspective of entrepreneurial practices. Emanating from the knowledge gathered, I decided to help aspiring entrepreneurs through a process of business coaching and mentoring.

Sometimes the impetus for writing autoethnography comes from a desire to remember and honour the past (Ellis, 2004:233). Here autoethnography enables me to journey back in time to collect lived past experiences which shaped my life and destiny and to share these with an audience (Eisner, 1997:259). My successes were few but significant had I built upon them and grew the business into a thriving enterprise. However, the failures were significant enough to knock me out of business and deep in debt and despair. These were avoidable had I followed simple business principles like ensuring proper financial management, avoid taking advice from inexperienced individuals and above all to remember that risk is ever prevalent.

After sharing my experiences with the mentees, allowing them to find meaning and resonance in my stories, they freely engaged in the discussion. By sharing experiences and information through the mentoring programme, the mentees were gradually growing in knowledge and confidence. Indications in the post-mentoring questionnaire were that the overwhelming majority (21 out of 22) found the mentorship informative and enlightening.

What the country needs are young people who design and operate their own businesses; youth who become owners and employers instead of employees, job seekers, and unemployed people. Youth entrepreneurial development is a viable means of addressing youth unemployment and related social problems. (Gilmore, 2009:324).

9.3.2 To promote co-operation amongst youth entrepreneurs in knowledge gathering, information sharing and business networking.

The voluntary participation of the group of youth in this study stems from their desire to become business owners and employers rather than employees. The mentees were exposed to a wide range of subjects associated with cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset as well as best practices in business. These exercises had

given us the opportunity to critically analyse and consciously seek alternative perspectives to generate a better understanding of entrepreneurship. It also showed the importance of widening their circle of associates through networking so that they may have the necessary resources when needed to remain sustainable.

According to Dinis et al. (2013:764), the locus of control represents the degree to which individuals believe that their achievements are dependent on their own behaviour. Individuals consider their accomplishment of goals or objectives depends more on their own ability and actions, rather than luck or other people's efforts (Kuip and Verheul, 2003:54). The action research stage and the post-mentoring questionnaire gave an opportunity to observe overt behaviour, see changes in attitudes towards business, note levels of confidence rise and detect new levels of desire in the mentees to pursue entrepreneurship as a career option.

The power of business networking is well documented. According to Slotte-Kock and Coviello (2010:33), networks improve entrepreneurial effectiveness by providing access to resources such as business skills, industrial information, financial capital, and access to opportunities. As the business evolves, the network changes in response to the entrepreneurial requirements because a developing business requires different contacts and resources over time (Casson and Della Giusta, 2007; Johannisson, 1988 cited in Jonsson, 2014:197). Moreover, diversity creates opportunities for bridging, thus enabling the entrepreneur to connect to different network clusters (Jonsson, 2014:198).

Although the mentorship programme that followed had to revert to an online format owing to the Covid 19 pandemic, it did offer a new opportunity to test the effectiveness of online collaboration and networking for business opportunities. Whilst this was a deviation from the original plan, conducting the programme online give us a unique opportunity to test the new meeting software and working in a virtual environment which could prove absolutely invaluable in the long term.

9.3.3 Investigate innovative ways in which ICT can help facilitate an effective mentoring programme on a sustainable basis

The use of information communication technology had proved invaluable under present circumstances. Unfortunately, the face-to-face meetings that were planned could not take place owing to social distancing because of the Covid 19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the online engagements were encouraging, and the mentees showed encouraging signs of changes in business outlook and stronger requests to keep the online network open.

The main objective of the study was to gauge how the mentorship programme had influenced the mentees and the transformation that might have taken place during the mentoring period. As the researcher, I took into account the findings of the pre and post mentoring questionnaire, my observation of mentee behaviour during the action research phase and my informal conversations with the mentees during the research period.

Despite the limited contact, the mentees found that at the heart of the e-mentoring model is the use of web-enabled and mobile technology, which, being digital natives, they are very familiar with. This facilitated communication and speed learning directed by the mentor and through self-discovery, the mentees received knowledge wherever they were (Bamford, 2011:152). According to the survey, all the mentees agree that communication technologies are playing an increasingly important role in various facets of business. They have indicated in their feedback their faith in the Internet as a business tool. In this age of connectivism, knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and consequently that learning consists of the ability to navigate the vast constellation of networks (Bell, 2009:6).

According to Siemens (2004), the connectivist theory is relevant for the digital age, since individuals learn, cooperate and work together in a networked environment. The mentees have the tools, techniques and theories to help them successfully navigate the business world. The discussion of entrepreneurial learning is focused on the idea of gaining entrepreneurial skills through experience that entrepreneurs gain from learning by doing (Cope and Watts, 2000 cited in McFarland, 2017:269). The mentees have discovered a treasure trove of knowledge that is waiting to be

accessed on the world wide web. Whatever information or skill needed to grow their business is just a mouse click away.

9.3.4 To create a framework that could contribute to the development and growth of the SMME sector.

Table 9.1 is the framework that was developed to promote entrepreneurship among the youth in the country. It suggests the following steps be taken to achieve the objectives enunciated throughout this study:

- **Offer relevant entrepreneurial education and training:** this would ensure an entrepreneurial mindset develops early, leading to the choice of business as a career. With the right education, their risk appetite improves and so will the survival rate of businesses.
- **Offer financial and non-financial support:** this would make it easier for start-ups to secure business finance. Institutions offering the finances should offer sound money management skills that could ensure business profitability and sustainability.
- **Mentoring:** By volunteering the services of mentors and other role models, the mentees would learn appropriate business skills and execute business strategies through improved self-confidence. Through the mentors, they would be exposed to business networking with the possibility of meeting new suppliers and customers.
- **Building social capital:** Serving the community both tangible needs (goods/ services) and intangible needs (love/compassion). By viewing the community as their social responsibility, youth entrepreneurs would put in greater effort towards job creation and unemployment reduction leading to community upliftment and social stability.
- **Promoting peace through entrepreneurship:** Thriving businesses usher in periods of economic prosperity, which promotes socio-political stability. This is the ideal atmosphere for business collaboration and cooperation since

businesses prosper in times of peace and stability. Aspiring entrepreneurs are encouraged to enter the business arena when levels of crime are down.

- **Align to National Development Plan 2030:** By ensuring the entrepreneurial goals are in keeping with the objectives of the NDP, the government will take steps to increase the number of youths in business because they are seen as creators of employment who could help promote socio-economic stability of the country. Youth entrepreneurship could also help increase state revenue through taxes.

9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, the suggested recommendations are stated based on the results that were achieved:

9.4.1 Stimulate interest in Entrepreneurial Education

It has been argued extensively by researchers that entrepreneurship education and training must fulfil a crucial role in preparing the youth for a career in business since it motivates both entrepreneurial orientation and intention in individuals, which makes them more confident to behave or act entrepreneurially. Since entrepreneurship education in South Africa is in its developmental stage, the problem should be addressed as early as in primary and secondary school thereby allowing the youth to have a more positive attitude towards entrepreneurship than is presently the case.

9.4.2 Encourage use of ICT

The introduction of ICT as a vital component of the knowledge gathering and networking process should be thoroughly explored. The inability of some youth entrepreneurs to be proactive in forging business networking and collaborative relationships could prove to be detrimental. Steps should be taken to ensure that access to internet connectivity is seamless so that there are more participants. The use of technology to facilitate business networking and sourcing business opportunities must be encouraged since the youth are adept in the use of ICT.

9.4.3 Promote psychological development and propensity for risk-taking

It is important to develop some psychological characteristics that include the propensity to take risks, building self-confidence, need for achievement, and innovativeness. These could be addressed with the right entrepreneurship education since many aspiring entrepreneurs still carry the psychological burden of apartheid indoctrination. Youth enterprise development will also provide another means of addressing the racial disparities in wealth acquisition since it has the potential of leading towards racial and economic justice for low-income youth. With the right attitude and exposure risk-taking and the acceptance of uncertainty can slowly be modified to match the prevailing business conditions.

9.4.4 Canvass Government to provide a supporting ecosystem

Youth entrepreneurship in South Africa is impaired by high levels of bureaucracy limiting access to finance, a shortage of skills resulting in a lack of innovation. This makes the country less competitive on the international business front. There is a need to create a favourable entrepreneurial ecosystem to complement entrepreneurship education. Policymakers must create a complementary entrepreneurial ecosystem to improve business protection for budding entrepreneurs. The key entrepreneurial ecosystem factors should include business protection, approval of mentors, ease of accessing financial resources, friendly economic policies and increase in technology.

9.4.5 Engage mentors for support

Tacit knowledge, which forms the basis of one's core capabilities, are conveyed through the processes of socialisation by means of mentoring and storytelling. The implication here is that by identifying with successful role models who own or run their own businesses, aspiring entrepreneurs may be encouraged to start and run their businesses. The intentions of creating businesses are stronger when the degree of self-efficacy grows due to the correct education and the presence of entrepreneurial role models.

9.4.6 Endorse women in business

Empowering women through entrepreneurship in a male-dominated society is one of the main ways of ensuring gender equity. Women entrepreneurs are making noteworthy contributions to employment, wealth creation and poverty alleviation globally. Many women support themselves and their families through incomes earned from their entrepreneurial activities. The government's adoption of the National Development Plan (NDP) towards vision 2030 is a progressive policy that addresses key issues including job creation, poverty alleviation, and gender equality. Practical steps should be taken to ensure the expansion of economic opportunity through investment in technology infrastructure and entrepreneurship education with women empowerment being given priority.

9.5 CONTRIBUTION OF STUDY

Table 9. 1 Framework to promote Entrepreneurship

Innovation-Driven Economy		
↓		
Supportive Ecosystem		
↓	↓	↓
Enabling Environment	Entrepreneurial Competencies	Entrepreneurial Orientation
Relevant education and training	<i>Entrepreneurial mindset / Business as a career option/develop mindfulness as business practitioners</i>	<i>Technology innovation and better risk appetite / more start-ups and improvement in survival rate</i>
Financial and non-financial support	<i>Secure business finance Sound money management skills/ knowing one's locus of control.</i>	<i>Ensure business profitability and sustainability.</i>
Mentoring	<i>Learn business skills / execute business strategies through improved self-confidence/ psychological factors.</i>	<i>Business networking / meet new suppliers and new customers</i>
Social capital	<i>Serving the community both tangible needs (goods/ services) and intangible needs (love/compassion) /strengthens a culture that supports business ideas.</i>	<i>Job creation / unemployment reduction. Community upliftment and social stability.</i>
Peace through Entrepreneurship	<i>Promote a stable socio-political environment. Improved atmosphere for business collaboration and cooperation.</i>	<i>Businesses prosper in times of peace and stability. Aspiring entrepreneurs are encouraged to enter business arena when levels of crime are down.</i>
Align to National Development Plan 2030	<i>Increase in the number of youth entrepreneurs / contribute to national economy / Further research in entrepreneurship.</i>	<i>A thriving SMME sector/ Increase in state revenue: contribute to the goals of NDP 2030.</i>

In this section, the contribution of the present study to the body of knowledge in youth entrepreneurship is discussed. Table 9.1 above encapsulates the main ideas that have surfaced throughout this study to promote entrepreneurship.

By adopting these budding entrepreneurs into a mentorship programme, I had the opportunity and privilege of sharing my experiences so that they too could find meaning in the study, learn from the mistakes and avoid the obstacles along the way. The success of the mentoring programme could make a significant contribution to the SMME sector in the community and the province. Efforts are being made to expand the network. The mentees are encouraged to share their knowledge and mentor other budding entrepreneurs as they journey towards success.

The study also revealed the significance of entrepreneurial education in shaping the psychological profile of nascent entrepreneurs; suggesting that this type of training start as early as in primary and secondary schools. Further revelations included the effective use of technology to promote distance learning and online collaboration.

The mentorship created the support structure that aspiring entrepreneurs yearn for as they cautiously enter the business arena. The online learning opportunities for mentees are a revolutionary step in the whole coaching and mentoring narrative that is no less profound (Bloch, 1995:20). The mentees were also exposed to the online business courses which they are encouraged to complete and add to their qualifications with certification.

9.6 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Some unavoidable limitations were identified during the research process.

- The time that was allocated to each of the mentees for face-to-face sessions could not be implemented according to plan because of social distancing according to Covid 19 protocols.
- With provisions being made for group discussions in a classroom setting and the unforeseen change to online contact could have also impacted the overall

outcome of the mentoring programme. This was particularly disadvantageous to those who preferred face-to-face contact as opposed to online discussion.

- Of the 34 participants who had started the mentorship programme, 12 had dropped out of the class with the remaining 22 seeing through the completion of the programme.
- It is beyond the scope of this study to continue the mentoring of participants who are engaged in or are contemplating starting a business. However, efforts are being made to direct those seeking advice to relevant support structures available.

Despite 12 out of 34 participants dropping out of the programme, 22 had successfully completed the post-mentoring questionnaire, which is an indication that the mentoring did stimulate renewed interest in entrepreneurship among the participating youth. The findings of this intervention, as depicted in the analysis in Chapter Eight are very encouraging for the promotion of entrepreneurship among the youth.

9.7 FURTHER RESEARCH

There are numerous studies that examine the influence of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurship as a career. These studies cover a range of approaches and were conducted within qualitative as well as quantitative paradigms. The general findings were that there is a positive link between entrepreneurial education and venture creation.

However, given the importance of the issue in South Africa, and the number of publications associated with the topic being relatively few, indications are that this field is under-researched. This study concludes that more research needs to be done on the influence of entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial role models or mentors on entrepreneurship as a career choice. It, therefore, proposes that further research be undertaken in the area that is presently under-researched.

9.8 CONCLUSION

The consensus among scholars in the field of entrepreneurship research is that entrepreneurship education plays a major role in shaping the entrepreneurial orientation and intention of individuals. Entrepreneurial intention indicates the effort that the person is willing to make to carry out that entrepreneurial behaviour. However, the study did reveal that in order to reach the level of orientation and intention, the aspiring youth entrepreneur had to first develop the correct psychological profile, which was shaped by the Mentor.

Similarly, entrepreneurship is regarded as the most important economic activity for the development of an economy with entrepreneurial intention and orientation playing an important part in the development of entrepreneurial activity. The consequence of unleashing huge bands of youth entrepreneurs from every little village and town in business activity, satisfying the tangible and intangible needs of the people whilst generating wealth for their families and the extended community is a phenomenon that the enlightened youth and governments in developing economies alike aspire to.

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APPENDIX A PRE MENTORSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE



Youth Entrepreneurship and Digital Learning Pre Mentorship Questionnaire





Faculty of Management Science

Department of Public Management & Economics

Date: _____

Dear Participant

My name is Rajen Murugan. I am a Ph.D. student at the Durban University of Technology. I am conducting research in Youth Entrepreneurship and Digital Learning. This study investigates how new SMMEs can become profitable and sustainable through a programme of coaching and mentoring of aspiring entrepreneurs.

There are no risks involved during the research and participation is strictly voluntary. Participants are at liberty to withdraw at any time for whatever reason. All information pertaining to the research and participants are strictly confidential.

R. Murugan (Student)

Supervisor: Prof. S. Penciliah

Contact Details: 074584055

Youth Entrepreneurship & Digital Learning

The information collected through this questionnaire will always remain confidential and will be used exclusively for research purposes.

A. BUSINESS EXPERIENCE

1. Do you have any prior experience in business before joining this Mentorship Programme?
Please indicate in the appropriate box (X)

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

2. Is any member of your family engaged in business of some kind?
Please indicate in the appropriate box (X)

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

3. If your answer is yes to the above, state your relationship to this person.
(Grandmother, father, sister, uncle etc.)

--

4. Was business ever discussed as a career option for you in your family?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

5. At what age did you first think about the possibility of being involved in some form of business?

--

B. INTEGRATING ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAITS

Below you will find a list of the steps related to the integrated path to Youth Entrepreneurship.

Please indicate the degree of importance you attach to each step:

List of Tasks	How important is it to you?				
	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Fairly important	Very important
6. Having entrepreneurship as subject from school days.					
7. Having the business idea					
8. Being able to identify and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities					
9. Setting realistic and measurable objectives					
10. Market analysis & research					
11. Knowledge, Competences & Skills					
12. Taking risks					
13. Training and Development					
14. Financial support & financial means					
15. Coaching & Mentoring					
16. Business assistance & support					
17. Business Networking					
18. Awareness of business legislation					
19. Use of ICT					
20. Having your own business website					

C. QUALITIES THAT ENTREPRENEURS SHOULD CULTIVATE

Do you agree that any education for Youth Entrepreneurs should include lessons on the following qualities?

	Qualities	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
21	Creativity and innovation					
22	High self esteem					
23	Initiative taking ability					
24	Optimism					
25	Problem-solving attitude					
26	Risk-taking ability					
27	Thorough record keeping					
28	Good money management skills					
29	Good time management skills					
30	Strong willpower					
31	Good networking ability					

D. STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS VENTURE

Do you agree that you want to start your own business venture because of the following reasons? Indicate your choice in the appropriate block.

Reasons	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
32 Tired of your present job if working somewhere.					
33. Desire to earn more money					
34. Dissatisfied with previous job or occupation if having worked.					
35. Fear of unemployment					
36. Government policy and schemes					
37. Influence and encouragement by family members or friends					
38. More opportunity to meet people					
39. Previous experience with a similar line of business activity.					
40. To gain social prestige					
41. To implement own business idea					
42. To secure self-employment or independence.					
43. To make use of one's technical knowledge of professional skills					

E. GETTING A SALARIED JOB

Do you agree that you may opt for a salaried job because of the following reasons? Please place a (x) in the appropriate block.

Reasons	Strongly Disagree	disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
44. Bad experience of others in a business					
45. Have difficulty coping with risk					
46. Economic problems to start a business					
47. Family resistance to start a business.					
48. Family responsibilities to earn a constant source of income.					
49. Fear of Failure in business					
50. Inability to bear the mental pressure of business.					
51. Lack of information about business operations.					
52. One bad experience about a business.					
53. To earn social status.					

F. CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

What is your opinion on the following statements concerning your customers in particular and society in general?

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
54. It is important to make maximum profits in business irrespective of market conditions					
55. It is vital for my business to contribute in different ways to the community in which we operate.					
56. You will sell a product or offer a service that is highly profitable even if it adds little/no value to customers.					
57. You are an important agent for the creation of jobs in the community you do business.					
58. Start-up businesses should pay the correct taxes to the Receiver when they are due.					
59. To secure business one may be justified in paying a bribe to a potential customer.					
60. It is necessary to have a hostile relationship with your competitors because they are the enemy.					

G. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. Gender	Male/ Female
2. Age	
3. Hometown/ Province	
4. South African	Yes / No
5. Marital Status	

H. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

1. Post Graduate Degree	
2. Degree	
3. Diploma	
4. Matric	
5. Other	

Thank You

APPENDIX B: MENTORING AGREEMENT

This agreement is between the Mentor, _____ and the Mentee, _____ and will last for a period of Three Months. There would be face-to-face meeting as a group at a venue that is convenient for all participants.

The Mentee's objectives for the Mentoring Programme include the following:

- To develop a leadership career pathway to prepare for future business leadership;
- Learn the basics of group roles, dynamics, and decision-making in order to function constructively in business networking;
- To gain a greater awareness of business opportunities and activities that can broaden my entrepreneurial experience.
- To learn how to conduct research on career opportunities within my field of study
- To learn to communicate effectively in networking situations.
- To gain a better understanding of best-practice in business leadership;
- To encourage online communication and online learning to improve self-motivation, self-discipline, and goal setting techniques.

Specific assistance Mentor will provide to assist Mentee in achieving objectives:

- Assess Mentee's current level of expertise and make a recommendation on career path development;
- Assign Mentee reading materials specific to business objectives;
- Provide guidance and support by creating an atmosphere of openness where meaningful communication and trust can exist;
- Identify and encourage mentee to take advantage of support services available on various business platforms in the network;
- Assign Mentee specific tasks/assignments aimed to develop Mentee's entrepreneurial skills.

Steps Mentee will take in order to achieve these objectives:

- Provide Mentor with current resume and educational goals
- Read material assigned by Mentor within established time frames
- Complete tasks/assignments within established time frames
- Mentee's learning outcomes will be measured by an open ended questionnaire at the end of the programme.

Face-to-face meeting will occur bi-monthly on Wednesdays. Other ways Mentor and Mentee will communicate will be via telephone and email. Everything discussed in the agreement will be confidential unless otherwise specified at the time of the discussion. This mentoring agreement sets forth the objectives that the Mentor and Mentee commit to working on together.

Mentor's Signature

Date

Mentee's Signature

Date

APPENDIX C POST MENTORSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE



Youth Entrepreneurship and Digital Learning

Post Mentorship Questionnaire



Various topics were discussed during the Coaching/Mentoring sessions. The following questions relate to the Mentor-Mentee / Coach-Coachee relationship as well as the business environment and how Entrepreneurs are expected to conduct themselves.

Please answer the following by giving a detailed answer in the space provided after each question.

1. Do you believe that coaching / mentoring programmes should be restricted to just face-to-face interaction? Give reasons for your response.

2. Do you think coaches / mentors should facilitate sessions by asking all the questions and listening to your responses or should they be conducting themselves differently?

3. How has the coach/mentor improved your business knowledge since you started on this programme? If Yes/No, explain.

4. How would you best describe the coaching/ mentoring sessions that you attended in the past few weeks?

5. Should the coach/mentor help you solve business problems by giving you the solutions or would you prefer to arrive at the answers on your own?

6. Is timely feedback from your coach / mentor important to you?
If Yes/No, give reasons for your response.

7. If you have benefitted from the Coaching/Mentoring programme, would you help other up-and-coming entrepreneurs develop their business skills? If Yes, how do you propose to do this?

8. Should Entrepreneurs place greater emphasis on ethical business practice or maximising profits? Give reasons for your choice.

9. How would you use the Practice of Mindfulness to improve your standing as a budding entrepreneur?

10. How can the youth contribute to the economic development of the country?

11. It is said that risk is always a part of business. How do you propose to minimise its impact?

12. Can you expand your business without a major capital injection?
If Yes/No, give reasons for your response.

G. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

6. Gender	Male/ Female
7. Age	
8. Hometown/ Province	
9. South African	Yes / No
10. Marital Status	

H. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

6. Post Graduate Degree	
7. Degree	
8. Diploma	
9. Matric	
10. Other	

APPENDIX D: Statistician's Report

Sachin Suknunan
Qualitative Statistical Analysis

(Cell): 078 170 4497
Email: suknunan.s30@gmail.com

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Date: 28 November 2020

This serves to certify that I, Sachin Suknunan, have provided full qualitative data analysis services to one Rajendran Murugan, on the qualitative data collected for his PHD study.

Services rendered included:

- Reading of Interviews/Data
- Data cleansing and extraction
- Cluster, Word Frequency, Tree Mapping, Word Trees and Hierarchy Charts
- Node development and Coding of data
- Theme formulation
- Output of analysed data (into MS Word format)

Analysis was done using NVIVO 11, as well as objective interpretive analysis.

Should you have any queries, don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sachin Suknunan

(Qualitative data analyst/ Research consultant)

APPENDIX E: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

SURY BISETTY EDITORIAL SERVICES



To whom it may concern,

I have edited and proof read the dissertation entitled: **An Autoethnographic Study in Youth Development with Technology Entrepreneurship** by Rajenderan Murugan, Student Number: 21450996 registered at the Department of Public Management & Economics, Faculty of Management Sciences at the Durban University of Technology.

Sury Bisetty
26 March 2021

Linguist and Professional Language and Technical Editor
Sury Bisetty Academic Writing Services

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Disclaimer: I provided proof reading and language and technical editing as per discussion with the client. The content of the dissertation was not amended in any way. The edited work described here may not be identical to that submitted. The author, at his/her sole discretion, has the prerogative to accept, delete, or change amendments/suggestions made by the editor before submission.