A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN BLACK-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH AFRICA

_____

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE (LETELE)

A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN BLACK-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH AFRICA

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE (LETELE)

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHIA

In the

Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

at the

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

Promoter: Professor E. Venter
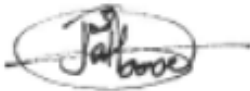
Co-promoter: Professor C. Rootman

Port Elizabeth

March 2015

DECLARATION

In accordance with Regulation G4.6.3,

I, **Makatleho Julia Matabooe (Letele)** hereby declare that this thesis entitled **A proposed framework for mentoring in black-owned small businesses in South Africa** is my own work, that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.

Makatleho Julia Matabooe (Letele)

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Lehlohonolo Joseph Matabooe,
and my children, Katleho Vincent and Lintle Rose Matabooe for
their love and understanding during long and lonely periods
of my absence from home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- The two institutions that provided financial support for this study, namely the government of Lesotho through NMDS, and NMMU through RCD. The bursaries were a tremendous financial help.

ABSTRACT

In view of the important role that small businesses play in the economic development of most economies in the world, including South Africa (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4088; Kongolo, 2010:2290), as well as the survival challenges that they face, the purpose of this study was to propose a framework for effective mentoring. This framework can be used to develop the business management skills of black small business owner–managers which will eventually increase the survival of small businesses in South Africa. As such, the primary objective of this study was to gain an understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses by empirically identifying the factors that influence effective mentoring of these businesses. If mentoring programmes for black-owned small businesses can be effective, the high failure rate of these businesses could be reduced, which may influence the South African economy positively.

This study sought to review previous findings and theories on mentoring and small business development, and then contextualise these to black-owned small businesses. A comprehensive literature review revealed potential factors which could influence the effectiveness of mentoring of black-owned small businesses. Four categories of these factors were identified, namely relational-based, non-relational based, cultural and demographical factors. These factors guided the collection of primary data in this study.

An interpretivism paradigm was adopted because the study's primary objective was to uncover meanings and to explain how mentoring was understood and experienced by the black owner–managers, mentors and board member/managers who were the participants in this study. A qualitative research methodology is often associated with an interpretivism design, and because qualitative research allows the researcher an opportunity to explore meanings and experiences of the phenomenon investigated, a qualitative research methodology was selected for this study.

The method of primary data collection used in this study was semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured nature of the interviews maintained consistency, as

each interview started with a similar set of questions. The population for this study comprised South African institutions providing mentoring and skills development programmes to small businesses. Within these institutions, three groups of participants (mentors, mentees and board member/managers) participated in the empirical part of the study. This study was limited to two provinces in South Africa, namely the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, for which the selection was based on the varying magnitudes of the two provinces in terms of wealth, size and distribution of small businesses. Two mentoring institutions were selected from each province, making up a total of four institutions. Six mentors, 12 owner–manager mentees and three board member/managers participated in this study, bringing the total to 21 participants. These three groups of participants were selected to enable in-depth and rich data to be collected from all stakeholders concerned with a mentoring programme, and to be sufficient to address the research questions.

In order to perform data analysis, the process of coding the data, as well as developing the coding framework used to identify themes and subthemes from the data was elaborated on. A combination of content analysis and constant comparative analysis was identified as the most suitable technique for data analysis in this study. The necessary strategies were also employed to ensure trustworthiness and the standards of ethics required during qualitative research.

The following factors were identified from the participants' responses as the most important issues which influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses:

- *Knowledge and expertise of the mentor*
- *Experience and age of the mentor*
- *Approachability of the mentor*
- *Passion and patience of the mentor*
- *Cultural sensitivity of the mentor*
- *Mentee's willingness to learn*
- *Mutual respect*
- *Open communication*
- *Mutual trust and honesty*

- *Alignment of expectations*
- *Accessibility of mentoring location*
- *Accessibility of mentoring resources*
- *Capacity of mentors*
- *Marketing strategies*
- *Practical arrangements for the mentoring process*
- *Financial support*

Based on these factors, a framework for understanding the factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses was proposed. This framework also contributes to understanding the factors that may have influence on effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. The findings of this study have important implications for research in the fields of small business development and of mentoring. Furthermore, this study presents recommendations and implications for mentors and mentees, the institutions that provide mentoring to small businesses, as well as the newly established Ministry of Small Business Development in South Africa. Most importantly, the study highlights the factors that should be considered and implemented in order to ensure effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses in South Africa.

KEYWORDS:

SMEs, small businesses, black-owned small businesses, mentoring, mentor, mentee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVE MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

PAGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

CHAPTER 6
BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

CHAPTER 7

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: PERCEPTIONS OF MENTORING

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

CHAPTER 8

INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE   **PAGE**

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The main focus of this study is on small businesses in general and black-owned small businesses in particular. However, it should be noted that in literature, small businesses are often discussed interchangeably with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). As such, a large part of the discussion in this study will use these concepts interchangeably as it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between these concepts.

SMEs, and consequently small businesses, are critically important for the economic growth and development of any country (Bazilian & Onyeji, 2012:3; El-Khasawneh, 2012:329; Odit & Gobardhun, 2011:114; Ebrahim, Ahmed & Taha, 2010:2249), and their contribution to most countries' gross domestic product (GDP) is highly significant (Ebrahim *et al.,* 2010:2249). SMEs further contribute to social growth through employment generation (Ebrahim *et al.,* 2010:2249; Javalgi & Todd, 2011:1004; Odit & Gobardhun, 2011:114). The importance of these businesses extends to the role they play through export trading, foreign currency, investment, wealth distribution and the creation of new business (Javalgi & Todd, 2011:1004; Odit & Gobardhun, 2011:114). As a result of their significance to economic growth, many countries have been promoting the establishment of SMEs (Odit & Gobardhun, 2011:114).

In Africa, SMEs have been regarded as the engine of economic growth on the continent. Their importance is recognised in employment generation, poverty alleviation and wealth creation as well as their contribution towards the continent's GDP (Awaritoma, Oyekanmi, Erah & Isokpehi, 2011:526; Long & Olufemi, 2011; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). Even in South Africa, SMEs dominate the economy and their contributions cannot be ignored (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4088). Small businesses are estimated to account for approximately 38 per cent of production and

71 per cent of jobs in South Africa (Cant, 2012:1107; Chelule, Van Greunen, Herselman & Veldsman, 2011:1; Fatoki, 2011:193). It is evident from these statistics that small businesses in South Africa, as in other economies, have the potential to bring solutions to the country's economic challenges such as high unemployment rates.

In addition, black-owned small businesses in particular are regarded as a solution for addressing unemployment and inequality issues in South Africa (Phillips, Moos & Nieman, 2014:85). Currently the black population is the poorest (13.1%) in the country when compared to other population groups. For example, the poverty level of the coloured population is 4.5 per cent, indian population 0.4 per cent and white population 0.1 per cent (Ndedi, 2013; Statistics South Africa, 2014:28). Also, the black community is the largest community in South Africa as it constitutes 79.4 per cent of the population (Adams, Van de Vijver, & De Bruin, 2012:378; Lucassen, Ehlers, Grobler, & Shezi, 2013). Therefore, developing black-owned small businesses to become key contributors of the South African economy is essential as more jobs could be created (Small Business Connect, 2014). The development of black-owned small businesses is particularly important as entrepreneurship is a new territory for the black community who may have perceived starting a business as a way out of poverty (Nyazema, 2013:64).

Despite their potential to contribute to the world economy, SMEs and therefore black-owned small businesses face many challenges (Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). These include changes in technologies, lack of innovative products, lack of adequate financial resources, increased customer demands and inflexible business operations (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4089). In South Africa, the failure rate for SMEs ranges between 70 and 80 per cent (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4089; Fatoki, 2011:193; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325), which is a major challenge, given the critical role these businesses play in the South African economy.

In the context of black-owned businesses, Luiz (2002:5) and Rogerson (2013:141) maintain that developing these businesses is a major challenge and the growth in these businesses is slow (Nyazema, 2013:64). In addition, the survival rate of black-owned small businesses decreases significantly as the size of the business increases (Luiz, 2002:5). For example, black-owned survivalist businesses make up 86 per cent of the survivalist sector, while black-owned micro businesses make up 40 per cent of the micro sector, and black-owned very small businesses constitute only 29 per cent of the respective sector in South Africa (Luiz, 2002:5). Survvalist businesses are described as those businesses which provide an income to the owner that is below poverty line (Agupusi, 2007:4) which is at R620 (Statistics South Africa, 2014:8).

Cao and Huang (2012:27) are of the view that the survival of SMEs is generally affected by a wide range of factors. According to these authors, the lack of experience by management could influence their survival. Galea (2004:179), together with Huang (2009:99), observe that a possible explanation for the high failure rate of SMEs could be the fact that many owner–managers lack the relevant skills and knowledge to make important and quality decisions. The South African government also acknowledges appropriate business skills and competencies as critical success factors driving SMEs (Urban & Naidoo, 2012:147). SME owner–managers also lack skills to gather relevant market intelligence (Galea, 2004:179). Nkosi, Bounds and Goldman (2013:9) assert that black small business owner–managers often lack basic business management skills necessary to operate their businesses. In addition, Ndedi (2013:197) maintains that black owner–managers in small businesses are often not sufficiently educated to be entrepreneurs.

On the basis of the above challenges, mentoring is proposed as a tool that could assist owner–managers in improving their business management skills and making better business decisions. Mentoring is identified by previous research (Owen, 2011:3; Price & McMullan, 2012:2; Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5603) as being the potential solution for SMEs to flourish in the present business world. The importance of mentoring to improve the survival of small businesses is also recognised by the South African government (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2012:12102). Mentoring refers to a

developmental relationship between two individuals, in which skills and knowledge are transferred from the mentor to the mentee (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:63; Solansky, 2010). Because the high failure rate for SMEs in general is attributed to a lack of business management skills, the use of mentoring could help create and refine knowledge of small business owner–managers to use in making business decisions (Chandra & Aneja, 2004:156; Herholdt, 2012; Offstein, Shah & Gnyawali, 2011:79). The knowledge gained through mentoring should provide owner–managers with the capacity to cope with business challenges and help develop new competencies that will enable these owner–managers to meet business demands (Goose & Vuuren, 2005:62; Klasen & Clutterbuck, 2004:78). Bell (2008:31) observes that mentoring not only influences the quality of decision-making for management but also influences the growth of the business.

Despite the pivotal role that small businesses play in the South African economy, they experience high failure rates because they often do not possess the appropriate business management skills and competencies, resulting in poor decision-making. It is against this background that this study seeks to gain greater insight into mentoring of black-owned small businesses because of the potential mentoring has to enhance the survival of these businesses. The problem statement of the study is highlighted in the next section.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the recognition of the importance of small businesses to enhance economic growth and job creation globally (Deng, Hofman & Newman, 2013:718), these businesses are confronted with challenges that threaten their survival. In South Africa, among the top five challenges experienced by small business owner–managers is the lack of business management skills (Gallato, Rashid, Suryasaputra, Warokka, Reamillo & Abdullah, 2012:2) to assist them in making proper business decisions and managing their businesses more effectively (Huang, 2009:99). Similarly, Nkosi *et al.* (2013:9) assert that black-owned small businesses often lack the business management skills necessary to operate their businesses.

The survival of small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in particular is also a concern to the South African government (Rogerson, 2013:141). This is possibly due to the fact that black-owned small businesses are regarded as a solution in addressing unemployment and inequality issues in South Africa (Phillips *et al.,* 2014:85). South Africa is currently reported as having one of the highest unemployment rates in the world (Burger & Von Fintel, 2014:37). The unemployment rate in 2014 increased from 25.2 per cent in the first quarter to 25.5 per cent in the second quarter (Trading Economics, 2014). South Africa also has the highest inequality coefficient of 0.63 in wealth distribution in the world (Stromquist & Monkman, 2014:267). Considering these alarming statistics, the development of small businesses is regarded as a potential solution to address unemployment in South Africa (Bezuidenhout & Nenungwi, 2012:11659). Small business development includes the development of businesses owned by previously disadvantaged individuals such as those in the black community (Peters, Van Gensen, Isaacs, Botha & Naicker, 2014:1128).

Consequently, mentoring has been identified as a possible tool that small businesses, and therefore also black-owned small businesses, can use to improve their survival and longevity (Owen, 2011:3; Price & McMullan, 2012:2; Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5603). However, despite the existence of mentoring services for small business development in South Africa (NEF Annual Report, 2013), a large number of these businesses still fail. This raises concerns for the effectiveness of mentoring programmes for small businesses. Several researchers (Abbot, Goosen & Coetzee 2010:9; Cline, 2011:8; Gray, Ekinci & Goregaokar, 2011b:865; Williams 2008:10) comment that determining the state of small business mentoring in South Africa has presented a challenge to academic researchers as there is hardly any information available on mentoring of these businesses. As such, it becomes increasingly important to gain an understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. This will be achieved by investigating the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

It is no secret that the survival rate of small businesses in general, and black-owned small businesses in particular, is a major concern. As noted earlier, small business owner–managers often lack the business management skills that are necessary to make quality business decisions. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to propose a framework for effective mentoring which can be used to enhance business management skills of owner–managers and eventually improve the survival of small businesses in South Africa. Although the literature provides ample research on small businesses in general, research on mentoring of these businesses, and specifically of black-owned businesses, is limited in South Africa.

As a result of scant research on mentoring of black-owned small businesses, particularly in South Africa, this study will empirically identify the factors that influence effective mentoring to these businesses. These factors could assist small businesses in South Africa, as well as other African countries as more effective mentoring programmes will be designed and offered to these businesses. The study will also add to the body of knowledge regarding mentoring and small business in South Africa and globally.

1.4   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of this study are divided into two components, namely the primary and secondary research objectives. These are discussed in the sections that follow.

1.4.1   PRIMARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this study is to gain an understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses by identifying the factors that influence effective mentoring of these businesses. This framework could assist South African black-owned small businesses to improve their business skills and decision-making by making use of mentoring programmes. Furthermore, these

results are expected to assist mentoring institutions, policy makers and funders in the development of small businesses in ensuring their survival.

1.4.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In order to address the primary objective, a number of secondary objectives (SO) were identified:

SO^1: To undertake a theoretical investigation into the nature and importance of small businesses, mentoring, as well as the factors that influence effective mentoring.

SO^2: To describe the research design and methodology used in conducting this study.

SO^3: To conduct an empirical investigation in order to determine the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses.

SO^4: To provide recommendations to various role players on how they could make use of mentoring as a tool to enhance the skills development of black-owned small businesses and ultimately improve the survival of these businesses.

SO^5: To propose a framework for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses drawn from the empirical investigation and construct hypotheses for future research based on this framework.

1.4.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the purpose of the research and the research objectives, the following research questions are presented:

- What are the lived mentoring experiences and perceptions of mentors and mentees during mentoring of black-owned small businesses?
- What are the perceptions of board member/managers of mentoring institutions regarding effective mentoring of black owner–managers?
- What are the factors which mentors, black owner–managers and board member/managers perceive as essential for effective mentoring?

- What guidelines and recommendations can be put forward to help mentors and mentees to achieve harmonious mentoring relationships during mentoring of black-owned small businesses?

- What guidelines and recommendations can be put forward to assist mentoring institutions, policy makers, as well as funders in providing effective mentoring to black-owned small businesses?

1.5   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A twofold research design will be employed to obtain information on the factors that influence the effective use of mentoring for black-owned small businesses. A literature review (which constitutes secondary research) will be undertaken, followed by an empirical investigation, which is the primary research component of the study.

1.5.1   LITERATURE REVIEW (SECONDARY RESEARCH)

A comprehensive literature review will be undertaken in an attempt to identify and describe as many factors as possible that could influence effective mentoring of small businesses globally, as well as in South Africa. Various textbooks, journal articles and other research outputs on small businesses and mentoring will be consulted. Online reports, reports from institutions that offer mentoring to small businesses and government documents on mentoring of small businesses are consulted, particularly with reference to small black-owned businesses. Search engines such as Google and Google Scholar are also utilised, together with the EBSCO host to identify relevant literature sources. The inter-library loan facilities at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) are used to access data from other international and national libraries. Prior findings and theories on mentoring in small businesses are compared with the findings of this study to establish how conditions for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses are similar to or different from mentoring of small businesses in other contexts.

1.5.2   EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

In terms of the primary research of this study, three aspects are important: to identify the most appropriate research paradigm; to identify the sample and how data will be collected; and to analyse data collected from the empirical investigation. A brief introduction to each of the sub-components of the empirical investigation is provided in the subsequent paragraphs. A more detailed discussion is presented in Chapter 5.

1.5.2.1 Research paradigm, methodology and approach

This study aims to identify the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses from the experiences and perceptions of those who participate in mentoring programmes offered to black-owned small businesses. As a result, an interpretivism paradigm is suitable for this study. An interpretivism paradigm is used to interpret and find meaning in social events and settings (Eiksson & Kovalainen, 2008:19). It assumes that the world is just as people perceive it to be. This means that the aim of the interpretivism paradigm is to uncover meanings in a phenomenon as it is understood by an individual or a group of individuals, and to describe these meanings in a relevant manner to those who experience the phenomenon (Remenyi, 2007:218).

Because the interpretivism paradigm is often associated with qualitative research methodologies, qualitative methodology is adopted to address the research objectives in this study. Qualitative research seeks to understand reality inductively, thereby providing answers to questions (Woodside, 2010:48, 49). A qualitative methodology allows the researcher the opportunity to explore meanings, variations and perceptual experiences of the phenomenon from a rich and in-depth perspective of the participants as observed and recorded through their words, actions, behaviours and practices (Goosen & Vuuren, 2005:64; Monsen & Van Horn, 2008:5).

Since this study aims to explore the experiences and perceptions of participants about mentoring of black-owned small businesses, an exploratory research

approach is adopted in this study. According to Hair, Money, Samouel and Page (2007:154), exploratory research is appropriate when the researcher knows little about the phenomenon investigated as it helps to discover new patterns or ideas. This approach is more appropriate when a researcher needs to understand the people's lived experiences and the meanings they make about such experiences (Young & Atkinson, 2012:51). Therefore, the in-depth information obtained from participants in this study is important as it provides an understanding of mentoring experiences of black small business owner–managers.

1.5.2.2 Sample and data collection

A non-probability quota sampling technique will be used in order to select the participants in this study. Quota sampling is employed to produce a sample that reflects a population in terms of the relative characteristics of people in various categories (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Hair *et al.,* 2007:182; Quinlan, 2011:212). Such characteristics include gender, ethnicity, age group, socio-economic group, and the industry of a business (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Burns & Burns, 2008:204; Quinlan, 2011:214). Therefore, quota sampling is adopted in this study with the view that it will allow representation from various industries within the small business sector which were or currently are enrolled in a mentoring programme. In addition, quota sampling is chosen with the view that it will allow for representation of gender when selecting the participants.

To gain a deeper understanding of the mentoring experiences of the participants, semi-structured interviews are used to collect data. According to Bevan (2014:138), when interviews are selected as the method of data collection, the researcher is free to structure the interview in a manner that enables thorough investigation. Therefore the researcher in this study uses semi-structured interviews to maintain consistency across the interviews, as each interview begins with a similar set of questions. When semi-structured interviews are used to collect data, predetermined questions and special topics are covered during the interview. There is more flexibility when conducting semi-structured interviews, since other topics could emerge in order to

provide more information that may be of importance to the researcher (Gideon, 2012:112; Myers, 2013:124).

A detailed explanation of the sampling frame, data collection methods, as well as how the interviews were conducted is presented in Chapter 5.

1.5.2.3 Data analysis

Bazeley and Jackson (2007:68) broadly describe data analysis as a way of working intensively with rich data. Quinlan (2011:420) asserts that the main function of qualitative data analysis is to develop a thick, rich and complete account of the phenomenon under investigation. This means that qualitative data analysis is performed to transform primary data into rich descriptions of the findings (Sreejesh *et al.,* 2014), and this analysis directs the findings to a theoretical understanding of behaviour (Babbie, 2013:396). This involves working with data, organising it, breaking it down, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learnt, and finally interpreting the data (Hair *et al.,* 2007:291; Japhet & Usman, 2013:29).

In order to enable data analysis, the data is transcribed by the researcher using the exact words and language recorded during the interviews. This is followed by an intensive process of concurrently reading the transcripts and reviewing the recordings. The coding of the transcribed interviews is divided into three groups according to participant type, namely mentors, mentees and board members/managers for the respective institutions. The transcripts are then read for each group of participants. This enables the researcher to identify words and phrases that are common to each group. These words and phrases are analysed further to discover any underlying themes and sub-themes to simplify the coding process. Thereafter, themes and sub-themes are grouped into relevant categories, enabling preliminary analysis to be performed.

The appropriate data analysis methods for this study are content analysis and constant comparative analysis. Content analysis is a means of textual analysis that involves counting the frequency and sequencing of words, phrases and concepts in addition to comparing, contrasting and categorising them (Stam, 2008:26). It is used to calculate the frequency with which particular words, phrases or ideas appear in the text being analysed (Quinlan, 2011:162). In this study, content analysis is used to find meaning of the transcribed interviews based on answering the research questions. A similar approach was followed in a study by Ramaswami and Dreher (2010:506) of the mentoring experiences of Indian Masters in Business Administration students. In their study, applicable comments for each content area were selected and grouped into themes reflecting their underlying meanings. Based on consideration of the different approaches to content analysis of data, this study adopted an inductive, directed content analysis approach. Even though existing theory on mentoring exists, little is still known about the mentoring experiences of small businesses in general (Clutterbuck & Abbott, 2012:74) and consequently of black-owned small businesses. As such, inductive, directed content analysis is selected to analyse themes and sub-themes emerging from the empirical data to better understand mentoring in the context of black South African small business owner–managers.

From the transcribed interviews, similarities and differences between the participants are identified and analysed using constant comparative analysis. Constant comparative analysis is a process that involves comparing one piece of data (such as one interview) to others, in order to develop an understanding of the relationships between different pieces of data (Shi, 2008:158).

1.5.3 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008:290), one of the challenges confronting qualitative researchers is ensuring trustworthiness. Polit and Beck (2014:323) state that trustworthiness can be achieved in five ways, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability and authenticity. These issues are applicable in this study and are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

1.5.4   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is an increasing recognition of ethical regulation in conducting a research study. This means that there are ethical considerations which must be adhered to when conducting research using data collection tools such as interviews (Schostak, 2006:136). The researcher in this study has obtained ethics approval from the FRTI of the NMMU's Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences and has complied with the ethical measures stipulated by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of NMMU. Participants have been briefed on the reason for and format of the interview by means of a short introduction and have been given the opportunity to decline participation in the study. Even though no confidential information such as financial records are required for this study, participants have been assured that their responses are treated with the strictest confidentiality. Pseudonyms have been used to protect anonymity of all participants.

1.6   SCOPE AND DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on small businesses because they are the main driving force behind job creation and employment in their respective economies (Bazilian & Onyeji 2012:3; Urban & Naidoo, 2012:146). Black-owned small businesses in particular are regarded as a solution in addressing unemployment in South Africa (Phillips *et al.,* 2014:85). Nonetheless, the development of black-owned small businesses is a challenge in South Africa as these businesses have been characterised by slow growth (Nyazema, 2013:64; Rogerson, 2013:141). Therefore, the researcher has focused on black owner–managers of small businesses who have experienced mentoring or who are enrolled in a mentoring programme. The mentors of these owner–managers, as well as the board member/managers of the institutions providing mentoring to these small businesses are also included in the study.

The study takes place in two provinces of South Africa, namely Eastern Cape and Gauteng. The selection of the two provinces is based on the varying magnitudes of the two provinces in terms of wealth, as well as the size and distribution of small businesses. For instance, Gauteng is the richest province (Jakkie, 2014:6) and is the

leading province in terms of the number of small businesses in both the formal and informal sectors (DTI Report, 2008:67). The Eastern Cape is the poorest province in South Africa (O'Donoghue & Shackleton, 2013:444) with a large rural population and it accommodates higher proportions of informal businesses (DTI Report, 2008:67).

1.7   PRIOR RESEARCH AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The benefits of mentoring have received ample attention in the literature from a number of disciplines (Allen & Eby 2010; Bizionelos, Bizionelos & Polychroniou, 2011; Crisp & Cruz 2009; Fair, Hopkins & Decker, 2012; Fawcett 2002; Jones & Corner 2012:13; Straus, Chatur & Taylor, 2009; Van Emmerik, 2008:575). Throughout the different disciplines, the preponderance of mentoring research revolves around two major themes which happen to focus on mentoring at lower levels of the business rather than the managerial level. The first theme suggests that the mentor must be superior to or in a position of power over the mentee (Ehigie, Okang & Ibode, 2011:398; Offstein *et al.,* 2011:76), while the second dominant theme views mentoring almost exclusively as a career progression tool (Allen & Eby, 2010:80; Bizionelos *et al.,* 2011:447; Friday & Friday, 2002:152; Gibson, 2004:259; Young & Perrewé, 2000; Offstein *et al.,* 2011:76-77). For example, research shows how mentoring influences the mentee's career outcomes such as promotion, compensation, career satisfaction, job satisfaction and career commitment (Allen & Eby, 2010:80; Bizionelos *et al.,* 2011:447; Friday & Friday, 2002:152; Gibson, 2004:259; Young & Perrewé, 2000). It is for this reason that Allen and Eby (2010:80) suggest that research on mentoring needs to go beyond these themes in order to expand the nomological network of mentoring.

A different perspective on mentoring is needed to examine how mentoring can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage for the business, eventually culminating in longevity (Allen, Smith, Mael, O'Shea & Eby, 2009:1114; Offstein *et al.,* 2011:77). As Offstein *et al.* (2011:77) propose, when mentoring is viewed from this perspective, its outcomes are not for individual career progression, but for use as a tool to benefit one of the most important elements of human capital inside a business, namely the management. However, research is limited regarding the potential benefits of

mentoring for a business (Allen *et al.,* 2009:1114; Ehigie *et al.,* 2011:403). According to Ehigie *et al.* (2011:403), mentoring is likely to improve the survival of a business. Allen *et al.* (2009:1114) maintain that, considering the benefits accrued to both mentors and mentees, it stands to reason that mentoring is likely to ensure benefits at a business level as well.

This study will therefore add to the body of knowledge on small businesses, because previous research has mainly focused on large businesses, while SME mentoring has received limited research attention (Fassin, Rossem & Buelens, 2011:425), particularly in the case of black-owned small businesses. At the same time, while the significant economic contribution of SMEs to emerging economies such as South Africa is well understood, their business practices have not been extensively studied (Javalgi *et al.,* 2011:542; Javalgi & Todd, 2011:1004). This is because the business situation in emerging economies differs in several aspects from the situation in developed economies (Hermelo & Vassolo, 2012:264). In addition, few studies have been conducted in South Africa on the skills development of black-owned small businesses (see Nkosi *et al.,* 2013). This study therefore aims to increase knowledge on SMEs in emerging economies, particularly South Africa. In addition, this study extends knowledge on skills development of black-owned small businesses by focusing on how mentoring could enhance the survival of these businesses. Guidelines will be provided at the conclusion of the study, suggesting how to improve the success of black-owned small businesses through the use of mentoring programmes, as an important tool for survival.

This study also contributes to the body of knowledge within SMEs. Gray *et al.* (2011b:865), in their study on the coaching/mentoring of SME managers, conclude that more research on mentoring within SMEs is needed. The current study therefore acts on this call by investigating what are the conditions necessary to conduct mentoring effectively in black-owned small businesses. A deeper knowledge of the nature of mentoring services provided to small businesses will further enable small business mentors to practise an empathic, supportive and constructive approach in implementing mentoring to these businesses, thereby enhancing the chances of business survival.

In addition to the contributions outlined above, this study will make theoretical and methodological contributions to the study of small businesses and the use of mentoring within these businesses. The effective mentoring framework which is proposed in this study, will outline the factors that are essential for effective mentoring of black owner–managers to improve the survival of their businesses. In conclusion, the alarming failure rates of small businesses could be improved by providing effective mentoring to these businesses. Consequently, the improved survival of black-owned small businesses can significantly contribute to the socio-economic development and economic wellbeing of South African communities.

1.8   DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

With the focus of this study in mind, clear definitions of the two key concepts employed are presented in the sections that follow.

1.8.1   BLACK-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS

As this study focuses on small businesses, a black-owned small business is referred to as *a business that is independently owned and managed by a black person, and which employs fewer than 50 people.*

1.8.2   MENTORING

In this study, mentoring is a relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained, rather than curricular territory covered (Swanepoel, Strydom & Nieuwenhuizen, 2010:65). In a mentoring relationship, the two main stakeholders are mentors and mentees. A mentor is defined as a person with expertise in a variety of areas of interest, who is willing to share wisdom with others (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62). A mentee is a person who is committed to expand his or her capabilities, and is open to new ways of learning as well as trying new ideas which lead towards personal growth and development (Ayinde, 2011:2; Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62).

1.9   STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter of this study and provides the background to the topic under investigation. The introduction is followed by the problem statement, the purpose of the study, as well as the research objectives and research questions. The research design and methodology are also introduced in this chapter. In addition, the scope and demarcation of the field of study is described and previous research on small businesses and mentoring is highlighted, together with a discussion of the contribution that this study makes. This chapter concludes with definitions of the two most important concepts used in the study, as well as an overview of the structure of this study.

Chapter 2 will provide an overview of the nature and importance of small businesses globally. Small businesses will first be contextualised and the most important contributions of small businesses and black-owned businesses to the economy will be highlighted. The advantages and disadvantages of small businesses will be discussed which will also include the challenges that black-owned small businesses in South Africa are faced with. A brief synopsis of business management skills that are necessary in the operations of small businesses will be presented. Finally, mentoring initiatives by the South African government in an effort to nurture the small business sector will be highlighted.

Chapter 3 consists of a detailed discussion on the nature and importance of mentoring. The discussion will include the conceptualisation of mentoring. As a result of the confusion between mentoring and coaching in the literature, a distinction between mentoring and coaching will be highlighted, followed by discussion concerning the critical stakeholders in a mentoring relationship and the nature of mentoring relationships. To fully understand the concept mentoring, a discussion focusing on earlier approaches to the study of mentoring, as well as theoretical models and approaches to mentoring, will be provided. This is followed by an analysis of the importance of engaging in mentoring programmes, as well as the benefits of participating in mentoring programmes. The different types of mentoring will be presented, as well as the phases through which mentoring moves. Following

these will be a discussion of the various functions that mentoring performs in the development of the mentee. This chapter will conclude by discussing the challenges of effective mentoring.

Chapter 4 will investigate the factors that influence effective mentoring in the literature. Cultural and demographic factors will also be investigated as they can provide an understanding of the difference between mentoring experiences in Western countries and African countries, particularly South Africa.

Chapter 5 will explain and motivate the research design chosen for this study and the methodology to be implemented in this study. This will include a discussion on the population investigated, the sampling frame, method of primary data collection and the strategies that are to be implemented in analysing the primary data collected. A discussion of how trustworthiness was enhanced, as well as how ethical considerations were addressed in this study will be presented.

Chapter 6 presents the demographic profile of the mentoring institutions that participated in this study. The discussion will highlight the activities of the institutions, particularly their involvement with small business development support. A biographical profile of the three groups of participants will also be presented.

Chapter 7 examines the empirical findings of the mentoring experiences and perceptions of participants in this study. Thus, the nature of mentoring of black-owned small businesses from the perceptions of those who directly participate in the mentoring process, as well as the facilitators of mentoring programmes, will be presented.

Chapter 8 will present the interpretations and discussions of the themes and sub-themes discussed in Chapter 7. Previous research on mentoring will be consulted to establish how the findings in this study relate to or differ from the existing body of knowledge and research on mentoring in small businesses.

Chapter 9 is the concluding chapter of the study and will consequently present conclusions based on the literature review and the empirical study. Recommendations will be made to various parties such as mentees and mentors, the institutions that provide mentoring to small businesses, as well as the policy makers and funders of these institutions. A proposed framework which provides an overview of the most important factors influencing effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses will be presented. Following this will be a discussion on the contributions and the shortcomings of the study, as well as suggestions for future research. Finally, self-reflection and learning of the researcher will be provided, and concluding remarks will be made.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF SMALL BUSINESSES

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The main focus of this study is on small businesses in South Africa, particularly black-owned small businesses. Small businesses contribute significantly to the economic development of their respective economies, as is the case with the South African economy (Xheneti & Barlett, 2012:607). Small business's contribution is realised in poverty alleviation through job creation, particularly in rural places where large enterprises do not do business (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Kongolo, 2010:2288). Because of the high failure rates of small businesses globally (Marom & Lussier, 2014:63), it becomes vital to understand the nature of these businesses, and identify areas that hinder their survival. Because of the crucial role that these businesses play in the economy of this country, it is particularly important to explore possible strategies that could help improve their survival rate. In the literature, small businesses are often discussed interchangeably with medium-sized businesses. Because it is difficult to make a clear distinction between small businesses and SMEs, the biggest part of this chapter will treat small businesses and SMEs as one entity.

The chapter commences by discussing the definitional dilemma facing SMEs in academic research, taking into consideration the two main criteria used in defining these businesses. The importance of small businesses globally, as well as in South Africa, will be explored, followed by a discussion of the challenges that small businesses are faced with. A brief synopsis of the basic skills that are necessary in the operations of small businesses will be presented. Finally, the support mechanisms that different governments have initiated in an effort to nurture the small business sector will be highlighted, with emphasis on the South African government. These are provided to demonstrate that efforts have been made to help this sector, and that these efforts have been partly successful (Irwin 2011:210). The discussion should provide evidence of the necessity to help improve the survival of SMEs,

particularly small businesses, as well provide reasons for growing interest among researchers in this sector.

2.2   DEFINING SMALL BUSINESSES

One of the most fundamental challenges that researchers are faced with is finding a universally accepted definition for SMEs in general, and for small businesses in particular. Classifications of SMEs vary from country to country and from industry to industry (Abor & Quartey, 2010:219; Awaritoma *et al.*, 2011:524; Ebrahim *et al.*, 2010:2249; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6324). This can mainly be attributed to the different geographical placements of SMEs, as well as to country-specific legislation (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6324). The cultural differences that exist between countries could be another factor that makes it hard to find a universal definition for SMEs. Thus, a business that is considered an SME in one country for example, in Germany or the USA, may be classified as a large business in another country (Cant, 2012:1107).

Regardless of the different parameters, it is essential to find an appropriate and operational definition of SMEs and of small businesses. The definition is imperative for stakeholders such as policy makers and supporting agencies in nurturing this sector. It is also important to have an appropriate definition for a small business in order to facilitate benchmarking of a country's economy against other economies and among regions within the same economy. A universally acceptable definition should also assist in determining eligibility for particular forms of public support such as funding (Shahkook, Fasanghari & Sharifi, 2008:262; Shanmugam, Ali & Haat, 2012:477). It is also imperative to have consistent and acceptable definitions for different sizes of businesses in order to facilitate research in this field (Stokes & Wilson, 2006:4).

In the absence of a definitive classification of SMEs, Ebrahim *et al.* (2010:2249), as well as Mohamad, Ibrahim, Muda and Moklis (2012:664), posit that it is accepted practice to make use of both quantitative and qualitative parameters to represent the true nature of these businesses. Quantitative criteria refer to those variables which

can be measured, such as the number of employees, turnover and balance sheet figures. Although turnover and balance sheet statistics are part of the criteria, in practice the number of employees appears to override the other factors considered in this criterion (Abor & Quartey, 2010:219; Ebrahim *et al.,* 2010:2249). A possible explanation for this could be that it is often easier to obtain data concerning the number of employees compared to turnover and balance sheet figures.

Qualitative criteria cannot be measured and refer to certain characteristics of SMEs that are inherent in their nature (Alasrag, 2010:17). Examples include having independent ownership and management, as well as having a relatively small share of the market in economic terms. SMEs are independent and are not part of larger enterprises. More importantly, the owner of an SME is usually involved in the daily running of the business, as well as in decision-making that is mainly based on personal objectives of the owner(s). In addition, the method of production in SMEs is labour-intensive, and the management is usually informal and personalised by the owners of these businesses. (Abor & Quartey, 2010:219; Alasrag, 2010:17; Burns, 2001:9; Ebrahim *et al.,* 2010:2249; Stokes & Wilson, 2006:5). Finally, the owner– managers are responsible for several business tasks because there is not a clear cut of responsibilities. Therefore, when the owner is also the manager of the business, responsibilities such as ownership and management often overlap with the same person (Tilley, 2000:4).

Although most countries use the concept of SMEs, in South Africa, the term often used to define small businesses is SMMEs, standing for Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (Mathibe & Van Zyl, 2011:101). This is because micro businesses also constitute a large component of the small business sector. The SMME concept is based on the Government's official policy on smaller business enterprises which was formulated in the White Paper on a national strategy for the development and promotion of small businesses in South Africa (Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:551). The policy was then translated into the National Small Business Act 102 of 1996, which was amended by the National Small Business Amendment Act 29 of 2004 (Government Gazette, 2004). The Act categorises SMMEs in South Africa into four distinct categories, namely medium, small, very small and micro businesses. The Act

further defines SMMEs based on the quantitative criteria of full-time employees, total annual turnover and total gross asset value. The quantitative classifications of SMMEs in South Africa are summarised and presented in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1: Quantitative classifications of micro, small and medium-sized businesses in South Africa

Business size	Number of employees	Annual turnover (in South African rand)	Gross assets, excluding fixed property
Medium	Fewer than 100 to 200, depending on industry	Less than R4 million to R50 million, depending on industry	Less than R2 million to R18 million, depending on industry
Small	Fewer than 50	Less than R2 million to R25 million, depending on industry	Less than R2 million to R4.5 million, depending on industry
Very small	Fewer than 10 to 20, depending on industry	Less than R200 000 to R500 000, depending on industry	Less than R150 000 to R500 000, depending on industry
Micro	Fewer than 5	Less than R150 000	Less than R100 000

Source: Abor and Quartey (2010:222); Government Gazette (2004)

Consequently, the Act defines a micro business as one that is owner-managed and employs not more than five people; a small business as one that is normally owner-managed and employs between five and fifty people; and a medium-sized business as one that is owner–manager controlled and employs a workforce of up to 200 people (Abor & Quartey, 2010:219; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6324).

For the purpose of this study, the criterion that will be used for definition purposes is the quantitative approach using the number of full-time employees. This is because the size of a business is the criterion that is internationally adopted in small business studies (Agupusi, 2007:3). It should be noted that even though the concept of

SMMEs is used in the South African context, the focus of this study is in the small business sector and not on the micro business sector. For this reason, the only time that SMMEs will be referred to in this study is in the definition of this business sector. It should also be noted that even though the study is based in South Africa, the results are intended to assist small businesses in other economies as well.

The definition of small and medium-sized businesses to be employed in this study is adopted from the study of Farrington (2009:31), which states that SMEs are businesses that are independently owned and managed which employ more than five but fewer than 200 persons. However, the focus of this study is on the small business section of SMEs. This is because research on the small business sector in South Africa is limited and has thus hampered the development of this sector (Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:552). Again, the small business sector in South Africa has the potential to contribute to job creation and economic growth of this country, while also redressing historical imbalances and increasing black economic participation (Xaba & Rankhumise, 2014:182). As this study focuses on black-owned small businesses, it is equally important to establish what essentially constitutes a black-owned business. According to SAinfo (2013), a business is regarded as black-owned if 51 per cent of the business is owned by black people, and black people have substantial management control of the business. Therefore, in this study a black-owned small business is referred to as *a business that is independently owned and managed by a black person, and which employs fewer than 50 people*.

It should be noted that the above discussion has not attempted to accurately define small and medium-sized businesses, but merely clarifies the criteria by which businesses used in this study are categorised in terms of size. The absence of a universally accepted definition does not rule out the important role that SMEs, particularly small businesses, play in empowering the communities in which they operate. The importance of SMEs will be addressed in the paragraphs that follow.

2.3   IMPORTANCE OF SMALL BUSINESSES

The significant contribution of small businesses to the economic development of their respective economies is globally recognised (Xaba & Rankhumise, 2014:182; Xheneti & Barlett, 2012:607). Numerous researchers such as Abor and Quartey (2010:218), Kongolo (2010:2290), Mwobobia (2012:88), as well as Parak and Khonje (2012:29), acknowledge that SMEs in general are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their countries. For example, in First World countries such as the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom, SMEs are the drivers of the economy because they represent 99.7 per cent of businesses in the country (Kongolo, 2010:2290; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). SMEs in the USA, for example, are further realised as accounting for an estimated one third of industrial employment of that country (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). Besides, SMEs in the USA create more than half of the private non-agricultural businesses GDP which includes 60 to 80 per cent of the net new jobs in that economy (Kongolo, 2010:2290; Terdpaopong & Mihret, 2011:64). Thus, SMEs' contribution towards job creation is significant in that more than half of new jobs created, are found in the SME sector. In addition, the number of SMEs is generally seen to be increasing as opposed to large businesses which are decreasing (Terdpaopong & Mihret, 2011:64).

The important role of SMEs is acknowledged in emerging economies which are currently experiencing rapid economic growth with rising income and buying power (Mishra & Jain, 2012:177; Senik, Scott-Ladd, Entrekin & Adham, 2011:260; Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). According to Madhani (2012:7), SMEs in emerging economies account for over 90 per cent of all businesses in these economies, and are becoming more competitive and increasingly crucial for economic growth (Madhani, 2012:7; Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). It is anticipated that by 2020, emerging economies will account for 86.1 per cent of the global population (Abonyi, 2012:1). SMEs in emerging economies account for more than 60 per cent of all businesses in their respective countries (Hermelo & Vassolo, 2012:264; Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). This is more so in China, an emerging economy, where SMEs account for 70 per cent of all businesses (Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). SMEs in China are further responsible for

about 75 per cent of employment and 55 per cent of China's growth in economic activities (Borgia & Newman 2012:181). SMEs in China have not only shown remarkable development, but also play a more important role in the national economy since the economic transition of this country began in the 1970s (Cao & Huang, 2012:26).

Equally, the importance of SMEs is recognised in numerous African countries such as Uganda, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Kenya and Malawi (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). In Africa, SMEs have been regarded as the engine of economic growth in the continent. Their pivotal role is realised through employment generation, poverty alleviation and wealth creation as well as their contribution towards the continent's GDP (Awaritoma *et al.,* 2011:526; Long & Olufemi, 2011; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). For example, SMEs account for 75 per cent of formal employment sector in Botswana, while in Kenya they contribute over 50 per cent of new jobs. It is believed that SMEs will be the key drivers of sustainable economic growth in Africa over the next 10 years (Mwobobia, 2012:88).

Consistent with the general notion about the importance of SMEs, this sector is one of the largest contributors to the South African economy (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4088; Kongolo, 2010:2290; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). It is estimated that there are approximately 2.2 million SMEs (Bosch, Tait & Venter, 2011:581), which account for 91 per cent of the formal business sector in South Africa (Cant & Wiid, 2013:707). Their role is further realised in their contribution towards South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is estimated at between 52 and 57 per cent, and about 61 per cent of employment (Abor & Quartey, 2010:219; Kongolo, 2010:2290; Fatoki, 2011:193; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). South African SMEs, particularly small businesses, are regarded as the largest employer of workers to the economy of this country (Abor & Quartey, 2010:218), and hence a possible way to combat poverty (Fatoki & Patswawairi, 2012:133). Addressing black-owned businesses in particular, the South African government emphasises that businesses owned by previously disadvantaged individuals have the potential to affect income inequality and high unemployment levels (Peters *et al.*, 2014:1128).

In many aspects, SMEs play an important socio-economic role by contributing to the development of communities in which they operate (Mosbah & Debili, 2014:38; Urban & Naidoo, 2012:147). Employees in SMEs often require limited or else no skills or training (Bosch *et al.,* 2011:580). For this reason, SMEs have a greater capacity for job creation because of the unskilled and untrained workers they employ (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Awaritoma *et al.,* 2011:527; Mwobobia, 2012:88). At the same time, SMEs could be regarded as having the potential to be a training ground for management skills of these employees (Madhani, 2012:7).

Fatoki (2011:193) and Kongolo (2010:2290) postulate that SMEs are also more labour-intensive than larger businesses. Hence they have lower capital costs associated with job creation (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223). As a result, SMEs are more likely to succeed in remote and rural areas, where they can contribute to a more even distribution of economic activity in a region and can help to slow the flow of migration to large cities (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Kongolo, 2010:2288).

The SME sector further acts as an absorbent of retrenched people coming from the private and public sectors (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). This highlights the job creation potential of SMEs and their contribution to the reduction of unemployment (Fatoki & Odeyemi, 2010:2763). This is particularly relevant in South Africa, which is characterised by high unemployment, a low growth rate and high inflation rates (Fatoki, 2011:193). It is estimated that approximately 25.5 per cent of the South African economy is unemployed, with 40.7 per cent of the youth unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2014). Again, 42.9 per cent of South Africans can be considered to be poor, most of whom are black communities (Botha, 2014:17). SMEs, and particularly black-owned small businesses, should play an important role in addressing unemployment and inequality issues in South Africa (Peters *et al.,* 2014:1128).

SMEs have the potential to conduct entrepreneurial activities such as adopting new and emerging innovation, opening new markets and promoting individual initiatives (Hew & Nee, 2004:3; Ndubisi & Iftikhar, 2012:216; Madhani, 2012:7). Having the capacity to adapt to new and emerging innovations such as technology is essential

since the global economy is powered by changing market conditions (Kachienga, 2006:77). Because of their flexible nature, SMEs easily adapt to new technologies as opposed to large businesses which are perceived to be less efficient and slowed by bureaucracy and more rigid hierarchies (Parak & Khonje, 2012:35). For this reason, SMEs have a strong potential to benefit from advances in information and communication technologies and the adaptation of new business modes of operation (Ebrahim *et al.,* 2010:2249; Fatoki, 2011:193).

While the importance of SMEs is recognised by different economies, they also face challenges that inhibit their development and growth. The next section is a presentation of the challenges that SMEs, including small businesses are faced with in South Africa, as well as globally.

2.4 CHALLENGES FACING SMALL BUSINESSES

Although small businesses are recognised as being critical to the economic growth in most countries, a number of factors inhibit their development and therefore the extent of their contribution to the economic development of their respective countries (Abor & Quartey, 2010:224; Fatoki, 2011:193; Neneh, 2012:2265; Parak & Khonje, 2012:27). Many small businesses do not reach their full potential and fail to grow, resulting in job losses and decreased wealth for their countries (Fatoki, 2011:193; Neneh, 2012:3365). The high failure rate of small businesses not only has implications for economic growth and employment but also for the wealth and health of the owner–managers (Gallato, *et al.*, 2012:2).

While it is important to describe the challenges facing small businesses in South Africa, it is equally important to include the challenges faced by these businesses in the context of emerging economies. This is because South Africa is classified as an emerging economy (Economy Watch, 2010). This means that small businesses are, to some extent, prone to the challenges presented by the unique nature of emerging economies. Moreno and Gomes (2009:1) indicate that the survival rate of small businesses in emerging economies is very low and only a few small businesses are able to make it through their first three years of existence. This is because the

business situation in an emerging economy differs in several aspects from that of a developed economy (Hermelo & Vassolo, 2012:264). For example, emerging economy markets are less efficient due to their lack of transparency. At the same time, governments in these economies are active via state-owned businesses (Xu & Meyer, 2012:4), which could pose a challenge for small businesses in terms of competition. Most importantly, the business environment in emerging economies is unstable as a result of escalating competitive pressures, unbalanced growth, as well as new policies and regulations that are being implemented in these economies (Roztocki & Weistroffer, 2008:3; Zhou & Li, 2010:224). These aspects can adversely affect the development of small businesses.

Hermelo and Vassolo (2012:264), as well as Zhou and Li (2010:224) point out that the survival rate of small businesses in emerging economies is further influenced by weak economic structures since they are dependent on a few industries such as agricultural and mineral commodities. In addition, doing business in an emerging economy is risky because these economies lack either economic or political stability (Xu & Meyer, 2012:4). Li and Miller (2006:11) posit that businesses in these economies tend to be new business start-ups, and they have been in operation for a shorter period of time as opposed to those in developed economies. As a result, owner–managers are less experienced in running these businesses, which could impact negatively on their survival.

In South Africa, the number of small business failures within five years of existence is about 80 per cent. Of the 20 per cent that survive past five years, a further 80 per cent fail within the next five years (Rolfe, Woodward, Ligthelm & Guimarães, 2010:17). This suggests that only 4 per cent of business ventures survive beyond 10 years (Nkosi *et al.*, 2013:2). These rates of failure are regarded as being among the highest in the world (Neneh, 2012:3365). Hence it becomes vital to conduct research on the factors that contribute to this high failure rate, in order to address them and ensure the survival and growth of small businesses.

In the context of black-owned businesses, Luiz (2002:5) asserts that the survival rate of black businesses decreases significantly as the size of the business increases. For example, black survivalist businesses, which are described as those businesses that provide an income below poverty line (Agupusi, 2007:4), make up 86 per cent of the survivalist sector, while black micro businesses make up 40 per cent of the micro sector. Black-owned businesses constitute only 29 per cent of very small businesses in South Africa (Luiz 2002:5). In addition, Nyazema (2013:64) posits that the development of black-owned businesses in South Africa has been characterised by a slow growth. At the same time, Luiz (2002:5) and Rogerson (2013:141) maintain that improving the black-owned businesses is one of the major challenges facing the South African economy.

Generally, social factors such as crime pose serious challenges to the development and growth of small businesses (Fatoki, 2012:28; Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:553; Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732). Cant (2012:1112) as well as Mbonyane and Ladzani (2011:553), assert that crime is bound to hinder the economic development of small businesses, and that little can be done from a business perspective to overcome this problem. Consultancy Africa Intelligence (2012a) points out that within South Africa, the crime rate has become a national concern since the demise of apartheid. Olawale and Garwe (2010:732) contend that the effect of crime on business in South Africa is not only alarming but is also increasing on small business premises. Mbonyane and Ladzani (2011:553) note that small businesses are becoming targets for robbers, and as a result customers and employees fall victim to violence. These small businesses incur losses which include the cost of improving security or repairing damage and compensating affected employees. Also, employees can steal from small businesses because they do not earn enough money (Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:558).

Several researchers (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Kongolo, 2010:2293; Parak & Khonje, 2012:34; Soni, 2005:2) identify regulatory constraints as one of the factors that adversely affect the development of small businesses. These include the high start-up costs for businesses, high tariffs and taxation registration requirements, and complicated licensing requirements. Kongolo (2010:2293) emphasises that such

regulations and bureaucratic practices can impose excessive and unnecessary burdens on small businesses. The smaller businesses are also sometimes found to engage in corruption, which is often linked to problems with regulatory compliance and bureaucracy (Borgia & Newman, 2012; Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732). In addition, regulations encourage the dominance of large businesses because not all small businesses can afford these costs. For these reasons, Olawale and Garwe (2010:737) advise that tax incentives in South Africa need to be put in place to favour creation and development of new small businesses.

Market-related factors also have an effect on the growth and development of small businesses (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325; Xu & Meyer, 2012:4), which means that the success of small businesses is tied in with the economic conditions in which they operate. Thus, if there is an economic downturn, small businesses are also challenged (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). Examples of market-related factors that could exert negative influences on these businesses are low demand, having an inefficient market, the inability to identify the target market, limited market size and poor competitor understanding (Smit & Witkins, 2012:6326). Le and Nguyen (2009:871) posit that although small businesses in emerging economies such as South Africa are often presented with high growth business opportunities, most of them are also confronted with a high degree of uncertainty in the business environment. In South Africa, the high unemployment rate has a direct impact on the market potential of small businesses (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732). Therefore, if the people within the communities that are served by small businesses lose their jobs, the impact of such job losses will have a negative influence on the performance of small businesses.

South Africa is further hampered by a structural problem. That is, South African small businesses do not complement large businesses with specialised products or services. Instead, SMEs including smaller businesses often compete with these businesses in the same product markets albeit for different consumer segments, which is not the case in advanced economies (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6327). By so doing, SMEs are increasing their competition with large businesses, which is not healthy for any business.

Lack of infrastructure is another challenge that inhibits the growth prospects of small businesses (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732; Ongori & Migiro, 2010:97). Because of the gradual economic reform process in emerging economies, the lack of infrastructure is a major problem for businesses seeking opportunities in these economies (Zhou & Li, 2010:224). South Africa in particular is described as having a poor infrastructure system, which puts severe constraints on the economic development of this country (Cassim, Soni & Karodia, 2014:30). South Africa is faced with a challenge to develop infrastructure in the communities that were previously disadvantaged (Thwala & Mvubu 2008:094). Examples of infrastructure include the location at which the business is situated, roads, water supplies, electricity supply, communication networks and technology (Battisti, Deakins & Perry, 2013:74; Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:553; Modiba, Kotzé & Eloff, 2012:123; Olawale & Garwe, 2010:731). Again, small businesses in emerging economies, which South Africa is an example of, are often situated in remote and rural areas (Battisti *et al.,* 2013:74; Kongolo, 2010:2288). As a result, the lack of infrastructure is challenging to small businesses because they are subjected to limited and scarce resources in comparison to those in urban areas (Battisti *et al.,* 2013:74). In addition, it is extremely costly to operate a business once it has been set up because of poor infrastructure (Consultancy Africa Intelligence, 2012b).

The concern about lack of financial assistance for small businesses is a known fact. Ample evidence (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:731; Okpara, 2011:159; Oum, Harvie & Narjoko, 2011:262; Singh & Kaur, 2014:65;) indicates that lack of finance is a serious issue for developing and supporting the small business sector. Considering the contribution of these businesses towards job creation, poverty alleviation and socio-economic stability at large, it becomes a major concern when these businesses are restricted in receiving financial assistance.

Restricted access to finance is particularly serious in emerging economies (Borgia & Newman, 2012) because bank loans tend to be the only significant formal source of external funding for small businesses in these economies (Le & Nguyen, 2009:867). Banks are unable to assess risk when small businesses have to be financed as owner–managers in these businesses lack knowledge of the financial status of their

businesses (Kongolo, 2010:2293; Oum *et al.*, 2011:261; Parak & Khonje, 2012:30; Modiba *et al.*, 2012:120; Mazanai & Fatoki, 2012a:60; Parak & Khonje, 2012:33). In South Africa, bankers indicate that they are less inclined to finance small businesses because of the perceived high level of risk associated with these businesses and the weak expected return (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6326). Miles (2013:4) observes that the situation is even worse for black-owned businesses as they are twice as likely to be denied credit. As a result of the restriction on property ownership rights during the apartheid regime, the black community could not acquire assets that may serve as collateral for bank loans (Meyer, 2010:13).

Mueller (2012) acknowledges that SMEs often fall behind large businesses in the area of corporate governance. This is the situation in South Africa because, as Smit and Watkins (2012:6325) point out, South African SMEs do not aspire to corporate governance best practices. This is a challenge to the management of these businesses because the extent to which managers have the ability to implement decisions depends on the business's governance structure (Belghitar & Khan, 2013:60). A possible reason for small businesses lacking corporate governance could be that decision-making still lies with the owner of the business, who is often the head of the family (Rachagan & Satkunasingam, 2009:469). This is the result of a lack of separation between ownership and control in these businesses, which suggests that owner–managers themselves are responsible for the direction and development of their businesses without proper skills (Cant, 2012:1109; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). Again, small business owners believe that being informal and without structured processes will help them minimise costs and provide flexibility in their operations (Madhini, 2012:9). Rashid and Lodh (2011:3) however advise that SMEs should practice good governance because it will help them to obtain funds from investors and financial institutions which will eventually help them grow.

Human resource issues are identified by several researchers (Abor & Quartey, 2010:224; Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6326) as a major challenge for SMEs. This challenge encompasses poor staff planning, high employee turnover, inadequately trained employees, low productivity and difficulties in recruiting quality staff (Smit & Watkins, 2012:6326). While Smit and Watkins

(2012:6326) affirm that good skills are among the most important factors contributing to SMEs growth, Olawale and Garwe (2010:732) point out that SMEs in South Africa find it difficult as well as expensive to employ skilled labour. This is because employment and minimum wage regulations make it difficult for small businesses to afford skilled labour. As a result, SMEs fail to attract employees with the necessary skills and expertise which could be essential in the development of these businesses (Abor & Quartey, 2010:224). At the same time, the scarcity of talented management bears a negative impact on the development of SMEs (Abor & Quartey, 2010:223; Buys & Schutte, 2011:4; Ladzani, Smith & Pretorius, 2012:3988).

One of the major impediments of nurturing small businesses, which is also the main focus of this study, is the lack of business management skills possessed by the owner–managers of these businesses (Mofokeng & Thwala, 2012:714; Okpara, 2011:159; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). The lack of business management skills is among the top five challenges that small businesses are faced with (Gallato, *et al.* 2012:2), and on its own can seriously hinder the survival of small businesses in emerging economies (Thompson & MacMillan, 2010:69). It is not surprising that owner–managers in these economies lack business management skills (Zhou & Li, 2010:224). This is because management practices in emerging economies differ substantially from those in developed economies due to the transition phase they go through (Roztocki & Weistroffer, 2008:3). Olawale and Garwe (2010:732) observe that entrepreneurs cannot afford the high cost of training available to them, while others do not see the need to upgrade their skills and remain complacent (Fatoki, 2011:193). Hence, the success or failure of small businesses is largely influenced by the skills and abilities of the owners themselves.

As noted above, decision-making in small businesses is to a large extent, owner-centred (Xavier & Martins, 2011:91). This means that owner–managers switch from one role to the other since their role is that of a generalist (Pedersen, Zachariassen & Arlbjørn, 2012:355). As such, this role could have negative implications to the business when such owner–managers do not have the necessary skills to make profound decisions. Business management skills and style, including the attitude of the owner–managers towards change, also contribute to personal effectiveness and

ultimately influence the performance of the business (Kongolo, 2010:2293; Olawala & Garwe, 2010:731; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6326).

While the lack of business management skills of owner–managers is a concern for the success of these businesses, owner–managers are reluctant to use external advice services in their operations (Gray *et al.,* 2011b:865; Bennett & Robson, 2003:797). The challenge is that owner–managers are reluctant to expose their own deficiencies to external third parties because they fear that they will lose control of their businesses if these parties are engaged (Gray *et al.,* 2011b:865). Even those who realise that they need external advice lack information on where to go for such advice (Bennett & Robson, 2003:797; Gray *et al.,* 2011b:865). In this way, the survival of the small business sector is compromised while proper guidance could be provided to these businesses in order to ensure their survival and growth. Mentoring, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3, is proposed as a tool that can be used to equip owner–managers with business management skills necessary to operate their businesses.

Against this background, there is a need to look at the business management skills required for the success and longevity of small businesses. The next section presents the basic skills that are necessary for owner–managers to possess in order to make quality decisions in their operations.

2.5   SKILLS REQUIRED IN A SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS

"Management skills" is a collective term that encompasses several skills that are necessary to operate a business efficiently and effectively (Nkosi *et al.*, 2013:2). Often in the literature, the concepts of managerial skills, tasks and business management skills are used interchangeably. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on business management skills such as marketing, human resource and financial skills. As discussed in the previous section, small business owner–managers often lack skills which are essential to operate their businesses. As a result, they fail to make quality decisions about their businesses which negatively influence the business's survival.

Rankhumise and Lehobye (2012:5601) observe that one of the main reasons for small business owner–managers lacking business skills is that owner–managers often do not come from the field of business. In the South Africa context, some individuals go into business because of the high unemployment rate facing this country, yet they do not acquire proper skills to operate a business. This is even more true for black-owned small business because of the historically disadvantaged background of the black population in South Africa (Miles, 2013:4). Black-owned businesses often experience a lack of business management skills due to limited education and training opportunities for the owner–managers, in comparison to small business owner–managers from other ethnic groups (Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2). Many black people in South Africa were either employed in the public sector or unemployed before the democratic transition that took place in South Africa in 1994 (Ndedi, 2013:197). This implies that the black community was often not involved in entrepreneurial activities and therefore was not offered the opportunity to develop their business management skills. This is why black business empowerment is one of the priorities of the South African government to promote equality in South African communities (Horwitz & Jain, 2011:298).

Even though skills development is needed for small businesses, it should be noted that the skills needs differ across industries (McFarland & McConnell, 2012:104; Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2) and become more specialised as a business grows (McFarland & McConnell, 2012:104). Hence it is important that the skills development programmes of small businesses are tailored to meet the specific needs of the various industries in the small business sector (Bezuidenhout & Nenungwi, 2012:11659). Of the many skills that small business owner–managers need in order to operate their businesses efficiently and effectively, those that are commonly suggested are: technical, marketing, financial and human resource skills (Bezuidenhout & Nenungwi, 2012; Mutanda, De Beer & Myers, 2014; Nkosi *et al.,* 2013; Thwala & Mvubu, 2008; Van Scheers, 2011). These skills are briefly highlighted in the subsequent subsections.

2.5.1   TECHNICAL SKILLS

Technical skills refer to the ability to perform the key operations of a given job (Lyons & Wyckoff, 2014:6). They comprise the knowledge and capabilities to perform specialised tasks that are related to a specific field (Davis, n.d). In the context of small businesses, technical skills are the skills required for the particular industry in which owner–managers operate (Lyons & Wyckoff, 2014:6). For example, a motor mechanic will need specific skills to maintain and repair cars. Ngungi, Gakure, Susan, Nungi and Robinson (2012:14) acknowledge that when owner–managers possess technical skills, the growth of small businesses is enhanced. Thwala and Mvubu (2008:094) assert that black businesses are often based on technical skills as these skills are needed to meet the demands of the communities in which they operate.

According to Davis (n.d), owner–managers need to possess technical skills in order to communicate effectively with employees and be able to interpret the problems that they come across in their businesses. Also, because of the rapid change in technology, technical skills should help owner–managers to facilitate the absorption of new technology into their businesses (Conti & Raymond, 2011:5; Sandulli, Baker & López-Sánchez, 2013:1977).

Even though technical expertise is perceived to contribute most to the performance of a business, black-owned businesses often lack the business management skills necessary for economic growth (Thwala & Mvubu, 2008:094). Nkosi *et al.* (2013:2) observe that the available skills development programmes in South Africa are putting more focus on technical skills than on other expertise. It should however be noted that technical skills on their own are insufficient, as there are other skills such as marketing which are necessary for the functioning of a successful business. Unlike the specialised managers of their larger counterparts, small business owner–managers are active in many of the operations and daily activities of their businesses and therefore need additional skills (Mankelow, 2008:2172). For a competitive edge, technical skills and business management skills are equally important for a small business (Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2).

2.5.2   MARKETING MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Marketing management skills are those skills that can help a business perform better than its competitors in terms of marketing the products or services offered (Campoamor, Mercado & De Gracia, 2013:81). These skills are necessary for small businesses because they help determine the survival of a business in the long run (Van Scheers, 2011:5049). Being able to market the business will provide owner–managers with a clear picture of the future of their businesses.

Small business owner–managers need marketing management skills to gain an understanding of the market they are serving and the potential for growth. These skills also help to define the market segment, prepare an analysis for the needs of the market and to gain access to finance in order to fund marketing actions (Cant, 2012:1109; Van Scheers, 2011:5049). In order to do this, owner–managers need to design and develop marketing strategies that are aligned to the needs of their respective businesses (Cant, 2012:1115). Such strategies may include developing valued points of difference in its offerings and services that competitors may find difficult to copy (Van Scheers, 2011:5049).

An important activity of marketing is making potential customers aware of the products and services offered by a business (Van Scheers, 2011:5049). When the target market, in this case customers, is aware of what a business sells, what the product does and where the business is located, such a business can get support. Otherwise if the market does not know about a certain product or service, they cannot support such a business as they are not aware that it exists (Cant, 2012:1108; Van Scheers, 2011:5049).

Marketing management skills are particularly important for owner–managers to have on order to meet the demands of the black consumer market which is characterised by a fast growth (Hugo & Van Aard, 2012:464). Opperman (2010) states that the increase in the black market is observed as the strongest buying influence in South Africa and thus has the potential to enhance the growth and competitiveness of small businesses (Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2). Marketing management skills should be critically

important to owner–managers in order to develop strategies necessary to attract and address the demands of this dominant ethnic group.

When owner–managers acquire marketing management skills, they will have a better understanding of the behaviour of their market and ultimately value their relationship with the market. By so doing, owner–managers will manage to retain the important stakeholders in the market such as the customers and suppliers (Cant, 2012:1109; Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2). In maintaining good relationships with the key stakeholders in the market, owner–managers are likely to experience growth in their businesses. McFarland and McConnell (2013:107) provide support for this view by explaining that the countries that provide marketing programmes for small businesses are likely to have higher levels of small business growth.

2.5.3   FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Financial management skills are described as the control and monitoring of the performance of a business using management accounts and cash-flow information (Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2). Financial management skills form part of the finance and accounting responsibilities that are focused on raising enough capital to finance a business. These skills are the basis for the success of any business because they are focused on ensuring that a business uses its financial resources efficiently to achieve a maximum return (Mutanda *et al.,* 2014:154; Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:2). Financial management skills that small business owner–managers need to manage their businesses successfully include, amongst others, the ability to prepare a cashbook, prepare accounts receivable records, perform proactive debtor management and records of inventory, as well as preparing and managing a cash budget (Kirsten & Fourie, 2012:460; Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:3).

According to Van Auken and Carraher (2011), the financial impact of decision-making is evident in the poor financial management exhibited by the high failure rate of small businesses. For example, a lack of financial management skills can threaten the financial performance of a business and eventually influence business operations such as marketing and employment of qualified employees.

When owner–managers possess adequate financial management skills they are able to use the information at their disposal to predict and plan business costs and income and therefore make quality decisions that will increase profitability and satisfy their customers' needs. In addition, financial management skills should enable owner–managers to choose appropriate finance options that suit their business needs (Nkosi *et al.,* 2013:3). While Kirsten and Fourie (2012:460) acknowledge that it is important that owner–managers should be able to draw up and interpret financial statements, Mutanda *et al.* (2014:155) allege that some owner–managers cannot read the financial statements, nor collect and analyse simple financial data. It is vitally important that owner–managers are well-aware of the financial position of their businesses and the changes that take place over time in the business's financial position (Mutanda *et al.,* 2014:154). When owner–managers are well informed about the financial position of their businesses, it is likely that the quality of finance-related decisions will be improved.

2.5.4   HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Human resource management (HRM) is regarded as an important tool in any business as it enhances the competitive edge of a business and eventually the performance and success of businesses (Wei & Feng, 2013:804). HRM can be described in three stages. First are the administrative roles that are focused on administrative management and personnel files (Zhao & Du, 2012:180). Secondly, HRM encompasses supportive roles that describe human resource practices such as recruitment, training and development, rewards and employee relations (Allen, Erisksen & Collins, 2013:154; Cunningham, 2010:2131; Long, Ajagbe & Kowang, 2014:99). In the final stage, HRM involves strategic roles necessary to achieving the objectives of a business (Zhao & Du, 2012:180).

Bezuidenhout and Nenungwi (2012:11660) maintain that human resource development through skills development programmes is the primary determinant of productivity and a broader economic growth of any country. Given the increasing importance of small businesses in the creation of jobs and to the economy at large, it is vital for owner–managers to develop the necessary skills that will help them

understand the expectations of employees and achieve the objectives of their businesses. This is most important because small businesses' human resource decision-making is mainly the responsibility of owner–managers (Cunningham, 2010:2134).

Because small businesses are known to lack proper HR practices, the effective management of human resources may be an important strategy towards the success and survival of these businesses (Allen *et al.*, 2013:156). Small businesses are often faced with competition for human capital which leads to less access to quality workforce in the market (Schlosser, 2013:1). Even if they have recruited quality employees, they are not able to retain such employees, which threatens the survival of small businesses (Long *et al.,* 2014:99). However, when owner–managers have proper HR practices in place, employee retention can be achieved and eventually employee turnover can be reduced. This view is supported by Allen *et al.* (2013:154), as well as Long *et al.* (2014:100) who contend that proper HR practices enhance the effort that employees put into their jobs and reduce employee turnover. By retaining quality employees, small businesses can create a feasible environment in the current competitive market, which in turn would maximise their profits (Long *et al.,* 2014:99).

Against this background, there is a need to look at what kind of support small businesses receive for their development and find effective ways in which their survival can be nurtured. The literature identifies various initiatives that have been launched to enhance and support the development of the small business sector, and these initiatives are discussed in the next section.

2.6   GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

As small businesses contribute significantly to economies, it is necessary to encourage their survival and performance. For this reason, promoting the development of small businesses is described as one of the top priorities to achieve the development of the country's economy as a whole (Okpara & Kabongo, 2009:35). The development of small businesses has the potential to address unemployment and inequality distribution of wealth within South African communities

(Bezuidenhout & Nenungwi, 2012:11659). Kongolo (2010:2289) further asserts that politicians, academics and developmental economists believe that enhancing small business development and promoting entrepreneurship would be a good strategy to improve a country's economy. Consequently, the potential of these businesses to achieve competitive advantage has become a major concern for all stakeholders (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4089; Kongolo, 2010:2288).

In an effort to nurture the small business sector, Cao and Huang (2012:26) observe that the government should attach great importance to the development of SMEs. This echoes the views of Cant (2012:1107) and Consultancy Africa Intelligence (2012b), who point out that the government's policy towards SMEs is one important factor to take into consideration when looking at the opportunities the SME sector has for growth. Governments globally should provide transfer payments, loans, subsidies and tax benefits, not only to encourage the establishment of small business, but also to help SMEs grow up and expand (Consultancy Africa Intelligence, 2012b). This was realised in North America, where initiatives such as the New Ventures Investor Forums were established to bring together financial, government, and business communities to generate mechanisms to actively support SMEs. These initiatives by North America were later extended to emerging economies, which however raised questions about the suitability and efficacy of these management paradigms and practices in non-Western contexts (Tung & Aycan, 2008:381). Hence Bruton, Ahlstrom and Obloj (2008:4) argue that these paradigms need to be adapted to suit entrepreneurship in emerging economies.

In the light of developing small businesses, the South African government also realises the importance of upgrading the small business sector to accelerate the growth of the country. This is a result of the high rates of unemployment, poverty, crime, income inequality and weak economic growth which the South African economy is experiencing (Mazanai & Fatoki, 2012b:31; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325). In order to facilitate the SME sector's empowerment, the South African government passed the National Small Business Act in 1996, which was amended with Act 29 of 2004. The Act was aimed at developing and sustaining the SME sector (Kennedy, 2010:18). This included the broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE or

BEE) initiative through which large businesses are encouraged to get supplies from small businesses (Department of Trade and Industry, 2008). The South African government, through the Department of Trade and Industries (DTI), further established a number of public sector institutions to cater for the needs of SMEs (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2011:44; Mazanai & Fatoki, 2012b:31). Ladzani and Netwera (2009:227) explain that small business support includes elements of business support and management, as well as mentoring schemes for these businesses. A list of institutions offering these services include:

- Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd;
- Small Enterprise Development Agency;
- South African Micro-Finance Apex Fund;
- Industrial Development Corporation;
- National Empowerment Fund;
- National Youth Development Agency; and
- Technology for Women in Business.

While many initiatives and institutions by the South African government were put in place to achieve sustainable and equitable growth of the SME sector (Abor & Quartey, 2010:218; Adeniran & Johnston, 2012:4089; Buys & Schutte, 2011:3; Mazanai & Fatoki, 2012:31b; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325), South Africa still lags behind other countries in promoting the growth and sustainability of SMEs (Neneh, 2012:3368). Thus, the development of small businesses in South Africa still remains a challenge. The initiatives that are being implemented by the South African government to nurture these businesses seem to be failing, a notion supported by Irwin (2011:210), who observes that SME support policies do not always deliver results. A possible reason is that the people offering support to entrepreneurs are incompetent and inadequately prepared (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2011:26). A strategic plan is therefore needed in which the SME sector constraints can be addressed (Parak & Khonje, 2012:27). Hence Adeniran and Johnston (2012:4089) affirm that SMEs need more than ordinary capabilities to survive considering the less-than-successful efforts made by the South African government to encourage the establishment of this sector.

South African government has continued to show its support towards the development of small businesses. The most recent initiative in this direction is the establishment of the Ministry of Small Business Development (2014). This initiative was in response to a call by small business owners to the government for more initiatives to ensure sustained success of the small business sector (Small Business Connect, 2014). Also, this initiative may be a result of criticism that South Africa lags behind other developing countries in promoting the growth and sustainability of small businesses (Neneh, 2012:3368. According to Small Business Connect (2014), this newly established ministry has the potential to enhance the performance of black-owned small businesses to become key economic players of the South African economy.

In the light of South African government initiatives to support small businesses, Cant (2012:1107), together with Parak and Khonje (2012:37), stress that more effort needs to be focused on the area of management development since most of the factors which inhibit the development of small businesses are internal factors. Consequently, this study proposes mentoring as a tool that can be used to sustain the survival and ultimate success of small businesses in South Africa. Mentoring is a concept which plays a pivotal role in the professional development of any business (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:63). For this reason, mentoring for small businesses could provide learning opportunities that focus on developing business management skills of owner–managers.

It is hoped that with effective mentoring of owner–managers, the survival of small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in particular, can be achieved which will not only provide good results for these businesses, but will also assist in the economic growth of their respective countries. The government, together with private institutions aimed at developing the small business sector, need to ensure that proper guidance is provided for owner–managers through effective mentorship programmes. Saayman and Oliver (2005:124) add that it is necessary to take small businesses through mentoring programmes to ensure their success. More importantly, there is a need for entrepreneurial training of black owner–managers, as entrepreneurship is a new territory for the black community who perceive starting a

business as a possible way out of poverty (Nyazema, 2013:64). This training should go beyond the classroom traditional teaching and needs to involve experienced entrepreneurs by offering mentoring to black owner–managers (Ndedi, 2013:198).

In continuing to strengthen the survival of small businesses, the South African government, through the Department of Trade and Industry, regards small business mentoring as essential for owner–managers to acquire the relevant business skills (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2012:12102). The Department of Trade and Industry considers SME development as central to broadening economic participation of South African businesses. For this reason, they introduced a mentoring programme as an intervention to enhance the survival of these businesses (NEF Annual Report, 2014).

Nonetheless, Meyer (2011:3) highlights that even though 69 per cent of businesses now use mentoring programmes in South Africa, it does not necessarily mean that these interventions are effective. This is evident in the high failure rate of small businesses in this country. The next chapter will therefore provide a discussion of effective mentoring of small business owner–managers.

2.7   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to examine the nature and importance of small businesses. This was achieved by investigating the characteristics and importance of small businesses globally, as well as the challenges they are facing. In addition, the basic skills that small businesses need in order to operate their businesses were highlighted. The initiatives undertaken by governments to nurture the small business sector were also discussed. Although many of these initiatives were intended to empower small businesses, it was acknowledged that the objectives for which they were developed had not been achieved.

It was noted that researchers in this field are faced with a definition dilemma for SMEs as there are too many different parameters to take into consideration. Some of the commonly used criteria to classify SMEs are the number of employees,

balance sheet statistics, the method of production and many more. For the purpose of this study, a definition is adapted from the study of Farrington (2009:31) which states that SMEs are businesses that are independently owned and managed, and that employ more than five but fewer than 200 persons. However, as this study focuses on small business, a black-owned small business is referred to as *a business that is independently owned and managed by a black person, and which employs fewer than 50 people*.

Despite the critical role that small businesses play in the economies of their respective countries, it remains no secret that their survival is challenged. In the context of South Africa, numerous initiatives were taken to develop and grow the small business sector. These initiatives' successes have been limited. Most of the challenges facing small businesses are internal in nature. For example, a lack of business management skills leads to poor decision-making, and this is one of the main challenges small businesses are faced with. Even though some mechanisms such as mentoring programmes were put in place for the development of management skills of owner–managers, such efforts were not effective. For this reason there is a need for small businesses to be nurtured and grown. The next chapter will focus on mentoring, which in this study is perceived to possibly be a tool that could assist small business owner–managers to improve the quality of decisions they make and ultimately improve the survival of their businesses.

CHAPTER 3

NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE MENTORING

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The nature of small businesses generally and black-owned small businesses in particular, as well as the theoretical dimensions of these businesses were discussed in Chapter 2. Several challenges facing these businesses were also highlighted, often leading to a high failure rate and lack of longevity. One of the main reasons for these failures is that small businesses lack the necessary skills to make quality decisions (Gallato, Rashid, Suryasaputra, Warokka & Reamillo, 2012:2).

Consequently, numerous researchers (Herholdt, 2012; Offstein *et al.*, 2011:79; Poulsen, 2006:256; Saayman, 2004; Saayman & Oliver, 2005:118) suggest mentoring as a possible tool to help small businesses improve the quality of their decisions and ultimately their performance. Other researchers such as Botha and Esterhuyzen (2013:332), as well as Hattingh, Coetzee and Schreuder (2005:40) acknowledge that businesses, particularly South African small businesses, need business mentoring to improve their chances of survival. This is mainly because South African small businesses are experiencing high failure rates while their contribution towards the country's GDP and employment is significant. Through mentoring, these businesses could acquire the skills necessary to survive an uncertain and changing world. Hence mentoring has become a strategic business initiative which businesses can use to survive (Herholdt, 2012:56). This chapter will focus on the nature of mentoring as a strategic tool that could aid small business owner–managers in their decision-making in order to improve the survival and growth of their businesses.

In the light of the above discussion, this chapter will commence with contextualising mentoring. In particular, mentoring will be defined, followed by a distinction between mentoring and coaching. The critical stakeholders in a mentoring relationship, as well as the nature of mentoring relationships will also be highlighted. A discussion

focusing on earlier approaches to the study of mentoring as well as theoretical models and approaches to mentoring will be provided. The importance of engaging in mentoring programmes as well as the benefits of participating in mentoring programmes will then be discussed. Following these will be a highlight of the different types of mentoring, the phases through which mentoring moves and the various functions that mentoring performs in the development of the mentee. This chapter will conclude by discussing the challenges of effective mentoring.

3.2   CONTEXTUALISING MENTORING

Mentoring is, by its nature, complex because it is a widely researched concept across disciplines (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955). As a result, it is necessary to provide a brief discussion on the concept of mentoring for the purpose of this study.

3.2.1   DEFINING MENTORING

The concept of mentorship originates in Greek mythology. During this time, Odysseus, the king of Ithaca who fought in the Trojan wars, placed Mentor in charge of his son Telemachus while away from home. Mentor was to see to Telemachus's education and the development of his identity into adulthood (St-Jean & Audet, 2012:122; Terblanché, 2011:55). Odysseus was gone for 20 years, during which Telemachus matured into a wise and confident man under the guidance of Mentor (Rombeau, 2010:89).

Since then, the term "mentor" has been used over time to demonstrate a characteristic of a trusted advisor, friend and teacher (Gentry, Weber & Sandri, 2008:241; Rombeau, 2010:89). This has led to mentoring receiving much attention from contemporary disciplines such as entrepreneurship, organisational behaviour, academic development and psychology (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955). Allen, Eby, O'Brien and Lentz (2008:343), as well as Gaunt, Creech, Long and Hallam (2012:25), affirm that in the last two decades there has been an increase of interest and research on the topic of mentoring. This increased interest could possibly be

due to the critical role of the concept in different disciplines in meeting the challenges of the ever-changing world (Gaunt, Creech, Long & Hallam, 2012:25).

Watson (2004:67) observes that the increased interest in mentoring has developed differently from scientific and functional disciplines, such that defining mentoring has been a challenge that researchers are faced with. Thus, there is often little agreement amongst researchers as to what mentoring entails (Bierema & Hill, 2005:557). Ghosh (2012:154) believes this could be attributed to the different expectations attached to the concept. Kram (1985), in Haggard, Dougherty, Turban and Wilbanks (2011:286) also acknowledges that mentoring could mean different things to different people depending on the context and objectives attached to the concept. Therefore, to make provision for these diverse perceptions, varied definitions of mentoring have been provided by researchers (Haggard *et al.*, 2011:286). Thus, there is no consensus around a given definition of mentoring because explaining the concept through a single, universal and prescriptive definition is inadequate (Cline, 2011:35). As such, mentoring definitions can differ across disciplines, depending on the profession in which it is used and the workplace practices where it is implemented (Terblanché, 2011:56).

Cline (2011:36) defines mentoring as a relationship between two parties, where one of these passes on knowledge about a specific subject to the other party. It is generally used as an effective tool in developing skills for work and for personal development (Watson, 2004:67). It is a relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained (Cline, 2011:36; Swanepoel *et al.*, 2010:65).

Mentoring is further considered to be a personal, long-term professional relationship that deepens over time, which results in positive outcomes for the stakeholders of the relationship (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:7). Thus, unlike other relationships, mentoring is a developmental relationship which grows gradually with beneficial results. Hence, Odunayo (2011:180) defines mentoring as a developmental relationship. According to this author, mentoring is a partnership in which one person

shares knowledge, skills, information and perspectives to foster the personal and professional growth of someone else. In the same manner, Pinho, Coetzee and Schreuder (2005:20) believe that mentoring is a developmental relationship between two individuals leading toward the enhancement of the junior partner's psychological growth.

Against this background, it is important to find a definition of mentoring to be adopted in this study. However, it should be noted that even though different definitions of mentoring may have been adapted across different disciplines, the essence of mentoring has remained the same – to help in the development of the mentee (Pinho *et al.*, 2005:20).

Based in particular on the definitions of Swanepoel *et al.* (2010:65), as well as Cline (2011:36), mentoring can be defined as a relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained. Because this study focuses on improving the skills necessary for small business owner–managers to help increase the survival of small businesses, this definition is the most appropriate to use. That is, skills will be acquired and results will be measured in terms of the improved survival rates of small businesses which will be a result of competencies gained.

Despite the popularity of mentoring and the increased use of mentoring as a developmental tool, several researchers (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:25; Hamlin & Sage, 2011:754; Owen, 2011:11) observe that there seems to be confusion about the distinction between mentoring and coaching. The next section offers a brief discussion of the difference between the two concepts.

3.2.2   DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MENTORING AND COACHING

The difference between mentoring and coaching is often not clear, and numerous researchers (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:421; Herholdt, 2012:19; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:20) use the terms interchangeably. This is because the distinctions between mentoring and coaching are not the same across different disciplines,

which could possibly explain the confusion between the two concepts (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:25; Ng, 2012:25). For the purpose of this study, it is deemed necessary to differentiate between the mentoring and coaching concepts.

Ng (2012:24) maintains that there are many areas of overlap between the two in both concept and practice. In the same manner, Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:424) acknowledge that the two concepts share similar characteristics, which is possibly why they are often confused with each other. For instance, both are used as human resource development tools (Herholdt, 2012:27). Also, both coaches and mentors use questioning techniques to facilitate the mentee's thought processes, as well as feedback interventions during the mentoring processes (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424). Even though Herholdt (2012:28) acknowledge that a practical differentiation between mentoring and coaching is a vague and difficult one, Cline (2011:36) and Gallagher (2010:5) emphasise that the roles of mentoring and coaching are not the same.

The most basic element which differentiates mentoring from coaching is the role of parties involved. With regard to mentoring, the mentor is an expert in a specific field or a leader who facilitates individual growth in professional and personal skills, which the individual needs to be successful (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422,424). Contrary to mentoring, a coach provides on-the-job training that is specific to the selected skills needed to perform the job (Watson, 2004:71). In addition, mentoring is a long-term relationship (Gallagher, 2010:5; Cline, 2011:36) as opposed to coaching, which is a short-term relationship between the coach and the person who is guided by the coach (Watson, 2004:71). The long-term relationship applicable to mentoring allows time for experimentation and reflection, as well as for collaboration and advice for the mentee (Cline, 2011:36). This means that during mentorship, mentors are able to offer advice, guidance and support to the mentee.

The mentoring relationship is designed in a way that fosters personal growth and helps the mentee implement his creative, personal and professional development in a wider context (Gaunt *et al.,* 2012:29; Ng, 2012:25). In order to facilitate the mentorship and for mentorship to be effective, there are a number of techniques that

a mentor can use. For instance, a mentor may choose to use coaching techniques such as listening, questioning, clarifying and giving feedback (Passmore, 2010:11) within the mentoring relationship. Thus, mentoring can include coaching techniques in order to improve a mentee's performance on the job. (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424).

Unlike mentoring, coaching is more concerned with on-the-job training, it is skills-specific and it directs behaviour (Watson, 2004:71). It refers to the provision of technical support focused on the development of techniques that employees must know and practise, and it is often focused on learning job-related skills (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:423). Coaching is a strategy focused on the technical part of the job in order to help an individual to perform the job better. In this case, the coach plays the role of a tutor, observing the work and actions of employees, providing comments on execution and teaching skills that may be lacking (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:423; Gaunt *et al.,* 2012:29).

Čiutienė, Neverauskas and Meilienė (2010:444) stress that the objective of coaching is to encourage an individual's desire to learn, to improve and to reach activity perfection through an employee's self-evaluation and learning. It is a relationship aimed at enhancing learning and development with the intention of improving performance in a specific aspect of practice (Gaunt *et al.,* 2012:29). As a result, performance outcomes are expected from this relationship (Watson, 2004:71). Through coaching, employees are able to find more new professional possibilities, create new skills that conduce not only business objectives, but also the realisation of individual career objectives. Against this background, a brief summary of the differences between the two concepts, mentoring and coaching, is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1   Summary of the differences between mentoring and coaching relationships

MENTORING	COACHING
• Career-focused • Relationships can be personal as well as professional • Mentor is an expert in an area or a leader within the business • Uses coaching techniques • Mentor acts as a counsellor to the mentee, provides development opportunities and elements that are critical to become a successful leader • Focuses on professional (technical and non-technical) and personal skills needed for success • Has a longer-term focus with emphasis on micro- and macro-related issues • Both the mentor and mentee communicate ideas	• Task- or performance-focused • Relationships are functional • A coach does not solve problems of someone, rather tries to draw the wisdom from it • A strategy for mentoring • Aimed at the development of someone with the intention of improving performance in a specific aspect of practice • Provided by a professional colleague or external executive coach, and is more technical support • Has a short-term focus with emphasis on immediate micro-related issues • The coach plays the role of a tutor, observing the work and actions of employees • Encourages individual's desire to learn and improve

Sources: Adapted from Čiutienė *et al.,* (2010:444); Cline (2011:36); Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:421); Gallagher (2010:5); Gaunt *et al.,* (2012:29); Ng (2012:25); Watson (2004:71).

While it is important to differentiate between mentoring and coaching, it is equally important to differentiate between the two critical stakeholders in a mentoring relationship, namely the mentor and mentee. The definitions for each of the two concepts are provided in the next section.

3.2.3   CRITICAL STAKEHOLDERS IN A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Stakeholders refer to those individuals or groups who contribute towards the achievement of the business's goals (Eskerod & Huemann, 2013:39; Van Puyvelde, Caers, Bois & Jegers, 2012:433). Stakeholders are also individuals or groups with a two-way interaction whose participation or involvement could have an influence on the performance of the business in either a positive or negative manner (Onkila, 2010:380). As such, Reinig and Tilt (2008/2009:177) advise that any business must consider the impact of its operations on its various stakeholders. Examples of other stakeholders include suppliers, employees, customers, shareholders, government authorities and local communities (Mishara & Suar, 2010:573; Reinig & Tilt, 2008/2009:178).

As this study is concerned with mentoring, it is important to discuss the two stakeholders relevant in mentoring relationships, namely the mentor and the mentee. On one hand, a mentor is defined as a person with expertise in a variety of areas of interest, and who is willing to share wisdom with others (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62). Although there have been a number of definitions for mentor, the most clearly expressed is: an experienced, trusted friend and advisor (Rombeau, 2010:89). Mentors are individuals who provide advice to their clients (Bisk, 2002:262). Thus, a mentor is someone who helps others to reach their potential (Hattingh *et al.,* 2005:41). Mentors are expected to be guides, teachers and coaches to mentees (Eby, Durley, Evans & Ragins, 2008:358).

On the other hand, a mentee or protégé is a person who is committed to expand his or her capabilities. This person should be open and receptive to new ways of learning as well as trying new ideas which lead towards personal growth and

development (Ayinde, 2011:2; Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62).

 It has been suggested by several researchers (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422; Herholdt, 2012:36) that in order for the two stakeholders to have an effective mentoring relationship, it is important to nurture and embrace the relationship they have. The next section will therefore highlight the nature of mentoring relationships.

3.2.4   THE NATURE OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Hattingh *et al.* (2005:40) emphasise that an effective mentoring relationship is one of the most motivating relationships for individuals to have in a business. As such, once the relationship is established, it must be nurtured (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422) and embraced because of the potential benefits attached to the relationship (Herholdt, 2012:36). Fleig-Palmer and Schoorman (2011:335), as well as Solansky (2010:676) explain that the mentoring relationship is described as a complex relationship that is based on social exchange between at least two individuals. The reason why this relationship is regarded as complex is that the relationship facilitates the development of the other party (Freedman, 2009:173). Yet it is expected that not only the mentee gains from the relationship, but that the mentors and businesses providing mentoring to their employees also receive related benefits (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254). Again, the relationship is complex in that it is the responsibility of both the mentor and mentee to work in harmony to achieve the objectives for which the relationship exists (Hattingh *et al.*, 2005:41; Terblanché, 2011:57). Hence, it is advised that both the mentor and mentee should each do their part for the relationship to be successful (Hattingh *et al.,* 2005:41).

While authors such as Manwa and Manwa (2007:32) imply that mentoring relationships are formed by people who are employed by the same enterprise, several other authors (Bell, 2008:31; Hudson-Davies, Parker & Byrom, 2002:249; Straus *et al.,* 2009:137) are of the opinion that mentoring relationships can also be formed with outsiders. It is even advised that engaging in a mentorship with

someone from outside the enterprise can be more useful than with someone from within the enterprise (Bell, 2008:31).

Gallagher (2010:4) together with Taglieber (2011:29), suggest that reciprocity is the most important element for good mentoring relationships. Reciprocity implies that both the mentor and mentee should strive towards achieving the same goals and combine their efforts to achieve these goals. In order to do this, Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:422), as well as Parsloe and Leedham (2009:20), advise that it is essential to clarify goals and expectations of the relationship from the beginning. This way, both the mentor and mentee understand their roles in the relationship and their actions are guided by these goals.

Hattingh *et al.* (2005:41) and Lee (2007:337) explain that a mentoring relationship is an inclusive, confidential and non-judgemental relationship between a mentor and mentee because their common objectives are mutual personal growth and business success. Confidentiality is important since confidential information is provided during mentoring. As Herholdt (2012:59) notes, an effective mentoring relationship is one which is characterised by high levels of intimacy between the mentor and mentee since it deals with crucial sensitive issues.

The qualities most cited by researchers (Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Herholdt, 2012:36; Ayinde, 2011:5) for effective mentoring relationships are trust, respect, openness, commitment, authenticity, being able to listen to one another and attendance at meetings. Once these qualities and many others exist in a mentoring relationship, such a relationship is bound to make a significant impact on the career of the mentee and growth of the business in which the mentee operates (Herholdt, 2012:59).

Because this study focuses on the mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa, it is necessary to highlight the theories which have been developed concerning mentoring. This study is intended to identify theories that could be useful for the mentoring of small businesses, particularly in South Africa to improve their survival and ultimately performance. Thus, the next section concerns the evolution of mentoring as a study field.

3.3 THE EVOLUTION OF MENTORING AS A STUDY FIELD

As has been noted earlier, mentoring is a widely researched concept in various disciplines. The concept has received much attention because of the essential role it plays in the development of employees for the success of the business (Malik, Nawab, Naeem & Danish, 2010:17). Mentoring has also been acknowledged as a critical tool that is used to help people adapt to business life (Hatmaker & Park, 2013:17; Okurame, 2012:70). For these reasons and many others, mentoring has been used in different fields such as education (Conway, 2009:95; Ghosh, 2012:154), architecture and engineering (Buell, 2004:58), psychology (Buell, 2004:58; Chester, Burton, Xenos & Elgar, 2013), communication (Buell, 2004:58; Koschmann & Peterson, 2013) and business (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:428; Ghosh, 2012:155). As such, there have been notable developments for diverse purposes in mentoring research. As a result of the potential for these diverse perceptions, researchers have developed theories to suit each context in which the concept is studied. At the same time, there have been a number of developments in mentoring research during the period from 1980 to 2009.

3.3.1 EARLIER APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF MENTORING

Mentoring has been studied across various disciplines with the aim of enhancing the performance of those who receive it. According to Haggard *et al.* (2011:282), a variety of topics were investigated in mentoring research from 1980 to 2009. These authors provide a summary of the developments in mentoring research covering notable topics across various disciplines. These are presented in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Notable topics and developments in mentoring research
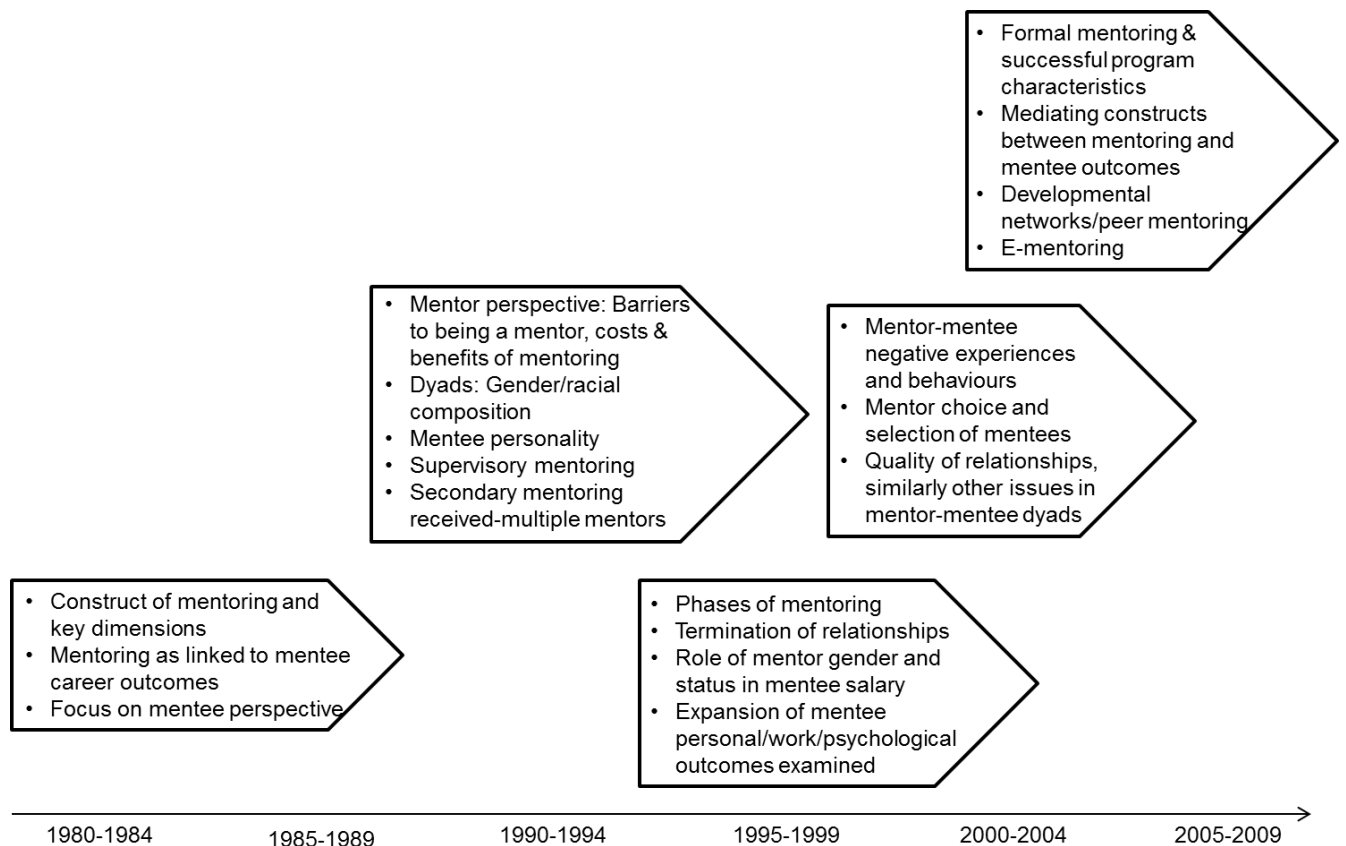
Source: Haggard *et al.* (2011:283)

The review of mentoring literature by Haggard *et al.* (2011:283) in Figure 3.1 describes how the concept of mentoring has changed since its inception in the early 1980s. Early theorists in mentoring research were focused on understanding the nature of mentoring and its key dimensions as well as mentee perspectives during mentoring sessions focusing mainly on career outcomes. Later, more studies such as that of Kram (1983) were conducted to expand knowledge on mentoring. Kram proposed a theoretical model of mentoring that identified career and psychosocial development as primary functions of a mentoring relationship (Gibson, 2004). Research conducted by Kram (1983, 1985) provided the foundation for more studies such that the focus of mentoring was then shifted from that of the mentee to include the perspectives of mentors as illustrated in Figure 3.1. The shift included multiple topics aimed at improving mentoring programmes. Among these were studies

focusing on the influence of demographics on mentoring (Blake-Beard, Bayne, Crosby & Muller, 2011; Finkelstein, Allen, Ritchie, Lynch & Montei, 2012; Ensher & Murphy, 2011), phases of mentoring (Kram 1983; Murphy & Ensher, 1997), mediating variables between mentoring and mentee outcomes (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011), network mentoring support (Lamb, 1999; Stamm & Buddeberg-Fisher, 2011) and mentoring using technology (Leslie & Johnson-Leslie, 2014; Rowland, 2012).

It is important to note that even though mentoring has been a topic of interest across disciplines, these studies are limited as far as mentoring for owner–managers is concerned. Offstein *et al.* (2011:75) suggest that it is vitally important to include managers and owners in mentoring programmes in order to improve the overall performance of small businesses because of the high failure rates facing these businesses.

It is further observed that previous studies refer to mentoring which is provided within the same business because of the hierarchical nature of mentoring programmes where the senior employee becomes the mentor of a junior employee (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:5; Rowland, 2012:229). While it is important for mentoring to be provided from within the business, it is also equally important for small businesses to consider being mentored by outsiders. For example, Qu, Cooper and Ezzamel (2010:4), advise that the use of management experts outside the business is more useful since they can help with the transformation of expertise from outside into the businesses. Thus, expertise from outside is important because it brings outsiders' perspectives which owner-manages may not be exposed to. This is especially important for managers given that – except in the case of reverse theory (discussed in the next section) – they will need an experienced mentor who is less likely to come from within their business. This means that since owner–managers themselves are at the apex of the business, logically there cannot be any other person superior to them. A suggestion is therefore made that using models based on mentoring of owner–managers from external bodies is of paramount importance.

3.3.2   THEORETICAL MODELS AND APPROACHES TO MENTORING

Even though several theories and approaches have been developed over the years to explain mentoring, several researchers (Chandler, 2011; Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:14) identify two theories which form the basis for mentoring and which, to some extent, describe the principles governing mentoring relationships. Fletcher and Mullen (2012:14) observe that even though these theories have different perspectives on mentoring, they overlap when put into practice. The two theories are the traditional and alternative mentoring theories discussed below.

3.3.2.1 Traditional mentoring theory

Researchers define traditional mentoring as a dyadic process in which a more experienced individual supports a less experienced employee in his career (Cline, 2011:35; Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Freedman, 2009:176; Rowland, 2012:229). Thus, learning in this perspective is dispensed hierarchically from a senior employee to a junior employee (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:56; Holland, Major & Orvis, 2012:344). O'Neil and Marsick (2009:19) acknowledge that traditional mentoring is an intense and caring relationship between people who have different levels of experience to promote professional and personal development.

Bryant (2005:323) point out that traditional mentoring can be useful when supporting a new employee to adjust to a business. For example, an experienced individual could guide and support a newer employee to adjust in a business. This should assist the new employee in adapting to the values of the business (Bryant, 2005:323; Cline, 2011:35). Traditional mentoring could be regarded as more useful in start-up businesses than for owner–managers who have been in business longer. Due to the hierarchical nature of traditional mentoring, owner–managers who have been in business for some time are in a better position to guide start-up owners on the important aspects of business success. New business owners often struggle to have their businesses established because of a lack of experience and in particular, a lack of management expertise (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:332; St-Jean & Audet, 2013:96). It is at this stage that traditional mentoring could be of great importance

where new business owner–managers learn from those who have been in the business environment for a longer period. Fletcher and Mullen (2012:7) add that traditional mentoring can be very useful in cases where learning is passed down through generations because of its potential to be focused on enhancing skills and ultimately achieving specific business goals. Thus, mentoring provides an effective way to provide career growth to employees who will later possibly take up senior or managerial positions within the business (Ayinde, 2011:8).

While traditional mentoring is regarded as an important tool in the development of junior employees, it has some negative aspects which the mentee may be exposed to. When learning is passed from a senior to a junior employee, individuals learn through theory and from that to which they have been exposed. This could limit the mentee's advancement when it comes to experience on a leadership level because of a lack of exposure to other areas in the business (Rowland, 2012:229). In addition, traditional mentoring sustains a biased culture (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:14). The shortfall is that employees may not be able to learn about new effective ways of performing their jobs because they are introduced to the old systems that the business has been practising. Hence Herholdt's (2012:56) criticism against traditional mentoring theory is that it has failed to keep up with new developments in business.

As a result of the hierarchical nature of traditional mentoring, owner–managers' opportunities of enhancing skills can be limited as a result of the cost of getting advice from experienced entrepreneurs. According to Coulson-Thomas (2011:432), the cost of having senior, experienced mentors can be high because such people are in demand. Considering that owner–managers cite cost as one of the reasons for not seeking external advice (Blackburn, Carey & Tanewski, 2011:11), the cost of using senior people as mentors is a limiting factor to owner–managers.

3.3.2.2 Alternative mentoring theories and practices

Criticism of traditional mentoring relationships and systems is that they are developmentally limiting and exclusive of diverse populations (Fletcher & Mullen

2012:14). Traditional mentoring basically involves a senior employee offering support to a junior employee. By contrast, alternative mentoring is non-hierarchical (Draves & Koops, 2011:68). This means that mentoring relationships can be in a different form such as a junior employee offering mentoring to a senior employee. Furthermore, alternative mentoring practices seek to meet the needs of both individuals and groups, whereas traditional mentoring is aimed at individuals only (Draves & Koops, 2011:68). Alternative theories also allow for different mentoring models which serve different purposes and can be conducted in different settings, depending on the situation for which mentoring is needed (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:10).

Some confusion exists about alternative mentoring theories identified by researchers because of the different mentoring models that have been developed across disciplines. The different theories may have names that vary, but when analysed, these have similar meanings. For example, some researchers (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012:14; Rombeau, 2010:92) label alternative mentoring theories as collaborative mentoring, also known as co-mentoring, mosaic mentoring, multiple-level co-mentoring and synergistic leadership. Most other researchers (Buell, 2004:57; Chandler, 2011; Draves & Koops, 2011; O'Neil & Marsick, 2009:21) label alternative mentoring theories as group mentoring, reverse mentoring, peer mentoring and virtual mentoring.

There is confusion with regard to what constitutes mentoring types and mentoring theory. Some researchers (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426; Freedman, 2009:177) are of the opinion that the above-mentioned theories (group, reverse, peer and virtual) are forms of mentoring, while other researchers identify these as mentoring theories. This confusion is attributed to the fact that the use of mentoring differs depending on the discipline, so that researchers adapt the concept to suit their respective fields. For the purpose of this study, the researcher has decided to classify group, reverse, peer and virtual mentoring as alternative mentoring theories because they describe the principles governing the different settings of mentoring relationships as opposed to traditional mentoring theory. As a result, in this study, these concepts qualify as

alternatives to traditional mentoring relationships. The alternative mentoring theories are discussed in detail in the subsequent sections.

- *Group mentoring***:** According to Emelo (2011:221) together with Freedman (2009:177), group mentoring is a relatively new concept. It is non-hierarchal in nature (Zasloff & Okurowski, 2012:53), and is a mentoring relationship in which individual development is achieved by using more than one expert and a number of mentees in a group setting (Carvin, 2011:50; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426; Freedman, 2009:177; Zasloff & Okurowski , 2012:53). Freedman (2009:177) asserts that group mentoring is a term which is used to describe a function of professional associations in which the career development of members of the group is influenced by the group's exertion of social norms and roles. Thus, group mentoring has a synergistic effect through the interaction of the group members (Freedman, 2009:177). Even though the relationship is structured as a group, each mentee works on individual needs and development goals.

Group mentoring has emerged as a useful tool for individual development because of its capacity to spread a limited number of mentors across a larger number of mentees (Carvin, 2011:50). Group mentoring works towards improving mentoring relationships to avoid unpleasant mentoring experiences such as a mismatch of the mentor and mentee, a lack of mentor expertise and exploitation of the relationship by the mentor (Johns, McNamara & Moses, 2012:75). During group mentoring, a mentee is exposed to different mentors who have different approaches to situations. Lastly, group mentoring is seen as a cost-effective way to expand individuals' knowledge and skills across the business (Emelo, 2011:221). Thus, mentoring expenses are shared by a bigger group as opposed to costs being incurred on an individual basis.

Carvin (2011:50) proposes that even though mentoring groups function in different settings, they share the same characteristics. Such characteristics are as follows:

- Each mentee has his own unique learning objectives;

- A group is a safe and confidential environment for both mentees and mentors to explore and share personal challenges;

- Mentors guide rather than train mentees; and

- Both mentors and mentees benefit from participating in group mentoring.

Carvin (2011:50) as well as Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:426), assert that group mentoring relationships may be preferred to the other theories of mentoring relationships because each mentor in the group has his or her own experiences and insights to share, and mentees can learn from this discussion. Therefore, mentees are able to choose mentors to address specific goals because mentees (in this case, owner–managers), often have multiple goals to be achieved from a mentoring relationship (Distelberg & Schwarz, 2013:2).

Owner–managers can be mentored in groups focusing on certain managerial skills, so that they can share their individual experiences regarding these skills and use this together with what they learn from a mentoring programme to better manage their businesses. The questions which the mentor(s) ask during the process also help mentees to engage in the discussion and reflect on the issues being discussed (Buell, 2004:57; Carvin, 2011:50).

Group mentoring may also be useful to owner–managers if mentoring is targeted at business owner–managers with the same needs. For example, business owner–managers in the agricultural sector may be in need of mentoring because of a crisis they are faced with in the industry at large. Through group mentoring, such issues may be addressed and resolved more easily by engaging all those concerned in a group setting.

- *Reverse mentoring:* Reverse mentoring is a concept that has been known for years, but was formally introduced in 1999 by the former Chief Executive of General Electric, Jack Welch (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:56). The central idea of reverse mentoring is that it aims to help older and/or more senior people learn from the knowledge of younger people (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:56; Fajana & Gbajumo-

Sheriff, 2011:426; Gannon & Maher, 2012:441; Haggard *et al.*, 2010:299). This form of relationship is common in the field of information technology, computing and internet communications (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426) to help senior employees acquire new techniques in the field in order to keep up with the rapidly changing technology (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:56; Gannon & Maher, 2012:441; Samuels, 2012:556).

It is important to realise that as new technologies are invented, owner–managers may need the assistance of their junior employees in order to "catch-up" with the new developments. It is not surprising that young, entry-level employees will have more knowledge about technology compared to their managers or owners because of the rapid changes in technology, which the younger generation is more exposed to (Haggard *et al.,* 2010:299). It is further suggested that reverse mentoring could be useful to small businesses since these businesses are known for a lack of information and communication technology support which negatively influences their success (Zaidi, 2013:417). Other than in the field of technology, reverse mentoring is useful in its ability to create and maintain openness between senior and junior employees (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426).

Chaudhuri and Ghosh (2012:57) assert that in order for reverse mentoring relationships to be effective, the business should first acknowledge that the junior employee has new knowledge that he can share to advance the success of the business. With reverse mentoring, the barriers of status, power and position between senior and junior employees can easily be dissolved (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426).

- *Peer mentoring*: The fundamental idea behind peer mentoring is to support professional development of colleagues in the same business (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426). Unlike traditional mentoring, peer mentoring is not hierarchical (O'Neil & Marsick, 2009:22), and the mentor does not do an evaluation on the performance of the mentee at the end of the relationship (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426). As a result, the mentor could be the same age as the mentee, and could be someone holding the same position in the business

as the mentee (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Holland *et al.,* 2012:344). Thus, peer mentoring is a mutual involvement in encouraging and enhancing learning development between peers (Freedman, 2009:177).

During peer mentoring, a more experienced individual in the job could pass on his or her knowledge to a less experienced colleague in order to improve the performance of the other and help that individual become effective more quickly (Bryant, 2005:321). In comparison to more senior colleagues as mentors, peer mentors are able to draw on more recent experiences that the mentee can relate with and be able to apply these to the business in which they are employed (Holland *et al.,* 2012:344).

As O'Neil and Marsick (2009:22) explain, communication, mutual support and collaboration are made easier because there is no status or power that needs to be noted in the relationship. Again, it is often more comfortable to approach peers for mentoring needs instead of approaching senior colleagues (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Holland *et al.,* 2012:344; O'Neil & Marsick, 2009:22).

Peer mentoring also plays a critical role in the socialisation of new employees (Bryant, 2005:323). The support that new employees get from their peers enables them to settle in and easily adapt to the values of the business. In this way, new employees become effective in their jobs and are able to contribute towards the success of the business (Bryant, 2005:323). In conclusion, during peer mentoring relationships, those in the relationship may act as both mentor and mentee, and all participants share a similar status (Draves & Koops, 2011:68). This means that it is not the mentee alone who gains from the relationship, but the mentor can also learn some valuable information from the mentee. Peer mentoring is a two-way process (O'Neil & Marsick, 2009:22).

As with other type of business, small businesses need a platform where they can share ideas as a group of peers to increase their success. Botha and Esterhuyzen (2013:342) suggest that experienced South African owner–managers should encourage and support their peers by business mentoring. This way they will learn from each other and share their individual expertise and experiences, which they can

apply to their individual business settings. It is suggested in this study that when developing peer mentoring programmes for small businesses, it is important to take into account how peer mentoring can meet the needs of small businesses in their respective industries. For example, there are small business industries such as retailers, pharmacies and farmers who may not share the same needs with regard to skills development. Therefore, mentoring programmes should cater for the needs of varying small business industries.

- *Virtual mentoring*: Developments in technology have provided new opportunities for mentoring. These developments have made it possible for individuals to engage in mentoring relationships through the use of the internet (Rombeau, 2010:91). This type of mentoring is referred to as virtual mentoring (Bierema & Hill, 2005:558; Dempsey, Arthur-Kelly & Carty, 2009:299). There are other terms which are used interchangeably with virtual mentoring. These are e-mentoring, computer-mediated mentoring, tele-mentoring, e-mail mentoring, internet mentoring, online mentoring, and cyber-mentoring (Bierema & Hill, 2005:558; Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:463).

The central idea of virtual mentoring is to provide a relationship in which a mentor provides guidance and support to a mentored individual through distance communication technologies (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:463). Although virtual mentoring lacks non-verbal communication and is lower in social presence, Bierema and Hill (2005:559), Dempsey *et al.,* (2009:299) as well as Shpigelman and Gill (2013:463), are of the opinion that this method enables more flexibility than face-to-face mentoring relationships which are the basis of traditional mentoring. When individuals engage in virtual mentoring, they can participate in mentoring activities at times that suit them (Dempsey *et al.,* 2009:299; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:427). Due to its flexibility, virtual mentoring further allows for various populations, such as people with disabilities, to participate in mentoring activities (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:463).

Dempsey *et al.* (2009:299) also contend that virtual mentoring allows mentoring relationships to be created from a much larger pool of participants than traditional face-to-face mentoring. There is a possibility of a larger peer group participating in a mentoring process by use of technology, which, among other benefits, allows mentees to see that they share the same problem with others. This realisation can play a big role in their self-esteem and the mentor's responses can contribute to their emotional support (Dempsey *et al.,* 2009:299). However, Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:427) stress that it is still recommended that the mentor and the mentee meet face-to-face at least once during the mentoring relationship.

The use of virtual mentoring presents participants with access to various sources of information and support because it can be mediated through a variety of tools suitable to both individuals (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:463). Being able to choose a tool suitable to both mentors and mentees benefits the participants in a sense that either of the two can leave messages for the other to check when time allows. Again, given that it is text-based in nature, it provides a written record of the mentoring process which can be referred to when necessary (Bierema & Hill, 2005:559).

Lastly, it can be mentioned that virtual mentoring is less expensive than traditional mentoring theory (Bierema & Hill, 2005:559; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:427) because it is not place-dependent (Bierema & Hill, 2005:559). This means that the mentor and mentee can be at different places and yet still be in a mentoring relationship by using technological tools (Bierema & Hill, 2005:559). Even those who are not able to leave their workplace or who live in remote communities can make use of mentoring opportunities via these online communication technologies (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:427).

In the context of this study, however, the challenge is how accessible online communication technologies are to both the mentor and mentee. This is especially true for small businesses, in particular South African small businesses (Makoza & Chigona, 2012:5). South African small businesses are mostly situated in rural areas (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:731) and these areas are subjected to limited resources including communication technologies (Battisti *et al.*, 2013:74). Again, Bierema and

Hill (2005:562) explain that some individuals may not have the information literacy skills to enable successful involvement in the mentoring relationship. In addition, owner–managers may not be aware of the latest software and upgrades available to them (Zaidi, 2013:417). For this reason, Bierema and Hill (2005:562) advise that accessibility should be considered when implementing this method of mentoring.

Theories of mentoring have been identified by numerous researchers, as discussed above. Although there is variation in the names given to the theories, most of them are fairly similar in content and describe the theories in more or less the same manner. This is not surprising because of the diverse use of mentoring across different disciplines. The most outstanding similarity derived from the theories is that their focus is on the development of employees, while they are silent regarding the development of managers. Managers, particularly owner–managers need to know where to receive advice when they need it. Gray *et al.* (2011b:865) as well as Bennett and Robson (2003:797) affirm that owner–managers find it difficult to identify and select management developmental opportunities, which could be the result of a lack of mentoring models focusing on this group of employees. This does not necessarily mean that the other mentoring theories are not suitable to owner–managers, but rather that special mechanisms are essential for managers to guide them in the decisions they make. Mentoring theories need to be developed to incorporate the development of owner–managers for the success and longevity of small businesses.

The preceding paragraphs provided a discussion of the evolution of mentoring as a study for research. The importance of engaging small businesses in mentoring programmes will be addressed in the paragraphs that follow.

3.4   IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

The 21st century has been described as a challenging, changing, turbulent and unpredictable time which requires businesses to change and grow if they want to stay competitive (Hattingh *et al.,* 2005:40). Cline (2011:31) stresses that businesses need to engage in effective strategies in order to respond to the challenge of

competitiveness under conditions of globalisation. This situation has put managers under a great deal of pressure to develop strategies that should help them cope with new business demands (Hattingh *et al.,* 2005:40). As such, the management literature has sought to find ways in which management can be improved to cope with this changing and contemporary environment (Jones & Corner, 2012:392).

Cline (2011:31) posits that the strategies which businesses need to develop in order to cope with the ever-changing economic climate include skill development of the workforce. It is important for businesses to note that they need to offer development opportunities that will enable their employees to harness their potential which can be extended to the success of the business (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:427; Hattingh *et al.,* 2005:40). Skills development plays a major role in the success of a business. In the same manner, Rankhumise and Lehobye (2012:5601) state that the development of management skills is critical to ensure sustainability in a business.

The high failure rate of small businesses could also to a large extent be attributed to owner–managers lacking the necessary skills to make quality decisions (Gallato, *et al.,* 2012:2), even though they are responsible for a wide range, if not all, of tasks in the business (Cant, 2012:1108). As a result, their poor decisions could have a negative impact on the survival of these businesses (Kongolo, 2010:2293; Olawala & Garwe, 2010:731; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6326). Cline (2011:31) advises that managerial skills are essential for the success of small businesses, including those in Africa, since small businesses on the African continent are challenged to compete within an increasingly competitive and global economy. African SMEs, and consequently small businesses however have not been able to compete globally unlike their counterparts in Western countries, such as the United States of America, because of poor management practices (Long & Olufemi, 2011).

A lack of management skills is also evident in South Africa which is facing high failure rates for small businesses and for black-owned small businesses in particular (Nkosi *et al.*, 2013:2). This situation has resulted in government interventions to help this sector develop some skills to survive (Urban & Naidoo, 2012:147). Botha and Esterhuyzen (2013:331) emphasise that the situation in South Africa may even be

worse because this country faces many economic, political and social challenges in its new democracy since 1994 (Ncube, 2010:77). This explains why there has been a concern to provide economic programmes to South African small businesses to empower and cater for their needs (Kennedy, 2010:18; Smit & Watkins, 2012:6325).

In response to developing the skills of small business owner–managers, the South African government, through the Department of Trade and Industry, is involved in transformation programmes which are targeted at broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE). The focus of the Department of Trade and Industry is on the development of managerial skills for BBBEE businesses (Swanepoel *et al.,* 2010:59). This is because in South Africa, black rural people are the most disadvantaged communities (Ndedi, 2009:463; Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5599). As a result, one of the issues that BBBEE is focused on is the development of entrepreneurs to equip them with the necessary skills that should allow them to create new and appropriate business practices (Horwitz & Jain, 2011:311) so that they can have an opportunity to advance in life (Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5599).

Consequently, Offstein *et al.* (2011:79) and Herholdt (2012) suggest that effective mentoring could be a possible solution to enhance African small businesses' competitive behaviour and overall competitiveness because effective mentoring in a business improves managerial competency (Lo & Ramayah, 2011:428). According to Botha and Esterhuyzen (2013:332) as well as Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:428), business mentoring is regarded as of great importance for owner–managers to acquire relevant business skills. The low rate of small business success in South Africa also requires these owner–managers to engage in mentoring programmes to ensure their businesses' success and eventually that of the South African economy at large (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:332). This could also explain why there is a high interest in mentoring programmes in South Africa (Abbott *et al.*, 2010:1).

In view of enhancing the skills development of small businesses, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) acknowledges small business mentoring as essential for

owner–managers to acquire the relevant business skills (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013). This is because the South African government realises the crucial role that mentoring plays in equipping small business owner–managers with the necessary skills that should help enhance the success of their businesses.

As such, mentoring is about making a difference in the effective development of talented managers to nurture them and make them future leaders (Freedman, 2009:171; Williams, 2008:10), which is important at this point considering the high failure rate among small businesses. Bell (2008:31) emphasises that mentoring also develops people and encourages them to be successful. That is, successful people are able to meet a range of competing demands because mentoring provides an opportunity for the mentee to enhance confidence in dealing with challenges by developing new skills and expertise (Ayinde, 2011:7; Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62). Hence, mentoring of managers helps to create and refine knowledge of the competitive environment, thereby assisting them to use such knowledge in making effective strategic decisions (Offstein *et al.,* 2011:77).

Small business owner–managers do not often come from the field of business, and are not knowledgeable about making business decisions (Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5601). Because knowledge is mainly gained through experience, it is challenging for them to perform (Rankhumise & Lehobye, 2012:5601). In such cases, business mentoring is essential because it allows for the transfer of business skills that may not have otherwise been acquired (Allen *et al.*, 2009:1117). At the same time, mentoring could provide owner–managers with opportunities that focus on developing managerial and entrepreneurial skills (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:332). As such, owner–managers would be able to learn management skills through action, with the support of a person with extensive business experience (Cline, 2011:35).

Owner–managers need to have someone who can challenge their thinking and encourage them to explore alternative perspectives on how they do things. Therefore, given the important role of mentoring in developing people, owner–managers should be able to perform at their best level by engaging in mentoring

programmes (Olatundun, 2011:169). Furthermore, when small businesses engage in mentoring, potential skills of owner–managers can be developed to enhance the performance of these businesses. Thus, through mentoring, potential skills can be developed for which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained from the mentoring programme (Cline, 2011:36).

Mentoring is usually provided by someone from within the business (Haggard *et al.,* 2011:291). However, in a case where mentoring is facilitated by someone from the outside, mentoring becomes even more useful (Bell, 2008:31) because negative mentoring experiences such as abuse are less likely. In addition, because of the absence of hierarchical working relationships within the business (Haggard *et al.,* 2011:291), it is more likely that the mentoring relationship will exhibit openness and mutual trust between the two parties (Laiho & Brandt, 2012:439; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21).

Mentoring is suggested by several researchers (Allen *et al.,* 2009:1114; Ayinde, 2011:7; Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:332) as a tool that provides mentees, particularly owner–managers, with the knowledge, skills and abilities to enable them to perform their jobs better to achieve business goals. When owner–managers have the necessary skills to perform their jobs better, the benefit is extended to the performance of their businesses. In other words, the benefit of mentoring to a business is the improved performance of the individuals who participate in mentoring programmes that ultimately improves the performance of the business as a whole. Nienaber and Svensson (2013:838) concede that the ultimate goal of any business is improving business performance to ensure its survival. Hence, job performance is a critical outcome of mentoring programmes (Van Emmerik, 2008:575). This implies that when owner–managers engage in mentoring programmes, the performance of their businesses will improve which will ultimately lead to the survival and success of their businesses.

In conclusion, mentoring can add value for two main reasons. First, it can be used to maximise the potential management competencies that will enable entrepreneurs to meet business needs (Klasen & Clutterbuck, 2004:78). Mentoring can further be

extended to maximising the competitiveness of businesses (Olatundun, 2011:178; Zoogah, 2013:30) and continue growth through succession planning as part of mentoring (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:425). Thus, mentoring can be used to prepare the potential future leaders of small businesses for a smooth transition from one generation to the next in order to ensure continuity and survival of these businesses.

In addition to understanding the importance of mentoring to a business, it is necessary to become aware of the benefits attached to mentoring for all concerned stakeholders. The benefits of mentoring are highlighted in the section that follows.

3.5   BENEFITS OF MENTORING FOR ITS VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

It has been explained in the previous sections that mentoring plays a significant role in the career development of an individual. Resulting from this important role, a number of benefits are attached to mentoring. These benefits are substantial and are not only related to the mentee, but also to the mentor and to the business of the mentee (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254; Pinho *et al.*, 2005:20). It is for this reason that Ayinde (2011:2) suggests that mentoring should be discussed from three perspectives, namely those of the mentor, the mentee and the business. Olatundun (2011:177) believes that the benefits of mentoring stem from the "law of explosive growth" as proposed by Maxwell (1998:208). According to this theory, leaders who develop leaders multiply the growth of a business because for every leader they develop, they also benefit from the work of that leader's followers (Olatundun, 2011:177; Russell & Nelson, 2009:42). Thus, not only are the benefits of mentoring enjoyed by the mentee, but by other stakeholders also. The benefits of mentoring from the three perspectives (mentee, mentor and business) are each discussed in the next sections.

3.5.1   BENEFITS TO THE MENTEE

The primary objective of mentoring is to develop the mentee. Therefore, the most important benefit of mentoring to mentees is that of acquiring new skills and

expertise that should enable them to perform their jobs better (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Ayinde, 2011:7; Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62). This is because mentoring enhances the confidence of mentees in dealing with work-related issues (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:62). At the same time, people who have been mentored feel more in control and are able to deal with challenges in a range of active ways (Bell, 2008:32; Freedman, 2009:173). Mentoring is also essential to new employees because these employees are able to make a connection with established employees. Established employees are then enabled to focus on developing the skills that new employees need to become confident in their jobs (Olatundun, 2011:177). In the same manner, mentoring has been identified as an essential tool in helping new business owner–managers to develop managerial competencies necessary to operate their businesses (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:332).

In addition to acquiring new skills, people who have been mentored report increased levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment compared to those who have not been mentored (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Gibson, 2004:263; Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). A possible reason for this is that employees respond positively when they perceive that their business values them and contributes towards their success and development (Okurame, 2012:70). Therefore, mentored people perform better on the job and are likely to advance more rapidly within the business (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254).

Mentoring further provides support to the mentee. It can be encouraging to mentees to have support as they develop in their career (Ayinde, 2011:7). The counselling role that a mentor plays in a mentoring relationship can be detrimental to the mentee because it provides a personalised development opportunity to the mentee to address his individual needs (Ayinde, 2011:7; Bower, 2012:7; Okurame, 2012:70). Lastly, the mentee is able to learn in a friendly social environment and in an unstructured manner. That is, knowledge is not gained with specific rules and procedures, which makes this relationship more relaxing and friendly (Ayinde, 2011:7).

Lamm and Harder (2011:2) provide a summary of the benefits of mentoring for the mentee:

- Gaining new ideas, technical expertise, interpersonal and managerial skills;
- Increased achievement as a result of being encouraged to reach for higher goals and take educated risks;
- Self-confidence in decision-making within the business;
- Insight into the culture of the business;
- Gaining a relationship with a person who can serve as a role model and a source of stability when facing new challenges;
- Professional contacts;
- Increased competencies and stronger interpersonal skills; and
- Assistance in identifying self-weaknesses and how to address them.

3.5.2   BENEFITS TO THE MENTOR

Not only do mentees benefit from mentoring relationships, but mentors likewise derive important benefits from the relationships. Robinson and Reio (2012:408) comment that engaging mentors in mentoring activities provides them with an opportunity to make use of their knowledge and expertise. This notion is supported by Ayinde (2011:6) as well as Robinson and Reio (2012:408), who allege that the joy and satisfaction that a mentor experiences in enhancing the skills of others and in helping someone to grow, are self-fulfilling and motivating. As a result of this joy and satisfaction, a mentor is more likely to experience a renewed sense of commitment towards his profession (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254; Freedman, 2009:173).

While mentoring is expected to develop mentees, mentors can also learn and develop skills as a result of their interactions with mentees (Ayinde, 2011:6; Freedman, 2009:173; Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). Mentees can update the mentors on current issues that they may not be aware of. Such issues include the use of technology which keeps changing due to global competitiveness and innovation

(Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012:56). Mentoring gives mentors an opportunity to gain fresh perspectives on emerging issues from the younger generation (Ayinde, 2011:6). This is the kind of knowledge which is gained during reverse mentoring relationships.

Mentors stand to develop leadership skills because mentoring involves taking the responsibility of helping somebody advance his career, which on its own is a challenge. Therefore, coping with challenges of moulding someone and building somebody's future also enhances mentors' interpersonal skills such as leadership skills. Mentors also get to stimulate their thinking while developing mentees into successful individuals (Ayinde, 2011:6; Freedman, 2009:173).

Lamm and Harder (2011:2) provide a summary of the benefits of mentoring for the mentor:

- Exposure to new ideas, technologies and perspectives through conversations with the mentee;
- A sense of accomplishment in helping someone grow in his or her career;
- Ability to pass a legacy of information and history to the next generation of employees;
- Increased professional contacts through mentee's contacts;
- Utilising coaching and counselling skills;
- Enhanced reputation through a demonstration of commitment of the mentee to the business;
- Opportunity for personal reflection; and
- Knowledge that the business will be enhanced as a result.

3.5.3 BENEFITS TO THE BUSINESS

The most important benefit of mentoring to the business is that businesses which have implemented employee mentoring programmes will recognise the talent of their employees (Olatundun, 2011:177). This is vital for the business because as employees enhance their learning, leadership skills will also be developed which are

essential for succession planning (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:428). Thus, mentoring enables future leaders to be developed.

The positive outcomes of mentoring regarding job satisfaction and organisational commitment of employees can be extended to improved employee turnover levels. For example, when employees are satisfied in their jobs and more committed to their businesses, employee turnover is reduced (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Carvin, 2011:49; Freedman, 2009:173). This is because employees with low levels of job satisfaction are more likely to quit their jobs than employees with high levels of job satisfaction (Aamdt, 2004:339). At the same time, when employees are committed to the business, their loyalty to the business is also increased; hence turnover levels are reduced (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254).

Carvin (2011:49) points out that when employees are satisfied in their jobs and are more committed to the business, this could also lead to increased production levels and enhanced productivity (Kanwar, Singh & Kodwani, 2012:27). This suggests that businesses which provide employees with mentoring programmes are likely to be more effective than businesses which do not provide such programmes (Johns *et al.,* 2012:75; Waymer, 2012:404).

Mentoring has also been acknowledged as a useful tool for the attraction of new employees (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254; Robinson & Reio, 2012:406). This is because people are attracted to businesses which have an interest in the development of their employees (Hurst & Eby, 2012:82).

Furthermore, mentoring relationships promote socialisation among employees, especially for new employees (Hatmaker & Park, 2013:17). The aspect of socialisation ensures the survival of the business because it promotes a sense of belonging which leads to improved performance of new employees and ultimately that of the business (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424; Hatmaker & Park, 2013:17). New employees are able to network with established employees who guide them towards achieving the objectives of the business (Freedman, 2009:173; Ncube & Wasburn, 2006:78).

Mentoring of new employees could also provide assurance of the continuity of business culture (Ncube & Wasburn, 2006:78) since these employees are introduced to the values of the business by employees who have been in the business long enough to know the culture (Freedman, 2009:173; Ncube & Wasburn, 2006:78). This is relevant in a case where both the mentor and mentee work for the same business (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424), but may not be relevant when mentoring is provided by an outsider.

As suggested earlier by several researchers, mentoring has the potential to positively influence the survival of small businesses, particularly black-owned businesses. In the continually changing business environment, mentoring can make a difference towards the skills development of owner–managers. Given the high failure rates among small businesses, the skills development of owner–managers should allow them to meet the demands of their businesses and improve the survival rates of small businesses. Hence, mentoring of owner–managers helps to create and refine knowledge of the competitive business environment, thereby assisting them to use such knowledge in making effective strategic decisions (Offstein *et al*., 2011:77).

In summary, the possible benefits of mentoring for the business of the mentee, as suggested by Lamm and Harder (2011:2), are:

- Improved employee interaction contributing to higher job performance;
- Development of partnerships and allies;
- Enhancing of a positive environment, providing a clear understanding of expectations for new employees;
- Increase in employee retention by increasing comfort levels of employees; and
- Higher level of employee commitment and loyalty which leads to lower levels of turnover.

Since the benefits of mentoring to the mentor, mentee, and the business have now been identified, the next section will be a highlight of the different types of mentoring relationships.

3.6   DIFFERENT TYPES OF MENTORING

According to a number of researchers (Allen & Eby, 2010:12; Laiho & Brandt, 2012:437; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21; Finkelstein, 2012:804), mentoring can be initiated formally and maintained as part of a formal programme in the business, or can take place naturally and be maintained as an informal relationship. The different types of mentoring are discussed in the next sections.

3.6.1   FORMAL MENTORING

Formal mentoring refers to a structured process which businesses use for the development of their employees. This form of mentoring is usually arranged and targeted at employees to provide guidance in order to promote human resource development (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:254; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426; Olatundun, 2011:176) and employee retention efforts (Freedman, 2009:173). Formal mentoring programmes not only include individuals, but may include small, manageable groups of mentees to enable mentors to carry out the mentoring effectively (Olatundun, 2011:176).

Formal mentoring relationships are short-term in nature since they are usually intended for short-term goals (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Laiho & Brandt, 2012:437). For instance, a formal mentoring programme could be used as an effective means of providing support when the business goes through change (Freedman, 2009:173). In this way, employees will need a mentor to assist them in adopting the new system that the business is implementing. These mentors are often selected based on their competence rather than on mutual respect as is the case with informal mentoring. In this form of mentoring, responsibilities are clearly stated for the stakeholders, and the duration of the relationship is well established. Most importantly, the expectations regarding the relationship are emphasised so that the mentorship can be effective. (Pinho *et al.,* 2005:20,21). Agumba and Fester (2010:1955) indicate that even though the focus of formalised mentoring programmes may be on completion of designated tasks, mentors could still fulfil counselling and coaching roles.

In the interest of owner–managers, formal mentoring can be of importance in the development of this stakeholder and the survival of small businesses. While small businesses regard formal skills development programmes as costly and time-consuming (Leppisaari & Tenhunen, 2009:195), considering the benefits of these programmes as well as the skills development needs of owner–managers, it is suggested that effort needs to be made to encourage the use of formal mentoring programmes in these businesses. It was noted earlier that owner–managers do not know where to obtain advice. Formal mentoring programmes could thus be of great importance to provide that platform for small businesses.

Agumba and Fester (2010:1955) warn that despite the importance of formal mentoring, stakeholders in this form of mentoring may exhibit lower levels of commitment to the relationship. Instead, they may show some commitment towards the programme. In the latter case, both the mentor and mentee do not pay much attention to their development as individuals, but are more focused on achieving the goal for which the mentoring relationship was established. Another drawback of formal mentoring can be that mentors may perceive their mentees to be poor performers who have been assigned to a mentor in order to improve their work performance (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955). Lastly, since mentoring sessions of formal mentoring are arranged, mentoring support cannot be provided as and when problems arise (Coulson-Thomas, 2011:432), which can be a limitation to owner–managers. This means that while formal mentoring is important, owner–managers cannot rely solely on this type of mentoring.

3.6.2   INFORMAL MENTORING

Several researchers (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:426; Freedman, 2009:177; Odunayo, 2011:181; Pinho *et al.*, 2005:21) observe that informal mentoring relationships develop spontaneously, which is what distinguishes this form of mentoring from the formal form (Freedman, 2009:177). In other words, informal mentoring relationships develop on their own between the mentor and the mentee. According to Olatundun (2011:176), these relationships develop when a person

approaches a possible mentor and that person agrees to form a mentoring relationship.

There are a number of reasons why people approach others to be their mentors. For instance, the relationship develops because of shared interests, rapport and admiration (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955; Freedman, 2009:177). The relationship may also develop because of the job demands that require the skills of two or more persons to have the job completed (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955), which the other person does not possess. An example of such a combination is finance and technical skills. At times, an informal mentoring relationship develops because the mentee is looking for a role model (Abbott *et al.*, 2010:1; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21).

As Pinho *et al.* (2005:21) observe, informal mentoring is characterised by a more relaxed environment since the relationship develops voluntarily. Such relationships tend to exhibit greater levels of commitment to the relationship by both parties because of mutual interest (Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21), resulting in better career outcomes (Olatundun, 2011:176). Even in small businesses, informal mentoring programmes are preferred to formal mentoring programmes because learning can be obtained while doing the job, thereby focusing on the actual needs of the mentee (Leppisaari & Tenhunen, 2009:195). This means that small businesses commit to informal mentoring programmes because of their relaxed and flexible nature. This type of mentoring may be useful to owner–managers because of the relaxed nature of mentoring sessions. Examples of informal mentoring could be group mentoring between owner–managers and mentors as well as peer mentoring between owner–managers. Hamburg and Hall (2013:87) add that owner–managers prefer informal methods of learning to enhance their skills. This is because during such methods, the mentees have an opportunity to learn while performing a task as opposed to taking time off from their daily duties. Lastly, because of their nature, informal relationships usually go beyond career-related issues. They often extend to being more in-depth, sharing personal interests, needs and values (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955).

Following this discussion of different types of mentoring, the phases through which mentoring relationships move will now be highlighted.

3.7 PHASES OF MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Mentoring evolves over time, typically passing through sequential phases. A well-known model describing the phases through which a mentoring relationship moves is that of Kram (1983). As cited by several researchers (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Lunsford, 2011:477; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011:1533), Kram (1983) identifies the sequential phases that mentoring relationships go through as initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition. It is indicated that the phases last for a period of between two and five years (Chandler, 2011:24; Kram 1983).

Weinberg and Lankau (2011:1533) argue, however, that even though this sequence has been well documented in the literature, the evolution of the phases during formal mentoring programmes still remains questionable. Zellers, Howard and Barcic (2008:555) are of the opinion that the four stages developed by Kram (1985) have been found to be more complex and less predictable because they are not applicable during formal mentoring programmes. This is because during formal mentoring programmes it is known how and when the initiation stage begins as well as when the separation phase occurs, which make the sequence questionable. As such, it is suggested in this study that research should be conducted to further examine the way in which Kram's (1985) phases of mentoring relationships pertain to formal mentoring relationships, a suggestion also made by Weinberg and Lankau (2011:1552).

Osula and Irvin (2009:47) assert that other researchers such as Murphy and Ensher (1997) also propose a model of phases of mentoring relationships. The phases they propose are: attraction, contracting, growth, maturation and transition. In terms of the phases of mentoring relationships, the two models are quite similar, although they vary with regard to how the phases develop. With this in mind, it is proposed that the two models should be integrated into a single model explaining the phases through which a mentoring relationship of owner–managers will move. The suggested model

will then be: initiation, contracting, growth, separation and redefinition. These phases are discussed in the next sections.

3.7.1   INITIATION

The initiation phase is described as the time when the relationship begins (Cozza, 2011:325; Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). Ayinde (2011:4) suggests that the initiation phase could be described as the contact stage or the attraction stage (Osula & Irvin, 2009:47), in other words, the period during which the mentee gets attracted to the potential mentor and wishes to work with him in order to grow his skills. Weinberg and Lankau (2011:1533) note that the initiation phase usually forms through initial interactions between individuals. Thus, these parties gain respect for one another and arrange to spend time together to develop. There is no specific time during which the initiation phase must take place, however it could be in the region of six to twelve months (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Lunsford, 2011:477; Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). Kram (1983) suggests that during this time, both the mentor and mentee formulate and clarify their expectations of the relationship, and start getting to know one another (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255). However, in the current study it is suggested that this should happen in the second phase, namely the contracting phase. Formulation and clarification of expectations is regarded as a crucial dimension of attraction, hence it is recognised as a step on its own. The contracting phase is discussed below.

3.7.2   CONTRACTING

According to Murphy and Ensher (1997) in Gransrose and Oskamp (1997), during this phase the mentor and mentee test their preconceived ideas and views with regard to the roles each will take in the relationship as well as the expectations from the relationship. That is, the two stakeholders make an outline of how mentoring will be conducted. Ensher and Murphy (2011:255) indicate that expectations in a mentoring relationship are based on the needs of the two stakeholders, which will eventually influence satisfaction in the relationship. In addition, the perceived costs and benefits of the relationship are assessed in this phase, hence the term

"contracting". Since it is proposed that mentoring programmes for owner–managers should be facilitated by outside professionals, this phase is crucial since the two individuals will be moving from attraction to a binding agreement. The step is deemed sufficiently important to be recognised as a phase on its own.

Kram (1983) as well as Murphy and Ensher (1997) agree that open communication is essential to allow for smooth relationship development. Murphy and Ensher (1997) in Gransrose and Oskamp (1997) warn that differences of opinion between the mentor and mentee can be expected, which may affect the nature of the mentoring relationship. Therefore it is important for both mentor and mentee to be wary of such differences and work towards a harmonious relationship. A strong interpersonal bond between the mentor and mentee is likely to develop as they start getting to know one another. There is no specific time suggested for this phase because it depends on how quickly the two stakeholders agree on their roles and anticipated costs. Once agreed, the actual mentoring can begin. For this study it is suggested that the growth stage is the next phase after contracting.

3.7.3   GROWTH

This stage begins after the mentor and mentee have agreed on their respective roles in the mentoring relationship. Murphy and Ensher (1997) in Gransrose and Oskamp (1997), suggest that this phase includes sharing of information and the establishment of trust between the mentor and mentee. At this stage, all the activities that are necessary for the growth of the mentee are carried out, and most importantly the mentee is allowed enough time to grow intellectually. As the current study is focused on the development of owner–managers, it is essential to examine the intellectual growth of mentees once the necessary mentoring activities have been carried out. This can be achieved by providing the mentee with tasks that will stretch his or her capabilities. Such tasks include providing the mentee with challenging assignments, which is one of the functions of mentoring discussed later in this chapter. The rationale behind setting tasks is to establish the capabilities of the mentee for the time when the mentoring relationship has ended.

Kram (1983) suggests that the period during which growth activities may be carried out can vary from between two to five years (Ensher & Murphy, 2011). Likewise, in this study it is proposed that grooming owner–managers and testing their abilities be done in a period of between two to five years. When the mentor is content with the growth development of the mentee, ending the mentoring relationship can be anticipated.

3.7.4   SEPARATION

Lee (2007:338) asserts that, as with any relationship, the mentoring relationship must come to an end at some point, and this is referred to as the separation phase. Ensher and Murphy (2011:255) indicate that separation involves a transition period where the mentee establishes more independence from the mentor. In other words, the mentee becomes independent because his or her skills have been developed and the mentee is in a position to apply the knowledge gained (Cozza, 2011:325; Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Robinson & Reio, 2012:408).

Lee (2007:338) also contends that sometimes the relationship has to end because there is a problem in the relationship. For example, it could be that the mentor is becoming too close to the mentee such that the mentee is not comfortable with the relationship. In this case, the mentee may decide to end the relationship if it is perceived as a relationship that is too close with the mentor. Robinson and Reio (2012:408) indicate that this phase lasts from six months to two years after significant changes in the structured role relationship. However, if the mentor and mentee are still satisfied with their relationship, a different type of relationship may develop. Thus the next phase is that of redefinition.

3.7.5   REDEFINITION

Ensher and Murphy (2011:255) acknowledge that redefinition is the final phase in a mentoring relationship. Ayinde (2011:4) points out that during this phase there is more equality in the relationship between the mentor and mentee, so much so that a different relationship develops between the two individuals. The relationship may

now evolve into a friendship between peers (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255). This is a new form, significantly different from the previous relationship (Cozza, 2011:325), or else the relationship ends entirely (Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). Unlike the other phases of a mentoring relationship, the redefinition phase does not have a defined duration (Robinson & Reio, 2012:408). Since the new development is independent of the initial relationship, the duration depends entirely on the different needs and expectations that the two individuals have (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255).

From the preceding sections of this chapter, it becomes clear that each of the phases in mentoring relationships has a significant effect on the effectiveness of mentoring programmes. Once the phases have been clarified, it becomes imperative to identify the role that mentoring plays in the development of employees, particularly owner–managers. The functions of mentoring are discussed in the next section.

3.8   FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING

According to Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:429), as well as Hurst and Eby (2012:82), mentoring serves a number of purposes in an individual's life. Examples are employee socialisation, management development and diversity enhancement. As these authors suggest, mentoring may also be useful as a strategy for retention because it is likely that employees will remain loyal to the business that offers them developmental opportunities. St-Jean and Audet (2012:136) comment that mentoring is particularly helpful in allowing a transfer of knowledge about the business world, and developing a competency set that will be useful to the entrepreneur, within the limits of what the mentor can offer.

The roles or functions of mentoring are classified into two main categories, namely career development and psychosocial functions (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:421; Freedman, 2009:173; Manwa & Manwa, 2007:32; O'Neil & Marsick, 2009:19; Potgieter, 2011:57; Taglieber, 2011:28; Watson, 2004:69; Zoogah, 2013:20). Freedman (2009:179) is of the opinion that mentoring activities usually begin by serving career functions, but later on develop into serving psychosocial functions. However, Chun, Litzky, Sosik, Bechtold and Godshalk (2010:448) suggest

that these functions may vary across the phases of the relationship, which were discussed earlier in Section 3.7 of this chapter. This implies that while the career development and psychosocial functions of mentoring may both be important in the development of the mentee, the extent to which they take place is not the same across the relationship phases. At the same time, the different functions do not necessarily have to occur together, meaning that mentors may provide only one kind of support at a time. Thus, mentors may provide a specific type of support over a certain period (Lunsford, 2011:477).

Mentoring roles performed by a mentor for a small business employee differ from mentoring roles for an owner–manager. The mentoring needs of owner–managers are unique to the nature of their responsibilities. For example, owner–managers may not always need formal development in order to perform better in their jobs. Rather, they may need someone to turn to for guidance and support regarding their responsibility as the drivers of their businesses. In other words, they need someone to turn to when they are making management decisions. However, little is said in research about the functions of mentoring for the development of managers, an observation also made by Offstein *et al.* (2011:75).

This raises the question why researchers have not realised the necessity to develop this important stakeholder group through mentoring programmes. In the current study, it is believed that, when executed effectively, mentoring can be as beneficial for owner–managers as it is for employees. It is quite likely that mentoring of owner–managers should influence their performance as is the case with employees, which will eventually influence the quality of decisions they make. This proposition is supported by Thursfield and Kellie (2013:490) who reason that well-designed management development models will enhance the capacity of managers and ultimately the overall performance of the business. Therefore, it is important for researchers to identify the functions of mentoring that are aligned with the needs of managers, and of black owner–managers in particular. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this study, it is proposed that the two functions of mentoring of owner–managers are management skills development and psychosocial functions. The roles that each

of the mentoring functions play in the development of a mentee are highlighted in the subsections that follow.

3.8.1 MANAGEMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

Based on the high failure rates of small businesses globally and in South Africa, there is a need to improve the development of managerial capabilities of owner–managers considering their pivotal role in the economies of their respective countries. According to Thursfield and Kellie (2013:491), there is ample evidence suggesting that businesses acknowledge management development as an important tool in ensuring the success of such businesses. These authors explain that management development includes those processes that contribute to the development of individual managers as well as human resource developmental aspects that are focused on improving business performance.

In this study, management skills development functions refer to those functions which develop specific behaviour that mentors should possess in order to support owner–managers' abilities in day-to-day decision-making. Ates, Garengo, Cocca and Bititci (2013:37) support this in stating that management development of small businesses can be regarded as improving the skills of managers. Management skills development functions proposed in this study should include those functions that will enable owner–managers to acquire the skills necessary to survive in an uncertain and changing world. An example of this would be providing owner–managers with opportunities to meet other business owners who have been in business long enough to know the survival strategies in their respective industries.

In order for the mentor to develop the management skills of owner–managers, there are five different areas to cover. As with the career development of an employee, these functions include activities of sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protecting and providing challenging assignments. When focused on the development of managers, these roles should assist owner–managers in enhancing their capabilities, particularly decision-making in their businesses. The five roles are depicted in Figure 3.2 and highlighted in the sections that follow.

Figure 3.2   Management skills development functions of mentoring for small businesses
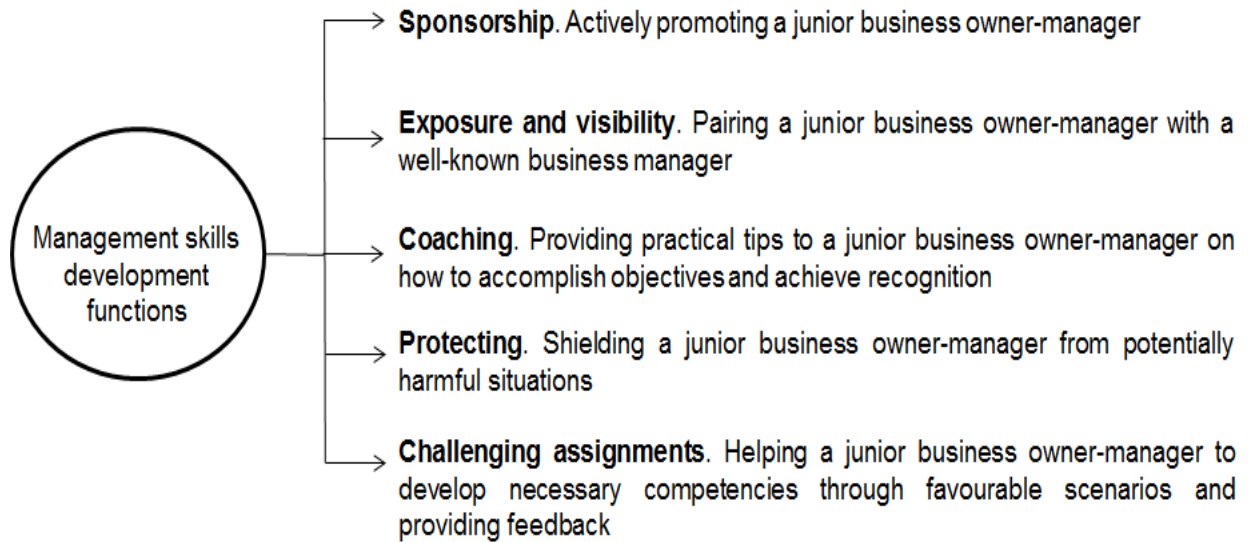
Sources: Adapted from Watson (2004:69).

Figure 3.2 is an illustration of the proposed management skills development functions of mentoring that could assist owner–managers in their decision-making for the success and survival of their businesses. These functions are each explained in the sections that follow.

3.8.1.1 Sponsorship

Mentoring is about a mentor guiding and offering support to the mentee. With regard to sponsorship, the mentor uses his or her influence to build a reputation for the mentee (Bower, 2012:6; Strong & Cornelius, 2012:1022). Thus, mentors should be able to expose and place mentees into available opportunities so that the mentees can build skills that will benefit their development (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335; Paddison, 2013:14). For example, mentors could nominate and support their mentees in projects that would highlight the mentees' potential and abilities to perform the task. In the case of employees, nominating employees to highlight mentees' potential in a job would be done with the aim of developing mentees for possible future promotion (Ghosh, 2012:164; Paddison, 2013:14; Watson, 2004:69;

Bower, 2012:6). However, there is a good reason to argue that sponsorship supports mentees in job opportunities. Senior owner–managers could provide mentoring to junior business owners to enhance self-confidence (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:333) which is essential in their business dealings.

In addition to assigning projects that could highlight the mentee's potential, the mentor could support a mentee in bringing his or her ideas to be implemented in the business (Knouse, 2013:81). Again, a senior business owner–manager could sponsor a junior business owner by actively intervening in business negotiations in order to advance the professional qualities and opportunities of the junior business owner (Botha & Esterhuyzen, 2013:333). Such examples include negotiations with suppliers on goods or raw materials they supply or with trade unions over wage agreements.

However, not all mentors have the potential to provide sponsorship to their mentees. In such cases, Strong and Cornelius (2012:1022) posit that the mentor can identify someone who will be an appropriate sponsor to the mentee. The appointed mentor still serves all the functions that a sponsor should perform in advocating the abilities of the mentee.

3.8.1.2 Exposure and visibility

The mentor is expected to be someone who can introduce mentees to key players in the industry (Bower, 2012:6; Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011; Ghosh, 2012:163). The exposure and visibility function is primarily concerned with creating opportunities for the mentee to interact with important people in the industry and bringing the mentee's accomplishments to the attention of such people (Ghosh, 2012:163). Unlike the sponsorship function (which is about promotion opportunities in a specific area), exposure and visibility is about promoting the development of mentees' knowledge regarding other aspects of the business. This is to assist the mentee in being recognised by those who may be interested in the mentee's capabilities (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335; Ghosh, 2012:163). In this way, the mentee can be exposed to future business opportunities (Ghosh, 2012:163). For instance, the

mentor could assign a project to the mentee whereby the mentee interacts with key players inside and outside the business and possibly develop relationships with these stakeholders (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335). Mentors could also create developmental opportunities for mentees, even in situations not normally available to mentees, such as high-level positions for employees (Ghosh, 2012:163) or in the case of owner–managers, the opportunity to network with prominent business people.

For South African small businesses in an emerging economy, mentors could provide international exposure and visibilities to owner–managers. For example, it was noted in Section 2.5 that governments in emerging economies compete with small businesses because these governments are active in the economy through state-owned businesses. Therefore in order to survive, small businesses may rather consider doing business internationally to survive. A mentor would then help owner–managers expand into these markets through interaction with those who are internationally experienced in the industry.

3.8.1.3 Coaching

Coaching was discussed earlier as a mentoring technique that is often focused on learning job-related skills (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:423). Forde, McMahon, Gronn and Martin (2013:110) observe that there is a lack of clarity regarding the roles and expectations that the coach should perform as a mentor. Nonetheless, Ghosh (2012:161) finds that coaching entails being supportive of the mentee's tasks and providing assistance in job-related skills and knowledge. The mentor is also expected to offer guidance to have the task performed. A coach is further expected to provide feedback to the mentee about his performance on tasks assigned to him in order to identify areas of improvement (Ghosh, 2012:161).

Because of to the reluctance of owner–managers to engage in formal learning to enhance their skills, learning may be provided using the coaching technique. This entails learning while performing the task to acquire specific skills that may be lacking (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:423; Gaunt *et al.,* 2012:29). In this way, the

mentor will provide the owner–manager with techniques focused on learning job-related skills. This implies that owner–managers can make use of coaching techniques to enhance learning and development in a specific aspect of the business.

3.8.1.4 Protecting

Sassi and Thomas (2012:833) assert that it is a natural human instinct for people to protect those whom they care about. Similarly, mentors care for their mentees from both professional and personal viewpoints. It is this care that mentors turn into protection. Mentors protect their mentees from painful experiences which could perhaps have a negative influence on their performance. Thus, mentors provide a reactive type of mentoring support to their mentees (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335). It is the responsibility of a mentor to reduce any unnecessary risk, such as when the mentee makes contact with influential people, for instance – action which might jeopardise his or her chances of advancement (Ghosh, 2012:164). In addition, a mentors' role is to protect mentees from controversial topics that could possibly have the potential to hinder their development in a business (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335; Ghosh, 2012:164).

Owner–managers need mentors who can protect them from risky situations such as making business-decisions that could jeopardise the performance or competitiveness of their businesses. Owner–managers often make decisions that seem to hinder the success of their businesses because of their lack of necessary skill. For this reason, the presence of a mentor who is available to guide owner–managers into less risky decision-making may be of paramount importance for the survival of small businesses.

3.8.1.5 Challenging assignments

In a mentoring relationship, a mentor is expected to encourage the mentee into new ways of thinking in order to enhance the mentee's abilities. This is achieved by providing challenging work assignments with opportunities to learn and develop new

skills. In this way, the mentor is enhancing the mentee's intellectual development (Ghosh, 2012:158). Challenging assignments entail providing technical training for which feedback is provided to monitor the performance of the mentee (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335). Challenging assignments could also be in a form of difficult skill-building tasks that stretch the mentee's capabilities to increase his or her responsibility. Although the tasks should be challenging, Ghosh (2012:158) suggests that they should be within the ability of the mentees and therefore provide mentees with an important learning opportunity (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:335; Ghosh, 2012:158), rather than what feels like a punishment. Mentors are also able to establish strong connections with their mentees, with the aim of making the interactions enjoyable (Smith, 2011:222).

When owner–managers lack the necessary skills to make quality decisions, assigning challenging tasks to improve the capabilities of this stakeholder is particularly important. When owner–managers are exposed to tasks that challenge their intellectual ability, they are able to develop skills that could improve their decision-making. Thus, challenging tasks should enable owner–managers to learn how to deal with critical issues in response to the continually changing market conditions for the survival of their businesses.

3.8.2   PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONS

The focus of psychosocial functions rests on interpersonal aspects of the relationship such as mentees' attitudes, behaviours and values which, in one way or another, have an impact on their career development (Taglieber, 2011:28). Weinberg and Lankau (2011:1531) explain that mentors provide psychosocial support to their mentees by assisting them in developing their own identity within the business. This leads to an enhancement of the mentee's self-confidence and the effectiveness of the work (Freedman, 2009:173; Taglieber, 2011:29; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011:1531).

Most importantly, Gannon and Maher (2012:442) and Taglieber (2011:29) stress that the success and effectiveness of focus on psychosocial functions depends on the quality of the interpersonal relationship between the mentor and the mentee. This is because psychosocial functions relate more strongly to the mentee's satisfaction with the relationship than do management development skills functions (Gannon & Maher, 2012:442). For example, when mentees believe that mentors are not providing them with mutual support or helping them improve their sense of competence and identity, it is more likely that the mentorship relationship will not be satisfactory for the mentees (Taglieber, 2011:29; Watson, 2004:73). The psychosocial functions that the mentor is expected to exhibit towards the mentee are: role modelling, acceptance and confirmation, counselling and friendship (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:421; Gannon & Maher, 2012:442; Manwa & Manwa, 2007:32; Watson, 2004:68). These functions are highlighted in Figure 3.3 and in the subsequent paragraphs.

Figure 3.3   Psychosocial functions of mentoring
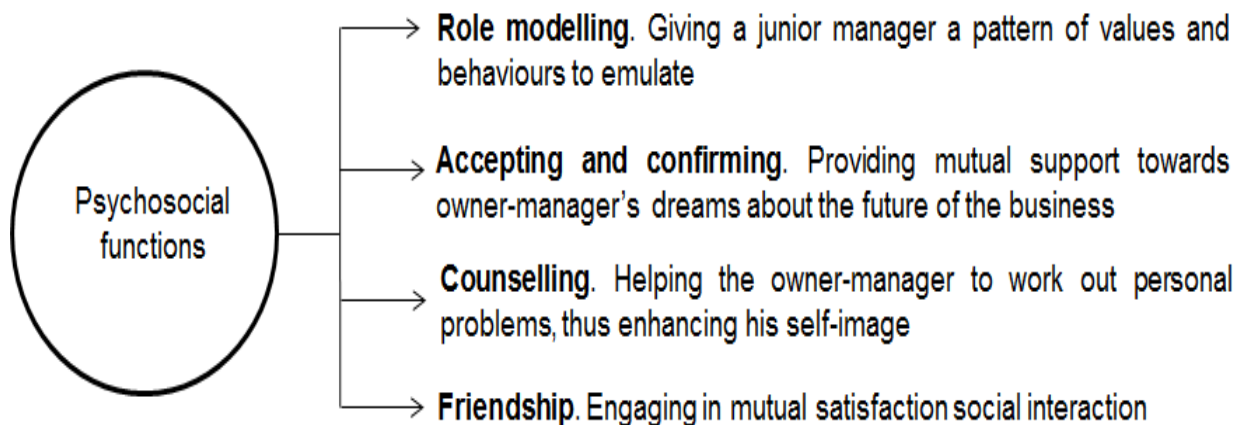
Sources: Adapted from Watson (2004:69).

Figure 3.3 illustrates the functions covered by the role of psychosocial mentoring which could enhance decision-making of owner–managers for the survival and success of small businesses. An explanation for each of the functions is provided in the next sections.

3.8.2.1 Role modelling

According to Steele, Fisman and Davidson (2013:e1130), a role model is generally defined as a person whose behaviour in a particular role is imitated by others. In the context of mentoring, a mentor is someone who displays appropriate attitudes, values, skills and behaviours for the mentee to learn and emulate (Bower, 2012:7; Ghosh, 2012:162). In essence, the mentor becomes a person whom the mentee admires and respects (Baranik, Roling & Eby, 2010:368). Thus mentors demonstrate ethical integrity and set a strong professional example which the mentee will follow in his developmental profession (Ghosh, 2012:162; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011:1531). For instance, mentees could observe how mentors perform certain tasks so that they can also perform them (Bower, 2012:7). In order for the mentee to be able to follow the examples set by the mentor, he or she first must respect the knowledge and abilities of the mentor. As a role model, the mentor may also offer confidence to the mentee and this creates some mutual trust between them. In addition, the mentor should trust the abilities of the mentee so that the mentor can provide the mentee with some encouragement and support to perform the assigned tasks (Bower, 2012:7).

Continually changing market conditions require owner–managers to have someone they can look up to in business and guide them through the fundamentals of business success based on experience. They need someone whose accomplishments in business are admired, a person who can positively influence their perceptions about entrepreneurial activities and encourage them to pursue business goals. Owner–managers can easily learn the necessary skills from those who already have these skills. In addition, mentors acting as role models for owner–managers should be able to encourage their mentees to work towards achieving business goals and ultimately enhance the survival of these businesses. In offering confidence to owner–managers, mentors need to believe in their mentees' skills and abilities and work towards enhancing these skills. Mentors need to offer encouragement to owner–managers and be an inspiration, even during challenging business situations.

3.8.2.2 Acceptance and confirmation

Acceptance and confirmation is a way of showing unconditional faith in a person (Gray & Goregaokar, 2010:528). Mentors who convey unconditional faith believe in and are supportive of their mentees' dreams (Ghosh, 2012:163). As owner–managers enhance their skills through mentorship, having a supportive mentor who has faith in the abilities of mentees is encouraging. Lee (2007:337) notes that a mentor who offers acceptance and confirmation to his or her mentee, helps the mentee to derive a sense of self-esteem. This feeling then builds or strengthens the level of trust between the mentor and mentee in their relationship (Baranik *et al.,* 2010:368), and the mentee also develops a sense of his or her personal value to the business (Bower, 2012:7). In addition, when a mentor has faith in the abilities of the mentee, this is a clear indication of regard for the mentee as a competent professional. This further demonstrates feelings of respect and signalling approval even in times of failure, as a way of providing support to the mentee (Ghosh, 2012:163). People who are in management positions need mentors who are not judgemental when they experience mishaps in their business dealings. It is important that even during such occasions mentors can still offer support and show respect towards mentees.

Lastly, mentees feel empowered when their mentors spend time with them. It is understood as a way of providing acceptance and confirmation that the mentee is worthwhile and has the potential to positively contribute towards the success of the business. (Lee, 2007:337). Thus, it is important to owner–managers that mentors make time to guide them because this will demonstrate acceptance and belief in the mentee, and will help mentees to succeed in their businesses.

3.8.2.3 Counselling

Generally, counselling is defined as a process of identifying problems, analysing the problems and establishing a workable solution (Watson, 2004:73). This suggests that a counsellor is someone who listens, facilitates and enables a client to discover himself or herself. Through counselling, the counsellor allows a client to discover his

or her own values, priorities, direction, esteem, identity and perhaps reasons for living (Maldé, 2006:540). In the same manner, counselling from the perspective of mentoring allows mentors to help mentees investigate and solve personal issues that may negatively affect their performance (Bower, 2012:7; Okurame, 2012:70). When the mentor performs the role of a counsellor, the mentor provides advice on career paths and an overview of what is critical for the mentee to become successful in his or her career (Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424; Gaunt *et al.,* 2012:29).

The mentor should be someone who listens to the mentee's problems without getting emotionally attached. The mentor should be able to motivate and support the mentee during such situations (Watson, 2004:73) by exhibiting trust towards the mentee and showing empathy to problems (Ghosh, 2012:162). This role is confirmed in a study conducted by Henrigues and Curado (2009:92) on mentoring as a knowledge tool. The interviewees, who were also mentees, indicated that they considered a mentor as a counsellor. They indicated that they could count on their mentor when they had professional and personal problems.

Several researchers (Baranik *et al.,* 2010:368; Ghosh, 2012:162; Watson, 2004:73) explain further that the mentor should be able to assist the mentee in understanding his or her personal concerns and how these affect perceptions, judgements and behaviour at work. By doing so, the mentee will have a sense of self-esteem and will feel comfortable in the business (Baranik *et al.,* 2010:368). In a case where the mentor cannot comprehend what is happening to the mentee, the mentor is able to suggest other forms of professional help such as professional counselling (Watson, 2004:73).

Watson (2004:73) identifies the main functions of the counsellor as being:

- A good listener – this should enable the mentor to gain an understanding of the emotions and actions of the mentee;
- Able to provide motivation – the mentor could assist the mentee by motivating and by referring to previous discussions they had; and

- Able to provide a sounding board – the mentor should be able to provide the mentee with a platform to express new ideas and concepts.

Without any doubt, owner–managers need someone who can understand their problems, both business-related and personal. This person should be someone who will be able to analyse the problems and provide them with the available options to solve such problems. A mentor offering counselling to owner–managers should be able to assist mentees in identifying the problems that their businesses are experiencing as well as provide the possible causes of such problems. This way, owner–managers will know that they can count on their mentors for support during difficult times.

3.8.2.4 Friendship

Friendship is generally referred to as a private, mutual and voluntary activity between two or more people. Friends provide each other with companionship, stimulation, intimacy and affection (McGowan, Saintas & Gill, 2009). In the same manner, a mentor is someone with whom the mentee can interact socially, confide in and trust to such an extent that the mentee feels comfortable to share personal experiences with the mentor (Bower, 2012:7; Ghosh, 2012:164). Interacting with the mentee about personal experiences is regarded as being friendly (Gray & Goregaokar, 2010:528). Baranik *et al.* (2010:368) indicate that friendship between the mentor and mentee creates positive social experiences that work and allow the mentee to feel like a peer with a more senior employee. This feeling can play an important role on how the mentee perceives the management and other important stakeholders in the business.

Owner–managers need mentors who can interact with them in a friendly manner in their mentorship dealings. A mentor is someone the mentee can confide in and trust in order to share experiences. A friendly atmosphere will give owner–managers a feeling of importance and make it enjoyable to work with their mentors. Friendship as a psychosocial function can ensure a relaxed mentoring relationship that will be characterised by high levels of trust and respect.

With the functions of mentoring having been identified, it is apparent that, when executed effectively, mentoring could be of great importance in fostering strategic thinking for owner–managers in an effort to improve the survival of their small businesses. The challenges that hinder the effectiveness of mentoring programmes will be addressed in the paragraphs that follow.

3.9   CHALLENGES HINDERING EFFECTIVE MENTORING

The pivotal role of mentoring as a growth development tool is well recognised in the South African business environment because the South African government supports and encourages mentoring (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1955).   However, Cline (2011:32) observes that determining the state of mentoring in this country is a challenge. This researcher finds that it is not easy to access information from mentoring programmes available in this country. Similarly, Abbott *et al.* (2010:2), Clutterbuck and Abbott (2012:74), as well as Coetzee and Schreuder (2005:1), maintain that information on the number of mentoring programmes available in South Africa is not easy to establish.

Mentoring research in the South African context is not well explored because of a lack of information on mentoring programmes in this country (Clutterbuck & Abbott, 2012:74; Coetzee & Schreuder, 2005:1). The lack of mentoring research in the South African context could be a possible reason for mentoring programmes offered to small businesses in this country to be regarded as ineffective (Meyer, 2011:3). According to Meyer (2011:3), even though 69 per cent of businesses use mentoring programmes in South Africa, it does not necessarily mean that these interventions are effective. Gentry *et al.* (2008:243) and Zoogah (2013:20) observe that unsuccessful relationships may be a result of cultural differences. This implies that research on mentoring relationships conducted in Western countries cannot be generalised to other regions such as Africa (Zoogah, 2013:19). Hence researchers have called for further investigation into the impact of culture on mentoring programmes (Zoogah, 2013:19).

Generally some negative experiences of mentoring programmes have been reported which hinder the success of mentoring (Agumba & Fester, 2010:1956; Hurst & Eby, 2012:82; Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:425). Mentor and mentee each have different experiences during and reactions to mentoring, since each person has a unique role in this relationship (Eby *et al.,* 2008:358). Differing role expectations can put a strain on the mentoring relationship. The implication is that challenges to mentoring relationships are inevitable because each stakeholder has a role to play in the relationship, and managing these roles can lead to negative perceptions of mentoring experiences.

Disparity in the relationship between the mentor and mentee has been reported by several researchers (Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Freedman, 2009:173; Laiho & Brandt, 2012:439; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:24; Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:464). The disparity in terms of values, work styles and personalities (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:464). Pinho *et al.* (2005:21) may result in relationships that are characterised by discontent, anger, jealousy, resentment, sabotage, deception and harassment. It is advised, therefore, that the pairing process for mentoring programmes be regarded as critical in the development of these relationships (Herholdt, 2012:59; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:24).

Problems in mentoring relationship can also occur when the mentee expects or demands too much from the mentor (Ayinde, 2011:10; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:22). Such cases occur when the mentee expects the relationship to meet every professional need, or that it should continue indefinitely (Ayinde, 2011:10). It is essential that both the mentor and mentee clearly define their expectations about one another and the programme from the beginning of the mentoring relationship.

Lack of time is yet another challenge that can negatively impact on the quality of the mentoring relationship (Ayinde, 2011:10; O'Brien, Biga, Kessler & Allen, 2010:539). Such a situation occurs when either of the two stakeholders does not commit to prearranged, scheduled meetings (O'Brien *et al.,* 2010:539). A lack of time could also be the result of work or private commitments for either the mentor or mentee. In such cases, either of the two parties may fail to keep up with the scheduled time to meet, which may result in an argument (Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21; Shpigelman & Gill,

2013:464). In addition, failure to schedule time that suits both stakeholders could have a negative impact on the relationship. For instance, a mentor may have a habit of working long hours while the mentee prefers fewer working hours per session. As a result of the difference in preference, the stakeholders may find themselves unable to work together effectively (Ayinde, 2011:9).

Other researchers (Laiho & Brandt, 2012:439; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21) note that hierarchical mentoring relationships may also have a negative impact on effective mentoring. These researchers indicate that hierarchical relationships lack openness, mutual trust, commitment and a developmental focus. In addition to these negative behaviours, hierarchical mentoring relationships could create a communication gap between mentors and mentees, which results in less interaction for the stakeholders (Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21).

Gallagher (2010), together with Pinho (*et al.,* 2005:21), observe that ineffective mentoring relationships may be a result of mentors taking credit for the work that has been done by the mentee. These authors argue that it is unethical for mentors to celebrate the achievements of the mentees as their own. Hence Freedman (2009:173) stresses that this can have a negative influence on the effectiveness of the mentoring programme. That is, the mentee may perceive that the objective for which he engaged in the programme has become a way of promoting the mentor rather than the other way around.

Ineffective mentoring relationships can be a result of manipulative behaviour by mentors. Mentors are seen as being manipulative if they use their power during the mentoring process (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:464). For example, mentors at times might exploit their mentees and give them assignments which do not from part of the mentoring programme (Gallagher, 2010). In addition, Pinho *et al.* (2005:21) note that overly dominant mentors cause their mentees to lose their sense of self-sufficiency. Gallagher (2010) observes that, at times, mentors expect mentees to copy the mentor's style of performing tasks. It is thus advised that mentees should be allowed to adapt their own style to avoid unpleasant mentoring experiences for mentees (Gallagher, 2010; Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21).

However, Hamlin and Sage (2011:757) argue that sometimes mentees can also be difficult to work with and then the effectiveness of the mentoring is inhibited. Mentees may want to control the relationship such that it becomes challenging for mentors to carry out the programme. This behaviour could lead to situations in which mentees inadvertently become overly controlling (Ayinde, 2011:10). As a result, the relationship experience for both parties is an unpleasant one and can negatively influence the success of the mentoring programme.

Various other challenges associated with ineffective mentoring include cases where mentors overload their mentees with tasks. While it is important to help mentees develop their skills, mentors should avoid making them feel overloaded (Pinho *et al.,* 2005:21). A lack of mentor expertise is also acknowledged as a major challenge for effective mentoring relationships (Eby *et al.,* 2008:358; Freedman, 2009:173).

It was also noted earlier that owner–managers do not engage in skills development programmes because, among other reasons, they usually lack finance in their operations (Blackburn *et al.*, 2011:11; Leppisaari & Tenhunen, 2009:195; Olawale & Garwe, 2010:732). This shortfall could result in less commitment from owner–managers such that they may not always attend mentoring sessions because they cannot afford payment for those sessions.

3.10   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this chapter was to investigate the role of mentoring in small businesses. In order to achieve this objective, the issues of the concept of mentoring, the importance of mentoring of small businesses in South Africa, and its global importance were highlighted.

As a result of a diverse use of mentoring across disciplines, no uniform, clear or widely accepted definition of mentoring could be found. However, for the purpose of this study, mentoring is referred to as *a relationship between two parties, a mentor and mentee, in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained.*

To fully understand the concept of mentoring, the confusion that seems to exist between mentoring and coaching was clarified, and earlier studies of mentoring together with theoretical models and various approaches to mentoring were discussed. This chapter further highlighted the importance of mentoring of small businesses and the benefits of engaging in mentoring programmes. Different types of mentoring as well as the phases of mentoring relationships were addressed. Following these was an elaboration of the various functions that mentoring plays in the development of owner–managers.

Lastly, the challenges for effective mentoring with specific focus on mentoring of small businesses in South Africa, were acknowledged. The outstanding challenge for mentoring which currently faces small businesses in South Africa is that of a lack of information. This has resulted in mentoring programmes which have been provided to small businesses in this country, being regarded as ineffective. In addition, it is argued that due to a lack of information on mentoring of small businesses in South Africa, it becomes a challenge to conduct research on mentoring of these businesses.

Nonetheless, this is not to say that there has been no work done on mentoring in South Africa. This study argues that new theoretical models are needed to reflect and explain mentoring of owner–managers in the context of South Africa, an emerging economy. This means that there is a need to explore the dynamic and interactive processes underlying mentoring in South Africa to make these programmes effective. For this reason, it is essential to understand the way in which the mentor and mentee relate to one another. The factors influencing the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses will form the basis of Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVE MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

4.1   INTRODUCTION

It was noted in Chapter 3 that mentoring has long been a topic of interest according to various disciplines. However, it was observed that even though models have been developed by researchers to empower employees through mentoring, there has been limited research on mentoring of managers, including black owner–managers of small businesses. In addition, previous research of mentoring has mainly focused on Western countries with few studies conducted in Africa. As a result, Jackson (2006:273) urges South Africa in particular to create its own unique way of developing the managerial skills of its communities. Such skills should include both the context and the indigenous philosophies and values of this country. Chapter 3 also presented a discussion of the many reasons why mentoring is crucial in the development of owner–managers. Therefore, identifying the factors that may have an influence on the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses is important. This should help guide efforts to improve the survival rates of small businesses in South Africa that is facing high failure rates.

The focus of this chapter is on various factors that may influence the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses, particularly those in South Africa. This covers relational and non-relational factors, as well as cultural and demographical factors. Cultural and demographic factors are especially important in this study as they provide an understanding of the difference between mentoring experiences in Western countries and African countries, particularly South Africa. Thus, issues unique to South Africa which have the potential to influence the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses will be addressed.

4.2 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MENTORING

An examination of the literature has revealed a number of factors that influence effective mentoring across various disciplines. However, it should be noted that mentoring can mean different things to different people depending on the context attached to the concept. As a result, the factors influencing effective mentoring also depend on the context in which mentoring is being offered. For small business mentoring, these factors fall into four groups, namely relational-based, non-relational-based, cultural-based factors and demographics, and they are discussed below.

4.2.1 RELATIONAL-BASED FACTORS

Research indicates that because of the relationship that exists between the mentor and the mentee, it is important to investigate effective mentoring based on factors that revolve around these two individuals (Fair *et al.*, 2012:109; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422; Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:63; Solansky, 2010:676). These are referred to as relational-based factors and refer to factors influencing the interaction between mentors and owner–managers during the mentoring process. In other words, it is necessary to identify factors that nurture the mentoring relationship between the mentor and mentee. These are highlighted in the subsequent sections.

4.2.1.1 Commitment

Hendel and Kagan (2012:450) assert that there is a lack of consensus on the definition of commitment because it is regarded as a multidimensional construct. However, these definitions share a common theme, being that commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets and can influence the behaviour of the target even in the absence of tangible rewards (Rusu, 2013:182).

An extensive search of the literature highlights two ways in which commitment takes place, namely towards a business or towards another individual. As the focus of this study is on the effectiveness of mentoring from the perspective of achieving harmonious relationships between the mentor and mentee, commitment will be discussed in the context of individuals. Zhang and Tsang (2013:1577) refer to commitment in a relationship as personal commitment. At the same time, some researchers (Griffin & Toldson, 2012:103; Hutchisin & Cochrane, 2014:1030) refer to mentoring as a personal commitment made between two or more people in a mentoring relationship. This indicates that personal commitment is fundamental in ensuring effective mentoring. Gettings and Wilson (2014:4) explain that personal commitment entails an individual's intention to sustain and remain psychologically attached to a relationship. However, Rusu (2013:184) warns that commitment should not be confused with a contract by which a person offers something in exchange for something else. Commitment is not a binding agreement but a psychological connection whereby a person engages in certain behaviours to build and maintain a relationship. The concept of commitment in this study refers to the context of personal commitment of the mentors and owner–managers to the mentoring process.

In their study examining commitment of the youth in mentoring relationships, Gettings and Wilson (2014:4) use an investment model to define commitment between individuals. According to this model, commitment is a function of three factors: satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and investment size. These authors define satisfaction level as comparing rewards received from a relational partner with costs incurred in engaging with the partner and evaluating the income. For example, in a mentoring relationship, the satisfaction level would be assessed by comparing the goal to be achieved from the mentoring relationship with the costs incurred in engaging in a mentoring programme. Quality alternatives involve comparison of alternatives if one does not commit to the current person. Alternatives in the mentoring of small businesses would be to check whether there are other mentors available for mentoring, or if owner–managers should remain in the mentoring relationship. Investments in a mentoring context are the resources that an individual gains from the relationship that would be lost if the relationship ended (Gettings &

Wilson, 2014:4–5). In the case of mentoring of owner–managers, the investments or resources would be the management skills that owner–managers would forfeit if the relationship with their mentors ended. This implies that owner–managers need to consider these factors when they engage in a mentoring relationship in order to decide whether they can commit to such relationships or not.

Allen and Eby (2008:310), as well as Hendel and Kagan (2012:450), allege that personal commitment plays a pivotal role in the stability of any relationship. It promotes pro-relationship behaviours such as a willingness to engage in behaviours that are essential in building a strong relationship. These behaviours are essential for strong mentoring relationships with owner–managers and include making time for mentoring sessions, attending scheduled meetings, preparing for the meetings and freely disclosing personal information (Allen & Eby, 2008:310; Hamlin & Sage, 2011:756; Herholdt, 2012:94). Welch (2011:892) adds that when a person commits to the other, it means that this person regards the other as important.

Welch (2011:892) believes that a committed mentor is one who goes beyond the call of duty and takes an active interest in the mentee and his or her needs. In other words, a committed mentor moves beyond the given responsibilities of the mentor-mentee relationship and invests time, personal knowledge, and emotional energy grooming the mentee into a new and improved professional being. In this way, a committed mentor feels a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction with the growth of the mentee.

Anecdotal and empirical evidence exists which suggests a positive relationship between commitment and mentoring (Hawker, McMillan & Palermo, 2013; Poteat, 2012). According to Poteat, Schocley and Allen (2009:332), even though most studies in mentoring focus on the role of mentor commitment, a study conducted by these authors reveal that there must be a "commitment fit" between the mentor and mentee. This means that the mentoring relationship should engender commitment from both the mentor and mentee to reach the desired outcomes of the mentoring relationship (Distelberg & Schwarz, 2013:5; Herholdt, 2012:94). This means that owner–managers must also exhibit high levels of commitment in a mentoring

relationship. More importantly, both stakeholders' commitment must be directed towards the achievement of the goals for which the mentoring relationship was established.

As it is imperative for owner–managers to have commitment towards the effectiveness of the mentoring process, Sambunjak, Estaus and Marusic (2010:74) mention that mentees must be proactive and willing to learn from the mentoring relationship. Herholdt (2012:94) has identified the following activities of a mentee in a mentoring relationship that reflect their commitment towards a mentoring relationship. These are also applicable to mentoring relationships of owner–managers and are:

- Being ready to make changes in life to accommodate mentoring sessions;
- Being ready to take responsibility for the learning process;
- Completing the tasks assigned and taking responsibility for the work
- agreed on during and between mentoring sessions; and
- Agreeing to be open, frank and honest.

It should be noted that owner–managers' mentoring takes place voluntarily, mainly because they have a motivation to improve their management skills for the success of their businesses. As a result, committing to the relationship should not be a challenge, especially because small businesses are observed to have strong commitment towards learning programmes (Saunders, Gray & Goregaokar, 2014:142).

4.2.1.2 Open communication

According to Banerjee (2009:4), communication is the basis of interaction among human beings. Beukers, Bertolini and Te Brömmelstroet (2014:62) define communication as a human behaviour that facilitates the sharing of information and takes place in a particular social context. Communication can take form in two ways, namely verbal and nonverbal communication (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2010:15) and should be open. Gordon and Hartman (2009:118) indicate that in order

for open communication to exist, there must be willingness between the parties to communicate and share opinions, ideas and criticism with each other.

Open communication is one of the most important aspects of effective mentoring (Ayinde, 2011:10; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:114; Shea, Stern, Klotma, Clayton, O´Hara, Feldman, Griendling, Moss, Estraus, & Jags, 2011:786). Both anecdotal and empirical evidence supports a positive relationship between open communication and effective mentoring (Eller, Lev & Feurer, 2014:817; Estraus, Chatur & Taylor, 2009:137; Kostovich & Thurn, 2013:417; Krause-Parello, Sarcone, Samms & Boyd, 2013:111). Krauso-Parello *et al.* (2013:111) explain that the greater the degree of open communication between the mentor and mentee, the better the ability to share private and personal information in that it ensures comfortable environments for both the mentor and mentee.

Since mentoring is described as an interaction between two individuals, openness and honesty in communication is deemed essential in establishing and maintaining mentoring relationships (Kostovich & Thurn, 2013:417). As Park-Saltzman, Wada and Mogami (2012:11) point out, effective mentoring provides a safe psychological space for mentees to freely express themselves and explore professional and personal growth through open communication. To create such a safe psychological space, both the mentor and owner–manager need to establish a collaborative working relationship and be in harmony with each other's communication style.

A correct choice of words and communication methods are important in the interaction between the mentor and mentee in order to achieve the objectives of their relationship. Communicating in a logical structure with the right level of content, manner, tone and pace of delivery are very important in a mentoring relationship (Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:114). Ayinde (2011:10) confirms that good communication strengthens the relationship between the mentor and mentee in contributing to performance and professional development of the two parties. Thus, owner–managers and their mentors should establish harmonious communication methods that will enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship, which will eventually contribute to their development.

While it may feel strange to do so from the beginning of the relationship, it is always important to openly communicate the expectations of the mentoring relationship. This is because clearly articulated expectations and goals enable an effective relationship between the mentor and mentee (Conn, 2013:543; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:20) and should allow for effective mentoring of owner–managers. As was noted in Chapter 3, one of the challenges facing a mentoring relationship is that the two parties may each have different role expectations which can create a strain on the relationship. This suggests that owner–managers and their mentors need to align their respective roles with the effectiveness of the mentoring programme. When these role expectations are communicated openly, owner–managers and their mentors will have a harmonious mentoring relationship because their actions will be guided by these goals.

An environment consisting of two-way open communication with questions is encouraged for the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship (Conn, 2013:543). In simple terms, either owner–managers or mentors should be able to openly ask questions and should each be able to respond to such questions. Most importantly, mentoring relationships tend to be beneficial when the mentee is willing to ask questions and seek advice from the mentor (McGill, 2011:105). This implies that owner–managers should always be prepared with thoughtful questions for their mentors.

In addition to asking questions, mentees such as owner–managers must demonstrate a willingness to learn from their mentors and be comfortable to share their fears and aspirations with the mentors (Mote, 2010). In return, mentors should be willing to share their own challenging experiences with the mentees in order to facilitate learning, particularly that of owner–managers (Conn, 2013:543). By so doing, mentors provide mentees with insight into skills that extend beyond the classroom (McGill, 2011:105) since experience is the best teacher (Huang & Moon, 2009:232). Thus, good mentors actively listen and respond to their mentees compassionately (Mote, 2010), while mentees are able to communicate openly when they feel they are being listened to (Kostovich & Thurn, 2013:418).

In any relationship it is very likely that there may be a misunderstanding while communicating. In such instances, both mentor and mentee must be willing to discuss any problem they encounter and work together to reach a solution (Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company, 2013). Lau and Rowlinson (2009:540) advise that uncertainty is eliminated or at least minimised when people are able to talk, negotiate and reach a compromise to save the relationship. This explains why DiRenzo, Linnehan, Shao and Rosenberg (2010:293) suggest that it is essential that both the mentor and mentee possess adequate communication skills in order to enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. However, this may be a problem for owner–managers who possess inadequate communication skills. The high failure rate of their businesses is attributed to a lack of skills, which possibly includes poor communication skills.

4.2.1.3 Feedback

According to Scott (2014:49), there is no widely accepted definition of feedback. However, Parsloe and Leedham (2009:116) state that feedback is generally defined as communication between the person who gives information and the one who receives it. Feedback is also a process whereby learners obtain information about their work in order to identify similarities and differences between the appropriate standards for to perform tasks. The aim of providing feedback is to generate improved work (Boud & Molloy, 2013:205). In other words, feedback must compare the actual performance with the expected goal. Once the difference between the actual performance and the expected goal is established, action must be taken to reduce this difference (Schartel, 2012:79). Feedback should further provide learners with the information they need in order to accomplish tasks that have been assigned to these learners (Thurlings, Vermeulen, Bastiaens & Stijnen, 2013:8).

Feedback is important in mentoring relationships, including those involving owner– managers. Owner–managers need feedback in their learning to enable them to face the demands of their businesses and ultimately improve the survival of these businesses. As Allen, Shockley and Poteat (2010:74) indicate, feedback between mentors and mentees is a critical component of mentoring relationships. Prior

studies (Allen *et al.*, 2010:74; Leck & Orser, 2013; Son & Kim, 2013:312; Tähtinen, Mainela, Nätti & Saraniemi, 2012) have provided anecdotal and empirical evidence to support a positive relationship between feedback and the effectiveness of mentoring.

The aim of feedback in a mentoring relationship is to help the mentee learn from mistakes so that these mistakes are not repeated (Merlevede & Bridoux, 2004:67). In the same manner, Boud and Molloy (2013:203), as well as Parsloe and Leedham (2009:116) emphasise that it is important to give feedback to mentees because they can learn and be aware of what is expected of them in order to acquire the skills that they need. Owner–managers will expect to get feedback from their mentors because it necessitates them becoming aware of the standards that they need to apply to their work (Boud & Molloy, 2013:203) so that they can use it to improve their performance (Allen *et al.*, 2010:74).

Several researchers (Phielix, Prins, Kirschner, Erkens & Jaspers, 2011:1088; Thurlings, *et al.*, 2013:6; Wintle, Fidler, Vesk & Moore, 2013) suggest that feedback is cognitive and can either be positive or negative. The Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company (2013) observes that providing feedback in a positive and constructive way is often difficult for mentors. Yet, it is advised that feedback should be respectful and honest, and should encourage positive motivational beliefs about the abilities of the people receiving it (Thurlings *et al.*, 2013:7).

Schartel (2012:77) advises that training in delivering feedback is necessary as providing feedback is one of the essential elements on which most people fall short. This is because there is no single form or strategy that is appropriate for providing feedback. This could be attributed to the fact that feedback needs to take different forms which depend on the different purposes for which it is given (Boud & Molloy, 2013:204; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:424). Schartel (2012:80) suggests guidelines for giving feedback which should enhance learning. These guidelines are also relevant for enhancing the quality of learning for owner–managers. Feedback should:

- Focus on the task and learner;
- Be elaborative in manageable units;
- Be specific and clear;
- Be kept as simple as possible;
- Reduce uncertainty between performance and goals;
- Be unbiased and objective; and
- Be focused on enhancing learning, not on appraising the learner.

Since negative feedback can create an emotional response, it should be treated with care so that it does not interfere with the effectiveness of the feedback (Schartel, 2012:77). Because mentoring provides an opportunity for the mentee to enhance his or her confidence (Ayinde, 2011:7), it is likely that negative feedback could negatively impact on the confidence levels of owner–managers if not treated with care. In addition, when the feedback is negative, the quantity of information should be regulated because too much feedback may be overwhelming for the recipient who can only process a limited amount of information. Instead, it is advisable to schedule several sessions in a case where the amount of material to be discussed is extensive (Schartel, 2012:82). This way, owner–managers will have enough time to absorb the information and to rectify the mistakes identified. Taherian and Shekarchian (2008:e98) contend that either way, constructive criticism that emphasises the need for change should be an integral part of providing feedback.

Allen *et al.* (2010:74) point out that mentors desire mentees who are open and receptive to the feedback they receive. However, these qualities may be determined by the type of feedback, especially if it is negative. Boud and Molloy (2013:93) indicate that negative feedback experiences can threaten the self-esteem of the person receiving it such that distrust and defensiveness of feedback recipients is experienced. This is particularly true for owner–managers who are known for their reluctance to expose their deficiencies to third parties or outsiders, since they fear losing control of their businesses if such shortcomings are known (Bennett & Robson, 2003:797). Therefore, mentors should provide negative feedback to owner–managers in such a way that these mentors will not become defensive.

In addition, those who provide feedback must have the best interests of the learner at heart and should be mindful of the language they use when they give feedback (Lawyers' Professional Indemnity Company 2013). This is particularly true for hierarchical or reverse mentoring relationships. Regardless of the nature of these mentoring relationships, owner–managers will still need to be spoken to with respect when they are provided with feedback. Mentors must not be carried away by the power of the knowledge they have when providing feedback to owner–managers. Both the written and verbal form of language which mentors use when giving feedback should be chosen wisely.

Feedback should also occur as quickly as possible after a task is completed (Schartel, 2012:82). Even though owner–managers are often busy because of the multiple roles they play in their businesses (Pedersen *et al.*, 2012:355), they should make time to receive feedback. When feedback is delayed, memories of the performance being reviewed may have faded, thereby diminishing the effectiveness of feedback. In addition, learners should be given advance notice about when feedback will be given to accommodate the busy schedules of the mentor and mentee. In this way, learners are given an opportunity to prepare themselves to receive feedback (Schartel, 2012:82).

It is important to note that effective feedback is delivered in an appropriate setting and focuses on performance, not on the individual (Schartel, 2012:77). This implies that personal differences should not influence the feedback that is being provided to mentee. Rather, it should be focused on the learning issues for the benefit of the mentee (Boud & Molloy, 2013:203). Thus, effective feedback is based on direct observation, is delivered using neutral, non-judgemental language and identifies actions or plans for improvement, particularly the improvement of owner–managers (Schartel, 2012:77).

While feedback is important for improving learning for owner–managers, it is equally important to those who provide mentoring services to owner–managers. It should be two-way in a sense that mentors should also receive feedback on how they provided the mentoring service. Allen *et al.* (2010:74), Hamlin and Sage (2011:755) mention

that mentors look for mentees' views on how mentoring was provided. It is important that mentees are open and honest about the feedback they give on their mentoring experience. Providing mentors with feedback is helpful for improving their performance. Thus, at the completion of the mentoring process, owner–managers should be allowed to communicate their views on how the mentoring was executed and possibly suggest ways to improve the experience.

4.2.1.4 Trust

Trust is viewed as a psychological state and refers to having the intention to accept being vulnerable based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviours of another (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:806). In essence, trust is an individual's subjective belief that the other party will perform as expected and will not take advantage of the situation (Aytemur & Erdem, 2008; Hsu, Chang & Yen, 2011:588; Webster & Wong, 2008:45).

Venter, Farrington and Boshoff (2012:17) postulate that trust reduces uncertainty in a relationship and is an important element of social exchange. It enables open communication, reliability of the partners concerning the activities of their relationship, honesty towards the other party, benevolence and competence (Aytemur & Erdem, 2008; Boud & Molloy, 2013:91; Venter *et al.*, 2012:17; Welch, 2013:48). When both mentor and mentee trust each other, they are able to divulge information that may be sensitive to share elsewhere (Allen, Finkelstein & Poteet*,* 2011:72). The existence of trust allows the mentee to take risks in the relationship because he is confident of being accepted by the mentor and vice versa (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:336; Son & Kim, 2013:315). For example, the mentor might accommodate mistakes made by the mentee during the learning process (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011:336), while in the same manner, it is expected that the mentee should accommodate the weaknesses of the mentor.

Several empirical studies have identified a positive relationship between trust and mentoring (Allen *et al.*, 2011:72; Ehigie *et al.,* 2011.:412; Herholdt, 2012:94; Son & Kim, 2013). According to Hallam, *et al.* (2012:247), as well as Lau and Rowlinson

(2009), the presence of trust in a mentoring relationship is important as it creates a bond between the mentor and mentee. In the absence of trust, misunderstandings, misinterpretation and possibilities of offending others based on false assumptions may occur (Seepersad, Hagood-Elliott, Lewis & Strickland, 2013:103).

In order for mentees to have trust in the mentoring relationship, mentors need to engage in sufficient levels of social support behaviours towards their mentees (Aytemur & Erdem, 2008). Such support behaviours fulfil the role of psychosocial functions in a mentoring relationship which enhance mentees' self-confidence and effectiveness towards work (Freedman, 2009:173; Taglieber, 2011:29). When mentees (in this case, owner–managers) possess high levels of trust regarding their mentors, they are likely to become more committed to the relationship because they feel that the mentoring programme is valuable. Also, demonstrating high levels of trust for their mentors implies that mentees feel that the mentors are trustworthy (Son & Kim, 2013:315).

According to Lau and Rowlinson (2009:540), the probability of working with strangers increases in a global society, which means that owner–managers are bound to seek external advice at some stage in order to survive the demands of their businesses. This could be challenging for small businesses owners who are regarded as being reluctant to make use of strangers in their operations (Gray *et al.,* 2011b:865; Bennett & Robson, 2003:797). As mentioned in section 2.5, the main reason for this is that owner–managers are reluctant to expose their own deficiencies to external third parties for fear that they will lose control of their businesses when third parties get involved with their businesses. In other words, owner–managers find it a challenge to trust outsiders, especially knowing that confidential information is exchanged during such relationships. It may be that they fear that external advisors could use this information to take control of their businesses.

Another possible reason for mentees being reluctant to expose their own deficiencies to external third parties is the lack of personal and business history between these parties, which makes it difficult to establish trust. Nonetheless, owner–managers need to understand the essence of trust when engaging in

mentoring programmes provided by external advisors. In other words, owner–managers need to trust that mentors can bring out the best in them and help them to grow (Kumar, 2010:192).

4.2.1.5 Respect

Respect is noted by Finkelstein *et al.* (2012:805) as a central theme that people mention when engaging in conversations with others about their relationship. Respect means accepting and affirming people as they are (Connor & Pokora, 2007:80), and is based on the perception of their admirable characteristics. Showing respect involves trusting the ability of the other to independently and self-reliantly perform well, recognising the other's potential to help (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:806; Schirmer, Weidenstedt & Reich, 2012:58-59), and taking the other party's work seriously (Schirmer *et al.*, 2012:58-59).

As in all personal relationships, respect is a key component in the effectiveness of mentoring programmes (Aytemur & Erdem, 2008; Matuszek, Self & Schraeder, 2008:19). This view is supported by empirical evidence from the studies of Allen *et al.* (2011:72), Ehigie *et al.* (2011:412), Herholdt (2012:94), as well as Son and Kim (2013) who maintain that a mentoring relationship must be characterised by mutual respect between the mentor and mentee.

Respect in a mentoring relationship suggests that both the mentor and mentee must show respect towards each other's opinions, ideas and decisions that are made during the relationship (Cunningham & Hillier, 2013:46). This means that owner–managers and mentors need to appreciate, empower and support each other throughout the mentoring relationship.

Fawcett (2002:952) indicates that the mentor earns respect because of his or her competency, knowledge, the ability to be flexible and open-minded and his or her ability to use resources. Conversely, in a case where a mentor is perceived as lacking experience or interest in the mentoring relationship, the mentee may feel demotivated from investing in such a relationship (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:806). In

order to earn respect, mentors are expected to prove that they have the potential to provide mentoring services to owner–managers. Hence it is imperative that mentors are competent in their work to win the trust of owner–managers. In the same manner, mentors who do not perceive respect from their mentees are likely to withdraw from the mentoring relationship (Connor & Pokora, 2007:80). Therefore, in order to promote harmonious mentoring relationship it is the responsibility of both the mentor and owner–managers to demonstrate respect towards one another.

4.2.1.6 Confidentiality of information

Confidentiality is defined as "preserving authorised restrictions on information access and disclosure including means for protecting personal privacy and proprietary information" (Banks, 2012:1). It is the practice of keeping information within proper bounds (Kling, 2010:196).

Given the nature of mentoring relationships, sensitive information will be exchanged. Anecdotal and empirical evidence exists which explains that protecting and respecting confidentiality is essential in a relationship such as the mentoring relationship (Hamlin & Sage, 2011:755; Leck & Orser, 2013; Straus *et al.*, 2009:137). According to Conn (2013), mentees need to feel confident that they can reveal problems in a confidential relationship. Similarly, the mentee should show loyalty towards the relationship and maintain confidentiality of the information shared during the mentoring process (Sanfey, Hollands & Grantt, 2013:716).

Concerns about confidentiality can prevent mentees from being comfortable with providing information to others. This may be true for owner–managers as well when they have to provide confidential information about their businesses to external parties. Being able to share information in a mentoring relationship may illustrate increased commitment towards the effectiveness of the mentoring process.

It is important to note that it may not be information alone that needs to be kept confidential in a mentoring relationship with owner–managers. Maintaining confidentiality during mentoring of owner–managers may include keeping personal

moments or experiences private, such as emotional issues which may have surfaced for either party during mentoring sessions. Both mentor and mentee would expect such moments not be shared with parties outside the mentoring relationship.

To maintain confidentiality in a mentoring relationship, owner–managers and mentors need to be clear about the standards of confidentiality sought in the relationship. When both are aware of these standards, such a relationship is strengthened (Allen *et al.*, 2011:72; Connor & Pokora, 2007:194). The clarity about the expected standards should form part of a discussion about the roles and expectations of each party in the relationship, which is carried out during the contracting phase of mentoring relationships. Conn (2013:543) emphasises that confidentiality is especially important to mentees; they need assurance that they can reveal their problems in a confidential relationship. These problems may be related either to the skills development or the psychosocial needs of owner–managers. Thus, the ability to treat with the utmost confidentiality everything discussed in a mentoring relationship is essential, particularly for the effectiveness of mentoring of owner–managers (Kay & Hinds, 2009:22).

4.2.1.7 Competence of the mentor

Even though the definitions of competence vary in their level of analysis, Palan (2014) defines competence as an individual's ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills to carry out specific work activities in a specific context. Specific skills may cover a wide range of areas such as investment and risk management in finance, governance and strategic planning (Strike, 2012:160). The characteristics of competence include knowledge, experience and technical skills necessary to perform a particular work within an industry (Cooper & Menzel, 2013:30; Palan, 2014; Strike, 2012:159).

Numerous researchers (Bell, 2008; Hamlin & Sage, 2011:758; Connell and Voola 2013; McGill, 2011; Zimmerman, Fiske & Scogin, 2011:366) reveal that the competence of the mentor is essential for an effective mentoring relationship. The mentor is expected to be competent and content to fulfil various roles and actions in

service of the mentee (Herholdt, 2012:94). Being knowledgeable and competent means having the ability to perform to recognised standards. This entails successful performances by the mentor which fit the purpose for which he was engaged in the relationship (Connor & Pokora, 2007:19). If the mentor is not knowledgeable, owner–managers cannot foster respect for the mentor or the profession of mentoring. Thus, in order to address small business specific issues such as a lack of managerial expertise, the mentor must be competent in the activities that are necessary for the development of the owner–manager.

In the case of small business owner–managers, mentors must possess knowledge and expertise in designated sectors in order to address the unique challenges and needs that owner–managers face in the particular specialised sectors in which they operate. (Small Enterprise Development Agency [SEDA] 2012:69). This way, they become experts in their respective areas as they can confidently help develop the skills of their mentees (Rombeau, 2009:90; SEDA, 2012:88).

Martin and Sifers (2012:942) recognise the importance of confidence in one's mentoring abilities as another aspect of competence. Mentors should be confident that they have the necessary abilities to improve managerial skills of their mentees such as having the self-efficacy in performing their role in a mentoring relationship (Larose, 2013:150; Martin & Sifers, 2012:942). Hendrix, Landerman and Abernethy (2013:592) refer to self-efficacy as the confidence in one's capabilities to organise and execute the duties assigned, and to produce the required outcome. In this case, mentors need to be confident of their abilities in order to develop the skills that owner–managers need for the survival of their businesses. When mentors are confident about their abilities, they will devote more time to the mentoring relationship, which can lead to more satisfaction with the relationship and better results for the mentoring programme (Martin & Sifers, 2012:942).

Fajana and Gbajumo-Sheriff (2011:423) emphasise that it is the role of the mentor to be a source of information to the mentee. As a result of global changes in doing business, the mentor should be aware of new standards that are emerging in the market, and be able to use that information in the business setting of the mentee

(Fawcett, 2002:953). By so doing, owner–managers will be in a better position to adjust to the challenges that the market imposes on their businesses.

4.2.1.8 Emotional intelligence

According to Bayne (2012:4) as well as Borg and Johnston (2013:44), emotional intelligence is the ability to understand emotions and make use of these emotions to assist in decision-making or action. Emotional intelligence involves being self-aware, able to regulate emotions, and using empathy and self-regulation of emotions to foster social skills that build positive relationships (Bayne, 2012:4; Crumpton, 2011:53). Crumpton (2011:53) reasons that a combination of these personal traits should enable mentors to identify and interpret mentees' emotions and related behaviours.

Several researchers (Crumpton, 2011:52; Yoo, Namkoong, Choi, Shah, Tsang, Hong, Aguilar & Gustafson, 2014:14) allege that the individual's ability to exchange and interpret messages is critical to social interactions such as mentoring relationships. High levels of emotional intelligence are often associated with interpersonal outcomes such as better interpersonal relationships (Kim, Cundiff & Choi, 2014; Schutte & Loi, 2014). As a result of the positive relationship observed between emotional intelligence and enhanced interpersonal relationship, the positive outcomes are extended to mentoring as a social interaction between the mentor and mentee.

When individuals in a mentoring relationship are able to understand their own emotions and are sensitive to those of the other party, such relationships are strengthened (Blake-Beard, 2009:17). Chun *et al.* (2010) observe that even though emotional intelligence is critical for mentors, the mentees' emotional intelligence also plays an important role in helping the mentor.to provide the mentoring. This is mainly because everybody experiences emotions and needs emotional support (Chun *et al.*, 2010:423,430). Therefore, it is important to both mentors and owner–managers to realise the interpersonal aspects of mentoring and each be sensitive to the emotions of the other to achieve effective mentoring relationships.

In a mentoring relationship, emotional intelligence is an essential aspect of providing psychosocial support to the mentee (Borg & Johnston, 2013). It was noted in Chapter 3 that mentoring is described as an intense, yet powerful development relationship. As such, this type of a relationship entails emotional involvement (Chun *et al.,* 2010:422). Being aware of emotional behaviours in a mentoring relationship may, for example, strengthen the level of trust and be a motivation to the owner–manager to improve performance.

Emotional support in a relationship is generally demonstrated in four major functions. Emotional support facilitates empathic and sympathetic responses, provides encouragement and re-assurance in building confidence, offers caring and physical affection, and includes putting emphasis on the importance of bonding (Yoo *et al.,* 2014:14). These functions are also important in the development of owner–managers. A feeling of emotional support may be a signal to owner–managers that their mentors are committed to the mentoring relationship and ultimately to improving their skills.

Owner–managers are bound to face challenges either from the mentoring programme or from the demands of their businesses during the mentoring process. Mentors should have the emotional intelligence to support mentees and to show empathy when mentees they are faced with challenging issues (Coll & Raghavan, 2011:68). Dealing with challenging economic issues, for instance, is likely to result in emotional behaviour by owner–managers. Mentors should therefore be able to understand these emotions and constructively use the observed emotions to enhance the learning capability of owner–managers.

Coll and Raghavan (2011:68) however warn that showing empathy towards the mentee should not derail the commitment towards achieving the objective of the mentoring relationship. Although empathy is about understanding what someone is going through, it is also important to help the person realise the chances of growth and development even in challenging situations. This kind of support may be encouraging to owner–managers when they feel that their mentors are being understanding about the challenges which they as mentees, encounter.

While relational-based factors have an impact on mentoring relationships and are important for the effectiveness of mentoring programmes, it is equally important to identify other factors which influence the effectiveness of mentorship being offered. Non-relational-based factors are addressed in the subsequent section.

4.2.2 NON-RELATIONAL-BASED FACTORS

Non-relational-based factors refer to those factors that do not influence the interaction between, in this case, mentors and black owner–managers. However, these factors are tangible supporting resources that influence the effectiveness of mentoring. Having resources available for the mentoring process is recommended by researchers (Botma & Roets, 2013:37; Distelberg & Schwarz, 2013). It is important to identify the resources that will help in the development of the mentee and align those resources with the mentee's goals (Distelberg & Schwarz, 2013:2; SEDA, 2012). Specific to mentoring of owner–managers in South Africa, such resources include geographical settings such as infrastructure, financial support and the capacity of mentors to facilitate mentoring services (SEDA, 2012). These resources are briefly addressed in the next sections.

4.2.2.1 Infrastructure

It was observed in Chapter 2 that limited access to infrastructure services is a major constraint on small businesses' survival as it inhibits the growth prospects of these businesses. Infrastructure refers to resources such as electronic access to communication networks and technologies and physical accessibility between small businesses and mentors. The gradual economic reform process in emerging economies such as South Africa, presents major challenges for businesses in these countries with respect to infrastructure (Zhou & Li, 2010:224). Since its transition to democracy, South Africa's access to infrastructure services has largely improved, but structural transformation still has a long way to go (Bhorat, Hirsch, Kanbur & Ncube, 2013:16). Infrastructure services themselves cannot be described as adequate. What makes the situation worse is that many small businesses in South

Africa are situated in rural areas with poor infrastructure (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:731; Du Plooy, De Jager & Van Zyl, 2012:98).

As technologies in the rural areas operate through the use of satellite networks (Tang, Wu, Feng, Zhao & Yu, 2014), the absence of these networks in rural areas inhibits the use of communication networks and ultimately the effectiveness of mentoring for owner–managers. The availability of electronic access to such technologies will enable the use of mentoring methods such as virtual mentoring. As noted in Section 3.3.2.2, one of the advantages of communication networks and technologies is that they are flexible and enable mentorship participation at a time suitable to the mentee, which would assist owner–managers. Electronic access to these technologies also would enable owner–managers to engage in peer and group mentoring methods where they can share their experiences, challenges and perhaps find solutions to challenges. Therefore, it is the responsibility of mentors to find alternative ways to provide mentoring services to small businesses with the available resources.

For some owner–managers, travelling long distances to reach the institutions that offer mentoring services may also be a challenge. In addition, the roads connecting rural areas with mentoring institutions in urban areas are not well developed. Therefore, mentoring services which provide for owner–managers operating in rural areas across South Africa should be tailored to the needs and geographical settings of these areas (SEDS, 2012:88). Centres which are established in rural areas could provide mentoring services to owner–managers so that they would not have to travel long distances to receive these services.

4.2.2.2 Adequate financial support

Financial support refers to grants awarded to small businesses to help them develop their skills. These grants are important because financial constraints are often mentioned as an inhibiting factor in the development of small businesses (Modiba *et al.*, 2012:120; Oum *et al.*, 2011:262). The financial stability of owner–managers is an important aspect of the effectiveness of mentoring programmes (Botma & Roets,

2013:37), and includes the ability to pay for fees and materials necessary for mentoring services (Distelberg & Sorenson, 2009:71). And because South Africa is such a geographically dispersed country, mentees may be located far from mentors, resulting in high transport costs. For these reasons, skills development sponsorships which support mentoring of small businesses could help these businesses overcome such problems in order to enhance the skills that they need to survive.

Phenya (2011:79) notes that financial support systems such as grants have been made available to small businesses to help develop their skills. However, due to the large numbers of small businesses in this country, as well as the depreciating value of the rand (Morkel, 2014), these grants may not be sufficient. For example, SEDA pays part of the training costs for owner–managers and the balance of the costs is expected to be paid by these owners, who may struggle to raise the required amounts and eventually decide not to pursue mentoring. Inadequate financial support may be the reason why owner–managers prefer informal training as it may cost less to obtain this kind of training. Hence it is suggested in SEDA's report (2012:90) that financial support systems for small businesses are reviewed given the current costs required to provide support interventions for these businesses.

4.2.2.3 The capacity of mentors

The capacity of mentors to facilitate mentoring services has been reported as limited (Freedman, 2009:173; SEDA, 2012:69). According to SEDA (2012:88), mentors are needed in order to accommodate small businesses across South Africa's nine provinces. Mentors need to have knowledge about the business as well as expertise that is specific to the diverse industries of small businesses such as retail, technology, manufacturing and agricultural industries.

While it is important for mentors to be knowledgeable about the industry in which they perform their work, it is equally important that there are sufficient numbers of mentors with the capacity to develop the skills of owner–managers across the diverse industries of small businesses. With a limited capacity of mentors, it is likely that owner–managers may not be given the necessary amount of time needed to

develop in the skills in which they are being mentored. It is also likely that owner–managers will be mentored by mentors not from their specific industries, meaning that these mentors are not competent. As mentoring involves knowledge transfer (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011), the ability of mentors to demonstrate knowledge to perform the activities necessary in the development of owner–managers is essential.

The South African government, as well as those who provide mentoring facilities to small businesses, must ensure that they have a continuing supply of mentors to enhance managerial skills of owner–managers. There is a need to train more people to accommodate the growing number of small businesses across the country. More importantly, the training of mentors should be planned in a manner that will maintain a balanced proportion of mentors across the various industries of the small business sector. In this way, the mentors will be able to address the unique challenges that owner–managers face in the industries in which they operate.

In any society there are norms and values that guide the interaction of people. As mentoring is a process that takes place between people, there is a need to investigate the norms and values that may influence the interaction of mentors and owner–managers. The next section highlights cultural-based factors that influence effective mentoring.

4.2.3. CULTURAL-BASED FACTORS

Culture is a complex concept as it covers all aspects of human life (Ciornei & Tămagă, 2013:1919). It is defined as a multidimensional concept consisting of norms, values and beliefs shared by a group of people which influences the behaviour of individuals (Zoogah, 2013:19). This behaviour can reflect a particular society, group, race or people within a certain area (Sycara, Gelfand & Abbe, 2013:3). A person is not born with a given culture but rather acquires it through the socialisation process that begins at birth. Through this process culture forms the basis for group belonging (Penceliah, 2008:333).

The impact of culture on relationships is evident in the way people interact and relate to one another (Penceliah, 2008:335). The influence of culture is also evident in mentoring relationships when people from different cultures work together. Their varying cultural values can result in misunderstandings, which in turn could influence their relationship (Allen *et al.*, 2008:347; Kent, Kochana & Greem, 2013:16). For this reason, understanding the cultural issues within mentoring processes is essential in designing mentoring programmes in such a manner that mentoring relationships will be more harmonious, which in turn could enhance the effectiveness of mentoring (Kochan, 2013:428).

There are two forms of culture identified in the literature, namely organisational culture and national culture. As the focus of this study is not specific to organisations, national culture is considered in understanding the differences that may exist between owner–managers and their mentors. Vajjhala and Strang (2014:80) propose that national culture consists of distinctive shared values, beliefs, and assumptions guiding the behaviour of people in a country. It is a collection of common ways of thinking and acting in a country that are distinct from those of other countries (Kim & McLean, 2014:41). As cited by Patel (2014:18), Hofstede (1980) explores the differences in levels of thinking that exist between people across nations. Hofstede (1980) conducted a survey of employees in 72 countries in which four dimensions of national cultural differences were identified. The four dimensions are power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity and uncertainty avoidance (Kim & McLean, 2014:43; Patel, 2014:18). A fifth dimension, namely long-term/short-term orientation, was later identified by Hofstede and Bond (1988) using a Chinese values survey in a study of, 23 countries (Bearden, Money & Nevins, 2006:457). Recently, Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) identified sixth and seventh dimensions as indulgence/restraint and monomuntalism/self-effacement (Kim & McLean, 2014:43).

Even though a review of the literature indicates several approaches to understanding national culture such as those developed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), Schwartz (1994), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998), as well as (Zakour, 2004:157), the cultural framework developed by Hofstede (1980) is regarded as the most practical of these approaches (Sivakumar, 2014:4), possibly because of its

usefulness regarding training, learning, development and management (Kim & McLean, 2014:43). Also, these cultural dimensions better explain the differences observed in the learning styles across diverse cultures (Latchem, 2014). Hofstede's framework will be discussed in more detail later in this section.

Other researchers (Engelen, Schmidt, Strenger & Brettel, 2013:5; Kim & McLean, 2014:41; Vajjhala & Strang, 2014:79) have however voiced criticism of this framework. According to Vajjhala and Strang (2014:79), most literature on national culture originates from Western countries, and therefore cannot be generalised to non-Western countries such as South Africa. For instance, one cannot assume that research on mentoring relationships conducted in Western countries such as Anglo-Saxon can be generalised to African countries (Zoogah, 2013:20).

In addition, cultural differences not only exist across nations but may also exist within a nation. Some countries have different groups with diverse languages, customs, religions, as well as ethnic groups (Engelen *et al.*, 2013:5; Kim & McLean, 2014:41). This is particularly true of South Africa which is classified as a multilingual nation (Schnell, 2007:3). South Africa consists of four dominant ethnic groups, namely Black, Coloured, Indian and White, of which nine different traditional cultural groups are included within the Black group (Adams *et al.*, 2012:378;2013; Lucassen *et al.*, 2013; Valchev, Nel, Van de Vijver, Meiring, De Bruin & Rothmann, 2013:366). These cultural groups are distinguished by the language they speak, among other things (Lucassen *et al.*, 2013). These cultural differences and many others are part of the unique nature of relationships within South African communities.

As this study is not concerned with cultural definitions per se but rather with the mentoring of black owner–managers in South Africa, the five cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (1980), together with Hofstede and Bond (1988), are accepted as the basis of cultural discussions for the study. As a result of the lack of literature concerning the two later identified dimensions, this study will focus on the first five dimensions in discussing cultural differences that have the potential to affect the mentoring relationship of small businesses owner–managers.

In addition, the choice of these dimensions is based on their relevance for understanding the diverse cultural behaviours observed in South African communities. Evidence from the literature of the relevance of these cultural dimensions is provided in the discussion below. The five cultural dimensions are highlighted in the subsequent paragraphs namely, individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation.

4.2.3.1 Individualism/collectivism

Casado-Lumbreras, Colomo-Palacios, Soto-Acosta and Misra (2011:2406), as well as Kim and McLean (2014:47), refer to individualism as the extent to which people in certain cultures prefer to work as individuals as opposed to working as a group. In contrast to an individualist culture, a collective culture is defined as a social pattern that consists of closely related individuals who see themselves as belonging to a group such as a family, co-worker group, tribe and nation (Casado-Lumbreras *et al.*, 2011:2406; Hamamura, 2012:3; Kim & McLean, 2014:47; Zoogah, 2013:20).

On one hand, the actions of individualists are orientated towards fulfilment of individual goals such that they engage in activities only to satisfy their personal needs rather than collective needs (Hamamura, 2012:3; Zoogah, 2013:20). Everyone is considered as an independent entity capable of making his or her own decisions and is expected to be fully responsible for the consequences of such decisions (Casado-Lumbreras *et al.*, 2011:2406). Individualism refers to people who are less autonomous, less co-operative (Zoogah, 2013:20) and who are motivated by their own preferences, needs and rights (Hamamura, 2012:3).

On the other hand, individuals who see themselves as belonging to a group (collectivists) are willing to prioritise the goals of a group over their own personal goals because they emphasise their connectedness to members of this group (Hamamura, 2012:3; Muchiri, 2011:444). As such, societies from a collectivist culture demonstrate compassion and generosity. They also have a concern for the welfare

of others and are influenced by, among other things, family experiences, parenting and cultural norms (Muchiri, 2011:444).

In applying the individualism/collectivism cultural dimension to African and South African contexts, Zoogah (2013:20) postulates that research shows that African countries, particularly those of the sub-Saharan region of which South Africa is part, are collectivistic. For example, a well-known African culture that describes the collectivistic nature of African countries is Ubuntu. Ncube (2010:78) describes Ubuntu as a viable philosophical perspective to describe the African culture, particularly in the context of post-colonialism in southern Africa. When translated to English, Ubuntu refers to the perspective that "a human being is a human being because of other human beings" (Letseka, 2012:48). Ubuntu emphasises that individuals are defined through their relationships with others rather than by their status as discrete individuals (Whitworth & Wilkinson, 2013:121). Thus, Ubuntu is about understanding what it means to be connected to one another (Ncube, 2010:78) because, according to this concept, one cannot exist in isolation from others (Metz & Gaie, 2010:275).

Even though South Africa is regarded as being collectivistic in orientation, some researchers (Adams *et al.*, 2012:379; Jackson, 2006:133) observe that both cultural orientation groups exist within South Africa. These authors suggest that individuals from the White ethnic group are more individualistic in orientation, whereas individuals from Black, Coloured and Indian ethnic groups come from more collectivistic cultures.

Having cultural differences within South African communities means that mentoring preferences for individuals may vary based on cultural background. For example, the individual interests of owner–managers during mentoring interactions such as in group settings may not be aligned, which could result in conflict. Mentoring programmes designed for owner–managers should take into consideration these varying preferences as they could have an impact on the effectiveness of these programmes.

4.2.3.2 Power distance

The power distance dimension represents the cultural characteristic defining the extent to which less powerful individuals accept societal inequality in power, status and wealth (Vajjhala & Strang, 2014:81). The acceptance of such inequalities in power demonstrates views about how individuals with differing levels of power should interact (Daniels & Greguras, 2014:1203). As a result, societies that are high in power distance communities are more likely to have relationships characterised by unequal relations (Kim & McLean, 2014:45).

Muganda and Pillay (2013:460) describe this country as having a high power distance. Examples of the elements of inequality observed in South African communities are: language issues such as English remaining the dominant language of power while there are ten other official languages; education issues placing township education at a disadvantage – perhaps due to limited resources; poverty disparities between rural and urban people; racial inequalities consisting of uneven income distribution across cultural groups; and a marginalised socio-economic class that is linked to income and occupation commonly observed within Black communities (Bakan & Abu-Laban, 2010:342; Chetty, 2014; Groener, 2013; O'Laughlin, Bernstein, Cousins & Peters, 2013:2; Spencer, 2009).

Even in mentoring relationships, power distance refers to the inequality and power dynamics which can exist between the mentor and mentee (Ramaswami, Huang & Dreher, 2013:154). An example of this could be mentors using their power during the mentoring process in a manipulative and controlling way (Ayinde, 2011:10; Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:464). This could include assigning mentees tasks which are not part of the mentoring programme (Gallagher, 2010). It is therefore imperative that power relations and the impact these relations could have on mentoring of owner–managers be considered and managed.

Volkova, Niwa, Bogensperger, Vestdam, Stefopoulos and Morales (2013:27) assert that power relations are mostly perceived as having a negative influence on a relationship and ultimately on the outcome of the mentoring programme. The

implications that power relations might have on the effectiveness of small business mentoring is that the actions of owner–managers could be influenced by their junior position in the relationship. This is because individuals from a high distance culture may not express disagreements strongly to someone with a higher status (O'Connell, Kung & Tristan, 2014). The relationship becomes even more challenging when an individual who is perceived as having power is being mentored by an individual from a disadvantaged group. Such mentoring relationships could result in undesirable relationships for both mentors and owner–managers and ultimately ineffective mentoring relationships.

In high power distance cultures as is the case in South Africa, it is likely that mentors may be perceived as less open to management skills development from the perspective of mentees (Okurame & Fabunmi, 2014:80), perhaps because mentees assume mentors prefer to maintain inequality rather than commit to helping them develop skills. In addition, relationships within high power cultures generate sentiments of inferiority for the disadvantaged individuals which may result in intimidating relationships (Volkovan *et al.*, 2013). For example, the black community was previously disadvantaged before the democratic transition in 1994 (O'Laughlin *et al.*, 2013:3; Vincent, 2008:1446). Therefore, when individuals from a previously disadvantaged cultural group such as the black community, engage in group or peer mentoring with other cultural groups that were historically perceived as privileged, the mentoring process may be intimidating to the individuals involved as mentees from the disadvantaged group. As a result, the mentoring activities assigned to mentees, in this case, owner–managers, may not be effective.

Another possible challenge would be encountered during reverse mentoring relationships. As was highlighted in section 3.3.1.2, the central idea behind reverse mentoring is to help a more senior individual learn from a younger person. Such a relationship between mentor and mentee shows the extent of power distance whereby an individual who has less power (the younger person), mentors an individual with more power (the senior individual). Such a relationship with owner–managers may be intimidating from the perspective of the younger individual, in this case the mentor, and as a result may not be effective.

Lastly, Ataguba and Alaba (2012:760) point out that the issue of power can be a sensitive aspect to address as it often results from unfavourable historical experiences. However, it is advisable to acknowledge inequalities in power to improve relationships within communities characterised by high power distance. It becomes even more important to acknowledge and recognise the impact of power on relations for mentoring of owner–managers to prevent problems associated with disparity in mentoring relationships. Such acknowledgement should also enable other appropriate approaches that need to be considered in addressing mentoring relationships in South Africa.

4.2.3.3 Masculinity/femininity

Masculinity and femininity in general refers to how aggressive or nurturing a culture is (Kim & McLean, 2014:49). Masculinity refers to individuals who are competitive and orientated towards material successes and goal achievement (Hofman & Newman, 2014:638; Kim & McLean, 2014:49). By contrast, feminine individuals consider the importance of social relationships and are compassionate towards one another (Hofman & Newman, 2014:638). As a result, individuals in a high femininity culture are sensitive to unethical or unsocial behaviour (Hofman & Newman, 2014:638; Kim & McLean, 2014:51).

Ample evidence exists (Beekun, Stedham, Westerman & Yamamura, 2010:314; Kim & McLean, 2014:43; King, 2010:R1700; Kochan, 2013:414; Onsrud, 2007) to show that masculinity/femininity can be contextualised by how gender roles are perceived in a society. For example, Measor and Sykes (1992) in Beekun *et al.* (2010:314) refer to gender as socially constructed ways of being masculine or feminine in a particular cultural circumstance. Rienties, Luchoomun & Tempelaar (2014:132) explain that a society is referred to as masculine when emotional gender roles (values that differentiate women from men) are clearly distinct, while feminine refers to cultures where emotional gender roles overlap. This means that in order for individuals to be regarded as either masculine or feminine, the perception is based on the gender roles of such individuals. Even though researchers such as Kim and McLean (2014:43) allege that they are uncomfortable with the fact that

masculinity/femininity is referred to as gender, these authors explain that the literature on cultural issues considers the conception that masculinity/femininity is referred to as gender roles. In the same manner, the influence of masculinity/femininity in mentoring relationships is considered on gender roles in this study.

In South Africa, it is observed that communities are perceived as masculinity-orientated (Jippes & Majoor, 2011:10; Mankayi, 2010:24). This means that it is likely that owner–managers in South Africa may be driven towards material successes and goal achievement.   Nonetheless, this does not mean that femininity-orientated individuals do not exist in South Africa given that this country consists of multiple cultures. Therefore, the differences observed in the behaviour of masculine and feminine cultures suggest that mentors should be able to understand these cultural aspects during the mentorship process. This should allow for mentoring programmes that are aligned with these behaviours to ensure effective mentoring relationships.

The aspects of masculinity and femininity in a mentoring relationship are essential to note when assigning mentors to mentees. This is because both value sets exist in any society even though the extent of preference may differ from one society to another (Hofstede, 1984:96) and will need to be approached differently. The nature of these cultures is differentiated in terms of preferences such as material possessions or maintaining social relationships. This implies that owner–managers who are masculinity-orientated will place more focus on management skills development functions of mentoring as these functions are focused on improving business performance. In contrast, owner–managers who are femininity-orientated are likely to be more focused on the psychosocial functions of mentoring as these functions place emphasis on the interpersonal aspects of a mentoring relationship.

As feminine cultures are sensitive to unethical behaviours, mentors should avoid actions which could be regarded as unethical. Such behaviours may include making business-related phone calls after business hours or arranging a meeting at a place which the mentee feels is not appropriate for a business meeting. Also, mentors should be able to understand femininity-orientated individuals to avoid misjudging

the behaviours portrayed by these individuals. For instance, mentors should be able to distinguish between hugging and sexual intimacy (Barnett, 2008:6).

In a similar manner, it is important that mentors understand the behaviours exhibited by mentees that are masculine-orientated. As masculine cultures are geared towards material successes and goal achievement, it is the duty of the mentor to assign tasks that stretch the capability of mentees. However, the mentors should be wary not to overload mentees so that they do not feel as if they are being punished. Rather, such tasks should be tailored in a manner that will enhance the abilities of owner–managers to make quality decisions about their businesses.

4.2.3.4 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid such situations (Bae, Qian, Miao & Fiet, 2014:226; Zhang & Zhou, 2014:152). Cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance prefer formal regulations, detailed directions on how to achieve tasks and explicit duties (Kim & McLean, 2014:49). These cultures are further described as consisting of individuals who are afraid of failure, having lower levels of ambition, and being risk-averse to uncertain situations. In contrast, low uncertainty avoidance is often associated with risk-taking (Bae *et al.*, 2014:226). Individuals from low uncertainty avoidance cultures reveal greater acceptance of change, more autonomy, only essential work and acceptance of ambiguity (Kim & McLean, 2014:50).

According to Zhang (2014:341), individuals from the same culture may have different background values and characteristics such that their level of uncertainty avoidance differs. Stander, Buys and Oberholzer (2013:309) consider societies in South Africa to be high in uncertainty avoidance, while a study conducted by Paddey (2011:86) found the society to be low in uncertainty avoidance. Stander *et al.* (2013:309) suggest that South African societies prefer more rigid procedures to reduce the levels of uncertainty, while Paddey (2011:86) is of the opinion that these societies prefer unstructured situations that are flexible. The contradicting observations

suggest that South African societies have different behaviours regarding uncertainty avoidance.

The relevance of uncertainty avoidance cultures during mentorship of owner–managers can be observed in the manner in which mentoring is initiated. As noted in section 3.6, mentoring can be initiated formally and maintained as part of a formal programme in the business, or can take place naturally and be maintained as an informal relationship. In the case of this study, owner–managers who have high uncertainty avoidance may prefer formal mentoring programmes. Such individuals may not be comfortable with informal and self-controlled learning environments because they prefer structured and outlined learning settings based on the instructor (Kim & McLean, 2014:50).

By contrast, owner–managers with low uncertainty avoidance may prefer informal mentoring relationships that develop spontaneously. It is likely that a large number of owner–managers have low uncertainty avoidance because of the relaxed nature of such methods (Hamburg & Hall, 2013:87). As individuals from low uncertainty avoidance cultures are not comfortable in the same setting, they prefer situations where there are no rules and where they are free to indulge in their own behaviour (Hofstede 1984:92; Kim & McLean, 2014:49) hence they may prefer relationships that develop spontaneously.

Bae *et al.* (2014:225) caution that uncertainty in a society becomes a barrier to entrepreneurship and has an impact on entrepreneurial activities. Therefore, observing uncertainty avoidance traits should help those who provide mentorship to small businesses to design proper strategies that can incorporate these differences. Such strategies should help to avoid disparity between the mentor and mentee in terms of uncertainty avoidance.

4.2.3.5 Long-term/short-term orientation

Long-term orientation measures people's consideration of the future (Gong, Stump & Li, 2014:43). It is generally considered in terms of the attitude or vision of parties

regarding the future benefits that a relationship can bring them (López-Navarro, Callarisa-Fiol & Moliner-Tena, 2013:102). Carson, Baker and Lanier (2014:350) posit that long-term-orientated individuals believe that distant goals are possible to achieve which makes it worthwhile to plan and evaluate possible consequences.

Cultures with a long-term orientation are characterised by values such as persistence, adaptations to new circumstances, and perseverance towards slow outcomes with the idea that the future holds better benefits than the present (Carson *et al.*, 2014:351; Gong *et al.*, 2014:43; Kim & McLean, 2014:50). As a result of these attributes, owner–managers who fall within this cultural dimension will be able to adapt to the expectations of the mentoring programme.

According to López-Navarro *et al.* (2013:102), long-term-orientated individuals regard business relationships as important because of the anticipated benefits in the long run. Owner–managers who are long-term orientated are then likely to maintain good relations with their mentors for the future when they may need advice on similar or other business-related issues.

Kim and McLean (2014:51) explain that individuals who are long-term orientated are open to various types of learning methods as a result of their hard-working nature. This suggests that owner–managers who are long-term orientated will be open to the different approaches employed to enhance their skills. Because long-term-orientated individuals adjust well to the learning environment (Kim & McLean, 2014:51), long-term-focused owner–managers should have a steady progression in the various exercises they will be exposed to during mentorship in order to achieve the objective of engaging in a mentoring programme.

In contrast to long-term orientation, short-term-orientated cultures strive towards achieving fast results such as quick profits (Carson *et al.*, 2014:351; Gong *et al.*, 2014:43; Kim & McLean, 2014:50). This implies that individuals who are short-term orientated make decisions aimed at the immediate improvement of the financial performance of their businesses (Gunkel, Schlägel, Langella, Peluchette & Reshtnyak, 2013:53) as their main interest is to maximise current profits. Also, when

short-term-orientated individuals engage in business relationships, they assess the importance of such relationship based on the present benefits (López-Navarro *et al.*, 2013:102). Hence short-term-orientated individuals are described as being probabilistic-thinking (Gunkel *et al.*, 2013:53).

According to Minkov and Hofstede (2012:9), South Africa is characterised by cultures that are short-term orientated. This implies that South African individuals may engage in relationships to obtain quick results that will improve their present situation. When extended into a mentoring relationship, it is likely that mentees engage in a mentoring programme because they need to fulfil a certain goal such as an improvement in the financial performance of their businesses.

Kim and McLean (2014:51) are of the view that due to the nature of short-term-orientated cultures that focus on current results, any challenges facing individuals that are short-term orientated may be addressed using informal learning methods. An example of an informal learning method in the case of mentoring of owner–managers is informal mentorship as it develops for specific needs. This means that a business owner–manager may approach someone to help address a specific problem that needs immediate attention for which the benefits are in the near future. In such cases, coaching as a function of mentoring may be more appropriate to address the problem. This is because coaching has a short orientation since it is more specific to achieving a particular goal (Cheema, Bhatti, Ahmed & Rajkumar, 2010:97).

Based on the above discussions, it is clear that the two orientations reflect varying perspectives when engaging in a mentoring relationship. Those who provide mentorship to owner–managers must understand the behaviours demonstrated by these cultures so that a common goal of enhancing the mentee skills can be accomplished. It is clear from the characteristics of each cultural orientation that mentoring goals as well as the learning expectations of these cultures differ depending on their preferences. This suggests that, for example, during the contracting phase of mentoring it is important to clarify the expectations of owner–managers about mentoring. The clarification should be based on the needs of

owner–managers as this will influence their satisfaction with the mentoring relationship. Also, when owner–managers clearly outline their expectations, it becomes easy for the learning tools to be aligned with these expectations. Therefore, observing such behaviours in mentoring relationships with owner–managers is recommended in this study.

Given the nature of South Africa as a country of diverse cultures, it is also critical to identify demographic factors that have the potential to influence the effectiveness of mentoring programmes for small businesses. The next section focuses on demographic factors that have the potential to influence effective mentoring of small businesses.

4.2.4 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVE MENTORING OF SMALL BUSINESSES

In addition to the aforementioned factors influencing mentoring, demographics are also regarded by several researchers (Gray, Ekinci & Goregaokar, 2011a:418; Rutti, Helms & Rose, 2013) as having an impact on mentoring relationships – particularly those which may influence the effectiveness of mentoring of black-owned small businesses. The four factors of ethnicity, language proficiency, gender and age are discussed in the subsequent sections.

4.2.4.1 Ethnicity

According to Samuelson and Freedman (2010:197), there is a lack of consensus on the definition of ethnicity, and attempts to understand the significance of ethnicity in relationships have provided conflicting results. The conflict arises from the varying characteristics that are identified as describing ethnicity (Harris & Findley, 2014:9). Some researchers (e.g. Adams *et al.*, 2012:378; Samuelson & Freedman, 2010:197) define ethnicity based on people using the same language and sharing cultural attributes such as values and certain behaviours, while others (e.g. Harris & Findley, 2014:10) define the concept based on people's skin colour, as well as tribes and castes originating from a common ancestry.

South African studies (Globler, 2014; Harris & Findley, 2014) describing ethnic groups were based on the skin colour of the participants. It should also be noted that the concepts of ethnicity and race are sometimes used interchangeably in South African studies (e.g. Vincet, 2008; Phiri, 2013). In the current study, ethnicity/race refers to the skin colour of both the mentor and owner–manager in a mentoring relationship.

Of the four South African dominant ethnic groups, the Black group is the largest because it constitutes 79.4% of the South African population (Adams *et al.*, 2012:378; Lucassen *et al.*, 2013). Nine different traditional cultural groups are included within this group (Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele, Swazi, Southern Sotho, Northern Sotho, Western Sotho, Venda and Tsonga). The second biggest ethnic group is the White group constituting 9.2% of the South African population (Adams *et al.*, 2012:379; Scott, Dolan, Johnstone-Louis, Sugden & Wu, 2012:548).Thirdly, there is a Coloured group which is approximately 8.8% of the South African population, and finally the Indian group constituting 2.6% of the South African population (Isaacs-Martin, 2014; Warnich, Drögemöller, Pepper, Dandara & Wright, 2011:192).

Despite transformation initiatives by politicians and academics to remove racial segregations within South African communities (Everatt, 2012:6), issues around these divisions still dominate the news headlines and have repeatedly been found to be deepening (Maree, 2011:257). Again, racial descriptions continue to be used to make sense of people's behaviour (Jawitz, 2012:545).

Ethnicity is understood to have an impact on social interactions (Harris & Findley, 2014:9), including mentoring relationships (Blake-Beard, Bayne, Crosby & Muller 2011:638; Manwa & Manwa, 2007:35). For example, Reddick (2012) studied the mentoring relationship amongst Black and White male faculty and Black students, concluded that ethnicity has a significant influence on the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. This means that ethnicity influences whom people choose to associate with, which may also influence the choice of whom to approach as a potential mentor (Manwa & Manwa, 2007:35). With the racial segregations of South Africa in mind, those who provide mentoring services to small businesses need to consider these

differences as they have the potential to influence the effectiveness of mentoring programmes since expectations of one ethnic group may be different to the expectations and behaviour of another group (Jackson, 2006:32).

4.2.4.2 Language proficiency

Language proficiency is defined as an individual's general communicative competence in the target language (Alavi, Kaivanpanah & Nayernia, 2011:28; Nakata, 2010:77; Zhang, 2010:120). This is irrespective of how, where or under what conditions it has been acquired. Alavi *et al.* (2011:29) assert that being a proficient language speaker is not necessarily determined by good pronunciation, correct grammar and the politeness of the speaker. Rather, a proficient language speaker should have the necessary strategies to implement obtained knowledge effectively in actual use (Zhang, 2010:120). That is, language proficiency is not necessarily equated with nativeness (Nakata, 2010:77), but with being able to understand a language in its different applications. For example, even though the English language is considered the medium of instruction in most countries, certainly not all native speakers are able to communicate in this language (Nakata, 2010:77).

Language could influence the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses in South Africa because the country's citizens may speak any of the eleven official languages. This diversity poses a challenge when people speaking different languages have to interact (Casale & Posel, 2011; Jackson, 2006:251; Murray, 2012:85). Even though English remains the dominant language in the country, the majority of South Africans speak an indigenous African language as their home language (Casale & Posel, 2011:387; SEDA, 2012:88). Therefore, due to the fact that the Black group lacks quality education (Adams *et al.*, 2012:378; Mammen, 2012:2), the extent to which they can understand and express themselves in English is limited.

SEDA, in its report on the business needs of small businesses (2012:88), has expressed concerns about the use of English as the principal language to communicate with small businesses. In this report, it is indicated that in some

instances business advisors were forced to translate information to their mentees. The concern raised is that information could be communicated more efficiently to small businesses when made available in a more diverse range of South Africa's official languages. This implies that in order for mentoring of small businesses in South Africa to be effective, both the mentor and mentee should be able to understand each other in a language in which they are both comfortable. Therefore, investigating how language proficiency influences the effectiveness of mentoring relationships with owner–managers, is recommended in this study.

4.2.4.3 Gender

King (2010:R1700) describes gender as the identity of an individual. It is the social construction of masculinity and femininity since it does not exist within a person. Siann (2013:3) explains that gender is the manner in which culture defines the differences between males and females. It is also about the differences in the manner in which individuals view themselves and others in terms of the female/male dichotomy.

A general observation by O'Brien *et al.* (2010:546) is that males and females respond differently to relationships. With specific reference to mentoring, research on gender and mentoring has found that there are consistent differences in mentoring experiences between males and females (Dworking, Maurer & Schipani, 2012; Ensher & Murphy, 2011:256; Manwa & Manwa, 2007:35). This is mainly because issues inherent to mentoring relationships between different gender groups have been seen to present challenges, particularly from the perspective of females (Leck & Orser, 2013:412). Females are more likely to be in cross-gender mentoring relationships as mentees because they regard the gender of the mentor as influencing the effectiveness of mentoring (Rutti *et al.*, 2013: 451). Again, men and women have different understandings of disclosure which influences their decision-making when they need to share private information (Dainton & Zelley, 2011:69). Thus, gender may influence what mentees such as owner–managers bring into mentoring relationships, what they get from these relationships and who is appointed as a mentor (O'Brien *et al.,* 2010:546).

The investigation of gender influence on the effectiveness of mentoring relationships is essential considering that gender discriminations have been reported during mentoring relationships (Levine, Mechaber, Reddy, Cayea & Harrison, 2013:527). Previous studies on the relationship between gender and mentoring reveal that gender positively influences the effectiveness of mentoring (Ensher & Murphy, 2011). Therefore, given the diversity of cultures in South African communities, it is reasonable to assume that cultural gender discrimination exist and will have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring programmes. The consideration of gender in pairing mentees with mentors is important in a country such as South Africa. Its impact on mentoring relationships will be investigated in this study.

4.2.4.4 Age

Finkelstein *et al.* (2012:807) assert that the issue of age in a mentoring relationship is inherent in most of the definitions of mentoring found in the literature. Regardless of the transformational perspectives of mentoring through alternative mentoring theories, these definitions refer to the mentee as someone who is "younger" than the mentor (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:807; James, Smith & Radford, 2014). According to traditional mentoring theory, mentoring pairs comprise older mentors and younger mentees (Rowland, 2012:229). When the word "younger" is used, it is usually associated with the level of experience of the mentee. An age combination that defies this expectation could therefore present challenges for the development of the mentoring relationship (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:807).

However, research on the issue of age in mentoring relationships presents inconsistent findings. For example, Gosh (2014) found that age difference in mentoring relationship has an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring process as it influences the extent of satisfaction with the relationship. This is because in a case of a younger mentor, the older mentee may doubt the competence of the mentor, and at the same time, a younger mentee may also doubt the competence level of the older mentor as a result of changes in how things are done at present as compared to the old days (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:809).

The inconsistency regarding the issue of age in a mentoring relationship has resulted in confusion about whether or not age matters in this situation (George & Mampilly, 2012:140; Geuder, Lange & Scafidi, 2011:56; Naicker, Chikoko & Mthiyane, 2014:428). These authors cite researchers who suggest that the mentor should be at least eight to fifteen years older than the mentee, explaining that when the age difference is not wide, such a mentoring relationship may be regarded as more peer-like in character.

Contrary to this perception, Gosh (2014:371) maintains that when the age difference is high it is likely that there may be a conflict of understanding. The mentor and mentee may belong to different generations such that generational stereotypes may influence their understanding of important issues. Naicker *et al.* (2014:428) as well as Geuder *et al.* (2011:56) are of the opinion that when the age disparity is too wide, the mentoring relationship could develop into a parenting relationship characterised by parental behaviour on the part of the older and dependency on the part of the younger. This behaviour is likely because mentors who are older than their mentees can take advantage of their more senior role which is described by the age difference (Frankel & Wood, 2011). Yet another perspective on this issue is that some individuals in a mentoring relationship prefer interacting with someone close to their own age (Naicker *et al.*, 2014:428).

Regardless of whether disparity in age is important or not, Gosh (2014:371) believes that age-related stereotypes of the mentoring role are likely to exist, which may result in a lack of mutual understanding when either of the two parties does not fit the perceived expectations of the other. Considering the diverse norms and values of South African communities, as well as the varying individual perspectives on the issue of age in a mentoring relationship, such differences are likely to exist in mentoring relationships with owner–managers. Therefore, an investigation of the impact of age on mentorship of small businesses is suggested in this study.

4.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Despite the uniqueness of mentoring programmes across various disciplines, the ultimate common goal of these programmes is to improve the performance of businesses/organisations participating in mentorship. Consequently, it is essential to understand the conditions necessary to ensure effective mentoring of small businesses in South Africa in view of the currently ineffective mentoring programmes which have been undertaken. The aim of this chapter was to identify the factors that influence effective mentoring of small businesses, to enable mentoring to be used as a tool with the potential to enhance the managerial skills of owner–managers.

Various researchers have provided quite a number of variables that influence the effectiveness of mentorship. These were categorised into four groups namely, relational-based, non-relational-based, cultural and demographical factors. The quality of mentoring relationships between the two parties involved (mentor and mentee) is a critical determinant of the mentoring process as it is the basis of effective mentoring programmes. These factors were classified as relational-based factors which are geared towards building harmonious mentoring relationships between mentors and mentees. The elements necessary to both mentors and owner–managers in order to nurture the mentoring relationship are commitment, open communication, feedback, trust, respect, confidentiality of information, competence of the mentor and emotional intelligence.

The second category of non-relational factors refers to those influences which are not part of the interaction between mentors and owner–managers. These factors are tangible supporting resources that influence the effectiveness of mentoring, namely infrastructure, adequate financial support and the capacity of mentors. It is imperative that mentoring processes are structured in a manner that will ensure available resources for effective mentoring of owner–managers, especially those situated in the rural areas. Otherwise, mentoring programmes will not serve the purpose for which they were established.

The third category, an understanding of cultural factors is crucial for mentoring relationships as it provides clarity regarding the varying cultural backgrounds that may influence the interaction of mentors and owner–managers. Culture is a critical issue in a mentoring relationship as it determines the perceptions of individuals towards mentoring activities. The discussion of culture in this chapter was based on the cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (1980), and by Hofstede and Bond (1988), as these dimensions are regarded as the most practical of the major cultural dimension approaches. These are: individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation.

Lastly, demographic factors were identified as important because of the diverse cultures that exist in South African societies. It is imperative to address these issues as they are likely to influence the interaction of mentors and black owner–managers. These factors are ethnicity, language proficiency, gender and age.

In the next chapter, the research design and methodology that were used to identify the elements of effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses will be outlined.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this study was presented in Chapter 1, namely to identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of mentoring of black-owned small businesses to enhance the success of these businesses. Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the research design and methodology employed in addressing the primary objective. Research is a scientific and systematic inquiry undertaken to establish pertinent information on a specific topic (Kumar, 2008:1), and Farrington (2009:331) highlights the importance of clearly outlining the research methodology.

This chapter will commence by focusing on the research design and the methodology adopted in this study. The research paradigm followed in this study will then be discussed. Because qualitative research was the methodology chosen for this study, an analysis of the different qualitative research methods will follow. The methods of data collection will be presented, including the population, sampling and sampling techniques, the design of the interview schedule and setting up of the interviews in this study. In the next section, before the data analysis methods are described, the process of data coding and coding framework development is explained. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how the trustworthiness and ethical considerations in this study were adhered to.

5.2   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

Sumathi and Saravanavel (2009:85) believe that every research project that is scientifically conducted has a specific framework of research in order to obtain the basic objectives of the research. According to these authors, the framework starts from the identification of problems and ends with the presentation of the research report. This framework is referred to as the research design. Myers (2013:19)

denotes that the main purpose of a research design is to provide a map of the whole research project. It stipulates the information that needs to be collected, the available resources from which the information will be collected and the necessary procedures to collect the information (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:25; Myers, 2013:19; Sumathi & Saravanavel, 2009:86). Thus, a research design consists of three important elements, namely a plan, structure and strategy of the investigation in an attempt to obtain answers to research questions (Sumathi & Saravanavel, 2009:85). Collins and Hussey (2009:11) propose that the first step in a research design is to determine the research paradigm of a study. The two main research paradigms are presented in the following section.

5.2.1   POSITIVISM AND INTERPRETIVISM PARADIGMS

Woodside (2010:46) asserts that it is essential to define the research paradigm that is adopted in a study. According to De Vos *et al.* (2011:513), a paradigm is defined as a pattern that consists of reasonable assumptions and a design that is used for collecting and interpreting data. The literature identifies two commonly used types of research paradigms, namely positivism and interpretivism paradigms.

A positivism paradigm refers to an assumption that knowledge about a phenomenon can be obtained by applying scientific methods to experiences (Eiksson & Kovalainen, 2008:18). It is theory-driven as it aims to prove or disprove the hypothesis (Esteves, 2010:334; Remenyi, 2007:218). Even though a positivism research paradigm is often associated with quantitative research, it may not always be the case as qualitative data may also be used in positivism research (Remenyi, 2007:218). According to Remenyi and Money (2012:75), an important characteristic of positivism is that the research is often deductive. Deductive research starts with generating ideas, deduces specific expectations from these ideas, and then tests these ideas with empirical data (Engel & Schutt, 2014:40; Remenyi & Money, 2012:75).

The central idea of an interpretivism paradigm is to interpret and find meaning in social events and settings (Eiksson & Kovalainen, 2008:19). It assumes that the world is just as people perceive it to be. This means that the aim of the interpretivism paradigm is to uncover meanings in a phenomenon as it is understood by an individual or a group of individuals, and to describe these meanings in a meaningful manner to those who experience the phenomenon (Remenyi, 2007:218). One of the important characteristics of interpretivism is that the research is often inductive, in that it begins with specific data and then develops general theories to explain patterns observed in the collected data (Engel & Schutt, 2014:40; Remenyi & Money, 2012:75).

It should be noted that the positivism paradigm is often associated with quantitative research methodologies while the interpretivism paradigm is often associated with qualitative research methodologies. These methodologies are highlighted in the next section.

5.2.2   QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

The research methodology involves how the research was conducted and the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research (Quinlan, 2011:177). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008:26) point out that it is essential to plan the key elements in research, such as choosing the appropriate methods to address the research questions. The research methodology includes the place where the study was conducted, the population, data collection methods and processes, as well as data analysis (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2010:275; Taylor & Francis, 2013:24). Two research methodologies commonly identified in the literature are quantitative and qualitative research (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:16). However, there is a third methodological movement, namely mixed methods research, which combines quantitative and qualitative research methodologies (Creswell & Clark, 2011:1).

Quantitative research refers to an assumption that the only legitimate knowledge can be found from experience, and that only measureable things can be dealt with (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:17-18). This research methodology is concerned with

testing theories to establish facts, showing causal explanations and relationships between variables, and making predictions about these relationships. Quantitative research is grounded on experimentation that requires a defined model and a detailed plan of how activities within a particular research should be carried out (McWay, 2014:235). In addition, this research methodology entails collecting quantitative data and using statistical methods of data analysis (Collis & Hussey, 2014:5).

Qualitative research is concerned with how the social world is made meaningful. It seeks to understand reality inductively, thereby providing answers to questions (Woodside, 2010:48,49). Qualitative methodology allows the researcher the opportunity to explore meanings, variations and perceptual experiences of the phenomenon from a rich and in-depth perspective of the participants as observed and recorded through their words, actions, behaviours and practices (Goosen & Van Vuuren, 2005:64; Monsen & Van Horn, 2008:5). Designing a research study following qualitative research involves collecting qualitative data using interpretative methods of data analysis (Collin & Hussey, 2014:5).

Mixed methods research is a concept used to describe the use of methods that are drawn from different paradigms (Collis & Hussey, 2014:72). It refers to a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies (Creswell & Clark, 2011:1). Mixed methods research is appropriate when a single research method is insufficient to address the objective of a research study (Creswell & Clark, 2011:8; Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013:24). For example, in a single research study, interviews (more appropriate for use in a qualitative study) can provide the researcher with deep insights into the phenomenon while a survey (which is a quantitative data collection approach) can enable the researcher to gather data from a large number of participants (Venkatesh, *et al.,* 2013:25).

The differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches to research are presented in Table 5.1.

Table: 5.1 Differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies

Description	Qualitative research	Quantitative research
Origin	• Interpretative	• Positivist
Main purpose	• Description, exploration, prescription, theory building • Discovers"hidden" motivations	• Delineate associations between variables in a sample • Useful in tracking trends • More useful for testing
Subject	• Small samples between 1 and 50	• Large samples over 50
Data source/type	• Context-dependent document and texts, observation, participant observation	• Numeric-type data
Data collection and analysis	• Data is collected from small number of businesses through methods such as observation, in-depth interviews and longitudinal studies • Relatively long interviews • Emphasis on the trustworthiness of respondents • Allows for probing • Results relatively subjective	• Relatively short interviews • Emphasis on achieving reliability and validity of measures used • Higher concern for representativeness • Data is analysed using statistical techniques • Results relatively objective
Example	• Interviews, case studies	• Survey, laboratory experiment, numerical method

Source: Adapted from Hair *et al.* (2007:152); Lin, Wu and Tsai (2013:630).

As can be seen in Table 5.1, there are a number of differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The differences suggest that the researcher should consider the objective for doing a study in order to determine the research methodology appropriate to a study. In a case where a mixed method methodology is adopted, the researcher should consider the benefits of each research methodology that will address the objective of the study.

The next section briefly highlights the approaches which quantitative and qualitative research methodologies can use.

5.2.3 RESEARCH APPROACHES IN QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Salkind (2010:1244) identifies four types of research approaches that can be used in quantitative and qualitative research, the selection being based on the purpose of the research. These are exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and evaluative research and are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Exploratory research is undertaken when little is known about a phenomenon. The aim is to determine whether a relationship exists between several variables investigated (Salkind, 2010:1254). Zikmund and Babin (2012:66) state that explorative research is most appropriate when the decision is ambiguous or the interest is in discovering new ideas. That is, exploratory research is appropriate when the researcher knows little about the phenomenon investigated as it helps to discover new patterns or ideas (Hair, Money, Samouel & Page, 2007:154). Again, this approach is more appropriate when a researcher needs to understand the people's lived experiences and the meanings they make about such experiences (Young & Atkinson, 2012:51).

Descriptive research attempts to describe the characteristics of a group of people, objects or events (Salkind, 2010:1254; Zikmund & Babin, 2012:66). It describes who is experiencing a problem, how widespread the problem is and for how long the problem has existed (Hair *et al.,* 2007:155; Salkind, 2010:1254). This approach is appropriate when the researcher attempts to identify and obtain information on the characteristics of a particular issue (Collis & Hussey, 2014:4).

Explanatory or causal research focuses on testing existing theory to find out why variables are related to one another (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:44; Salkind 2010:1254). In other words, causality means that a change in X (the cause) influences a change in Y (the effect) (Hair *et al.,* 2007:160). Explanatory research is

appropriate when the researcher attempts to understand the phenomena by discovering and measuring causal relations between the phenomena (Collis & Hussey, 2014:5).

Evaluative research attempts to assess whether a particular intervention, process or procedure is able to change behaviour (Salkind, 2010:1254). This approach is the application of various research designs such as explorative and descriptive approaches. It is used to evaluate the effectiveness of social programmes that provide services such as performance, accountability, challenges and improvement (Salkind, 2010:1254; Yuen, Terao & Schmidt, 2009:46).

The section that will follow presents the research paradigm, methodology and approach deemed appropriate to address the objectives of this study.

5.2.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM, METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH ADOPTED IN THIS STUDY

This study aims to identify the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses from the experiences and perceptions of those who participate in mentoring programmes offered to these businesses. As a result, an interpretivism paradigm is suitable for this study as it enabled the researcher to describe the meanings of experiences and perceptions of the participants to understand mentoring in black-owned small businesses. In making meaning of the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants, at the completion of the study a framework was developed showing the factors that should be considered and implemented in order to ensure effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses. Together with this framework, hypotheses were generated that could be tested in a future quantitative study.

In addition, since this study aims to explore experiences and perceptions of participants about a phenomenon – in this case, mentoring of black-owned small businesses – a qualitative research methodology and an exploratory research approach is adopted. The in-depth information obtained from participants in this study is important as it provides an understanding of mentoring experiences of black

small business owner–managers. It is these experiences and expressions of reality that qualitative research attempts to understand and describe (Quinlan, 2011:420).

It should be noted that past research on mentoring of small businesses focused mainly on Western or developed economies (see Lo, Ramayah & Kui, 2013; Mazzarol, 2014; Schlosser, 2012). In the South African context, in-depth information acquired by using a qualitative research methodology and an exploratory research approach should help to identify the factors that are essential for effective mentorship of black-owned small businesses. Levine, Mechaber, Reddy, Cayea and Harrison (2013) corroborate the choice of a qualitative research study in that it was found to provide in-depth insight into the nature, role and benefits of mentoring relationships. The use of qualitative research in the current study provided the researcher with rigour, richness and depth in the data collected on mentoring experiences and perceptions of the participants.

As the methodology adopted in this study is qualitative in nature, the next discussion will only focus on qualitative research methods available to the researcher.

5.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

According to Berman and Wang (2011), qualitative research methods are described as a means for collecting and analysing data using methods that are non-statistical in nature. The literature (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:300; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:193; Van Zyl, 2014:217; Zikmund *et al.,* 2013:139) suggests several methods to choose from when following qualitative research, namely action research, case study research, ethnography, feminist research, grounded theory, phenomenology and projective techniques. These are briefly discussed in the sections that follow.

5.3.1 ACTION RESEARCH

Action research focuses on exploring the actions of a phenomenon over a period within a certain group of individuals, an organisation or a particular community. This method may also be used to understand a process such as a change, development and improvement of a problem (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:193). The aim of action

research is to understand the social environment that is constantly changing and is guided by social justice principles (Collis & Hussey, 2014:67; Struwig & Stead, 2011:14). For example, action research may be used in research to empower a disadvantaged community (Struwig & Stead, 2011:14).

5.3.2   CASE STUDY RESEARCH

According to Zikmund *et al.,* (2013:139) as well as Van Zyl (2014:217), a case study enables the researcher to investigate a phenomenon in context by employing a variety of techniques. A case study focuses on only one entity such as an individual, a group, an organisation or a particular event to get in-depth insights about the phenomenon (Van Zyl, 2014:217). A case study can also be performed as a multiple-case study, where two or more cases are investigated within a single research study (Yin, 2011:226).

5.3.3   ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography refers to a description of human socio-cultural phenomena based on field observation as it focuses on exploring the culture of the phenomenon (Collis & Hussey, 2014:65; Van Zyl, 2014:218). This means that in order to capture in-depth insights about the phenomena investigated, the researcher is required to become active within the culture of the group (Zikmund *et al.,* 2013:138).This method focuses on a community of individuals to select participants who are expected to represent an overview of the activities of the community

5.3.4   FEMINIST RESEARCH

The central idea behind feminist research is trying to understand the power of the lives of the participants and the power that exists between participants and the researcher (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008:245; Fisher, 2011:147). According to Fisher (2014:147), an empowered relationship between the researcher and the participants is enhanced when the researcher listens to the participants and makes a meaning of what is being said by the participants. This method of research encourages women's voices and their needs to be heard, as well as their goals to be realised (Flick 2014).

5.3.5   GROUNDED THEORY

Grounded theory is described as a process used to gather data about people's experiences in a particular context and building theory from the collected data (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:300). It provides the researcher with an explanation of the interaction in these experiences. Grounded theory can be distinguished from other methods of qualitative research in the sense that it builds theory based on the collected data as it is an inductive investigation (Zikmund, *et al.,* 2013:139). When this method is adopted in a research study, Cooper and Schindler (2011:301) advise that the researcher should avoid reading previous research about the phenomenon to eliminate any influence from previous studies.

5.3.6   PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenological method is used to human experiences and perceptions. It is a study of how things are perceived based on individual experiences, the way things are experienced and the meanings that these things have in these experiences (Zikmund, *et al.,* 2013:136). According to Struwig and Stead (2013:136), phenomenology also tries to understand how the relationships of individuals affect one another's behaviour. When this method is chosen, the researcher may use interviews to get insights into these experiences and perceptions which are recorded and later interpreted (Zikmund, *et al.,* 2013:137).

5.3.7   PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

Projective techniques are used when the participants are not willing or are not able to provide the information that is being sought through direct methods of research, such as focus groups and in-depth interviews (Malhotra, Hall, Shaw & Oppenheim, 2007:143). Clow and James (2013:111) explain that often participants are not willing to provide negative responses that might reflect their own behaviour, attitudes, beliefs or values. In some cases, the participants may not consciously understand the reasons behind their actions and thoughts, and as a result may not be able to articulate those reasons with researchers. Therefore, when projective techniques are

used, the participants are requested to interpret the behaviour of others and not their own. In doing so, the participants indirectly project their own behaviour, attitudes, beliefs or feelings about a situation (Malhotra, *et al.,* 2007:138).

Table 5.2 presents a summary of qualitative research methods that are commonly used.

Table 5.2:   Commonly used qualitative research methods

Research methods	Description	Types of approaches	Key advantages	Key disadvantages
Focus group interviews	Small group discussions led by a trained moderator	• Ethnography • Case studies	• Can be quickly done • Gain multiple perspectives • Flexibility	• Results dependent on moderator • Results do not generalise to larger population • Difficult to use for sensitive topics • Expensive
In-depth interviews	One-on-one, probing interview between a trained researcher and a respondent	• Ethnography • Grounded theory • Case studies • Phenomenology	• Gain considerable insight from each individual • Good for understanding unusual behaviours	• Result dependent on researcher's interpretation • Results not meant to generalise • Very expensive
Conver-sations	Unstructured dialogue recorded by a researcher	• Phenomenology • Grounded theory	• Gain unique insights from enthusiasts • Can cover sensitive topics • Less expensive than in-depth interviews or Easy to get off course • focus groups	• Interpretations are very researcher-independent
Semi-structured interviews	Open-ended questions, often in writing, that ask for short essay-type answers from respondents	• Grounded theory • Ethnography • Phenomenology	• Can address more specific issues • Results can be easily interpreted • Cost advantages over focus	• Lack the flexibility that is likely to produce truly creative or novel explanations

			groups and depth interviews	
Word association/ sentence completion	Records the first thoughts that come to a consumer in response to some stimulus	• Grounded theory • Case studies	• Economical • Can be quickly done	• Lack the flexibility that is likely to produce truly creative or novel explanations
Observation	Recorded notes describing observed events	• Ethnography • Grounded theory • Case studies	• Can be unobtrusive • Can yield actual behaviour patterns	• Can be very expensive with participant-observer series
Collages	Respondent assembles pictures that represent their thoughts/ feelings	• Phenomenology • Grounded theory	• Flexible enough to allow novel insights	• Highly dependent on the researcher's interpretation of the collage
Thematic apperception/cartoon tests	Researcher provides an ambiguous picture and respondent tells about the story	• Phenomenology • Grounded theory	• Projective, allows to get at sensitive issues • Flexible	• Highly dependent on the researcher's interpretation

Source: Adapted from Zikmund *et al.* (2013:141)

Having discussed the various types of qualitative research methods, the next section will present the type of qualitative research that is appropriate to this study.

5.3.8 TYPE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD SELECTED FOR THIS STUDY

Considering that little is known about mentoring experiences of small businesses (Clutterbuck & Abbott, 2012:74) and consequently of black-owned small businesses, this study aims to get an in-depth understanding of the mentoring experiences and perceptions of black small business owner–managers, their mentors and mentoring institutions, by identifying the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. Therefore the phenomenological method of

research is appropriate for this study because the study aims to make meaning of the lived experiences and perceptions of individual participants. A similar approach was adopted by Gibson (2004), Russell and Russell (2011), as well as San Miguel and Kim (2014), in their studies exploring the mentoring experiences of the participants. In the present study, phenomenology enabled the researcher to explore, understand and interpret the meaning of the lived experiences and perceptions of individual participants to understand mentoring of black-owned small businesses.

Upon deciding on the appropriate method of research, the next step is the collection of data from potential participants. This collection can be achieved through various methods. The section that follows is a discussion of data collecting methods.

5.4   DATA COLLECTION

The process of collecting data to obtain information on factors influencing the effective use of mentoring in black-owned small businesses was twofold. Secondary data was collected from the literature review, which was followed by collecting primary data from the empirical investigation.

5.4.1   SECONDARY DATA

A comprehensive literature study was undertaken in an attempt to identify and describe as many factors as possible that could influence effective mentoring of small businesses globally, as well as in South Africa. Various textbooks, journal articles, and other research outputs on small businesses and mentoring were consulted. Online reports, reports from the institutions that offer mentoring to small businesses and government documents on mentoring of small businesses were consulted, particularly with reference to small black-owned businesses. Search engines such as Google and Google Scholar were also utilised. In addition, journals in the field of entrepreneurship were also consulted. The EBSCO host was also used to identify relevant literature sources. The inter-library loan facilities at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) were used to access data from other

international and national libraries. Prior findings and theories on mentoring in small businesses are compared with the findings of this study in Chapter 8 to establish how conditions for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses is similar to or different from mentoring of small businesses in other contexts.

5.4.2   PRIMARY DATA

Quinlan (2011:240) describes primary data as data that the researcher creates as the information is gathered from original sources (McNabb, 2013:81). Primary data is the information on the phenomenon investigated and provides first-hand evidence of a phenomenon (Quinlan 2011:245).

Myers (2013:26) states that the choice of the method of data collection should enable the researcher to collect all the information necessary to provide answers to the research questions. Several researchers (McNabb, 2013:81; Stanton, 2005:66; Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer, 2010:9) indicate that there are many ways of generating primary data in qualitative research, of which the most common methods are case studies, observations, focus groups and interviews (Quinlan, 2011:480,481; Hair *et al.,* 2007:417,421). These are defined in the next paragraphs.

- *Case study:* The researcher collects information about a specific event or activity, often a particular business or industry.
- *Observations:* The researcher engages in observing and recording the phenomenon under investigation.
- *Focus groups:* The researcher uses a group of participants in a focused discussion on the issue under investigation.
- *Interviews:* The researcher speaks to the participant directly.

A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each method is given in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: **Advantages and disadvantages of qualitative data collection methods**

Data collection methods	Advantages	Disadvantages
Case studies	• Build upon or enhance a body of knowledge. • Show the importance of including people in the system that needs to be engineered. • Focus on specific situations and extract ideas from participants. • Compare specific aspects across other case studies.	• Embedded author biases. • A narrow focus on a dilemma facing a single person or group. • Time-consuming.
Observations	• It is possible to record a phenomenon as and when it happens. • Allows the researcher to identify "true" behaviour. • Flexible as the focus of research can shift as event unfolds. • Allows for identification of behaviours that the participant may unwittingly disclose.	• Observations of natural settings can be bias from the researcher's subjective interpretation of the situation. • The researcher's behaviour may influence the behaviour of the participant so much that the entire research may be invalidated.
Focus groups	• Allows for a social environment capturing real-life data. • It is flexible. • It is low in cost.	• The researcher has less control over the data being collected. • Data is not easy to analyse. • The groups are not easy to assemble. • The difference between • groups can be challenging to identify.
Interviews	• Enable participants to talk about their experiences in their own words. • Allow unexpected data to emerge.	• Analysis of data may be difficult. • The quality of data is dependent on the responses of the participants.

Source: Adapted from Adler and Clark (2008:325,325); Babbie (2010:323); Gratton and Jones (2004:142,143,163,164); Popil (2011:205); White, Gandhi, Gorod and Ireland (2013).

The section to follow presents the primary data collection method selected for this study.

5.4.3   PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION METHOD SELECTED FOR THIS STUDY

Interviews were used in this study to collect primary data. The interviews were used to develop an understanding of mentoring experiences as perceived by participants. The choice is based on the fact that the information that can be gathered from interviews is rich and diverse in the sense that it provides a broad perspective of the phenomenon investigated as participants talk about their experiences and perceptions in their own words. The information collected through interviews often varies across a number of patterns such as behaviour, attitudes, past experience, perception of support and actions (Gideon, 2012:110).

Interviews can take many forms, and therefore can be distinguished by their level of formality and the manner in which they are structured (Gideon, 2012:111; Myers, 2013:123). Thus, interviews can either be structured or semi-structured or unstructured in order to encourage the participant to talk at length around the subject of the research (Buchanan & Bryman, 2011:503; Myers, 2013:123).

When *structured interviews* are used in a research study, questions are pre-formulated and the time is strictly regulated for the interview (Myers, 2013:124). *A semi-structured interview* is an interview in which a number of predetermined questions and special topics are to be covered during the interview. In this form of interview, there is more flexibility as other topics could emerge in order to provide more information that may be of importance to the researcher (Gideon, 2012:112; Myers, 2013:124). Lastly, during *unstructured interviews,* few if any pre-formulated questions are used. When this form of interview is used, the participants have the freedom to say what they wish because there is no limit to the time allocated to the interview (Lee & Lings, 2008; Myers, 2013:124).

To gain a deeper understanding of the mentoring experiences of the participants, semi-structured interviews were used. According to Bevan (2014:138), when interviews are selected to collect data, the researcher is free to structure the interview in a manner that enables thorough investigation. Therefore the researcher in this study adopted semi-structured interviews to maintain consistency across the interviews, as each interview started with a similar set of questions. In addition, researchers such as Estraus *et al.* (2009) have used semi-structured interviews to collect data on issues related to mentor-mentee relationship. The benefit of semi-structured interviews is that they take the best of the other types of interviews. They provide the researcher with an opportunity to add important insights as they arise during the conversation, while at the same time the pre-formulated questions provide focus and a measure of consistency (Myers, 2013:125).

As the method of data collection has been defined, it is important to identify the target population, as well as the sampling for this study. In addition it is important to highlight how the interview schedule was designed and interviews with selected participants set up. These elements of collecting primary data will be discussed in the following sections.

5.4.3.1 Population studied

A population is defined as the total group of people from whom information is needed (Wiid & Diggines, 2010:195). A population is composed of all the elements that possess the information sought by the researcher and about which inferences will be made (Burns & Burns 2008:180; Ríos & Del Campo, 2013:193). Such elements include a specific group of individuals, households and businesses (Burns & Burns, 2008:180; Wiid & Diggines, 2010:195). Ríos and Del Campo (2013:193) warn that it is important to clearly define the target population in a study because imprecise definitions of the target population lead to ineffective research and misleading results. Consequently, the population for this study is defined as South African institutions that provide skills development programmes to small businesses through mentoring, as well as their mentors, mentees and board member/managers. While conducting this study, a comprehensive list of mentoring institutions in South Africa

could not be ascertained. However, a database of mentoring institutions that was developed by SEDA (n.d) initiated the sampling process.

5.4.3.2 Sampling and sampling unit

Sampling is described as a procedure that uses a small number of elements of a given population as a basis for drawing conclusions about the entire population (Neelankavil, 2007:240; Sreejesh *et al.*, 2014). The results obtained from the sample therefore represent the characteristics of the whole population. However, if errors are made in selecting the sample, the research results will be wrong and will not be representative of the population being investigated (Sreejesh *et al.,* 2014).

According to Neelankavil (2007:240), the sampling unit is a single element subject to selection in the sample. In the case of this study, black-owned small businesses were first identified and selected as the sampling unit. Thereafter, owner–managers who had already participated in a mentoring programme were selected. Thus, the sampling unit in this study comprises more than one element, namely the black-owned small businesses representing the primary sampling unit and black small business owner–managers who have been mentored as the secondary sampling unit. The third sampling unit comprised the mentors of these owner–managers, with the fourth sampling unit being board member/managers of the institutions that participated in this study.

There are two main techniques of sampling to choose from, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling. These are discussed in the next subsection.

a) Sampling techniques

Probability sampling rests on the assumption that every element in the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample (Babbie, 2013:196; Maxfield & Babbie, 2014:222). This is mainly because the selection of the respondents is determined by non-systematic and random rules (Van Zyl, 2014:96). Examples of probability sampling include simple random, cluster, stratified and systematic

sampling (Wiid & Diggines 2010:199) and are discussed in the paragraph that follows.

Simple random sampling refers to the selection of respondents randomly from a list of potential respondents (Struwig & Stead, 2011:112). In this selection, each population element has a known and equal chance of being selected (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:174). With *cluster sampling*, the researcher identifies subgroups known as clusters which exist naturally within a specific population. Then the researcher randomly selects the participants from the various clusters to be included in a research study (Van Zyl, 2014:102; Struwig & Stead, 2011:114). For *stratified sampling* the sample is designed so that a predetermined number of items are chosen from each section (Struwig & Stead, 2011:113). *Systematic sampling* refers to a procedure in which the respondents are selected in a manner that is efficient and unbiased (Struwig & Stead, 2011:114; Van Zyl, 2014:100).

Non-probability sampling occurs when the probability that an element will be included in a sample is not known (Maxfield & Babbie, 2014:222). According to Hair *et al.* (2007:181) and Quinlan (2011:213), the selection of a sample in non-probability sampling is not made with the aim of being statistically representative of the population. Rather, the researcher uses subjective methods such as personal experience, convenience and expert judgement to select the elements in the sample. Non-probability sampling includes techniques such as purposive or judgemental, quota, convenience and snowball sampling (Maxfield & Babbie, 2014:222).

The central idea of *purposive or judgemental sampling* is that the respondents are selected based on the judgement of the researcher (Struwig & Stead, 2011:111). The judgement is determined by specific characteristics needed in the sample, even when the selected sample is not a representation of the population. For example, purposive sampling can be used in attempts to forecast election results (Zikmund, *et al.,* 2013:393).

With *quota sampling*, the central idea is to produce a sample that reflects a population in terms of the relative characteristics of people in various categories (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Hair *et al.,* 2007:182; Quinlan, 2011:212). Such characteristics include gender, ethnicity, age groups, socio-economic groups and the industry of a business (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Burns & Burns, 2008:204; Quinlan, 2011:214). This means that the researcher specifies the characteristics of the elements to be selected in order to address the phenomenon being investigated. Once the categories and the number of participants have been decided upon, the researcher must select the potential participants who fit these categories (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Burns & Burns, 2008:205).

Convenience sampling refers to selection based on the availability of potential respondents (Zikmund, *et al.* 2013:392). This means that the researcher selects individuals who are readily available to participate in a study (Black, 2009:224).

Finally, *snowball sampling* refers to a variety of procedures when choosing the respondents, in which the initial respondents are selected by probability methods, who then refer the researcher to additional respondents (Struwig & Stead, 2011:112). Snowball sampling is appropriate when the location of the potential respondents is not known (Zikmund, *et al.,* 2013:395).

b)   Sampling technique selected for this study

The sampling technique that was used in the present study is non-probability quota sampling to select the participants. Quota sampling was adopted with the view that it would allow representation from various industries within the small business sector which had or currently have mentoring experience. This is because small businesses exist in almost every business industry (Moyes, Whittam & Ferri, 2012:142) such as retail, agriculture, services, finance and construction (Li, Troutt, Brandyberry & Wang, 2011:12). This method was also chosen with the view that it allowed for representation of gender when selecting the participants. However, few female owner–managers were available to participate in this study, resulting in the sample composition being dominated by male participants.

Even though quota sampling is described as being representative of the whole population, there are limitations with regard to generalising the results obtained from a study when this sampling technique has been used. For example, the results from a certain location may not be generalisable to other locations because of the nature of geographical settings (Bryman & Bell, 2011:193; Hair *et al.,* 2007:182). In order to address this limitation, this study is limited to two provinces in South Africa, namely the Eastern Cape and Gauteng. The selection of the two provinces is based on the varying magnitudes of the two provinces in terms of wealth, as well as the size and distribution of small businesses in these provinces. For instance, Gauteng is the richest province (Jakkie, 2014:6) and is the leading province in terms of the number of small businesses in both the formal and informal sectors (The DTI Report, 2008:67). The Eastern Cape on the other hand is the poorest province in South Africa (O'Donoghue & Shackleton, 2013:444) with a large rural population and it accommodates higher proportions of informal businesses (The DTI Report, 2008:67).

c)   Selection of the participants for this study

For the purpose of this study, the large group of participants was first selected based on two provinces as mentioned in the previous section. Institutions providing mentoring to small businesses in these provinces were then identified, followed by the selection of a group of black small business owner–managers who have participated in or who are currently participating in a mentoring programme. After this, a group of mentors and finally a group of board member/managers was selected.

While there is no accepted sample size for qualitative studies (Elo *et al.,* 2014:3), it was decided in the initial stage that a total of ten owner–managers would be selected from the five well-known and accessible institutions that provide mentorship to small businesses in Gauteng and Eastern Cape provinces. The database developed by SEDA (n.d.) identifies 10 mentoring institutions in Gauteng province and six mentoring institutions in Eastern Cape province. As explained in Section 5.4.3.1 this database initiated the selection of mentoring institutions to be included in this study.

For this selection, two black mentees would be selected from each institution to obtain a broader perspective of the mentoring experiences of these owner–managers. However, the number of mentees was changed to range between two and four mentees per institution depending on the availability of mentees. This was to accommodate those who might have second thoughts about participating. Therefore the final number of owner–manager mentees increased from ten to twelve. The number of mentoring institutions who took part was also reduced from five to four because other institutions were not willing to participate, in spite of numerous contacts made to include them in this study. Two mentoring institutions were finally selected per province, bringing the total to four institutions taking part in the study.

While the total number of mentees was decided upon, the total number of mentors was not known as it would be determined by the number of mentors assigned to each mentee by individual institutions. In all instances, one mentor was assigned to more than one owner–manager, and for some institutions, more than one mentor was available for each mentee to provide different skills, which led to a total of six mentors participating in the study. The idea of paring mentees with their mentors was to enable a linkage of responses between the two to get conclusive results. In the case of board members/managers, only three were available to participate in this study after several attempts failed to have representation from all four institutions. These three groups of participants were selected to enable in-depth and rich data to be collected from all the stakeholders concerned in a mentoring programme and to be sufficient to address the research questions. In total, 21 participants were available to participate in this study, namely twelve mentees, six mentors and three board member/managers.

d)   Design of interview schedule

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research does not use a conceptual model of variables and their correlation or causal relationships. Rather, it focuses on linking the empirical analysis to the literature review and theories. It aims at finding relevance of empirical results to the research questions, and does not focus on the existence of relationships in the literature (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:32).

Because this study is qualitative in nature, it is important to note that interview questions should be built around the incidents that participants have experienced in relation to the research area of interest (Buchanan & Bryman, 2011:503). As the participants of this study are black small business owner–managers who had or currently have a mentorship experience, the interview questions were built around their experiences of mentoring and what factors (in their experience) make mentoring more or less effective.

All interviews were conducted in English since this language is the medium of instruction in South Africa and the language that selected institutions use to conduct mentoring programmes (SEDA, 2012:75). These interviews were semi-structured for all the groups, whereby each group had two sections of questions to respond to. Section A of the interview schedule consisted of general questions pertaining to information regarding the participant for each of the three groups, and was collected at the beginning of the interview. In the case of owner–managers, this section requested information on age, gender, the business industry, the province in which the participant operates, the number of employees in the business, the number of years in the business, the qualifications of the participant and the previous jobs prior to operating the business. In the case of the mentors, Section A of the interview schedule requested information on age, gender, ethnicity, the province of operation, the number of years in mentorship, the qualifications of the participant and the working experience prior to mentorship. Lastly, questions for board members requested age, gender, ethnicity, the province of operation, the position in the institution and the number of years in the institution.

Section B of the interview schedule comprised questions on the mentoring experiences of the participants. The questions were posed in such a manner that enabled the participants to provide as much information as necessary about their mentoring experiences and what made it effective or ineffective. These questions revolved around how mentors and mentees were paired, how often these two parties met, the meeting place, the length of the mentorship programme, personality traits necessary for both mentors and mentees, the roles that a mentor plays when mentoring, and the challenges that hinder effective mentoring. More questions were

posed on whether demographics and culture should be considered in matching mentors and mentees. An example of the interview schedule is provided in Annexure C of this study.

e)   Setting up of interviews

In order to execute the interviews, potential institutions providing mentorship to black-owned small businesses were identified between the months of April and July 2014. This was done through quota sampling while the researcher was interacting with representatives of the institutions to get their permission to engage them in this research. Through these interactions, the researcher was able to establish the location of small businesses that constituted the sampling frame in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces. To enhance the perceived credibility of this study, the letter requesting participation of these institutions was presented on the official letterhead of the Unit for Applied Management at NMMU. The letter explained the purpose of the study and the type of information being sought. Annexure A is an example of the letter requesting participation from mentoring institutions.

After permission was granted by the institutions, three sets of letters were sent to the potential owner–manager mentees as selected by the institutions, their mentors and board members/managers. The letters provided details of the purpose of the study as well as the type of information being sought. Once permission was granted by the institutions to engage them in this study, an initial contact with the participants was made to arrange for interviews. Following this, face-to-face interviews with the three groups of participants took place on the business premises of the mentorship institutions. Participants were made aware that their responses were being tape-recorded and that confidentiality would be maintained. In order to foster participation in this study, the institutions, mentors and owner–managers were assured that a summary of the final results would be made available to them at the completion of the research. An example of letters to the three groups of participants is presented in Annexure B.

The interviews were flexible in that the researcher could ask follow-up questions or clarify information with participants when needed. The interviews were captured on an audio tape recorder in order to get the information transcribed verbatim. Consent was obtained from the participants to make use of the tape recorder during the interviews. An example of the consent letter for participation can be found in Annexure D.

As qualitative research generates a great deal of data, it is imperative to have a plan to deal with this data (Myers, 2013:26). Such a plan is referred to as data analysis and is presented in the next section.

5.5   DATA ANALYSIS

Bazeley and Jackson (2007:68) broadly describe data analysis as a way of working intensively with rich data. With specific reference to qualitative data analysis, Quinlan (2011:420) asserts that the main function of qualitative data analysis is to develop a thick, rich and complete account of the phenomenon under investigation. This means that qualitative data analysis is performed to transform primary data into rich descriptions of the findings (Sreejesh *et al.,* 2014), and this analysis directs the findings to theoretical understanding of behaviour (Babbie, 2013:396). This involves working with data, organising it, breaking it down, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learnt and finally interpreting the data (Hair *et al.,* 2007:291; Japhet & Usman, 2013:29).

Hair *et al.* (2007:291) as well as Japhet and Usman (2013:29), advise that with qualitative research, data collection and analysis are often concurrent. This means that as data is being analysed, such an analysis may initiate additional data collection which will also need to be analysed. This is to allow for flexibility in data collection procedures so that the researcher remains open to new ideas that may emerge and gain insight into the problem for further investigation (Japhet & Usman, 2013:29; Monsen & Van Horn, 2008:5). The process may continue until when there are no new themes emerging (Hair *et al.,* 2007:291). The same process was followed in this study. The researcher analysed data in such a manner that as new

information emerged, more data was collected on those aspects until no new information emerged.

5.5.1   CODING OF DATA

On collection of all the interview schedules, the researcher retyped the data using the exact words and language which was used during the interviews. Thus, the interviewed data was transcribed verbatim. An intensive process of concurrently reading the transcripts and reviewing the tapes was followed. This included paying attention to the reflections of the transcripts and listening to the interviews to interpret the manner in which the participants spoke. In cases where the tapes were not clear enough to hear the spoken information, the researcher contacted the respective participants for clarity and emailed the retyped data to them to confirm whether the information recorded was accurate and correct, or in any case whether some information had been omitted from the interview. Examples of the interview follow-up letter to participants and a snippet of participants' responses to this letter are presented in Annexures F and G respectively.   The coding of the transcribed interviews was divided into three groups of participants, namely mentees, mentors, and board members/managers for the respective institutions. Each of the responses in these groups was assigned a letter to ensure that the participants could not be identified, and participants were referred to using pseudonyms.

5.5.1.1 Types of codes used

Prior to coding, the researcher needs to decide on the type of coding to be used in a research study. This should help develop a coding framework to be implemented when the coding process begins (Sullivan, 2009:427), and this is presented in the next section. Zikmund *et al.* (2013:465) define codes as "rules for interpreting, classifying and recording data in the coding process: also the numerical or other character symbols assigned to raw data." Gavin (2008:384) explains that the codes enable the researcher to interpret data as themes and sub-themes are identified.

Hennik, Hutter and Bailey (2011:218) identify two types of codes, namely deductive and inductive codes. Deductive codes are formed based on existing themes from the literature as they are not formed from reading data. They are descriptive in nature and are theory-testing driven (Castro, Pinto & Simeonsson, 2014:98). On the other hand, inductive codes are formed from reading data as they are not based on theory. Inductive codes are interpretive and appropriate when there is little knowledge about the phenomenon (Castro *et al.,* 2014:98; Hennik *et al.,* 2011:218). According to Hennik *et al.* (2011:218), inductive codes are important as they reflect the issues that the participants regarded as essential. Castro *et al.* (2014:98) assert that the choice of which type of codes are appropriate in a study, is determined by the research questions as well as the purpose of the study.

Considering that little is known about the mentoring experiences of small businesses (Clutterbuck & Abbott, 2012:74) and therefore of black-owned small businesses, a combination of deductive and inductive coding methods were adopted in this study. While this study is based on gaining greater insight into mentoring of black-owned small businesses and is focused on reading data to develop themes and sub-themes (inductive codes), it has also considered themes and sub-themes from the literature (deductive codes). This means that inductive codes were used as a starting point to identify themes and sub-themes in the data. Thereafter the themes and sub-themes that were similar to the literature were merged and adopted in this study.

5.5.1.2 Coding framework development

A coding framework is described as a set of words or topics that represent a general meaning of the collected data (Haddad & Jaaron, 2012:150). The coding framework makes it easy to link the codes to the transcribed data. Again, when a coding framework is developed, the codes can be linked into common categories to enhance data analysis (Saks & Allsop, 2012:444).

In this study, the coding framework was developed following the Tesch's eight-step model as described by De Vos *et al.* (2002:340-341). The steps are as follows:

- Read through transcripts and write down ideas as they come to mind to obtain a sense of the whole interview;
- Read through transcripts thoroughly to understand the information and write down thoughts as they come to mind;
- Arrange similar topics in groups into three topics, namely major, unique and unrelated;
- Abbreviate topics into codes and indicate codes next to relevant sections of text within transcripts, observing the organisation of data to check for new emerging categories or codes;
- Identify the most descriptive words for themes and convert them into categories, while reducing categories by grouping related topics together;
- Finalise abbreviations for each category and alphabetise the codes;
- Cluster data (text material) belonging to each category into one place and perform preliminary analysis; and
- Record existing data where necessary.

In applying the coding process to this study, the transcripts were read for each group of participants. This enabled the researcher to identify words and phrases that were common to each group. While trying to understand the information contained in the transcripts, thoughts and ideas were written down as they came to mind. Similar topics that emerged from these transcripts were categorised together. The codes were then formed and placed next to the relevant words or phrases in the transcripts. These words and phrases were analysed further to discover any underlying themes and sub-themes to simplify the coding process. Following this, themes and sub-themes were grouped into relevant categories, enabling preliminary analysis to be performed. This process allowed for comparison of differences in the experiences and perceptions of across the three groups of participants.

The broad themes in the coding framework for this study were relational, non-relational and other themes, as shown in Figure 5.1. The framework presents collective categories derived from the three groups of participants in this study. Several sub-themes are also indicated in the coding framework.

Figure 5.1   Coding framework
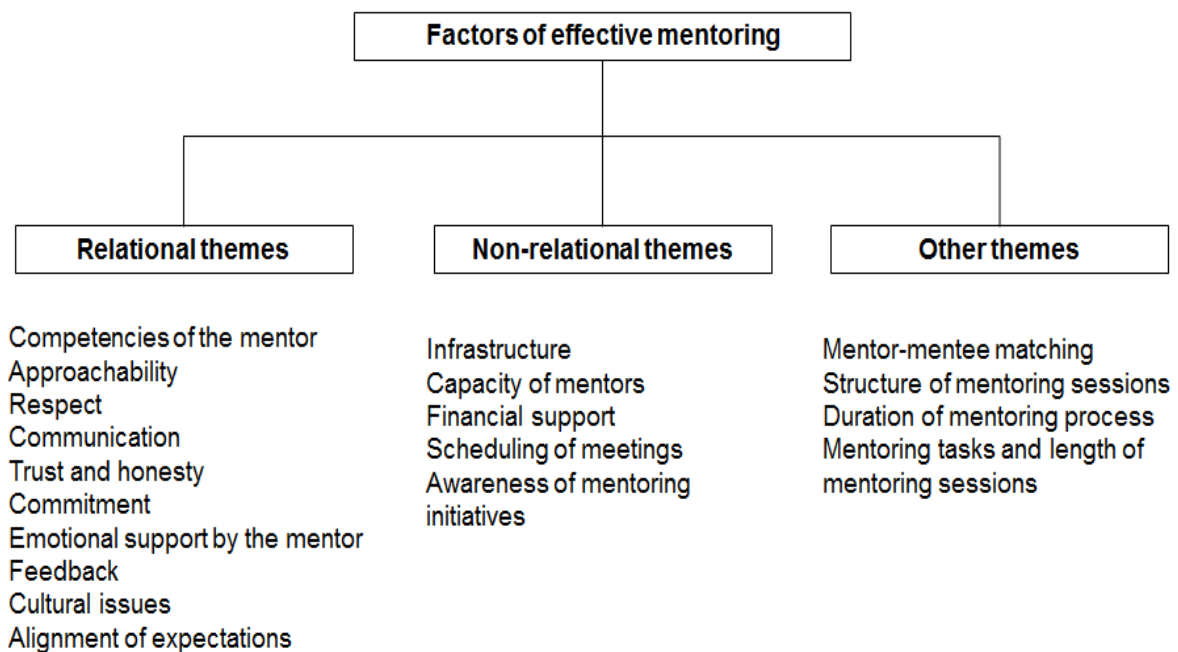
Source: Researcher's own construction

As noted in Figure 5.1, three broad categories of themes emerged from the data collected during the interviews, and sub-themes were grouped under the relevant categories. The selection of appropriate data analysis methods for this study, namely content analysis and constant comparative analysis, are discussed in the following sections.

5.5.2   CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is a means of textual analysis that involves counting the frequency and sequencing of words, phrases and concepts in addition to comparing, contrasting and categorising them (Stam, 2008:26). It is used to calculate the frequency with which particular words, phrases or ideas appear in the text being

analysed (Quinlan, 2011:162). Such texts include interviews, discussions, conversations and essays and are manifestations of communicative language (Stam, 2008:26).

In this study, content analysis was used to find meaning of the transcribed interviews based on answering the research questions. The transcribed comments were grouped into dimensions of content labels based on the underlying meaning they reflected, with keywords representing dimension labels, as highlighted in the previous section. A similar approach was followed in a study by Ramaswami and Dreher (2010:506) on mentoring experiences of Indian Masters in Business Administration students. In their study, applicable comments for each content area were selected and grouped into themes reflecting their underlying meanings. The approaches that researchers can choose from to interpret content analysis data are presented in the next section followed by the approach used in this study.

5.5.2.1 Approaches of content analysis and interpretation of data

Elo and Kyngäs (2008:109) assert that it is imperative to first decide on the appropriate content analysis approach before content analysis can be conducted. According to these authors, such a decision must be based on the purpose of the study. The literature reveals different approaches to content analysis. For example, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) identify three approaches to content analysis, these being conventional, directed and summative content analyses (Goodman, 2011:24; Lichtman, 2013:259), while other studies refer to deductive and inductive content analyses as approaches to content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008:109). Still other researchers refer to these approaches as conventional inductive content analysis (Miskon, Bandara, Fielt & Gable, 2011:3; Schoeb, Rau, Nast, Schmid, Barbero, Tal & Kool, 2013:81) and directed deductive content analysis (Alharbi, Carlström, Ekman, Jarneborn & Olsson, 2014:112; Kühlbrandt, Balabanova, Chikovani, Petrosyan, Kizilova, Ivaniuto, Danii, Makarova & McKee 2014:195).

Despite the different names given to these approaches to content analysis, in terms of when to use a particular method, the approaches overlap. For example, *conventional content analysis* is appropriate when the existing information on a phenomenon is limited – which means that themes and sub-themes emerge from data (Goodman, 2011:24; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1279; Lichtman, 2013:259). Similarly, *inductive content analysis* is appropriate when information on a phenomenon is limited as themes and sub-themes are derived from a systematic reading of data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008:109; Martin, & Hanington, 2012:40; Sparkes & Smith, 2014:26). *Directed content analysis* focuses on validating or extending a theoretical framework or theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1281). Similarly, *deductive content analysis* is appropriate where the researcher wishes to re-test existing data in a new context such as testing categories, concepts, models or hypotheses (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008:109; Lichtman, 2013:259). The last approach, *summative content analysis*, is the only one which does not overlap with any other approach. Summative content analysis follows two steps. The first step is identifying and quantifying words to explore the frequency of the issues emerging from the data. The second step is interpreting the quantified issues by linking the frequency of occurrence to the underlying meaning of these issues (Goodman, 2011:24; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1283; Lichtman, 2013:259).

Apart from deciding on the approach to content analysis, it is also important to decide how data will be interpreted. Elo and Kyngäs (2008:109) explain that content analysis can be interpreted using either manifest or latent analysis. *Manifest content analysis* focuses on the most obvious and straightforward meanings of data without any deeper interpretation (Binfa, Robertson & Ransjö-Arvidson, 2010:447; Smith, 2010:219). This includes issues that are physically present and can be counted, such as the number of times a particular issue is raised by the participants (Ittig, 2008:71). On the other hand, *latent content analysis* focuses on discovering the underlying meanings of the physical data (Binfa *et al.*, 2010:447; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005:1284; Smith, 2010:219). Even though there has been some debate about analysing and interpreting hidden meanings in silence, sighs, laughter and posture, the aim of latent content analysis is to take note of such moments (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008:109).

Despite the fact that there are two ways in which content analysis can be interpreted, Elo and Kyngäs (2008:109), Gebru and Willman (2010:59), as well as Ittig (2008:71) suggest a third option, recommending that where possible, a combination of both manifest and latent content analysis is used. Using both methods enables the methods to build upon one another to deepen the final interpretation of the analysis (Ittig, 2008:71).

5.5.2.2 Content analysis approach and data interpretation used in this study

Based on consideration of the different approaches to content analysis of data, this study adopted an inductive, directed content analysis approach. Even though existing theory on mentoring exists, little is still known about the mentoring experiences of small businesses in general (Clutterbuck & Abbott, 2012:74) and of black-owned small businesses in particular. In addition, it was noted in section 3.3.1 that mentoring could mean different things to different people depending on the context attached to the concept (Haggard *et al.,* 2011:286). As such, inductive, directed content analysis was chosen to analyse themes and sub-themes that emerged from data, and to analyse those themes and sub-themes that are similar to themes and sub-themes in the literature to better understand mentoring in the context of mentoring South African black owner–managers.

With regard to the method of interpreting content analysis data, a combination of manifest and latent content analyses were performed in this study. A manifest analysis was performed to determine which issues were regarded as important by the participants. This was achieved by checking the frequency of a particular issue arising in conversation. The latent analysis was performed to reveal the meaning of participant responses, which included observations of the responses. For example, certain cultural behaviours were observed in the participants' communications, and these were interpreted to find their meaning. Thus, inductive directed content analysis was employed in the study, guided by both manifest and latent analysis to interpret data.

5.5.3   CONSTANT COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Constant comparative analysis is a process that involves comparing one piece of data (such as one interview) to others, in order to develop an understanding of the relationships between different pieces of data (Shi, 2008:158). It attempts to generate concepts that can explain people's actions and thinking in ways that are independent of time and place (Rodrigues, 2010:59-60). Through constant comparative analysis, the researcher may identify similarities and differences across data and begin to develop theories about relationships, patterns and themes. This allows the researcher to develop a better understanding of the phenomenon investigated (Shi, 2008:158).

Rodrigues (2010:59) describes constant comparative analysis method in terms of four distinct stages, which are:

- Comparing incidents applicable to each category;
- Integrating categories and their properties;
- Delimiting the theory; and
- Writing the theory.

From the transcribed interviews, similarities and differences between the participants were identified. The comparison of responses was made between the three groups of participants (owner–managers, mentors and board member/managers) to establish the mentoring experiences of the participants. These enabled the researcher to categorise data according to emerging themes and sub-themes. The variations in owner–managers' experiences provided the researcher with an understanding of their mentoring experiences in order to identify the factors that are essential for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. In the same manner, the variations in the responses from mentors, and from board member/managers, provided an insight into the factors that are necessary to ensure effective mentoring to black-owned small businesses in South Africa.

The next section highlights the importance of trustworthiness in a qualitative research study.

5.6   TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008:290), one of the challenges confronting qualitative researchers is ensuring trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is a concept that originates from the seminal work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) that was developed to address the issues of reliability and validity of qualitative research (Elo *et al.,* 2014:2). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008:290) point out that adopting explicit evaluation criteria increases the transparency of a research project. Against this background, the issues that should be addressed to assess trustworthiness in research are presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4:   Trustworthiness in quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative	**Qualitative**	**Issue addressed**
Internal validity	Credibility	Truth value
External validity	Transferability	Generalisability
Reliability	Dependability	Consistency
Objectivity	Conformability	Neutrality

Source: Ary *et al.* (2013:531).

Table 5.4 summarises the standards of trustworthiness used in both quantitative and qualitative research. Since this is a qualitative study, trustworthiness issues that were addressed were credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Elo *et al.* (2014) observe that trustworthiness in content analysis is often assessed using these criteria. According to Polit and Beck (2014:323), authenticity was developed as another criterion in response to criticisms and other evolving views. Given the importance of authenticity in assessing trustworthiness, this criterion has also been considered in the study.

5.6.1 CREDIBILITY

Ary *et al.* (2013:531−532) assert that credibility involves how well the researcher has established confidence in the findings based on the research design, participants and context. Credibility refers to confidence in how well the data addresses the intended focus (Elo *et al.,* 2014:3). The strategies that need to be implemented in establishing the credibility of qualitative research and how these strategies were applied in this study are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5   Establishing the credibility of qualitative research

Credibility strategies	Application in this study
Selection of the most appropriate method of data collection	Section 5.4.3
Proper selection of the appropriate sample size	Section 5.4.3.2
Proper selection of a suitable method of analysis	Section 5.5
Being able to evaluate how well themes cover the data	Section 5.5.1.2
Identifying similarities within and differences between themes	Sections 5.5.2 & 5.5.3
Accurately identifying and describing the participants	Chapter 6

Source: Adapted from Elo *et al.* (2014:2−7)

Several researchers (Ary *et al.,* 2013:533; Macnee & McCabe, 2008:172; Polit & Beck, 2014:328) claim that the credibility of qualitative research can also be assessed through member checks. A member check allows the participants to check the accuracy, completeness and interpretation of data (Macnee & McCabe, 2008:172). It can be carried out as data is being collected, through deliberate probing, to ensure that the recorded interviews have properly interpreted participants᾽ meaning. A formal member check can follow after data has been fully analysed in follow-up interviews (Polit & Beck, 2014:328). However, Polit and Beck (2014:328) warn that member checking should be done in a manner that encourages critical appraisal by participants as some participants may agree with the researcher᾽s interpretation out of politeness. In this study, the researcher followed this method of assessing credibility. The researcher received participants᾽ feedback on the data collected, as well as their interpretation and conclusions.

In addition, the credibility of a research study can be achieved through triangulation. Triangulation involves using more than one approach or source of data collection about the same phenomenon (Macnee & McCabe, 2008:172; Polit & Beck, 2014:327). As Macnee and McCabe (2008:172) point out, when multiple sources of data lead to the same conclusion, the credibility of those findings is increased. Therefore, the use of three groups of participants from which data was collected in this study, ensured that a comprehensive understanding of mentoring experiences of black-owned small businesses was established.

5.6.2 TRANSFERABILITY

The central idea behind transferability is the degree of similarity of the research results to other similar studies in terms of the concepts, themes or dimensions identified (Elo *et al.,* 2014:2; Macnee & McCabe, 2008:171). In addition, it is important to clearly state the principles and criteria used to select participants and detail the participants' main characteristics. This should enable applicability of the results to a different group or a different setting from where the data was collected, or to other contexts. Thus, transferability relies on the reasoning that findings can be generalised or transferred to other settings or groups (Elo *et al.,* 2014:2; Macnee & McCabe, 2008:171-172).

Even though transferability is based on applicability of the results to other contexts, the focus is not on replication of the results, but on establishing whether some similarity could be found in other research contexts. This means that transferability involves confirming that what is considered meaningful in one specific setting or with one specific group is also meaningful and accurate in a different setting or group (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:294; Macnee & McCabe, 2008:172).

For the purpose of this study, transferability was achieved by comparing the empirical findings of this study with previous research on mentoring in other contexts, as well as grouping the responses for each group. In this manner, it was possible to assess whether the findings of one group were similar to those of other groups. The grouping of responses also allowed the researcher to assess the

differences and similarities of the findings across the three groups that were investigated in this study.

5.6.3 DEPENDABILITY

Dependability is concerned with the responsibility to offer information that can be obtained if the same study is repeated (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:294). Polit and Beck (2014:323) affirm that credibility cannot be achieved in the absence of dependability, just as validity in a quantitative research cannot be achieved in the absence of reliability. Elo *et al.* (2014:3, 7) add that good qualitative studies provide a detailed explanation of the method that was followed to collect data, as well as the methods used to analyse the data. This is done to allow for stability when repeated over time and under the same conditions.

Even though dependability serves the same purpose as reliability in quantitative research, it accommodates changes in the research design and method. It does not consider these changes as disruption as long they are documented (Pedrosa, Näslund & Jasmand, 2012:278). In this study, dependability was enhanced by firstly constructing a thorough and well documented methodology chapter (Chapter 5) and secondly, by ensuring that all the important information pertaining to the study, including the interview schedule, interview transcripts and other secondary data were well documented and accessible for future reference.

5.6.4 CONFORMABILITY

Conformability involves linking the findings and interpretations to the data in such a manner that it can be understood by others researchers (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:294). It is the potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance and meaning of the findings. The findings must reflect the participant's voice and conditions of the investigation rather than the researcher's bias, motivations or perspectives. Thus, conformability implies that the data accurately represents the information that the participants provided,

and that the interpretations of data are not inverted by the researcher (Elo *et al.,* 2014:2,6).

Macnee and McCabe (2008:171) point out that an approach that can be used to ensure conformability is one which develops and maintains an audit trail. These researchers refer to an audit trail as documentation of the methods of data collection as well as the processes used in analysing data. Polit and Beck (2014:328) indicate that when more than one researcher shares common information in their reports, it is possible to draw conclusions about the trustworthiness of the findings.

To enhance conformability in this study, all interviews were audio taped and transcribed to ensure that the responses were recorded correctly. After this, these records were archived to be available should the findings of this study be challenged. Ensuring that all notes, interview schedules, transcripts and memos are well kept should an audit be necessary, is another way of enhancing conformability.

5.6.5   AUTHENTICITY

Higgs, Titchen, Horsfall and Bridges (2012:217) explain that authenticity refers to the extent to which researchers genuinely generate an understanding of the experiences of the respondents. According to Holloway and Wheeler (2010:304), a study is authentic when the strategies used in a research are appropriate for the honest reporting of the participant's ideas. These authors discuss the concept of fairness and the ontological, educative, catalytic and tactical aspects of authenticity. These are briefly examined in the subsequent sections.

5.6.5.1 Fairness

Higgs *et al.* (2012:218) acknowledge that fairness reinforces the ethical basis of the research as it aims to ensure a balanced view of all perspectives and experiences of the phenomenon. Fairness requires the researcher to obtain ongoing informed consent of all participants throughout the whole of the study by reminding them that they have a right to refuse to participate (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:304). This was done for the current study.

To achieve a balanced view of participants, a sample of participants was drawn from different institutions which provide mentorship to small businesses. In addition, the criteria for the sample included drawing participants from different industries, representation of different gender groups and from members of the board who have significant knowledge of mentoring programmes offered at the institution. Furthermore, fairness was enhanced by continually obtaining informed consent of participants. Participants were also reminded about their right to refuse to participate in the study.

5.6.5.2 Ontological authenticity

According to this criterion, all the parties involved in a study should be helped to understand the study in an environment which is open and relaxed (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:304). This entails providing time for participants to engage in a dialogue about their experiences of the phenomenon as well as understanding the problem that is investigated. Such a conversation should be taken in an environment that allows openness and should not be judgemental (Higgs *et al.* 2012:220).

This criterion was achieved by providing enough time and space to participants in order to promote openness during the interviews. Given that interviews are a two-way conversation (Remenyi, 2012:36), participants were provided enough time to freely talk about their mentoring experiences. The researcher remained neutral during the interviews to allow participants to openly talk about their mentoring experiences.

5.6.5.3 Educative authenticity

This criterion supports participants in appreciating their experiences, understanding these experiences and giving meaning to these experiences (Higgs *et al.,* 2012:220). By exhibiting an understanding of these experiences, participants improve the way in which they understand other people (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:220). Thus, participants learn how to appreciate other people in their experiences when they feel that their experiences are appreciated.

To enhance educative authenticity, the researcher took into consideration the cultural background of participants to accommodate everyone regardless of their values. This enabled the researcher to have an understanding of how these values frame participants' individual perspectives on mentorship.

5.6.5.4 Catalytic authenticity

Catalytic authenticity focuses on encouraging participants in the role their contributions play in addressing the research problem (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:304; Malone, Atweh & Northfield, 2013:45). When participants feel encouraged to participate in a study, they willingly engage in the research activities (Higgs *et al.,* 2012:220). For example, the implementation of strategies and theories resulting from a study enhances catalytic authenticity (Malone *et al.,* 2013:45).

To ensure catalytic authenticity in this study, participants were assured that they would be provided with a report on the results of the study. This will include the recommendations and strategies for carrying out the recommendations for the success of their individual institutions or businesses. The aim of providing participants with the report is to enhance their participation, knowing that their contributions are noted and acted upon.

5.6.5.5 Tactical authenticity

Tactical authenticity refers to the extent that participants feel empowered in a research study (Higgs *et al.,* 2012:220; Holloway & Wheeler, 2010:304). This is achieved by engaging participants in the evaluation process so that they feel their role in the research has been significant (Higgs *et al.,* 2012:220; Malone, Atweh & Northfield, 2013:45). This way, participants appreciate the fact that they are given an opportunity to contribute towards the phenomenon in a meaningful manner (Malone *et al.,* 2013:45). The results of the research should be mutually agreed on by the researcher and the participants (Malone *et al.,* 2013:45).

To enhance authenticity in this study, the interpretations of the collected data were given to the participants to evaluate. This was to ensure that data had been correctly interpreted by the researcher. Participants were requested to give feedback on the results and their contribution on the results was considered to obtain a mutually agreed research result.

The ethical considerations in this study are highlighted in the subsequent section.

5.7   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is an increasing recognition of ethical regulation in conducting a research study. This means that there are ethical considerations which must be adhered to when conducting research using the research tools of collecting data such as interviews (Schostak, 2006:136). Boeije (2010:45) points out that the ethical considerations are generally addressed in three dimensions, namely informed consent, privacy and confidentiality and anonymity.

With regard to *informed consent*, Boeije (2010:45) contends that this is intended to ensure that the participants are placed in a situation that allows them to decide whether and how to participate in a research study. Such a decision is based on the full knowledge of the risks and benefits of the research in question. This means that those who are researched have the right to know that they are being researched and that they should give their consent to participate. The right to refuse to participate in a research project protects the participant from being persuaded to participate in a research (Fitzpatrick & Kazer, 2012). Most importantly, the fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants either in a physical or an emotional manner (De Vos *et al.,* 2011:115).

Privacy in a research study refers to the interest of participants to control the access that others have to them (Boeije, 2010:46). Participants have the right to privacy, which entails the right to keep collected data private, undisclosed and away from public scrutiny (Fitzpatrick & Kazer, 2012). In other words, participants decide to

whom they give information about themselves and the researcher may not disclose such information to third parties (Boeije, 2010:46).

Confidentiality is concerned with how the collected data is to be handled in the research in order to ensure privacy. This refers to anonymity of participants, which includes reference to participants' names and other unique identities. Such information should not be attached to data in order to maintain anonymity of participants. Instead, the researcher must use a code book to identify participants which must be kept at a safe place (Boeije, 2010:46). Even though anonymity can be challenging in qualitative research, it is important that the identity of the participants is protected. This can be achieved by use of assumed names (pseudonyms) (Schneider, Whiterhead, Lo-Biondo-Wood & Haber, 2012).

In addition to the three dimensions mentioned above, consideration of *how the results of an interview are presented* is also a source of ethical concern in how interview data is interpreted and used (Buchanan & Bryman, 2011:511). Schostak (2006:136) further explains that personal interviews with participants require the researcher to be open with participants, and to also avoid revealing his or her own views during the interview.

In consideration of the above information, the researcher in this study was issued ethics approval from the FRTI of the NMMU's Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences and complied with the ethical measures stipulated by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of NMMU. Participants were briefed on the reason and format of the interview by means of a short introduction. They were further given the opportunity to decline participation in the study. Even though no confidential information such as financial records was required, participants were ensured that their responses would be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Pseudonyms were used to protect anonymity of all participants. The ethics approval letter is presented as Annexure E.

5.8   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed discussion of the activities involved in the research design and methodology adopted for this study was presented. Firstly, the research paradigm was highlighted with specific reference to qualitative research as the preferred methodology in this study. The different types of qualitative research and were addressed in order to determine the appropriate methods for this study. The population studied as well as the sampling unit and sampling technique were highlighted and data collection methods were described. Interviews were selected for the purpose of this study and the design for these interviews was explained. The data analysis procedures and processes were presented, as well as how the trustworthiness of this study will be ensured. Finally, the ethical considerations that are important in this study were addressed.

Chapter 6 will present the biographical profile of the participants.

CHAPTER 6

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

An overview of the research design and methodology used in this study was presented in Chapter 5. The overview highlighted several important methods that were necessary to use to explore the mentoring experiences of the participants in order to identify the elements that are crucial to the success of mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. Chapter 6 presents the demographic profile of the participants in this study, as well as the biographical profile of their mentors, mentees and board members or managers.

A summary of the composition of the sample of institutions participating in this study will be discussed, followed by a demographic profile of these institutions. The discussion will highlight the activities of the institutions, particularly their involvement with small business development support. A biographical profile of the three groups of participants will also be presented. It should be noted that pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of participants.

6.2   COMPOSITION OF SAMPLE

Four institutions participated in this study. All of these focus on general development and support of small businesses, which include managerial and technical skills development through mentoring. Table 6.1 presents the composition of this sample drawn from selected provinces in South Africa, namely Eastern Cape and Gauteng. As was explained in Section 5.4.2, these provinces were selected based on their varying wealth, size and distribution of small businesses.

Table 6.1:   Sample composition

INSTITUTION	PROVINCE	MENTEES	MENTORS	BOARD MEMBER/ MANAGER
HBDC	Eastern Cape	2	1	1
USDC	Eastern Cape	3	2	0
Universal Knowledge	Gauteng	3	1	1
Empire Industries	Gauteng	4	2	1
TOTAL	**4**	**12**	**6**	**3**

As can be seen in Table 6.1, two institutions from each selected province participated in the study and a total of 12 owner–managers were interviewed. In all the institutions, a mentor was assigned to more than one mentee (owner–manager). In some cases, group mentoring was offered by using more than one expert to meet the various needs of owner–managers. Therefore, six mentors participated in this study. Even though four institutions took part, only three board members or managers were available for the interviews. Various attempts were made to contact additional board members/managers but these attempts were unsuccessful.

The next section provides the demographic profile of the institutions that were used to identify the participants in this study.

6.3   DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF INSTITUTIONS

As noted earlier, the four institutions that participated in this study are from two provinces, namely the Eastern Cape and Gauteng. The results of the demographic profile of these institutions are presented in the subsequent sections.

6.3.1   THE HERITAGE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (HBDC)

HBDC is a non-profit business association that was established in 1994 in the Eastern Cape Province, with a view of fostering, encouraging, promoting, protecting, developing and establishing commercial and industrial enterprises within the communities where it operates. It was intended to represent the interests of a broad spectrum of businesses in the region as it addresses issues that affect businesses across industries such as retail, manufacturing, service and general commerce. In

addition to the development of enterprises, HBDC facilitates economic growth and development. Through its initiatives and support of key economic projects in the development of its communities, HBDC is focused on achieving a competitive and sustainable business environment in the region.

The support services offered by HBDC include financial referral services, specialist support referral services, business skills training workshops, business networking and mentorship programmes. These services are offered in order to equip small business owner–managers with the necessary skills to operate their businesses efficiently. HBDC has 22 people working in the institution, of whom one is directly involved with small businesses. There are currently eight independent mentors who work with HBDC, and eight mentees participating in a mentoring programme.

6.3.2　UNITED SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (USDC)

USDC was established in 2000 and launched in 2009. It is one of seven branches across the country and is located in the Eastern Cape. It is part of the government's integrated and sustainable rural development initiative that is intended to provide production skills for emerging SMEs in the furniture and wood products industry. This includes assisting entrepreneurs with all aspects of starting up and developing their ventures into sustainable businesses. By so doing, USDC is able to encourage the formation and development of registered small and micro businesses, and promote entrepreneurship among these businesses.

In assisting entrepreneurs with establishing themselves, this institution offers learnerships, skills programmes and short courses in cabinet making, wood finishing, wood machining and upholstery. In addition to these courses, USDC realises the importance of mentoring and provides management guidance as well as business and entrepreneurial support tailored to meet the needs of individual businesses. This guidance should enable owner–managers to be independent at the end of the programme when they will be leaving the institution to work from their own commercial premises.

USDC prides itself in supporting the B-BBEE government initiative to empower the black community. In this regard, 91 per cent of the businesses established by USDC in 2013 represent black-owned businesses. While striving to develop the small business sector in the furniture and wood industry, USDC is developing the skills of owner–managers through the use of technology and giving these owner–managers an opportunity to gain experience and exposure to new opportunities in national and international markets. For example, USDC has recently been invited to participate in incubation conferences in other countries such as United States of America, United Kingdom and China. This exposure flows through to owner–managers so that they are able to hear about available business opportunities within the industry.

6.3.3   UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE

Universal Knowledge is a business incubator in the automotive sector which came into existence in Gauteng during 2005/2006. It was formed with the aim of assisting SMEs in the automotive industry in the province. The main focus of Universal Knowledge is to positively impact on the South African economy by enabling the development of small businesses in this industry.

An incubator is described as a facility that focuses on the establishment of new businesses (DeSimone, 2013:10). However, considering the large number of informal businesses in the South African automotive industry, Universal Knowledge has extended its support services to existing businesses in the industry. This includes assisting in the formalisation of informal businesses as these businesses are unable to contribute to the automotive industry in this country. In particular, Universal Knowledge provides support for the development of businesses owned by previously disadvantaged individuals such as the black community. However, the institution does not exclude white-owned small businesses from such support.

The following services are offered by Universal Knowledge in an effort to enhance the development of small business owner–managers: business registration, basic business skills training, technical training, mentoring, business development support services, networking activities and linkages. In addition, the institution assists small

business owner–managers with the facilitation of access to finance, infrastructure, markets and access to resource centres for research purposes. With regard to mentoring services, Universal Knowledge has seven employees working in the institution. Of the seven employees, two are mentors who provide mentoring services to 58 mentees. One mentor is responsible for mentoring of technical skills and the other provides mentoring of managerial skills.

6.3.4 EMPIRE INDUSTRIES

Empire Industries is a non-profit organisation operating in Gauteng Province. This institution was established in 2007 and was officially launched in 2010. The primary objective of Empire Industries is to identify and train entrepreneurs to establish new businesses in the base metals industry. The idea is to develop and support the new businesses until they are economically sustainable and independent. In order to achieve this, Empire Industries is committed to provide support through establishment of programmes that are focused on poverty alleviation within the area in which it operates, particularly in the previously disadvantaged population, enforcing skills development facilities and value creation in the base metals industry, and providing entrepreneurial mentorship to the newly established businesses.

Since its establishment, Empire Industries has developed into a fully operational entity that provides a range of facilities to business owner–managers. These include a workshop area, 14 small modules focusing on skills training as well as a conference and storage facility. The workshop area is able to provide space that owner–managers can use for metal casting, roof construction and guttering, welding, iron-making, renewable energy batteries, steel and woodwork and sheet metal bending. In an effort to enhance the skills development of small business owner–managers, Empire Industries offers technical training and business management skills tailored to the needs that have been identified in the base metals industry. In order to provide technical training and business management skills, Empire Industries has partnered with a business development centre and offers a national certificate qualification on the NQF level 2. This qualification is designed for learners who intend to start up or have already set up their own businesses.

With regard to providing mentoring services to small businesses, Empire Industries employs seven people, of whom three are mentors. These mentors provide development support to small businesses in both technical and managerial skills. They currently have 31 mentees in the mentoring programme.

The biographical profile of mentors, mentees and board members/managers is presented in the next section.

6.4   BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF BUSINESS OWNER–MANAGERS (MENTEES)

The biographical profile of the small business owner–managers (mentees) who participated in this study are presented in the sections that follow.

6.4.1   CASE A: MR AMOSE

Mr Amose is a 41-year-old male. His business operates in the manufacturing industry specialising in furniture and upholstery, particularly in the manufacture of office furniture such as cabins and school desks. He employs eight people and has been in operation for six years. He holds national diploma qualifications in civil engineering, computer technology and business management. Prior to operating his business, he was employed as a carpenter. Mr Amose has completed the two-year mentoring programme for which he was enrolled.

6.4.2   CASE B: MR ASANDA

Mr Asanda is a male aged 52 years. He works in the construction industry, and has been in this business for the past 14 years. The activities of his business include the construction of bridges and houses. He employs eight full-time people and his highest qualification is a National Diploma in Personnel Management. Prior to operating his business, he was employed as the inventory controller at his previous job. With regard to mentoring, he has been in the programme for the past two years and is expected to exit the programme at the end of 2014.

6.4.3   CASE C: MR HULISANI

Mr Hulisani, who is the youngest owner–manager in the research sample, is a male aged 24 years. His business is in the engineering industry focusing on precision engineering. His business activities include manufacturing parts for the large machinery that is used in mines shafts. Such parts include gears, bearing and gear boxes for this machinery. Mr Hulisani has been operating this business for the past five years, and employs eight full-time staff. His qualifications include a National Diploma in Business Management and a National Certificate in Graphic Design. This business has been his first job as he does not have any other work experience. He is enrolled in a three-year mentor programme which is intended to end in 2016.

6.4.4   CASE D: MR IVAN

Mr Ivan is a 37-year-old male. His business manufactures household electrical appliances such as stoves, heaters, kettles and 20 litre plastic urns. He has been in this business for the past five years, and has 12 employees working for him. He has a Diploma in Sales and Marketing. Prior to operating the business, he worked as a sales executive in a furniture shop. When he left his job, he started a business which offered cleaning services. However, the cleaning business was not successful and he decided to close it down to pursue this business which he currently owns. He is currently in a two-year mentoring programme and the anticipated completion of the programme is December 2015.

6.4.5   CASE E: MR KOPANO

Mr Kopano is a male owner–manager aged 55 years. His business is in the automotive industry specialising in radiator repairs and service to all brands of motor vehicles. He has five employees and has had this business for the past 15 years. His highest qualification is a National Certificate in Motor Mechanics. Besides this qualification he attended short courses in business management in an effort to improve his managerial skills. Before venturing into business he worked as a radiator

service consultant in an automotive business. The duration of his mentoring programme is three years which should conclude at the end of 2014.

6.4.6   CASE F: MR OAGILE

Mr Oagile is a male aged 35 years. His business operates in the manufacturing industry specialising in carpentry and upholstery. The activities of his business include manufacturing lounge suites, cupboards and build-in cabinets. He also has an arrangement with some furniture shops in the area to carry out repairs to some of their furniture, and he does some repairs for individuals. He has 12 employees and his business has been in operation for the past two years. His academic qualification includes a National Diploma in Petrol Management and a National Certificate in Computer Literacy. Prior to operating his business, he worked as a picker at a warehouse. The participant has been in the mentoring programme for over a year and is expected to complete the programme after the duration of two years.

6.4.7   CASE G: MR OFENTSE

Mr Ofentse is a male and the second-youngest owner–manager in the research sample. His business operates in the waste and hygiene management industry, specialising in cleaning and hygiene service. He provides household cleaning services such as window cleaning, carpet and floor tile cleaning, roof cleaning and domestic cleaning in general. He has seven employees and has been in this business for two years. He holds a National Diploma in Logistics, National Diploma in Import and Exports and is currently studying for a B Tech in Logistics. Prior to this business, he worked as an export controller. He has completed his mentoring programme which was six months in duration.

6.4.8   CASE H: MR RICHARDS

Mr Richards is a male aged 41 years and he operates his business in the manufacturing industry. His business mainly entails manufacturing office furniture and built-in furniture. He employs nine people and his business has been in operation for seven years. His highest qualification is a National Matric Certificate.

Prior to having his own business, Mr Richards was employed in a furniture store. He has completed his mentoring programme although he has not yet graduated. He advises that he has requested an extension until December 2014 as he is not ready to be independent. He feels he still needs some guidance from the institution, particularly in getting his own machinery to start operating from his own premises.

6.4.9   CASE I: MR SIPHIWE

Mr Siphiwe is a 54-year-old male.   His business is in the automotive industry, specialising in mechanical and electrical repairs to a particular model of motor vehicle (which cannot be disclosed to protect the anonymity of the participant).   He employs six people and his business has been in operation for a year. He holds a National Diploma in Auto Mechanics. Prior to operating this business, Mr Siphiwe spent most of his working life as a mechanic in an automotive business. The duration of his mentoring programme is three years, which is expected to end in 2014.

6.4.10   CASE J: MS UNATHI

Ms Unathi is a female business owner–manager aged 40 years. She owns an information technology (IT) centre where people bring in their documents to be typed. She has been in this business for three years and wishes to expand and offer more services such as the internet and short courses on computer basics.   The highest qualification she has is a National Matric Certificate. However, she has attended some short courses in public administration.   Before exploring this line of business, she was a hawker. With regard to mentoring, Ms Unathi quit the mentoring programme because she felt she was not getting enough support from her mentor. However, she had been in the mentoring process for six months before leaving.

6.4.11   CASE K: MR WANDILE

Mr Wandile is a male aged 49 years. His business operations are in the automotive industry with the main activities being repairs to all brands of motor vehicles. His business employs five people and has been running for 19 years. He holds a National Technical Certificate 2, majoring in motor mechanics. He also holds a

National Diploma in Business Management, which is an indication that he has some basic knowledge of how to manage a business. Before operating this business, he was employed in an automotive business working as the engine assembler and workshop foreman for truck rentals. The duration of his mentoring programme is three years, which ends in September 2015.

6.4.12   CASE L: MS YOLANDI

Ms Yolandi is a 30-year old female. The main activities of her business include renting out waste trucks, manufacturing selected parts for these trucks, as well as repairing the trucks. This is a start-up business as it had been in existence for only one year and four months at the time of the interview. She has 12 full-time employees. She has obtained a Diploma in Logistics Management and is currently studying for a Certificate in Business Management. Prior to operating this business, she worked as a technical administrator, national fleet administrator and workshop administrator. She has been in the current mentoring programme since September 2013 and will complete the programme at the end of September 2014.

Having presented the biographical information of small business owner–managers who participated in this study, a summary illustrating this information is presented in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2:   **A summary of biographical information of small business owner–managers (mentees)**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY
Age	20 – 25	2
	26 – 35	2
	36 – 45	4
	46 – 55	4
Total		**12**
Gender	Male	10
	Female	2
Total		**12**
Business industry	Manufacturing	4
	Construction	1
	Waste & hygiene management	2
	Engineering	1
	Automotive	3
	Information technology (IT)	1
Total		**12**
Province	Eastern Cape	5
	Gauteng	7
Total		**12**
Number of employees	5 – 10	8
	11 – 15	4
Total		**12**
Number of years in operation	1 – 5	7
	6 – 10	2
	11 – 15	2
	16 – 20	1
Total		**12**
Highest qualification	Matric	2
	Certificate	2
	Diploma	8
Total		**12**
Field of qualification	Business	6
	Technical	4
	N/A	2
Total		**12**
Previous Job	Sales person	2
	Inventory control	2
	Administrator	1
	Technical	3
	Driver	1
	Carpentry	1
	Hawker	1
	None	1
Total		**12**

It can be seen from Table 6.2 that two participants were aged between 20 and 25 years, followed by two aged between 26 and 35 years. Four of the owner–managers were between 36 and 45 years old, while the last four were between the ages of 46 and 55 years. The majority of owner–managers in this study (10) were male, while only two were female.

The owner–manager participants were found to operate within a diverse range of business industries. Four indicated that they were in manufacturing, one in construction, two in waste management, one in engineering, three in automotive and one from the information and technology industry. Because of the unavailability of some owner–managers, the same number of participants from each province could not be obtained (resulting in five from Eastern Cape and seven from Gauteng).

The majority of the participants, being eight employed between five and ten people while the remainder four employed between 11 and 15 people. This means that all participants in this study employed fewer than 20 employees, which is not surprising given that they are small businesses. Most of the owner–managers being seven had been in business for less than six years, followed by two whose business tenure ranged between six and ten years. Two participants who had been in business for more than 10 years but less than 15 years, while one participant had been in business for more than 16 years but less than 20 years.

Most of the participants had a diploma as their highest qualification, followed by two participants who had a certificate and another two with a matric certificate. Six of the participants obtained their formal education in business-related programmes such as sales and marketing, personnel management, logistics and business management. Four of the participants' formal education included technical skills such as motor mechanic and civil engineering while two participants did not have a tertiary qualification, and therefore did not have any professional expertise.

With regard to work experience prior to operating the business, the participants did not hold any business-related managerial positions. The previous jobs of the participants included sales, inventory control, administration, carpentry, hawking, and

being a technician driver, while one participant did not have any work experience prior to operating the business.

The next section highlights the biographical profile of mentors.

6.5 BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF MENTORS

In total, there were six mentors available for the interviews in this study. The biographical profile of these participants is provided in the subsequent sections.

6.5.1 CASE M: MR AYANDA

Mr Ayanda, a 22-year-old male, is the youngest mentor participant to be interviewed in this study. He is employed as a mentor in one of the institutions that provide skills development programmes to small business owner–managers. He has been in this position for eight months. He has a National Diploma in Business Management, indicating that he has some background in how a business should be managed. He has no work experience acting as a mentor as this is his first job.

6.5.2 CASE N: MR CALEB

Mr Caleb is a 55-year-old male. He is a former employee of one of the institutions that participated in this study. The reason why Mr Caleb is included in this study yet no longer works for the institution is that he mentored the owner–managers who participated in this study. Therefore, while employed in this institution he worked as a mentor for a period of 10 years. He has two degree qualifications in mechanical engineering and business management respectively. Prior to working as a mentor, Mr Caleb was employed in another institution as the maintenance engineer. His speciality then was as a diagnostician of engine failures. In the same institution he also worked as the field service engineer. He obtained a B Com degree in Business Management during this time.

After obtaining this qualification, Mr Caleb went to work at another institution which manufactures motor vehicles. There he worked as the national sales manager. Thereafter he decided to embark on mentoring where he provided mentoring services to small businesses. As noted earlier, Mr Caleb no longer works for the institution that participated in this study and currently owns a business offering mechanical services. However, he is still a board member of two other institutions which provide support to small businesses.

6.5.3   CASE O: MR EDWARD

Mr Edward, a 66-year-old male, is currently a mentor in one of the institutions that participated in this study. He has been contracted as an independent mentor to assist in the skills development of small business owner–managers for the past six years and has a Diploma in Electronic Engineering. He started his career in electronics and later moved to manufacturing where was promoted to manufacturing manager. After a while, he moved to technical services encompassing design, material testing and development, quality management and process engineering. He says he admires people who do something proactive to make their situation better, and he joined the mentorship programme to help those who are willing to improve their lives.

6.5.4   CASE P: MS GERTRUDE

Ms Gertrude, who is a 36-year-old female, is an independent mentor at one of the institutions that participated in this study. At the time of the interview, she had been working with this institution for only five months. She holds a B Tech qualification in Health, Safety and Environment. Prior to working with this institution, she had worked in human resource training and development as a mentor for five years and held a senior position as the officer for safety. When she resigned from this job, she decided to start her own business offering mentoring on safety management, which means she is still employed independently as a mentor while running her own mentoring business.

6.5.5   CASE Q: MS HANGWANI

Ms Hangwani is a female aged 25 years old. She is employed as a mentor in one of the institutions that offer skills development programmes to small business owner–managers and has been in this position for two years. She holds a National Diploma in Civil Engineering and Building. She is also a qualified assessor for safety at workplaces. Prior to this job she worked as a supplementary instructor for maths and construction materials at the institution where she obtained her qualification.

6.5.6   CASE R: MR RETHABILE

Mr Rethabile, a 74-year-old male, is an independent mentor who is contracted to offer mentoring services in the skills development programmes of small business owner–managers. He has been providing mentorship to these businesses for the past 12 years, and has acquired ample experience in working with small businesses. His educational background is in management as he holds a National Certificate in Business Management. Previously, he was the commercial manager of a telephone company and was responsible for telephone applications and exchanges.

Table 6.3   A summary of biographical information of mentors

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY
Gender	Male	4
	Female	2
Total		**6**
Age	20 – 25	2
	26 – 35	0
	36 – 45	1
	46 – 55	1
	> 55	2
Total		**6**
Ethnicity	Black	4
	White	2
Total		**6**
Province	Eastern Cape	3
	Gauteng	3
Total		**6**
Number of years in mentorship	< 1	1
	1 – 5	1
	6 – 10	3
	11 – 15	1
Total		**6**
Highest qualification	Certificate	2
	Diploma	3
	Degree	1
Total		**6**
Field of qualification	Technical	2
	Business management	3
	Health sciences	1
Total		**6**
Past work experience	Construction	1
	Technical services	1
	Administration	1
	Supervisor	1
	Management	1
	None	1
Total		**6**

As can be seen in Table 6.3, four male and two female mentors participated in this study. Two mentors were aged between 20 and 25 years, followed by one mentor in the 36 to 45 year category, and one in the 46 to 55 year category. The remaining two mentors were older than 55 years. Four participants were black followed by two white. Three participants came from the Eastern Cape, while the other three were from Gauteng.

The participants were also requested to indicate how many years they had been mentors, not necessarily only for small businesses. One mentor was in the first year of mentorship, while another had been in this job for more than one year but less than five years. Two mentor participants had been mentors for between six and ten years, while the last participant fell into the 10 to 15 year category.

Two participants have national certificates, followed by three participants with national diploma qualifications while the other participant holds a degree qualification. Of these qualifications, two were obtained in a technical field such as electronic and civil engineering, followed by two in business management and one in the field of health. The participants were also requested to indicate their past work experience which included construction, a technical job, administration and supervisory positions. Surprisingly, one participant did not have past work experience, so mentoring of small businesses was his first job.

The next section is a presentation of the biographical information of the board members/managers.

6.6 BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF BOARD MEMBERS/MANAGERS

The results of the biographical profile of board members/managers, together with an overview of the number of years worked in the institutions, are presented in the subsequent sections. In total, three participants were available for the interviews in this category.

6.6.1 CASE S: MS AWANDE

Ms Awande is the only female manager interviewed and was the youngest of the three in this study. She is 28 years old and has been employed in this institution for the past two years. Her responsibility is ensuring that small businesses obtain the business support they need, particularly mentoring support. Ms Awande holds a B Com Honours degree in Business Management and is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Business Management. Prior to working at this institution, she worked as project co-ordinator for quality innovation and design. Her responsibilities

then included facilitating the design of training material used for the training services offered by the institution.

6.6.2   CASE T: MR ENOCH

Mr Enoch, a 42-year-old male, is currently employed as the general manager in an institution that offers mentorship to small businesses. He is also a member of the board for this institution. He has been employed in this institution for the past three years. By virtue of his position in the institution, he has the responsibility of ensuring that the objectives of the institution with regard to small business development are achieved. This includes strategy development, mentorship and research development. He holds two Masters qualifications in Business Administration and Advanced Practice respectively. He also has a National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering. Mr Enoch is a board member for three other institutions that provide business support to entrepreneurs and is the chairperson of one of those institutions.

6.6.3   CASE U: MR SIZWE

Mr Sizwe is a 51-year-old male and is the centre manager of an institution that provides mentorship to small businesses in the automotive industry. He has been in this managerial position for four years. He is also involved in mentorship of small businesses in the institution where he is employed. However, because he has only recently been directly providing mentorship to owner–managers, he was interviewed in his capacity as manager rather than as mentor. Mr Sizwe holds National Certificates in both Business Management and Project Management. He has also attended training as part of a senior management programme.

Table 6.4: **Biographical information of board members/managers**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	FREQUENCY
Age	26 – 35	1
	36 – 45	1
	46 – 55	1
Total		**3**
Gender	Male	2
	Female	1
Total		**3**
Ethnicity	Black	3
Total		**3**
Province	Eastern Cape	1
	Gauteng	2
Total		**3**
Number of years in this institution	1 – 5	3
Total		**3**
Position in the institution	Manager	2
	Board member	1
Total		**3**
Highest qualification	National Certificate	1
	Honours degree	1
	Masters degree	1
Total		**3**

As shown in Table 6.4, each of the three participants fell into a different age bracket. Two of the managers were male and one was female, while all three were black. One participant came from Eastern Cape Province and the other two were from Gauteng Province. Surprisingly, all three board member/manager participants had been in their respective institutions for less than five years. The highest qualifications which the board member/managers had achieved were a National Certificate, an Honours degree and a Masters degree respectively.

6.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the demographic profiles of institutions of the selected South African provinces were discussed, together with the biographical profiles of participants from these institutions. Two institutions from each province were available for the study.

A total of nine people from the Eastern Cape Province participated in this study. These were five mentees (one female and four males), three mentors (one female and two males), and one board member/manager from one of the two institutions participating in the study. From Gauteng Province, a total of twelve participants were available for the interviews. Of these, seven were mentees (one female and six males), three were mentors (one female and two males) and two male board member/managers.

In total, 12 black owner–managers participated in this study. Most were older than 36 years, while a few were aged between 20 and 35 years. The dominant gender group was male, numbering ten males as opposed to two females. The participants were found to operate in a diverse range of business industries, these being manufacturing, construction, waste and hygiene management, engineering, automotive work, and information and technology. Most participants indicated that they employed between five and ten people, while others employed fewer than fifteen people.

Of the twelve owner–managers, seven were start-ups as they had been operating their businesses for less than five years. Only three owner–managers had been in business for over ten years. Even though none of the owner–managers holds a degree, most of them have a national diploma in business-related programmes, with four having obtained their qualifications in the field of technical studies. Again, none of the participants had previous work experience in the managerial role, even including those in senior positions.

Four male and two female mentors participated in this study, of whom four were black and two white. The age for these mentors was evenly spread ranging between 20 and above 55 years categories. One was in his first year as a mentor without any previous work experience, while the others had been providing mentoring programmes for at least six years. Only three mentors have a national diploma, followed by two with national certificates. The remaining mentor holds a degree qualification. Of the six mentors, three obtained their qualifications in business management, with the others in either technical or health sciences. Lastly, the

mentors had acquired their previous work experience in either construction, technical services or in a managerial position.

With regard to board members/managers, their ages were 28, 42 and 51 years respectively. Two were male, one female, and all were black. Again, all had been working in their respective institutions for less than five years.

The next chapter will present the results of the participants' perceptions and experiences of mentorship.

CHAPTER 7

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS: PERCEPTIONS OF MENTORING

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6, a biographical overview of the three groups of participants was presented. This included a discussion of the demographic information of the institutions offering mentoring to small businesses because these institutions were responsible for granting permission for participation in this study.

In this chapter, the empirical findings of the mentoring experiences and perceptions of participants are presented. As previous research indicates, determining the state of mentoring in South Africa has been a challenge to academic researchers (Abbot *et al.,* 2010:9). Therefore, it was deemed important to investigate the mentoring experiences and perceptions of mentors and mentees since they have the best understanding of how mentoring to black-owned small businesses is provided. The perceptions of the board member/managers as facilitators in the skills development of small businesses, is also regarded as important. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to present the nature of mentoring of black-owned small businesses from the perceptions of those who directly participate in the mentoring process, as well as the facilitators of mentoring programmes. These perceptions are imperative for the foundation of future research on mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa, and will provide a guide to identify the elements that are crucial for a successful mentoring relationship for black-owned small business.

The themes that were highlighted by participants have been categorised into three groups: relational, non-relational, and other themes, and will be discussed as such. Relational and non-relational themes were considered important across at least two groups, while other themes were considered important by only one group of participants. This "other themes" category was included, however, because it was found to have an impact on the relationship of mentors and mentees, as well as on the mentoring process.

In the discussions, the perceptions of mentors regarding a particular theme will first be presented, followed by mentees' perceptions and lastly those of the board member/managers. As mentioned in Chapter 6, pseudonyms are used to identify the participants. However, it should be noted that the participants' responses are quoted verbatim (including grammatical irregularities) to support discussion of the themes.

7.2   RELATIONAL THEMES

Mentoring is the relationship between mentor and mentee that is characterised by the meaning and quality of the experience through the interaction (Hays, 2013:34). It is critically important to identify the themes that could positively or negatively influence the relationship between these two stakeholders. Therefore, relational themes refer to those themes that influence the personal interaction between mentors and mentees during the mentoring process. These are presented in the subsequent sections.

7.2.1   COMPETENCIES OF THE MENTOR

Competencies refer to a set of characteristics of an individual to demonstrate knowledge and skills to carry out specific work activities in a specific context (Morales-Sánchz & Cabello-Medina, 2013:721). These characteristics include the knowledge and experience necessary to perform particular work within an industry (Cooper & Menzel, 2013:30; Palan, 2014; Strike, 2012:159). The participants in this study identified knowledge and expertise, as well as experience and age, as determining the level of competencies of the mentor.

7.2.1.1 Knowledge and expertise

Being knowledgeable means having the ability to perform to recognised standards (Connor & Pokora, 2007:19). Being knowledgeable entails successful performance by the mentor which fits the purpose for engaging in a mentoring relationship. In this way, mentors become experts in their respective areas as they can confidently help develop the skills of their mentees (Rombeau, 2010:90; SEDA, 2012:88).

The mentors did not have a great deal to say concerning their own knowledge and competencies; only one mentor highlighted the importance of being skilled to mentor small businesses.

"I don't think I was a good mentor and yes, I could have improved my skills in the mentoring…I think I could have done with more training on mentoring."

(Mr Edward)

However, the importance of knowledge and expertise of mentors was emphasised by mentees. The mentees indicated that mentors should be knowledgeable and acquire expertise in their respective industries and that these mentors must have owned a business to become experienced mentors of small businesses. Some of the mentees felt that appointing a mentor should not be based on the level of education but rather on how knowledgeable that person was in developing small businesses. For example, mentees stated that:

"[He] has to be someone who you know has got expertise based on our industry…someone who have the expertise in terms of dealing with small businesses, you know, developing small businesses." (Mr Ivan)

"They need to have the expertise." (Ms Yolandi)

"It must be someone who's got knowledge…it must be someone who knows even what is going on in the country…even if he's not, or she is not educated, highly qualified but someone with knowledge." (Mr Richards)

"…knowledge is very important…" (Mr Ofentse)

Similarly, the board member/managers pointed out that the level of knowledge is important for the mentoring of black-owned small businesses. They explained that the mentor should be able to provide the mentee with the knowledge that he or she is seeking. The board member/managers added that the mentor should have received formal training to mentor others, as quoted below:

"What needs to be established for someone to mentor anybody is their level of knowledge on the subject matter…if you can indicate knowledge of the subject matter than what the mentee has, then you can mentor that person, 'cause it means you have something to impart and empower the person with."

(Mr Enoch)

"It [knowledge] *has to be a higher level than that of the mentee … the mentor has to be competent…they must possess something that the mentee is looking* for…"

(Ms Awande)

"It must be someone who has got formal training in the specific field."

(Mr Sizwe)

As evidenced in the quotations, knowledge and expertise are significant for effective mentoring according to participants. Only one mentor indicated that he could have been a better mentor if he had improved his mentoring skills, while the other mentors were silent about the importance of being knowledgeable in a mentoring process. The mentees were of the view that a mentor should be knowledgeable on small business issues and be an expert in their respective industries. These mentees further pointed out that to become experienced mentors of small businesses, the mentors themselves must have owned a business. The board member/managers had a similar view and confirmed that a person who becomes a mentor should be knowledgeable in order to be able to impart knowledge to the other person and should have been trained in a particular industry.

7.2.1.2 Experience and age

According to McGill (2011:105), experience entails gaining insight into the skills that extend beyond the classroom, as experience is the best teacher (Huang & Moon, 2009:232). Conn (2013:543) acknowledges that mentors should be able to share their own challenging experiences with mentees in order to facilitate learning. In addition, an important element linked to experience is the age of the mentor, because the traditional view of mentoring relates to age facilitating the transfer of

knowledge from an older person to a younger person (see Finkelstein *et al.* 2012:807).

Experience in a mentoring relationship was valued by the participants. One mentor, currently in a mentor role for the first time, reported that he could not address mentees' questions because he had not mentored before. Other mentors emphasised that the level of experience of mentors is linked to their age; an older mentor has more experience than a younger mentor. Mentors explained that:

"One of the challenges that I can highlight, it's when the first time I was told to mentor a client and I've never done that before…it was my first time and also it's a challenge when you doing the mentoring session and you come up with the questions that you are unable to answer…are unable to provide all the information that they ask the mentors." (Mr Ayanda)

"It would be better if you could get one that's a bit older that has more experience in business than the mentee…" (Mr Rethabile)

"Well, it's, you've got to come to a business with experience. You can't have the experience generally…they had to be older…" (Mr Edward)

Mentees were also of the view that the experience of mentors influenced the competency level necessary to address the needs of owner–managers. Mentees, like the mentors, related the level of experience to the age of the mentor. One mentee further linked the experience of the mentor to the mentor's level of education. The mentees' comments follow.

"That's why I say that the mentor needs to at least have walked a certain path already…they need to have had some sort of success in the business industry…" (Mr Ofentse)

"You need to have owned a business for you to be able to advise me about how to run a business…The younger the mentor, the less experience…I think in his sixties or fifties…he's been through it, he had made mistakes…When I tell him about something, he knows it because he's been through it. So when and which I've found,

when you get young people mentoring you, you will make mistakes together because they have not been through it, so there's limited advice… what they can do is maybe tell you about what's in the book, what's written and researched – but in real life, is that sometimes you need to make a decision based on experience because you've been there, you've burnt your fingers…"

(Ms Yolandi)

"Because I'm fairly young and I would like to learn some stuff and you know, the older you are, the wiser you are."   (Mr Hulisani)

"I think the mentorship depend on experience; maybe the one who is older has got a lot of experience…maybe on my side I have been around the field maybe for fifteen years, now my mentor is on the field for two years. I will not be comfortable with that mentor."   (Mr Amose)

"A person who's experienced in this field…our mentors are from the retail sector and they just came into automotive sector…I find it difficult for them to understand our needs…experience goes hand-in-hand with qualifications."

(Mr Wandile)

In contrast to the view that experience should be linked to age, other mentees were of the opinion that the age of the mentor should not be an issue because what was important was the level of knowledge of such a mentor. These mentees explained:

"If somebody is younger than me but when he's giving me the mentorship or he's mentoring and you see the necessary skills in him…I don't see any problem at all."

(Mr Siphiwe)

"The only thing that if the mentor is trained, he's full skilled about the business; it doesn't matter how old he is."   (Mr Kopano)

"Even if like I'm forty-one and my mentor is twenty-five years, as long as he or she knows what is she doing, I don't have a problem…so the most important thing is like someone who knows what is he doing."   (Mr Richards)

"If a person is there and that is his job or her job, that's it – whereas young or old, it doesn't matter to me…" (Mr Asandi)

The board member/managers acknowledged the significance of experience of the mentor in the success of mentoring relationships. They emphasised that a mentor should have prior experience in the field of work to relate to mentees' experiences and should be older to acquire the experience. The board member/managers' comments follows:

"To be a mentor…you should be able to speak from experience as well…you'll be able to relate to situations, for someone to believe you and be able to relate and have the confidence of coming to you…growing a small business, you have to be practical…Unfortunately the norm is that the older people obviously would have had more experience." (Mr Enoch)

"The same age might point to similar experiences and the same level of knowledge or expertise, while a more senior mentor has experienced more and has done more." (Ms Awande)

"[The mentor] *must have had prior experience in that field…the mentor should be older than the mentees or maybe the same age, yes, but not younger."* (Mr Sizwe)

The value of experience in a mentoring relationship was observed across the three groups of participants. However, the findings reveal contradictory views with regard to linking the level of experience of mentors to their age. Although the common view of the majority of participants was that the older the mentor, the more experienced that mentor would probably be, a smaller group of mentee participants were of the opinion that the competencies of mentors, based on their experience, were important regardless of their age.

7.2.2 APPROACHABILITY OF THE MENTOR

Approachability refers to behaviours that ensure easy access to the subject without any restrictions (Kwon & Gregory, 2007:138). In a mentorship relationship, such behaviours can be determined by the attitude and personality of the mentor (Cloutier, 2007:10). In this study, the aspect of approachability of the mentor was mentioned by only one mentor and a large number of mentees. The board member/managers did not report anything on the theme. The single mentor stated:

"It's the mentor's approach towards the mentee that should actually be the determining factor to win the mentee over to try and convince them that you want to help them with their business. You don't want to dominate them; you want to find out how can I help you to make your business a success."   (Mr Rethabile)

Mentees emphasised that they preferred to have a mentor with a positive attitude, who was approachable and willing to help them at all times. They wanted a mentor who made them feel comfortable and had time for meetings, even when a request was made without an appointment. In addition, they preferred a mentor with the personality to clarify and resolve misunderstandings amicably. Mentees commented:

"Well…I think it's attitude…"   (Mr Ivan)

"Whereby the two parties feel comfortable about each other and resolve issues whereby they are done nicely without, you know, pointing fingers at each other …be more professional. I don't want a mentor who says to a mentee, 'I no longer want that kind of question.' I don't believe in a mentor who says that."   (Mr Wandile)

"It must be someone who is approachable…it must be someone whom you are not scared; like you can ask anything. Anyone, someone who's not going to like, if you go into his office, ask something, then he will say, 'No I'm busy, you must make an appointment.' "   (Mr Richards)

"The mentor must be somebody who is approachable, who has his door open at all times…I am going to give you the example: there were some other clause on the contracts that some of the members did not understand…our mentor said to us that a contract is a contract and then we cannot change it even if you are not happy…"

(Mr Siphiwe)

The participants agreed that approachability of the mentor is important in a mentoring relationship. They explained that it is the responsibility of mentors to create an environment that allows mentees to address issues freely. In particular, the participants noted that mentors should create an environment that does not make mentees feel dominated by mentors in the relationship.

7.2.3   RESPECT

Respect entails accepting and affirming people as they are (Connor & Pokora, 2007:80). To show respect means recognising the other as someone who has the potential to help (Finkelstein *et al.,* 2012:806; Schirmer *et al.*, 2012:58–59); and someone who takes the other party as well as his or her own work seriously (Schirmer *et al.,* 2012:58-59).   In a mentoring relationship, respect suggests that both mentor and mentee must accept each other's opinions, ideas and decisions as they are made during the relationship (Cunningham & Hillier, 2013:46). Similarly, the mentors and mentees in this study indicated that both parties in a mentoring relationship should have respect for each other. This theme is discussed in two sections. Firstly, the importance of a respectful mentor is highlighted, followed by a discussion of the importance of a respectful mentee in a mentoring relationship.

7.2.3.1 Respectful mentor

As noted in the previous section, to show respect means recognising the other as someone who has the potential to help (Finkelstein *et al.,* 2012:806. Therefore, a respectful mentor will show respect towards a mentee's opinions, ideas and decisions that are offered during the relationship (Cunningham & Hillier, 2013:46).

While mentors themselves did not note the importance of respect in their role as part of a mentoring relationship, most mentees expressed their views on the important role that a respectful mentor plays in the relationship. Mentees stated that a respectful mentor acknowledges the importance of mentees in a relationship, in the way the mentor speaks to mentees and whether the mentor treats mentees as adults. They also stated that when a mentor is respectful towards mentees, he or she will receive the same respect in return. This was expressed by what mentees said:

"…saying the right things, using the right words…"   (Mr Wandile)

"Treat me as an adult…so respect is important."   (Mr Asandi)

"Respect is very important…your mentor should make you feel that you are very important and you play an import role…your existence plays a huge role in the economy…"   (Ms Yolandi)

"So my feeling is that a mentor must respect me, as he respects me and then I'll respect him."   (Mr Siphiwe)

"I must respect my mentor but he or she must also respect me …"   (Mr Richards)

The board member/managers noted that a mentor should be respectful and know what to say to mentees. Not speaking to mentees in a disrespectful manner in front of their employees was highlighted as a characteristic of a respectful mentor. The board member/managers stated:

"…it must be a discipline person…a respectable person…"   (Mr Sizwe)

"If you do not have the admiration and the respect of your mentee, then you shouldn't be mentoring…someone can, may not like the idea of being spoken to in front of his employees, which again, it makes sense, because you need to respect."   (Mr Enoch)

A respectful mentor was identified as a crucial element in a mentoring relationship. According to the participants, a respectful mentor is professional in his or her interactions with mentees, uses the right words to give advice, and treats mentees as adults. The participants also valued mutual respect in the mentoring relationship.

7.2.3.2 Respectful mentee

As in the case of a respectful mentor, being a respectful mentee is demonstrated by showing respect towards the mentor's opinions, ideas and decisions that are made during the relationship (Cunningham & Hillier, 2013:46). In addition, a mentee showing respect for his or her mentor is punctual for meetings and prepares well for those meetings (Straus, Johnson, Marquez & Feldman, 2013:5).

Mentors stated that it is important for mentees to show some respect for their mentors to have a harmonious relationship and to earn the respect that they deserve. The mentors cautioned that being respectful does not mean that questions should not be asked during the mentoring process. Rather, mentees should understand the ethics of business relationships and practise these ethics during interactions with mentors. Interestingly, one mentor believed that being respectful was linked to the cultural background of individuals. This mentor explained that in some cultures such as the black culture, being respectful is determined by age, whereby a younger person should show respect by listening to the elderly. None of the board member/managers commented on the importance of respect in a mentoring relationship. Mentors had this to say:

"If you don't respect people who are around you, they won't respect you back and if you respect the mentors, they will be able to give you that respect to you back."

(Mr Ayanda)

"Respectful not to [in] *the sense that you don't want to talk because a lot of people say, 'I respect you too much to ask you questions'…so respect is also, in business you've got ethics, you've got business ethics…you must understand etiquette in business…you need to have knowledge and respect for your people…so respect is*

also an integral part of who you are as a person."

<div align="right">(Mr Rethabile)</div>

"…especially in terms of when it's black to black because…a culture of people respecting and listening to the older people."<div align="right">(Mr Caleb)</div>

Mentees also expressed their views on the significance of respect from mentees in a mentoring relationship. These mentees noted that when mentees respect their mentors, that respect can be received back. This is what they said:

"If I respect you [mentor]*…it makes you free to want to do more for me…"*
<div align="right">(Ms Unathi)</div>

"If you respect your mentor, they can respect you."<div align="right">(Ms Yolandi)</div>

"…so that I can always respect him and his views."<div align="right">(Mr Asandi)</div>

"…whereby the two parties…resolve issues…saying the right things; using the right words…"<div align="right">(Mr Wandile</div>

"If I respect my mentor, then I'll get what I need."<div align="right">(Mr Oagile)</div>

"…respect one another."<div align="right">(Mr Ivan)</div>

"I must respect my mentor…if there's no respect then you're not going anywhere."
<div align="right">(Mr Richards)</div>

A respectful mentee were mostly expressed as important in a mentoring relationship by mentor participants. Mentors believed that even though it is important that they are respectful, this should not stop them from being free to express their views and ask questions during the mentoring process. Mentees also noted the importance of mutual respect between mentors and mentees.

7.2.4   COMMUNICATION

Communication is defined as a human behaviour that facilitates the sharing of information in a particular social context (Beukers *et al.*, 2014:62). The participants in this study reported that effective communication can be achieved in three ways namely, open communication between the mentor and mentee; through language proficiency; and intercultural communication.

7.2.4.1 Open communication

Open communication enhances the ability to share private and personal information in a mentoring relationship (Krauso-Parello *et al.,* 2013). According to Conn (2013:543), an environment consisting of two-way, open communication is encouraged to ensure the success of a mentoring relationship. Open communication enhances the ability to share private and personal information in a mentoring relationship (Krauso-Parello *et al.,* 2013).

The participants in this study were also of the opinion that effective communication can be achieved through open communication between the mentor and mentee. For the mentors, open communication entailed communicating in a manner that allowed mentees to feel comfortable to express their views. The mentors stated:

"Communication, it's very good to give so that even the mentees can be comfortable to speak to me …"   (Ms Hangwani)

"You must be a good communicator."   (Mr Ayanda)

A similar perception was observed in the responses of mentees. Mentees mentioned that when the mentor encourages open communication in a mentoring relationship, they are comfortable to express their views and that enhances the level of understanding in the relationship. Creating an environment for open communication to take place includes being aware of cultural communication ethics, listening to the views of mentees and acting on them. This is captured in the following extracts from mentees:

"I think if the mentor can be just – how can I put it – be free or open for us…it is difficult to run a business with the mentor that you can't talk with."   (Mr Kopano)

"He [mentor] *must allow for anything to be able to be said in the mentorship…There needs to be a way of communicating either within your personal life and within your business…"*   (Mr Ofentse)

"Communication is very important…if you communicate in a good way…everything is going to be easy because if you don't communicate in a good way, then there will be a misunderstanding…"   (Mr Oagile)

"They [mentors] *should be able to listen…because in order to give an answer, you need to listen and understand what the person is saying…I think the mentor needs to listen to the mentees more often…You can't run a mentoring programme and not listen to your mentees' inputs…you must listen and act on it."*   (Ms Yolandi)

The board member/managers also felt that the ability to communicate is a crucial element in a mentoring relationship. Communication should be characterised by asking questions, the correct choice of words and listening to what mentees say, as well as listening to "silent" communication. This is illustrated in what they said:

"Any person, to be a mentor, must have that ability to communicate…"   (Mr Sizwe)

"They need to be able to probe and ask the right questions…so they need to be able to ask the right questions…They have to be great listeners…also listening for what is not said…"   (Ms Awande)

The common observation across the three groups of participants was that proper communication skills on the part of the mentor create a comfortable and open environment in which communication can take place. The participants highlighted that the mentor's ability to communicate well with mentees eliminates misunderstandings. Furthermore, the participants stated that a mentor who possesses proper communication skills listens to the views of mentees and allows them to freely express these views. Communication skills include listening to verbal and non-verbal cues that are being communicated by mentees.

7.2.4.2 Language proficiency

Language proficiency refers to an individual's general communicative competence in a target language irrespective of how, where and under what conditions it has been acquired (Alavi *et al.*, 2011:28; Nakata, 2010:77; Zhang, 2010:120).

The language being used during mentoring sessions was considered important by mentors and mentees. The board member/managers did not express any views on this theme. Mentors highlighted language proficiency as another aspect posing a challenge to the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses. Mentors reported that mentoring sessions were conducted in English and that some mentees did not understand English properly because of their educational background. This is captured in what they said:

"You find that there are some people who don't even understand English, but they currently came with a skill so we just translating…" (Ms Hangwani)

"Sometimes it (English) *is a challenge; there are times that it is a challenge."*
(Mr Rethabile)

"Not all people are educated. Some people left the school in the apartheid time where they were, they were forced, some they were forced to leave the school and to work for their families and be the breadwinners of their families at such a young age." (Mr Ayanda)

"I was doing mentoring to more illiterate-level people who wouldn't want me to speak with them in English…that emanates from their background schooling."
(Mr Caleb)

Mentees also highlighted the importance of the language that was being used during mentoring sessions. These mentees indicated that in some cases they used their home languages during mentoring sessions, as evidenced in the following responses:

"We do also use the vernac…our home languages." (Mr Wandile)

"Other people are not comfortable with the English." (Mr Amose)

"We have to communicate with English…some of us, we do reply with our own language…" (Mr Kopano)

It is evident from these quotations that even though the English language is the accepted medium of instruction in South Africa, it poses a challenge during the mentoring process as some of the mentees may not be proficient in the use of this language. Mentors indicated that in some cases they were obliged to translate from English into the native language of mentees, to enable them to understand the message being communicated. Mentees themselves noted that some of the mentees may not be comfortable with the use of English during mentoring sessions, and as such, home languages were sometimes used during these sessions.

7.2.4.3 Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication refers to the communication between people whose cultural perceptions are distinct enough to influence what is being communicated (Zhang, 2011:49). Therefore, the knowledge of intercultural communication and the ability to use this knowledge effectively can help bridge cultural differences and assist in achieving more harmonious and productive relations (Ismail & Lawrence, 2012:106; Samovar, Porter & McDaniel, 2012:8).

Mentors and only one mentee linked communication during the mentoring process to cultural differences, explaining that the various cultures within South Africa have an influence on the effectiveness of communication during the mentoring process. The board member/managers did not express any views on this theme. The mentors maintain that the diverse values of different cultures influence the manner in which the message being communicated is understood by the recipient. Again, mentors noted that the manner in which individuals should behave when a message is communicated is distinct across cultures. For example, they found that in some cultures, not looking in the eyes of the person who is being communicated with is disrespectful, while the reverse is disrespectful in other cultures. Again, in some

cultures such as black communities, the younger person must often listen to the elderly when they talk and not express disagreements with elderly people. The mentors said:

"I understand, because there's a lot of cultural differences between the different societies that we've got. So communication becomes a challenge in the sense that culturally, people have been brought up to say that you don't look somebody in the eye because it's disrespectful. And from a cultural point of view, to me, not looking at me is disrespectful, you understand. So these are some of the challenges. Communication from an understanding level, that we can understand each other and the message that is conveyed is understood by the recipient of the message…sometimes it is a challenge…" (Mr Rethabile)

"In terms of when it's black to black…a culture of people…listening to the older people." (Mr Caleb)

Only one mentee linked communication to cultural differences. This mentee stressed the importance of being aware of cultural practices of the other partner in a mentoring relationship. The mentee said:

"If you are not aware how my culture should be practised, how will you know when talking to me that you are supposed to, maybe, when you talk to me as an elder to you…you are supposed to stand or sit down or call me 'Mr'…that's where we are going to get conflict of interest." (Mr Wandile)

The participants stated that communication may be interpreted differently across cultures and that the meaning and interpretation of the communicated message depends on the culture of the person conveying the message. Furthermore, the participants explained that the manner in which individuals must behave when a message is being communicated, differs across cultures.

7.2.5   TRUST AND HONESTY

Trust refers to a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviours of another (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:806). Honesty is the extent to which one party is perceived to be telling the truth about a particular issue (Grimmelikhuijen, Porumbescu, Boram & Tobin, 2013:577). It was also evident from the various participants' perceptions that confidentiality of information is strongly linked to trust and honesty. Confidentiality is the practice of keeping information within proper bounds (Kling, 2010:196). This suggests that mentees need to be confident that they can reveal information and problems during the mentoring relationship and process (Conn, 2013). At the same time, mentors should show loyalty towards the relationship and maintain confidentiality of the information shared during the mentoring process (Sanfey *et al.,* 2013:716).

Mentors emphasised that a trusting relationship must be maintained, and that mentees should be provided with information that is honest. This is revealed in their responses:

"There has to be a good trusting relationship."   (Ms Gertrude)

"Tell them the honest [truth]*, that I am not going to give you any finance."*
(Mr Caleb)

Mentees maintained that a mentoring relationship must be built on trust. They pointed out that when trust exists in a mentoring relationship mentors believe in the abilities of mentees. Mentees further indicated that mentors should be able to keep information that was shared during the mentoring process to themselves. They noted that keeping confidential information only within the mentoring relationship suggests that trust exists between the parties and this should not be betrayed. This is illustrated in the following mentee responses:

"It's about trust … I think if he believes in me, my abilities, I can believe in his abilities."   (Mr Amose)

"If you want to share something very confidential, you must obviously trust that person. If you want to share your future strategy with this person it means you trust them enough to take that plan and keep it to themselves, you know, and they are not going to take it and sell it to whoever."   (Ms Yolandi)

"A mentor should be somebody like who you can trust; even if you share something that is confidential, you're sure that it's going to be very safe."
                                                                (Mr Siphiwe)

"If he's talking like about my financial something or my poor performance on finances…I won't like it because maybe it would affect my business or my personality."   (Mr Oagile)

"I wouldn't like to hear what we were discussing discussed outside…so secrecy is very important."   (Mr Asandi)

Mentees felt that the mentoring relationship should be professional at all times and that personal information should not be shared with a mentor. Rather, they suggested that mentees should focus on issues that would help them achieve the goal of mentoring. For example:

"I don't have to talk about how I fight with my wife to the mentor. I don't have to say some of the things that are personal."   (Mr Wandile)

"I would never share my personal details with what happens between me and my fiancé with my mentor. I think that will definitely distract you going forward. Business is business and home life is home life…"   (Ms Yolandi)

"…not to be his friend…there must be that gap between us."   (Mr Asandi)

"We can be friends outside, not on his duty or her duty. If she's a mentor, he's a mentor, that must be the deal; we are talking about the mentorship. The friendship is going to be outside…"   (Mr Oagile)

The board member/managers also linked the importance of trust with confidentiality of information in mentoring relationships. According to the board member/managers, when a mentee does not believe that the information shared with the mentor will be kept confidential, it is clear that trust does not exist in the relationship. They commented:

"Trust is very important; the relationship will never work without trust…If I do not trust that what I tell you will be kept confidential, then trust isn't there."
(Ms Awande)

"Once you build a relationship…especially that relationship of trust, they [mentees] *feel that they can share their personal problems…As a mentor, you can't just divulge information about the mentee or a client to any other person. So you must be able to keep secrets…"* (Mr Sizwe)

Generally, the participants highlighted the importance of trust and honesty between the mentor and mentee, and that keeping information confidential was also critical in ensuring this trust. The participants stated that a trusting relationship includes being honest with each other about the information that is being shared, believing in the abilities of one another and not sharing information with third parties. The participants also noted that even though it is expected that confidential information should be shared during the mentoring process, such information must not include personal issues in order to avoid disruptions of the mentoring process.

7.2.6   COMMITMENT

Mentoring involves a personal commitment made between two or more people in a mentoring relationship (Griffin & Toldson, 2012:103; Hutchisin & Cochrane, 2014:1030). Participants in the study noted that mentors exhibit high levels of commitment when they are passionate about working with small businesses and that they are patient with mentees. This sub-theme relating to the passion and patience of the mentor was mentioned only by mentees and board member/managers. However, all groups indicated that it was critical for mentees to demonstrate high levels of willingness to learn during the mentoring process. The sub-theme of

commitment is discussed in the next two sections, these being passion and patience of the mentor, as well as willingness to learn by mentees.

7.2.6.1 Passion and patience of the mentor

Passion is described as a motivational drive toward a self-defining activity that individuals value, and in which they invest their time and energy (Bureau, Vallerand, Ntoumanis & Lafrenière, 2013:122). Patience refers to accepting issues silently in the belief that the situation will improve with time. This involves ignoring an issue in the hope that the situation will resolve itself (Furrer, Tjemkes, Vos & Boymans, 2013:6).

Mentors did not share any views on their own commitment, but mentees indicated that mentors should be passionate about working with small businesses and owner–managers and be patient enough to go through developmental stages with mentees. One mentee believed that although it is important to have a patient mentor, it is equally important for a mentor to have boundaries to the extent of tolerance of mentees. Mentees expressed these views as follows:

"If one says he wants to mentor people, then you must be having passion…"

(Mr Asandi)

"They should have patience; they should know how to walk people through certain areas in the business…" (Mr Hulisani)

"Passion – they should possess that; you know, passion to work with small businesses." (Mr Ivan)

"A mentor who always wants to see the growth of the mentee on daily basis…and take some drastic measures and see to it that the mentees are successful in whatever business that they are practising." (Mr Wandile)

"So they need to be very patient, understanding to a certain limit…they need to discipline me if required…a mentor can't always be saying, 'Yes, yes, yes'.

(Ms Yolandi)

All the board member/managers also emphasised that a mentor should have considerable patience to work with people and be passionate about developing others. Such behaviours include someone who is tolerant and enjoys empowering others. They said:

"That they also have the patience and understanding of the type of people that they are being asked to deal with…you have to be selfless, you have to enjoy empowering others, you have to be tolerant…They must believe in the product or the business of the mentee, 'cause that's the only way they can fully support them…"

(Mr Enoch)

"Someone who is passionate about what he is doing…have an ability to understand the frustration of those people…" (Mr Sizwe)

"…a lot of patience, passion, passion for people development…" (Ms Awande)

These quotations indicate that someone who decides to be a mentor of small business owner–managers is expected to be passionate about the development of these owner–managers and their businesses. The participants noted that mentors should be selfless and enjoy empowering mentees. Even though participants emphasised the importance of being patient as a mentor in a mentoring relationship, they indicated that mentors should not be too tolerant towards mentees.

7.2.6.2 Mentee's willingness to learn

Mote (2010) points out that mentees such as owner–managers of small businesses must demonstrate a willingness to learn from their mentors. Willingness to learn is the ability of the learner to understand the learning processes, self-reflect on what is being learned and apply this understanding to the individual setting (Schmidt, Lewark & Strange, 2008:93).

In this study, mentors pointed out that the mentee's willingness to learn is demonstrated by the following behaviours: initiating mentoring activities, following-up on mentoring exercises, and being dedicated and inspired to succeed. These views are presented in the quotations:

"The self-starter, they need to initiate things [mentoring activities]*…and also, you know, follow through on matters…"* (Ms Gertrude)

"Dedication, I would like to see them motivated with a desire to be able to succeed and have an attitude of: 'I can'…" (Mr Rethabile)

"He must be a person…who knows what he's looking for or she's looking for…" (Ms Hangwani)

Mentees also realised the importance of showing commitment towards their own learning. They noted that it is important that they appreciate the help they receive from mentors by showing high levels of commitment to the mentoring programme. One mentee acknowledged that often mentees fail to show commitment towards mentoring programmes because they engage in these programmes for the wrong reasons. Mentees said:

"I think as business owners we have to commit ourselves to this programmes because at the end of the day it's taxpayers' money that is used. We must definitely respect that." (Mr Ivan)

"Well, the mentees also have a responsibility to be committed to the programme." (Mr Ofentse)

"I think I have to commit myself and do whatever what a mentor tells us to do…in that way, maybe our mentor can be, improve us…" (Mr Kopano)

"We should commit ourself…carry on as we are supposed to…so if we do our best then these programmes can be successful and we can derive many benefits from them." (Mr Asandi)

"As mentees, we need to dedicate ourselves…the biggest mistake when people walk into institutions…they expect [name withheld] *to do everything…do whatever they say you must do and get it done…"* (Ms Yolandi)

The board member/managers collectively acknowledged the importance of commitment of mentees in a mentoring relationship. They explained that mentees should be eager to learn as much information as possible. Board member/managers' comments were as follows:

"Mentees should be eager to soak up as much information as possible from the mentor…they should be drivers in this relationship…They must want to get somewhere with the business because for the relationship to work, they must, there has to be inspiration, but they must be inspiring to get somewhere with their business…" (Ms Awande)

"They [mentees] *must be diehards. They must be slave-drivers to themselves…it's the traits of an entrepreneur. They must be willing to give their all…"*

(Mr Enoch)

"They should be willing to learn." (Mr Sizwe)

Participants across the three groups noted that mentees should be dedicated and willing to learn during the mentoring process. They explained that when mentees have a desire to succeed in their businesses, they are more willing to learn from the mentors. It was noted that one of the reasons why some of the mentees do not commit to mentoring is because of the wrong reasons for which they engage in mentoring programmes.

7.2.7 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT BY THE MENTOR

Emotional support refers to a person being empathetic, caring, encouraging, providing reassurance in building confidence in other people and providing these people with the opportunity to express themselves emotionally (Thoits, 2011:147; Leiter, Bakker & Maslach, 2014:105; Yoo *et al.,* 2014:14). In a case where the mentor cannot understand the problems of the mentee and thereby provide

emotional support, it is advised that the mentor should suggest other forms of help such as professional counselling (Watson, 2004:73).

Mentors did not discuss emotional support to be provided to mentees. However, emotional support provided by the mentor was considered important by mentees and board member/managers. Mentees felt that a mentor should be empathetic when mentees were faced with challenging issues, and that mentors should be able to provide sympathetic responses. Again, mentees alleged that mentors should be able to provide solutions to the problems that mentees encountered, or at least should be able to refer them to someone who could provide help. The mentees said:

"I need somebody who is going to be a – how do I put it – the encourager, like to, somebody who's going to behave like a parent…" (Mr Oagile)

"The mentor must also fit on our shoes so that he is the one who come to lift us up…" (Mr Kopano)

"I think they [mentors] *are your booster…when you are feeling down and things are not going well…your mentor should be there to say, you know, 'It's going to pass'…I think they are, ja, the voice that keeps you going."* (Ms Yolandi)

"The mentor acts a part, whereby it's like, I'm being fathered…I have a father next to me…" (Mr Wandile)

"You have to know how to sympathise…" (Mr Hulisani)

"It must be somebody that, when you go to him with any kind of problem, he can be able to help you or even if he can't help you, he can refer you to somewhere…somebody that you can rely on, somebody that when we have any problems, any kind of problem, whether from home, whether financially…" (Mr Siphiwe)

While most mentees acknowledged the importance of having a mentor who provides emotional support and encouragement, other mentees emphasised that the role of a supportive mentor should not be exploited. The mentees explained that mentees should not regard mentors as their therapists and that the relationship should remain professional. These mentees expressed their views in the following responses:

"That's why I say your mentor shouldn't be your, they shouldn't be your therapist. You must get a therapist to talk about your personal life, and you must get a mentor to nurture you to grow your company…if you start mixing the two, there's a time where a business decision is going to be affected…maybe even negatively because you've mixed personal issues, your personal feelings into that transaction."

(Ms Yolandi)

"I would like to keep it [mentoring relationship] *professional. I have people who I can express that kind of stuff* [emotions] *with in a satisfactory interaction."*   (Mr Hulisani)

Board member/managers acknowledged the importance of emotional support in a mentoring relationship. They referred to emotional support as being the activity of counselling in a mentoring relationship. They indicated that mentors not only assist mentees with business-related issues but should also fulfil counselling roles, as follows: Board member/managers said:

"You need to understand the role of psychology…"   (Mr Enoch)

"You're going to end up assisting in business-related issues, but end up being a counsellor as well…"   (Mr Sizwe)

"They find themselves as these counsellors…"   (Ms Awande)

The participants viewed emotional support by mentors as crucial in the development of mentees. However, contradictory views were observed from mentees on what constitutes emotional support provided by mentors. For example, some mentees explained that they would want to have a mentor who is empathetic and sympathetic when they are faced with challenging issues in both business and personal contexts.

These participants emphasised that mentors should not only assist mentees with business issues but should also fulfil counselling roles in the development of these mentees. Other mentees, while acknowledging the importance of emotional support in the mentoring relationship, believed that the mentoring relationship should at all times be professional and it should not be expected of mentors to fulfil the role of a therapist. It was interesting, however, to note that board member/managers were also of the opinion that both business and personal issues should be addressed in the mentoring relationship.

7.2.8   FEEDBACK

It is important to provide feedback on mentoring activities so that mentees can be aware of and learn what is expected of them in order to acquire the skills that they need (Boud & Molloy, 2013:203; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:116). At the same time, mentors desire mentees who are open and receptive to the feedback they receive (Allen *et al.,* 2010:74). This theme is discussed in two sections because the participants highlighted the importance of feedback skills of the mentor and mentee's receptiveness to feedback during mentoring processes.

7.2.8.1 Mentor feedback skills

Feedback skills refer to the ability to understand the importance of providing feedback and being mindful of how the feedback is received and perceived in order for the feedback to be constructive (KarimiTaher, Molavi, Rahimi & Zad, 2014). The feedback should not be influenced by personal differences. Rather, it should be focused on the learning issues for the benefit of the mentee (Boud & Molloy, 2013:203).

Mentors had no views on their own feedback skills, whereas a few mentees indicated that it was important for them to get feedback from mentors during the mentoring process. Mentees explained that the manner in which feedback is presented should be professional. They said:

"I think the mentor, it's important that you come and give a feedback because if he doesn't give a feedback, you don't know whatever thing that you were discussing with him or whether it was right or wrong." (Mr Siphiwe)

"If I do an interview or whatever task and I'm supposed to get my feedback, they should give me feedback…in a proper manner, professional manner because that will teach me how to carry myself as well." (Ms Yolandi)

The board member/managers pointed out that it was imperative that mentors have the right feedback skills and know how to provide feedback because it has an impact on the success of mentoring relationships. They stated that mentors should provide mentees with feedback on the skills that are being developed. Their views are evidenced in the following quotations:

"They have to give them feedback…for instance on business skills…" (Mr Enoch)

"So they need to be able to, what is this, know what to say at what time…when to provide that negative feedback …" (Ms Awande)

The importance of the feedback skills of mentors was highlighted by mentees, as well as board member/managers. These groups of participants indicated that providing feedback ensures that mentees know whether they are on the right track concerning business skills learned. It was also noted that when mentors provide feedback, they should know how to provide negative feedback in an appropriate manner.

7.2.8.2 Mentee's receptiveness to feedback

While it is crucial that mentors possess the necessary skills to provide feedback in a mentoring process, Allen *et al.* (2010:74) point out that mentors desire mentees who are open and receptive to the feedback they receive. When those who receive feedback are open about the feedback they receive, that should enhance the effectiveness of the feedback (Miniute-Cobb & Alfred, 2010:104).

In this study, mentees' receptiveness to feedback was also highlighted as essential in a mentoring relationship. The mentors stated that mentees should be able to deal with feedback, whether it is positive or negative. They explained that mentees should not always expect positive feedback as that might not be reflective of their performances. This is confirmed in what they said:

"Feedback, whether it be negative or positive, it's always a positive because negative feedback helps you to understand where to improve. So if it's always just positive feedback, you think you've made it. Because we all fail; at certain stages, we all fail."   (Mr Rethabile)

"They need to be open to, not necessarily criticism, but to advice…"
                                                                         (Mr Edward)

Only one mentee noted the importance of being receptive to feedback from mentors. This mentee stressed that mentees should learn to accept feedback as it comes, regardless of whether it is positive or negative. The mentee said:

"I have to take everything as it comes because I believe that whatever feedback, positive or negative, at the end of the day it's going to be said."
                                                                             (Mr Ivan)

The board member/managers also stressed that mentees should be receptive to advice and suggestions given on their performance, saying:

"Mentees should be receptive to according to whatever advice they are given …"
                                                                           (Mr Sizwe)

"They [mentees] *need to be able to listen to suggestions and listen to questions properly…"*   (Ms Awande)

These findings illustrate the importance of mentees' receptiveness to feedback in a mentoring process. The participants stated that the ability of mentees to accept both positive and negative feedback is crucial as it enhances learning.

7.2.9 CULTURAL ISSUES

Culture is defined as a multidimensional concept consisting of norms, values and beliefs shared by a group of people which influences the behaviour of individuals (Zoogah, 2013:19). This behaviour could be reflected by a given society, group, a certain race or people within a certain area (Sycara *et al.,* 2013:3). The influence of culture is evident in mentoring relationships when people from different cultures work together. Sometimes their varying cultural values could result in misunderstandings, which in turn could influence their relationship (Allen *et al.*, 2008:347; Kent *et al.,* 2013:16).

The mentors in this study stated that it is important to acknowledge that cultural differences could exist between mentors and mentees, which can influence mentoring relationships. However, the mentors indicated that these cultural differences should not become a challenge to the smooth running of mentoring programmes. Mentors explained that it is important to observe these cultural differences and be sensitive to them, but the differences should not determine the extent of satisfaction in a mentoring relationship. In their words:

"I don't think it matters; of course you had to be culturally sensitive…you're there to provide a business and business is business. When you want to start a business you've got to do certain basic things right; there is no culture in that. Obviously the way you ran your business may have been culturally different but the basics, that's what the mentors would be doing."   (Mr Edward)

"There is some difference in culture…from my side I don't have a problem…take it from a school point of view. I mean, a teacher is teaching different children from different cultures, but the medium of their commonality is education…then it suppresses all the cultures…If we take mentorship in that level, no it doesn't have to [be a problem].*"*   (Mr Caleb)

"With different cultures and then obviously there's sensitivity in culture…this is where people need to understand that, you know, we're different people and just be sensitive in different culture beliefs…" (Ms Gertrude)

"It [culture] *cannot be a challenge because our religions and cultures, we have to take them aside of the working ethics."* (Ms Hangwani)

Similarly, most mentees noted that cultural differences between mentors and mentees should not have any impact on their relationship. These mentees explained that if cultural differences were to affect mentoring relationships, the purpose of mentoring would be compromised. Instead, they suggested that the business culture should be the most important aspect in a mentoring relationship and not personal cultural differences. Mentees stated:

"Well I don't have a problem about it [culture]…*at some point, I believe it's good to learn from one another, of our cultures."* (Mr Ivan)

"As we go on now, I will learn to understand the things he likes…if then he wants me to, when we get in and when we get in there, I must stand…and he's going to tell me to sit down…I will learn along the way…" (Mr Asandi)

"If we have to take culture into consideration, we are going to have a problem. I don't see it as one of the requirements." (Mr Wandile)

"When somebody is mentoring, you I don't think a culture thing is going to say anything about him…he's going to just mentor you on whatever skills that you are going to need." (Mr Siphiwe)

"Your cultures might clash in regards to what I think is wrong and what you think is right…culture comes with ethics…I'm saying if you talk business, business is the same culture…it's money culture…we are here to make money…everybody that starts a business, it's because they want to be successful…You want your company to grow and be as big as you wish…but once you start bringing your personal and

your – what is it – your personal culture, your personal style, living style into this business transaction, it complicates things."   (Ms Yolandi)

Even though most mentees indicated that cultural differences should not have any impact on a mentoring relationship, one mentee alleged that the diverse values and beliefs in a mentoring relationship did have an impact in the mentoring programme she participated in. The mentee stated:

"We have different values, beliefs…It's good if you are a Christian to be mentored by a Christian…"   (Ms Unathi)

The board member/managers acknowledged the diverse cultures that exist within South African communities. Similarly, the board member/managers emphasised that cultural differences between the mentor and mentee should not influence the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. They felt that both parties needed to find an understanding of each other's culture to survive in the relationship. These board member/managers noted that business culture should form the basis of a mentoring relationship. Board member/managers said:

"It [culture] *shouldn't be taken into consideration, definitely…"*   (Mr Swizwe)

"I mean, someone's cultural background, you need to understand it and then as a mentor, they need to understand that person, where they come from and find ways of coping with that hindrance…"   (Ms Awande)

"Understanding of group dynamics is also important…so you try and be accommodating where need be, also having an understanding of our cultural challenges…so we see a lot of customs…there must be an understanding that is achieved by everybody…we are not here to try and accommodate cultures, we're here to teach you the business culture…Business is also a culture…we're coming from outside, we all have our own, but the culture that we are coming to orientate ourselves with, that we are learning, it's also a business culture of which, if you're now coming into the business culture, you have to put aside your other culture."
                        (Mr Enoch)

Despite the fact that the board member/managers alleged that cultural differences should not influence the effectiveness of mentoring relationships, one board member/manager reported that she has had problems with culture differences between mentors and mentees:

"The mentors have indicated that culture is a particular one of the areas during the mentor and mentee relationship…they said that your background, cultural background and how some of the mentees do their things or how they're raised, it impacted on their relationship in terms of being straightforward, being assertiveness and being able to communicate your needs appropriately and not to be apologetic about it…They've also sometimes called me in during a mentor-mentee relationship when they find that they're constantly speaking past each other and they do need someone to establish a common ground, as to this one is saying this and this one is saying this…We have had a request that they want to deal with a mentor who is Christian." (Ms Awande)

The participants across the three groups agreed that cultural differences between mentors and mentees could exist but should not influence the mentoring relationship. However, they acknowledged that there had been incidences of unsatisfactory mentoring relationships resulting from differences in cultural background between mentors and mentees. Despite this, the participants pointed out that the most important culture to be the focus in mentoring relationships was the business culture.

7.2.10 ALIGNMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

It is important that mentees and their mentors align their respective expectations of what should be achieved during a mentoring process, because clearly articulated expectations and goals enable an effective relationship between the mentor and mentee (Conn, 2013:543; Fajana & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011:422; Parsloe & Leedham, 2009:20). It was noted in section 3.2.4 that both the mentor and mentee must have similar goals for mentoring to be successful. When both stakeholders have a common goal, their expectations will be aligned towards that goal. The importance of

the alignment of expectations in a mentoring relationship was observed across the three groups of participants.

Mentors in this study indicated that mentees sometimes have unrealistic expectations of the mentoring process. Mentors suggested that this behaviour could be a result of mentees going into business for the wrong reasons, such as being. desperate to make money, and not because they had a passion for business. Mentors said:

"I think their expectation – they have huge expectations and to me, that's quite a challenge because you can't meet all their expectations. Because when they see a mentor, I think the light flashes and says, 'This is money, money, money; now I can get access to money because I've got a mentor.' So the expectations from their side are sometimes unrealistic."   (Mr Rethabile)

"There's too many stories floating around that people are getting rich so quickly, that the expectation is that they want their turn as well, whereas in a business environment you need to think big, but start small. I think the concern that I have (I am not sure whether it's an Eastern Cape thing or Port Elizabeth), is that there is a very high expectation of, it's almost like a hand-out mentality. People want things done for them…the young lady said okay, now she wants to now write up her business plan. I said, 'Okay, no problem.' So I waited and she said, 'Have you written it yet?' I said, 'No, I don't write your business plan for you. You write it and you send it to me, and I will have a look at it.' And then she went quiet after that…but if they'd come onto the programme and been properly briefed at the beginning, they should not have that expectation, no."   (Mr Edward)

On the contrary, mentees explained that when they came into the programme, it was with the expectation that certain business needs would be addressed, which had not been the case. Mentees further explained that the promises that were made to them when they went for mentoring had not been honoured. Their concerns are evident in the following quotations:

"I don't think my expectations are met." (Mr Siphiwe)

"The things that were promised they were never delivered, actually ja, most of them…I got management training from somewhere else…but for them to give us some training or to take us to some trainings, it's something that has never happened…I started being happy and I am no longer happy…I sometimes feel sorry for this institution…" (Mr Wandile)

"So far my expectations, like what is happening so far, I'm just pushing everything by myself…" (Mr Oagile)

"Someone will be able to give me an opportunity…to know about opportunities, to know where to go, what do now, or to associate me with like good people according to my business." (Ms Unathi)

Mentees further explained that when they went for mentoring, it was with an expectation that the institutions that provide mentoring would help them with some responsibilities such as the marketing of their businesses. They were expecting the mentors to get more customers on their behalf or at least arrange with the institutions to market their businesses. This is revealed in the following quotations:

"He's the one that must go out and maybe do some marketing for us or arranging some people who can do some marketing…as I understand, mentor is the one that should do marketing. They promised us that they are going to do marketing…My expectation is that from the day when we start to meet the mentors until today, I don't expect to be where I am now…The most important thing that we are looking for – work, we want work. If we don't get some customers that brings work to our workshop, then we don't see any difference." (Mr Kopano)

"Well, I'm still struggling with getting customers, you know, that's the main thing." (Mr Asanda)

"We've got equipments and everything, but the main challenge is the clientele…at least I should be seeing four clients in a day, but sometimes I spend like the whole week – in a week am seeing three clients and for me that's the problem."

(Mr Siphiwe)

"I thought they were going to do the advertisements." (Mr Wandile)

One mentee specifically indicated that the reason he got into mentorship was to get funding for his business. He explained that upon registering for mentorship, he expected that his businesses would be funded.

"When I was on my mentorship, the most important thing that I was looking for is funding. Now the most frustrating thing is that, okay, my mentor couldn't point me in the direction of, okay, here's five or six options of funders that you can go to…"

(Mr Ofentse)

Despite the fact that most mentees noted that their expectations about mentoring had not been fulfilled, two mentees expressed their satisfaction in the mentoring programme, saying:

"I think the mentorship has been tremendous…I think majority of the sessions I had, definitely I think most of them – I would say even ninety per cent of the sessions – have been quite productive, informative and educational…" (Ms Yolandi)

"I think they (expectations) *have been met."* (Mr Amose)

The issue of unrealistic mentee expectations was also highlighted by the board member/managers, who described the unrealistic expectations of owner–managers as a "culture of entitlement". They explained that mentees expect the government to provide them with everything for free, especially because these mentees were aware that the institutions are government-funded. They commented:

"Some of our black SMMEs…almost become a culture of a complacency or a culture of expectancy to say government must give…talking of entitlement, almost to say that they think that everything must be done for them." (Mr Enoch)

"The other things is maybe the last challenge in terms of the expectation…the expectation is that when they leave, or after the end of the programme, institution is funded by government…so they think this is part of service delivery…they are not expected to pay a cent, but they will always receive something." (Mr Sizwe)

These findings reveal contradictory perceptions and expectations about what the outcomes of the mentoring process should be. In particular, mentors raised their concerns that mentees enrol into mentoring programmes for the wrong reasons, such as receiving funding and having some of their business responsibilities, such as marketing, being conducted by the institutions. These mentors explained that the wrong perceptions could be the result of accepting owner–managers into a mentoring programme without properly briefing them on what the programme does. On the other hand, mentees expressed disappointment in the mentoring programme as their expectations had not been fulfilled. Mentees indicated that initial promises had not been honoured by mentoring institutions and that they went for mentoring with an expectation that the institutions would assist them by performing marketing activities on their behalf. Mentees had also applied for mentorship to get funding for their businesses, which had not materialised. There were only two mentees who expressed their satisfaction with the mentoring programme. Board member/managers describe mentees' perceptions of mentoring programmes as the "culture of entitlement" and pointed out that this was common among the black-owned businesses as these mentees believe that the programme is a part of service delivery from the government.

The next section is a presentation of the findings on non-relational themes.

7.3   NON-RELATIONAL THEMES

Non-relational themes refer to those factors which do not impact on the personal relationship of the mentor and mentee, but on the mentoring process itself. These non-relational factors, based on the experiences and perceptions of participants, are highlighted in the next subsections.

7.3.1   INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure refers to a country's physical facilities, such as highways and airports, which support economic activities (Daft & Marcic, 2012:103). South Africa is described as having a poor infrastructure that presents major constraints to the economic development of this country (Cassim *et al.*, 2014:30). In the context of mentoring, infrastructure refers to resources such as electronic access to communication networks and technologies and the distance between the location of small businesses and mentors. The participants in this study highlighted the importance of infrastructure for effective mentoring and regarded infrastructure as relating to the accessibility of the mentoring location and accessibility of mentoring resources.

7.3.1.1 Accessibility of mentoring location

Accessibility of the location where the mentoring between the mentors and mentees is taking place is critical to ensure an effective mentoring process. It is important that mentoring services provided to owner–managers operating in rural areas across South Africa, are tailored to their needs and geographical settings in these areas (SEDA, 2012:88). This is particularly important for small businesses in South Africa as these businesses are often situated in rural areas which are characterised by poor infrastructure (Olawale & Garwe, 2010:731; Du Plooy *et al.*, 2012:98), which includes poor transport facilities.

Both mentors and mentees highlighted accessibility of the mentoring location as significant. The mentors who participated in this study reported that travelling from the institutions where the mentoring facilities are located and mentees' business premises posed a challenge to providing the mentoring service effectively. This is evidenced in the quotations below:

"I mean, the centre is away from, [laughter] *from civilisation, ja. It's the way the place of the centre is located…that is why we see…sometimes a decrease in attendance*

every Friday…Where the centre is located, it's not in, should say friendly area…"

(Ms Gertrude)

"Geographically, roads are not well. That's why I even end up buying myself a Land Rover…" (Mr Caleb)

"I have a challenge, that's another challenge that we have…some of them have to depend on transport; others have got their own…so there is a challenge that they are not always on time…" (Mr Rethabile)

Mentees reported that the location where the mentoring took place was inconvenient. They had to travel long distances to reach the mentoring location and at times had to walk because transport to these locations was not available. They noted:

"Travelling between your house and here, that also becomes a problem…it's quite a distance out…if I'm in a bad financial time in my company…putting in the fuel and diesel in the car to come here, then it would be quite inconvenient…"

(Ms Yolandi)

"Sometimes if I don't have a car and then it's a problem because I have to walk from town…" (Mr Oagile)

"The place is very much awkward. It's difficult for us to, you know, reach this place…I prefer the centre actually to relocate from here to…where actually it's accessible to everyone." (Mr Ivan)

Participants considered accessibility to where the mentoring takes place to be important for effective mentoring, noting that the location of the places providing mentoring to small businesses was not easily accessible. Infrastructure problems experienced include the distance between mentoring service providers and mentees' business premises, poor road infrastructure and scarce public transport.

7.3.1.2 Accessibility of mentoring resources

Accessibility of mentoring resources is crucial in the success of a mentoring programme (Botma & Roets, 2013:37; Distelberg & Schwarz, 2013). Examples of resources include materials used on the mentoring programme (Van Rhijn, Ebrahim & Case, 2010:34) and technological resources such as computers (Quintana & Zambrano 2014:631).

All participant groups commented on accessibility of mentoring resources. Mentors in this study indicated that to some extent, they could not provide mentoring because the mentees had no access to electronic resources and training material such as stationery, necessary to perform mentoring tasks. For example, mentees did not have access to email facilities and often computers at the institutions that provide mentoring services were not working. In addition, some mentors believed that their institutions did not take mentoring seriously and as a result did not provide enough resources for mentoring programmes. Mentors commented as below:

"Some of the guys that I have mentored obviously has; some don't even have access to emails for that matter…"   (Mr Gertrude)

"It would be better…where we can have the resources of operating the mentoring session…the computers that are in their offices…they are not working, they are not operating.   (Mr Ayanda)

"I think (name of institution withheld) *did not provide a huge amount of resources…to them, it was a Mickey Mouse thing. It ran on the side-line…I always say, when you look at a business and you say what's important to that business, is what they put at number one on the agenda…and the same with the mentorship programme; it's not important to them – it's low on the agenda."*   (Mr Edward)

One mentee also highlighted the importance of having access to proper resources during the mentoring process. The mentee pointed out that funding itself is not enough to ensure success during the mentoring process as materials should be provided by the mentoring institutions themselves. He said:

"If you teach someone, like now as I am doing business, you teach me bookkeeping and all those things – yes, it's good, but there's a resource that you have to provide me so that I can cope…" (Mr Kopano)

One board member/manager mentioned that it had come to the institution's attention that some mentees did not have access to the facilities necessary for mentoring. This board member/manager stated that some of the mentees did not have access to the internet at their business premises, and they had to go to an internet café to access their emails. The board member/manager's comment was as follows:

"You find that they don't respond to emails because they have to go to an internet café to open the emails…" (Ms Awande)

These findings show that accessibility of mentoring resources plays a crucial role in the success of mentoring of small businesses. Participants from the three groups noted that mentees do not always have proper access to resources necessary in the mentoring process. It was further noted that the institutions themselves do not provide enough resources to perform mentoring activities. For example, the participants stated that the computers which mentees should be using at the institutions were often not in working condition.

7.3.2   CAPACITY OF MENTORS

While it is important for mentors to be knowledgeable about the industry in which mentees operate, it is equally important that there are enough mentors to develop the skills of owner–managers across the diverse industries of small businesses. Mentoring capacity in this study refers to the number of mentors available to mentor small business owner–managers.

Although the capacity of mentors was identified as important by mentees and board member/managers, mentors did not comment on this subject. A few mentees mentioned that the number of people available for mentoring was limited. Mentees stated that mentors were not available for private meetings because of other

mentoring commitments. They further observed that only one or two mentors were available per institution. Mentees said:

"…don't have enough people or mentors in the centre. So that one I think poses a challenge…we attend as a group and it's only one or two people who are mentoring us…" (Mr Ivan)

"Sometimes you can't see your mentor because they are booked for the whole day…" (Mr Hulisani)

The board member/managers confirmed that their institutions do not have enough mentors to provide mentoring to small businesses. In some cases they indicated that they had one external mentor and that they themselves assisted in the mentoring sessions. They explained that they also used people who had retired from their jobs for the mentoring of small businesses because retirees are always available to provide mentoring service as they had no other job demands, as quoted below.

"I also play that role [mentor]*…we are on a drive to try and identify and get more mentors…remember it's also a cost challenge…nobody wants to mentor for free*." (Mr Enoch)

)

"…we use retirees…" (Ms Awande)

"At the moment we're using one external and then myself." (Mr Sizwe)

These findings reveal that the capacity of mentors to facilitate mentoring services was limited. In particular, mentees stated that they had to attend group sessions because of a limited number of mentors, not out of choice. Mentees further explained that the available mentors were unable to address their individual needs because of the limited numbers of mentors available. In support of these views, board member/managers acknowledged that few mentors were available to facilitate mentoring. They explained that they had retirees providing the service and that they also assisted with mentoring sessions themselves.

7.3.3 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financial support of owner–managers is an important aspect to consider during the mentoring process as it may influence its success (Botma & Roets, 2013:37). Financial support may include funds to pay for the fees and materials necessary for mentoring services, as well as other costs incurred during the mentoring programme such as the cost of recruiting mentors. The significance of financial support during a mentoring process was acknowledged by mentors and board member/managers, while mentees mentioned the importance of financial support for the running of their businesses.

One mentor reported on the importance of financial support for the success of mentoring. This mentor mentioned that a lack of funds was hindering the effectiveness of the development support they provide to small businesses. The mentor revealed that their institution could not provide all the necessary training because their funding was insufficient. She said:

"Every training that we provide obviously needs to be paid, but obviously there has to be funds for it…we can't progress to other trainings…obviously financing the training materials and all of those things. At this stage, we can't obviously do all of the skills identified, you know, skills gaps that we've identified that these guys require due to obviously funding issues…" (Ms Gertrude)

Interestingly, mentees did not comment on the importance of financial support for the success of mentoring processes. Rather, they emphasised the importance of financial support for the running of their businesses such as day-to-day operating costs, as well as necessary capital. One mentee explained that funding for small businesses was available, but that access to these funds was a challenge facing them as owner–managers. They commented:

"They [the government] *should make funds more accessible for one; they should be more assisting with day-to-day runnings of companies."* (Mr Hulisani)

"We don't have enough capital." (Mr Kopano)

"The real problem with the small business we're facing, it's not only mentoring. Also financial challenges…we start business with nothing…without the capital…it's not easy to build your capital…" (Mr Richards)

"The biggest problem with entrepreneurs, small entrepreneurs is access to finance at the moment. Access to finance is the biggest thing. There is actually no one who is providing finance, except for banks – and banks want your heart, your liver and your second leg!" (Mr Ofentse)

"The money is out there to help SMEs, but to get a hold of those opportunities…it's just a challenge." (Ms Unathi)

The board member/managers indicated that there was insufficient funding available to ensure the effective mentoring of small businesses. In addition, they noted that mentees did not have enough money for mentoring tasks such as paying the internet café for checking emails. Their statements follow:

"There's always challenges…for instance, is the amount of funding that's made available…the amount of grand funding [is insufficient]*…it's also understandable because it's a lot of money."* (Mr Enoch)

"They [mentees] *don't have the money to pay the internet café…"* (Ms Awande)

The findings highlight the importance of financial support in ensuring the delivery of effective mentoring to small businesses. Participants found that, because of financial constraints, mentors could not provide mentees with enough training and advice on identified skills gaps. In addition, participants noted that mentees were unable to afford some of the basic mentoring aids such as paying for internet access. Mentees mentioned that the amount of grants they received from funders was insufficient, and spoke of the importance of financial support with regard to their own businesses, and not specifically regarding the mentoring process.

7.3.4 SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS

Scheduling time for mentoring meetings involves use of a timetable which should be followed for sessions in a learning programme such as a mentoring programme (Ugwu & Elochukwu, 2013:103). In this study, participants observed that mentoring meetings were normally scheduled on a weekly or monthly basis, while some mentors indicated that subsequent meetings were arranged based on the need of the mentee to meet with the mentor. In their words, mentors stated:

"It was once a week, trying once a week where possible because now they were split around Pretoria…"   (Mr Caleb)

 "In some cases it was weekly, in some cases it was sort of occasionally, when they phoned. The requirement is always on the mentee to – you make the initial contact and say you want to meet, but the requirement on the programme was that they [mentees] *had to set up the meeting."*   (Mr Edward)

"It depends, because mentoring, it's not necessarily meeting with the mentee in a specific place…it doesn't mean necessarily scheduled for the specific date or day."
                                                                      (Mr Ayanda)

While some mentees also mentioned that they met weekly or monthly for mentoring sessions, other mentees indicated that they did not have a scheduled time for meetings. Those who met on a monthly basis stated that the frequency was not sufficient to meet their needs in a mentorship programme. These mentees said:

"Weekly, I can say."   (Mr Wandile)

"Since the mentor come to my place, I think maybe it was last month or when, I don't remember."   (Mr Kopano)

"We don't have a date like when we are supposed to meet but if there's maybe like a problem you are experiencing, or if maybe they want to assist you on something…"
                                                                     (Mr Richards)

"We met every month…sometimes it would be twice a month…I think most of the time mentors are kind of, they take a back seat…they want the client to come…the mentee to be the one approaching them…they need to keep a relationship where there is a structure in place…they should see their clients more regularly than what they do…once a month is not going to do much for a client. Maybe it should be once every two weeks or every week that they have a meeting with them…" (Mr Ofentse)

The board member/managers in the study each reported differing schedules for mentoring meetings. One board member/manager pointed out that the meetings were held twice a week; another had weekly meetings; a third indicated that meeting times were not structured as they depended on the needs of mentees. These views are presented in the statements:

"Generally it's about twice a week." (Mr Sizwe)

"Every week, it's part of the requirement…then they can set up individual meetings as and when, 'cause then they'll have particular needs in their individual companies." (Mr Enoch)

"The prescription was once a month physical and then the rest can be telephonic or email…so the frequency of that communication we did not prescribe…the responsibility lies on the mentee, so the mentee has to initiate the meeting; the mentee is in charge…they shouldn't be spoilt by the mentor…the onus was on the mentee to drive the programme." (Ms Awande)

The quotations highlight how often meetings with mentees are scheduled at their respective institutions. A number of different responses were noted. Some participants stated that the meetings were scheduled weekly, some twice a week, some monthly and others who did not have regular time-scheduled meetings.

7.3.5   AWARENESS OF MENTORING INITIATIVES

According to SEDA (2012:91), a mentoring awareness initiative is an important strategy to ensure the success of mentoring programmes. The participants in this

study are also of the view that the development support of small businesses should be known to the public in order to have successful mentoring programmes. Specifically, mentors and mentees commented on the awareness of mentoring initiatives while board member/managers did not express any views on this sub-theme.

The mentors in this study noted that many communities in South Africa are not aware of development opportunities available to small businesses. They indicated that the mentoring programmes were not known to them before they joined their institutions. For example, they said:

"I stay very close to this area but I was not even aware of, I think publicise more of this information…the institutions themselves…" (Ms Gertrude)

"What I've noticed in Port Elizabeth here, I don't really know of any state organisation that's promoting it [mentoring]*… "* (Mr Edward)

Similarly, some of the mentees stated that it is important to make small business owner–managers aware of the available mentoring services. These mentees suggested that the institutions providing mentoring to small businesses should use the media and schools to advertise themselves. Their comments follow:

"I think the government should find other ways to maybe take up, you know, spread the word that there are incubators…there are resources out there for small businesses…I have never heard about it on TV, I've never come across it in a newspaper…should the government not be saying let's take this to the schools so that the kids when they have matric they find, they know about these things?"
(Ms Yolandi)

"I don't think the government is doing enough because most of the people don't know that there are such [services] *from the government…the government must approach the schools…so they must like give such programmes to our kids so that the kids should bring that information to us…in that way, I think they will be, people will know…this programme must be made known to the people…"* (Mr Siphiwe)

The participants noted that it was important that South African communities become aware of development support through mentoring, which is available to small businesses. They stated that it is the responsibility of mentoring support providers to inform the public about the availability and content of such support mechanisms. They suggested that using media such as television and newspapers, as well as involving school children in the campaigns, may be effective.

7.4   OTHER THEMES

Other themes can be described as those themes that have an impact on the relationship of mentors and mentees, as well as on the mentoring process. However, these themes differ from the others discussed earlier, in the sense that they were significant for only one group of participants. In other words, these themes were not highlighted by more than one group of participants. These themes were observed from the perceptions of mentors only, or mentees only, and will be discussed as such.

7.4.1   MENTOR-MENTEE MATCHING

It is important to inquire about mentor-mentee matching, (which is the matching of a mentee with a particular mentor), as disparity in matching of mentor with mentee has been reported by several researchers (Laiho & Brandt, 2012:439; Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:465) as being one of the crucial issues to consider in a mentoring process. This disparity may be a result of differences in values, work styles and personalities (Shpigelman & Gill, 2013:465). Therefore, it is crucial in a mentoring relationship to use the right methods in matching mentees with mentors.

To explore this issue, mentees were asked to explain whether they had chosen a mentor or whether the mentors had been chosen for them. Their responses indicated that the pairing was not voluntary as it was arranged by the mentoring support providers. This is evidenced as follows:

"…it was organised…"   (Mr Oagile)

"…it was just organised." (Mr Wandile)

"…it was organised..." (Mr Kopano)

"…it was organised." (Mr Siphiwe)

In order to further address the issue of disparity in mentoring relationships, the researcher asked mentees about their preferences with regard to having a mentor chosen for them or choosing a mentor themselves. Varied responses were provided by the participants in this regard. A group of the mentees explained that if given a chance, they would prefer to choose a mentor. They explained that when they chose the mentor themselves, it would give them a chance to familiarise themselves with the credentials and suitability of the mentor. Their responses are given below:

"If I'm given the chance, I would prefer to choose the mentor myself…I don't think my present mentor is really quite fine for the kind of work I'm doing." (Mr Siphiwe)

"I prefer it to be voluntarily…I want somebody who can in a way, you know, guide me in the way I understand it." (Mr Asandi)

"Obviously there are certain skill sets that we're all strong in and we're all weak in, and you would like to find someone who is going to pair up with you on those points that you feel you need to capitalise the most out of…More importantly, you need to be able to choose that person yourself because you want to know exactly that person, what have they done, how have they, you know, are they entrepreneurial or are they mentoring me from a book…" (Mr Ofentse)

"I would like to choose since I've got some expectations that I don't think anybody can just deliver." (Mr Wandile)

Only two mentees indicated that they preferred the mentor to be organised for them. Their reasoning for this preference was that when the institution knows about the skills gap in the mentee, such an institution can recommend someone who will be able to address the knowledge gap, unlike choosing a mentor who may not deliver. They said:

"They know more about the mentorships, which is maybe if they assess me, then they will chose somebody who is going to help me so much." (Mr Oagile)

"I think it would be much better if it [mentorship] *can be organised for us."* (Mr Kopano)

The findings revealed differences in opinion by mentees concerning how mentors should be paired with mentees. Firstly, two perspectives were reported by the participants with regard to choosing a mentor and having a mentor chosen by the institution. Some of the participants stated that they prefer to choose a mentor while others stated that they prefer to have a mentor chosen for them.

7.4.2   STRUCTURE OF MENTORING SESSIONS

Foote and Solem (2009:54) assert that determining the structure of mentoring relationships is crucial as it ensures the success of mentoring programmes. Clutterbuck, Poulsen and Kochan (2012:99) explain that the structure of mentoring should be outlined at the beginning of the mentoring process. The structure may indicate whether the mentoring process is one-on-one or group mentoring or a combination of both. In a case where group mentoring is applicable, it is important to decide on the structure of these groups. For example, the number of mentees as well as the number of mentors per group should be determined (Carvin, 2011:50).

In this study, mentees had varied preferences regarding the choice of a one-on-one style of mentoring, a group mentoring style, or a combination of the two styles. For one-on-one mentoring, mentees indicated that they prefer someone who will address their individual needs as part of the mentoring programme and not those of a group, because the needs of a particular mentee may not be applicable to the individual needs of another mentee. This is what they said:

"It's in a group, and personally myself, I prefer one-on-one…we are in actually different type of industries so that's how actually I would prefer one-on-one mentor." (Mr Ivan)

"There are many things that we are looking that the mentor should try to put them in order, because as mentee, we are like a student. So now the mentor is the one who must teach us all the other things…in group, sometimes he can't reach us all."

(Mr Kopano)

Those who indicated that they preferred group mentoring sessions explained that this method would allow them to gain experience from others as well as learn from others' mistakes. This is confirmed in the subsequent quotations:

"I would like to be mentored in a group, so that, you know, when other people, you know, ask some questions, then I can also gain." (Mr Asanda)

"I prefer the group; I prefer the group because, as small companies, we all go through the same, you go through similar problems. They may not be identical …in a group, you learn more in that few hours that you are sitting there and then ja, I think it just equips you with more information." (Ms Yolandi)

Specifically, when they were in groups, mentees highlighted the importance of homogeneity during mentoring sessions. According to mentees, there are different levels or phases in any business, which they believe should rather be used as a guide to place mentees into a particular group. Mentees explained that some of their peers were not supposed to be attending mentoring sessions as it was still too early in their business's life cycle. The reasons why mentees value homogeneity in mentoring groups are presented in these quotations:

"There's companies that are in advanced stages and there's companies that are still starting out and we are all put under the same umbrella and we all report back on the same things. That kind of slows down more advanced companies." (Mr Hulisani)

"The reason being…there's different levels of small businesses…when you are at a certain level, you go through certain things and then if you are grouped with the right people, you share those things and you discuss similar problems, you know. Then there's a business that's already in operation but at a certain level. Maybe you've just, ja, started and you may be within the three months, you're trying to get tax

certificate…so our conversations are going to be similar but not as effective as they would have been if I was in the category where there's people that understand what I'm going through."   (Ms Yolandi)

"You know, some of them, they still need an education in terms of how to run the business, how to register a business and all of that and stuff…there should be some phases…there should be a criteria, because when you look at some of the mentees, then definitely you see that some of them, they actually, like they don't supposed to be in the centre. It's early for them…some of them they are sitting here now they don't know the type of business they want to venture in; some of them, they are undecided…"   (Mr Ivan)

While some mentees indicated that they prefer either one-on-one mentoring or group mentoring, other mentees preferred a combination of the two mentoring styles as each of these styles could be beneficial in a mentoring process. These mentees stated:

"I think they both have their own values…in a group setting you getting to learn about other people's challenges…and you might be going through the same thing…and when it's one-on-one, you know it's more in-depth…you can make it personal about your company and you tell them exactly what is wrong…so I think they're different, but they both have their own values…"   (Mr Hulisani)

"There needs to be done a one-on-one type of discussion…at the same time you also want to relate maybe what another entrepreneur is going through or what another entrepreneur could maybe advise to your certain circumstances."
                                                           (Mr Ofentse)

Different responses regarding the preferred style of mentoring were reported. Some of the participants indicated that they prefer a one-on-one style of mentoring to familiarise themselves with the credentials and suitability of the mentor. Other participants indicated that they prefer group sessions in order to share experiences with their peers. When they are in groups, mentees asserted that group mentoring should be structured to address the needs of mentees, based on the life cycle stage

of their businesses. They explained that grouping together mentees who are not in the same stage of their business development becomes a waste of time as mentoring discussions may not apply to everyone in the group. Another group of mentees stated that they preferred both styles of mentoring during the programme as they could benefit from the two styles of mentoring.

7.4.3   DURATION OF MENTORING PROCESS

A mentoring process moves through a series of phases (Grossman 2013:2002). These mentoring phases were highlighted under Section 3.7 of the study. To complete the series of phases, each mentoring process has a certain duration. This section presents the preferences of mentees on the duration of the mentoring process. Varied time frames were highlighted by the participants concerning the duration of the mentoring process. Responses were as follows:

"I don't think after a year I would have achieved whatever I wanted to do or what I signed for."   (Mr Siphiwe)

"Mentorship, at least a year … it will be a suitable time …"   (Ms Unathi)

"If we can get a long term, maybe we can understand everything that we are coming for here…"   (Mr Kopano)

"It's three years…it's too short…"   (Mr Richards)

"I prefer that there should be some phases…first phase may be of about twelve months…the second phase – let actually the centre identify the challenges, the needs that we as small businesses we are facing…and the last phase whereby they can assist us in terms of funding, you know, to get machinery from government or whatever."   (Mr Ivan)

"Three years…business grows gradually, so it's going to allow the company to expand in ways that it should…might be strenuous on an individual, but for the company it's good.   (Mr Hulisani)

"At least if the programme could run for three to five years…as a start-up in the first year, you don't even know what you're doing…once you hit three to five years, then you start building a relationship, firstly with the person that you're working with, you've got a strong relationship with that person – and also you know your market more clearly and that person can help you, guide you."   (Mr Ofentse)

In contrast to long-term mentoring programmes as preferred by most mentees, two mentees indicated that they preferred to be in a short-term mentoring programme.

"I think a year is ample time to learn a lot…a year is enough for me to grow…"
(Ms Yolandi)

"I prefer short term…but based on whether their promises are delivered."
(Mr Wandile)

The participants had contradictory opinions about the mentoring programme's duration, as evidenced from the quotations. The majority of mentee participants however, indicated that they prefer to have long-term mentoring programmes, preferably between three and five years. Those who were of the view that mentoring programmes should take longer reasoned that the longer the mentoring process, the better their mentoring needs would be addressed.

7.4.4   MENTORING TASKS AND LENGTH OF MENTORING SESSIONS

A tasks is often described as a piece of work that needs to be completed within a specific period of time (Melkumov, 2011:6). The length of mentoring sessions refers to the amount of time spent by mentor and mentee during mentoring sessions (Ness, 2012:6). In the context of mentoring, the tasks and length of sessions refer to the work that needs to be completed during mentoring, as well as the amount of time that is spent during mentoring sessions.

In the interview, mentees were asked whether they ever felt as though they were being overloaded by mentors. Most of the mentees simply responded with a "no" and for that reason, their responses have not been quoted in this discussion. However,

one mentee felt that mentees were being overloaded by mentors especially because they had other responsibilities to take care of. She said:

"Why don't we do that tasks an hour of the day and it's done, but this thing of taking homework, it's not right…Remember, you've got a business and you've got a home…When you get home, you are a mommy and a wife; when you are at work, you're a boss you know and you need to make time for both."   (Ms Yolandi)

Apart from being given many tasks, mentees raised concerns that the mentoring sessions were too long. Even though they acknowledged the benefits of mentoring, they suggested that the number of hours spent at the sessions should be reduced because the long hours disrupted their businesses. Here are their suggestions:

"Should we not come for less hours, you know, because every – if you have your own business – every minute that passes is worth, it could either be a make it or break it…so for you to come and sit here the whole day, even though there is a (what is it) a reward in the end of the session, but I think spending a whole day then becomes a bit distractive in your business life…It means you literally every week, you only have four days and you don't count Fridays because Fridays people's minds are already switched off by twelve o'clock so you're literally limited to three days…"   (Ms Yolandi)

"If a mentor can maybe mentor a fortnight, not every day, because we have weekly… at least fortnight, then it's good to us."   (Mr Kopano)

With the exception of one mentee, mentees in this study indicated that their mentors did not overload them with mentoring tasks. However, some mentees stated that mentoring sessions were too long. These mentees suggested that mentoring sessions should be conducted for fewer hours and not daily, because of other responsibilities such as their business and family lives.

Having explored all the themes and sub-themes on the perceptions and experiences of mentoring of black-owned small businesses in the preceding sections, a summary illustrating these themes is presented in Table 7.1.

Table 7:1   Summary of the perceptions and experiences of effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses

Relational themes	Frequency			
	Mentors (6)	Mentees (12)	Managers (3)	Total 21
Competencies of the mentor				
Knowledge and expertise	1	8	3	12
Experience and age	3	7	3	13
Approachability	1	8	0	9
Respect				
Respectful mentor	0	9	2	11
Respectful mentee	4	7	0	11
Communication				
Open communication	4	10	2	16
Language proficiency	4	4	0	8
Intercultural communication	2	1	0	3
Trust and honesty	3	9	2	14
Commitment				
Passion and patience of the mentor	0	7	3	10
Mentee's willingness to learn	3	5	3	11
Emotional support by the mentor	0	8	3	11
Feedback				
Mentor feedback skills	0	3	2	5
Mentee's receptiveness to feedback	3	1	2	6
Cultural issues	4	10	3	17
Alignment of expectations	2	10	3	15
Non-relational themes				
Infrastructure				
Accessibility of mentoring location	3	3	0	6
Accessibility of mentoring resources	3	1	1	5
Capacity of mentors	0	2	3	5
Financial support	1	5	2	8
Scheduling of meetings	6	12	3	21
Awareness of mentoring initiatives	2	2	0	4
Other themes				
Mentor-mentee matching	0	12	0	12
Structure of mentoring sessions	0	5	0	5
Duration of mentoring process	0	9	0	9
Mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions	0	12	0	12

In Table 7.1, it can be seen that 19 themes were identified from the perceptions and experiences of participants in this study. This table illustrates the frequency of the themes and sub-themes as perceived by participants across the three groups, being

mentors, mentees and board member/managers. As discussed earlier, The themes are classified into relational, non-relational and other themes.

The most prominent issues that the participants commented on were *knowledge and expertise, experience and age, respectful mentor, respectful mentee, open communication, trust and honesty, passion and patience of the mentor, mentee's willingness to learn, emotional support by the mentor, cultural issues, alignment of expectations, mentor-mentee matching, scheduling of meetings* and *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions.*

The least prominent issues that the participants commented on were *approachability, language proficiency, intercultural communication, mentor feedback skills, mentee's receptiveness to feedback, accessibility of mentoring location, accessibility of mentoring resources, capacity of mentors, financial support, awareness of mentoring initiatives, structure of mentoring sessions* and *duration of mentoring process.*

7.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the themes which arose from the participants' perceptions of mentoring experiences of black-owned small businesses. A number of themes were identified and these themes were divided into three categories, namely relational, non-relational and other themes. Relational themes were described as those which influence the relationship between a mentor and mentee, while non-relational themes were described as those having an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring processes but not on the relationships of mentors and mentees. The last category, other themes, referred to themes that featured in the experiences and perceptions of only one group of participants but were therefore still considered important in addressing the research objective of this study.

The themes that have been discussed in the current chapter will be interpreted and elaborated on in Chapter 8. The chapter will include comparisons with previous research in the field of mentoring.

CHAPTER 8

INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

8.1   INTRODUCTION

As outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to identify the elements of effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. In Chapter 7 the empirical results of the perceptions of participants on mentoring of black-owned small businesses were presented under themes and sub-themes. This chapter presents the interpretations and discussions of these themes and sub-themes by engaging with previous studies to establish how the findings in this study relate to the existing body of knowledge.

The interpretations and discussions of the themes will be presented in three categories, these being relational themes, non-relational themes, and cultural diversity observations. Even though no observations of cultural diversity were mentioned in the previous chapter, it is important to include this category here, as certain behaviours of the participants in the study were observed which could indirectly have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. The themes that were discussed under "other themes" in Chapter 7 will be discussed where applicable in this chapter, either as relational or non-relational themes and not as a separate category. Within each category, the discussions will illustrate how each theme influences effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses as conceptualised by the participants. Following the discussion within a particular theme, anecdotal and empirical evidence will be provided to support or oppose the findings of this study for a particular theme.

It should be noted that even though the findings are presented in three distinctive categories, some of the themes in the three broad categories overlap and will be discussed as such.

8.2 RELATIONAL THEMES

As mentioned in section 7, relational themes refer to those themes that influence the personal interaction between mentors and mentees during the mentoring process, namely *competencies of the mentor, approachability of the mentor, respect, communication, trust and honesty, commitment, emotional support by the mentor, feedback, cultural issues, alignment of expectations* and *mentor–mentee matching*.

8.2.1 COMPETENCIES OF THE MENTOR

As mentoring is an exercise of knowledge transfer from the mentor to mentee about a specific subject (Cline, 2011:36), it is imperative that the mentor is knowledgeable about and possesses competencies in a particular subject area. The participants in this study highlighted the competencies of mentors as playing an important role in enhancing knowledge transfer during the mentoring process. The participants asserted that the competencies of mentors were often characterised by knowledge and expertise, and were related to the experience and age of the mentor.

8.2.1.1 Knowledge and expertise

The importance and value of the mentor possessing knowledge and expertise in a mentoring relationship was reported across all three groups of participants in this study, but mostly by mentee and board member/manager participants. Only one mentor spoke of the value of having knowledge in the mentoring process. The possible reason for so few mentors highlighting this factor as important could be that they felt it was implicit in mentorship, because mentoring is defined as a relationship between two parties, where one of these passes on knowledge about a specific subject to the other party (Cline, 2011:36).

The mentee and board member/manager participants indicated that the competencies of the mentor should be characterised by a high level of knowledge in the field of small business and expertise in their respective industries. This finding suggests that the more mentors are knowledgeable and possess industry and small business expertise, the more likely that mentees will benefit from the mentoring

relationship. Ample anecdotal and empirical support for these findings exists in previous research (see Connell & Voola, 2013:219; De Janasz & Godshalk, 2013:760; Hamlin & Sage, 2011:765; SEDA, 2012:86). For example, a study conducted by De Janasz and Godshalk (2013:760) on the role of e-mentoring revealed that mentees who perceive their mentors as having knowledge that will guide their career towards success, benefit from the psychosocial and career development in a mentoring relationship. Similarly, a study conducted by SEDA (2012:86) on the needs analysis of selected SME industries reported that mentor expertise in a specific industry has a positive impact on the effectiveness of mentoring.

8.2.1.2 Experience and age

All three groups of participants in this study reported that the experience of mentors in a mentoring relationship influences the effectiveness of mentoring. The participants pointed out that to become experienced mentors of small businesses, the mentors themselves must have owned a business. The argument for this is that business decisions should not be based on reading books, but rather on experience. According to the participants, experience should enable mentors to relate to the experiences of mentees and suggest practical solutions based on these experiences.

The empirical findings of this study are supported by a survey of first-generation students and African-American women (McGill, 2011:105) which showed that mentors should be able to share their own challenging experiences with the mentees in order to facilitate learning. Again, a survey (Ferguson, 2011:120) regarding how effective mentorship looks in practice revealed that mentees valued their mentoring relationships with experienced mentors and believed that these mentors would help enhance their knowledge. By contrast, a study of novice English language teachers' mentoring support (Mann & Tang, 2012:489) did not support the notion that the experience of the mentor is important in the mentoring relationship. The study in question found that it was preferable to have a less experienced mentor because the

mentor's experience would be more recent, eliminating the generation gap which presents old concepts in current situations.

Furthermore, the findings of this study revealed that the participants relate the level of experience of mentors to their age, possibly because some of the mentors who participated in this study were young (half of these mentors were less than 45 years old). The younger mentors however indicated that age should not be an issue for mentoring relationships, while the older mentors linked the experience of mentors to age. It is understandable that the younger mentors would not link their own experience to their age as doing so would mean that they were not sufficiently competent to provide mentoring to small businesses.

The idea of experience being linked to age is inherent in the traditional theory of mentoring whereby a mentor is referred to as someone who is older than the mentee and is experienced in the field to impart knowledge to the younger individual (Finkelstein *et al.*, 2012:808; Rowland, 2012:229). As a result, the age of the mentor has been reported by numerous researchers (Finkelstein *et al.,* 2012:804; George & Mampilly 2012:140; Geuder *et al.,* 2011:56; Gosh 2014) as having an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring as it influences the extent of satisfaction with the relationship. Therefore, there could still be challenges to mentoring relationships that do not follow the traditional older-mentor and younger-mentee combination (Finkelstein *et al.* 2012:809). However, the most important element of experience is the possession of the skills to address the skills gaps identified, rather than age. This view is supported by a study conducted by Deering (2010:38) on the impact of age on mentoring relationships within academic settings. The results of that study suggested that a relationship does not exist between the age of mentors and the knowledge gained by mentees in a mentoring relationship.

8.2.2   APPROACHABILITY OF THE MENTOR

The approachability of the mentor in a mentoring relationship was found to be important by mentees, while only one mentor and none of the board member/managers commented on this theme. A possible reason for the lack of

comment could be that these participants believed approachability is a given and is therefore not worth mentioning. It is also possible that mentees noting the importance of approachability in a mentor could be the result of negative mentoring experiences with unapproachable mentors in the past.

The mentee participants were of the view that being approachable was characterised by the mentors having a positive attitude as well as creating an environment that allowed mentees to address issues freely, and not feel dominated by mentors. Mentors being approachable was further described as being available and welcoming to mentees when they approached mentors for help and assistance. Empirical evidence exists (Eller *et al.,* 2014:817; Elliott, Beltman & Lynch 2011:6; Little, Kearney &Britner, 2010:196) supporting the findings of this study. In a study conducted among talented adolescents, Little *et al.* (2010:196) found that the participants noted the importance of their mentors' approachability as one aspect that influences the quality of the mentoring relationship.

8.2.3 RESPECT

Respect is acknowledged as a central theme that people mention when engaging in conversations with others (Finkelstein *et al.* 2012:805). The participants in this study indicated that both parties in a mentoring relationship should have respect for one another. As such, respect in a mentoring relationship is discussed under two sub-themes, namely what it means to be a respectful mentor, and a respectful mentee.

8.2.3.1 Respectful mentor

Mentee and board member/manager participants in this study were of the opinion that a respectful mentor has an influence on the effectiveness of mentoring. These participants stated that a respectful mentor acknowledges the importance of mentees in the relationship and this is determined by how the mentor speaks to mentees, for example using the right words to give advice, and also treating mentees as adults.

Both anecdotal and empirical evidence support the findings of this study (see Eller *et al.,* 2014:818; Pomeroy & Steiker, 2011:198; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2012:442). Pomeroy and Steiker (2011:198) point out that mentors must treat mentees with the utmost respect for their hard work in the relationship and the desire to develop skills. In addition, a survey undertaken by Eller *et al.* (2014:818) on key components of an effective mentoring relationship, reported that when mentors respect their mentees, that respect encourages mentees to work harder because they would not want to disappoint their mentors.

8.2.3.2 Respectful mentee

The findings of this study reveal that a respectful mentee has an impact on the success of a mentoring relationship. Although no board member/managers commented on the need for mentees to be respectful, both mentors and mentees expressed their views on mentees' display of respect during mentoring interactions. The board member/managers may have not commented on this aspect, perhaps because they believed that respect for mentors is automatically conferred in the relationship, and that those who are in an authority position deserve to be respected.

The mentors however emphasised that being respectful should not stop mentees from being free to express their views and ask questions during the mentoring process. It is however common in the black culture that a younger person should show respect by listening to the elderly and not openly express their views and ask questions. Respect being linked to culture demonstrates a cultural behaviour, which is discussed later in this chapter in Section 8.4.2. Mentees indicated that when mentees demonstrate respect towards their mentors, such respect is returned to these mentees.

The findings of this study are supported by both anecdotal and empirical evidence (Connor & Pokora, 2007:80; Cunningham & Hillier, 2013:46; Eller *et al.,* 2014:818; Son & Kim, 2013:323) which suggests that a mentoring relationship is enhanced when mentees demonstrate respect towards their mentors. Connor and Pokora (2007:80) indicate that mentors who do not perceive respect from their mentees are

likely to withdraw from the mentoring relationship. Hence, mentees must show that they respect their mentors' opinions, ideas and decisions made during the relationship (Cunningham & Hillier 2013:46).

8.2.4   COMMUNICATION

Communication is considered important in a mentoring relationship as it strengthens the relationship between the mentor and mentee (Ayinde 2011:10). The participants in this study mentioned three sets of circumstances in which communication in a mentoring relationship can be enhanced. These are when open communication exists in the mentoring relationship, when the mentee is proficient in the language that is being used during mentoring sessions, and during intercultural communication. Interpretations of these three sub-themes are presented in the following sections.

8.2.4.1 Open communication

The findings of this study suggest that open communication has an impact on effective mentoring of small businesses. All the participants in this study expressed their views about the importance of open communication in the context of mentoring in that it means creating a comfortable and open environment to enable mentees to express their views freely. The participants further explained open communication as being characterised by the ability of the mentor to communicate well with mentees to eliminate misunderstandings. These participants indicated that when open communication exists in a mentoring relationship, mentors listen to the views of the mentees, including listening to both verbal and non-verbal communications by mentees, and knowing how to act accordingly. This implies that the mentor should have the ability to correctly interpret the views of mentees including those which are indirectly communicated.

Sufficient empirical evidence exists to support these findings. For example, in a survey of mentor–mentee dyads in an academic setting, mentees stated that open communication with mentors helps them gain confidence in their skills (Eller *et al.,*

2014:817). Furthermore, a survey determining the traits that inhibit the success in doctoral programmes revealed that open communication between both parties enhances a learning environment that unveils even the cultural norms and expectations of which mentees would be otherwise unaware (McGill 2011:105). Another survey of female athletic trainers showed that open communication has a positive impact in making mentees feel invited and welcome to share their concerns (Mazerolle, Borland & Burton, 2012).

8.2.4.2 Language proficiency

Empirical findings from this study reveal that language proficiency has an influence on the effectiveness of communication and that of mentoring. In other words, the more mentees understand the language that is being used during mentoring interactions, the more likely it is that communication will be effective and mentoring enhanced. The mentors and mentees highlighted the importance of language proficiency for effective mentoring of black owner–managers. The board member/managers did not express any views on this theme, possibly because some of these board member/managers were not directly involved in mentoring sessions.

The participants noted that it is imperative to use a language that is understood by mentees during mentoring sessions. They explained that using a language that is not understood by mentees may require a translation of the information into the native language of these mentees. The participants noted that a lack of English proficiency of black owner–managers in particular, could be a result of the poor standard of education that the black community had received. This is not surprising as Botha (2014:8) acknowledges that the black South African community had generally received a low quality of education before the democratic transition in 1994.

Empirical support for the findings of this study can be found in a study determining the needs, state and performance of SMEs in South Africa (SEDA, 2012:88) in which it was reported that communication with SME owner–managers was not efficient because of the use of English during mentoring interactions. That study reported that the communication material was usually presented in English, which created

challenges in communicating with owner–managers – so much so that in some cases, the information had to be translated into a language that these owner–managers could understand. Hence, providing mentoring to small businesses in a language in which owner–managers are proficient, is likely to positively influence the effectiveness of communication and of mentoring.

8.2.4.3 Intercultural communication

The importance of intercultural communication during mentoring was noted by mentor and mentee participants in the current study, while the board member/managers did not comment on this theme. Mentor and mentee participants explained that the diverse cultures in South Africa have an impact on the effectiveness of communication during the mentoring process in that the meaning and interpretation of the communicated message depends on the culture of the person conveying the message. In addition, participants explained that the manner in which individuals must behave when a message is communicated differs across cultures.

The findings of this study are supported by a large volume of anecdotal and empirical evidence in the communication literature (Adetunji & Sze, 2012:8; Ismail & Lawrence, 2012:106; Kappas & Krämer, 2011:94; Samovar *et al.*, 2012:8). For example, a survey conducted by Adetunji and Sze (2012:8) reported that non-verbal actions such as body language and facial expressions should be interpreted correctly and meaningfully in any relationship. Anacdotal evidence (Kappas & Krämer, 2011:94; Samovar *et al.,* 2012:16) also suggests that people engaging in intercultural communication should try to maintain a continual awareness of body behaviours during interaction with others.

8.2.5   TRUST AND HONESTY

The findings of this study suggest that a trusting and honest mentoring relationship that is characterised by confidentiality of information may have a positive influence on effective mentoring. High levels of trust and honesty between mentors and

mentees were highlighted by all three groups of participants as important in a mentoring relationship. It was also evident in the participants' comments that trust and honesty are strongly linked to confidentiality of information in a mentoring relationship. The participants stated that a trusting and honest relationship includes being honest with each other about the information that is being shared, believing in the abilities of one another and not sharing information with third parties. Even though the participants were of the opinion that confidential information may be exchanged during the mentoring process, these participants believed that the relationship should be professional at all times and that personal information should not be shared with a mentor in order to avoid disruptions of the mentoring process.

Previous research supports the findings of this study (Eller *et al.,* 2014:818; Sambunjak *et al.*, 2010:74). For example, in a survey determining mentor–mentee dyads in an academic setting (Eller *et al.,* 2014:818) mentors indicated that honesty and mutual trust are necessary in achieving successful mentoring. In that study, mentees noted that it was important to trust and appreciate each other. One mentee even stated that mentors should believe and trust in the ability of mentees. The other mentee went on to explain that when professors respect mentees, these mentees work a lot harder because they do not want to disappoint their professors. Furthermore, both anecdotal and empirical evidence (Bell 2008; Hamlin & Sage 2011:755; Leck & Orser 2013:417; Straus *et al.* 2009:137) exists suggesting that both the mentor and mentee must maintain confidentiality in a mentoring relationship.

8.2.6   COMMITMENT

Griffin and Toldson (2012:103) as well as Hutchisin and Cochrane (2014:1030), highlight the importance of commitment in a mentoring relationship. The findings of the current study demonstrate that commitment of both mentors and mentees is critical in a mentoring relationship. The participants indicated that it is important that mentors exhibit high levels of commitment through passion and patience in working with small businesses, while mentees demonstrate high levels of willingness to learn

to show their commitment in a mentoring process. These views are presented in the next subsections.

8.2.6.1 Passion and patience of the mentor

The mentees and board members in this study considered commitment of mentors as an important aspect of a mentoring relationship. The participants noted that a committed mentor, while being passionate and patient, would also be selfless and enjoy empowering mentees, particularly ensuring the development of owner–managers and their businesses. Such a mentor was also tolerant and believed that the mentees' businesses could be successful.

Both anecdotal and empirical evidence exists (Hamlin & Sage 2011:755; Poteat, 2012:35; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011:1548) demonstrating that the commitment of a mentor enhances the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. In addition, the findings of this study are supported by a survey determining mentor–mentee dyads in an academic setting (Eller *et al.,* 2014:817) in which mentees reported that they need mentors who have a passion for mentoring. In that case, the mentees explained that they themselves may also enjoy the activities they engaged in during mentoring sessions.

8.2.6.2 Mentee's willingness to learn

The participants across all three groups noted that mentees should be dedicated and willing to learn during the mentoring process. The participants found that mentees often fail to commit to mentoring when they engage in mentoring programmes for the wrong reasons, such as hoping to get funding for their businesses, or hoping to get marketing assistance for their own businesses from the institutions that provide mentoring services. The participants explained that mentees' willingness to learn in a mentoring process is demonstrated by the following behaviours:

- Being dedicated and inspired to succeed in business;
- Being able to initiate mentoring activities such as meetings;
- Doing what is required of them; and

- Being hard-working.

Empirical evidence exists (Leck & Orser, 2013:416; McGill 2011:105) supporting the findings of this study. For instance, an exploratory study on trust in mentoring relationships showed that mentees need to demonstrate a genuine willingness to learn from their mentors for the success of mentoring programmes (Leck & Orser, 2013:416). Furthermore, a survey of African American female graduate students revealed that mentoring relationships seem to be most beneficial when the mentee is willing to ask questions and learn from the mentor (McGill 2011:105).

8.2.7   EMOTIONAL SUPPORT BY THE MENTOR

Emotional support by the mentor was considered important for a mentoring relationship by mentee and board member/manager participants in the study. Mentors did not share any views on the emotional support provided by mentors to mentees. Mentees and board member/managers had contradictory views, however, regarding the extent of the emotional support that should be provided by mentors to mentees. Most of the participants felt that a mentor who provides emotional support should be sensitive to the emotions of mentees and be sympathetic and empathetic when these mentees face challenging issues in both business and personal lives. These participants emphasised that mentors should not only assist mentees with business issues but should also fulfil counselling roles in the development of these mentees. An opposing view of one participant was that even though the emotional support provided by mentors is important in a mentoring relationship, the mentoring relationship should at all times be professional and it should not be expected of mentors to fulfil the role of a therapist.

Despite the conflicting views about the extent of emotional support in a mentoring relationship, the findings of this study suggest that emotional support by the mentor has an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring. Thus, the more a mentor is being empathetic, sympathises when mentees are faced with challenging issues and provides solutions to the business and personal challenges these mentees

encounter, the more likely these mentees are to regard their mentor as providing them with emotional support.

Previous research also elaborates on the emotional support provided by mentors. A research study conducted by Garr and Dewe (2013:250) reported that mentees are satisfied with the mentoring relationship when a mentor understands the difficult and troubling situations that they experience during mentoring. Furthermore, a study of doctoral experiences in successful degree completion (Jairam & Kahl, 2012:317) revealed that mentoring relationships were successful because mentors were understanding of and encouraging about the challenges and problems faced by mentees. Those mentees explained that their mentors provided emotional support focused on the problems they encountered during mentoring. In addition, a study of how effective mentors look in practice (Ferguson 2011:122), revealed that on approaching a potential mentor, new nurses would look for someone whom they believed would offer them emotional support during stressful working conditions.

According to Freedman (2009:179), mentoring activities usually begin by addressing business-related issues, but later on develop into serving psychosocial functions such as counselling. Counselling in a mentoring relationship allows mentors to help mentees investigate and solve personal issues that may negatively affect their performance (Bower, 2012:7; Okurame, 2012:70). In other words, it is appropriate to expect mentors to provide counselling on personal issues in a mentoring relationship, particularly those issues that may have a negative impact on the effectiveness of mentoring and on the mentees' businesses.

8.2.8   FEEDBACK

The aim of providing feedback, particularly in a learning environment, is to generate improved work (Boud & Molloy 2013:205). In this study, the participants asserted that feedback was valuable during mentoring of small businesses. The participants explained that the mentor must possess the necessary skills in providing feedback to mentees. At the same time, mentees must accept the feedback that they receive, whether the feedback is positive or negative.

8.2.8.1 Mentor feedback skills

The findings of this study suggest that the feedback skills of a mentor may have a positive influence on the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses. This implies that when mentors provide feedback on mentoring tasks and activities and know how to provide negative feedback, the more likely it is that the feedback will lead to effective learning by mentees. Mentees and board member/manager participants indicated that providing feedback about mentoring tasks and activities assigned to mentees during mentoring process was important, because it allowed these mentees to know whether they are on the right track concerning business skills learned. The participants commented that mentors who possess feedback skills know how to provide negative feedback in the appropriate manner. It is important to highlight the manner in which negative feedback is presented to mentees because negative feedback can create an emotional response and therefore should be treated with care to ensure the effectiveness of such feedback (Schartel 2012:77).

Empirical evidence supporting these findings exists in previous research. For example, a survey of Eller *et al.* (2014:817) highlighted the need for supportive feedback that is honest in a mentoring relationship. In that survey, the participants reported that mentors need to provide feedback that is critical, constructive and honest to enhance learning. In addition, a study conducted among healthcare professionals (Harrison, Hayden & Cushing, 2012:418) reported the significant impact of mentors' feedback skills on the effectiveness of mentoring. These authors concluded that the development of feedback skills in mentors is essential to ensure that feedback is presented appropriately.

8.2.8.2 Mentees' receptiveness to feedback

As important as the mentor's feedback skills, is mentees' receptiveness to feedback in a mentoring relationship. The participants, mainly the mentor and board member/managers, asserted that mentees should be able to deal with feedback, whether it is positive or negative, since receiving positive feedback all the time might

not be a true reflection of their own performances. The ability to accept both positive and negative feedback is crucial as it also enhances learning.

Prior studies (Allen *et al.,* 2010:74; Leck & Orser, 2013;416; Miniute-Cobb & Alfred, 2010:104; Son & Kim, 2012:312) have provided anecdotal and empirical evidence to support a positive relationship between the extent to which the mentee accepts feedback and the effectiveness of mentoring. According to Son and Kim (2012:312), research has shown that mentors are more likely to provide mentoring support to mentees who are receptive to advice and feedback. Again, in their exploratory study on trust in mentoring relationships, Leck and Orser (2013:416) found that mentors indicated that the mentee's ability to receive honest feedback was essential for the effectiveness of mentoring. In one extreme case, one mentor even described himself as being known for "tearing people apart" because he believes in providing honest feedback regardless of how bad the feedback is. Furthermore, in a study among marketing teachers (Tähtinen *et al.*, 2012:11), mentees revealed that feedback discussions often affected them negatively as they failed to be objective during these discussions.

8.2.9 CULTURAL ISSUES

The participants across the three groups agreed that even though cultural differences between mentors and mentees could exist, they should not influence the mentoring relationships. The participants noted that it was important to observe these cultural differences and be sensitive to them, but that these differences should not determine the extent of satisfaction in a mentoring relationship. They explained that if cultural differences were considered to have an impact on mentoring relationships, the purpose of mentoring would be compromised. These participants alleged that the "business culture" should be considered the determining factor in a mentoring relationship and not personal cultural backgrounds. Despite the fact that the participants in this study indicated that cultural differences should not influence mentoring relationships, some of the participants acknowledged that there had been incidents of unsatisfactory mentoring relationships resulting from differences in the cultural backgrounds of mentors and mentees.

The findings of this study are consistent with a study conducted by Chung, Bemak and Talleyrand (2007:28). In that study, the participants reported that it was not important to have a mentor of the same cultural background. Instead, those participants asserted that it was important that the mentor is culturally sensitive to other cultures for the relationship to work. Contrary to the findings of the present study, however, Kochan (2013:427) concludes that the success or failure of mentoring programmes depends on cultural issues inherent within individuals in a mentoring relationship.

8.2.10 ALIGNMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

The interviews among all three groups of participants revealed that contradictory perceptions and expectations about mentoring and mentoring outcomes exist. In particular, mentors and board member/managers had similar views about the sometimes unrealistic expectations of mentees. Both groups of participants indicated that some black owner–managers engage in mentoring for the wrong reasons – such as expecting to obtain funding or marketing from the mentoring institutions. A possible explanation provided by these participants for these unrealistic expectations is that owner–managers get accepted into a mentoring programme without being properly informed about the programme and its possible outcomes.

Contrary to the views of mentors and board member/managers, mentees expressed disappointment in their mentoring institutions because their mentoring expectations had not been met. Varied expectations were noted by these mentees. Some pointed out that they had not yet received any skills training as part of the mentoring programme. Others explained that they were expecting to be exposed to established businesses and that this exposure would increase their chances of growing. One mentee was disappointed that he had not been provided with funding for his business which seems to have been his reason for enrolling for mentoring. Other mentees were expecting that the institutions would assist them by performing marketing activities on their behalf. They stated that their customer base had not improved since joining a mentoring programme.

Even though differences in expectations of mentoring between the mentor and mentee can be expected, it is important that the functions of mentoring be clearly defined to ensure satisfactory mentoring experiences (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255). This implies that if the functions and outcomes of mentoring had been clearly discussed with these mentees, the expectations of all the stakeholders in a mentoring programme would have been aligned as everyone in the relationship would be working towards achieving a common goal. These findings also emphasise the importance of the contracting phase of mentoring discussed in section 3.7. In that section, it was suggested that mentors and mentees outline a plan of how mentoring should be conducted, which would influence the satisfaction of both parties with the relationship.

Both anecdotal and empirical evidence exists (Cotton & Shen 2013; Eller *et al.,* 2013:817; Huskins, Silet, Weber-main, Begg, Fowler, Hamilton & Fleming 2011), which confirms the importance of alignment of expectations in social connections such as mentoring relationships (Crumpton 2011:52). In a survey determining mentor–mentee dyads in an academic setting, mentees noted that they need mutually established goals, clear expectations and identified milestones for successful mentoring (Eller *et al.,* 2013:817). Furthermore, the empirical evidence from a survey (Huskins *et al.,* 2011) demonstrated the significance of having aligned expectations in a mentoring relationship. The survey focused on identifying and aligning the expectations of mentees and mentors for successful mentoring and the researchers concluded that mentoring contracts can be useful to facilitate this alignment. In addition, a study among junior medical doctors (Garr & Dewe, 2013:251) concluded that a mismatch in expectations of the mentor and mentee results in undesirable mentoring relationships and therefore has a negative influence on effective mentoring. Hence, it is imperative to outline the expectations of mentors and owner–managers at the beginning of the relationship to ensure effective mentoring.

8.2.11 MENTOR–MENTEE MATCHING

All mentee participants in this study engaged in formal mentoring programmes, where mentors are allocated to mentees by the institutions, as these programmes are structured to address the needs of the mentees' businesses. This means that mentees did not have a choice in deciding who their mentor would be. However, mentee participants had contradictory views when asked about mentor–mentee matching preferences. Most of the mentees reported that they would prefer to choose a mentor themselves as that would give them a chance to familiarise themselves with the credentials and suitability of the mentor. Only two mentees noted that they preferred to have a mentor assigned to them. These mentees explained that when the institution knows about the type of skills needed by mentees, such an institution can specifically recommend someone who will be able to address and develop those skills.

Previous research (Munson & McMillen, 2008:460) also reported that most of the participants had their mentors arranged for them, while less than half of them had met their mentors through informal interactions such as family, friends and the neighbourhood. A study of mentoring among junior medical doctors (Garr & Dewe, 2013:251) reported that mentees are more satisfied with the mentoring relationship when a system of matching exists, a system that accommodates their preferred pairing.

8.3   NON-RELATIONAL THEMES

Non-relational themes refer to those aspects highlighted by participants that do not impact the personal relationship of the mentor and mentee, but the mentoring processes itself, namely *infrastructure, capacity of mentor, financial support, scheduling of meetings, awareness of mentoring initiatives, structure of group mentoring sessions, duration of mentoring process,* and *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions.*

8.3.1   INFRASTRUCTURE

Having a proper infrastructure is important for the effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. Unfortunately many small businesses in South Africa are situated in rural areas with poor infrastructure (Du Plooy *et al.*, 2012:98). The participants in this study noted the importance of infrastructure in the success of mentoring programmes, describing infrastructure in terms of having proper access to the mentoring location, as well as to mentoring resources.

8.3.1.1 Accessibility of mentoring location

Both mentor and mentee participants highlighted accessibility of the mentoring location as important for effective mentoring, but noted that it was problematic. The board member/managers did not comment on this theme, perhaps because the location is convenient for them and, as such, they did not consider the cost of travelling to this location for mentees. Nonetheless, mentors and mentees pointed out that travelling between the institutions where the mentoring facilities are located and their own business premises posed a challenge to providing and receiving the mentoring service effectively. Mentees indicated that they have to travel long distances to reach the mentoring location and that they had to walk at times because transport to these locations was not available.

For black owner–managers in particular, if the location of mentoring services is not easily accessible, it may become costly and unaffordable. In addition, it is unlikely that many black owner–managers own motor vehicles to travel between their business premises and the location where the mentoring services are provided. At the same time, even those owner–managers who do own motor vehicles may not be able to afford the fuel cost of travelling between their business premises and the mentoring location as these are often situated far apart.

A similar finding was observed by SEDA (2012:87) in their analysis of the needs, state and performance of SMEs in South Africa. The findings of that study reported that some of the SMEs operating in rural areas have to travel long distances to reach

the institutions that support the development of these businesses. In turn, SME advisors were reported as often having to travel long distances to reach the business premises of owner–managers. Hence it is important that the location of the places that provide mentoring to small businesses should be more easily accessible to save time and costs which are often unaffordable by the black small business owner–managers.

8.3.1.2 Accessibility of mentoring resources

The participants across the three groups noted that lack of access to mentoring resources influences effective mentoring, and that mentees do not always have proper access to necessary resources such as email facilities or training material such as stationery to perform mentoring tasks. In some cases, mentees do not have access to computers as the computers at the institutions that provide mentoring services are often not working. It was suggested that these mentoring institutions did not provide enough resources to perform mentoring activities possibly because the institutions did not take mentoring seriously, and as a result did not provide sufficient resources for mentoring programmes.

It is also possible that one of the reasons for these institutions not providing mentors and mentees with the necessary mentoring resources is insufficient funding. This is confirmed by mentors' comments in Section 7.3.3, when they explained that they could not provide all the training because of financial constraints. It is apparent that mentors themselves often do not have access to training material, and that mentoring service providers do not provide enough resources for mentoring activities because there is insufficient funding for mentoring programmes. This may be a result of the fact that almost all the small businesses participating in this study were involved in technical activities, and that most of the funding is being used for technical activities rather than for business management activities.

The empirical findings reported in this study are in agreement with previous research indicating that mentoring resources are important for effective mentoring. However, in the case of this study, the findings differ from previous research in respect of the

lack of access to mentoring resources. For example, Ayeni and Adelabu (2012:62), report that the availability of learning facilities in a learning environment has a positive relationship with the quality of learning, which in turn leads to the attainment of goals. Furthermore, in a study among nursing students, Jokelainen, Turunen, Tossavainen, Jamookeeah and Coco (2011:2863) noted that even though a good relationship between mentors and mentees is an important aspect of a mentoring process, it is equally important to provide opportunities for mentoring with adequate resources to achieve effective mentoring.

8.3.2   CAPACITY OF MENTORS

Even though it is emphasised that there should be enough mentors to develop the skills of owner–managers (Guy, 2010:8), mentee and board member/manager participants in this study indicated that mentoring sessions are conducted in group settings as there are too few mentors to facilitate individual mentoring. Mentees mentioned that in most cases the available mentors were unable to address their individual needs because of the limited numbers of mentors available. In some cases, the board member/managers also assisted in the mentoring sessions when not enough mentors were available. One board member/manager acknowledged this, pointing out that increasing the capacity of mentors is costly. As was the case with accessibility of mentoring resources, insufficient funding is given as a reason for not having enough mentors to facilitate mentoring to small businesses.

The findings of this study suggest that the capacity of mentors to address the needs of mentees is critical in the success of mentoring. Thus, if more institutions have enough mentors to address the needs of mentees, the more likely it is that effective mentoring will be ensured. The findings of this study are corroborated by the findings reported by SEDA (2012:89) in which the limited capacity of mentors was reported as a challenge facing large number of SMEs in South Africa. Furthermore, a study among resident doctors in Nigeria (Okoro, Ogunbiyi, George & Bello, 2012:6) reported that one of the issues hindering the success of mentoring was the limited capacity of mentors for those doctors. In addition, in a study that explored the role of mentors (Myall, Levett-Jones & Lathlean, 2008:1838), mentors reported that they

were sometimes under pressure when there was a limited number of mentors available to assist nurses.

8.3.3   FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A lack of financial support for mentoring processes was acknowledged by mentors and board member/managers. Interestingly, mentees did not comment on the importance of financial support for the effectiveness of mentoring processes as one would expect that insufficient funding would have a significant impact on this group of participants. This behaviour may be linked back to the alignment of expectations in a mentoring relationship which was highlighted in Section 8.2.10. In that section, it was noted that owner–managers get accepted into a mentoring programme without being properly briefed on what the programme and its outcomes involve. This implies that mentees may not be aware of the possible costs of mentoring because their main interest was the funding of their own businesses rather than the financial needs of the mentoring processes themselves. Some of these mentees indicated that there should be more funding for owner–managers for day-to-day operating costs of their businesses, as well as capital for the businesses. One mentee explained that funding for small businesses was available, but how to access to these funds was a challenge facing small business owner–managers.

Nonetheless, it was noted in this study that the funding which the institutions receive for mentoring of small businesses is insufficient. The mentor and board member/manager participants mentioned that a lack of funds hinders the effectiveness of the development support provided to small businesses as the institutions cannot provide all the necessary training. These participants further explained that mentees could not afford some of the mentoring aids such as access to internet cafés. It was also noted that the grants they received from funders were insufficient for their needs.

The empirical findings reported in this study are well supported by previous research. In a survey among SMEs in South Africa (SEDA, 2012:90), for example, it was revealed that the funding made available to SMEs generally is not enough to provide

support interventions for these businesses. Furthermore, the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (2009:7) reports that the main challenge that the project faces in providing mentoring is insufficient funding.

8.3.4 SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS

According to the findings of this study, mentoring meetings are scheduled differently depending on the preference of the institution involved. Some of the participants indicated that the meetings were scheduled weekly, some monthly, while others indicated that meetings were scheduled depending on the needs of mentees. For those without predetermined scheduled meetings, the participants explained that the first meeting was initiated by the institution and subsequent meetings were arranged based on the need of the mentee to meet with the mentor. In addition, mentees explained that even though they met monthly, the frequency of these meetings was not enough to address their needs in a mentoring relationship.

While some of the participants in this study indicated that they had predetermined scheduled meetings, this does not necessarily mean that these meetings are scheduled to achieve target goals. This argument is based on the fact that if meetings were scheduled to achieve target goals, the mentees would not be expressing their dissatisfaction about the mentoring programme failing to provide them with management training, because they would know what was expected to be achieved by certain dates.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that determining the scheduling of the meetings is important for the success of mentoring programmes as it ensures that both mentors and mentees work together to achieve common goals (Hinchman & Sheridan-Thomas, 2014:376). In the absence of scheduled meetings, it is likely that some of the tasks and skills may either be delayed or never completed as it would be expected that feedback is provided on such tasks during these meetings. Empirical evidence for the significant impact of scheduled meetings in the learning environment exists in previous research (Alonso & Loui, 2011; Usmani, Rehman, Babar & Afzal, 2012:283). For example, a survey concerning an undergraduate

research programme (Alonso & Loui, 2011) reported that as a result of the mismatch in expectations in a mentoring relationship, scheduled meetings were designed to monitor mentees' progress. Furthermore, a survey by Bagramian, Taichman, McCauley, Green, Inglehart and Habil (2011:293) reported that mentees prefer to have scheduled meetings with mentors in order to have successful mentoring.

8.3.5   AWARENESS OF MENTORING INITIATIVES

The findings of this study reveal that the awareness or lack of awareness of small business mentoring programme initiatives may influence the success of mentoring of these businesses. Both mentors and mentees stressed that the availability of support mechanisms, including mentoring programmes, for small businesses was not known to the public. The board member/managers did not comment on the need to make the public aware of mentoring services provided by their institutions. This may be because they are part of the initiative, and therefore assume that small businesses know of their institutions' existence. Another possible reason for the board member/managers' silence on this theme could be that they do not have a proper marketing plan to make the public aware of mentoring initiatives.

Nonetheless, some mentors acknowledged that they had not known about the existence of mentoring programmes before they joined the institutions. These participants further noted that many communities are not aware of development opportunities available to small businesses. Mentees also proposed that small business owner–managers should be made aware of the available mentoring institutions by means of the media and using schoolchildren to convey information to parents on the available mentoring opportunities for small businesses.

The empirical findings reported in this study are well supported by those in previous research. For example, a study conducted among young people who transit from school to work (Schlimbach 2010:12) reports that many young people are still not aware of the opportunity of being supported by a mentor and the potential benefits of this support. According to that study, it is important to increase coverage of mentoring projects and to raise awareness of mentoring to enhance mentoring

programmes. Furthermore, a study conducted among SMEs in South Africa (SEDA, 2012:91) reports that a lack of awareness of the development support among many SMEs in this country is noted by previous research. SEDA explains that information and understanding is lacking among businesses regarding the institutions that provide support to SMEs, what these institutions do, as well as the nature and potential benefits of the programmes, products and services provided to SMEs by these institutions.

8.3.6   STRUCTURE OF MENTORING SESSIONS

The mentee participants found the structure of mentoring sessions to be important during the mentoring process. Varied preferences were reported by mentees whereby some indicated that they prefer one-on-one mentoring, others indicated a preference for group mentoring, and yet another group indicated that they prefer having both styles of mentoring. Specifically when in groups, mentees were of the opinion that group mentoring should be structured to address the needs of mentees, based on the life cycle stages of their businesses. These mentees felt that grouping together mentees who are not in the same stage of their businesses' development becomes a waste of time as mentoring discussions may not apply to everyone in the group.

Despite the preferences mentioned above, the majority of mentees were being mentored in one large group per institution at the time of the study, yet their business needs differed from each other. It is important to note that one of the characteristics of group mentoring is that mentees share similar problems, concerns and goals (Smith, 2007:280). Even though mentee participants in this study shared a common goal – that of acquiring business management skills – it is equally important to note that their businesses were not all in the same life cycle stage, as indicated by these participants. Therefore, the problems and concerns that these mentees experience may not all be the same.

Contradictory findings on the effectiveness of structured groups to enhance group learning have been reported in prior research. A study conducted by Carswell, Hanlon, O'Grady, Watts and Pothong (2009) reported that the learning activities in a group should remain as structured as possible in order to maintain learner focus, interest and involvement in the group. Mulcahy (2012:28) however did not find significant differences in the learning between heterogeneous groups and homogeneous groups. Because of the lack of evidence of significant differences during learning either in structured or unstructured learning sessions, the latter author concludes that it is irrelevant to try to determine which of the two is superior.

8.3.7 DURATION OF MENTORING PROCESS

The participants had contradictory responses regarding the duration of the various mentoring programmes. The majority of mentees believed that the current duration of the mentoring process, between three and five years, was satisfactory to develop business management skills. By contrast, a small number of mentees found three years to be too long.

The empirical results of this study do not have support from previous studies. For example, in a survey on transfer of expertise (Argyriou, Fleming & Wright, 2012:92), almost all the participants mentioned that the mentoring duration of two to six months was insufficient to address all their needs. Those participants suggested that the optimal period of the mentoring process should be at least six months. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence (Earle, Myrick & Yonge, 2011:84) suggests that mentees received insufficient mentoring and as a result suffered from stress and attrition at work.

8.3.8 MENTORING TASKS AND LENGTH OF MENTORING SESSIONS

Most of the mentee participants reported that they did not feel overloaded by mentors regarding mentoring tasks; however, a small number of mentees found the number of mentoring tasks is a lot because they had other responsibilities, such as the running of their businesses. In addition, some of the mentees indicated that the

length of mentoring sessions was too long. These mentees suggested that sessions should be conducted for fewer hours and not daily.

The findings of this study are inconsistent with previous research. A study describing the occurrence and perceived influence of mentoring for occupational therapy faculty members (Falzarano, 2011:141), for example, reported varied lengths of mentoring sessions whereby some sessions lasted one hour or less, others two to three hours, while others varied according to the needs of mentees.

8.4   CULTURAL DIVERSITY OBSERVATIONS

The following section is included in this study to highlight certain behaviours that were observed from the participants, which indirectly could have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. According to Williamson and Harrison (2010:763), even though several researchers use the term "cultural diversity" to describe the changing population of the world through immigration, this concept has been developed to include people born in the same country but who may have different values and approaches to life. In this study, cultural diversity refers to people born in the same country, who have different cultural backgrounds. Thus, cultural diversity refers to people of a variety of cultures living and interacting with one another (Betts 2013:98).

Despite the fact that the participants in this study believed that cultural differences should not influence the effectiveness of mentoring relationships, certain cultural behaviours have been observed across the three groups under investigation during the interview process. Anecdotal and empirical evidence (Allen *et al.,* 2008; Blake-Beard 2009:16; Manwa & Manwa 2007:41; Mujtaba 2013:250; Zoogah 2013:19) suggests that it is important to observe cultural differences in a mentoring relationship as these differences could influence effective mentoring. The varying cultural values can result in misunderstandings, which in turn could influence mentoring relationships. Kochan (2013:428) adds that understanding the cultural differences in mentoring processes is essential when designing mentoring programmes so that mentoring relationships will be more harmonious, which could

enhance the effectiveness of mentoring. Anecdotal evidence further suggests that people of different cultures behave differently, meaning that interpersonal relationships between people of different cultures may be affected by these cultural differences. As such, it is important to take culture into consideration when developing relationships because expectations and acceptable patterns of interaction vary considerably across cultures (Allen *et al.,* 2008:347; Kent *et al.* 2013:16).

From the perceptions and experiences of mentoring as presented in the empirical findings, cultural differences were observed in the following themes: *approachability of the mentor, respectful mentee, intercultural communication, mentor–mentee matching, scheduling of meetings, structure of mentoring sessions*, *duration of mentoring processes,* and *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions*. These themes were discussed in detail earlier as either relational or non-relational themes. The discussions in this section will be presented following the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980), as well as Hofstede and Bond (1988), as these dimensions formed the basis of cultural discussions in this study (see Section 4.2.3). The five cultural dimensions observed in the participants in this study are individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance and long-term/short-term orientation, and findings from these observations are presented in the subsequent sections.

8.4.1   INDIVIDUALISM/COLLECTIVISM

Individualism is the extent to which people prefer to work as individuals as opposed to working as a group (Casado-Lumbreras *et al.,* 2011:2406; Kim & McLean, 2014:47).   In contrast, collectivism is defined as a social pattern that consists of closely related individuals who see themselves as belonging to a group such as a family, co-worker group, tribe and nation (Casado-Lumbreras *et al.,* 2011:2406; Hamamura, 2012:3; Kim & McLean, 2014:47; Zoogah, 2013:20).

The theme that indirectly reflects the individualism/collectivism culture of the participants in this study is the *structure of mentoring sessions* as discussed in Section 7.4.2. Three diverse preferences were presented on this theme suggesting diverse cultural behaviours regarding the individualism/collectivism cultural dimension. One group of the participants pointed out that they prefer a one-on-one mentoring with the mentor. This group explained that a one-on-one style of mentoring ensures that individual needs are addressed, since group discussions may include issues that are not applicable to their individual business settings. This behaviour suggests that these mentees are individualists as they are orientated towards the fulfilment of individual goals.

Contrary to these views, another group of participants asserted that a group mentoring session was the most preferred. This group reasoned that being mentored in a group enables them to gain experience from others as well as learn from others' mistakes. A group mentoring preference implies that these mentees are collectivists as they see themselves belonging to a group of business owner–managers from which they can learn from the experiences shared within the group.

The last group indicated that they prefer both styles of mentoring as each of these styles could be beneficial in a mentoring process. This group is thus neither individualistic nor collectivistic. This implies that these mentees need one-on-one mentoring sessions to address those needs that are unique to their business settings and also need to be in a group of mentees where they can share experiences with others to learn from those experiences.

While it may be expected that the Ubuntu philosophy that emphasises the importance of working in groups could have an influence on behavioural patterns of black owner–managers, the findings of this study suggest that both individualist and collectivist cultural dimensions exist for black owner–managers in South Africa. The findings of this study are, however, contradictory to anecdotal evidence in the literature of culture (Adams *et al.,* 2012; Jackson 2006:133), which indicates that South African communities that are individualistic-orientated are from the white

ethnic group and that collectivistic-orientated communities are from the black ethnic group.

8.4.2   POWER DISTANCE

The power distance dimension is described as the extent to which less powerful individuals accept societal inequality in power, status and wealth (Daniels & Greguras, 2014:1203; Vajjhala & Strang, 2014:81). The acceptance of such inequalities demonstrates views about how individuals with differing levels of power should interact (Daniels & Greguras, 2014:1203).

The existence of power distance for the participants of this study is observed in Sections 7.2.1.2, 7.2.2, 7.2.3.2 and 7.2.4.3, namely the sections on the *experience and age* of the mentor, *approachability of the mentor, respectful mentee* and *intercultural communication*. The findings on the four themes reveal that the participants in this study are high in power distance as inequality and power dynamics exist between mentors and mentees. For example, with regard to the *approachability of the mentor*, the participants were of the opinion that being approachable is characterised by a positive attitude from the mentor when interacting with mentees and creating an environment that does not make mentees feel they are dominated by mentors in the relationship. With regard to *respectful mentee,* as well as *intercultural communication,* an illustration of power distance is observed in the participants' responses where it was stated that in the black culture, younger individuals must show their respect by listening to the elderly when communicating and not openly express their views nor ask questions. Lastly, an indication that power distance exists in mentoring relationships was observed in the participants' responses where it was argued that mentees can learn from a mentor when the mentor is older than the mentee. These findings are supported by Muganda and Pillay (2013:460) confirming that South Africa communities are high in power distance.

8.4.3   MASCULINITY/FEMININITY

Masculinity and femininity in general refer to how aggressive or nurturing a culture is (Kim & McLean 2014:49). Masculinity refers to individuals who are competitive and orientated towards material successes and goal achievement (Hofman & Newman 2014:638; Kim & McLean 2014:49), while individuals with a femininity orientation consider the importance of social relationships and are compassionate towards one another (Hofman & Newman 2014:638).

The existence of the masculinity/femininity cultural dimension in the participants of this study is observed in Sections 7.2.7. and 7.2.9, which discuss *emotional support by the mentor* and *cultural issues*. These two themes' findings suggest that the participants in this study are orientated towards both masculinity and femininity. With regard to *emotional support by the mentor,* an illustration of masculinity/femininity is observed in the responses of the participants on what constitutes emotional support of mentors. Most of the participants indicated that the mentor should be empathetic and sympathetic when mentees face challenges, demonstrating the femininity orientation of these participants. Only two participants stated that the mentor should not play the role of a therapist and that the mentoring relationship should remain professional. This illustrates that these particular mentors are masculinity-orientated as they are driven towards achieving the goals for which the mentoring relationship was established.

Another illustration of the masculinity/femininity cultural dimension in this study was noted when the participants indicated that cultural differences should not influence mentoring relationships because the focus of the mentoring programme is a business improvement and individual cultures should not interfere with mentor–mentee interaction. Instead, they explained that the most important aspect that should drive the relationship is the business culture. They asserted that the main objective of being in a mentoring programme was to grow small businesses, and that this should be the focus of mentoring relationships. This example demonstrates that the participants in this study are masculinity-orientated, as they are focused on achieving the goal for which they engaged in a mentoring programme, rather than on

how well they relate with one another. The findings of this study, as demonstrated by the two themes mentioned above, indicate that both cultures exist across the three groups of participants, and this contradicts previous research (Jippes & Majoor, 2011:10; Mankayi, 2010:24) which indicated that South African communities are perceived as masculinity-orientated.

8.4.4 UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain and ambiguous situations and tries to avoid such situations (Bae *et al.,* 2014:226; Zhang & Zhou 2014:152). Cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance prefer formal regulations, detailed directions on how to achieve tasks and explicit duties (Kim & McLean 2014:49). By contrast, individuals from low uncertainty avoidance cultures reveal greater acceptance of change, prefer more autonomy, only perform essential work and accept ambiguity (Kim & McLean 2014:50).

The relevance of uncertainty avoidance during the mentorship of owner–managers is observed in *mentor–mentee matching* (Section 7.4.1) which explains the manner in which a mentoring relationship is initiated. All the participants in this study agreed that mentees did not have a choice in deciding who their mentor would be as mentors had been assigned by mentoring institutions. However, mentee participants reported contradictory views on mentor–mentee matching preferences. Most mentees indicated that they prefer to choose a mentor themselves to give them a chance to familiarise themselves with the credentials and suitability of the mentor. The finding suggests that this group of mentees is low in uncertainty avoidance as they prefer mentoring relationships that develop spontaneously, possibly with the fear that when a mentor is assigned to them, the relationship may not work. Individuals from low uncertainty avoidance cultures are comfortable in situations where there are no rules (Hofstede 1984:92; Kim & McLean 2014:49), therefore it is likely that choosing a mentor may enable the relationship to be conducted in the manner that suits the interests of the mentee.

While most of the mentee participants were low in uncertainty avoidance, only two mentees noted that they prefer to have a mentor assigned to them. These mentees explained that when the institution knows about the type of skills needed by mentees, such an institution can recommend someone who will be able to address and develop these skills. This implies that when mentoring relationships are characterised by clearly articulated directions and details on how mentoring tasks should be performed, it is likely that these owner–managers believe that the mentorship will be effective, which demonstrates that these owner–managers are high in uncertainty avoidance.

The contradictory observations and findings from this study suggest that some of the black owner–managers are low in uncertainty avoidance while others are high in uncertainty avoidance. These findings are supported by empirical evidence from previous research. In other words, previous research also shows contradictory results. For example, Stander *et al.,* (2013:309) observe South African communities as being high in uncertainty avoidance, while a study conducted by Paddey (2011:86) observe these communities as being low in uncertainty avoidance.

8.4.5   LONG-TERM/SHORT-TERM ORIENTATION

Long-term orientated individuals are open to various types of learning methods as a result of their hard-working nature (Kim & McLean 2014:51). Cultures with a long-term orientation are characterised by values such as persistence, adaptations to new circumstances, as well as perseverance regarding slow outcomes with the idea that the future holds better benefits (Carson *et al.* 2014:351; Gong *et al.,* 2014:43; Kim & McLean 2014:50). In contrast, individuals who are short-term orientated make decisions aimed at the immediate improvement of the financial performance of their businesses (Gunkel *et al.,* 2013:53).

The theme that reflects the long-term/short-term cultural dimension is presented under *duration of the mentoring process* (Section 7.4.3). The majority of mentees believed that the current three-year duration of the mentoring process was satisfactory. These participants indicated that three to five years of mentoring should

be enough to develop business management skills. One mentee suggested that mentoring programmes could be structured into developmental phases of learning. By contrast, a small number of mentees considered a three-year duration of the mentoring process too long, suggesting that a year of mentoring was enough to develop their skills.

These findings suggest that most of the participants preferred long-term mentoring processes and that they are therefore long-term orientated. As Carson *et al.* (2014:350) explain, long-term orientated individuals believe that distant goals are possible to achieve, making it worthwhile to plan and evaluate possible consequences. It is likely that the majority of participants in this study believe in persistence and perseverance with mentoring processes, based on the perception that the benefits of long processes are worthwhile.

The participants who preferred short-term mentoring processes are more short-term orientated. This implies that these mentee participants engage in mentoring programmes to achieve instant results, as they claim that lengthy mentoring processes take time that could be better used by attending to other responsibilities such as their businesses. Gunkel *et al.* (2013:53) asserts that individuals who are short-term orientated make decisions aimed at the immediate improvement of the financial performance of their businesses.

The findings on the long-term/short-term cultural dimension of this study are not supported by past research. For example, Iacob and Dumitrescu (2012:131) observe that black South African communities are often more short-term orientated while white communities are often long-term orientated. However, in this study a combination of long-term and short-term orientated individuals were present.

8.5   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, interpretations of the findings were presented. The discussions incorporated previous research to establish how the findings of this study relate to the existing body of knowledge. The analysis of the themes was presented in three

categories, namely relational, non-relational and cultural diversity observations. Relational themes were described as referring to those themes that influence the personal interaction between mentors and mentees during the mentoring process. These were discussed under *competencies of the mentor, approachability of the mentor, respect, communication, trust and honesty, commitment, emotional support by the mentor*, *feedback, cultural issues, alignment of expectations* and *mentor–mentee matching*. Non-relational themes were described as referring to those factors that do not impact on the personal relationship of the mentor and mentee, but rather on the mentoring processes itself, these being *infrastructure, capacity of mentors, financial support, scheduling of meetings, awareness of mentoring initiatives, structure of group mentoring sessions, duration of mentoring process,* and *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions*. Lastly, the cultural diversity observations which resulted from this study were described to show how the differences in cultural behaviours could influence effective mentoring. Following the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980) as well as Hofstede and Bond (1988), the cultural dimensions observed in the participants in this study were *individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance* and *long-term/short-term orientation*.

Chapter 9, which is the final chapter in this study, will present an overall summary of the study, followed by propositions regarding the factors of effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. Implications and suggestions will be offered on how to improve mentoring of small businesses for their success. Finally, the contributions of this study in the field of mentoring and small businesses will be highlighted and thereafter the limitations of the research, as well as recommendations for future research, will be presented.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 8 presented the interpretations and discussions of the empirical findings of this study by comparing the results with previous research to establish how this study's findings relate to the existing body of knowledge on mentoring of small businesses. Chapter 9 is the final chapter and provides an overview of the study, as well as a summary of the major findings. From the interpretations presented in the previous chapter, the recommendations for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses will be highlighted in this chapter. Following this discussion a framework of factors that influence effective mentoring of small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in particular, will be proposed. The contributions of this study will be presented, followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study and finally, recommendations for future areas of research will be suggested.

9.2   OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Despite the increasingly important role of small businesses to economic development and poverty alleviation, the survival rate of these businesses in South Africa is a major concern. A lack of business management skills and expertise in making important decisions is observed as a possible reason for the high failure rate of small businesses (Huang 2009:99; Nkosi *et al* 2013:2). Even though mentoring has been suggested by previous studies as having the potential to enhance the skills of owner–managers in small businesses, it is surprising that little is still known about the mentoring experiences of these owner–managers, especially in black-owned businesses.

Against this background, the primary objective of this study was to gain an understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses by identifying the factors that influence effective mentoring in these

businesses. In order to address the primary objective, a number of secondary objectives (SO) were identified:

SO[1]: To undertake a theoretical investigation into the nature and importance of small businesses, mentoring, as well as the factors that influence effective mentoring.

SO[2]: To describe the research design and methodology used in conducting this study.

SO[3]: To conduct an empirical investigation in order to determine the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses.

SO[4]: To provide recommendations to various role players on how they could make use of mentoring as a tool to enhance the skills development of black-owned small businesses and ultimately improve the survival of these businesses.

SO[5]: To propose a framework for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses drawn from the empirical investigation and construct hypotheses for future research based on this framework.

This study consists of nine chapters. Based on the above-mentioned objectives, the first chapter commenced with an introduction and background to the study. Thereafter, the problem statement was outlined and the purpose of the research was defined. The primary and secondary research objectives were then presented, together with the research questions of this study. The research design and methodology adopted were also highlighted, and the scope and demarcation of the study were explained. Prior research was discussed and the possible contributions of this work to research and to the development of mentoring were explored. Finally, definitions of the main concepts employed in this study were presented.

A comprehensive review of literature on small businesses, as well as mentoring, was conducted and presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 to address the first secondary objective (SO[1]) of this study. Chapter 2 focused on the nature and importance of small businesses. The discussion commenced by presenting the definitional dilemma facing SMEs, which has resulted in the lack of a universal definition.

Nonetheless, as this study focuses on small business, a black-owned small business is referred to as *a business that is independently owned and managed by a black person, and which employs fewer than 50 people*.

Further discussion was presented on the importance of small businesses in general and in South Africa specifically. The discussion included the important role that black-owned small businesses play in the communities in which they are situated. Following this was a presentation of the challenges that small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in particular are faced with. The business management skills that small business owner–managers need in order to operate their businesses effectively were also highlighted. The initiatives undertaken by the South African government to nurture the small business sector in South Africa were then discussed. Although many of these initiatives are intended to empower small businesses, it was acknowledged that the objectives for which the initiatives were developed are seldom achieved.

In Chapter 3, the role of mentoring in small businesses was explored. Despite the popularity of mentoring and the increased use of mentoring as a developmental tool by various disciplines, no uniform, clear or widely accepted definition of mentoring could be found in the literature. However, for the purpose of this study, mentoring is referred to as *a relationship between two parties, a mentor and mentee, in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained.* Following the definition of mentoring adopted in this study, the confusion that seems to exist between mentoring and coaching was clarified. Earlier studies of mentoring together with theoretical models and various approaches to mentoring were also discussed. This chapter further highlighted the importance of mentoring of small businesses and the benefits for these businesses when engaging in mentoring programmes. Different types of mentoring, as well as the phases of mentoring relationships, were addressed. Following these was an elaboration of the various functions that mentoring plays in the development of owner–managers. The challenges for effective mentoring, particularly pertaining to the small businesses in South Africa, were acknowledged. It was acknowledged that one of the main challenges for

effective mentoring in South African small businesses is a lack of information available regarding mentoring services for these businesses. As such, it was argued that due to a lack of information on mentoring of small businesses in South Africa, it becomes a challenge to conduct research on mentoring of these businesses.

Previous research on mentoring was consulted to identify the factors that could possibly influence effective mentoring of small businesses. These factors were presented in Chapter 4. The importance of harmonious mentoring relationships between the two parties involved (mentor and mentee) was observed as a critical element for an effective mentoring process. A vast number of factors that could influence effective mentoring were identified and were categorised into four groups, namely relational-based, non-relational-based, cultural and demographic factors. The relational-based factors which are geared towards building harmonious mentoring relationships between mentors and mentees were identified as *commitment, open communication, feedback, trust, respect, confidentiality of information, competence of the mentor* and *emotional intelligence*. Non-relational-based factors were described as those factors having an impact on the effectiveness of the mentoring process itself but which are not part of the interaction between mentors and owner–managers, namely *infrastructure, adequate financial support* and *the capacity of mentors*. The third category, cultural factors, was highlighted as crucial for mentoring relationships because differences in cultural backgrounds may influence the interaction of mentors and owner–managers during mentoring processes. These cultural factors are *individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance* and *long-term/short-term orientation*. Lastly, demographic factors such as *ethnicity, language proficiency, gender* and *age* were identified as important as a reflection of diverse populations that exist in South African communities.

The next secondary objective (SO^2) was accomplished in Chapter 5 in which the research design and methodology adopted for this study were described. The chapter commenced with a discussion of the different research designs and methodologies available to the researcher and the different research methods that can be utilised in qualitative research. The following section focused on secondary

and primary data collection methods. The discussion on primary data collection included an overview of the population studied, the sampling unit and techniques, as well the design of the interview schedule. The discussion on data analysis included an explanation of types of codes used when coding the data, the development of the coding framework, as well as the main methods of data analysis used in this study. The chapter concluded with a discussion of how trustworthiness was achieved in this study, together with the way in which ethical considerations were met.

An interpretivism paradigm was utilised in this study, because the study's primary objective was to uncover meanings in a phenomenon (in this case mentoring to black-owned small businesses) as it is understood by the owner–managers, their mentors and mentoring institutions and to describe these in a meaningful manner to those who experience the phenomenon (Remenyi, 2007:218). A qualitative research methodology is often associated with an interpretivism design, and because qualitative research allows the researcher an opportunity to explore meanings and experiences of the phenomenon investigated, a qualitative research methodology was selected for this study. Considering that little is known about effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses, the research approach was exploratory in nature, while phenomenology was selected as the most appropriate research method because it enabled the researcher to distil meaning from the experiences and perceptions of individual participants to understand mentoring of black-owned small businesses.

Methods for collecting secondary and primary data in this study were discussed next. The primary data collection method used was semi-structured interviews. The population studied, the sampling unit as well as the sampling technique were discussed. The population for this study comprised South African institutions providing skills development programmes to small businesses through mentoring, together with their mentors, mentees and board member/managers. The sampling technique used in the present study was non-probability sampling using quota sampling to select the participants. Quota sampling was adopted for the reason that it would allow representation from small businesses in various industries which had participated or were currently participating in a mentoring programme. Unfortunately,

few female owner–managers were available to take part in this study, resulting in the sample composition being dominated by male participants. Furthermore, this study was limited to two provinces in South Africa, namely the Eastern Cape and Gauteng, for which the selection was based on the varying magnitudes of the two provinces in terms of wealth, size and distribution of small businesses.

Four well-known and accessible institutions that provide mentorship to small businesses in Gauteng and Eastern Cape provinces were selected. Two mentoring institutions were selected from each province. While the total number of mentee participants decided upon was 12, the total number of mentors was unknown at the beginning of this study as this number is a function of the number of mentors assigned to each mentee by individual institutions. In all instances, one mentor was assigned to more than one owner–manager, and in some institutions, more than one mentor was available for each mentee to provide a variety of different skills. In total, six mentors participated in this study. The objective of pairing mentees with their mentors was to enable a linkage of responses between the two to obtain conclusive results. After several failed attempts to have representation from all four institutions, only three board members/managers made themselves available to participate in this study. These three groups of participants (mentors, mentees and board members) were selected to enable in-depth data to be collected from all the stakeholders concerned in a mentoring programme, and also to be sufficient to address the research questions.

Information pertaining to the analysis of the data was elaborated upon. This included the process of coding the data such as describing the types of codes used in this study, as well as developing the coding framework used to identify themes and sub-themes from the data. A combination of content analysis and constant comparative analysis was identified as the most suitable technique for data analysis in this study.

The third secondary objective (SO^3) was accomplished in Chapters 6, 7 and 8, namely to conduct an empirical investigation of the factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses and to report on these findings. Chapter 6 presented the demographic profile of mentoring institutions within the selected South African

provinces, together with the biographical profile of the participants from which primary data was collected. The presentation of the profiles included the nature of the institutions that provide mentoring to small businesses in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng provinces in South Africa, and the involvement of these institutions in mentoring activities was briefly highlighted. Biographical information of mentors, owner–managers and board member/manager participants was briefly presented, together with their involvement in mentoring programmes.

Chapter 7 presented the findings of the empirical investigation regarding factors that influence effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses. In this chapter, the themes which arose from participants' perceptions and experiences of mentoring were presented and divided into three categories, namely relational, non-relational and other themes. "Relational themes" were described as those which influence the relationship between a mentor and mentee, while "non-relational themes" were described as those influencing the effectiveness of the mentoring process itself but not as a result of the relationship between mentors and mentees. The last category, "other themes", referred to themes that featured in the perceptions and experiences of only one group of participants but were still considered important in addressing the research objective of this study.

A summary of the themes and sub-themes was presented illustrating the themes that were most prominent and those that were less prominent in this study. The most prominent issues that the participants commented on as influencing effective mentoring were *knowledge and expertise of the mentor, experience and age of the mentor, respectful mentor, respectful mentee, open communication, trust and honesty, passion and patience of the mentor, mentee's willingness to learn, emotional support by the mentor, cultural issues, alignment of expectations, mentor– mentee matching, scheduling of meetings,* as well as *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions.* The less prominent issues that the participants commented on were *approachability of the mentor, language proficiency, intercultural communication, mentor feedback skills, mentees' receptiveness to feedback, accessibility of mentoring location, accessibility of mentoring resources, capacity of*

mentors, financial support, awareness of mentoring initiatives, structure of mentoring sessions and *duration of mentoring process*.

In Chapter 8 the interpretations and discussions of the themes and sub-themes that were identified in Chapter 7 were presented. These interpretations and discussions were presented in two categories, these being "relational" and "non-relational themes". The themes that were discussed under "other themes" in Chapter 7 were discussed as relational or non-relational themes in Chapter 8 and not as a separate category in order to provide a holistic discussion of these factors. The relational themes were *competencies of the mentor, approachability of the mentor, respect, communication, trust and honesty, commitment, emotional support by the mentor*; *feedback, cultural issues, alignment of expectations* and *mentor–mentee matching*. Non-relational themes were *infrastructure, capacity of mentors, financial support, scheduling of meetings, awareness of mentoring initiatives, structure of mentoring sessions, duration of mentoring process,* as well as *mentoring tasks and length of mentoring sessions*.

A third category emerged in this chapter based on the empirical findings, namely cultural dimensions, since certain behaviours were observed in the participants in this study which could indirectly have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring relationships. The discussions were presented following the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980), as well as Hofstede and Bond (1988), these being *individualism/collectivism, power distance, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance* and *long-term/short-term orientation*. The discussions across the three categories included comparisons with previous research to establish how the findings in this study relate to previous research on mentoring. Recommendations on how to improve the factors that emerged as influencing effective mentoring are presented in Section 9.3 of this chapter.

The overview of this study confirms that secondary objectives SO[1] to SO[3] of this study have been achieved. In Chapter 9, secondary objectives SO[4] and SO[5] will be achieved. Table 9.1 presents a summary of the secondary objectives (SO) and relevant chapters that address these objectives.

Table 9.1:   Study objectives achieved in the relevant chapters

Objective	Where the objective was achieved
Primary objective: To gain an understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses by identifying the factors that influence effective mentoring in these businesses.	Chapter 1 – Chapter 9
SO[1]: To undertake a theoretical investigation into the nature and importance of small businesses, mentoring, as well as the factors that influence effective mentoring.	Chapter 2 – Chapter 4
SO[2]: To describe the research design and methodology used in conducting this study.	Chapter 5
SO[3]: To conduct an empirical investigation in order to determine the factors that influence effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses.	Chapter 6 – Chapter 8 ANNEXURE B
SO[4]: To provide recommendations to various role players on using mentoring as a tool to enhance the skills development of black-owned small businesses to ultimately improve the survival of these businesses.	Chapter 9
SO[5]: To propose a framework for effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses drawn from the empirical investigation and construct hypotheses for future research based on this framework.	Chapter 9

Source: Researcher's own construction

The next section presents recommendations on the key factors of effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses based on the empirical findings of this study.

9.3   RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE KEY FACTORS OF EFFECTIVE MENTORING OF BLACK-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES

The research findings in this study highlight the importance of effective mentoring of small businesses and black-owned small businesses in particular. Based on the empirical findings of this study, recommendations have been designed to improve the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses in South Africa. These

recommendations are put forward to the different stakeholders involved in the mentoring of small businesses such as mentors, mentees, mentoring institutions, the government, as well as funders of mentoring programmes. The recommendations are presented in two categories, namely relational-based and non-relational-based factors.

9.3.1   RELATIONAL-BASED FACTORS

In this study, relational-based factors refer to those themes which influence the personal interaction between mentors and mentees during the mentoring process, namely *knowledge and expertise of the mentor, experience and age of the mentor, approachability of the mentor, passion and patience of the mentor, cultural sensitivity of the mentor, mentee's willingness to learn, mutual respect, open communication, mutual trust and honesty* and *alignment of expectations*. These are presented in the subsections that follow.

9.3.1.1 Knowledge and expertise of the mentor

In this study, the extent to which mentors are knowledgeable and able to transfer this knowledge to mentees as well as possessing expertise necessary to develop owner– managers, was found to have an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses. The following recommendations are put forward regarding how these issues can be addressed:

- Before knowledge can be transferred, mentors and mentoring institutions should first assess the knowledge and skills levels of mentees, as well as identify mentees' possible skills and knowledge gaps. This is crucial as failure to do so may result in mentees receiving ineffective and inappropriate mentoring.
- Mentors and mentoring institutions should also take into account the fact that some of their mentees lack proper education and educational qualifications. As a result, mentoring material that was developed for better educated owner– managers or for a westernised economy may not be understood by black

owner–managers; knowledge and skills transfer may be ineffective. Therefore care should be taken that mentoring materials be designed in a manner and language that is understood by mentees.

- Mentors should design challenging tasks for mentees to improve their business management skills, capabilities and critical thinking, because individuals often do best when they are challenged to think critically and originally. Again mentors need to be aware that not all owner–managers have the same level of skills development. Tasks need to match the skills level of the small business owner–manager.

- Visiting successful businesses in the same industry where mentees can observe how these businesses operate and what makes them successful, could help the mentees to deepen the knowledge they have gained during the mentoring process. By organising business linkages between mentees and the private sector, business opportunities for small businesses can be generated and skills transfer facilitated.

- In cases where the mentor does not have specific knowledge and expertise needed by a particular mentee and his business, for example where to find new markets or funding, the mentor should know where the mentee can go for advice and assistance. That is why it is important that mentors themselves stay ahead and informed of the newest developments in the small business sector.

- Mentors should keep abreast of new standards that are emerging in different industries as this information may influence the business development of mentees. Various methods for mentors to keep informed and ahead of developments in the small business sector include reading business publications, attending workshops and conferences on small business development, the use of social media and attending small business expos and trade shows.

The knowledge and expertise of mentors also has implications for mentoring institutions as it is their responsibility to recruit mentors who are knowledgeable and possess the necessary expertise to mentor small businesses. The findings of this study, however, indicated that this is not always the case and that mentors often do not possess the appropriate knowledge and expertise to facilitate the mentoring

process. Therefore the following recommendations are put forward to mentoring institutions:

- Mentors should be contracted by using appropriate evaluation criteria to ensure that they possess the knowledge, expertise and qualifications needed to aid or develop mentees in the skill gaps identified in their small businesses. Using appropriate criteria will also ensure that mentors are selected to serve the various industries of small businesses where a need for mentoring is identified.

- A learning culture should be encouraged whereby mentoring institutions ensure that mentors take an active role in developing mentoring programmes and content. Often expert and experienced mentors have better knowledge than the mentoring institutions of which processes and materials work best in transferring knowledge and skills.

- Mentoring institutions need to ensure that mentors continuously improve their mentoring skills in order to make meaningful contributions in the development of owner–managers. Training and continuous development of mentors will enhance the competencies of these mentors. Training could include presenting workshops on mentoring by the mentoring institution or attending modules and workshops presented by tertiary institutions and business associations on how to facilitate mentoring of small businesses.

- Seminars or get-togethers could be organised for mentors from different mentoring institutions so that they can exchange ideas and best practices for performing their mentoring duties in developing the skills of small business owners. New ideas could be developed and information gained by interacting with mentors from other mentoring institutions.

9.3.1.2 Experience and age of the mentor

In this study the empirical results revealed that the experience of the mentor is linked to age and whether the mentor has owned a business prior to taking up the mentoring role. The philosophy that "experience makes the best teacher" (Edwards, 2013:49) cannot be ignored even during mentoring processes.

In order for mentoring institutions to ensure that mentors are experienced regarding small businesses, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Before mentors are selected, it is important to specify the skills and experience needed for mentoring in a particular industry. More experience may be required for mentoring in certain industries such as manufacturing. The selection process should also assess whether the potential mentor has owned a business or has at least had vast experience in a particular industry.

- Where possible, the age of the mentor should be considered in the selection process as the findings of this study suggested that the younger the mentor, the less experience the mentor has. This could be achieved by having a minimum age requirement for mentors and the mentor should preferably be older than the mentee.

- Mentoring institutions should establish a system to provide experience for mentors who appear to have the potential and passion to work with small businesses but who do not yet have experience in mentoring. This can be achieved by pairing an inexperienced mentor with an experienced mentor during mentoring processes. The new mentor can then gain experience by engaging in mentoring processes with an experienced colleague and will be better equipped with the necessary information when he or she becomes an independent mentor.

- An induction programme should be implemented that is designed to assist novice mentors or those with little experience in mentoring small businesses in order to understand their mentoring roles and responsibilities better. An induction programme would enable mentors to understand how to work with small business owner–managers when they begin the mentorship process.

9.3.1.3 Approachability of the mentor

Approachability of the mentor, in this study, refers to mentors having a positive attitude and creating an environment that allows mentees to convey issues freely. It also means that mentors are available and welcoming to mentees who approach them for help and assistance. It is important that mentors become aware of the

power they have in the relationship as they are senior to mentees and should therefore try to create an environment to encourage mentees not to feel dominated in the mentoring relationship. This feeling of domination, as the results revealed, could easily happen when mentors and mentees are from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In order for mentors of small businesses to be perceived as being approachable during mentoring interactions, the following recommendations are put forward for mentors:

- Misunderstandings with mentees should be resolved amicably by addressing these matters privately, without pointing fingers or swearing.
- Care should be taken that mentees do not feel intimidated by the manner in which mentors present themselves and their viewpoints. For example, mentors should not impose their personal views on mentees, but should discuss mentoring issues together, particularly those that will have an impact on the private lives of mentees. By doing so, mentees will feel that they have a say in the decisions affecting them during mentoring interactions and perceive their mentors as being approachable.
- Mentors should demonstrate a sense of openness by being relaxed and friendly during mentoring interactions. Prior to the start of mentoring sessions, mentors could first talk about the current business environment or general state of a particular industry before addressing sensitive and complex business issues.

The approachability of the mentor also has implications for mentoring institutions. To ensure that mentors are approachable to mentees during mentoring interactions, the following recommendations are proposed for these institutions:

- Mentoring institutions should strive to employ mentors with an appropriate attitude for the mentoring job. Having interviews that are structured in such a way that the attitude of a potential mentor can be assessed is recommended. By doing so, it is likely that most of the selected mentors will then be considered approachable by mentees during mentoring interactions.

- Ensure that a policy exists to ensure that mentors are not dominant and controlling towards mentees. This policy should explain the rights and responsibilities of both mentors and mentees during mentoring interactions. For example, this policy could have a list of the rights and responsibilities of each partner during mentoring interactions. This should enable mentees to know when their rights are being violated by mentors so that they can act accordingly.

- A procedure or system should be available for mentees to safely express their dissatisfaction with mentors' dominating behaviour. The system should provide examples of controlling behaviour so that all the parties concerned may have a common understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour during mentoring interactions.

- A policy should be established that deals with mentors who are found guilty of being controlling and dominant during mentoring interactions. This will ensure that mentors are approachable during interactions with mentees, knowing that failure to do so will not be tolerated.

- Encourage mentors and also, if possible, give them remuneration to attend seminars on how to enhance their interpersonal skills and interpersonal relationships. Seminars could educate mentors, among other things, how to demonstrate approachable behaviour towards mentees during mentoring interactions.

9.3.1.4 Passion and patience of the mentor

The findings of this study showed that a mentor who demonstrates the qualities of passion and patience is described as having high levels of commitment and that these qualities could have a positive impact on the effectiveness of mentoring of small businesses. For the purpose of this study, a passionate and patient mentor is someone who is selfless and enjoys empowering mentees, who is tolerant towards these mentees, and believes that their businesses can be successful.

The following recommendations are put forward to ensure that mentors are passionate and have patience in working with small businesses:

- Mentors should have a passion and desire to work with mentees and be excited to see mentees' businesses grow and develop. Mentors should feel a need to empower others and experience a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction when mentees become professional businesspeople.

- Passionate mentors are willing to go beyond the call of duty and take an interest in mentees themselves in addition to their business needs.

- Mentors should be willing to persevere with mentees when mistakes are made during mentoring activities. Mentors should be encouraging towards mentees to build confidence in mentees.

- In an attempt to be patient during the mentoring interactions, a mentor should try to control his or her temper when the mentee makes mistakes which could affect the progress of the mentoring programme.

- Mentors should establish regular meetings with mentees. This can encourage mentees to believe that mentors are committed to small business owner–managers.

Having mentors who are passionate and patient in working with small businesses also has implications for mentoring institutions. The following recommendations are proposed:

- Mentoring institutions should develop an assessment tool to ensure that only mentors who are willing to commit themselves to develop small businesses, are chosen for mentoring of small businesses. It is possible that some people may wish to be mentors of small businesses because that is the only job available to them, not because they are really passionate about developing small businesses. An assessment tool will ensure that the selection of mentors is not only based on the knowledge and expertise of mentors but also on their passion to empower the small business sector.

- The efforts of mentors should be recognised and appreciation shown to mentors to encourage their commitment. This could be achieved by

implementing a reward system that acknowledges the efforts of mentors such as developing a competitive salary package, as well as organising rewards for good performers based on the success rate of businesses mentored by a particular mentor. Motivated mentors are likely to provide superior services to mentees, thereby demonstrating commitment to develop mentees and consequently enhancing the effectiveness of mentoring.

9.3.1.5 Cultural sensitivity of the mentor

During the interviews with all participant groups, and through cultural observations made by the researcher, it became clear that cultural differences exist in the participants investigated. As a result, cultural sensitivity emerged as a new factor which influences the effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. Cultural sensitivity is defined as the ability of mentors to observe, understand and accept the diverse cultural values of owner–managers during mentoring interactions.

The following recommendations are put forward for mentors in order to improve sensitivity to different cultures during mentoring interactions:

- It is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the mentoring process to be aware and acknowledge cultural differences and learn about cultural dimensions to understand individual behaviours demonstrated by mentees during mentoring interactions.
- Mentors should equip themselves with knowledge about intercultural communication. This knowledge will ensure that the message that is being communicated during the mentoring process is conveyed and interpreted correctly. In order to achieve this, mentors need to take it upon themselves to learn about other cultures besides their own so that they can understand and interpret communication behaviours demonstrated by mentees.
- Mentors should develop the skills of observing and understanding individual behaviours of mentees, as these behaviours often demonstrate cultural differences or dimensions. Having the ability to observe and interpret such behaviours is essential in designing mentoring programmes to accommodate

the diverse cultural behaviours and choices of individual mentees. Examples could include preferences for working in groups or individually, how mentees wish to be approached during mentoring interactions, and whether mentees are orientated towards material success and goal achievement or towards the nature of social relationships during the mentoring process. Again, some mentees may prefer detailed regulations and directions during mentoring interactions, while others may prefer to be more autonomous. In addition, some mentees may engage in mentoring programmes to achieve instant results, thereby preferring short-term mentoring processes, while others may prefer the benefits of longer mentoring processes. Therefore mentors need to have the ability to observe these differences and accommodate them where possible to ensure effective mentoring relationships.

- Mentoring institutions should provide seminars and workshops for mentors covering diverse cultural behaviours and possible choices of small business owner–managers. This would equip mentors with the necessary skills to be sensitive to the diversity of cultures and preferences of black owner–managers in particular, during mentoring process.

9.3.1.6 Mentees' willingness to learn

The extent to which mentees demonstrated their willingness to learn was an indication of their commitment to the mentoring process, which influences the effectiveness of the process. In this study, willingness to learn refers to mentees being dedicated and inspired to succeed in business, being able to execute mentoring activities, doing what is required of them and being hardworking during the mentoring process.

In the light of the above, the following recommendations are made for mentees to enhance their willingness to learn:

- Mentees should come prepared and on time for mentoring meetings.
- Mentees should demonstrate an interest in participating during mentoring interactions, for example, by asking questions and making suggestions.

- Mentees should be cooperative during mentoring sessions by positively engaging in mentoring activities and taking responsibility for mentoring tasks and assignments.

Beside the fact that mentees need to show a willingness to learn during mentoring processes, it is equally important that a proper assessment system should be used in the selection of owner–managers suitable for mentoring. Some owner–managers may be in business purely as a means of escaping poverty and the high rates of unemployment in South Africa. Therefore, the system should enable mentoring institutions to select owner–managers who are not only seeking development to make a living, but who also have an inspiration to succeed, and have the potential to grow their businesses.

9.3.1.7 Mutual respect

In this study, mutual respect refers to acknowledging the importance of the other partner in a mentoring relationship, to how mentors speak to mentees, such as using the right words to give advice, and to treating mentees as adults.

To demonstrate respect towards mentees, the following recommendations are put forward to mentors of small businesses:

- Mentors should consider mentees' opinions and ideas about mentoring activities suggested during the mentoring process. When mentors appreciate mentees' opinions and ideas, they consider their suggestions. If they do not agree with a suggestion made, they need to explain their reason for not agreeing.
- Mentors should recognise and acknowledge the hard work that mentees put in during mentoring processes and the desire of mentees to develop their business skills. Acknowledging the efforts of mentees in performing mentoring tasks is an example of showing respect to mentees. For example, a prize-giving could be arranged by mentors for the most dedicated mentee each year.

- Mentors should treat mentees as adults during mentoring interactions. This means that the manner in which mentors speak to mentees, also in the presence of other people, should be professional. For example, mentors should avoid showing their dissatisfaction with a mentee in the presence of the mentee's employees or any other third parties.

To demonstrate respect towards mentors, the following recommendations are put forward to mentees during mentoring interactions:

- Mentees should believe in the abilities of mentors and recognise these mentors as having the knowledge and expertise to guide them and help them to develop and improve the required business skills.
- Mentees should appreciate and consider the advice and suggestions made by mentors during the mentoring process regarding improvement of their business management skills and businesses. In a case where these suggestions are not considered, mentees should explain to mentors why they have not considered and implemented such a suggestion.
- During the mentoring process, the behaviour of mentees should demonstrate respect. For example, they should be on time for meetings and perform all the necessary mentoring tasks assigned to them.
- Mentees should be aware of how the mentor expects the mentee to show respect of the mentor in the mentoring process. Contrary to traditional black cultural beliefs where it is expected that the person being mentored should show respect by listening to the mentor and not oppose his or her views and suggestions, the results of this study illustrate that the mentors preferred that mentees should communicate and debate their views and opinions.

Mutual respect of mentors and mentees during mentoring interactions also has implications for the mentoring institutions. The following recommendation is proposed to ensure that mutual respect exists in a mentoring relationship:

- Mentoring institutions should ensure that clear policies which guide the actions of mentors and mentees, together with clear lines of authority, exist in a

mentoring programme. Such policies should include disciplinary measures that will be taken in cases where the behaviour of one of the two parties is found to be disrespectful or unethical. Both mentors and mentees will then understand that unethical behaviour will not be tolerated during the mentoring programme.

9.3.1.8 Open communication

The extent to which open communication exists in a mentoring relationship has an impact on effective mentoring of small businesses. In the present study, open communication exists in a mentoring relationship when mentors listen to the views of the mentees, including taking note of both verbal and non-verbal communication and knowing how to respond accordingly.

In order to create an environment that encourages open communication, the following recommendations are put forward to mentors and mentees:

- Both mentors and mentees should listen to what is being communicated by the other partner, try to understand what is being communicated and act accordingly.
- Mentors should allow mentees to freely express their opinions and ideas during the mentoring process. For example, when suggestions are made by mentees, these suggestions should not be ignored. Rather, they should be carefully taken into consideration, and when not adopted, explanations should be given for this choice.
- Mentors should avoid being judgemental when mentees share businesses experiences and decisions made regarding their businesses. This is achieved by listening to mentees without blaming them for their decisions, particularly bad decisions, and providing guidance to rectify such mistakes where possible.
- Mentees in turn should demonstrate a willingness to share information with mentors. This can be achieved if mentees freely express themselves and discuss their business-related issues with mentors.
- The preferred language of mentees should be used during mentoring interactions to facilitate effective and open communication.

9.3.1.9 Mutual trust and honesty

For the purpose of this study, a trusting and honest relationship requires that mentors and mentees are honest with each other about the information that is being shared, believe in the abilities of one another and do not share information with third parties. This suggests that when entering into a mentoring relationship, it is critical that the mentor and mentee establish a foundation of mutual trust and honesty as doing so may positively influence the effectiveness of mentoring.

To ensure that mentors and mentees establish a trusting and honest relationship that is characterised by keeping information confidential, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Mentors should trust that mentees have the potential to succeed in their businesses, while mentees should trust that mentors have the potential to develop the skills necessary to help mentees more successfully manage their businesses. This can be achieved by being comfortable to divulge information that may be sensitive to share elsewhere.

- Mentors should make realistic promises to mentees. For example, mentors should not promise funding to mentees or finding new markets while knowing that they cannot fulfil such promises.

- Mentors should demonstrate a high degree of transparency during mentoring interactions. This can be achieved by sharing important information with all mentees without exception. For example, disclosing certain financial opportunities to some mentees but not to others could be described as not being transparent. If mentors behave in this manner, mentees will not trust them and this would impact negatively on the level of trust by mentees.

- Both mentors and mentees must deliver and do what they have been contracted to do during the mentoring process. This means that these partners should honour their responsibilities during the mentoring programme as agreed in the contract. If one partner is not able to deliver what was agreed to, this partner cannot be trusted with other things such as the information provided during the mentoring interactions.

- Mentors and mentees must establish themselves as trustworthy by being honest about the information exchanged during the mentoring process. This means that both parties should avoid telling lies about the information that they exchange because if one of the two parties is found to have been lying, trust in the relationship will be compromised.

- Mentors and mentees must maintain confidentiality regarding the information shared during mentoring, unless it is specifically necessary to share the information with a third party. For instance, it may be required to share the financial status of mentees in order to obtain funding for these mentees.

- Mentoring institutions should have a proper mentor–mentee matching system that will enable mentees to choose mentors. In doing so, mentees will be able to choose mentors whom they can trust and be honest with about the information that is exchanged during the interactions. Again, mentees will trust that confidentiality of the information will be maintained because sharing confidential information with someone implies that the person can be trusted.

9.3.1.10 Alignment of expectations

Differences in mentoring expectations were noted between mentors, mentees and board members in this study, which suggests that the purpose for which the mentoring was designed may not have been clearly defined and will negatively influence the effectiveness of the mentoring process. In this study, the alignment of expectations refers to having a common understanding of the expectations of a mentoring relationship by both the mentor and mentee. This includes a common understanding of the processes and outcomes of mentoring.

In order to eliminate such differences in expectations, the following recommendations are offered to mentoring institutions and mentors:

- Before the start of the mentoring process, it is important to have a collective session of mentors and mentees during which the roles and responsibilities of both partners are clearly spelled out and agreed upon. The outcomes of the mentoring process should also be agreed upon. These sessions should take

place in the presence of the management of mentoring institutions so that a common understanding of the roles of mentoring is established by all stakeholders concerned. Management may include the general managers of mentoring institutions and board members who are responsible for small business development.

- Basic expectations on how to interact during mentoring processes should be outlined. This includes issues such as the manner in which mentors and mentees should approach one another, mutual trust, honesty of information, as well as the importance of commitment during the relationship.

- When the mentor–mentee matching process has been completed, both mentors and mentees should agree on the goals to be achieved in addressing the needs of mentees, and draw up a plan for achieving these goals by subdividing the main goals into smaller goals. This should include a detailed structure of how each of the smaller goals will be achieved and evaluated throughout the mentoring process.

- Both mentors and mentees should have a written agreement based on the agreed roles and responsibilities of each partner in order to hold each other accountable.

9.3.2 NON-RELATIONAL-BASED FACTORS

Non-relational-based factors in this study refer to those factors that do not impact the personal relationship of the mentor and mentee, but the mentoring process itself. These factors are: *accessibility of mentoring location, accessibility of mentoring resources, capacity of mentors, marketing strategies*, *practical arrangements for the mentoring process* and *financial support*. The empirical results of this study clearly illustrated that problems were experienced by participants with all of these factors as a result of lack of access to the mentoring location, resources and practical arrangements for the mentoring process, a shortage of mentors and financial support, as well as a lack of information. These factors are of particular relevance for mentoring institutions since the institutions have control over these factors and need to put them in place before the mentoring process commence. Recommendations pertaining to these factors are presented in the subsequent sections.

9.3.2.1 Accessibility of mentoring location

In this study, accessibility of the mentoring location is about the distances that mentors and mentees have to travel to reach the mentoring location. It is important that the distance between mentoring institutions and mentees' businesses, as well as the distance that mentors must travel to reach these institutions and mentees' businesses is as short as possible. The empirical results of this study however revealed that it is not currently the case.

In South Africa, improving infrastructure is one of the highest priorities as lack of infrastructure inhibits the economic growth of this country. Because small businesses in South Africa are often situated in remote and rural areas, the underdeveloped roads in these areas are likely to influence travelling between business premises of mentees and mentoring institutions. Transport in these areas is a challenge as reported in this study. In addition, the South African black community is the poorest ethnic group in the country, which means that having to incur transport expenses to get to mentoring locations may impact negatively on black owner–managers and their mentoring.

In order to ensure that the location between owner–managers' businesses and these institutions is easily accessible, the following recommendations are put forward for mentoring institutions:

- Offices should be established and if possible, branches within the area that they serve, particularly in the rural areas of the country. Even though the establishment of offices may have cost implications, these offices and branches could provide information and mentoring to owner–managers within their respective areas, which means that there would not be a need for mentees to travel long distances to gain access to mentoring facilities.
- Transport services should be provided to mentees. This can be achieved by deciding on a central location where mentees can be picked up and transported to and from mentoring institutions. Transportation of mentees however has cost

implications, and without enough money to address mentoring needs, this recommendation may be difficult to implement.

9.3.2.2 Accessibility of mentoring resources

Access to training material necessary for mentors to facilitate mentoring processes, as well as to resources such as email facilities and stationery for mentees during mentoring processes, emerged as a challenge in this study. When mentors and mentees do not have the necessary mentoring resources, it is likely that mentoring will be ineffective. It is particularly important for black owner–managers to have access to adequate resources as they may not be able to afford mentoring resources themselves.

Recommendations pertaining to accessibility of resources during mentoring processes are proposed for mentoring institutions, namely:

- Care should be taken that adequate training material is available so that mentors can provide all the necessary training needed to mentees. This can be achieved through proper planning with mentors to decide on training material requirements for each programme.
- Mentoring resources needed by mentees, such as computers and specialised stationery (e.g. cashbooks and ledgers), should be made available to mentees during mentoring sessions by checking beforehand with mentors about the type of mentoring resources needed.
- Regular inspection and maintenance of resources should be done by mentoring institutions to ensure that depleted or broken resources are replaced or repaired timeously. Some of the computers that mentees needed to use at the time of the interviews were not working; hence it is recommended that these resources be maintained and inspected regularly.
- Because mentoring institutions may not be able to afford all the necessary maintenance of resources due to financial constraints, they should make efforts to increase funding to ensure that they can provide appropriate mentoring services and resources.

9.3.2.3 Capacity of mentors

In the present study, the capacity of mentors refers to the number of mentors available to address the individual needs of owner–managers during mentoring. It is important to have enough mentors to address the needs of owner–managers in the various industries of the small business sector.

In order to ensure that mentoring institutions have enough mentors, the following recommendations are put forward to these institutions:

- The potential pool of mentors across the various industries of small businesses could be expanded by preparing competitive compensation packages for mentors. The packages may include a basic salary and other remuneration methods such as rewards based on the success of the businesses of owner–managers who have been mentored by individual mentors.

- The establishment and facilitation of mentoring methods that are less costly is proposed. For example, a system could be set up where more experienced owner–managers share their expertise with others who are in the initial life cycle stage of their businesses and are less experienced in running a business. This way, owner–managers who are still in the early stages of their businesses may gain knowledge and business management skills as well as awareness of potential future challenges for their businesses. Also, sharing knowledge with less experienced owner–managers could enhance the competencies and skills which more experienced owner–managers may have acquired during mentoring sessions.

9.3.2.4 Marketing strategies

Marketing strategies is a new factor that emerged as having an influence on effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses. This factor was developed because it was reported in this study that many communities are not aware of skills development opportunities available to small businesses. For the purpose of this study, marketing strategies refer to the initiatives needed to make the public aware of

mentoring services provided by mentoring institutions to small businesses. This suggests that proper marketing strategies to promote the mentoring of small businesses are necessary to ensure effective mentoring. By doing so, South African communities, including small business owner–managers will know where to go when mentoring is needed.

The following recommendations have been put forward to mentoring institutions and the government, to ensure that information on mentoring services spreads across the country, particularly to black small business owner–managers as they are the target for many of these programmes:

- It is important to develop a proper strategy to publicise information on the availability of mentoring services available for small business development.

- Making use of appropriate communication media which is accessible across all communities would be part of an effective communication strategy. To know which communication media to use, mentoring institutions will need to conduct surveys within targeted locations to establish what is being used by the communities in the areas. With this insight, mentoring institutions can use the appropriate media when marketing mentoring services. For example, radio stations and pamphlets distributed at traffic lights are often the only media to reach certain communities. Advertising mentoring services on buses and taxis is also an effective way of reaching potential mentees in South Africa with its vast numbers of commuters.

- Mentoring institutions could use social media as marketing tools to promote mentoring services to the public. Online communities and forums as well as social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube can be used. These are cheaper than traditional media, and individuals can also be targeted more effectively. Even if many black households do not have access to or own a personal computer, many of these communication networks can be accessed via their cell phones.

- The most widely known language in a particular area should be used when advertising mentoring services. Since mentoring programmes are most often conducted in English, it is likely that this is the language currently being used to

market mentoring services to the public; however, this may not be the language understood by the target audience. Care should be taken when translating into other languages, that the message being conveyed to the communities remains the same.

- The government should prepare a database of black-owned small businesses across the country. This database would enable mentoring institutions to have a comprehensive list of black-owned small businesses within the areas they serve, and organise meetings with owner–managers to inform them about available mentoring services.

9.3.2.5 Practical arrangements for the mentoring process

In this study, the results revealed that considering and planning for practical arrangements such as matching the mentee with the appropriate mentor, scheduling meetings between mentors and mentees, structuring of mentoring sessions, as well as having a mentoring evaluation system in place, will influence the effectiveness of the mentoring process.

Before these practical arrangements can be put into place by mentoring institutions, it is important to consider other issues already discussed in this chapter as they may influence these arrangements. For example, the mentor–mentee matching process will be influenced by the skills levels of owner–managers still needing to be developed, as well as by the phase of their business's life cycle. These issues will also influence how to structure the mentoring sessions. Businesses in the start-up stage, needing guidance on how to draw up a business plan and register a business, could be grouped together for mentoring purposes as their needs are similar. On the other hand, owner–managers in a more advanced stage of the business life cycle could have different mentoring needs, for example how to develop financial and marketing management skills which may not be relevant for start-up business owner–managers. They should therefore not be grouped together during mentoring sessions. Thus, clearly defining the life cycle stage of a business will assist in structuring mentoring sessions in a manner that will benefit all mentees and make it easier for mentors to focus their guidance.

Recommendations concerning practical arrangements that should be put into place are as follows:

Mentor–mentee matching: Mentor–mentee matching is an aspect that should be accommodated by the mentoring programme. Mentoring institutions should establish clear procedures to make sure the appropriate mentor is assigned to a particular mentee. The following recommendations are proposed in this regard:

- Mentoring institutions should facilitate one-on-one sessions with mentees to understand the individual needs of mentees in a mentoring programme. Insight into these needs should enhance the mentor-mentee matching process as owner–managers can be paired with mentors whose competencies will be aligned with the identified needs of each mentee.

- Mentees' preferences for a particular mentor should be considered by exposing them to potential mentors. This could be achieved by exposing them to online mentor profiles or by inviting potential mentees to regular events organised by mentoring institutions to acquaint mentees with potential mentors. Although the institutions currently assign mentors to mentees, in this study the majority of mentees would have liked to choose a mentor themselves.

- A tool such as a questionnaire should be designed for mentees where they can indicate their needs and outcomes for mentoring. This insight may be useful in assigning mentors to mentees. In a situation where group mentoring is the only option (which was the case with most of the institutions participating in this study), the type of skills which mentees need from mentoring should be a guide on how to match mentees with mentors.

- If possible, the mentees should receive mentoring in the language that they are most comfortable with and can understand as this may influence the effectiveness of the mentoring process. Even though the English language is accepted as the medium of instruction in South Africa, it is equally important to note that some of the communities in this country may not be proficient in this language. This means that when mentees are unable to express themselves or clearly understand what is being communicated to them in English, the effectiveness of mentoring is being compromised.

Scheduling of meetings: Determining the scheduling of meetings is important for effective mentoring as it ensures that both mentors and mentees work together to achieve common goals. It should be noted that mentoring involves more than providing ad hoc help; it means providing support and encouragement to ensure learning to less knowledgeable individuals. As such, when mentoring meetings are scheduled, this learning can easily be managed.

To ensure that meetings are scheduled, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Mentees should initiate meetings with mentors; it is equally important to have pre-scheduled meetings to ensure effective mentoring. The absence of well planned scheduled meetings could be detrimental to the effectiveness of mentoring programmes.
- Planning of a proper schedule of meetings will ensure that both mentors and mentees know when meetings are taking place and what is expected to be achieved during those meetings.
- Meetings should be regulated to enable proper monitoring of the mentee's performance in the programme.

Structuring of mentoring sessions: It is essential that the manner in which mentoring sessions are structured to address the various mentoring needs of mentees is defined. Mentoring sessions may either be one-to-one or group sessions.

The following recommendations are put forward to ensure that mentoring sessions are structured appropriately:

- As was mentioned in the introduction to Section 9.3.2.5, the structuring of mentoring sessions will be influenced by the skills development level and needs of mentees, as well as by the life cycle of their businesses. Mentoring institutions should assess this before the structuring of mentoring sessions takes place.

- Alternate or use mixed methods of structuring – sometimes individual, sometimes group.

Mentoring evaluation system: It is worth noting that when implementing any process, it is important to have a plan for measuring the effectiveness of such a process. Likewise, it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of mentoring programmes to identify areas that may need improvement.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are made to mentoring institutions and the government to ensure that a proper mentoring evaluation system is established:

- An evaluation system and procedures should be designed to accommodate evaluation of the mentoring process during and after completion of the mentoring. It is important that progress towards achieving mentoring goals and outcomes is continuously monitored. In this way, problems between mentors and mentees will also be detected. Mentoring institutions should design an assessment tool such as a short questionnaire that mentors and mentees can complete at the end of a mentoring programme to establish the effectiveness of the programme. Mentoring institutions should also follow up on owner–managers who have completed the mentoring programme to check on the progress of their businesses. Following up on these businesses should enable the institutions to assess whether the knowledge gained through mentoring processes was effective, and if not, to decide on strategies to address the gaps. The information obtained could help improve on the shortcomings reported in the findings.

- The government as well as private donors should conduct research on the institutions that are entrusted to provide mentoring services in order to assess the efficiency of these institutions in the development of small businesses. The government should provide sponsorship to university students, private researchers and mentoring institutions to undertake this research.

- The government and mentoring institutions should acknowledge the efforts of researchers contributing towards the development of small businesses by

implementing recommendations put forward from research studies such as this one.

9.3.2.6 Financial support

Financial support, in this study, refers to the funding provided to mentoring institutions that will enable them to provide adequate mentoring support to small businesses. As was discussed earlier and also experienced during the empirical investigation, a lack of financial support may negatively influence the provision of proper resources during the mentoring process.

In the light of the above discussion, the following is recommended:

- South African mentoring institutions could approach the new Ministry of Small Business about more funding and support to accommodate the needs of mentoring institutions. When presented with a well outlined budget for mentoring programmes, it is likely that the Ministry will reconsider the current amount of funding that is being made available for mentoring services, which was reported as inadequate in this study.

- Mentoring institutions should develop strategies for generating more income themselves and should not only be dependent on the government and private donors. Rather, alternative financing options should be considered. Generating income could be achieved by organising fundraising campaigns. However, it is important that the institutions become aware that to raise funds is time-consuming and requires patience, perseverance, as well as resilience.

- Establish a policy for rental fees for those mentees who have been allocated space to operate their businesses on the mentoring institution premises. These mentees use mentoring institutions' equipment to manufacture their products. As such, a small fee such as five per cent, could be charged on the goods that have been sold. This should prepare mentees to take responsibility for business expenses when they are independent and leasing property to operate their businesses elsewhere.

- Build up a list of alumni mentees who have successfully completed a mentoring programme. These mentees could be approached in future for sponsorships or provide internships for new mentees.

Considering the discussions in the preceding sections, it is evident that the factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses have been investigated in this study. Thus, the primary objective of this study, namely, to gain a better understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of black-owned small businesses and to empirically identify factors that influence the effectiveness of mentoring of these businesses, has been achieved. The next section will present a proposed framework of the factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses for future research and the hypotheses for these relationships will be formulated.

9.4   PROPOSED FRAMEWORK OF FACTORS INFLUENCING EFFECTIVE MENTORING OF SMALL BUSINESSES

Based on the empirical findings reported in this study, a framework is proposed of relational and non-relational-based factors that influence effective mentoring of small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in South Africa. This framework serves two purposes. Firstly, it provides an overview of the most important factors influencing effective mentoring in black-owned small businesses, which may differ from research conducted on Western economies and small businesses. Secondly, hypotheses are indicated in the framework, which could be tested in a future quantitative study. The basis for the selection of these factors is that they may be more relevant to the communities in South Africa than to those in Western countries. The categories take into account the interaction of mentors and mentees during mentoring processes (relational-based), as well as factors that do not impact on the relationship between mentors and mentees (non-relational-based), but on the mentoring process itself. Of these, three new factors were derived based on the findings of this study, namely: *cultural sensitivity of the mentor, marketing strategies* and *practical arrangements for mentoring process.* These were discussed in section 9.3.

Furthermore, the hypothesised relationships describe the extent to which the *alignment of expectations* enhances relational-based factors and that *financial support* enhances non-relational-based factors for the effectiveness of mentoring for small businesses. This means that even though relational-based and non-relational-based factors have an influence on *effective mentoring*, the significance of the relationships can also be influenced by the *alignment of expectations* and *financial support* available to mentoring institutions. The framework presenting the hypothesised relationships is illustrated in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Proposed framework: Factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses

Relational-based factors
- Knowledge and expertise of the mentor
- Experience and age of the mentor
- Approachability of the mentor
- Passion and patience of the mentor
- Cultural sensitivity of the mentor
- Mentees' willingness to learn
- Mutual respect
- Open communication
- Mutual trust and honesty
- Alignment of expectations

$H^{1b} - H^{9b}$

$H^{1a} - H^{10a}$

Effective mentoring

Non-relational-based factors
- Accessibility of mentoring location
- Accessibility of mentoring resources
- Capacity of mentors
- Marketing strategies
- Practical arrangements for the mentoring process
- Financial support

$H^{11a} - H^{16a}$

$H^{11b} - H^{15b}$

Source: Researcher's own construction

As can be seen in Figure 9.1, the framework is a presentation of the relationships between independent variables and effective mentoring of small businesses. The hypotheses that have been formulated to test these relationships in a future quantitative study are presented below:

$H^{a1} - H^{10a}$: *There is a positive relationship between relational-based factors and effective mentoring of small businesses.*

$H^{1b} - H^{9b}$: *There is a positive relationship between the alignment of expectations during mentoring interactions and relational-based factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses.*

$H^{11a} - H^{16a}$: *There is a positive relationship between non-relational-based factors and effective mentoring of small businesses.*

$H^{11b} - H^{15b}$: *There is a positive relationship between financial support available during mentoring processes and non-relational-based factors influencing effective mentoring of small businesses.*

9.5   CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge on mentoring of small businesses by providing new insights into the mentoring experiences of black small business owner–managers in South Africa. As recommended by Allen *et al.* (2009:1114) and Offstein *et al.* (2011:77), the use of mentoring can lead to the success of businesses. When mentoring is targeted at the management of the business to harness the potential of managers, this benefit can be extended to the longevity of the business. Because limited information exists on how to conduct effective mentoring among black-owned small businesses, this is the first academic study that has attempted to obtain in-depth information on the mentoring experiences of black small business owner–managers in South Africa, as well as on the factors that influence effective mentoring in these businesses. Previous research on mentoring mainly focused on larger businesses (Fassi *et al.,* 2011:425), and small businesses operating in Western economies (Lo *et al.*, 2013; Mazzarol, 2014;

Schlosser, 2012; Zoogah, 2013:20). In addition, previous research (Abbot *et al.*, 2010:9; Gray *et al.*, 2011b:865; Williams, 2008:10) states that little information exists on mentoring for small businesses which academic researchers can use. This study has attempted to address this need for further research into mentoring as a tool to improve the longevity and success of small businesses in general and black-owned businesses in particular.

In addition, this study has responded to the calls for more in-depth qualitative studies among small businesses in general (Gilman, Edwards, Ram & Arrowsmith, 2002:56) and black-owned small businesses in particular. The qualitative research methodology was chosen as it enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth information on the perceptions and experiences of black small business owner–managers on mentoring. In addition, conducting interviews enabled the researcher to collect data in person and to observe cultural differences which could not have been possible had a quantitative research design been used. Furthermore, it was important to conduct in-depth interviews to establish whether the factors that influence effective mentoring of small businesses in a developing economy like South Africa are the same as or different from previous research on mentoring that was conducted mainly among small businesses in developed economies.

Based on the empirical findings of this study, various factors were identified that influence effective mentoring of small businesses in the context of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. From these findings a framework is proposed that could assist small businesses, mentoring institutions, mentors, the government and practitioners to more successfully implement mentoring processes in these businesses, which could ultimately improve the survival rate and success of black-owned small businesses in South Africa. As mentoring is a development process that is used to enhance skills, the proposed framework can be used in other disciplines that engage in learning activities, as well as by other African countries to improve the effectiveness of mentoring services available to small businesses.

Furthermore, this study may aid future quantitative research on mentoring of black-owned small businesses in South Africa with a view to improving the survival of these businesses. Hypotheses were generated and proposed in Figure 9.1 which could be tested empirically using a quantitative research design and methodology and a relatively large sample of black-owned small businesses.

In conclusion, the alarming failure rates of small businesses could be improved by effective mentoring provided to these businesses. Consequently, the improved survival of black-owned small businesses can significantly contribute to the socio-economic development and economic well-being of South African communities.

9.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study has attempted to make a significant contribution to the body of knowledge concerning mentoring to small businesses in general and black-owned small businesses in particular. However, as is the case with all empirical studies, a few limitations are noted and certain areas still need to be explored. These limitations, as well as recommendations for future research, are put forward for consideration on mentoring of small businesses.

The findings in this study are based on the mentoring perceptions and experiences of participants from only two provinces in South Africa, namely Gauteng and Eastern Cape. Therefore, there are limitations with regard to generalising the results obtained from this study as it is likely that responses from black-owned small businesses from other provinces with the same interview schedule may differ from the responses of the participants included in this study. As such, future research on this topic should be extended to other provinces of South Africa to identify similarities and differences in mentoring experiences of black-owned small business.

The nature of the sample, consisting of black-owned small businesses, limits the capacity to generalise research findings across all small businesses in South Africa. Using the same interview schedule, a study could be undertaken among small

businesses owned by other ethnic groups in South Africa. The study should be undertaken to establish whether the findings reported in this study vary significantly when a study is conducted among other ethnic groups.

Quota sampling was employed to allow for representation of the relative characteristics of participants in various categories such as gender groups. However, the participants in this study were predominantly male as few females were available for participation. This is not surprising as many female entrepreneurs are still excluded from business support initiatives such as skills development schemes (Mandipaka 2014:127). As a result, future studies should investigate mentoring experiences of females in black-owned small businesses to establish whether the results reported in this study vary significantly when a larger sample of female participants is included.

This study is inductive as it follows the qualitative approach which uses small sample sizes to explore meanings and perceptual experiences from a rich and in-depth perspective of the participants, as observed and recorded through their words and behaviours. It is recommended that future studies should follow a deductive approach based on larger and more diverse samples to validate the responses of the target group. A framework with hypotheses was proposed in section 9.4 which could be the basis of a quantitative study.

Some of the board member/managers of the institutions that participated in this study are also mentors to small business owner–managers. Even though they were interviewed in their capacity as the management of the institutions, it is likely that their responses may have been biased because of the overlapping roles they play during mentoring processes. As a result, it is recommended that future research should focus on board member/managers who are not directly involved in the mentoring process.

Another limitation of this study is that it focuses only on black owner–managers in South Africa. As noted in this study, black owner–managers come from a range of cultures which influence their perceptions about mentoring. It is recommended that

future research should explore the perceptions and experiences of black owner–managers in other African countries as their responses could be different. Therefore, future studies could endeavour to investigate the extent to which mentoring experiences of black owner–managers in South Africa differ from those of other African countries.

The focus of this study was limited to the perceptions and experiences of participants regarding the factors of effective mentoring. As a result, other contextual factors could not be probed in this study. For example, mentoring evolves over a certain period, typically passing through sequential phases (Ensher & Murphy, 2011:255; Lunsford, 2011:477; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011:1533). In this study, it could not be established whether mentoring processes of the institutions that participated in this study follow any sequential phases. Future research should explore mentoring phases that small businesses pass through in more depth as they may also have an influence on the effectiveness of mentoring programmes offered in South Africa.

This study aimed to identify the factors of effective mentoring in general, irrespective of how individual institutions conducted mentoring programmes. Future research may compare mentoring programmes that are provided to small businesses across mentoring institutions. The information obtained from such institutions may provide a deeper understanding of the types of programmes required, which of these are more effective, and how successful institutions measure the outcomes of effective mentoring programmes.

Despite various limitations that were encountered, the findings of this study make a significant contribution to the existing body of research on mentoring of small businesses, particularly black-owned small businesses. For this reason, many opportunities exist for future research on mentoring of small businesses.

9.7   SELF-REFLECTION AND LEARNING

Doing a study on mentoring of small businesses has developed in me an understanding of the need for skills development in these businesses. This study has also awoken in me a desire to stay up-to-date with the developments in skills development programmes for small businesses because of the contribution these businesses make to the socio-economy and economy of their respective countries. Even though the important role that small businesses play to their respective countries is well documented in the literature, the insight I gained through personal interactions with owner–managers has changed my perception about small businesses. While I had a perception that these businesses only serve the low-income market, I had an opportunity to see some of the products made by these businesses, which included durable household items such as upmarket kitchen accessories. In addition, I did not realise that these businesses have the potential to serve large businesses, for example in manufacturing parts such as gear boxes for the large machinery used in mines shafts. Therefore, doing this study has positively changed my perception about the nature of the products that small businesses make.

Undertaking a qualitative study to investigate mentoring experiences and perceptions of the participants has helped me gain specific skills such as conducting interviews for data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Ensuring that the standards of trustworthiness in a qualitative research study are met is another important element that I have learnt during this study. I realised that, as with quantitative research, a qualitative research study should be guided by certain principles in order to ensure rigour. However, these principles were more intense for qualitative research as they required a good deal of paperwork which may not be necessary during quantitative research.

Furthermore, I have learnt that mentoring of small businesses, when conducted effectively, has the potential to equip owner–managers with the skills necessary not only to survive but to prosper. However, from the findings of this study, certain issues still need to be addressed to ensure that mentoring initiatives are effective and

ensure success. This means that all the stakeholders in mentoring of small businesses need to work together to achieve the objectives for which mentoring services were established.

Finally, to quote Nelson Mandela in *Long Walk to Freedom*,

"I am fundamentally an optimist. Whether it comes from nature or nurture,
I cannot say. Part of being optimistic is keeping one's head pointed
toward the sun, one's feet moving forward. There were many dark
moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested but
I would not and could not give myself up to despair.
That way lays defeat and death".

9.8   CONCLUDING REMARKS

Black-owned small businesses are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their economies. As a result of the significant contribution of these businesses to economic development and poverty alleviation, their longevity is imperative. As such, this study is a first step in gaining an understanding of and deeper insight into mentoring experiences of small businesses in South Africa as these businesses face high failure rates. Numerous recommendations and suggestions have been presented in this study to ensure the effective mentoring of small businesses. Of particular importance, it is hoped that these suggestions will enhance the survival and longevity of black-owned small businesses in South Africa and in the rest of Africa.

REFERENCES

Aamodt, M.G. 2004. *Applied industrial/organizational psychology.* 4th Edition. Belton CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Abbott, P., Goosen, X. & Coetzee, J. 2010. Developing and supporting coordinators of structured mentoring schemes in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management,* 8(1):1-10.

Abonyi, G. 2012. *The emerging ASEAN economic community (AEC 2015) and the challenge of innovation – micro view* (Part 2). [Online] Available: https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/exed/sites/asiapolicy/FINAL per cent20- per cent20June per cent20- per cent20GA per cent20Brief per cent202 per cent20- per cent20(Micro) per cent20Innovation per cent20and per cent20Emerging per cent20ASEAN per cent20Economic per cent20Community per cent20LS per cent20markup.pdf (Accessed 13 September 2012).

Abor, J. & Quartey, P. 2010. Issues in SME development in Ghana and South Africa. *International Research Journal of Finance and Economics*, 39:218-228.

Adams, B.G., Van de Vijver, F. & De Bruin, G.P. 2012. Identity in South Africa: Examining self-descriptions across ethnic groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations,* 36:377-388.

Adeniran, T. & Johnston, K.A. 2012. Investigating the dynamic capabilities and competitive advantage of South African SMEs. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(11):4088-4099.

Adler, E.S. & Clark, R. 2008. *How it's done: An invitation to social research.* 3rd Edition. Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.

Agupusi, P. 2007. *Small business development and poverty alleviation in Alexandra, South Africa.* Proceedings of the second meeting of the society for the study of economic inequality. ECINEQ Society, July 12-14, 2007, Berlin, Germany.

Alharbi, T.S.J., Carlström, E., Ekman, I., Jarneborn,A. & Olsson, L. 2014. Implementation of person-centred care: Management perspective. *Journal of Hospital Administration,* 3(3):107-120.

Allen, M.R., Ericksen, J. & Collins, C.J. 2013.Human resource management, employee exchange relationships, and performance in small businesses. *Human Resource Management,* 52(2):153-174.

Allen, T.D. & Eby, L.T. Eds. 2010. *The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives' approach.* West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Allen, T.D. & Eby, L.T. 2008. Mentor commitment in formal mentoring relationships. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 72:309-316.

Allen, T.D., Eby, L.T., O'Brien, K.E. & Lentz, E. 2008. The state of mentoring research: A qualitative review of current research methods and future research implications. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 73:343-357.

Allen, T.D., Finkelstein, L.M. & Poteet, M.L. 2011. *Designing workplace mentoring programs: An evidence-based approach.* West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Allen, T.D., Shockley, K.M. & Poteat, L. 2010. Protégé anxiety attachment and feedback in mentoring relationships. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour,* 77(1):73-80.

Allen, T.D., Smith, M.A., Mael, F.A., O'Shea, P.G. & Eby L.T. 2009. Oranization-level mentoring and organizational performance within substance abuse centers. *Journal of Management,* 35(5):1113-1128.

Alonso, R.A.R. & Loui, M.C. 2011. *Work in progress – Exploring the evolution of the mentoring relationship in a summer undergraduate research program.* 41st ASEE/IEEE Frontiers in Education Conference, Rapid City, USA.

Altinay, L. & Paraskevas, A. 2008. *Planning research in hospitality and tourism.* Burlington: Elsevier Ltd.

Argyriou, I., Fleming, P. & Wright, A. 2012. Local climate policy: Lessons from a case study of transfer of expertise between UK local authorities. *Sustainable Cities and Society,* 5:87-96.

Ary, D., Jacons, L.C., Sorensen, C. & Walker, D.A. 2013. *Introduction to research in education.* 9th Edition. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Ataguba, J.E. & Alaba, O. 2012. Explaining health inequalities in South Africa: A political economy perspective. *Development Southern Africa,* 29(5):756-764.

Ates, A., Garengo, P., Cocca, P. & Bititci, U. 2013. The development of SME managerial practice for effective performance management. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development,* 20(1):28-54.

Awaritoma, O., Oyekanmi, N., Erah, P. & Isokpehi, R.D. 2011. Small and medium enterprises and biopharmaceutical innovations in Africa: Challenges and prospects. *Tropical Journal of Pharmaceutical Research,* 10(4):523-529.

Ayeni, A.J. & Adelabu, M.A. 2012. Improving learning infrastructure and environment for sustainable quality assurance practice in secondary schools in Ondo State, South-West Nigeria. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education,* 1(1):61-68.

Ayinde, A.T. 2011. Mentoring: Does it work?. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal: Mentoring: A key Issue in Human Resource Management,* :1-15.

Aytemur, J.O. & Erdem, F. 2008. Mentoring – Relationship based on trust: Qualitative research. *Public Personnel Management,* 37(1):55-65.

Ayyagari, M., Beck, T. & Demirguc-Kunt, A.D. 2007. Small and medium enterprises across the globe. *Small Business Economics,* 29:415-434.

Babbie, E. 2010. *The practice of social research.* 12th Edition. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Babbie, E. 2013. *The practice of social research.* 13th Edition. Belmont: Cengage Learning.

Bae, T.J., Qian, S., Miao, C. & Fiet, J.O. 2014. The relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions: A meta-analytical review. *Entrepreneurship: Theory & Practice,* 38(2):217-254.

Bagramian, R.A., Taichman, R.S., McCauley, L., Green, T.G., Inglehart., M.R. & Habil, P. 2011. Mentoring of dental and dental hygiene faculty: A case study. *Journal of Dental Education,* 75(3):291-299.

Bakan, A.B. & Abu-Laban, Y. 2010. Israel/Palestine, South Africa and 'one-state solution': The case for an apartheid analysis. *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies,* 37(2-3):331-351.

Banerjee, S. 2009. Marketing communication through brand placement: A strategic roadmap. *Journal of Marketing & Communication,* 5(2):4-22.

Banks, M.J. 2012. *On confidentiality and formal methods*. Doctoral thesis, University of York.

Baranik, L.E., Roling, E.A. & Eby, L.T. 2010. Why does mentoring work? The role of perceived businessal support. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour,* 76(3):366-373.

Barnett, J.E. 2008. Mentoring, boundaries, and multiple relationships: Opportunities and challenges. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning,* 16(1):3-16.

Battisti, M., Deakins, D. & Perry, M. 2013. The sustainability of small businesses in recessionary times: Evidence from the strategies of urban and rural small businesses in New Zealand. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research,* 19(1):72-96.

Bayne, M.C. 2012. *Contributions of emotional intelligence, mentoring and self-efficacy to academic success and addictions treatment.* Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. University of California, Santa Cruz.

Bazeley, P. & Jackson, K. 2007. *Qualitative data analysis with NVIVO.* 2nd Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Bazilian, M. & Onyeji, I. 2012. Fossil fuel subsidy removal and inadequate public power supply: Implications for business. *Energy Policy,* 45:1-5.

Bearden, W.O., Money, R.B. & Nevins, J.L. 2006. A measure of long-term orientation: Development and validation. *Journal of The Academy of Marketing Science,* 34(3):456-467.

Beekun, R.I., Stedham, Y., Westerman, J.W. & Yamamura, J.H. 2010. Effects of justice and utilitarianism on ethical decision making: A cross-cultural examination of gender similarities and differences. *Business Ethics: A European Review,* 19(4):309-325.

Belghitar, Y. & Khan, J. 2013. *Governance mechanisms, investment opportunity set and SMEs cash holdings. Small Business Economics*, 40(1):59-72.

Bell, L. 2008. Mentoring: A quality business practice. *Management Today,* 24(5):31-33.

Bennett, R.J. & Robson, P.J.A. 2003. Changing use of external business advice and government supports by SMEs in the 1990s. *Regional Studies,* 37(8):795-811.

Berman, E.M. & Wang, X. 2011. *Essential statistics for public managers and policy analysis.* 3rd Edition. : CQ Press.

Betts, D. 2013. A review of the principles for culturally appropriate art therapy assessment tools. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association,* 30(3):98-106.

Beukers, E., Bertolini, L. & Te Brömmelstroet, M. 2014. Using the cost benefit analysis as a learning process: Identifying interventions for improving communication & trust. *Transport Policy,* 31:61-72.

Bevan, M.T. 2014. A method of phenomenological interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research,* 24(1):136-144.

Bezuidenhout, A. & Nenungwi, A.L. 2012. A competency framework for the small business sector in Johannesburg South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(47):11658-11669

Bhorat, H., Hirsch, A., Kanbur, R. & Ncube, M. 2013. Economic policy in South Africa. [Online] Available: http://www.kanbur.aem.cornell.edu/papers/EconomicPolicyInSouthAfrica.pdf (Accessed on 29 June 2014).

Bierema, L.L. & Hill, J.R. 2005. Virtual mentoring and HRD. *Advances in Developing Human Resources,* 7(4):556-568.

Binfa, L., Robertson, E. & Ransjö-Arvidson, A. 2010. "We are always asked: 'Where are you from?'" Chilean women's reflections in midlife about their health and influence of migration to Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences,* 24(3):445-453.

Bisk, L. 2002. Formal entrepreneurial mentoring: The efficacy of third party managed programmes. *Career Development International,* 7(5):262-270.

Bizionelos, N., Bizionelos, G. & Polychroniou, K.K. 2011. How providing mentoring relates to career success and organizational commitment: A study in the general managerial population. *Career Development International,* 16(5):446-468.

Black, K. 2009. *Business statistics: Contemporary decision making.* 6th Edition. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Blackburn, R., Carey, P. & Tanewski, G.A. 2011. *The role of trust, relationships and professional ethics in the supply of external business advice by accountants to SMEs.* [Online] Available: http://eprints.kingston.ac.uk/18448/1/Balckburn-R-18448.pdf (Accessed 27 February 2014).

Blake-Beard, S. 2009. Mentoring as a bridge to understanding cultural difference. *Adult Learning,* 20(1):14-18.

Blake-Beard, S., Bayne, M.C., Crosby, F.J. & Muller, B.C. 2011. Matching by race and gender in mentoring relationships: Keeping our eyes on the prize. *Journal of Social Issues,* 67(3):622-643.

Blake-Beard, S., Bayne, M.L., Crosby, F.J. & Muller, C.B. 2011. Matching by race and gender in mentoring relationships: Keeping our eyes on the prize. *Journal of Social Issues,* 67(3):622-643.

Blanche, M.T., Durrheim, K. & Painter, D. 2006. *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences.* 2nd Edition. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Boeije, H. 2010. *Analysis in qualitative research.* London: SAGE Publications.

Borg, S.W. & Johnston, W.J. 2013. The IPS-EQ model: Interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence in a sales process. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management,* 33(1):39-51.

Borgia, D. & Newman, A. 2012. The influence of managerial factors on the capital structures of small and medium-sized enterprises in emerging economies: Evidence from China. *Journal of Chinese Entrepreneurship,* 4(3):180-205.

Bosch, J., Tait, M. & Venter, E. (Eds). 2011. *Business management: An entrepreneurial perspective.* Port Elizabeth: Lectern.

Botha, J. 2014. *Measuring economic transformation: Tracking the progress of an elusive South African dream.* Unpublished Masters dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Botha, M. & Esterhuyze, E. 2012. The perceived capabilities and willingness of South African small business owners to act as business mentors. *Afrian Journal of Business Management,* 6(51):12101-12113.

Botma, Y. & Roets, L. 2013. Ways to improve research outputs of nurse academics in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal for New Generation Sciences,* 11(1):31-41.

Boud, D. & Molloy, E. Eds. 2013. *Feedback in higher and professional education: Understanding it and doing it well.* New York: Routledge.

Bower, G.G. 2012. Gender and mentoring: A strategy for women to obtain full professorship. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance,* 83(2):6-12.

Bruton, G.D., Ahlstrom, D. & Obloj, K. 2008. Entrepreneurship in emerging economies: Where are we today and where should the research go in the future. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 32(1):1-14.

Bryant, S.E. 2005. The impact of peer mentoring on businessal knowledge creation and sharing: An empirical study in a software firm. *Group & Business Management,* 30(3):319-338.

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. 2011. *Business research methods.* 3rd Edition. New York: University press.

Buchanan, D.A. & Bryman, A. Ed. 2011. The SAGE handbook of organisational research methods. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Buell, C. 2004. Models of mentoring in communication. *Communication Education,* 53(1):56-73.

Bureau, J.S., Vallerand, R.J., Ntoumanis, N. & Lafrenière, M.K. 2013. On passion and moral behaviour in achievement settings: The mediating role of pride. *Motivation Emotions,* 37(1):121-133.

Burger, R.P. & Von Fintel, D.P. 2014. Rising unemployment in a growing economy: A business cycle perspective of post-transition South Africa's labour market. *Studies in Economics and Econometrics,* 38(1):35-64.

Burns, P. 2001. *Entrepreneurship and small business.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Burns, R.B. & Burns, R.A. 2008. *Business research methods and statistics using SPSS.* Singapore:SAGE Publications.

Buys, P. & Schutte, D. 2011. The impact of the statement of GAAP for SME's in South Africa. *Studia UBB Negotia,* 2:3-20.

Campoamor, J.Q., Mercado, J.L.L. & De Gracia, E.D. 2013. Marketing skills as predictors of profitability of franchisees in Davao city, Philippines. *International Peer Reviewed Journal,* 4(1):79-95.

Cant, M. 2012. Challenges faced by SME's in South Africa: Are marketing skills needed? *International Business & Economics Research Journal,* 11(10):1107-1116.

Cant, M.C. & Wiid, J.A. 2013. Establishing the challenges affecting South African SMEs. *International Business & Economics Research Journal,* 12(6):707-715.

Cao, Y. & Huang, J. 2012. The survival conditions of SMEs in Guangdong province of China: An empirical research under the global economic crisis. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(1):26-44.

Carson, K.D., Baker, D.S. & Lanier, P. 2014. The role of individual cultural traits and proactivity in an organisational setting. *Management Research Review,* 37(4):348-366.

Carswell, S.B., Hanlon, T.E., O'Grady, K.E., Watts, A.M. & Pothong, P. 2009. A preventive intervention program for urban African American youth attending an alternative education program: Background, implementation and feasibility. *Education & Treatment of Children,* 32(3):445-469.

Carvin, B.N. 2011. The hows and whys of group mentoring. *Industrial and Commercial Training,*43(1):49-52.

Casado-Lumbreras, C., Colomo-Palacios, R., Soto-Acosta, P. & Misra, S. 2011. Culture dimensions in software development industry": The effects of mentoring. *Scientific Research and Essays,* 6(11):2403-2412.

Casale, D. & Posel, D. 2011. English language proficiency and earnings in a developing country: The case of South Africa. *Journal of Socio-Economics,* 40:385-393.

Cassim, S., Soni, P. & Karodia, A.M. 2014. Entrepreneurship policy in South Africa. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review,* 3(9):29-43.

Castro, S., Pinto, A. & Simeonsson, R.J. 2014. Content analysis of Portuguese individualised education programmes for young children with autism using the ICF-CY framework. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal,* 22(1):91-104.

Chandler, D.E. 2011. The maven of mentoring speaks: Kathy E. Kram reflects on her career and the field. *Journal of Management Inquiry,* 20(1):24-33.

Chandra, R. & Aneja, R. 2004. *Corporate governance for sustainable environment.* New Delhi: Isha Books.

Chaudhuri, S. & Ghosh, R. 2012. Reverse mentoring: A social exchange tool for keeping the Boomers engaged and Millennials committed. *Human Resource Development Review,* 11(1):55-76.

Cheema, F., Bhatti, K., Ahmed, S. & Rajkumar. 2010. Prospects of coaching & mentoring as HRD intervention in Pakistan: A conceptual study. *Journal of Management & Social Sciences,* 6(2):93-103.

Chelule, E., Van Greunen, D., Herselman, M. & Veldsman, A. 2011. Mobi-incubation user experience for rural entrepreneurs in emerging economies. Presented at IST-Africa 2011 conference.

Chester, A., Burton, L.J., Xenos, S. & Elgar, K. 2013. Peer mentoring: Supporting successful transition for first year undergraduate psychology students. *Australian Journal of Psychology,* 65:30-37.

Chetty, R. 2014. Class dismissed? Youth resistance and the politics of race and class in South African education. *Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies,* 28(1):88-102.

Chun, J.U., Litzky, B.E., Sosik, J.J., Bechtold, D.C. and Godshalk,V.M. 2010. Emotional intelligence and trust in formal mentoring programmes. *Group & Businessal Management,* 35(4):421-455.

Chung, R.C., Bemak, F. & Talleyrand, R.M. 2007. Mentoring within the field of counselling: A preliminary study of multicultural perspectives. *International Journal of Advancement of Counselling,* 29(1):21-32.

Ciornei, I.X. & Tămagă, T.M. 2013. Effective ways of teaching British culture and civilization. *Prodedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 70:1919-1924.

Čiutienė, R., Neverauskas, B. & Meilienė, E. 2010. Coaching as a tool to develop employees career. *Economics and Management,* 15:444- check

Cline, M. 2011. Paying it forward: *The relationship between mentoring and perceived ESE of Jewish South African.* Unpublished Master's dissertation. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Cloutier, R. 2007. *Mentoring as part of a coach certification system.* [Online] Available: http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/27822/1/MR49179.PDF (Accessed 23 September 2014).

Clow, K.E. & James, K.E. 2013. *Essentials of marketing research: Putting research into practice.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Clutterbuck, D. & Abbott, P. 2012. Mentoring as an empowerment tool. *Management Today,* 30(1):74-77.

Clutterbuck, D., Poulsen, K.M. & Kochan, F. 2012. *Developing successful diversity mentoring programmes: An international case book.* New York: Open University Press.

Coetzee, M. & Schreuder, D. 2005. Introduction overview. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management,* 3(3):1.

Coll, J.H. & Raghavan, P. 2011. Mentoring: Who and how. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC),* 1(8):65-77.

Collis, J. & Hussey, R. 2009. *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students.* 3rd Edition. London: Palgrave Macmillian.

Collis, J. & Hussey, R. 2014. *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students.* 4th Edition. New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Conn, V.S. 2013. Mentorship moves science forward. *Western Journal of Nursing Research,* 35(5):543-545.

Connell, J. & Voola, R. 2013. Knowledge integration and competititveness: A longitudinal study of an industry cluster. *Journal of Knowledge Management,* 17(2):208-225.

Connor, M. & Pokora, J. 2007. *Coaching & mentoring at work.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Consultancy Africa Intelligence. 2012a. *Globalisation and transitional organised crime in South Africa.* [Online] Available: http://www.polity.org.za/article/globalisation-and-transnational-organised-crime-in-south-africa-2012-06-04 (Accessed 18 September 2012).

Consultancy Africa Intelligence. 2012b*. SMEs in Africa: Growth despite constraints.* [Online] Available: http://www.polity.org.za/article/smes-in-africa-growth-despite-constraints-2012-09-17 (Accessed 18 September 2012).

Conti, G. & Raymond, D. 2011. *Leadership of cyber warriors: Enduring principles and new directions.* [Online] Available: http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA545300 (Accessed 07 September 2014).

Conway, C. 2009. Book review: Michael Strong effective teacher induction and mentoring: Assessing the evidence New York: Teachers College Press, 2009. 160pp. $25.95. ISBN 0807749338. *Journal of Music Teacher Education,* 19(1):93-104.

Cooper, D.R. & Schindler, P.S. 2011. *Business research methods.* 11th Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Cooper, T.C. & Menzel, D.C. Eds. 2013. *Achieving ethical competence for public service leadership.* New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Cotton, R.D. & Shen, Y. 2013. The company you keep: The relational models and support expectations of key developer relations. *Career Development International,* 18(4):328-356.

Coulson-Thomas, C. 2011. Will 24/7 performance support replace traditional mentoring and training? *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 43(7):431-438.

Cozza, M. 2011. Bridging gender gaps, networking in computer science. *Gender Technology and Development,* 15(2):319-337.

Creswell, J.W. & Clark, V.L.P. 2011. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* 2nd Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Crisp, G. & Cruz, I. 2009. Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in Higher Education,* 50(6):525-545.

Crumpton, M.A. 2011. Leading results mentoring in tough financial times. *Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances,* 24(1):51-54.

Cunningham, J. & Hillier, E. 2013. Informal learning in the workplace: Key activities and processes. *Education + Training,* 55(1):37-51.

Cunningham, L.X. 2010. Managing human resources in SMEs in a transition economy: Evidence from China. *International Journal of Humana Resource Management,* 21(12):2120-2141.

Daft, R.L. & Marcic, D. 2012. *Understanding management.* Cincinnati: Cengage Learning.

Dainton, M. & Zelley, E.D. 2011. *Applying communication theory for professional life: A practical introduction.* 2nd Edition. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Daniels, M.A. & Greguras, J. 2014. Exploring the nature of power distance: Implications for micro- and macro-level theories, processes, and outcomes. *Journal of Management,* 40(5):1202-1229.

Davis, O. n.d. *What are technical skills in management? – Definitions, examples & quiz.* [Online] Available: http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/what-are-technical-skills-in-management-definition-examples-quiz.html#lesson (Accessed 07 September 2014).

De Janasz, S.C. & Godshalk, V.M. 2013. The role of e-mentoring in protégés' learning and satisfaction. *Group Organization Management,* 38(6):743-774.

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fourché, C.B. & Delport, C.S.L. 2011. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions.* Cape Town: Van Schaik Publishers.

Deering, K. 2010. *The contributions and affects of age on mentoring relationships within an academic setting.* Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Dempsey, I., Arthur-Kelly, M. & Carty, B. 2009. Mentoring early career special education teachers. *Australian Journal of Education,* 53(3):294-305.

Deng, Z., Hofman, P.S. & Newman, A. 2013. Ownership concentration and product innovation in Chinese private SMEs. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 30(3):52-67.

Department of Trade and Industry. 2008. *White paper on national strategy for the development and promotion of small business in South Africa.* (White Paper No. WPA/1995). Cape Town: Department of Trade & Industry.

DeSimone, F. 2013. *Teaching and assessing "critical thinking" in undergraduate business education.* [Online] Available: http://wagner.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/business-admin/files/2013/09/Final-Dissertation-submission-9.20-pdf.pdf (Accessed 14 October 2014).

DiRenzo, M.S., Linnehan, F., Shao, P. & Rosenber, W.L. 2010. A moderated mediation model of e-mentoring. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 76(2):292-305.

Distelberg, B. & Schwarz, T.V. 2013. Mentoring across family-owned businesses. *Family Business Review,* XX(X):1-18.

Distelberg, B. & Sorenson, R.L. 2009. Updating systems concepts in family businesses: A focus on values, resources flows and adaptability. *Family Business Review,* 22(1):65-81.

Distelberg, B.J. & Schwarz, T.V. 2013. Mentoring across family-owned businesses. *Family Business Review,* 0894486513511327

Draves, T.J. & Koops, L.H. 2011. Peer mentoring: Key to new music teacher educator success. *Journal of Music Teacher Education,* 20(2):67-77.

Du Plooy, A.T., De Jager, J.W. & Van Zyl, D. 2012. Drivers of perceived service quality in selected informal grocery retail stores in Gauteng, South Africa. *Southern African Business Review,*16(1):94-121.

dues, S. Ed. 2010. *Using analytical frameworks for classroom research: Collecting data and analysing narrative.* New York: Routledge.

Dworking, T.M., Maurer, V. & Schipani, C.A. 2012. Career mentoring for women: New horisons/expanded methods. *Business Horizons,* 55:363-372.

Earle, V., Myrick, F. & Yonge, O. 2011. Perceptorship in the intergenerational context: An integrative review of the literature. *Nurse Education Today,* 31(1):82-87.

Ebrahim, N.A., Ahmed, S. & Taha, Z. 2010. Critical factors for new product developments in SMEs virtual team. *African Journal of Business Management,* 4(11):2247-2257.

Eby, L.T., Durley, J.R., Evans, S.C. & Ragins, B.R. 2008. Mentor's perceptions of negative mentoring experiences: Scale development and nomological validation. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 93(2):358-373.

Economy Watch. 2010. *The BRIC countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China.* [Online] Available: http://www.economywatch.com/international-organizations/bric.html (Accessed 6 April 2013).

Edwards, K. 2013. *Carry your name.* Bloomington: Trafford Publishing.

Ehigie, B.O., Okang, G.O. & Ibode, F.O. 2011. Mentoring and organisational behaviour. *IFE PsychologIA,* 1:398419.

El-Khasawneh, B.S. 2012. Challenges and remedies of manufacturing businesss in developing countries. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management,* 23(3):328-350.

Eller, L.S., Lev, E.L. & Feurer, A. 2014. Key components of an effective mentoring relationship: A qualitative study. *Nurse Education Today,* 34(5):815-820.

Elliott, J., Beltman, S. & Lynch, E. 2011. *"If you make a difference, you have changed someone's life": Outcomes from a university student mentor program.*

Proceedings of The First Year in Higher Education Conference, 20 July, Fremantle.

Elo, S. & Kyngäs, H. 2008. The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* 62(1):107-115.

Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K. & Kynäs,H. 2014. Qualitative content analysis: A focus on trustworthiness. SAGE Open http://classic.sgo.sagepub.com/content/4/1/2158244014522633

Emelo, R. 2011. Group mentoring best practices. *Industrial and commercial training,* 43(4):221-227.

Engel, R.J. & Schutt, R.K. 2014. *Fundamentals of social work research.* 2nd Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Engelen, A., Schmidt, S., Strenger, L. & Brettel, M. 2013. Top management's transformational leader behaviors and innovation orientation: A cross-cultural perspective in eight countries. *Journal of International Management,* XXX:1-13.

Ensher, E.A. & Murphy, S.E. 2011. The mentoring relationship challenges scale: The impact of mentoring stage, type and gender. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 79(1):253-266.

Eriksson, P. & Kovalainen, A. 2008. Qualitative methods in business research. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Eskerod, P. & Huemann, M. 2013. Sustainable development and project stakeholder management: What standards say. *International Journal of Managing Project in Business,* 6(1):36-50.

Esteves, J. 2010. *Proceedings of the 9th European Conference on research methodology for business and management studies.* Spain: Academic Conferences Limited.

Estraus, S.E., Chatur, F. & Taylor, M. 2009. Issues in the mentor-mentee relationship in academic medicine: A qualitative study. *Academic Medicine,* 84(1):135-139.

Everatt, D. 2012. Non-racialism in South Africa: Status and prospects. *Politikon,* 39(1):5-28.

Fair, C.D., Hopkins, K. & Decker, A. 2012. Developmental mentoring, relationship quality and school adjustment: the Chapel Buddy programme. *Early Child Development and Care*, 182(1):107-121.

Fajana, S. & Gbajumo-Sheriff, M. 2011. Mentoring: A human resource tool for achieving enterpriseal effectiveness. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal: Mentoring: A key Issue in Human Resource Management,* 420:432.

Falzarano, M. 2011. *Describing the occurance and influence of mentoring for occupational therapy faculty members who are on the tenure track or eligible for reappointment.* Unpublished Doctors' thesis. Seton Hall University, New Jersey.

Farrington, S.M. 2009. *Sibling partnership in South African small and medium-sized family businesses.* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.

Fassin, Y., Van Rossem, A. & Buelens, M. 2011. Small-business owner-managers' perceptions of business ethics and CSR – related concepts. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 98:425-453.

Fatoki, O. & Odeyimi, A. 2010. The determinants of access to trade credit by new SMEs in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 4(13):2763-2770.

Fatoki, O. & Patswawairi, T. 2012. The motivations and obstacles to immigrant entrepreneurship in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 32(2):133-142.

Fatoki, O.O. 2011. The impact of human, social and financial capital on the performance of small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 29(3):193-204.

Fatoki, O.O. 2012. The impact of ethics on the availability of trade credit to new small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 30(1):21-29.

Fawcett, D.L. 2002. Mentoring – What it is and how to make it work. *AORN Journal,* 75(5):950-954.

Ferguson, L.M. 2011. From the perspective of new nurses: What do effective mentors look like in practice? *Nurse Education in Practice,* 11:119-123.

Fick, W. 2014. *An introduction to qualitative research.* 5th Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Finkelstein, L.M., Allen, T.D, Ritchie, T.D., Lynch, J.E. & Montei, M.S. 2012. Adyadic examination of the role of relationship characteristics and age on relationship satisfaction in formal mentoring programme. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology,* 21(6):803-827.

Fisher, C.T. Ed. 2011. *Qualitative research methods for psychologists: Introduction through empirical studies.* California: Academic Press.

Fitzpatrick, J.J. & Kazer, M.M. Eds. 2012. *Encyclopedia of nursing research.* 3rd Edition. New York: Springer Publishing.

Fleig-Palmer, M. & Schoorman, F.D. 2011. Trust as a moderator of the relationship between mentoring and knowledge transfer. *Journal of Leadership & Organisational Studies,* 18(3):334-343.

Fleig-Palmer, M.M. & Schoorman, F.D. 2011. Trust as a moderator of the relationship between mentoring and knowledge transfer. *Journal of Leadership or Organizational Studies,* 18(3):334-343.

Fletcher, S.J. & Mullen, C.A. 2012. *SAGE Handbook of mentoring and coaching in education.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Flick, U. 2014. *An introduction to qualitative research.* 5th Edition. California: SAGE Publication.

Foote, K.E. & Solem, M.N. 2009. Toward better mentoring for early career faculty: Results of a study of US geographers. *International Journal for Academic Development,* 14(1):47-58.

Forde, C., McMahon, M., Gronn, P. & Martin, M. 2013. Being a leadership development coach: A multi-faceted role. *Educational Management Administration Leadership,* 41(1):105-119.

Frankel, F. & Wood, J.J. 2011. *Social skills success for students with autism/asperger's: How to teach conversation skills, prevent meltdown, and help kids fit in.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Freedman, S. 2009. Effective mentoring. *IFLA Journal*, 35(2):171-182.

Friday, E. & Friday, S.S. 2002. Formal mentoring: Is there a strategic fit? *Management Decision,* 40(2):152-157.

Furrer, O., Tjemkes, B., Vos, P. & Boymans, C. 2013. *A circumplex approach to interpartner dynamics in strategic alliances.* [Online] Available: http://unifr.ch/marketing/assets/files/2013_furrer_tjemkes_vos_boymans_ubac hs_intinterpart_dynamics_strategic-alliances.pdf (Accessed 24 September 2014).

Galea, C. 2004. Eds. *Teaching business sustainability: From theory to practice.* Sheffields: Greenleaf Publishing.

Gallagher, B.J. 2010. *Making the most of mentoring.* Flower Mound: MultiAd.

Gallato, C.G., Rashid, S., Suryasaputra, R., Warokka, A., Reamillo, K.A.G. & Abdullah, H.H.B. 2012. Fostering niches among SMEs in Malaysia through organizational commitment, leadership, organizational culture and job satisfaction. *Journal of Innovation Management in Small & Medium Enteprises. DOI: 10.5171/2012.511352.*

Gannon, J.M. & Maher, A. 2012. Developing tomorrow's talent: The case of an undergraduate mentoring programmeme. *Education + Training,* 54(6):440-455.

Garr, R.O. & Dewe, P. 2013. A qualitative study of mentoring and career progression among junior medical doctors. *International Journal of Medical Education,* 4:247-252.

Gaunt, H., Creech, A., Long, M. & Hallam, S. 2012. Supporting conservatoire students towards professional integration: one-to-one tuition and the potential of mentoring. *Music Education Research,* 14(1):25-43.

Gavin, H. 2008. *Understanding research methods and statistics in psychology.* London: SAGE Publications.

Gebru, K. & Willman, A. 2010. Education to promote culturally content nursing care: A content analysis of student responses. *Nurse Education Today,* 30:54-60.

Gentry, W.A., Weber, T.J. & Sadri, G. 2008. Examining career-related mentoring and managerial performance across cultures: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 72(2):241-253.

George, M.P. & Mampilly, S.R. 2012. A model for student mentoring in business schools. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education,* 1(2):136-154.

Gettings, P.E. & Wilson, S.R. 2014. Examining commitment and relational maintenance informal youth mentoring relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,* :1-27.

Geuder, B., Lange, R.E. & Scafidi, S. 2011. *A life saver for new teachers: Mentoring case studies to navigate the initial years.* Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Ghosh, R. 2012. Mentors providing challenge and support: Integrating concepts from teacher mentoring in education and organisational mentoring in business. *Human Resource Development Review,* 12(2):144-176.

Gibson, S.K. 2004. Mentoring in business and industry: The need for a phenomenological perspective. *Mentoring & Tutoring,* 12(4):259-275.

Gideon, L. Ed. 2012. *Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences.* New York: Springer.

Gilman, M., Edwards, P., Ram, M. & Arrowsmith, J. 2002. Pay determination in small firms in the UK: The case of the response to the national minimum wage. *Industrial Relations Journal,* 33(1):52-67.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. 2011. *Global report.* Babson Park, MA: Babson College.

Globler, B. 2014. Teachers' perceptions of the utilisation of emotional competence by their school leaders in Gauteng South Africa. *Educational Management Administration & Learning,* DOI: 10.1177/1741143213513184.

Gong, W., Stump, R.L. & Li, Z.G. 2014. Global use and access of social networking web sites: A national culture perspective. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing,* 8(1):37-55.

Goodman, V.D. 2011. *Qualitative research and the modern library.* Oxford OX28 4BN: Chandos, Publishing.

Goosen, X. & Van Vuuren, L.J. 2005. Institutionalising ethics in enterprises: The role of mentoring. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management,* 3(3):61-71.

Gordon, J. & Hartman, R.C. 2009. Affinity – Seeking strategies and open communication in peer workplace relationships. *Atlantic Journal of Communication,* 17:115-125.

Gosh, R. 2014. Antecedents of mentoring support: A meta-analysis of individual, relational, and structural or organizational factors. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 84(3):367-384.

Government Gazette. 2004. [Online] Available: http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=67967. (Accessed: 28 January 2013).

Gratton, C. & Jones, I. 2004. *Research methods for sport studies.* New York: Routledge.

Gray, D.E. & Goregaokar, H. 2010. Choosing an executive coach: The influence of gender on the coach-coachee matching process. *Management Learning,* 41(5):525-544.

Gray, D.E., Ekinci, Y. & Goregaokar, H. 2011a. A five-dimensional model of attributes: Some precursors of executive coach selection. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment,* 19(4):415-428.

Gray, D.E., Ekinci, Y. & Goregaokar, H. 2011b. Coaching SME managers: Business development or personal therapy? A mixed methods study. *International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 22(4):863-882.

Griffin, K.A. & Toldson, I.A. 2012. Reflections on mentoring for Blacks in academia (Editor's commentary). *The Journal of Negro Education,* 81(2):103-105.

Grimmelikhuijen, S., Porumbescu, G., Boram, H. & Tobin, I. 2013. The effect of transparency on trust in government: A cross-national comparative experiment. *Public Administration Review,* 73(4):575-586.

Groener, Z. 2013. Skills development and structural change: Possibilities for and limitations of redressing structural racial inequalities in South Africa. *International Review of Education,* 59(6):723-749.

Grossman, S.C. 2013. *Mentoring in nursing: A dynamic and collaborative process.* 2nd Edition. New York: Springer Publishing.

Guenther, J.L. 2014. A phenomenological approach to describe the lived experiences of ovarian cancer. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic & Neonatal Nursing,* 43(1):

Gunkel, M., Schlägel, C., Langella, I.M., Peluchette, J.V. & Reshtnyak, E. 2013. The influence of national culture on business students' career attitudes: An analysis of eight countries. *Zeitschrift für Personalforschung,* 27(1):47-68.

Guy, T.A. 2010. *School vision of learning: Urban setting.* [Online] Available: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED521455.pdf (Accessed 13 November 2014).

Haddad, T.H. & Jaaron, A.M. 2012. The application of total productive maintenance for healthcare facilities: An implementation method. *International Journal of Business, Humanties and Technology,* 2(2):148-155.

Haggard, D.L., Dougherty, T.W., Turban, D.B. & Wilbanks, J.E. 2011. Who is a mentor? A review of evolving definitions and implications for research. *Journal of Management,* 37(1):280-304.

Hair, J.F., Money, A.H., Samouel, P. & Page, M. 2007. *Research methods for business.* Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Hamamura, T. 2012. Are cultures becoming individualistic? A cross-temporal comparison of individualism-collectivism in the United States and Japan. *Personality and Social Psychology Review,* 16(1):3-24.

Hamburg, I. & Hall, T. 2013. Social networks, web and mentoring approaches in SME continuing vocational education & training. *Journal of Information Technology and Application in Education,* 2(2):85-94.

Hamlin, R. & Sage, L. 2011. Behavioural criteria of perceived mentoring effectiveness: An empirical study of effective and ineffective mentor and mentee behaviour within formal mentoring relationships. *Journal of European Industrial Training,* 35(8):752-778.

Harris, A.S. & Findley, M.G. 2014. Is ethnicity identifiable? Lessons from an experiment in South Africa. *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 58(1):4-33.

Harrison, G., Hayden, S. & Cusing, A. 2012. Improving health care professionals' feedback on communication skills: Development of an on-line resource. *Patient Education and Counseling,* 88(3):414-419.

Hatmaker, D.M. & Park, H.H. 2013. Who are all these people? Longitudinal changes in new employee social networks within a stage agency. *The American Review of Public Administration,* DOI: 10.1177/0275074013481843.

Hattingh, M., Coetzee, M. & Schreuder, D. 2005. Implementing and sustaining mentoring programmemes: A review of the application of best practices in the South African businessal context. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management,* 3(3):40-48.

Hawker, J., McMillan, A. & Palermo, C. 2013. Enduring mentoring partnership: A reflective case study and recommendations for evaluating mentoring in dietetics. *Nutrition & Dietetics,* 70(4):339-344.

Hays, T. 2013. The role of mentorship in the training of professional musicians. *Journal of Arts and Education,* 1(1):27-37.

Hendel, T. & Kagan, I. 2012. Organisational values and organisational commitment: Do nurses' ethno-cultural differences matter? *Journal of Nursing Management,* 22(4):499-505.

Hendrix, C.C., Landerman, R. & Abernethy, A.P. 2013. Effects of an individual caregiver training intervention on self-efficacy of cancer caregivers. *Western Journal of Nursing Research,* 35(5):590-610.

Hennik, M., Hutter, I. & Bailey, A. 2011. *Qualitative research methods.* London: SAGE Publications.

Henrigues, P.L. & Curado, C. 2009. Pushing the boundaries on mentoring: Can mentoring be a knowledge tool? *Journal of Business Economics and Management,* 10(1):85-97.

Herholdt, J. Ed. 2012. *Mentoring & coaching: Articles from the Human Capital Review.* Randburg: Knowres Publishing.

Hermelo, F.D. & Vassolo, R. 2012. How much does country matter in emerging economies? Evidence from Latin America. *International Journal of Emerging Markets,* 7(3):263-288.

Hernandez, A.R.S. 2009. *Exploring live experiences and motivational factors of former heroin users in long-term abstinence without pharmacotherapy.* Ann Arbo: UMI.

Hew, D. & Nee, L.W. (Eds.) 2004. *Entrepreneurship and SMEs in Southeast Asia.* Pasir Panjang: Seng Lee Press Pte. Ltd.

Higgs, J., Titchen, A., Horsfall, D. & Bridges, D. Eds. 2012. *Creative spaces for qualitative researching: Living research.* The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Hinchman, K.A. & Sheridan-Thomas, H. Eds. 2014. *Best practices in adolescent literacy.* 2nd Edition. New York: The Guilford Press.

Hofman, P.S. & Newman, A. 2014. The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on organisational commitment and the moderating role of collectivism and masculinity: Evidence from China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 25(5):631-652.

Hofstede, G. 1984. Cultural dimensions in management and planning. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management,* 1(2):81-99.

Holland, J.M., Major, D.A. & Orvis, K.A. 2012. Understanding how peer mentoring and capitalisation link STEM students to their majors. *The Career Development Quarterly,* 60(4):343-354.

Holloway, I. & Wheeler, S. 2010. *Qualitative research in nursing and healthcare.* 3rd Edition. West-Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Horwitz, F.M. & Jain, H. 2011. An assessment of employment equity and broad based black economic empowerment developments in South Africa. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal,* 30(4):297-317.

Hsieh, H. & Shannon, S.E. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research,* 15(9):1277-1288.

Hsu, M., Chang, C. & Yen, C. 2011. Exploring the antecedents of trust in virtual communities. *Behaviour & Information Technology,* 30(5):587-601.

Huang, F.L. & Moon, T.R. 2009. Is experience the best teacher? A multilevel analysis of teacher characteristics and student achievement in low performing schools. *Educ. Asse. Eval. Acc.,* 21:209-234.

Huang, X. 2009. Strategic decision-making in Chinese SMEs. *Chinese Management Studies,* 3(2):87-101.

Hudson-Davis, R., Parker, C. & Byrom, J. 2002. Towards a healthy high street: Developing mentoring schemes for smaller retailers. *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 34(7):248-255.

Hugo, S.H. & Van Aard, A.M. 2012. Evaluative criteria applied by South African female fashion consumers when purchasing casual daywear. *International Journal of Consumer Studies,* 36(4):460-471.

Hurst, C.S. & Eby, L.T. 2012. Mentoring in businesss: Mentor or tormentor. *International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life,* :81-94.

Huskins, W.C., Silet, K., Weber-Main, A.M., Begg, Fowler, V.G., Hamilton, M.H.S. & Fleming, M. 2011. Identifying and aligning expectations in a mentoring relationship. *Clinical and Translational Science,* 4(6):439-447.

Hutchison, T. & Cochrane, J. 2013. A phenomenological study into the impact of the sign-off mentor in the acute hospital setting. *Nurse Education Today,* 34(6):1029-1033.

Iacob, V. & Dumitrescu, D. 2012. Cultural awareness, sensitivity and competence: Basic requirements for business success in Nepal and South Africa. *Synergy,* (2):121-134.

Irwin, D. 2011. Learning from business support in Africa. *Management Research Review,* 34(2):207-220.

Isaacs-Martin, W. 2014. National and ethnic identities: Dual and extreme identities amongst the coloured population of Port Elizabeth, South Africa. *Studies in ethnicity and nationalism,* 14(1):53-73.

Ismail, I.R. & Lawrence, J. 2012. *Investigating intercultural communication across ethnic diversity: A preliminary study at University Malaysia Tenengganu.* 2nd Malaysian Postgraduate Conference. 7 – 9 July, Bond University, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia.

Ittig, M. 2008. *The political construction of family: Mapping the connections between constituents, government, advocacy, and family policy regarding same-sex marriage.* Ann Arbor: ProQuest LLC.

Jackson, T. 2006. *Management and change in Africa: A cross-cultural perspective.* New York: Routledge.

Jairam, D. & Kahl, D.H. 2012. Navigating the doctoral experience: The role of social support in successful degree completion. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies,* 7:311-329.

Jakkie, C. 2014. South African futures 2030 – how Bafana Bafana made Mandela Magic. *Institute for Security Studies Papers,* (25):36.

James, A.I., Smith, P.K. & Radford, L. 2014. Becoming grown-ups: A qualitative study of the experiences of peer mentors. *Pastoral Care in Education,* 32(2):104-115.

Japhet, L. & Usman, T. 2013. The use of grounded theory technique as a practical tool for qualitative data collection and analysis. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods,* 11(1):29-40.

Javalgi, R.G. & Todd, P.R. 2011. Entrepreneurial orientation, management commitment, and human capital: The internationalisation of SMEs in India. *Journal of Business Research,* 64(9):1004-1010.

Javalgi, R.G., Todd, P.R. & Granot, E. 2011. The internationalization of Indian SMEs in B-to-B markets. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing,* 26/27:542-548.

Jawitz, J. 2012. Race and assessment practice in South Africa: Understanding black academic experience. *Race Ethnicity and Education,* 15(4):545-559.

Jippes, M. & Majoor, G.D. 2011. Influence of national culture on the adoption of integrated medical curricula. *Adv in Health Science Education,* 16:5-16.

Johns, R., McNamara, J. & Moses, Z. 2012. Marketing and branding implications of a corporate service programme: The case of women's group mentoring. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 10(1):74-88.

Jokelainen, M.,Turunen, H., Tossavainen, K., Jamookeeah, D. & Coco, K. 2011. A systematic review of mentoring nursing students in clinical placements. *Journal of Clinical Nursing,* 20(19-20):2854-2857.

Jones, R. & Corner, J. 2012. Seeing the forest and the trees: A complex adaptive systems lens for mentoring. *Human Relations,* 65(3):391-411.

Kachienga, M.O. 2006. *Making business sense of technological innovations in emerging nations: A study of business linkages in South Africa*. IEEE International Conference on Management of Innovation and Technolgy, Singapore, China.

Kanwar, Y.P.S., Singh, A.K. & Kodwani, A.D. 2012. A study of job satisfaction, businessal commitment and turnover intent among IT and ITES sector employees. *The Journal of Business Perspective,* 16(1):27-35.

Kappas, A. & Krämer, N.C. Eds. 2011. *Face-to-face communication over the internet: Emotions in a web of culture, language, and technology.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

KarimiTaher, R., Molavi, R., Rahimi, M. & Zad, A.R. 2014. *A study on the relation between managers' communiation skills and the employees' organizational commitment.* [Online] Available: http://brisjast.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Dec-25-2014.pdf (Accessed 16 November 2014).

Kay, D. & Hinds, R. 2009. A practical guide to mentoring: How to help other achieve their goals. 4th Edition. Oxford.

Keele, R. 2010. *Nursing research and evidence-based practice: Ten steps to success.* London: Jones & Bartlett Learining

Kennedy, C. 2010. *The use of consultants versus independent strategy formation for small and medium enterprises in Gauteng.* Unpublished Masters dissertation. University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg.

Kent, A.M., Kochana, F. & Greem. A.M. 2013. Cultural influence on mentoring programs and relationships. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education,* 2(3):204-217.

Kim, K., Cundiff, N.C. & Choi, S.B. 2014. The influence of emotional intelligence on negotiation outcomes and the mediating effect of rapport: A structural equation modelling approach. *Negotiation Journal,* 30(1):49-68.

Kim, S. & McLean, G.N 2014. The impact of national culture on informal learning in the workplace. *Adult Education Quarterly,* 64(1):39-59.

King, B.M. 2010. Point: A call for proper usage of "gender" and "sex" in biomedical publications. *American Journal of Physiology – Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology,* 298:R1700-R1701.

Kirsten, C. & Fourie, J.R. 2012. The accounting professions' role in financial management skills development of small businesses. *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences,* 5(2):459-480.

Klasen, N. & Clutterbuck, D. 2004. *Implementing mentoring schemes: A practical guide to successful programs.* Burlington: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.

Kling, S. 2010. Confidentiality in medicine. *Current Allergy & Clinical Immunology,* 23(4):196-198.

Knouse, S.B. 2013. Mentoring for Hispanics. *Review of Business,* 33(2):80-90.

Kochan, F. 2013. Analyzing the relationships between culture and mentoring. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning,* 21(4):412-430.

Kongolo, M. 2010. Job creation versus job shedding and the role of SMEs in economic development. *African Journal of Business Management,* 4(11):2288-2295.

Koschmann, M.A. & Peterson, B.L. 2013. Rethinking recidivism: A communication *approach* to prisoner re-entry. *Journal of Applied Social Science,* 7(2):188-207.

Kostovich, C.T. & Thurn, K.E. 2013. Group mentoring: A story of transition for undergraduate baccalaureate nursing students. *Nurse Education Today*, 33:413-418.

Kram, K.E. 1983. Phases of the mentor relationship. *Academy of Management Journal,* 26(4):608-625.

Krause-Parello, C.A., Sarcone, A., Samms, K. & Boyd, Z.N. 2013. Developing a centre for nursing research: An influence on nursing education and research through mentorship. *Nurse Education in Practice,* 13(2):106-112.

Kühlbrandt, C., Balabanova, D., Chikovani, I., Petrosyan, V., Kizilova, K., Ivaniuto, O., Danii, O., Makarova, N. & McKee, M. 2014. In search of patient-centred care in middle income countries: The experience of diabetes care in the former Soviet Union. *Health Policy,* 118:193-200.

Kumar, C.R. 2008. *Research methodology.* New Delhi: APH Publishing.

Kumar, D. 2010. *Business growth strategy: Vision, planning and execution.* Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Kwon, N. & Gregory, V.L. 2007. The effects of librarians' behavioural performance on user satisfaction in Chat Reference Services. *Reference & User Services Quarterly,* 47(2):137-148.

Ladzani, W. & Netswera, G. 2009. Support for rural small businesses in Limpopo Province, South Africa. *Development Southern Africa,* 26(2):225-239.

Ladzani, W., Smith, N. & Pretorius, L. 2012. Using leadership and strategic planning function to improve management performance: The progress made by small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the province of Gauteng, South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(11):3988-3999.

Laiho, M. & Brandt, T. 2012.J Views of HR specialists on formal mentoring: Current situation and prospects for the future. *Career Development International,* 17(5):435-457.

Lamb, S. 1999. The Holmes scholars network: A networking mentoring program of the Holmes partnership. *Peabody Journal of Education,* 74(2):150-162.

Lamm, A. & Harder, A. 2011. *Using mentoring as a part of professional development.* [Online] Available: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/WC/WC08200.pdf (Accessed 10 May 2013).

Larose, S. 2013. Trajectories of mentor's perceived self-efficacy during an academic mentoring experiences: What they look like and what are their personal and experimental correlates. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning,* 21(2):150-174.

Latchem, C. 2014. Informal learning and non-formal education for development. [Online] Available: http://jl4d.info/index.php/ejl4d/article/view/6 (Accessed 06 March 2014).

Lau, E. & Rowlinson, S. 2009. Interpersonal trust and inter-firm trust in construction projects. *Construction Management and Economics,* 27:539-554.

Lawyers' Professional Indemnity. 2013. [Online] Available: http://www.practicepro.ca/practice/pdf/Mentoring_Booklet.pdf (Accessed 16 September 2013).

Le, N.T.B & Nguyen, T.V. 2009. The impact of networking on bank financing: The case of small and medium-sized enterprises in Vietnam. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* 33(4):867-887.

Leck, J. & Orser, B. 2013. Fostering trust in mentoring relationships: An exploratory study. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal,* 32(4):410-425.

Lee, A. 2007. Special section: How can a mentor support experiential learning? *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry,* 12(3):333-340.

Lee, N. & Lings, I. 2008. *Doing business research: A guide to theory and practice.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Leiter, M.P., Bakker, A.B. & Maslach, C. Eds. 2014. *Burnout at work: A psychological perspective.* New York: Psychology Press.

Leppisaari, I. & Tenhunen, M. 2009. Searching for e-mentoring practices for SME staff development. *Service Business,* 3(2):189-207.

Leslie, H. & Johnson-Leslie, N. 2014. Technology mentoring: A model for professional development. In Searson, M. & Ochoa, M. (Eds). Proceedings of Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference, Chesapeak, VA.

Letseka, M. 2012. In defence of Ubuntu. *Stud Philos Educ*, 31:47-60.

Levine, R.B., Mechaber, H., Reddy, S.T., Cayea, D. & Harrison, R.A. 2013. A good career choice for women: Female medical students' mentoring experiences: A multi-institutional qualitative study. *Academic Medicine,* 88(4):527-534.

Li, H. & Miller, T. 2006. *New ventures in emerging markets: Comprehensive review and future directions.* [Online] Available: http://www.owlnet.rice.edu/~haiyang/LI per cent20CHAP per cent2002.pdf (Accessed 17 February 2013).

Li, X., Troutt, M.D., Brandyberry, A. & Wang, T. 2011. Decision factors for the adoption and continued use of online direct sales channels among SMEs. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems,* 12(1):1-31.

Lichtman, M. 2013. *Qualitative research in education: A user's guide.* 3rd Ed. London: SAGE Publications.

Lin, C., Wu, J. & Tsai, H. 2013. A hybrid approach to knowledge flow. *Industrial Management & Data Systems,* 113(5):628-646.

Little, K., Kearney, L. & Britner, P.A. 2010. Students' self-concept and perceptions of mentoring relationships in a summer mentorship program for talented adolescents. *Roeper Review,* 32(3):189-199.

Little, Kearney, K.L.Britner, P.A. 2010. Students' self-concept and perceptions of mentoring relationships in a summer mentorship progam for talented adolescents. *Roeper Review,* 32(3):189-199.

Lo, M. & Ramayah, T. 2011. Mentoring and job satisfaction in Malaysian SMEs. *Journal of Management Development,* 30(4):427-440.

Lo, M., Ramayah, T. & Kui, L.C. 2013. Mentoring and job satisfaction in Malaysia: A test on small medium enterprises in Malaysia. *International Journal of*

Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach/ Tarptautinis psichologijos zurnalas: Bioisocialinis poziuris, December (13):69-90.

Long, C.S., Ajagbe, M.A. & Kowang T.O. 2014. Addressing the issues on employees' turnover intention in the perspective of HRM practices in SMEs. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Science,* 129:99-104.

Long, W. & Olufemi, E.A. 2011. *Knowledge management and innovation for firms competitiveness: A strategic approach for African SMEs.* Management and service science (MASS). International conference on 12-14 August, Wuhan.

López-Navarro, M.Ά., Callarisa-Fiel, L. & Moliner-Tena, M.Ά. 2013. Long-term orientation and commitment in export joint ventures among small and medium-sized firms. *Journal of Small Business Management,* 51(1):100-113.

Lucassen, A., Ehlers, K., Grobler, P.J. & Shezi, A.L. 2013. Allele frequency data of 15 qutosomal STR loci in four major population groups of South Africa. *International Journal of Legal Medicine.* Available on: DOI 10.1007/s00414-013-0898-4.

Luiz, J. 2002. *S mall business development, entrepreneurship and expanding the business sector in a developing economy: The case of South Africa.* [Online] Available:

http://www.econrsa.org/system/files/publications/policy_papers_interest/pp14_interest.pdf (Accessed 07 September 2014).

Lunsford, L.G. 2011. Psychology of mentoring: The case of talented college students. *Journal of Advanced Academics,* 22(3):474-498.

Lyons, T.S. & Wyckoff, B. 2014. Facilitating community wealth building: Understanding the roles played and capabilities needed by coordinating institutions. *Community Development,* DOI: 10.1080/15575330.2014.939680.

Macnee, C.L. & McCabe, S. 2008. *Understanding nursing research: Reading and using research in evidence-based practice.* 2nd Edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Madhani, P.M. 2012. Matching compensation strategies: Enhancing competitiveness. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management,* 9(1):5-22.

Makoza, F. & Chigona, W. 2012. The livelihood outcomes of ICT use in microenterprises: The case of South Africa. *The Electronic Journal of International Systems in Developing Countries,* 53(1):1-16.

Maldé, B. 2006. A personal view: Do assessment centres really care about the candidate? *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling,* 34(4):539-549.

Malhotra, N., Hall, J., Shaw, M. & Oppenheim, P. 2007. *Essentials of marketing research, an applied orientation.* Australia: Pearson.

Malik, M.E, Nawab, S., Naeem, B. & Danish, R.Q. 2010. Job satisfaction and businessal commitment of university teachers in public sector of Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Management,* 5(6):17-26.

Malone, J.A., Atweh, B. & Northfield, J.R. Eds. 2013. *Research and supervision in mathematics and science education.* New York: Routledge.

Mammen, M. 2012. Using mentee's feedback to improve a mentoring program in a South African medical school. *Anthropologist,* 14(1):1-8.

Mandipaka, F. 2014. Overview of women entrepreneurs in South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* 5(9):127-130.

Mankayi, N. 2010. Race and masculinities in the South African military. *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies,* 38(2):22-43.

Mankelow, G. 2008. Social responsibility paradox of small business human resource management practices. *International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 19(12):2171-2181.

Mann, S. & Tang, E.H.H. 2012. The role of mentoring in supporting novice English language teachers in Hong Kong. *TESOL Quarterly*, 46(3):472-494.

Manwa, H. & Manwa, F. 2007. Applicabiity of the Western concept of mentoring to African organisations. A case study of Zimbabwean organisation. *Journal of African Business,* 8(1):31-43.

Maree, J.G. 2011. Editorial: Reporting on research: Reflecting on and mirroring the psychological state of our nation. *South African Journal of Psychology,* 41(3):257-267.

Marom, S. & Lussiier, R.N. 2014. A business success versus failure prediction model for small businesses in Israel. *Business and Economic Research,* 4(2):63-80.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. 2011. *Designing qualitative research.* 5th Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Martin, B. & Hanington, B. 2012. *Universal methods of design: 100 ways to research complex problems, develop innovative ideas, and design effective solutions.* Beverly, MA: Rockport Publishers.

Martin, S. & Sifers S. 2012. An evaluation of factors leading to mentor satisfaction with the mentoring relationship. *Children and Youth Services Review,* 34:940-945.

Mathibe, M.S. & Van Zyl, J.H. 2011. The impact of business support services to SMMEs in South Africa. *International Business & Economcs Research Journal,* 10(11):101-108.

Matthews, T.D. & Kostelis, K.T. 2011. *Designing and conducting: Research in health and human performance.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Matuszek, T., Self, D.R. & Schraeder, S. 2008. Mentoring in an increasingly global workplace: Facing the realities and challenges. *Development and Learning in Organizations,*22(6):18-20.

Maxfield, M.G. & Babbie, E.R. 2014. *Research methods for criminal justice and criminology.* 7th Edition. Belmont: Cengage Learning.

Mazanai, M. & Fatoki, O. 2012a. Access to finance in the SME sector: A South African perspective. *Asian Journal of Business Management*, 4(1):58-67.

Mazanai, M. & Fatoki, O. 2012b. Perceptions of start-up small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the importance of business development services providers (BDS) on improving access to finance in South Africa. *Journal of Social Sciences,* 30(1):31-41.

Mazerolle, L.J., Borland, J. & Burton, S.M. 2012. They cannot seem to get past the gender issue: Experiences of young female athletic trainers in NCAA Division I intercollegiate athletics. *Sport Management Review,* 15(3):304-317.

Mazzarol, T. 2014. *How do Australia's universities engage with entrepreneurship an small business?* [Online] Available: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2428008 (Accessed 07 October 2014).

Mbonyane, B. & Ladzani, W. 2011. Factors that hinder the growth of small businesses in South African townships. *European Business Review,* 23(6):550-560.

McFarland, C. & McConnel, J.K. 2012. Small business growth during a recession: Local policy implications. *Economic Development Quarterly,* 27(2):102-113.

McGill, C.J.D. 2011. *Creating opportunities with mentoring relationships.* [Online] Available: http://www.lamergray.com/gray/research/AIJ2011conf-proceed.pdf#page=104 (Accessed 08 September 2014).

McGowan, B., Sainta, P. & Gill, K.S. 2009. On mentoring, social mentoring and befriending. *AL & Society,* 23:613-630.

McNabb, D.E. 2013. *Research methods in public administration and non-profit management: Quantitative and qualitative approaches.* 3rd Edition. New York: M.E. Sharp.

McWay, D.C. 2014. *Today's wealth information management: An integrated approach.* New York: Delmar.

Measor, L. & Sykes, P. 1992. Gender and schools. In Beekun, R.I., Stedham, Y., Westerman, J.W. & Yamamura, J.H. 2010. Effects of justice and utilitarianism on ethical decision making: A cross-cultural examination of gender similarities and differences. *Business Ethics: A European Review,* 19(4):309-325.

Melkumov, D. 2011. *Towards explaining the tasks and roles of the boards of directors.* [Online] Available: https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/28038/235_978-952-232-146-6.pdf?sequence=1 (Accessed 30 October 2014).

Mentoring and Befriending Foundation. 2009. *Funding for mentoring and befriending projects: Challenges and opportunities.* [Online] Available:

http://www.mandbf.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/MBF-Funding-Report-Survey-FINAL.pdf (Accessed 17 November 2014).

Merlevede, P. & Bridoux, D. 2004. *Mentoring and coaching with emotional intelligence.* Carmarthen, Wales: Crown House Publishing.

Merriam, S.B. 2009. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* St Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Mertler, C.A. 2013. *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators.* London: SAGE Publications.

Metz, T. & Gaie, J.B.R. 2010. The African ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for research on morality. *Journal of Moral Education,* 39(3):273-290.

Miles, D.A. 2013. Research in economics, ethnicity and gender: A comparative study on black female-owned and black male-owned business enterprises. *Global Business and Economics Research Journal,* 2(4):1-23.

Miniute-Cobb, E.I. & Alfred, M.V. 2010. Learning from evaluation by peer team: A case study of a family counselling organization. *International Journal of Training and Development,* 14(2):95-111.

Minkov, M. & Hofstede, G. 2012. Hostede's fifth dimension: New evidence from the word values survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* 43(1):3-14.

Mishara, S. & Suar, D. 2010. Does corporate social responsibility influence firm performance of Indian companies? *Journal of Business Ethics,* 95:571-601.

Mishra, R. & Jain, P.K 2012. Impact of globalisation in boosting Indian SMEs: Special reference to Punjab state. *Asian Journal of Research in Business Economics and Management,* 2(4):176-185.

Miskon, S., Bandara, W., Fielt, E. & Gable, G.G. 2011. *An exploration of shared services types in higher education.* Proceedings of the Seventeenth Americas Conference of Information Systems, Detroit, Michigan, August 4th – 7th 2011.

Modiba, F.S., Kotzé, D.A & Eloff, J. 2012. The challenges of accessing information and communication technologies as indicated by women entrepreneurs in Pretoria, South Africa. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences,* 6(4):119-130.

Mofokeng, G. & Thwala, W.D. 2012. Mentorship programmes within the small and medium sized contractor development programme: A case study of the Free State Province, South Africa. *Journal of Economics and Behavioural Studies,* 4(12):712-722.

Mohamad, Z., Ibrahim, Y., Muda, M.S. & Moklis, S. 2012. *Entrepreneurial competencies and sustainability of Malaysian small medium enterprises (SMEs).* 3rd International conference on business and economic research (3rd ICBER 2012) proceedings. Bandung, Indonesia.

Monsen, E.R. & Van Horn, L. Eds. 2008. *Research successful approaches.* 3rd Edition. Chicago: Diana Faulhaber.

Morales-Sánchez, R. & Cabello-Medina, C. 2013. The role of four universal moral competencies in ethical decision-making. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 116(4):717-734.

Moreno, V. & Gomes, J. 2009. *Benefits and success factors of web services adoption: An exploratory action-research project in a Brazilian small software house.* Proceedings of the fifteenth American Conference on information systems. San Francisco, California.

Morkel, D. 2014. *Economists warn South Africa is living beyond its means.* [Online] Available: http://mg.co.za/article/2014-01-28-economists-warn-sa-living-beyond-its-means/ (Accessed 25 May 2014).

Mosbah, A. & Debili, R. 2014. Development of Algerian SMEs in the age of globalization. *Journal of Business and Social Development,* 2(1):37-48.

Mote, G. 2010. Mentoring builds positive relationships. *Corridor Business Journal,* 7(3):9-15.

Moyes, D., Whittam, G. & Ferri, P. 2012. A conceptualisation of the relationship capital of rural small service firms. *Local Economy,* 27(2):136-151.

Muchiri, M.K. 2011. Leadership in context: A review and research agenda for sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology,* 84:440-452.

Mueller, J.M. 2012. *Good governance – not just for the big boys: Governance in organizations in New Zealand.* [Online] Available: http://dro.deakin.edu.au/view/DU:30018597 (Accessed 21 September 2012).

Muganda, N. & Pillay, K. 2013. Forms of power, politics and leadership in asynchronous virtual project environment: An exploratory analysis in South Africa. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business,* 6(3):457-484.

Mujtaba, B.G. 2013. Ethnic diversity, distrust and corruption in Afghanistan: Reflections on the creation of an inclusive culture. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal,* 32(3):245-261.

Mulcahy, R.S. 2012. The effects of experience grouping on achievement, satisfaction, and problem-solving discourse in professional technical training. *Educational Technology Research and Development,* 60(1):15-29.

Munson, M.R. & McMillen, J.C. 2008. Nonkin natural mentors in the lives of older youths in foster care. *The Journal of Behavioural Health Services & Research,* 35(4):454-468.

Murphy, S. & Ensher, E. 1997. The effects of culture on mentoring relationships: A developmental model. In Granrose, C.S. & Oskamp, S. Eds. *Cross-cultural work groups.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Murray, S. 2012. The challenges of designing a common, standards-based curriculum for all South Africa's languages. *A Journal of Language Learning,* 28(2):84-94.

Mutanda, M., De Beer, M. & Myers, G.T. 2014. The perception of small and micro enterprises in the city of Durban Central Business District (CBD) (Kwazulu-Natal) (KZN) towards financial planning. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* 5(6):153-163.

Mwobobia, F.M. 2012. Empowering of small-micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs): A case of Botswana. *Business and Management Research,* 1(4):88-98.

Myall, M., Levett-Jones, T. & Lathlean, J. 2008. Mentorship in contemporary practice: The experiences of nursing students and practice mentors. *Journal of Clinical Nursing,* 17(14):1834-1842.

Myers, M.D. 2013. *Qualitative research in business and management.* 2nd Edition. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Naicker, I., Chikoko, V. & Mthiyane, S.E. 2014. Does mentorship add value to in-service leadership development for school principals? Evidence from South Africa. *Anthropologist,* 17(2):421-431.

Nakata, Y. 2010. Improving the classroom language proficiency of non-native teachers of English: What and how? *RELC Journal,* 41(1):76-90.

Ncube, L.B. & Wasburn, M.H. 2006. Strategic collaboration for ethical leadership: A mentoring framework for business and businessal decision making. *Journal of Leadership and Businessal Studies,* 13(1):77-92.

Ncube, L.B. 2010. Ubuntu: A transformative leadership philosophy. *Journal of Leadership Studies,* 4(3):77-82.

Ndedi, A.A. 2013. The incorporation of entrepreneurship in black economic empowerment programmes in South Africa. *Journal of Business Management and Economics,* 4(9):195-199.

Ndubisi, N.O. & Iftikhar, K. 2012. Relationship between entrepreneurship, innovation and performance: Comparing small and medium-size enterprises. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship,* 14(2):214-236.

Neelankavil , J.P. 2007. *International business research.* New York: M.E. Sharpe.

NEF Annual Report 2014. Foreword by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry. [Online] Available: http://www.thedti.gov.za/parliament/NEF_2.pdf (Accessed 27 August 2014).

Neneh, N.B. 2012. An exploratory study on entrepreneurial mindset in the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector: A South African perspective on fostering small and medium enterprise (SME) success. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(9):3364-3372.

Ness, E.J. 2012. *Trust in the mentor-youth relationship and its correlates with frequency of contact, parental involvement, and academic improvements.* Unpublished Masters dissertation. Minnesota State University, Mankato, Minnesota.

Ng, P.T. 2012. Mentoring and coaching educators in the Singapore education system. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education,* 1(1):24-35.

Ngungi, J.K., Gakure, R.W., Susan, W.M., Nungi, P.K. & Robinson, K.C. 2012. The influence of intellectual capital on the growth of small and medium enterprises in Kenya. *Journal of Business Management and Corporate Affairs,* 1(1):11-19.

Nienaber, H. & Svensson, G. 2013. An analysis of the contribution of leadership to organisational performance using complexity science. *Journal of Management Development,* 32(8):836-851.

Nkosi, E., Bounds, M. & Goldman, G. 2013. Skills required for the management of black-owned small enterprises in Soweto. *Acta Commercii,* 13(1):1-10.

Nyazema, M.M. 2013. *Developing an empowerment framework for broad-based black economic empowerment in the hotel industry of South Africa.* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town.

O'Brien, K.E., Biga, A., Kessler, S.R. & Allen, T.D. 2010. A meta-analytic investigation of gender differences in mentoring. *Journal of Management,* 36(2): 537-554.

O'Connell, M., Kung, M. & Tristan, E. 2014. Developing successful global consultants. *Internationalising the Curriculum in Organisational Psychology,*:183-206.

O'Donoghue, A. & Shackleton, C.M. 2013. Current and potential carbon stocks of trees in urban parking lots in towns of the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening,* 12:443-449.

O'Laughlin, B., Bernstein, H., Cousins, B. & Peters, P.A. 2013. Introduction: Agrarian change, rural poverty and land reform in South Africa since 1994. *Journal of Agrarian Change,* 13(1):1-15.

O'Neil, J. & Marsick, V.J. 2009. Peer mentoring and action learning. *Adult Learning,* 20(1-2):19-24.

Odit, M.P. & Gobardhun, Y.D. 2011. The determinant of finance leverage of SME's in Mauratius. *International Businesss & Economics Research Journal,* 10(3):113-125.

Odunayo, A. 2011. Mentoring and leadership succession in industries and organisations. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal,* 180-186.

Offstein, E.H., Shah, A.J. & Gnyawali, D.R. 2011. Effects of CEO-BOD mentoring on firm competitive behaviour. *Review of Business,* 32(1):75-88.

Okoro, O.E., Ogunbiyi, A.O., George, A.O. & Bello, T.O. 2012. Challenges of dermatology training among internal medicine resident doctors in Nigeria. *Jos Journal of Medicine,* 6(3):6-9. Smith, D.E. Eds. 2012. The study of people at work. *Personnel Psychology,* 65(1):201-220.

Okpara, J.O. & Kabongo, J.D. 2009. Entrepreneurial export orientation, strategy, and performance of SMEs in an emergent African economy. *African Journal of Business and Economic Research,* 4(2&3):34-54.

Okpara, J.O. 2011. Factors constraining the growth and survival of SMEs in Nigeria: Implications for poverty alleviation. *Management Research Review,* 34(2):156-171.

Okurame, D. 2012. Impact of career growth prospects and formal mentoring on businessal citizenship behaviour. *Leadership & Businessal Development Journal,* 33(1):66-85.

Okurame, D.E. & Fabunmi, R. 2014. Protean and boundaryless careers: Exploring the role of mentoring and gender in the context of a major African country. *Career Development International,* 19(1):73-100.

Olatundun, I.O. 2011. Workplace mentoring: Learning and developmental approaches: Chapter 14. *IFE PsychologIA: An International Journal*

Olawale, F. & Garwe, D. 2010. Obstacles to the growth of new SMEs in South Africa: A principal component analysis approach. *African Journal of Business Management,* 4(5):729-738.

Ongori, H. & Migiro, S.O. 2010. Information and communication technologies adoption in SMEs: Literature review. *Journal of Chinese Entrepreneurship,* 2(1):93-104.

Onkila, T. 2010. Multiple forms of stakeholder interaction in environmental management: Business arguments regarding differences in stakeholder relationships. *Business Strategy and the Environment,* 20:379-393.

Onsrud, E. Ed. 2007. *Research and theory in advancing spatial data infrastructure concepts.* New York: ESRI Press.

Opperman, C. 2010. *Investigating the marketing of South African wine amongst the emerging black market of South Africa.* Unpublished Masters' dissertation. University of Stellenbosch, Western Cape.

Osula, B. & Irvin, S.M. 2009. Cultural awareness in intercultural mentoring. A model for enhancing mentoring relationships. *International Journal of Leadership Studies,* 5(1):37-50.

Oum, S., Harvie, C. & Narjoko, D. 2011. Small and medium businesss' (SMEs') access to finance in selected East Asian Economies. Presented at the 8th SMEs in a Global Economy Conference 2011: "Rising to the global challenge: Entrepreneurship and SMEs development in Asia."

Owen, H. 2011. *The complete guide to mentoring: How to design, implement and evaluate effective mentoring programmes.* Philadelphia, PA: Replika Press Pvt Ltd.

Paddey, M. 2011. *An investigation into Southern African university students' use of proactive coping style.* Unpublished Masters' dissertation. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.

Paddison, D. 2013. Guided sponsorship: The ultimate tool for internal talent sourcing. *Leader to Leader,* 67:13-18.

Palan, R. 2014. *Competency management: A practical guide.* Kuala Lumpur: Specialist Management Resources.

Parak, C. & Khonje, W.H. 2012. *Challenges for SMEs development in small and developing countries.* [Online] Available:

http://www.thecommonwealth.org/files/248999/FileName/SmallStatesDigestIssue22012.pdf#page=25 (Accessed 11 September 2012).

Park-Saltzman, J., Wada, K. & Mogami, T. 2012. Culturally sensitive mentoring for Asian international students in counselling psychology. *The Counselling Psychologist,* 40(6):895-915.

Parsloe, E. & Leedham, M. 2009. 2nd Edition. *Coaching and mentoring: Practical converstations to improve learning.* London: Kogan Page.

Passmore, J. Ed. 2010. *Excellence in coaching: The industry guide.* Great Britain: Kogan Page.

Patel, T. 2014. *Cross-cultural management: A transactional approach.* New York: Routledge.

Pedersen, S.G., Zachariassen, F. & Arlbjørn, J.S. 2012. Centralisation vs de-centralisation of warehousing: A small and medium-sized enterprise perspective. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development,* 19(2):352-369.

Pedrosa, A.M., Näslund, D. & Jasmand, C. 2012.Logistics case study based research: Towards higher quality. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management,* 42(3):272-295.

Penceliah, Y. 2008. Managing across cultures for organisational success. *Journal of Public Administration,* 43(3):330-341.

Peters, R.M., Van Gensen, G., Isaacs, E.B.H., Botha, M.J. & Naicker, V. 2014. Education and small business growth: A gender perspective of two divergent provinces in South Africa. *International Business & Economics Research Journal,* 13(5):1127-1140.

Phenya, A. 2011. *An assessment of the financial management skills of small retail business owner-managers in Dr JS Moroka Municipality.* Unpublished Masters' dissertation. University of South Africa, Johannesburg.

Phielix, C., Prins, F.J., Kirschner, P.A., Erkens, G. & Jaspers, J. 2011. Group awareness of social and cognitive performance in CSCL environment: Effects

of a peer feedback and reflection tool. *Computers in Human Behaviour,* 27:1087-1102.

Phillips, M., Moos, M. & Nieman, G. 2014. The impact of government support initiatives on the growth of female businesses in Tshwane South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* 5(15):85-92.

Phiri, A. 2013. Kopano Matlwa's coconut and the dialectics of race in South Africa: Interrogating images of whiteness and blackness in black literature and culture. *The Journal of South Africa and American Studies,* 14(2):161-174.

Pinho, S.D.C., Coetzee, M. & Schreuder, D. 2005. Formal mentoring: Mentee and mentor expectations and perceived challenges. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management,* 3(3):20-26.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. 2008. *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice.* 8th Edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Polit, D.F. & Beck, C.T. 2014. *Essentials of nursing research: Appraising evidence for nursing practice.* 8th Edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Pomeroy, E.C.& Steiker, L.H. 2011. *Paying it forward: On mentors and mentoring.* [Online] Available: http://www.valleyelink.org/files/Professioals%20page%20Mentoring.pdf (Accessed 10 October 2014).

Popil, L. 2011. Promotion of critical thinking by using case studies as a teaching method. *Nurse Education Today,* 31(2):204-207.

Poteat, L. 2012. For better or worse: An examination of the antecedents and outcomes of mentor commitment in mentoring relationships. Unpublished Doctoral degree. University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.

Poteat, L.F., Shockley, K.M. & Allen, T.D. 2009. Mentor-protégé commitment fit and relationship satisfaction in academic mentoring. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 74:332-337.

Potgieter, A. N.D. 2011. *Mentoring as a strategy to develop leadership potential of female employees.* Unpublished Masters dissertation. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.

Poulsen, K.M. 2006. Implementing successful mentoring programs: career definition vs mentoring approach. *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 38(5):251-258.

Price, A. & McMullan, L. 2012. We don't need no education: The role of mentoring in the wider business eco-system. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship,* 4(2):5.

Qu, S., Cooper, D.J. & Ezzamel, M. 2010. Creating and popularising a global management accounting idea: The case of the balanced scorecard. *Research Executive Summary Series,* 6(13):1-6.

Quinlan, C. 2011. *Business research methods.* Hampshire:South-Western.

Quintana, M.G.B. & Zambrano, E.P. 2014. E-mentoring: The effects on pedagogical training of rural teachers with complex geographical accesses. *Computers in Human Behaviour,* 30:629-636.

Rachagan, S. & Satkunasingam, E. 2009. Improving corporate governance of SMEs in emerging economies: a Malaysian experience. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management,* 22(4):468-484.

Ramaswami, A. Dreher, G.F. 2010. Dynamics of mentoring relationships in India: A qualitative, exploratory study. *Human Resource Management,* 49(3):501-530.

Ramaswami, A., Huang, J. & Dreher, G. 2013. Interaction of gender, mentoring and power distance on career attainment: A cross-cultural comparison. *Human Relations,* 10.1177/001872671349000.

Rankhumise, E.M. & Lehobye, N.M. 2012. Success and failure of government-funded businesses: Evidence from a selected entrepreneurial entity in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(16):5599-5605.

Rashid, A. & Lodh, S.C. 2011. *Corporate governance and performance of small and medium sized enterprise (SME): Evidence from Bangladesh*. [Online] Available: http://www.wbiconpro.com/411-Sudhir.pdf (Accessed 21 September 2012).

Reddick, R.J. 2012. Male faculty mentors in black and white. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education,* 1(1):36-53.

Reinig, C.J. & Tilt, C.A. 2008/2009. Corporate social responsibility issues in media releases: A stakeholder analysis of Australian banks. *Issues in Social and Environmental Accounting,* 2(2):176-197.

Remenyi, D. & Money, A. 2012. *Research supervision for supervisors and their studets.* 2nd Edition. RG4, 9AY: Academic Publishing International Limited.

Remenyi, D. 2007. *Proceedings of the 6th European Conference on research methodology for business and management studies.* Ireland: Academic Conferences Limited.

Remenyi, D. 2012. *Field methods for academic research: Interviews, focus groups and questionnaires in business and management studies.* Nr Reading, RG4 9AY: Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited.

Rienties, B., Luchoomun, D. & Tempelaar, D. 2014. Academic and social integration of master students: A cross-institutional comparison between Dutch and international students. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International,* 51(2):130-141.

Ríos, V.R. & Del Campo, E.P. 2013. *Business research methods: Theory and practice.* Madrid: Fotocomposición Y Fotomecánica.

Roach, V. & El-Khawas, E. 2010. *Gender equity in the university: The unmet agenda.* [Online] Available: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ903577.pdf (Accessed 07 October 2014).

Robinson, D.M. & Reio, T.G. 2012. Benefits of mentoring African-American men. *Journal of Managerial Psychology,* 27(4):406-421.

Rogerson, C.M. 2013. Improving market access opportunities for urban small, medium and micro-enterprises in South Africa. *Urbani Izziv,* 24(2):133-143.

Rolfe, R., Woodward, D., Ligthelm A. & Guimarães, P. 2010. *The availability of informal micro-enterprise in South Africa.* Presented at the Conference on Entreprenuership in Africa. Whitman School of Management, Syracuse Unversity, Syracuse, New York, April 1 – 3.

Rombeau, J.L. 2010. Jonathan E. Rhoads lecture: Mentoring and nutrition care. *Journal of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition,* 34(1):89-93.

Rowland, K.N. 2012. E-Mentoring: An innovative twist to traditional mentoring. *Journal of Technology Management & Innovation.* 7(1):229-237.

Roztocki, N. & Weistroffer, H.R. 2008. Information technology investments in emerging economies. *Information Technology for Development,* 14(1):1-10.

Russell, J.S. & Nelson, J. 2009. Completing the circle of professional development through leadership and mentoring. *Leadership and Management in Engineering,* 9(1):40-42.

Russell, M.L. & Russell, J.A. 2011. Mentoring relationships: Cooperating teachers' pespectives on mentoring student interns. *Professional Educator,* 35(1):16-35.

Rusu, R. 2013. Organisational commitment – from its beginnings until today. *Bulletin Scientific,* 2(36):181-186.

Rutti, R.M., Helms, M.M. & Rose, L.C. 2013. Changing the lens: Viewing the mentoring relationship as relational structures in a social exchange framework. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal,* 34(5):446-468.

Saayman, M. & Oliver, E. 2005. An analysis of tourism SMEs in South Africa. *South African Journal of Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation,* 27(1):117-126.

Saayman, M. 2004. *Business development strategy: Impact assessment study.* Potchefstroom: Institute for Tourism and Leisure Studies.

Saks, M. & Allsop, J. Eds. 2012. *Researching health: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.* 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Salkind, N.J. 2010. *Encyclopedia of research design.* 3rd Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

SAinfo. 2013. *Black economic empowerment.* [Online] Available: http://www.southafrica.info/business/trends/empowerment/bee.htm#objectives (Accessed 04 March 2015).

Sambunjak, D., Straus, S.E. & Marusic, A. 2010. A systematic review of qualitative research on the meaning and characteristics of mentoring in academic medicine. *Journal of General Internal Medicine,* 25(1):72-78.

Samovar, L.A., Porter, R.E. & McDaniel, E.R. 2010. *Communication between cultures.* 7th Edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Samovar, L.A., Porter, R.E. & McDaniel, E.R. 2012. *Intercultural communication.* 13th Edition. Boston, CA: Wadsworth.

Samuels, A.D.H. 2012. Putting imagination to work: Commentary on papers by Kenneth Eisold and Marc Maltz. *Physchoanalytic Dialogues,* 22(5):555-561.

Samuelson, B.L. & Freedman, S.W. 2010. Language policy, multilingual education, and power in Rwanda. *Language Policy,* 9:191-215.

San Miguel, A.M. & Kim, M.M. 2014. Successful Latina scientists and engineers: Their lived mentoring experiences and career development. *Journal of Career Development,* DOI: 10.1177/0894845314542248: 1-21.

Sandulli, F.D., Baker, P.M.A. & López-Sánchez, J.I. 2013. Can small and medium enterprises benefit from skill-biased technological change. *Journal of Business Research,* 66:1976-1983.

Sanfey, H., Hollands, C. & Grantt, N.L. 2013. Strategies for building an effective mentoring relationship. *The American Journal of Surgery,* 206(5):714-718.

Sassi, K. & Thomas, E.B. 2012. "If you weren't researching me and a friend …": The mobius of friendship and mentorship as methodological approaches to qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 18(10):830-842.

Saunders, M.N.K., Gray, D.E. & Goregaokar, H. 2014. SME innovation and learning: The role of networks and crisis events. *European Journal of Training and Development,* 38(1/2):136-149.

Schartel, S.A. 2012. Giving feedback – An integral part of education. *Best Practices & Research Clinical Anaesthesiology,* 26:77-87.

Schirmer, W., Weidenstedt, L. & Reich, W. 2012. Respect and agency: An empirical exploration. *Current Sociology,* 61(1):57-75.

Schlimbach, T. 2010. Intergenerational mentoring in Germany: Older people support young people's transitions from school to work. *Working with Older People,* 14(4):4-15.

Schlosser, F. 2012. Taking an active approach in entrepreneurial mentoring programmes geared towards immigrants. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship,* 21(2):201-221.

Schlosser, F. 2013. Identifying and differentiating key employees from owners and other employees in SMEs. *Journal of Small Business Management,* pls check

Schmidt, P., Lewark, S. & Strange, N. Eds. 2008. *What do we know about our graduates? Graduate analyses for forest sciences and related curricula.* Proceeding of the SILVA Network Conference held at the Faculty of Life Sciences, Unveristy of Copenhagen, Denamark.

Schneider, Z., Whiterhead, D., Lo-Biondo-Wood, G. & Haber, J. Eds. 2012. *Nursing and midwifery research: Methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice.* 4th Edition. New York: Elsevier Health Sciences.

Schnell, H. 2007. *Aspects of the English language in South Africa – Focusing on language identity and language varieties.* [Online] Available: http://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=RX7lgim97rMC&oi=fnd&pg=PA 3&dq=Schnell+H.+2007.+%22Aspects+of+the+english+language+in+South+Af rica+- +focusing+on+language+identity+and+language+varieties%22&ots=MbH4D1v n3W&sig=h1m4OCzxRb6DVzJllRidz6Ozuvo#v=onepage&q&f=false (Accessed 09 September 2013).

Schoeb, V., Rau, B., Nast, I., Schmid, S., Barbero, M., Tal, A. & Kool, J. 2013. How do patients, politicians, physiotherapists and other health professionals view physiotherapy research in Switzerland? A qualitative study. *Physiotherapy Research International,* 19(2):79-92.

Schostak, J. 2006. *Interviewing and representation in qualitative research.* England: McGraw-Hill Education.

Schutte, N.S. & Loi, N.M. 2014. Connections between emotional intelligence and workplace flourishing. *Personality and Individual Differences,* 66:134-139.

Scott, L., Dolan, C., Johnstone-Louis, M., Sugden, K. & Wu, M. 2012. Enterprise and inequality: A study of Avon in South Africa. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* 36(3):543-568.

Scott, S.V. 2014. Practising what we preach: Towards a student-centred definition of feedback. *Teaching in Higher Education,* 19(1):49-57.

Seepersad, Hagood-Elliott, Lewis & Strickland, 2013. *Cross-cultural mentoring: Exploration through the lens of African American students.* [Online] Available: http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1269&context=sferc&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.co.za%2Fscholar%3Fhl%3DDe%26as_sdt%3D0%2C5%26q%3DSeepersad%2C%2BHagood-Elliott%2C%2BLewis%2B%2526%2BStrickland%2B2013%2B-%2Btrust#search=%22Seepersad%2C%20Hagood-Elliott%2C%20Lewis%20%26%20Strickland%202013%20-%20trust%22 (Accessed 23 April 2014).

Senik, Z.C., Scott-Ladd, B., Entrekin, L. & Adham, K.A. 2011. Networking and internationalization of SMEs in emerging economies. *Journal of International Entrepreneurship,* 9:259-281.

Shahkooh, K.A., Fasanghari, M. & Sharifi, A. 2008. *Prioritization of SMEs strategies in IT fields of developing countries using entropy Shannon.* [Online] Available: http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=4682036 (Accessed, 22 August 2012).

Shanmugam, J.K., Ali, A. & Haat, M.H.C. 2012. *Internal control, risk management and fraud prevention measures on SMEs: Reliability and validity of research instrument.* 3rd International conference on business and economic research (3rd ICBER 2012) proceedings. Bandung, Indonesia.

Shapira-Lishchinsky, O. 2012. Mentors' ethical perceptions: Implications for practice. *Journal of Educational Administration,* 50(4):437-462.

Shea, J.A., Stern, D.T. Klotma, P.E., Clayton, C.P., O´Hara, J.L., Feldman, M.D., Griendling, K.K., Moss, M., Estraus, S.E. & Jagsi, R. 2011. Career development of physician scientists: A survey of leaders in academic medicine. *The American Journal of Medicine*, 124(8):779-787.

Shi, L. 2008. *Health services research methods.* 2nd Edition. New York: Thomson.

Shpigelman, C. & Gill, C.J. 2013. The characteristics of unsuccessful e-mentoring relationships for youth with disabilities. *Qualitative Health Research,* 23(4):463-475.

Siann, G. 2013. *Gender, sex and sexuality: Contemporary psychological perspectives.* Oxon: Taylor & Francis.

Singh, F. & Kaur, M. 2014. Small and medium enterprises' awareness regarding export credit delivery system. *Management and Labour Studies,* 39(1):63-79.

Sivakumar, K. 2014. National culture and inter-tier price competition. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 23(2):1-26.

Small Business Connect. June 2014. Small biz gets minister, *Small business connect.* [Online] Available: www.SmallBusinessConnect.co.za (Accessed 17 June 2014).

Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). 2012. *Analysis of the needs, state and performance of small and medium businesses in the agriculture, manufacturing, ICT and tourism sectors.* [Online] Available: http://www.seda.org.za/Publications/Publications/Analysis%20of%20the%20ne nee,%20State%20and%20Performance%20of%20Small%20and%20Medim% 20Businesses%20in%20the%20Agriculture,%20Manufacturing,%20ICT%20an a%20Touri.pdf (Accessed 27 March 2014).

Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). n.d. *Incubation centres.* [Online] Available: http://www.seda.org.za/MYBUSINESS/STP/Pages/Incubations.aspx (Accessed 10 March 2015).

Smit, Y. & Watkins, J.A. 2012. A literature review of small and medium enterprises (SME) risk management practices in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 6(21):6324-6330.

Smith, A.A. 2007. Mentoring for experienced school principans: Professional learning in a safe place. *Mentoring & Turoring,* 15(3):277-291.

Smith, L.H. 2011. Cross-age peer mentoring approach to impact the health outcomes of children and families.

Smith, S.L.J. 2010. *Practical tourism research.* Oxford-Shire: CABI

Solansky, S.T. 2010. The evaluation of two key leadership development program components: Leadership skills assessment and leadership mentoring. *The Leadership Quarterly,* 21:675-681.

Son, S. & Kim, D. 2013. What makes protégés take mentors advice in formal mentoring relationships. *Journal of Career Development,* 40(4):311-328.

Soni , J. 2005. *The challenges facing small businesses: A global perspective.* [Online] Available: http://www.dorriangroup.com/docs/NewsNov2005.pdf (Accessed 22 August 2012).

Sparkes, A.C. & Smith, B. 2014. *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From process to product.* New York: Routledge.

Spencer, L. 2009. Young, black and female in post-apartheid South Africa. *Scrutiny 2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa,* 14(1):66-78.

Sreejesh, S., Mohapatra, S. & Anusree, M.R. 2014. *Business research methods: An applied orientation.* [Online] Available: http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-00539-3 (Accessed 13 September 2014).

Stam, A.J. 2008. *The church in relation to the world.* Delft: Eburon.

Stamm, M. & Buddeberg-Fisher, B. 2011. The impact of mentoring during postgraduate training on doctors' career success. *Medical Education,* 45(5):488-496.

Stander, S., Buys, P. & Oberholzer, M. 2013. Using the cultural dimension and accounting value classification frameworks to investigate cultural diversity in a multi-national South African-based company. *Managing Global Transitions,* 11(3):301-316.

Stanton, B. 2005. *Management skills.* [Online] Available: https://books.google.co.za/books?id=zW7nEFNELD4C&pg=PA176&lpg=PA176&dq=Select+Knowledge+%26+Stanton,+B.+2005.+Management+skills&source=bl&ots=JzNGeNAkpD&sig=36Pp0-CiUzt8VwQxt0lcQhWIyAo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=u--0VPPOF8b-UPvAg6gN&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Select%20Knowledge%20

%26%20Stanton%2C%20B.%202005.%20Management%20skills&f=false (Accessed 26 September 2014).

Statistics South Africa. 2014. National and provincial labour market: Youth [Online] Available: http://beta2.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-10-06/Report-03-10-06March2014.pdf (Accessed 27 August 2014).

Steele, M.M., Fisman, S. & Davidson, B. 2013. Mentoring and role models in recruiting and retention: A study of junior medical faculty perception. *Medical Teacher,* 35(5):e1130-e1138.

St-Jean, E. & Audet, J. 2012. The role of mentoring in the learning development of the novice entrepreneur. *International Entrepreneurial Management,* 8:119-140.

Stokes, D. & Wilson, N. 2006. *Small business management entrepreneurship.* 5th Edition. London: Thomson Learning.

Straus, S.E., Chatur, F. & Taylor, M. 2009. Issues in the mentor-mentee relationship in academic medicine: a qualitative study. *Academic Medicine,* 84(1):135-139.

Straus, S.E., Johnson, M.O., Marquez, C. & Feldman, M.D. 2013. Characteristics of successful and failed mentoring relationships: A qualitative study across two academic health centres. *Academic Medicine,* 88(1):82-89.

Strike, V.M. 2012. Advising the family firm: Reviewing the past to build the future. *Family Business Review,* 25(2):156-177.

Stromquist, N.P. & Monkman, K. Eds. 2014. *Globalisation & Education.* Plymouth PL6 7PP: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Strong, C.G. & Cornelius, L.A. 2012. *Preparing the next generation in academic medicine: Recruiting and retaining the* best. [Online] Available: http://www.nature.com/jid/journal/v132/n3-2/pdf/jid2011407a.pdf (Accessed 14 May 2013).

Struwig, F.W. & Stead, G.B. 2011. *Planning, designing and reporting research.* Cape Town: Pearson

Sullivan, L.E. Ed. 2009. *The SAGE glossary of the social and behavioural sciences.* London: SAGE Publications.

Sumathi, S. & Saravanavel, P. 2009. *Marketing research & consumer behaviour.* New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Swanepoel, E., Strydom, J.W. & Nieuwenhuizen, C, 2010. An empirical analysis of a private company's corporate social investment in SMME development in South Africa. *Southern African Business Review,* 14(1):58-78.

Sycara, K., Gelfand, M. & Abbe, A. Eds. 2013. *Models for intercultural collaboration and negotiation.* New York: Springer.

Taglieber, J. 2011. *Mentoring as a factor of businessal attractiveness among South African graduates.* Unpublished Masters dissertation.   Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth.

Taherian, K. & Shekarchian, M. 2008. Mentoring for doctors. Do its benefits outweigh its disadvantages? *Medical Teacher,* 30(4):e95-e99.

Tähtinen, J., Mainela, T., Nätti, S. & Saraniemi, S. 2012. Intradepartmental faculty mentoring in teaching marketing. *Journal of Marketing Education,* 0273475311420245.

Tang, Z., Wu, C., Feng, Z., Zhao, B. & Yu, W. 2014. Improving availability through energy-saving optimisation in LEO satellite networks.   *Information and Communication Technology,* 8407:680-689.

Taylor, B. & Francis, K. 2013. *Qualitative research the health sciences: Methodologies, methods and processes.* Kentucky: Routledge.

Terblanché, S.E. 2011. Mentorship a key success factor in sustainable land reform projects in South Africa. *South African Journal of Agricultural Extensions,* 39:55-74.

Terdpaopong, K. & Mihret, D.G. 2011. Modelling SME credit risk: Thai empirical evidence. *Small Enterprise Research,* 18(1):63-79).

The DTI report. 2008. Annual review of small business in South Africa 2005 – 2007. [Online] Available: http://www.dti.gov.za/sme_development/docs/smme_report.pdf (Accessed 12 August 2014).

Thoits, P.A. 2011. Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior,* 52(2):145-161.

Thompson, J.D. & MacMillan, I.C. 2010. Making social ventures work. *Harvard Business Review,* 88(9):66-73.

Thurlings, M., Vermeulen, M., Bastiaens, T. & Stijnen, S. 2013. Understanding feedback: A learning theory perspective. *Educational Research Review,* 9:1-15.

Thursfield, D. & Kellie, J. 2013. Unitary practice or pluralist empowerment?: The paradoxical case of management development in UK trade unions. *Personnel Review,* 42(4):488-504.

Thwala, W.D. & Mvubu, M. 2008. Current challenges and problems facing small and medium size contractors in Swaziland. *African Journal of Business Management,* 2(5):093-098.

Tilley, F. 2000. Small firm environmental ethics: How deep do they go? Business ethics. *A European Review,* 9(1):31-41.

Trading Economics. 2014. South African unemployment rate (2000-2014). [Online] Available: http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/unemployment-rate (Accessed 27 August 2014).

Tung, R.L. & Aycan, Z. 2008. Key success factors and indigenous management practices in SMEs in emerging economies. *Journal of World Business,* 43(4):381-384.

Ugwu, A.M. & Elochukwu, N.A. 2013. Quality learning at tourist destinations: The nexus of tourism and adult education. *Research on Humanaties and Social Sciences,* 3(2):100-107.

Urban, B. & Naidoo, R. 2012. Business stability: Empirical evidence on operational skills in SMEs in South Africa. *Journal of Small Business and Business Development,* 19(1):146-163.

Usmani, A., Rehman, R., Babar, S. & Afzal, A. 2012. Impact of structured meetings on the learning of faculty members. *JPMI,* 26(3):283-290.

Vajjhala, N.R. & Strang, K.D. 2014. Collaboration strategies for a transition economy: Measuring culture in Albania. *Cross Cultural Management,* 21(1):78-103.

Valchev, V.H., Nel, J.A., Van de Vijver, F., Meiring, D., De Bruin, G.P. & Rothmann, S. 2013. Similarities and differences in implicit personality concepts across ethnocultural groups in South Africa. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* 44(3):365-388.

Van Auken, H. & Carraher, S.M. 2011. How do small firms use financial statement? *Proceedings of the Academy of Accounting and Financial Studies,* 16(1):35-42.

Van Emmerik, I.J.H. 2008. It is not only mentoring: The combined influences of individual-level and team-level support on job performance. *Career Development International*, 13(7):575-593.

Van Puyvelde S., Caers, R., Bois, C.D. & Jegers, M. 2012. The governance of non-profit organisations: Integrating agency theory with stakeholder and stewardship theories. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly,* 41(3):431-451.

Van Rhijn, T.M., Ebrahim, M. & Case, P 2010. *Mentoring as inclusion strategy for racialised faculty.* [Online] Available: http://www.theresearchshop.ca/sites/default/files/van%20Rhijn%20et%20al_H RHR%20Mentoring%20Paper.pdf (Accessed 07 October 2014).

Van Scheers, L. 2011. SMEs' marketing skills challenges in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management,* 5(13):5048-5056.

Van Zyl, L.E. 2014. *Research methodology for the economic and management sciences.* 8th Edition. Cape Town: Pearson.

Venkatesh, V., Brown, S.A. & Bala, H. 2013. Bridging the qualitative – quantitative divide: Guideliness for conducting mixed method research in information systems. *MIS Quarterly,* 37(1):21-54.

Venter, E., Farrington, S.M. & Boshoff, C. 2012. Relational-based factors influencing successful copreneurships. *Management Dynamics,* 21(4):14-30.

Vincent, L. 2008. The limitations of 'inter-racial contact': Stories from young South Africa. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 31(8):1426-1451.

Volkova, A., Niwa, M., Bogensperger, J., Vestdam, J.J., Stefopoulos, V. & Morales, J. 2013. *What possible changes does an individual's identity go through in the process of being immersed into a new society and what role does language learning play in this process?* [Online] Available: http://rudar.ruc.dk:8080/bitstream/1800/11784/1/Finished%20project.pdf (Accessed 13 May 2014).

Warnich, L., Drögemöller, B.I., Pepper, M.S., Dandara, C. & Wright, G.E.B. 2011. Pharmacogenomic research in South Africa: Lessons learned and future opportunities in the rainbow nation. *Current Pharmacogenomics and Personalized Medicine,* 9(3):191-207.

Watson, G.E.H. 2004. *A situational analysis of entrepreneurship mentors in South Africa.* Masters dissertation. University of South Africa, South Africa.

Waymer, D. 2012. Each one, reach one: An autobiography account of a black PR professor's mentor-mentee relationships with black graduate students. *Public Relations Inquiry,* 1(3):403-419.

Webster, J. & Wong, W.K.P. 2008. Comparing traditional and virtual group forms: Identity, communication and trust in naturally occurring project teams. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 19(1):41-62.

Wei, S. & Feng, A. 2013*. Research on applications of human resource information system in SMEs.* 2nd International Conference on Science & Social Research (ICSSR), 13 – 14 Beijing, China.

Weinberg, F.J. & Lankau, M.J. 2011. Formal mentoring programmes: A mentor-centric and longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Management,* 37(6):1527-1557.

Welch, S. 2011. "Fit," mentoring, and commitment. *Hypatia,* 26(4):888-894.

Welch, S. 2013. Transparent trust and oppression. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy,* 16(1):45-64.

White, B.E., Gandhi, S.J., Gorod, A. & Ireland, V. 2013. *On the importance and value of case studies: Introduction to the special session and case studies in system of systems, enterprises, and complex systems engineering.* [Online] Available:

http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=6549868 (Accessed 03 May 2014).

Whitworth, A. & Wilkinson, K. 2013. Tackling child poverty in South Africa: Implications of *Ubuntu* for the system of social grants. *Development Southern Africa,* 30(1):121-134.

Wholey, J.S., Hatry, H.P. & Newcomer, K.E. Eds. 2010. *Handbook of practical program evaluation.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wiid, J. & Diggines, C. 2010. *Marketing research.* Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.

Williams, P.C. 2008. *Developing 21st century small business leaders through formal mentoring.* Ann Arbor, ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

Williamson, M. & Harrison, L. 2010. Providing culturally appropriate care: A literature review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies,* 47(6):761-769.

Wintle, B.C., Fidler, F., Vesk, P.A. & Moore, J.L. 2013. Improving visual estimation through active feedback. *Methods in Ecology and Evolution,* 4(1):53-62.

Woodside, A.G. Ed. 2010. *Organizational culture, business-to-business relationships, and interfirm networks.* Bingley: Emerald Group.

Xaba, G. & Rankhumise, E.M. 2014. Business owners' perspectives in pursuance of their businesses: What matters most? *Problems and Perspectives in Management,* 12(2):181-189.

Xavier, W.S. & Martins, R.S. 2011. Logistic strategy and organisational structure in Brazillian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). *Organizations and Markets in Emerging Economies,* 2(2):91-116

Xheneti, M. & Barlett, W. 2012. Institutional constraints and SME growth in post-communist Albania. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development,* 19(4):607-626.

Xu, D. & Meyer, K.E. 2012 Linking theory and context: "Strategy research in emerging economies" after Wright et al. (2005). [Online] Available: http://www.klausmeyer.co.uk/publications/2013_Xu_Meyer_JMS_strategy_in_emerging_economies.pdf (Accessed: 14 May 2012).

Yin, R.K. 2011. *Qualitative research from start to finish.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Yoo, W., Namkoong, K., Choi, M., Shah, D.V., Tsang, S., Hong, Y., Aguilar, M. & Gustafson, D.H. 2014. Giving and receiving emotional support online: Communication competence as a moderator of psychosocial benefits for women with cancer. *Computers in Human Behaviour,* 30:13-22.

Young, A.M. & Perrewé, P.L. 2000. The exchange relationship between mentors and protégés: The development of a framework. *Human Resource Management Review,* 10(2):177-209.

Young, K. & Atkinson,M. Eds. 2012. *Qualitative research and physical culture.* Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Yuen, F.K.O., Terao, K.L. & Schmidt, A.M. 2009. *Effective grant writing and program evaluation for human service professionals.* New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Zaidi, L. 2013. Problems affecting the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in India. *International Conference on Technology and Business Management, March 18-20.*

Zakour, A.B. 2004. Cultural differences and information technology acceptance. Proceedings of the 7th Annual Conference of the Southern Association for Information Systems. February 27-28, Savannah, GA.

Zasloff, M. & Okurowski, M.E. 2012. Federal Agency finds success in group mentoring programme. *Public Manager,* Summer :53-56.

Zellers, D.F., Howard, V.M. & Barcic, M.A. 2008. Faculty mentoring programmes: Reenvisioning rather than reinventing the wheel. *Review of Educational Research,* 78(3):552-588.

Zhang, B. 2010. Assessing the accuracy and consistency of language proficiency classification under competing measurement models. *Language Testing,* 27(1):119-140.

Zhang, H. & Tsang, S.K.M. 2013. Relative income and marital happiness among urban Chinese women: The moderating role of personal commitment. *Journal of Happiness Studies,* 14:1575-1584.

Zhang, X. & Zhou, J. 2014. Empowering leadership, uncertainty avoidance, trust and employee creativity: Interaction effects and a mediating mechanism. *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes,* 124(2):150-164.

Zhang, X. 2011. On interpreters' intercultural awareness. *World Journal of English Language,* 1(1):47-52.

Zhang, X. 2014. *A relationship examination of uncertainty avoidance, guanxi building and organisational socialisation among newcomers.* International Conference on Educational Reform and Modern Management. Venezia, Italy.

Zhao, S. & Du, J. 2012. Thirty-two years of development of human resource management in China: Review and prospects. *Human Resource Management Review,* 22(1):179-188.

Zhou, K.Z. & Li, C.B. 2010. How strategic orientations influence the building of dynamic capability in emerging economies. *Journal of Business Research,* 63(3):224-231.

Zikmund, W.G. & Babin, B.J. 2012. *Essentials of marketing research.* 5th Edition. Mason: Cengage learning.

Zikmund, W.G., Babin, B.J., Carr, J.C. & Griffin, M. 2013. *Business research methods.* 9th Edition. Mason: Cengage Learning.

Zimmerman, J., Fiske, A. & Scogin, F. 2011. The mentoring in clinical geropsychology: Across the stages of professional development. *Educational Gerontology,* 37(5):355-369.

Zoogah, D.B. 2013. Career motivation, mentoring readiness, and participation in workplace mentoring programs: A cross-cultural study. *Journal of African Business,* 14(1):19-32.

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A

LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION TO MENTORING INSTITUTIONS

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

f o r   t o m o r r o w

Unit for Applied Business Management
Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Tel. +27 (0)41 5042203   Fax. +27 (0)41 5832644

May 2014

Dear Potential Participant

RESEARCH PROJECT: A PROPOSED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

I am a PhD student at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and i kindly request your permission to participate in this research project. This research regarding small businesses in South Africa is being conducted by the Unit for Applied Business Management (UABM). The UABM is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, of which small businesses are an important component, are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their economies. The significant contribution of these businesses is realised through employment generation as well as through the socio-economic role in contributing to the development of communities in which they operate. However, small businesses do not reach their full potential and fail to grow. A lack of survival for these businesses not only has implications on the economic growth and employment but also on the wealth and health of the owner-managers. Research shows that one of the most challenges facing these businesses is a lack of the management expertise necessary to making important and quality decisions. As mentoring is considered a possible solution to refine the knowledge of small businesses, it becomes important to understand the conditions necessary to ensure the success of mentoring programmes provided to these businesses.

The purpose of this research project is thus to gain a better understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of small businesses. The information pertaining to mentorship will be collected through face-to-face interviews from black small business owner-managers who have gone through mentoring as well as their mentors. The heads of the organisations that provide mentoring services to black small business owner-managers will be included in the interviews.

Even though no confidential information is required, please be ensured that the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Names of individuals will not appear in the research project. Should you be interested in the results of this research, a copy of the findings will be made available to you. If this is the case, please contact the researcher at the email address provided below.

Your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE   **ProPROF ELMARIE VENTER (SUPERVISOR)**
(PhD. CANDIDATE)
(Cell: 0781236695) Email: matabooej@gmail.com

ANNEXURE B

LETTERS REQUESTING PARTICIPATION TO THE THREE GROUPS OF PARTICIPANTS

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

f o r   t o m o r r o w

Unit for Applied Business Management
Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Tel. +27 (0)41 5042203   Fax. +27 (0)41 5044840

June 2014

Dear Mentor

RESEARCH PROJECT: A PROPOSED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

I am a PhD student at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and i kindly request your permission to participate in this research project. This research regarding small businesses in South Africa is being conducted by the Unit for Applied Business Management (UABM). The UABM is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, of which small businesses are an important component, are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their economies. The significant contribution of these businesses is realised through employment generation as well as through the socio-economic role in contributing to the development of communities in which they operate. However, small businesses do not reach their full potential and fail to grow. A lack of survival for these businesses not only has implications on the economic growth and employment but also on the wealth and health of the owner-managers. Research shows that one of the most challenges facing these businesses is a lack of the management expertise necessary to making important and quality decisions. As mentoring is considered a possible solution to refine the knowledge of small businesses, it becomes important to understand the conditions necessary to ensure the success of mentoring programmes provided to these businesses.

The purpose of this research project is thus to gain a better understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of small businesses. The information pertaining to mentorship will be collected through face-to-face interviews from black small business owner-managers who have gone through mentoring as well as their mentors. The heads of the organisations that provide mentoring services to black small business owner-managers will be included in the interviews.

Even though no confidential information is required, please be ensured that the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Names of individuals will not appear in the research project. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point in time. Should you be interested in the results of this research, a copy of the findings will be made available to you. If this is the case, please contact the researcher at the email address provided below.

Your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE   **PROF E VENTER**   **PROF C ROOTMAN**
(PhD candidate)   **(Supervisor)**   **(Co-supervisor)**
Email: matabooej@gmail.com

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

for tomorrow

Unit for Applied Business Management
Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Tel. +27 (0)41 5042203   Fax. +27 (0)41 5044840

June 2014

Dear Mentee

RESEARCH PROJECT: A PROPOSED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

I am a PhD student at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and i kindly request your permission to participate in this research project. This research regarding small businesses in South Africa is being conducted by the Unit for Applied Business Management (UABM). The UABM is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, of which small businesses are an important component, are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their economies. The significant contribution of these businesses is realised through employment generation as well as through the socio-economic role in contributing to the development of communities in which they operate. However, small businesses do not reach their full potential and fail to grow. A lack of survival for these businesses not only has implications on the economic growth and employment but also on the wealth and health of the owner-managers. Research shows that one of the most challenges facing these businesses is a lack of the management expertise necessary to making important and quality decisions. As mentoring is considered a possible solution to refine the knowledge of small businesses, it becomes important to understand the conditions necessary to ensure the success of mentoring programmes provided to these businesses.

The purpose of this research project is thus to gain a better understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of small businesses. The information pertaining to mentorship will be collected through face-to-face interviews from black small business owner-managers who have gone through mentoring as well as their mentors. The heads of the organisations that provide mentoring services to black small business owner-managers will be included in the interviews.

Even though no confidential information is required, please be ensured that the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Names of individuals will not appear in the research project. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point in time. Should you be interested in the results of this research, a copy of the findings will be made available to you. If this is the case, please contact the researcher at the email address provided below.

Your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE   **PROF E VENTER**   **PROF C ROOTMAN**
(PhD candidate)   **(Supervisor)**   **(Co-supervisor)**
Email: matabooej@gmail.com

**Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University**

f o r   t o m o r r o w

Unit for Applied Business Management
Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Tel. +27 (0)41 5042203   Fax. +27 (0)41 5044840

June 2014

Dear Manager/Board member of mentoring organisation

**RESEARCH PROJECT: A PROPOSED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN
                         SMALL BUSINESSES**

As per our conversation with you (or your office), the researcher kindly requests permission to use your organisation in this research project. This research regarding small businesses in South Africa is being conducted by the Unit for Applied Business Management (UABM). The UABM is a research unit functioning under the auspices of the Department of Business Management at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, of which small businesses are an important component, are globally recognised for their important role in the economic development of their economies. The significant contribution of these businesses is realised through employment generation as well as through the socio-economic role in contributing to the development of communities in which they operate. However, small businesses do not reach their full potential and fail to grow. A lack of survival for these businesses not only has implications on the economic growth and employment but also on the wealth and health of the owner-managers. Research shows that one of the most challenges facing these businesses is a lack of the management expertise necessary to making important and quality decisions. As mentoring is considered a possible solution to refine the knowledge of small businesses, it becomes important to understand the conditions necessary to ensure the success of mentoring programmes provided to these businesses.

The purpose of this research project is thus to gain a better understanding of the conditions required for effective mentoring of small businesses. The information pertaining to mentorship will be collected through face-to-face interviews from black small business owner-managers who have gone through mentoring as well as their mentors. The heads of the organisations that provide mentoring services to black small business owner-managers will be included in the interviews.

Even though no confidential information is required, please be ensured that the responses will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Names of individuals will not appear in the research project. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw participation at any point in time. Should you be interested in the results of this research, a copy of the findings will be made available to you. If this is the case, please contact the researcher at the email address provided below.

Your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE   **PROF E VENTER**   **PROF C ROOTMAN**
(PhD candidate)   **(Supervisor)**   **(Co-supervisor)**
Email: matabooej@gmail.com

ANNEXURE C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EACH OF THE THREE GROUPS OF PARTICIPANTS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING PARTICIPANT

GENDER: _____

AGE: _____

ETHNICITY: _____

PROVINCE IN WHICH MENTORSHIP IS OFFERED: _____

NUMBER OF YEARS IN MENTORSHIP: _____

QUALIFICATIONS: _____

WORKING EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO MENTORSHIP POSITION: _____

POSITION IN THE PREVIOUS JOB AND NUMBER OF YEARS: _____

SECTION B: QUESTIONS TO MENTORS REGARDING EFFECTIVE MENTORING

1. How did you identify your mentee? ……………………………………………..
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………....

2. How often do/did you meet with your mentee? ……………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   ………………………………………………………………………………………......

3. Where do/did you have your meetings? ....
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………

....

....

    4. How long is/was the mentorship programme? ....

....

....

....

5. What kind of management training do/did you provide to your mentee?

....

....

....

....

....

6. In your role as a mentor, what personality traits would you like to see in a mentee? ....

....

....

....

....

7. In your opinion, are there any challenges to providing successful mentoring of small businesses? ....

....

....

....

....

8. Generally, what do you perceive as the contributing factors of a successful or failed mentoring relationship? ....

....

....

....

....

9. In your opinion, should the mentors and mentees be matched on the following aspects? Motivate your answer for each of them.

a) gender, …………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

b) ethnicity, …………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

c) age, …………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

d) culture, and ……………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

e) other factors that you may suggest? ……………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

10. From your viewpoint, are there any improvements that could be made to enhance mentoring relationships? ……………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………......

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………......

I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you made in making this research study a success. Thank you for your help.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR BOARD MEMBER/MANAGERS

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE PARTICIPANT

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

ETHNICITY: _____

PROVINCE: _____

POSITION IN THE INSTITUTION: _____

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THIS INSTITUTION: _____

SECTION B: QUESTIONS TO A BOARD MEMBER/MANAGER REGARDING EFFECTIVE MENTORING

1. How does your institution identify mentees? …………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………......

2. How often do mentees meet with their mentors? …………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………......

3. To your knowledge, is there a specific place where mentors and mentees meet? ………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………......

4. How long is a mentorship programme? …………………………………………..

....
....
....
....

5. Which personality traits do you think mentors should possess for effective mentoring? ....

....
....
....
....

6. What roles should a mentor play when mentoring?.................................

....
....
....
....

7. What are the qualities that you think mentees should possess for effective mentoring? ....

....
....
....
....

8. Is there a financial subsidy that you provide to your mentees for the mentoring programme? ....

....
....
....
....

9. Do you think there are challenges to providing effective mentoring to small businesses? Motivate your answer. ....

....
....

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

10. Generally, what do you perceive as the contributing factors of a successful or failed mentoring relationship? …………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

11. In your opinion, should the mentors and mentees be matched on the following aspects? Motivate your answer for each of them .

a) gender, …………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

 b) ethnicity, ………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

c) age, …………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

d) culture, and ………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….....

e) Other factors that you may suggest? …………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….....

12. From your viewpoint, are there any improvements that could be made to enhance mentoring relationships? ……………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….......

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………….....

I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you made in making this research study a success. Thank you for your help.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNER–MANAGERS
(Mentees)

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING PARTICIPANT

AGE: _____

GENDER: _____

BUSINESS INDUSTRY: _____

PROVINCE IN WHICH THE BUSINESS OPERATES: _____

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: _____

NUMBER OF YEARS IN OPERATION: _____

QUALIFICATIONS: _____

PREVIOUS JOBS PRIOR TO OPERATING THE BUSINESS: _____

SECTION B: QUESTIONS TO OWNER-MANAGERS REGARDING EFFECTIVE MENTORING

1. How did you identify your mentor?..
   ....
   ....
   ....
   ....

2. How often do/did you meet with your mentor?...
   ....
   ....
   ....
   ....

3. Where do/did you have your meetings?...
   ....

....

....

....

4. How long is/was the mentorship programme? ....

....

....

....

....

5. What kind of management training do/did you receive from your mentor?

....

....

....

....

6. Which skills do you think a mentor should possess for effective mentoring?

....

....

....

....

7. What personality traits would you like to see in a mentor? ....

....

....

....

....

8. In your opinion, what roles should a mentor play when mentoring?

....

....

....

....

9. Who is paying for this training? ....

....

....

....

....

10. Were there any challenges to receiving mentorship?......................................

....

....

....

....

....

11. Generally, what do you perceive as the contributing factors of a successful or failed mentoring relationship? …………………………………………………………..

....

....

....

....

....

....

12. In your opinion, should the mentors and mentees be matched on the following aspects? Motivate your answer for each of them.

a) gender, …………………………………………………………………………………

....

....

....

....

b) ethnicity, ………………………………………………………………………………..

....

....

....

....

c) age, ……………………………………………………………………………………..

……

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………………………….......

d) culture, and ……………………………………………………………………………

……

……

……

……

e) Other factors that you may suggest? …………………………………………………..

……

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………………………….......

13. From your viewpoint, are there any improvements that could be made to enhance mentoring relationships? …………………………………………………………..

……

……

……

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….......

………

I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you made in making this research study a success. Thank you for your help.

ANNEXURE D

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT

I _____ declare that I consent to participate in the study entitled "A proposed integrated framework for mentoring in small businesses". I understand the nature of this study and the research process has been explained to me.

The study is voluntary and anonymous – personal, identifiable information of participants will be kept confidential. I am aware that my responses will be audio taped for data verification purposes. I also understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in this research project and that I have the right to withdraw my participation at any point in time.

Signature: Date:

_____   _____

For office use

Province: _____

Participant type:

Manager/Board member of mentoring organisation

Mentee

Mentor

ANNEXURE E

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

Ref: H14-BES-BMa-067 [Approved]

Chairperson: Faculty RTI Committee
Faculty of Business and Economics Sciences
Tel. +27 (0)41 504 2906

6 June 2014

Prof E Venter
NMMU
Business Management
South Campus

Dear Prof Venter

PROJECT PROPOSAL: A PROPOSED INTERGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES (DOCTORAL DEGREE: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT)

PRP: Prof E Venter
PI: Ms JM Letele-Matabooe

Your above-entitled application for ethics approval served at Fac RTI.

We take pleasure in informing you that the application was approved by the Committee. However, please note that the approval is on condition that permission to conduct the study is also obtained from the other relevant individuals, parties, organisations and/or role players to which the study pertains.

The ethics clearance reference number is **H14-BES-BMa-067**, and is valid for three years. Please inform the Faculty RTI Committee, via the faculty representative, if any changes (particularly in the methodology) occur during this time.

Please inform your co-investigators of the outcome.

Yours sincerely

Prof C Rootman
Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences

ANNEXURE F

INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

• PO Box 77000 • Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan University
• Port Elizabeth • 6031 • South Africa

**Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University**

f o r   t o m o r r o w

Unit for Applied Business Management
Summerstrand South Campus
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Tel. +27 (0)41 5042203   Fax. +27 (0)41 5044840

September 2014

Dear Participant

RESEARCH PROJECT: A PROPOSED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN SMALL BUSINESSES

As a follow-up on the interview that I had with you on my study, please find in the attachment the typed interview. As was explained to you on the day of the interview, our conversation has been transcribed word by word to record the conversations correctly. Please check the typed interview and let me know whether the information is accurate and correct. In a case where the information has not been recorded correctly, or some information has been omitted, please do not hesitate to let me know about it.

Once again, thank you for your willingness to contribute to the success of this important research project. I look forward to your comments.

Yours faithfully

MAKATLEHO JULIA MATABOOE
(PhD candidate)
Email: matabooej@gmail.com