A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS'

ATTITUDES AND VIEWS ON ESTABLISHING A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

by

J. Maxwell Rollins

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. Despite the stated advantages of establishing a mentoring relationship, including improving entrepreneurs' chances of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development, over 50% of novice women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship. The researcher conducted 22 face-to-face semi-structured interviews with women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry. All participants had a positive attitude towards establishing a mentoring relationship and stated that mentoring would increase novice women entrepreneurs' chance of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. Most participants believed a mentor would enhance a novice entrepreneur's self-efficacy. The mentored participants all stated that their mentor influenced their leadership style. The research found that the participants primarily lead with a transformational and transactional style of leadership. The findings are significant because when novice women entrepreneurs understand how to overcome the barriers of establishing a mentoring relationship and the potential for greater success, more novice women entrepreneurs may seek to establish a mentoring relationship. A mentor can have a powerful and lasting influence on a follower.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs, mentoring, wedding industry, leadership, leadership development, self-efficacy

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Dedication

It is with great pleasure that I dedicate this applied doctoral research project to my wife, Donna. For over 26 years, she has supported and encouraged me with every endeavor. During the last three years of countless hours of studying and research, she has gone the extra mile every day to show her love for me.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The focus of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. St-Jean and Audet (2012) argue that it is beneficial for entrepreneurs to establish a mentoring relationship with an experienced mentor to enhance levels of self-confidence, self-efficiency, and perseverance in an effort to improve personal leadership ability. Many entrepreneurs, including over half of women entrepreneurs, do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). Exploring female entrepreneurs' perceptions on mentoring may provide insight of any real or perceived barriers which, if overcome, might encourage women entrepreneurs to establish mentoring relationships to improve business success, organizational growth, of their organization and leadership development (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012).

Background of the Problem

Some of the main causes of entrepreneurial failures are lack of experience, competence, and learning; however, when a novice entrepreneur establishes a mentoring relationship with a mentor, the relationship can assist in increasing an entrepreneur's probability for success (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Studies show that mentoring is a dynamic relationship where experienced mentors guide a less experienced individual toward successful business and personal outcomes (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). However, despite studies showing mentoring as a positive influence on a novice entrepreneur's success, many startup businesspeople, including over half of women entrepreneurs, do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). Compared to men, women entrepreneurs' overall business performance is lower, in part, due to a lack of entrepreneurial competency,

which might be improved by establishing a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014). Exploring the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in establishing a mentoring relationship may lay the groundwork for understanding barriers to overcome in establishing a mentoring relationship in an effort to improve business success, support greater company growth, and enhance leadership ability.

Problem Statement

The research explored the problem in business that over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship despite the stated advantages of having a mentor, which include an increased potential for business success, greater company growth, and enhancement of leadership ability (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Barnir (2014) maintained that women entrepreneurs are at a disadvantage because of barriers they perceive in establishing a mentoring relationship. Women entrepreneurs face a considerable number of challenges throughout their entrepreneurial venture. Exploring women entrepreneurs' attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship will contribute to understanding the barriers in creating these relationships. This research may provide the groundwork to determine ways in which to encourage women entrepreneurs to establish mentoring relationships (Davis, 2011; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). The focus of this study was to explore the mentoring relationship of women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. The research explored female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry on their perception of barriers and benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship in female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry.

The study explored potential benefits for female entrepreneurs in areas of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. A mentoring relationship is defined as a close association between a novice entrepreneur, a mentee with minimal experience, and a mentor with significant business experience who helps the mentee in developing necessary business skills (St-Jean & Audet, 2009; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015).

Nature of the Study

A phenomenological qualitative design was selected because the study explored the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. This was qualitative research because the study explored a phenomenon in order to understand social and human problems (Creswell, 2013). Stake (2010) stated that the purpose of qualitative research is to understand a particular situation, not to reach a general understanding. This reflects the nature of this study of exploring the attitudes and views of a particular segment of business leaders, women entrepreneurs, on their perception of the benefits and barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. This type of qualitative research also relies on the personal experience of the participants (Stake, 2010). The expectation was that different women entrepreneurs had different attitudes and views about mentoring. Merriam (2009) claims qualitative research is interpretive in nature and assumes a socially constructed reality, which results in more than one observable reality.

The researcher considered quantitative and mixed methods. However, there were several reasons for not choosing these methods. The quantitative method was not chosen because researchers use that particular method for examining a relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2013). That was not the focus of this research because it was not trying to determine a correlation or other direct relationship between participants' attitudes and views

toward establishing a mentoring relationship and a particular outcome. The mixed methods was not chosen because a mixed methods strategy uses both qualitative and quantitative data either merged into one data base, or uses the results side by side to reinforce each other, and this study used only qualitative data (Creswell, 2009). The research adopted a phenomenological approach to explore the perception of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship and used interviews to develop a description of the lived experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Interviews were the primary source of data collection since the research was interested in the participants' lived experiences (Merriam, 2009).

Alternative qualitative designs would not give the researcher enough useful data. An ethnographical approach was inappropriate because it relies on the researcher studying a cultural group in a setting over a prolonged period of time (Creswell, 2013). The narrative research design was inappropriate because it relies on the researcher interpreting a story as narrated by the participants (Merriam, 2009). The case study design was inappropriate because this study did not have clear boundaries focused on a single issue (Creswell, 2013); instead, the focus was on exploring the general attitudes and views to lay groundwork. The research did not use grounded theory, a method designed to generate a substantive theory to address questions about process, in particular, how something changes over time (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009), because this study focused on the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs at a point in time and was not attempting to build new theory.

Research Questions

This qualitative study explored the following central research questions:

RQ_1: What are the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship in the wedding industry?

RQ_2: What barriers do women entrepreneurs experience in establishing a mentoring relationship?

RQ_3: What are the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on whether establishing a

mentoring relationship improves their chance of business success, organizational growth,

and leadership development?

RQ_4: How did the mentor's leadership style affect the mentee's leadership style?

Conceptual Framework

Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977) and self-efficacy theory (1977) provided the

conceptual framework for this research. Wood and Bandura (1989) claim the most effective

predictor of individual performance is self-efficiency since all other factors stem from internal

beliefs about the ability to face challenges and produce expected outcomes. In essence,

individuals who believe in personal abilities tend to view difficult tasks as challenges and

opportunities instead of threats (St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). Yu and Chen (2016) found a positive

relationship between an entrepreneur's level of self-efficiency and innovation performance. For

optimal leadership development, a resilient and stable level of self-efficacy is required (Machida

& Schaubroeck, 2011). Krueger (2000) established that mentors are beneficial in developing a

mentee's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy and business success are associated with having a mentor.

A mentor guides a mentee entrepreneur in increasing self-efficacy and developing leadership

skills to evolve strategies and achieve objectives (St-Jean, 2011).

Another theory grounding this research is transformational leadership theory (Bass,

1985). Bass (1985) found that transformational leaders motivate followers to do more than

originally expected by raising followers' level of consciousness about the importance of

outcomes and methods for achieving the outcomes. A mentor's behavior exhibits

transformational leadership because it heightens a mentee's awareness and interest, increases

confidence, and moves the mentee from concerns of existence to one of achievement and growth (Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1994). Transformational leadership theory is an appropriate theory for this study's framework because transformational and entrepreneurial leaders both demonstrate many similar behaviors. These behaviors include leaders intellectually stimulating employees, inspiring followers, individually influencing each person on the team by acting as a role model, and providing individual treatment showing genuine care about each employee's needs (Bass, 1990).

The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969) is another relevant theory grounding this research. The theory of reasoned action uses attitudes as a way to predict and explain human social behavior (Ajzen, 2012). The theory of reasoned action maintains that the best way to predict an individual's behavioral intentions is to consider attitudes and normative beliefs toward the particular act's likely consequences (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969). Ajzen and Fishbein (1969) found an individual bases a decision on whether to engage in a certain behavior on normative beliefs about the possible outcomes. Measuring the specific behavior usually involves a particular action, a target, a specific context, and time frame (Ajzen, 2012).

A theory with similarities to the theory of reasoned action is Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory. The expectancy theory explains an individual's behavior based on the expectation that the behavior will result in a specific outcome; furthermore, the attractiveness of the outcome is determined by the importance placed on the result by the individual (Vroom, 1964). Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory explains an individual's motivation based on three variables. The first variable, expectancy or effort-performance linkage, is how much an individual believes exerting a certain amount of effort will result in a particular performance level (Vroom, 1964). Another variable is instrumentality, or performance-reward linkage, which is the degree a person places

on how performing at a certain level is critical in reaching the desired outcome (Vroom, 1964). The final variable is valence, or attractiveness of reward, which considers the importance an individual places on the attainment of reward (Vroom, 1964). Hsu, Shinnar, and Powell (2014) maintain that individuals with high expectancy are motivated to engage in certain behaviors. The motivational force exerted by an entrepreneur to attain a specific outcome is computed using the three relational variables of Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Hsu et al., 2014).

Finally, the present research used situational leadership theory since the mentor's approach must be adapted to match the demands of the mentee's situation and development. Effective leaders match leadership style to the needs of followers (Northouse, 2013). The Situational Leadership II model (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 1985) suggests that leadership style should be matched to followers' degree of readiness or development. Blanchard et al. (1985) posits that effective leadership occurs when a leader's style pairs correctly with a subordinate's current state of development.

Using the framework of social cognitive theory's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), this research explored women entrepreneurs' attitudes and views to provide insight to an understanding of any real or perceived barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. In addition, using the framework of transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985) the research viewed the mentor as a transformational leader in the mentoring relationship and explored the mentors' influence on the women entrepreneurs. The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969) and Vroom's expectancy theory (1964), support why a novice entrepreneur might or might not desire to engage in a mentoring relationship. A mentee's normative beliefs might include an expectation that using a mentor may result in a beneficial outcome. Likewise, a

mentee's normative beliefs might be that the effort necessary to establish a mentoring relationship does not result in a desired outcome or reward. Finally, the situational leadership theory (Blanchard et al., 1985) might justify the mentor's effectiveness based on the ability to match the mentor's leadership style to the development of the female entrepreneur. The expectation was that these theories help explain the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in establishing a mentoring relationship.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to ensure uniformity and give clarity for the study.

Entrepreneurial leadership is a style of leadership a person engages in to influence and direct group members' performance toward achieving the goals of the organization that involve recognizing and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities. (Renko, El Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015).

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a person's belief about the ability to attempt and carry out tasks such as marketing, leading employees, managing finances, and taking risks associated with beginning and operating a new enterprise (Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998).

Entrepreneurship is the process of an individual discovering, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities in an effort to create future goods and services for society to flourish (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Leader development is a process by which people learn and develop leadership skills and abilities necessary for increasing their effectiveness in a leadership role (Dragoni, Tesluk, Russell, & Oh, 2009).

Leader self-efficacy is a leader's confidence in abilities, skills, and knowledge in areas to lead followers effectively (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011).

Mentee is an individual who receives advice, knowledge, or support from another person who has a greater level of knowledge and experience (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

Mentor is an influential individual with a high level of knowledge and experience who provides career support for a mentee (Scandura & Ragins, 1993).

Mentoring relationship is a close association between a novice entrepreneur with a lack of experience and a mentor who helps the mentee develop necessary business skills. (St-Jean & Audet, 2009; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015).

Transformational leadership is a process by which the leader arouses and heightens the motivation of followers to do more than expected by raising awareness and promoting a higher quality of performance by increasing innovativeness (Bass, 1985).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

One assumption was that the participants answered the interview questions truthfully based on personal experience. Another assumption was that the most valuable instrument in a qualitative phenomenological study is the researcher, who during the interview process, obtains and interprets information held by the participants interviewed to find out something the researcher could not discover by observation (Stake, 2010). In addition, the assumption was that the research was subjected to observer dependency; therefore, the results must be interpreted in light of the way the researcher looked at the situation studied (Walvis, 2003).

Limitations

The sample for this qualitative study was a nonprobability sample instead of a random sample. Limiting the study to just one city and one industry made the study more manageable under the time constraints and allowed for face-to-face interviews. Creswell (2013) cautioned

that the value of qualitative research is in the particular description and theme developed within the context of the particular study and stated that generalization occurs when researchers study additional cases and generalize the findings to the new studies. Merriam (2009) stated that researchers often overvalue formal generalization, whereas they underestimate the force of a single study, as a source of scientific development. Therefore, even though generalizing a qualitative study's results to the general population is limited, the context-dependent knowledge gained will be valuable (Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research, the researcher is expected to make comments based on the findings. However, the researcher makes comments based on self-reflection shaped by background, potentially limiting the study based on the researcher's own biases (Creswell, 2013).

Delimitations

Since this research used the qualitative phenomenology method, the intent was not to generalize findings to areas outside the study to other women entrepreneurs (Creswell, 2013). The delimitations of the research include studying only women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry and their attitudes and views on developing a mentoring relationship. The study did not consider male entrepreneurs' attitudes and views about developing a mentoring relationship, nor did the research compare men and women entrepreneurs' attitudes about mentoring. Although not all male entrepreneurs engage in a mentoring relationship, studies indicate that more women entrepreneurs than men do not establish mentoring relationships (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015) placing women at a disadvantage because of barriers preventing women from establishing a mentoring relationship (Barnir, 2014).

Significance of the Study

Reduction of Gaps

According to St-Jean and Audet (2012), the main causes of business start-ups failing are the lack of experience and insufficient competency of the entrepreneur. However, they maintained that if the novice entrepreneur establishes a mentoring relationship with a mentor, the relationship could facilitate a quick and efficient transfer of knowledge leading towards success (St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Davis (2011) posited that women entrepreneurs face an assortment of barriers and challenges. Studies show that mentoring could play a significant role in increasing an entrepreneur's chances for success (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016); nonetheless, over 50% of all women choose not to establish a mentoring relationship with a mentor (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015).

St-Jean and Audet (2009) argued that there is a gap in the research on entrepreneurial mentoring. This qualitative phenomenological study of women entrepreneurs provided a greater understanding of the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship and the relationship's effect on women entrepreneurs' business success, growth of their organization, and leadership development. The study also explored reasons why women entrepreneurs choose not to establish a mentoring relationship and any perceived barriers in connecting with a mentor. The study also explored the effect of the mentoring relationship on the mentee's leadership development. The study's findings also included valuable information for women entrepreneurs to understand the value of establishing a mentoring relationship to improve business success, business growth, and enhance leadership development. The findings from this research may help mentoring organizations seeking to promote and assist women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry.

Implications for Biblical Integration

A reciprocal mentor-mentee relationship exists with developmental benefits for the mentee (St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). Scripture states that people should support and encourage one another. Paul's letter to the Thessalonians implored them to "encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thess. 5:11, NIV) and in the letter to the Romans, Paul likewise advised to "make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification" (Romans 14:19). Later in the New Testament, the Bible again advocates the principle of mentoring when it maintains that people should "encourage one another daily" (Heb. 3:13). In the Old Testament, mentoring is encouraged by proclamations of "two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: if one falls down, his friend can help him up" (Eccl. 4:9-10), and "as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Prov. 27:17).

Mentoring deals with a mentor serving and tending to the developmental needs of a mentee. For the disciples, Jesus was their mentor; yet, clearly stated, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45) giving guidance that mentoring is a relationship based on serving. In addition, mentors and mentees undertake interpersonal relationships involving creating an emotional bond (Germain, 2011). Jesus replied to the Pharisees that the greatest emotional bond is love, including to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). Paul reinforced the concept of love in relationships saying, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1). Therefore, the biblical implications of mentoring are based on loving one's neighbor by the mentor serving and sharpening a mentee to help develop the mentee's leadership skills.

An early example of a Christian mentoring relationship in order to develop a mentee's leadership skills is evidenced by the apostle Paul's mentoring of Timothy, a disciple Paul first

met in Lystra (Acts 16:1-4). Paul started mentoring Timothy from the initial meeting when Paul decided to take Timothy along on the journeys to spread the gospel (Acts 16:3-4). The mentoring relationship lasted until near the end of Paul's life, at which time Timothy was given full charge to continue to spread the gospel and lead others to Christ (2 Tim. 4:1-8). Hoehl (2011) claimed Paul and Timothy's mentoring relationship represented an excellent example of the benefits a mentee receives from a mentor in developing leadership skills in order to meet future challenges and face upcoming issues.

Relationship to Field of Study

This research is related to the field of leadership in several ways. Laukhuf and Malone (2015) maintained that women entrepreneurs perceive value from mentoring because of the knowledge gained to develop a personal leadership style. Part of an entrepreneur leader's role is to articulate a compelling vision for the organization and arouse followers' personal involvement in the company's vision (Renko et al., 2015). Renko et al. (2015) further explained that although entrepreneurial leadership shares common ground with transformational leadership, entrepreneurial leadership differed from transformational leadership with its focus on a leader's attributes that lead to opportunity recognition and exploitation. An entrepreneur's self-efficacy is one central element affecting the strength of an entrepreneur's leadership and the resulting opportunity recognition and exploitation (Renko et al., 2015). Machida and Schaubroeck (2011) argued there is a direct association between a leader's development and learning entrepreneurial self-efficacy and that positive encouragement and feedback from a mentoring relationship is a strong source to increase self-efficacy.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This chapter presents the literature review to align with the problem statement and research questions from chapter one. In addition, the review was performed to look for gaps in the research that this study could fill. The literature review provides the framework for exploring the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship in order to understand ways to improve business success, organizational growth, and enhance leadership development. The literature review guided the present study through several different, yet related topics to explore several themes.

The literature review begins with an overview of the concept of entrepreneurship and the role of the entrepreneur. This section aligns with the research question exploring the theme of why women have a desire to become an entrepreneur. Next, the literature review outlines the theme of exploring the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, often different from the challenges faced by male entrepreneurs, in launching a new venture and becoming successful entrepreneurs. The third major concept explores establishing a mentoring relationship, which leads to one of the main themes the present study explored, which is exploring the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. Finally, the literature review provides a framework for exploring leadership development and style, including an overview on transformational, transactional, and entrepreneurial leadership.

The problem this research addressed is that over 50% of all women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship despite the stated advantages of having a mentor, which include an increased potential for business success, greater company growth, and an enhancement of leadership ability (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Research maintained that when a novice entrepreneur

established a mentoring relationship, it typically led to increased business growth, success, and enhanced leadership ability for the entrepreneur (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012. Therefore, the topics of entrepreneurship, mentoring, and leadership development and style were viewed together to explore the theme of the perceived benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship, including looking at the leadership style of the mentor and its effect on the novice entrepreneur's leadership style.

Much of the literature focused on the worldwide phenomenon of women who launched businesses. Often, the literature focused on the concept of women entrepreneurs in developing countries establishing a business in order to lift themselves out of poverty. Unfortunately, this study could not use many peer-reviewed journal articles on women entrepreneurs because the articles were based on females who launched an enterprise in a country outside the U.S., typically in a developing country. Because the present study explored U.S. women entrepreneurs' attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship and the resulting effect on leadership development, the majority of the literature review reflects studies primarily on American female entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurs

The first concept the literature review explored was the concept of entrepreneurship and the role of the entrepreneur. An entrepreneur was first distinguished from other roles, such as landowner or hireling, as a person engaged in the commercial exchange of goods or services for profit and who exercises business judgement while facing uncertainty (Dimovski, Penger, Peterlin, & Uhan, 2013). Barnir (2014) defined entrepreneurs as individuals driven to start a new venture because of dissatisfaction with their current job, insufficient salary, or lack of opportunities in the wage-earning workplace. In general, people often define entrepreneurs as

individuals who are enormously gifted and different from others; but, regardless of the

differences, to some extent, the spirit of entrepreneurship exists in every single human being

(Yunus & Jolis, 2003). Entrepreneurship ability is not genetic; however, even though it takes

hard work, anyone can learn the necessary skills and acquire the knowledge in order to enter the

realm of entrepreneurship (Bujor & Avasilcai, 2016).

     Society often describes entrepreneurs as individuals possessing more overconfidence and

narcissism than the general population (Navis & Volkan Ozbek, 2016). Bujor and Avasilcai

(2016) concluded that successful entrepreneurs typically possess the following characteristics in

order to improve continuously the entrepreneurial process: independence, a capacity to plan,

openness to innovation, capability as a decision-maker, willingness to take risks, and the ability

to effectively receive and use critical feedback. The last characteristic of using feedback presents

the rationale of establishing a mentoring relationship because of the need for the mentee to use

the feedback provided by the mentor to implement necessary change in behavior (Bujor &

Avasilcai, 2016). When compared to other population groups, research shows that entrepreneurs

have a lower level of stress because they can tolerate and manage stress better (Baron, Franklin,

& Hmieleski, 2016). This goes hand-in-hand with research showing entrepreneurs exhibiting

higher rates of subjective well-being in comparison with individuals not involved in starting a

business (Kelley, Bosma, & Amoros, 2014).

     Despite society's notion that entrepreneurs are lone individuals, many act in groups or

teams, often inside established organizations or family firms (Miller, Steier, & Le Breton-Miller,

2016). For enterprises' long-term success, entrepreneurs, typically known as intrapreneurs if

working for someone else, undertake the vast majority of new ventures using readily available

resources (Miller et al., 2016). Miller et al. (2016) stated that compared to lone entrepreneurs,

organizations and family firms are more likely to strive for long-term survival in order to support current and future generations, to build up financial capital, and invest in long-term relationships with stakeholders in order to make the business more robust in order to survive during times of scarcity.

Importance to the economy. Entrepreneurs are important economic actors who extend offerings of needed and wanted goods and services to help sustain the economy (Bullough & Renko, 2013). One reason for the importance of entrepreneurship is that new businesses entrepreneurs create and provide jobs. In addition, a new venture intensifies competition and increases productivity, which ultimately has a positive impact on society on multiple levels (Kelley et al., 2014).

Entrepreneurs create more than a tangible new enterprise; they also improve upon existing ideas. Maltsev (2016) stated that when entrepreneurs create and develop their business, or improve upon existing ideas, they do so by using their own competencies and capabilities, as well as, their own borrowed resources. Entrepreneurs' resources include more than capital, raw materials, and energy; the resources also include time, skills, labor, and knowledge used to create goods and services that customers deems has superior value compared to other alternatives (Koch, 2015).

History and current state of entrepreneurship. Three decades ago there was little emphasis placed on entrepreneurship in its role in economic development (Kelley et al., 2014). That view of entrepreneurship changed a long time ago. The U.S. economy continues to struggle since the recession in the late 2000s resulting in the downsizing of many large organizations and an overall stagnant job growth; therefore, many individuals no longer view entrepreneurship as a risky endeavor but now view entrepreneurship as a viable career choice (Austin & Nauta, 2016;

Gibbs, 2014). Entrepreneurship could be more than a person's viable career choice, it can also serve as the foundation for any firm's competitive advantage and technological growth (Gupta, MacMillan, & Surie, 2004). In many ways, entrepreneurs set the pace in today's highly competitive and global economy (Bullough & Renko, 2013).

Economic uncertainty presents a conundrum with respect to the overall level of entrepreneurial activity. Contrary to the previous paragraph indicating that a slow job growth or stagnant economy provides the impetus for entrepreneurial growth, a downturn in the economy might be a barrier for entering a new venture. Research indicates that a high degree of unemployment reflects a lower demand and a restriction to external financing, potentially resulting in a reduction of new firms emerging (Davidsson & Gordon, 2016; Kelley et al., 2014). Other research maintains that a higher unemployment level gives more people who have become unemployed a reason to seek new opportunities with an alternative income (Davidsson & Gordon, 2016; Kelley et al., 2014).

There are differences in opinion found in the literature on whether or not a downturn in the economy is a rational reason for someone to start a new business. Bullough and Renko (2013) stated that during the financial crisis of 2008, more low overhead, low-revenue ventures were launched than in the preceding years. A majority of today's fast-growing and largest firms started during a period of economic adversity. Davidsson and Gordon (2016) found that a major economic crisis did not have a negative effect on how nascent entrepreneurs act. Even entrepreneurs well into the startup process continued with their venture despite the economic crisis (Davidsson & Gordon, 2016).

Factors necessary for entrepreneurship. Regardless of the state of the economy, there are certain minimum conditions required for entrepreneurial action to take place. These factors

include the ability to effectively communicate the entrepreneurial vision, a process to nurture and support innovation, a method to secure the resources and expertise to implement the effects, and a means to continue to facilitate the exploration of innovative ideas (Gupta et al., 2004). Baron et al. (2016) maintained that an entrepreneur is first attracted to entrepreneurship as a career because of certain personal skills or characteristics.

Finally, some novice entrepreneurs recognize they do not possess the necessary skills to succeed upon discovering their current skillset does not align with the requirements of entrepreneurship (Baron et al., 2016). According to Bujor and Avasilcai (2016), one challenging, yet necessary factor for entrepreneurship, is finding the balance between the entrepreneur's creative side and the financing and business development side. Finding this balance might not be possible if an entrepreneur relies solely on prior knowledge; however, establishing a mentoring relationship might overcome this issue.

Why women enter entrepreneurial ventures. Society still considers entrepreneurship a male-gendered concept, and when speaking about an entrepreneur, a man is automatically who is perceived as the person launching a new venture, with a woman entrepreneur as the exception (Ahl & Nelson, 2015). However, research shows that women entrepreneurs have the necessary drive, ambition, and ability to successfully launch a business (Fielden & Hunt, 2011) and for the last twenty years have launched new business ventures in the United States at a rate higher than men (Allen & Curington, 2014; Morris, Miyasaki, Watters, & Coombes, 2006). Between 2007 and 2016, the number of women-owned businesses increased by 45%, with 11.3 million firms currently owned by women employing nine million employees; this compares positively to a nine percent gain in the creation of all new businesses during that period ("State of women-owned business report," 2016).

The accelerated rate of launching new ventures by female entrepreneurs has the potential to contribute significantly to the creation of new jobs (Allen & Curington, 2014). Since the Great Recession, employment in female-owned companies has increased by 18%, even though overall employment declined by one percent ("State of women-owned business report," 2016). Although the increase in new ventures launched by women has helped create new jobs, the reasons more women are launching new ventures are explored in the following paragraph.

Research into why women have increasingly joined the workforce as small business owners and entrepreneurs has increased substantially over the past two decades (Barnir, 2014; Davis, 2011). Women enter entrepreneurial ventures for many reasons, such as a means to support themselves and families; to gain greater independence; to obtain a higher level of self-esteem; to achieve personal growth, and to gain a higher economic payoff (Kelley et al., 2014; Ncube & Wasburn, 2010; Xavier, Ahmad, Nor, & Yusof, 2012). Barnir (2014) claimed drivers for women entrepreneurs to leave the traditional workforce to begin their own business were dissatisfaction with prior employment, low salary, or fewer opportunities for advancement in the traditional setting. Other research found that some female entrepreneurs stated the impetus for starting their own business was based on a negative corporate experience such as a lack of recognition; other women entrepreneurs were driven instead by a positive experience, such as a promotion, that boosted self-confidence in their ability to be successful in launching a business (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010).

Comparing male and female entrepreneurs. Although men and women both have the ability to become entrepreneurs, they enter entrepreneurial careers for different reasons (Allen & Curington, 2014). Allen and Curington (2014) assert that women entrepreneurs are motivated by wealth creation and non-pecuniary benefits. Allen and Curington (2014) claim that male

entrepreneurs do not appear to be motivated by wealth creation; instead, other pecuniary concerns are male entrepreneurs' motivation for venture creation.

Society, in its respect to entrepreneurial behaviors and processes, has long viewed men and women differently (Gibbs, 2014). This different view by society might help explain some of the reasons why male entrepreneurs still outnumber women entrepreneurs in most of the world's economies (Kelley et al., 2014). Although more women are in today's workforce than in the past, with the number of female-owned firms expanding at a rate faster than among all businesses (Morris et al., 2006; "State of women-owned business report," 2016), the pathway into an entrepreneurial career is still one with a bias against women entrants (Dempsey & Jennings, 2014). For the past twenty years, despite the rapid growth in the number of female-founded firms, female entrepreneurs have only generated four percent of the United States' annual revenue ("State of women-owned business report," 2016). This small percentage of revenue generation is perhaps why women who choose self-employment quickly come to realize the limited returns from their entrepreneurial venture and are motivated back to the alternative of wage-employment instead of self-employment (Allen & Curington, 2014).

According to Austin and Nauta (2016), when compared to men, women's perception of the opportunity to start a business is seven percent higher; however, female entrepreneurs express less intention in actually starting a business when compared to men. Dempsey and Jennings (2014) maintained that one reason for women entrepreneurs' lower intentions of launching an entrepreneurial venture is the preconceived notion of the capability to launch successfully a new business. Women considering self-employment typically express less optimism for institutional support and have greater time constraints compared to men (Allen & Curington, 2014). In addition, women view the thought of an entrepreneurial career as less

arousing and state that it does not generate feelings of excitement compared to men's attitudes on an entrepreneurial venture (Dempsey & Jennings, 2014).

Gibbs (2014) examined gender differences and concluded that female entrepreneurs had significantly lower company revenues, lower business performance, and exhibited a smaller degree of entrepreneurial self-efficacy compared to male entrepreneurs. Gibbs (2014) maintained that females employed fewer workers and were relegated to start-ups in the services sector. Findings such as these have led some researchers to state that entrepreneurship might not be the panacea for women that society once believed it would be in its ability to increase the societal and economic well-being of women (Ahl & Nelson, 2015). Gibbs (2014) recommended programs designed to assist female entrepreneurs to include entrepreneurial competency and opportunity recognition and to incorporate mentoring in an effort to develop leadership skills and increase the success rate for women entrepreneurs.

Yousafzai, Saeed, and Muffatto (2015) argued that governments around the world have begun to pay attention to women entrepreneurs and the value they offer society and have started to look at their particular needs. However, this area remains understudied. Although a potential avenue for a woman's career is to seek an entrepreneurial route, they continue to be under-represented worldwide in entrepreneurial careers compared to male entrepreneurs (Dempsey & Jennings, 2014).

Barriers women face entering an entrepreneurial venture. The research appears to support that women face more barriers compared to men when launching an entrepreneurial venture (Ahl & Nelson, 2015; Eddleston, Ladge, Mitteness, & Balachandra (2016); Xavier et al., 2012. This is why one theme the present research explored was the challenges women face in the early stages of an entrepreneurial venture. First, the full life of women entrepreneurs must be

considered since most female entrepreneurs have greater family commitments compared to men; therefore, women entrepreneurs have greater challenges in devoting the necessary effort into a new business venture (Ahl & Nelson, 2015). Due to these family responsibilities, many female entrepreneurs feel forced to pursue only a part-time entrepreneurial venture, often in an industry yielding lower income or in a traditional female-segregated industry (Ahl & Nelson, 2015).

Another major obstacle facing women entrepreneurs is a feeling of isolation, believing they have to make major decisions alone (Xavier et al., 2012). In part, this is due to a culture where, in spite of society encouraging women to pursue professional careers, it still teaches women not to be risk-takers, competitive, or aggressive (Morris et al., 2006). This culture starts with family members who view women pursuing entrepreneurship as wasting time and money (Fielden & Hunt, 2011).

Eddleston et al. (2016) found that gender played a significant role in the area of receiving financing for the business venture. Morris et al. (2006) concluded that the top three unique obstacles faced by women entrepreneurs were all financial in terms of difficulty in finding investors, getting a commercial loan, or getting personal loans for the business. When compared with male entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs received less funding based on the number of employees working at the firm, number of hours the owner devoted to the business, age of the business, and the company's past performance (Eddleston et al., 2016).

The literature review regarding the concept of entrepreneurship and the role of the entrepreneur provided a general review of why women become entrepreneurs. In general, entrepreneurs are economic actors who launch a venture not solely for their benefit, but also to provide a positive impact on multiple levels by offering goods and services to society. Although women have launched new businesses in the United States at a higher rate than men (Morris et

al., 2006; "State of women-owned business report," 2016), society considers entrepreneurship a male-dominated field (Ahl & Nelson, 2015). Women have the same drive, ambition, and skills to become entrepreneurs as men (Fielden & Hunt, 2011), and choose to enter the field for several reasons (Allen & Curington, 2014; Kelley et al., 2014; Ncube & Wasburn, 2010; Xavier, Ahmad, Nor, & Yusof, 2012). The literature showed that there is a conversation about women in entrepreneurship, yet more exploration is needed to further understand why female entrepreneurs are launching new ventures and the barriers they face in a male-gendered career. The next section of the literature review highlights one of the primary barriers women entrepreneurs face, their low self-efficacy.

Low Self-Efficacy

Davis' (2011) study found that women entrepreneurs face barriers and challenges throughout an entrepreneurial venture. However, women entrepreneurs experience improved economic performance and growth in business when the issues causing the barriers and challenges are resolved (Davis, 2011). A deeper review of the literature looked for specific barriers that establishing a mentoring relationship might help women entrepreneurs overcome.

A primary barrier women face that prevents them from launching a new business and becoming a successful entrepreneur is low self-efficacy, a lack of confidence in their ability to start and sustain a new business (Austin & Nauta, 2016; Gibbs, 2014; Yu & Chen, 2016). Self-efficacy is a motivational construct based on the conviction that an individual can successfully complete the behavior required to accomplish a desired outcome and is a major determinant in a person's choice of activities (Bandura, 1977). In the context of the present research, the desired outcome is sustaining an entrepreneurial venture. Bandura (1977) bases self-efficacy on four primary sources of information including performance accomplishments, vicarious experience,

verbal persuasion, and physiological states. Yu and Chen (2016) advanced the importance of self-efficacy, stating that self-efficacy was the most important predictor of performance because all other factors stem from the person's belief in the power and ability to deal with the task's challenges to produce the desired results. The present research explored if establishing a mentoring relationship enhanced the mentee's self-efficacy.

Yu and Chen's (2016) empirical research showed a positive relationship between self-efficacy and innovation performance. An entrepreneur's level of self-efficacy could predict the entrepreneur's ability to offer new goods and services for society's consumption (Yu & Chen, 2016). Yu and Chen (2016) indicated that innovation tended to be stronger for male entrepreneurs than for female entrepreneurs when both groups had identical levels of self-efficacy with men outperforming women in the area of innovative strength.

Gibbs (2014) maintained that women often fall victim to a stereotype threat resulting in a diminished level of entrepreneurial success due to a lowered self-efficacy in an ability to accomplish goals. Dempsey and Jennings (2014) found that women entrepreneurs have lower entrepreneurial self-efficacy compared to men partially due to prior experience in founding a new business, less excitement and arousal in starting an entrepreneurial career, less positive feedback and greater negative are more likely to receive failure feedback (Dempsey & Jennings, 2014).

Austin and Nauta (2016) suggested that women entrepreneurs might not act on potential opportunities for a start-up because of lower level of self-efficacy. Although research has shown that women entrepreneurs have lower entrepreneurial self-efficacy than men, when women do see someone succeed who is similar to themselves, the experience has the potential to raise efficacy (Dempsey & Jennings, 2014). An increase in a woman's self-efficacy leads to greater

confidence in the ability to seek new opportunities (Barnir, 2014) and can serve as a predictor of future behavior toward unfamiliar challenges compared to relying on past performance as a predictor (Bandura, 1977).

Bullough and Renko (2013) showed a heavy reliance on self-efficacy and an individual's pursuit of entrepreneurship, especially in overcoming adversities to lead to new ventures. The authors recommended that aspiring entrepreneurs seek activities aimed at intentionally boosting self-efficacy. Mentors may play a significant role in boosting a female entrepreneur's self-efficacy, since women typically need external validation as leaders and professionals (Bickel, 2014). To help overcome the low self-efficacy phenomenon, mentors must recognize women's tendency to underestimate their ability and be ready to bolster their female mentee's self-efficacy (Bickel, 2014).

Additional Theories to Explain Establishing a Mentoring Relationship

In addition to self-efficacy, two additional theories can also help explain reasons an entrepreneur would, or would not, establish a mentoring relationship. The first theory is Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which states that an individual tends to behave in a certain way based on perceptions of the likelihood and attractiveness of the outcome's reward. Using Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, an entrepreneur would establish a mentoring relationship if there is a perception that exerting the effort to find a mentor and engaging in the relationship would lead to a higher level of performance. In addition, the mentee must see a link between establishing the mentoring relationship and the reward potentially received (Vroom, 1964). The expectancy theory also maintains that the individual must place a particular degree of importance on the potential outcome to engage in the behavior (Vroom, 1964). Hsu et al. (2014) found that Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory has predictive power in terms that entrepreneurial skills could

be taught, and once acquired by the entrepreneur, can serve to strengthen an individual's self-efficacy and expectation for success.

Ajzen and Fishbein's (1969) theory of reasoned action is another theory to explain why an entrepreneur might establish a mentoring relationship. This theory predicts that an individual's behavior is based on preconceived attitudes (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969). This model predicts that a person's intention to behave in a certain way is based on normative beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969). The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969) may help explain whether a female entrepreneur believes establishing a mentoring relationship is beneficial. If female entrepreneurs believe establishing a mentoring relationship is beneficial, they may behave accordingly and therefore have the intentions to engage in a mentoring relationship. Likewise, when female entrepreneurs believe that establishing a mentoring relationship is not worthwhile, they behave accordingly and do not seek a mentor.

The topics this literature reviewed that related to the purpose of the study included an overview of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. This section gave several definitions of entrepreneur and a brief history and the importance of entrepreneurs to the economy. The review explored several factors necessary for entrepreneurship and reasons women enter entrepreneurial ventures. A comparison between men and women entrepreneurs found women entrepreneurs had significantly lower company revenues and business performance (Gibbs, 2014). Two additional concepts explored included barriers women entrepreneurs face and the effect low self-efficacy has on their success in launching a new business. Finally, the section gave an overview of two theories that guided the present research, Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory and Ajzen and Fishbein's (1969) theory of reasoned action. The next section of the literature review provides a framework for understanding mentoring and its potential benefits for a female entrepreneur. The

next section defines mentoring, compares formal to informal mentoring, and states several

requirements for establishing a mentoring relationship. This section of the literature review also

states women entrepreneurs' attitudes on mentoring, including perceived challenges and barriers,

and some potential disadvantages to establishing a mentoring relationship.

Mentoring

One of the present study's themes explores the attitudes and views of women

entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship; therefore, the literature review provided a

framework for understanding the topic of mentors, mentees, and a mentoring relationship. The

concept of mentoring has recently received a substantial amount of attention due to its potential

to lead to a positive outcome for both parties in the relationship, the mentor and mentee, as well

as the organization (Mysyk, 2008). One thing to remember is that the aim of a mentoring

relationship is not constant, often changing over time depending on the needs of the mentee

(Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008).

Defining mentoring. The term mentor originated over 3000 years ago in the Greek

poem, *Odyssey* (Bynum, 2015). Homer depicted the story of a renowned and wise counsellor

named Mentor (St-Jean & Audet, 2012; Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Mentor was placed in

charge of overseeing Odysseus' son's education and development while Odysseus was away

fighting in the Trojan War (St-Jean & Audet, 2012; Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Today,

mentoring denotes a relationship between a person who possesses counseling and support

qualities who benevolently oversees the development of someone with less experience (St-Jean

& Audet, 2009, 2012).

St-Jean and Audet (2009) suggest mentoring is a support relationship between an

experienced entrepreneur, the mentor, and a novice entrepreneur, the mentee or protégé, to foster

the mentee's development. It is a complex endeavor, facilitated by a mentor's love and care to encourage and guide a mentee (Laughlin & Moore, 2012). It differs from coaching, which focuses on immediate performance, because mentoring is a process that focuses on the long-term perspective of individual growth (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010).

Typically, mentors are generalists (selected not by technical expertise, but by business experience) whose goal is to help in transforming a mentee to become aware of individual strengths and areas for personal growth (Bean & Kroth, 2013; St-Jean & Audet, 2009). Mentoring is one of many resources available for individuals during career transitions to provide strength, guidance, and resources (Mysyk, 2008). The mentor guides the protégé to reflect on existing strengths and weaknesses and to plan for attainment of future goals and ambitions (Laughlin & Moore, 2012).

Formal versus informal mentoring. Formal training cannot cover everything an individual needs to know on the job. Academics and practitioners continue to recognize mentoring as a valuable tool to bridge the gap between formal training and a worker's development (Germain, 2011). Formal mentoring involves a high cost in respect to the time and resources required to mentor effectively (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). In addition, measuring the cost effectiveness of formal mentoring programs is difficult since the rewards generated are difficult to quantify (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Copeland and Calhoun (2014) maintained that an amalgamation of both formal and informal mentoring provides the greatest benefit to an organization. Companies gain greater flexibility in employees' development by utilizing both formal and informal mentoring (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014).

The traditional model of mentoring, typically found in an established company, formally pairs a senior member, or more experienced employee, of the organization with a junior member

in order to implement specific organizational criteria (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Copeland & Calhoun, 2014). One common issue with formal mentoring is that the people who do not have a mentor might resent the people chosen by the organization to participate in mentoring (Linney, 2000). Germain (2011) compared the traditional organizational mentoring relationship to an arranged marriage, citing that both often fail because of the incompatibility of attachment style. Today, informal mentoring is now more popular and common than formal mentoring and can be at least as valuable for personal and professional development, especially for women who find it difficult to develop formal mentoring relationships (Bynum, 2015).

In contrast, informal mentoring, where the two participants get a choice in the pairing, is typically more successful due to its similarity to a friendship type relationship (Germain, 2011). In informal mentoring relationships, the mentor and mentee typically share common values, backgrounds, experiences, and outlooks (Bickel, 2014; Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011). Therefore, a woman entrepreneur should seek a female mentor who has similar characteristics to the mentee to derive the greatest benefit from the mentoring relationship (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011).

Copeland and Calhoun (2014) maintained that informal mentoring is impromptu and free flowing, where the mentee and mentor establish a comfort level conducive to discussing openly a wide array of topics at any time. In addition, a mentor must have a desire to help a less experienced entrepreneur, possess a breadth of business knowledge to advance the mentee's business in terms of growth, and have values compatible with the mentee's values (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010). Mentors who have benefitted from mentoring are inclined to establish a mentoring relationship with others in order to create a reciprocal effect (Bullough & Renko,

2013) seeing themselves in the mentee's shoes when they began their own venture and recognize an opportunity to help someone else succeed (Dunbar & Kinnersley, 2011).

In contrast to the traditional model of mentoring in an established organization, entrepreneurs are often alone in running their business, especially in the beginning stage, with no one to confide in or share their problems. Fielden and Hunt (2011) stated that the generalized approach often utilized in an organization is not appropriate for an entrepreneur because entrepreneurs tend to view their business position as unique; thus, they need a more personalized means of support and advice. Nonetheless, establishing a mentoring relationship could help novice female entrepreneurs gain a clearer business vision, enhance their self-image, and increase assurance about the ability to succeed in the business venture (St-Jean & Audet, 2012).

Requirements of establishing a mentoring relationship. The beginning of a mentoring relationship is not always obvious and some mentors do not even realize they have assumed that role; instead, they simply transition seamlessly from the role of neophyte to accomplished professional to find themselves assisting someone else in their development (Mysyk, 2008). The relationship might start with mentors sharing stories from their own experiences to tell how they built their careers, of finding balances between work and family life, or dealing with gender biases (Mysyk, 2008).

In addition, a mentor must have a firm commitment to develop the next generation of leaders (Mysyk, 2008). Bean and Kroth (2013) posited that one of the most important requirements of a successful mentoring relationship is a mentor's willingness to spend quality time with the protégé. This includes face-to-face meetings, so a mentee should choose a mentor living in the same geographic area (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Linney (2000) suggested

that many people do not enter into a mentoring relationship due to it requiring more time commitment than people are willing to promise to give.

Taherian and Shekarchian (2008) maintained that an essential requirement for a mentoring relationship is that the mentor be non-judgmental, have good interpersonal skills, and be open-minded about the relationship. Mentees must have respect and admiration for their mentor, and the mentor must want the mentee to succeed (Bean & Kroth, 2013). Mutual trust is required for respect to develop in a mentoring relationship (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008).

Perceived benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship. The research explored the theme of the perceived benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship; therefore, a review of the literature provided a framework for this theme. Along with the rise in using mentoring as an aid to assist a novice entrepreneur, researchers continue to explore the usefulness of mentoring and the benefits perceived by the mentees (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010; Ozgen & Baron, 2007; St-Jean & Audet, 2009). To have a lasting effect on the performance of the business, mentoring should be viewed as a relationship giving long-term support to the novice entrepreneur (Fielden & Hunt, 2011). Though a mentee should view mentoring as a long-term relationship, the mentoring relationship should be established at the launch of the new business before difficulties arise for the greatest benefits to occur (St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). Nascent entrepreneurs typically have no shortage of ideas; but they often have difficulty sorting out the ones that best match their life goals (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). A mentor can help a mentee figure out what direction to take that would be most advantageous (St-Jean & Audet, 2009).

Women entrepreneurs should seek mentors as role models to offer support by the encouragement from the mentor's example of mastery of successes (Bullough & Renko, 2013; Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011). Due to the authenticity of the advice based on the mentor's

experience, caring, and mutual trust, a mentor plants a seed of hope in a protégé's mind, increasing the woman's self-efficacy and the potential of success (Bean & Kroth, 2013).

There are many opportunities for a mentor to influence a mentee including lending emotional, vocational, and role modeling support to a novice entrepreneur (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010). For example, mentors could intervene with novice entrepreneurs by offering advice, help improve the mentees' self-efficacy, or act as role models assisting the novice entrepreneurs in solving dilemmas (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). Mentors also help novice entrepreneurs build personal social networks by inviting them to join important events, which in turn, contribute to their success by allowing them to discover new decision-making opportunities (Ozgen & Baron, 2007; Shek & Lin, 2015). Without a robust network, an individual's visibility is limited, potentially causing an adverse effect on leadership influence (Bickel, 2014).

Mentoring is not merely an avenue for a more experienced person to tell someone what to do in a particular situation; instead, it is more about a mentor guiding and encouraging a protégé to reflect critically in order to find solutions to the challenges of owning a new business (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). Research describes some of the benefits of mentoring as a means for entrepreneurs to face challenges and confront barriers, as well as, to assist novice entrepreneurs in identifying opportunities for new ventures and ways to advance in critical areas (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; Ozgen & Baron, 2007; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Shek and Lin (2015) maintain that one benefit of mentoring is advancement of a mentee's career by increasing income potential and social networking opportunities. Mentees may also learn from the mentor's mistakes and avoid making those same errors (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). This is especially true for a relationship where the mentor is an individual who launched a business successfully,

despite encountering immense challenges, and is able use those experiences to motivate a potential entrepreneur (Bullough & Renko, 2013).

St-Jean and Audet (2009) identified several factors that could increase mentees' level of satisfaction in a mentoring relationship. One factor is pairing the mentee with a mentor with contextual knowledge in order for the mentee to understand the mentor (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). Another factor to increase satisfaction in the relationship is establishing a climate of mutual trust (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). Augustine-Shaw and Funk (2013) agreed with the concept of developing a climate of mutual trust in the mentoring relationship and added that mentors and mentees saw face-to-face mentoring as an irreplaceable benefit. Finally, there must be an expectation that the mentee sees concrete and observable results by establishing a mentoring relationship (St-Jean & Audet, 2009).

Mentoring is an effective means of allowing a transfer of knowledge to a novice entrepreneur about the business world (St-Jean & Audet, 2012). Other benefits of mentoring include the mentor's influence on the mentee's career in terms of increasing the protégé's feelings of satisfaction, competence, and instilling a positive and realistic self-image (Shek & Lin, 2015; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). Although the consensus is that mentoring is beneficial, some entrepreneurs refuse to seek a mentor because they do not like to ask for help or believe that the relationship is not beneficial (St-Jean & Audet, 2009).

Women's attitudes and views on mentoring. Mentoring can help a novice entrepreneur overcome roadblocks, such as the lack of time or confidence, and to gain access to formal business networks (Fielden & Hunt, 2011). Some women are hesitant to take the leap from thinking about starting a business to actually launching it because of roadblocks (Kelley et al.,

2014). Kelley et al. (2014) recommended that female entrepreneurs, acting as mentors, could play a significant role in helping mentees overcome perceived challenges.

Alvarez and Lazzari (2016) emphasized that mentoring is a good investment because women grow by their connections to one another. This connection between female mentor and female mentee often creates a bond that results in a long-lasting relationship (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014). Research shows that the majority of women leaders describe mentoring as having played an integral role in their career and leadership development (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; Tolar, 2012). Mentoring improves the likelihood of women entrepreneurs' chance of business success and career satisfaction by providing support, encouragement, and friendship (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010). In addition, mentoring can help women succeed in entrepreneurial ventures by enhancing understanding of concepts relating to risk-taking, creativity, and innovativeness (Xavier et al., 2012). Laukhuf and Malone (2015) stated that establishing a mentoring relationship is a good investment for women entrepreneurs to improve the chances of success by developing professionally leadership skills, such as a transformational style of leadership.

Comparing female to male attitudes on mentoring. Currently, the typical female-owned business is less successful, smaller, and in a low-growth industry compared to those owned by men (Ahl & Nelson, 2015). This suggests that women need encouragement, support, and a helping hand, all of which a mentor could offer. Compared to male entrepreneurs, women have more difficulty in finding mentors (Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008).

Fielden and Hunt (2011) suggested that men and women have different social support needs. Unlike men, women need a personalized relationship offering affirmative support during the startup of their venture including the need for someone to listen and help them explore their

new ideas (Fielden & Hunt, 2011). Dunbar and Kinnersley (2011) concluded that a mentor's gender was important and had an impact on the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. Dunbar and Kinnersley (2011) argue that women perceive female mentors as better role models for them compared to having a male mentor because women mentors could best relate to their experiences.

Barriers women entrepreneur's face in establishing a mentoring relationship. With literature positing the benefits of mentoring, one theme that the present study explored was why over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015); that is, there must be barriers preventing this relationship from forming. Some women even detest the word "mentoring" making it unlikely they would pursue such a relationship (Linney, 2000). There are many reasons why over 50% of women do not ask for a mentor. Linney (2000) posited that women are hesitant to ask for a mentor for fear that the person they ask may turn down their request for mentoring. The literature review showed some of the reasons why more males than female entrepreneurs establish mentoring relationships, but more work is needed to further explore this topic.

Fielden and Hunt (2011) found that if women entrepreneurs had a family member who was an entrepreneur it gave them a positive example to follow and provided a source for advice and support. As far as finding a role model, Dempsey and Jennings (2014) concluded that there is no significant difference between men and women novice entrepreneurs in terms of having a role model in their immediate family. In contrast, Austin and Nauta (2016) maintained that women are less likely to know an entrepreneur; hence, they are not able to find a mentor. Morris et al. (2006) found that only 40.8 percent of female entrepreneurs had an entrepreneurial role model.

Ncube and Wasburn (2010) concluded that entrepreneurial mentors typically seek out younger versions of themselves, and since most mentors are men, more male novice entrepreneurs become mentored. Barnir (2014) stated that because men have a more continual presence in the workplace, women are at a disadvantage in terms of the ease in developing networking and mentoring relationships. This lack of access to networks and connections can have a direct adverse effect on women entrepreneurs to be successful or sell products (Morris et al., 2006). Bickel (2014) suggested female mentees' mentors could multiply their impact by coaching them to connect with their own colleagues to expand their networks.

Issues or challenges with mentoring. Regardless of the heavy emphasis in the literature of the positive results of mentoring in terms of business success, growth of the organization, and leadership development, mentoring might actually be a deterrent to a female entrepreneur's intentions. Austin and Nauta (2016) found a significant negative association between pairing a female mentor with a female mentee. Due to a higher level of self-disclosure, female mentors might offer a more realistic perspective to their mentee about career difficulties, potentially leading mentees to change their mind about pursuing entrepreneurial ventures (Austin & Nauta, 2016). This supports St-Jean and Mathieu's (2015) argument that mentoring might reduce a novice entrepreneur's intention to start a business. Austin and Nauta (2016) proposed that since mentoring might increase confidence in women's capacity to clarify their business vision, it might reduce the cognitive bias of overconfidence in an entrepreneurial venture, causing a realization that there is greater potential for success in wage employment rather than in an entrepreneurial venture.

Disadvantages of establishing a mentoring relationship. Although mentees generally perceive mentoring to be a positive element in their personal development, it is not risk-free and

may include some problems and risks, bringing suffering rather than benefits to the mentees (Shek & Lin, 2015). Some women perceive not having a mentor to be more beneficial compared to establishing a mentoring relationship. Tolar (2012) found one-third of female survey participants describe an upside of not having a mentor, stating that without a mentor, they had a greater personal resolve to achieve. Tolar (2012) found that one-third of the women surveyed indicated they wished to avoid the perceived risks of establishing a mentoring relationship. Risks included the mentor's absence of sensitivity to the mentee's circumstances, having a different set of values, or the potential to prey on the protégé's weaknesses (Tolar, 2012).

Alvarez and Lazzari (2016) stated that mentoring has the potential to play a significant role in improving the quality of a person's professional life. The probability for success in a business venture also increases through mentoring (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016). However, although there has been a significant amount of research conducted on mentoring, the question of why some mentees are less predisposed to a mentoring relationship remains relatively unexplored (Germain, 2011; St-Jean and Mathieu, 2015).

The primary topic of this literature review that related to the purpose of this study was women entrepreneurs' perceived attitudes and views on mentoring. Topics also included the benefits of mentoring, barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship, and disadvantages of establishing a mentoring relationship. Laukhuf and Malone (2015) recommended future studies to understand why the majority of women entrepreneurs do not have a mentor and choose not to establish a mentoring relationship. A primary question this research explored was why some women entrepreneurs are hesitant to establish a mentoring relationship. The next section of the literature review highlights a discussion of leadership style and the effect the mentor's leadership style has on the mentee's leadership style.

Leadership

   The final theme the present study explored was how establishing a mentoring relationship affects the mentee's leadership style. Definitions of leadership vary, but a commonality in many definitions of leadership revolves around a person who influences individuals, groups, or organizations (Waldman & Bass, 1991). Although there is no consensus on the definition of leadership, understanding the different leadership styles can assist both men and women entrepreneurs in growing firms that remain competitive (Franco & Matos, 2015). Shek and Lin (2015) asserted that a great leader is also generally regarded as a great mentor and that many modern leadership models proclaim mentoring as an integral part of leadership and leadership development. Bynum (2015) maintained that mentoring is essential in providing direction and support for women aspiring to advance into leadership. This section of the literature review provides a framework for the topic of leadership in its relationship to mentoring and entrepreneurship by looking at several different leadership approaches.

   Leadership development. Alvarez and Lazzari (2016) advocated a further investigation of the relational mentorship experience as a potential means of a more effective means of conducting leadership. Leadership development requires failure; yet support from others, such as from a mentor, offers a leader encouragement in order to not let failure demoralize, but to recognize failure as part of the developmental process (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011). One way for a leader to gain confidence in personal ability and increase capacity for leadership development is for the mentor to develop a safe and trusting environment in order to pave the way for the mentoring relationship (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013).

   When entrepreneurial startups grow into larger organizations, the issue of leadership development becomes vitally important (Dimovski et al., 2013). Maltsev (2016) posited that

when leaders look to the future, they must create a vision of the future. Leaders believe they can turn dreams into reality and take the responsibility to transform the status quo into something better. In order to lead in the 21st century, leaders must be prepared to participate in deep learning opportunities in content knowledge and processes in order to facilitate change (Augustine-Shaw & Funk, 2013). Due to the complexities and rapid change of business affairs, leaders constantly need to learn and develop.

Leadership styles. There are many different styles of leadership. The present research explored transformational and transactional styles in an entrepreneurial venture. Regardless of the style of leadership, Laughlin and Moore (2012) maintained that mentoring plays an important role in areas beyond affecting behavior and learning styles; mentoring also assists individuals in understanding personal leadership styles. The literature review provided a framework for exploring the different styles of leadership. There is scant research or consensus on what constitutes an effective leadership style, although leadership is vitally important to inspire innovative behavior in the early stages of development and growth in business start-ups (Kang, Solomon, & Choi, 2015). Leaders have the ability to serve as a catalyst to encourage creativity and innovation in problem solving (Waldman & Bass, 1991).

The present research also explored Situational Leadership Theory to explain that different leadership styles are necessary depending on the situation and a subordinate's level of development or readiness (Northouse, 2013). According to this theory, effective leaders are those who can access a follower's needs and adapt their leadership style to accommodate those needs (Northouse, 2013). The Situational Leadership II model matches a leader's leadership style to followers' level of development (Blanchard et al., 1985). The four possible leadership styles are delegating, supporting, coaching, and directing, whereas the development levels of followers

range from high to low (Blanchard et al., 1985). This theory suggests that leaders must determine the nature of a situation, and then adapt their leadership style in order to correspond to the development of their followers (Northouse, 2013). The Situational Leadership II model is intuitively appealing and easily understood by practitioners; furthermore, Meirovich and Gu (2015) have provided empirical validation for the model.

Dunbar and Kinnersley (2011) asserted that a similar leadership style between the mentor and mentee is often a contributing factor in establishing a mentoring relationship in the early stage of business development. Leadership style also plays an important role after launching a business. Yıldız, Baştürk, and Boz (2014) asserted that leadership style has a considerable effect on overall business performance, which is of vital importance due to the continuous changes in customer needs and the competitive marketplace, since leaders have a significant influence over their company's policies and innovativeness.

Gender plays a role in the typical leadership style chosen by the entrepreneur. The leadership style of women entrepreneurs has been understudied (Moore, Moore, & Moore, 2011). However, some research suggests that women entrepreneurs tend to lead using a transformational style, whereas, men most often lean toward the transactional style of leadership (Moore et al., 2011; Rosener, 1990). Li, Bao, and Jiang (2013) stated that women's leadership style is more humane than that of men, with women leaders focusing on communication, coordination, relationships, and the success of all involved. Women leaders view their power, not in terms of organizational statue, but by personal characteristics such as charisma, personal relationships with their employees, and other interpersonal skills (Li et al., 2013).

Overview of transformational leadership. For the first half of the last century, most leadership research studied the effects of democratic and autocratic leadership (Bass, 1985).

Seminal theorists Bass (1985) and Burns (1978) were some of the first researchers to

conceptualize theories of transformational leadership in the 1970s. Contemporary research built

upon the early theories to extend the earlier work (Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). Leaders

following the transformational approach strive to motivate their followers to do more than

expected by following a four-factor approach of leadership consisting of idealized influence,

inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985a,1990). Bass

(1990) postulated that a transformational leader seeks to broaden and elevate the interests of the

employees beyond their own self-interest toward the common good of the organization.

Researchers today still maintain that transformational leaders are interested in providing

employees with inspiration and intellectual stimulation in order to develop creativity while

simultaneously achieving a high level of trust, faith, and respect from subordinates (Bamiatzi,

Jones, Mitchelmore, & Nikolopoulos, 2015).

Transformational leaders serve as role models to subordinates encouraging them to be

proactive in pursuing innovative ideas (Bass, 1985). Yıldız et al. (2014) posited that

transformational leaders use a style that changes the beliefs and value judgments of their

followers; thus, motivating them through the mission and vision of the organization to be goal-

oriented. Furthermore, transformational leaders challenge the status quo and encourage their

followers to join them in their vision as they attempt to raise standards, take calculated risks, and

change the culture of the organization (Bass, 1990).

Bean and Kroth (2013) posited that transformational leaders typically exhibit

foundational characteristics of empathy, kindness, caring, trust, integrity, enthusiasm, and

compassion toward their followers. Transformational leaders are also individually considerate

and provide their followers with support through a variety of methods including mentoring and

coaching (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Mentoring behavior is encouraged in transformational leadership because leaders serve as role models for others to follow due to the leaders' influence over their followers (Shek & Lin, 2015).

Transformational leadership is typically encouraged for a variety of reason. One reason to encourage transformational leadership is its association with superior performance leading to financial rewards and potentially making a significant difference in a company's performance at all levels (Bass, 1990). Recent research supports transformational leadership as a style having a positive effect on business performance that is greater than the effect of transactional leadership (Yıldız et al., 2014). Vargas (2015), based on analytical-synthetic methodology, concluded that evidence points to transformational leadership as the style that dominantly impacts processes leading to an organization's innovation, high performance, and competitiveness.

The topic of transformational leadership is important to understand fully the orientation entrepreneurs need to cope with the demands imposed upon them by the constant change in their product, market, and organizational structure; thus, they must continuously rethink their venture's strategy and direction (Yitshaki, 2012). Bamiatzi et al. (2015) concluded that female entrepreneurs with a transformational leadership style were reluctant to release control of major decisions to their employees. For strategic decisions, 39% of female entrepreneurs made decisions without consulting their employees, whereas 49% consulted their employees but still made the final decisions on their own (Bamiatzi et al., 2015).

Transformational leaders encourage others with advice, help, support, recognition, and openness (Bass, 1985). In terms of leadership style, transformational leadership refers to leaders' ability, through moral standards and integrity, to inspire their followers, build team spirit, take risks, and challenge their followers to approach old situations in new ways (Vera &

Crossan, 2004; Yitshaki, 2012). Bass (1985) described transformational leadership as the means of using personal vision to achieve a quantum leap in performance by a group roused by its leader's innovative or revolutionary ideas for the group's future. Bamiatzi et al. (2015) maintained transformational leaders place great emphasis on the well-being and development of their employees. Part of this development is the transformational leaders' ability to increase the self-efficacy of their followers by helping them see the environment as a source of opportunity that they should use to their advantage (Vera & Crossan, 2004).

  Overview of transactional leadership. The next style of leadership reviewed through a search of the literature was the transactional approach. Transactional leadership emphasizes existing values and routines with a focus on improving efficiency in an organization's current processes by reinforcing the current way of doing things (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Transactional leadership typically produces only incremental change in the company (Vera & Crossan, 2004). Yıldız et al. (2014) described this style of leadership as task-oriented. Under transactional leadership, employees understand the expectations of their supervisors, realize their roles in the business, and proceed to do their best work (Yildiz et al., 2014). Vera and Crossan (2004) stated that transactional leaders select a conservative strategy to encourage a closed culture and rigid system to facilitate procedures in order to strengthen existing strategies and structures.

  Transactional leadership behaviors become more important as an entrepreneurial firm grows as the founders begin to standardize ways of doing things in order to quell chaos and ambiguity (Vera & Crossan, 2004). On the other hand, as a firm reaches its decline phase, it might become rigid and shortsighted, and unless a leader can adopt a transformational style to avoid a crisis, the firm might soon be a victim of creative destruction (Vera & Crossan, 2004).

Shortcomings of transactional leadership include managers not fully utilizing it, failure due to managers' lack of ability to deliver promised rewards, and other unintended consequences associated with it (Bass, 1985). Bass (1990) suggested that transactional leadership is typically counterproductive and a recipe for mediocrity. On the other hand, Kang et al. (2015) indicated that for a business startup, transactional leadership might not only be appropriate, but highly effective, given the limited resources available to the CEO to motivate extrinsically followers with desired rewards. This was one reason the present research explored the leadership style of the women entrepreneurs, because depending on the stage of the business, the entrepreneur might use a mentor to change leadership style.

Overview of entrepreneurial leadership. A review of the literature revealed how entrepreneurial leadership remains an underdeveloped area of academic knowledge (Renko et al., 2015). Entrepreneurial leadership relies on the leader evoking superordinate performances by appealing to the higher needs of followers (Gupta et al., 2004; Renko et al., 2015). Renko et al. (2015) posited an overlap between traditional leadership theory and entrepreneurship, stating overlapping behaviors and characteristics including leaders' and entrepreneurs' clear vision, ability to seek new opportunities, ability to effectively motivate their followers and constituents, and both encourage a high degree of self-efficacy.

Renko et al. (2015) defined entrepreneurial leadership as an individual's ability to influence and guide group members' performance toward accomplishing the goals of the organization by recognizing and exploiting opportunities. Renko et al. (2015) concluded that entrepreneurs needed effective leadership behaviors to develop successfully new ventures. Yitshaki (2012) found that entrepreneurial leaders' charismatic-inspired behavior directly influenced the growth of their organization. Dimovski et al. (2013) described entrepreneurial

leaders as individuals who first have a unique idea, and then they transform the idea into a reality by raising the required social and financial capital, and finally operating and growing the business as a manifestation of their unique idea. An ongoing challenge for entrepreneurial leaders is to balance their goal of motivating followers to work hard while acknowledging the limits of their followers' abilities (Gupta et al., 2004).

Renko et al. (2015) stated that entrepreneurial leadership results in higher levels of opportunity recognition and exploitation, and in turn, higher levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Ozgen and Baron's (2007) findings were similar, yet they stated that by increasing entrepreneurs' self-efficacy, it in turn potentially increases their efforts to identify opportunities. St-Jean and Mathieu (2015) confirmed that mentoring increased entrepreneurs' self-efficacy, but found that mentoring often reduced the intention of staying in a venture in the future. This was due to mentors increasing their mentees' ability to clarify opportunities and lead them to consider the potential for success in other places such as wage employment (St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015).

Some researchers recognize entrepreneurial leadership as a distinctive type of leadership (Harrison, Leitch, & McAdam, 2015). Gupta et al. (2004) posited that entrepreneurial leadership is different from transformational leadership because entrepreneurial leadership is founded on the organization's need to adapt to emerging environmental contingencies. According to Harrison et al. (2015), it is inappropriate to extend existing leadership theories to the entrepreneurial domain because most researchers developed leadership theories based on large organizations. Renko et al. (2015) remarked that one significant difference between entrepreneurial leadership and transformational leadership is that entrepreneurial leaders often lack the charismatic trait used to describe transformational leaders. On the other hand, Yitshaki (2012) posited that entrepreneurs who did demonstrate charismatic-inspirational behaviors were

able to extend their influence by gaining their followers' emotions to believe in the business'

vision and optimistic view of its success through their leadership.

   Transformational and transactional styles are on a continuum. Bass (1985) stated

that leaders typically do not lead with one style of leadership all the time, but lead on a

continuum of leadership styles. The lowest style on the continuum is laissez-faire (Northouse,

2013). This style of leadership shows an absence of leadership because leaders only intervene

when failures, breakdowns, and deviations occur (Bass, 1985). Outcomes are usually negatively

associated with a laissez-faire style of leadership (Bass, 1995). Bass (1985) posited that

transformational and transactional leadership differ on many levels, with transactional leadership

representing a lower level of improvement, whereas transformational leadership calls for a

higher-order of organizational improvement. Transactional leaders motivate their followers by

exchanging rewards with them for doing what the leader requested, whereas transformational

leaders, operating at the other end of the leadership continuum, move their followers to go

beyond their own interests towards the good of the entire organization (Bass, 1995).

   Researchers suggest the two styles may co-exist along a continuum because most leaders

exhibit both transactional and transformational leadership, though in different amounts,

depending on the current situation (Bass, 1985; Bass 1985a; Yammarino, 1993). Yammarino

(1993) described the continuum as one where transactional leadership provided the base for

effective leadership and followers' performance to meet existing standards, whereas, in order for

performance to exceed expectations, the leader must move up the continuum to adopt more of a

transformational approach. This agrees with Bass (1995) who contended that transformational

leadership is not a substitute for transactional leadership; transformational leadership merely

contributes to the effectiveness of transactional leadership implying that transactional leadership has already occurred.

 Bass (1995) claimed that the best leaders are both transformational and transactional, another indication of movement along a continuum. Bass (1990) advocated that organizations with transformational leaders were more effective. Movement along the leadership continuum is often necessary, and in many situations, transactional leadership is the best leadership approach (Bass, 1990). When there is stability in the workforce, technology, and environment, the followers might be motivated to perform well simply with the proper delivery of rewards (Bass, 1990). Vera and Crossan (2004) support Bass' (1985) original assumption that leaders can possess both transformational and transactional behaviors.

Kang et al. (2015) found that regardless of whether a leader in a startup venture used transactional or transformational leadership, there was a positive relationship between the two styles of leadership and individuals' innovative behavior. Nonetheless, Kang et al. (2015) posited that leaders with a more transactional style are unlikely to change significantly followers' individual values; whereas, leaders using a more transformational approach ultimately alters subordinates' values to new values based on those modeled by the leader. Colleagues and employees of transformational leaders view them as more satisfying and effective when compared to transactional leaders (Bass, 1990). However, if the employees do not see a need for change, potentially rejecting the transformational leader's vision, their level of satisfaction and commitment tends to decrease (Vera & Crossan, 2004).

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is a widely employed tool used in diagnosing a leader's behavioral aspects to determine if a leader's approach is more transactional or transformational (Bamiatziet al., 2015; Bass,

1995). Bass originally designed the multifactor leadership questionnaire in 1985 from data

obtained by surveying 198 United States Army field grade officers who described and rated their

superior officers' leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1999). Bass' pilot survey for the MLQ asked

judges to determine if a survey question measured a transformational or a transactional behavior,

then the questions were included in a pool of 73 questions on the original MLQ (Bass, 1995).

The rationale for developing the survey was to create a reliable and valid instrument to

discriminate between two approaches to leadership, transactional and transformational (Bass,

1995). Avolio and Bass (1999) tested the validity of the MLQ and found a high degree of

consistency in its reliability and factor loadings.

The MLQ has undergone several revisions since 1985 (Bass, 1995). The recent version,

the MLQ 5X, consists of 80 items designed to examine behavioral characteristics of leadership in

order to measure transformational versus transactional leadership attributes (Avolio & Bass,

1999; Bamiatzi et al., 2015). The survey bases the behavioral aspects on seven factors, including

idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized

consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire (Bamiatzi et al.,

2015; Bass, 1995).

Effects of mentor's leadership on entrepreneurs' leadership development. In many

ways, mentors model transformational leadership for novice entrepreneurs through motivating

them to do more than expected (Bass, 1985). Bass (1990) advocated that a leader could learn

transformational leadership and that mentoring was one tool to use to promote the

transformational factor. Tolar (2012) concurred with Bass, positing that the role of mentoring

often was a driving and impactful force for a woman's path toward leadership. By mentoring

others, a leader may improve leadership competencies, moral character, and the ability to care

for others (Shek & Lin, 2015).

Machida and Schaubroeck (2011) maintained that leaders' self-efficacy beliefs play a

crucial role in their development. There is a direct association between leaders' self-efficacy and

their development (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011). It is important that mentors understand the

complex and subtle ways self-efficacy affects leaders' development as they seek to improve

leaders' skills (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011).

Relationship between leadership style and effective entrepreneurship. Few

researchers have examined the relationship between leadership style and entrepreneurship in

small and medium sized businesses (Franco & Matos, 2015). However, it is logical that the

leadership style influences the success of the entrepreneurial venture (Franco & Matos, 2015).

Validov and Pulaj (2016) found no significant relationship between leadership style and career

choice. However, once a person chooses to become an entrepreneur, the various leadership styles

may exert unique influences on an entrepreneur (Morrison, 2000).

Darling and Leffel (2010) posited that regardless of the leadership style used, the most

important aspect of leadership styles on the effectiveness of the entrepreneur are the benefits a

business receives from the individual entrepreneur's ability to inspire and lead. Franco and

Matos (2015) concluded that no single leadership style prevailed as a common factor in

successful entrepreneurial ventures. Primarily, the appropriate leadership style for

entrepreneurial success depends largely on the characteristics of the company's operating

environment (Franco & Matos, 2015). Franco and Matos (2015) found the transaction leadership

style was effective when the entrepreneur needed employees to apply themselves to tasks with

more determination. Whereby, the transformational leadership style was found more effective in

the entrepreneurship venture when the entrepreneur tackled explicitly the employees' intrinsic motivation (Franco & Matos, 2015).

Transition and Summary

Section one has presented the statement of the problem which is that 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship despite the increased potential of business success, organizational growth, and enhancement of leadership ability by establishing a mentoring relationship. This problem statement leads to the purpose for this qualitative phenomenological study, which was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship and its effect on women entrepreneurs' leadership development. Theories grounding this study are the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985), theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969), Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, and situational leadership theory (Blanchard et al., 1985). There is a gap in the research of entrepreneurial mentoring and its role in leadership development and this research explored women entrepreneurs' attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship, including any perceived barriers, and the effect mentoring has on leadership development. This research was related to the leadership field of study because there is a direct association between a leader's development and the mentee learning entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and the feedback from mentoring is a strong source to increase the mentee's self-efficacy (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011). Section one also included implications for biblical integration by giving examples of Paul mentoring Timothy (Acts 16:1-4), and Jesus' guidance, shown through actions and words, that mentoring is a relationship based on Jesus' command to serve others (Mark 10:45).

The literature review provided an overview of three major topics, entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, mentoring, and leadership. Overall, the review showed how the three topics related to each other in helping the present research explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship in order to understand ways to improve women entrepreneurs' success, organizational growth, and methods to enhance leadership development. The research method and design is presented in section two. Details are given in this section concerning the population and sampling, along with the data collection and organization techniques. In addition, section two addresses the data analysis technique and the reliability and validity of the research.

Section 2: The Project

This section provides an overview of the methodology employed in the study. It restates the purpose statement of this qualitative phenomenological study, which was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. Next, it identifies the role of the researcher in the data collection process. In addition, this section discusses how the researcher gained access to participants for the interview, a general description of the research design and method, and describes criteria for choosing the population and sample. Next is a description of how the data was collected, organized, analyzed and secured to ensure confidentiality. Finally, this section addresses the reliability of the interview questions and validity of the study. A summary is presented at the end of this section.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. The research explored the perceptions of barriers to overcome, and benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship, in female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in Charleston, South Carolina. The study explored potential benefits for female entrepreneurs in areas of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. This study defined a mentoring relationship as a support relationship between a novice entrepreneur, that is, a mentee with minimal experience, and a mentor with significant business experience (St-Jean & Audet, 2009; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015).

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the most valuable instrument (Stake, 2010) and is often involved with the participants in their experience which might lead to

strategic, ethical, and personal issues resulting in potential biases in the researcher's interpretation of the study (Creswell, 2009). The researcher of this study served several roles. First, the researcher has a background as an entrepreneur in the same industry, the wedding industry, as the participants in the study. The researcher has worked for 35 years in the wedding industry and has worked with many of the study's female participants. However, there is no direct connection between the researcher and the participants in terms of working for the same employer because both the researcher and participants own individual businesses. Therefore, issues with the researcher's ability to disclose information or encountering power issues was not a problem (Creswell, 2009).

Second, the researcher obtained permission from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University and Charleston Southern University's Institutional Review Board, to ensure protection of the participants' human rights (Creswell, 2009). Once both universities' Institutional Review Boards granted permission to begin the research, the researcher contacted the participants by phone or email to give them an initial explanation of the research and invite them to participate in a face-to-face interview. If the participants granted permission for an interview, the researcher arranged for a date and place to meet. Prior to beginning the interview, the researcher gave participants a consent form officially asking them to participate in the research. The researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the study, time involved, and how the results would be used (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher gathered the data through semi-structured one-on-one interviews. The researcher interviewed each participant using semi-structured questions (Creswell, 2013) to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in establishing a mentoring relationship and the effect mentoring had on their leadership development. Another one of the researcher's

roles was to analyze and interpret the data. This involved preparing the data for analysis, then making an interpretation for the larger meaning of the data (Creswell, 2013). This allowed the researcher to determine how the information from the research aids in answering the research questions.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

To gain access to the participants, the researcher contacted 22 female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in Charleston, South Carolina. The researcher briefly explained the purpose of the research during a phone or email contact. If a potential participant agreed to participate in the study, the researcher arranged a time and place for a face-to-face interview. The interviews took place in a private setting chosen by the participant. Participants could exit the interview at any time.

In order to establish a working relationship with participants, the researcher conveyed to the participants the purpose of the study during the initial contact in order to develop their trust (Creswell, 2013). Although the researcher knew many of the participants, both the researcher and participants worked in the wedding industry, the working relationship was limited. The researcher does not report to, or supervise, any of the participants. To enhance the working relationship with the participants, the researcher contacted participants by telephone or email giving them a brief explanation of the research. Then the researcher arranged for a time to meet for a private one-on-one interview at the participant's choice of location.

The researcher took measures to assure adequate ethical protection of each participant. The present research was of a personal nature because it involved a relationship between participants and mentors. Therefore, the researcher protected the anonymity of the participants by assigning pseudonyms to each participant and mentor (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The

researcher disclosed to each participant the purpose of the study and the participant's role in the research during the initial contact. All participants signed to indicate informed consent (Creswell, 2009, 2013). If a survey candidate did not sign the informed consent form, then the interview did not proceed. In addition, the researcher held the face-to-face interviews in a private location so no one else could hear the conversation. Lastly, the researcher did not solicit any private information that was not closely associated with the research questions (Stake, 2010).

<center>**Research Method and Design**</center>

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. The researcher developed the research method and design in order to answer the present study's research questions. The researcher chose the qualitative method because the researcher needed to explore personal experiences in a particular situation (Stake, 2010). Furthermore, the researcher selected the phenomenological design under the qualitative method in order to describe the common meaning of the participants' lived experiences (Creswell, 2013). The next several sections offer additional details explaining the research method and design utilized in this research.

Method

The researcher selected the qualitative method for this study because as Merriam (2009) stated, qualitative research is interested in exploring how people make sense of the world based on their experiences. This study explored how female entrepreneurs make sense of their experiences of starting a business and the role establishing a mentoring relationship played in that venture. The research also explored the effect establishing a mentoring relationship had on mentees' leadership style. The researcher assumed that some of the female entrepreneurs had launched a new business venture with a mentoring relationship, and others had launched

businesses without using a mentor to guide them. The researcher chose the qualitative method because it gives individuals an opportunity to share their experiences in an effort for the researcher to understand a problem or issue (Creswell, 2013). In the present research, the participants shared their experiences in order to understand the problem of why over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015).

Furthermore, the researcher's goal in this research was to explore female entrepreneurs' experience in establishing their business venture and their attitudes and views of establishing a mentoring relationship during their business startup. The present research follows Stake's (2010) purpose of a qualitative method, which is to understand a particular situation instead of reaching a general conclusion. One characteristic associated with the qualitative method is that the focus is on the process and the researcher's attempt to understand the participants' meaning of a problem or issue (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). In the present study, the purpose was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in establishing a mentoring relationship during the startup of their business.

Researchers are the primary instruments in a qualitative method because they are the individuals gathering and analyzing the data from multiple sources to make sense out of it (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). In this study, the researcher interviewed each participant and was the primary person gathering and analyzing the data. In the qualitative method, the process is inductive since the researcher works to establish themes from the data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). Again, the researcher in this study was the one looking for themes in the data. The final characteristic of the qualitative method is that the study's product is richly descriptive since the researcher developed a holistic account of the problem (Creswell, 2013; Merriam,

2009). In the present study, the researcher developed an account based on the results of the interview to give a thorough account of the issues with female entrepreneurs' establishing a mentoring relationship.

The present study did not use the quantitative method for several reasons. First, the researcher did not administer a survey in order to measure and analyze any of the data using statistical procedures, one of the key characteristics of a quantitative method (Creswell, 2009). The researcher also did not choose the quantitative method because the quantitative method tests objective theories in an effort to examine the relationship among variables using numbered data (Creswell, 2009). The present study did not examine objective theories by examining relationships among the variables.

Mixed methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative methods in tandem to increase the overall strength of a study (Creswell, 2009). The researcher used only the qualitative method, and not quantitative, therefore, a mixed method study was not possible. The researcher conducted interviews in the present study and did not use any survey instruments or test an objective theory in addition to the interviews; therefore, the study did not use a mixed methods approach.

Research Design

After determining that the study was best conducted using a qualitative method, the researcher employed the phenomenological design. This qualitative design was chosen in lieu of the grounded theory, case study, ethnography, and narrative research designs. The researcher's goal in using the phenomenological design was to describe the common meaning for several individuals of a phenomenon they experienced (Creswell, 2013). In the present study, the researcher interviewed participants to explore the lived experiences of female entrepreneurs

during the launch of their business in order to explore their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. Some of the themes the current research explored were the perceived barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship and the affect a mentoring relationship had on the female entrepreneurs' leadership development.

The researcher rejected the other qualitative designs because the other four would not provide sufficient data to answer the research questions. The grounded theory involves using multiple stages of data collection, constantly comparing the data with emerging categories and samplings from different groups to maximize similarities and differences of the information (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The current study did not collect data at multiple stages, so the researcher rejected this method. Likewise, the researcher determined the ethnography design was not appropriate because that design relies on the researcher studying a cultural group in a setting over a prolonged time and this study only interviewed the participants once (Creswell, 2013).

The case study and narrative research designs were also not appropriate for the present study. The researcher rejected these two qualitative designs because time and activity binds these designs as the researcher collects data to explore a program, event, or one or more individuals in-depth (Creswell, 2013). The narrative research design is a strategy that asks participants to provide stories about their lives (Creswell, 2013). This design was not appropriate because the researcher was not concerned with the participants' life stories, but with one shared experience of all the participants, their experience with establishing a mentoring relationship and its effect on their leadership style during the launch of their business.

Population and Sampling

The population from which the researcher drew the sample was all female entrepreneurs working in the wedding industry in the Southeastern United States. The sample consisted of 22

female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in Charleston, South Carolina. The researcher considered probability and nonprobablity sampling, and chose the purposeful nonprobablity sampling for the present study. The nonprobablity sampling is the most common type in qualitative research, and a purposeful sample is the most common form (Merriam, 2009). There are several types of purposeful sampling, including typical, unique, convenience, and network sampling (Merriam, 2009). The researcher chose the network sampling for the present study. Although similar to convenience sampling, network sampling gives richer information (Merriam, 2009). Network sampling uses a strategy allowing the researcher to start with participants chosen because they meet the criteria of the study (Merriam, 2009). In turn, the initial participants refer the researcher to other participants who also meet the sampling criteria (Merriam, 2009). For the present study, the researcher used networking, or snowball, sampling. The researcher contacted female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry the researcher knew, and after interviewing them, asked the participants for names of other female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry who might be interested in participating in the research.

Creswell (2013) suggests for a phenomenological study that the researcher conduct in-depth interviews with as many as ten individuals. The important point in a phenomenological study is to describe the meaning of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Although the common phenomenon experienced by the women interviewed was launching a business, the research questions also explored the women's attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. The researcher assumed that some of the participants had experienced a mentoring relationship, while other participants did not establish a mentoring relationship. The study desired participants in both categories, so the researcher strove for approximately ten participants in each category to answer the research questions. The first interview question for each

participant concerned whether or not the participant used a mentor during the start of the business in order to gain enough participants in both the mentored and non-mentored categories. The researcher also kept Merriam's (2009) goal in mind when conducting a phenomenological qualitative study, which is to sample until the sampling reaches a point of saturation or redundancy when new participants offer no new information.

In order for participants to be eligible to participant in the study, the researcher prescreened them to ensure that all the women entrepreneurs were over 18 years of age and worked in the wedding industry. Participants in the sample must have launched their own business, and they must work in an occupation dealing with some aspect of the wedding industry. Relevant wedding occupations included wedding planners, florists, photographers, cake bakers, musicians, and other related fields. Participants were eligible regardless of whether they used a mentor during their venture. Because the study explored the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship, some of the women chosen had a mentor, while other participants did not use a mentor.

Data Collection

Creswell (2013) maintained that researchers must plan their approach to collecting and recording data prior to entering the field. In all qualitative research, researchers use interviews to collect at least some, if not all, of the data for their study with the majority of researchers using the more open-ended and less structured format of a semi-structured interview for their participants (Merriam, 2009). The purpose of conducting an interview is to collect, then organize, and later analyze data in order to answer a study's research questions (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, this researcher initiated the study by collecting data by conducting face-to-face one-on-one semi-structured interviews with female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry.

Instruments

   Rationale for choosing interviews as the instrument. Interviewing is necessary when it is impossible to replicate a past event or when a researcher cannot observe a person's attitudes or views, or the researcher cannot observe how interviewees interpret their environment (Merriam, 2009). Since it is impossible to replicate a particular female entrepreneur's past mentoring relationship, or observe a participant's attitudes and views on mentoring, the researcher used interviews as the primary instrument to gather data. The researcher used data from the interviews to shed light on four central research questions about mentoring relationships and leadership style among female entrepreneurs.

   Participants in a research study typically define their environment in unique ways (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, questions that are more open-ended are preferred in a qualitative study (Merriam, 2009). The present study used a semi-structured interview format (see Appendix A) to allow for flexibility in exploring the central research questions of this study.

   Two paths of interview questions depending on the mentoring relationship. In the present study, the researcher chose the phenomenological design because the participants studied are women entrepreneurs who had all experienced the phenomenon of launching an entrepreneurial venture in the wedding industry. Based on the literature review, the researcher assumed that some of the participants had experienced the phenomenon of launching a business with establishing a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). Likewise, the researcher assumed other female entrepreneurs did not establishing a mentoring relationship when they started their business (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015).

   Prior to conducting the interview, the researcher did not know whether a participant had a mentor or not. One of the first questions the researcher asked was if the participant had a

mentor. If the participant had a mentor, the researcher asked questions related to the entrepreneur's mentoring experience. If the participant did not have a mentor, the researcher asked another set of questions to explore that entrepreneur's attitudes and views on mentoring.

Interview questions for participants with a mentor. The researcher developed an interview guide (see Appendix A) to use in conducting all interviews in the exploration of female entrepreneurs' attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship and their leadership style. The first question asked concerned whether or not the interviewee used a mentor to screen which set of questions to ask next. If the participant did use a mentor, the interview guide listed basic questions of how the participant found a mentor and the mentor's gender. This question might give insight to future female entrepreneurs in where to find a mentor and whether most women seek a male or female mentor.

Since one of the main research questions was to explore barriers, the researcher also asked participants about any barriers they had to overcome in establishing the mentoring relationship. In addition, the literature review revealed that by raising women's self-efficacy, they have greater confidence to seek other opportunities (Barnir, 2014). Therefore, the interview guide asked participants about their mentor's ability to enhance their internal belief to face challenges and seek other opportunities. There were also questions exploring how their mentor fulfilled expectations in terms of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. These questions directly related to one of the research questions of the present study.

The researcher also asked participants to describe their mentor's leadership style and their own style. The interview guide's questions were based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) research, which described leadership styles on a continuum ranging from laissez-faire, through

transactional and finally transformational. The interviewer inquired if the female entrepreneurs believed their mentor had any influence on their leadership style. The researcher followed this question by asking several questions based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) research to determine the participant's leadership style. The researcher asked participants similarly worded questions concerning their mentor and their own leadership style. For example, to determine if the mentor had the transformational factor of idealized influence (Avolio & Bass, 1999), the interview guide asked if participants identified with their mentor because the mentor individually influenced them by being a good role model. A related leadership question asked participants if their mentor tried to influence them individually by being a good role model. Comparing the interview guide's related leadership questions based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) leadership continuum helped answer the final research question about the mentor's leadership style affecting the mentee's leadership style.

Interview questions for participants without a mentor. Based on the literature review, the researcher assumed that most of the female entrepreneurs interviewed had not established a mentoring relationship during the startup of their business. After all, the problem this research addressed was that over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). If the answer to the first question determined that the participant did not have a mentor, the researcher asked a different set of questions compared to the questions asked if the interviewee had established a mentoring relationship.

The interview questions in the interview guide for those participants who did not use a mentor (see Appendix A) focused on the views of these female entrepreneurs as to why they chose not to establish a mentoring relationship with a mentor. The first question asked if they

ever tried to find a mentor, and if they did, what prevented them from finding one. The researcher also asked questions to these participants to determine any real or perceived barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. These questions, like the questions for those participants who used a mentor, helped explore the research questions about the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs establishing a mentoring relationship.

The interview also included questions inquiring how the participants believed having a mentor might have improved their business success, organizational growth, and their leadership development. Specifically, the questions asked the participants in what ways they believed their business success might have improved, their company might have grown, and if their leadership style would be different if they used a mentor. In terms of leadership development, the researcher asked questions based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) continuum of leadership styles, ranging from laissez-faire to transactional, on to transformational, to the group of female entrepreneurs who did not have a mentor. The interview questions about the participant's leadership style were the same as the questions the researcher asked the participants who had a mentor.

Strategies for addressing ethics and threats to validity. Merriam (2009) stated that the key to getting useable data from an interview is to ensure the researcher asks good questions. For the present study, the researcher developed the interview questions prior to the collection process to ensure the questions adequately addressed the central research questions. All the questions were standardized and first submitted to Liberty University's Institutional Review Board, then to the researcher's own Institutional Review Board at Charleston Southern University for approval. The interview questions are available as an appendix in the study.

All researchers should strive to produce research in an ethical manner that is valid and reliable (Merriam, 2009). In qualitative research, validation is an attempt to assess the accuracy

of the findings as described by the researcher (Creswell, 2013). The present study minimized the

threat to validity by the amount of time the researcher spent in the field, the closeness of the

researcher with the participants, and the detailed thick description obtained from the interview

(Creswell, 2013). In addition, in a qualitative study, the researcher should enable readers to

determine if they can transfer the information to other settings (Creswell, 2013).

Data Collection Technique

The researcher collected the data by conducting interviews with the participants using

an interview guide (see Appendix A). Each interview was administered face-to-face, held in a

private location, and took approximately thirty minutes to complete. Merriam (2009) stated that

audio recording interviews is the most common method of collecting data to ensure better

preservation of everything said for later analysis. Therefore, to gather data to answer the central

research questions, the researcher audio recorded the interviews. The researcher then transcribed

the interviews verbatim for analysis. After finishing the interview, the researcher conducted a

brief review of the interview with participants prior to leaving and reassured them of the

confidentiality of their input to the study.

Although the researcher did not administer a pilot survey, one of the first interview

questions asked if the participant established a mentoring relationship during the launch of the

business venture. If a participant established a mentoring relationship, the researcher asked

questions based on establishing the relationship. For example, the researcher asked participants

to describe their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship including any

barriers they had to overcome, In addition, the researcher asked participants ways they felt the

mentor improved business success, organizational growth, and leadership development.

Furthermore, the researcher asked participants to describe the mentor's leadership style. The

researcher also asked mentored participants questions about their own leadership style. The researcher used Avolio and Bass' (1999) leadership continuum as the basis for the interview questions on leadership. Finally, female entrepreneurs who used a mentor provided the researcher input on whether they believed the mentor affected their leadership style.

 If participants did not have a mentor during the beginning stage of the business venture, the researcher asked slightly different questions. The main difference in the questions was why they did not establish a mentoring relationship, including any barriers they encountered and how they believed business success, organizational growth, and leadership development might have changed had they employed a mentor. The researcher asked further questions to gain insight about non-mentored participants in regards to their leadership style.

The present study had several central research questions it sought to explore. The researcher's interview questions to both the female entrepreneurs with a mentor, and without a mentor, sought to establish themes. Themes are broad ideas coded by the researcher conducting qualitative research, then aggregated in order to form a common idea (Creswell, 2013). The themes helped the researcher understand the attitudes and views of female entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship, any barriers in establishing the relationship, views on if a mentoring relationship advanced their business, and if the mentoring relationship affected their leadership style. Complete interview questions are in Appendix A.

Data Organization Techniques

Merriam (2009) described the three stages of data management as the researcher's preparation, identification, and manipulation of a study's data. In all three stages, the researcher used a dedicated journal to keep notes of all thoughts, ideas, dates, places, and decisions made during the research. The journal and all printed materials related to the study will be kept in the

researcher's office in a locked file cabinet. To organize the data, the researcher prepared the data

by audio recording the face-to-face interviews, and then transcribed verbatim the interviews into

a Microsoft Word document. The Microsoft Word document is on the researcher's password-

protected computer. The researcher then coded and manipulated the data into analytically

meaningful segments for ease in locating (Merriam, 2009). Finally, the researcher used the

organized data to answer the present study's research questions.

Data Analysis Technique

After organizing the data, the researcher continued the analysis by interpreting the larger

meaning of the data (Creswell, 2013). The researcher analyzed the data to address all four of the

study's central research questions. The researcher coded the data by labeling passages of the text

based on content, in order to retrieve it later as the researcher collected similarly labeled passages

(Merriam, 2009). Although computer software programs are available to assist a researcher,

Merriam (2009) suggests that small-scale qualitative studies such as the present study do not

need the capacity of these programs. Though computer programs might be helpful, they have

several disadvantages. Creswell (2013) states that learning the computer program can be a

daunting task; furthermore, using a computer program might be a barrier placing an

uncomfortable distance between the researcher and the data.

The results of the interview allowed the researcher to code the data sets according to

topics and issues, then tally and analyze the results to understand what was similar and what was

different among the participants' shared experience of launching a business. The researcher used

Creswell's (2013) template for coding to explore the essence of a phenomenology study. Using

Creswell's (2013) template, the researcher first described personal experiences with launching

the researcher's business. Although the research focused solely on female entrepreneurs in the

wedding industry, the researcher is also an entrepreneur in the wedding industry. Merriam (2009) argues that a researcher must put aside, or at least make known, viewpoints based on personal experiences with the study's phenomenon. Next, the researcher developed a list of statements perceived as significant to the study. Creswell (2013) suggests the researcher follow this step by grouping the significant statements into themes of meaningful units. The study also has a detailed textual description of what the female entrepreneurs experienced as they launched their business, including verbatim examples given during the interview. Continuing to follow Creswell's (2013) template, the present study includes a structural description of how the experience happened. Finally, the researcher wrote a long paragraph explaining the essence of the experience (Creswell, 2013).

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

This study included procedures to help ensure reliability and validity. It is essential that researchers conduct their study in an ethical manner to assure readers that the researcher's findings are reliable and valid. Practitioners must be able to trust that the conclusions of the research are credible because they will use the results to intervene in people's lives (Merriam, 2009). Although standards for ethical conduct for quantitative studies have existed since the 1940s, qualitative research standards are relatively new (Merriam, 2009). According to Creswell (2013), some researchers have criticized qualitative research for not adhering to the traditional standards of reliability found in quantitative research. However, Creswell (2013) maintains that most of the criticism of qualitative reliability could be resolved by understanding that quantitative terminology does not adequately describe qualitative reliability.

The concept of reliability implies that the researcher's approach to the study is consistent across different research and different projects (Creswell, 2013) and the research findings could be replicated (Merriam, 2009). However, because qualitative research studies human behavior, the concept of replicating research findings is problematic because researchers do not try to make things happen; instead, they observe human behavior and try to describe and explain the behavior in terms of how the participants experience their world (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, Merriam (2009) maintains that the important factor in qualitative research is not whether another researcher can replicate the results, but whether the results are consistent and that any conclusions make sense based on the data collected.

Methods to help ensure reliability in a qualitative study include documenting the steps of the study (Creswell, 2013) and paying careful attention to how the data is collected, analyzed and interpreted (Merriam, 2009). The researcher of the present study employed several techniques to ensure reliability. One method the researcher used to enhance reliability was to use a high-quality recorder during the interview, and afterwards, check the transcription of the interview to ensure it did not contain obvious transcription errors (Creswell, 2013). In addition to using a high-quality recorder, the researcher was consistent in the use of codes, making sure there was not a shift in the meaning of the codes during the research (Creswell, 2013). The researcher used an audit trail to detail how the data was collected and how decisions were made, and retained all emails sent to, and received from, participants including the initial invitation to participate in the study, consent forms, and any questions they had about the study (Merriam, 2009). The audit trail also contained a log to document phone calls to participants to arrange meetings or discuss their concerns about the study. Dates, times, and any other general information that was not directly related to the interview questions was documented in the audit trail logbook. Finally, to

ensure reliability of the interview questions used, the participants reviewed the transcribed

interview to confirm their responses, made any necessary corrections, and offered further

insights to the research (Merriam, 2009). The audit trail procedures are included in the analysis

and the researcher will retain all logs for a record.

Validity

Internal and external validity are two strengths of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013).

Internal validity concerns the question of how the study's findings match reality (Merriam,

2009). For a qualitative phenomenological study, there are multiple accounts of how people view

the phenomenon; thus, each participant has a personal view of reality (Creswell, 2013).

Therefore, since reality is subjective in qualitative studies, researchers must measure validity in

terms of credibility based on the finding's accuracy from the standpoint of the researcher,

participant, or reader (Creswell 2013; Merriam, 2009).

Researchers use several strategies to increase the credibility of a qualitative study. These

methods include triangulation, member checking, using rich, thick descriptions, clarifying the

researcher's bias, presenting discrepant information, adequate engagement in data collection,

using peer debriefing, and using an external auditor (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The

present study used several of these methods. One method the researcher used, triangulation,

assisted the researcher in establishing themes after an examination of the data from all the

participants' interviews, each with a different perspective, in order to build a coherent

justification for the study's themes (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The study also employed

member checking as an internal validity strategy. This method determines the accuracy of the

study by taking the report back to the participants and asking them to confirm that the findings

and researcher's interpretations are accurate (Creswell, 2009) and asking the participants for

corrections and comments (Stake, 2010). Finally, because the researcher is also an entrepreneur and works in the same industry as the participants, readers were informed of the researcher's relationship to the participants to indicate any bias potentially brought to the study (Creswell, 2013).

External validity is concerned with the ability of applying one study's findings to other situations (Merriam, 2009). The purpose of a qualitative study is not to generalize the findings to a population. Rather, the study should be conducted and provide adequate details so that practitioners and other researchers can transfer the study's findings to their particular situation (Merriam, 2009). For this reason, the present study provided descriptive details of the findings so other researchers and practitioners can transfer or generalize the findings of this study to their specific situation.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 provided an overview of the methodology employed in the study. The researcher selected the phenomenological qualitative design to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. Section 2 also stated why the researcher did not choose the other types of qualitative designs. The population for the study was all female entrepreneurs working in the wedding industry in the Southeastern United States, and the sample consisted of 22 female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in Charleston, South Carolina. The researcher also works in the wedding industry, but does not have any direct connection with the participants. To gain access to the participants, the researcher contacted them by telephone or email to arrange a face-to-face interview.

The primary instrument for gathering data was a semi-structured interview using an interview guide. There were two paths for the interview questions. One path consisted of

questions for participants who used a mentor during the start of their business, while the other path of questions was for the female entrepreneurs who did not use a mentor during the early stage of their business venture. The researcher designed all interview questions to answer the study's four research questions. After interviewing the participants, the researcher transcribed the recording for further analysis to understand what was similar and different among the participants' shared phenomenon of launching a business.

The concept and procedures of the study's reliability and validity were also addressed in Section 2. To help ensure reliability, the researcher paid careful attention to how data was collected, organized, and interpreted. The researcher used a high quality recorder, coded the data consistently, and documented the findings in a logbook. Later, the participants review the transcribed interview. Validity is a strength of qualitative research. In the present study, the researcher took the study back to the participants asking them to confirm the accuracy of the findings and the researcher's interpretations. In addition, the researcher informed the reader of any potential personal biases since the researcher works in the same industry as the participants. Section 3 discusses the findings of the research and uses those findings to answer the four research questions. In addition, the next section discusses applications of the findings to the professional practice, recommendations for actions, and recommendations for further study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

In this section, the researcher presents and interprets the findings of the research. The findings contribute to the current body of research on mentoring and leadership in women-based entrepreneurial ventures. This section also includes recommendations for action and implementation strategies for these actions in order to improve the business practices of women entrepreneurs. In addition, this section guides the reader to consider further questions to explore. Finally, the researcher states how this study closes the gap in the literature on mentoring and leadership development for women entrepreneurs.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. It is beneficial for entrepreneurs to establish a mentoring relationship in order to boost their confidence in their ability to be successful in their business venture and improve their leadership development (St-Jean & Audet, 2012). However, more than 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015). This applied doctoral research project was developed and conducted to explore why many women entrepreneurs do not use a mentor, even though research shows using a mentor enhances the probability for an entrepreneur's success (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012).

The researcher, acting as the primary instrument in this qualitative study, conducted 22 interviews of women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in Charleston, South Carolina to determine their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship using an interview guide (see Appendix A). The researcher asked a slightly different set of interview questions to

the women who had used a mentor compared to the ones that had not use a mentor during the startup of their business. The objective of the interviews was to answer the four central research questions presented in Section 1. These questions included exploring the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in establishing a mentoring relationship, barriers they experienced in trying to establish the mentoring relationship, whether they believed establishing a mentoring relationship improved the chance of success of their venture, growth of the business, and leadership development, and if their mentor's leadership style affected their own leadership style.

The researcher chose the participants using network sampling as described in detail in Section 2. The researcher knew several female entrepreneurs working in the wedding industry, and after interviewing them, asked them for names of other women entrepreneurs they knew that might be willing to participant in the study. In accordance with Section 2, after transcribing the interviews, and giving all participants a pseudonym, the researcher coded the responses and then searched for themes to answer the central research questions. The researcher then compared the study's findings with the conceptual framework and current literature to draw conclusions.

The research concluded that women entrepreneurs have a positive attitude and view toward establishing a mentoring relationship. The 22 participants mentioned several barriers to establishing a mentoring relationship including not knowing where to find a mentor, lack of trust, and the fear that the mentoring relationship would lead to the mentor taking the mentee's business ideas. Overall, the research found that the participants believed a mentoring relationship would increase women entrepreneurs' chance of business success, growth of their business, and leadership development. The research also found that all the women entrepreneurs primarily lead with a transformational style of leadership, though often lead with a transactional leadership. The next section provides a more detailed description of the findings.

Presentation of the Findings

The population for this research included all female entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in the Southeastern United States. The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview using the questions developed to address the central research questions with 22 women entrepreneurs working in Charleston, South Carolina. Interviewing 22 participants was well beyond the minimum number of Creswell's (2013) suggestion of conducting interviews with at least ten individuals for a phenomenological study. The researcher has been working in the wedding industry for 35 years and did not establish a mentoring relationship with a mentor. Although the researcher works in the same industry and knew several of the participants prior to the interview, the researcher did not know which of the participants had established a mentoring relationship during their first year of business until the interview began. The researcher confirmed that all participants were over 18 years of age and worked in the wedding industry. In addition, per Section 2, the researcher held all interviews at a private location of the participant's choice. Each interview was approximately 30 minutes in length, audio-recorded, and then transcribed. Prior to leaving the interview, the researcher conducted a brief review and assured each participant of confidentiality. The researcher recorded in an audit book each step of the research and emailed a transcript to each participant to confirm the accuracy of the interview to help ensure reliability in the qualitative study (Creswell, 2009).

In accordance with Section 2, the first question the researcher asked was if the interviewee used a mentor. The research revealed that of the 22 participants interviewed, only eight had established a mentoring relationship during the first year of business. The other 14 participants indicated they had not established a mentoring relationship during the first year of business. The number in each group was relatively close to the desired number of approximately

ten in each group as stated in section 2 of this study. The researcher ended the network sampling when the point of saturation was reached when no significant new information from the participants was discovered (Merriam, 2009).

Only four of the 14 participants who did not establish a mentoring relationship indicated that they ever considered finding a mentor during the startup of their venture. This result, that nearly 64% of the participants interviewed had not established a mentoring relationship, supports the problem that over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship despite many advantages including positive effects in their business success, organizational growth, and leadership ability (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012).

For the eight women entrepreneurs who had established a mentoring relationship, four had male mentors and the other four had female mentors. Most of the participants knew their mentors prior to starting their own business. The women entrepreneurs who had an entrepreneur in their family stated that the family member provided advice and support, consistent with Fielden and Hunt (2011). Three of the participants stated that their mentor was a family member including husband, father, and mother. Two of the interviewed entrepreneurs listed a former employer as their mentor, while two other participants said they used close friends for their mentors. This means that only one participant sought a mentor outside of an already established relationship. The interviewed participant who had a mentor outside an established relationship obtained the mentor through a local program designed to assist small businesses. However, this participant only met with the mentor on one occasion, which would not qualify as a mentoring relationship based on St-Jean and Audet's (2009) definition of a mentoring relationship. In terms of the mentor and novice entrepreneurs' matching career fields, three of the participants

who had a mentor replied that their mentor was not in the same career fields as they were, two said that their mentor was in a related career field, and three answered that they were in the exact same career as their mentor.

The last question the researcher asked those who had established a mentoring relationship was whether they would recommend other novice women entrepreneurs to establish a mentoring relationship based on their experience. All eight indicated that they would recommend women entrepreneurs establish a mentoring relationship. Replies of "absolutely," "definitely," and "100%" were often the first words spoken in response to the question. One participant summed up the feelings of many others by stating, "I can't imagine being able to confidently move forward in a huge life-changing entrepreneurial venture without that relationship." Some commented that they still have a mentor to help keep them in check and hold them accountable.

The final question the researcher asked those who had not established a mentoring relationship was if they could turn back time and start over in their business, would they attempt to establish a mentoring relationship. Four of the fourteen replied that they still would not want to use a mentor to assist them. This was nearly the percentage of women entrepreneurs in a former study that stated one-third of women entrepreneurs chose not to use a mentor because it gave them a greater resolve to achieve (Tolar, 2012). One participant defended giving a negative response about using a mentor by stating having trust issues about giving someone too many details of the business. Another participant indicated a personal satisfaction with how everything turned out and did not want to risk changing anything. Still another said that making mistakes is often the best way to learn. Ten of the fourteen non-mentored participants answered the final question with a "yes" and stated how much heartache and money it would have saved them if they had used a mentor.

Theme 1: General Attitudes and Views

The first theme that emerged from the research was based on the response to the interview question asking participants to describe their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 2012; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969) was the conceptual framework used for this theme because based on whether the participants had a positive attitude on establishing a mentoring relationship would be the best way to predict a novice's behavior of actually desiring to find a mentor. Likewise, if novice entrepreneurs expect positive outcomes, they are more likely to participant in establishing a mentoring relationship as predicted by Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory. Both the participants who had established a mentoring relationship and those who had not established a mentoring relationship had overall positive attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. Participants generally described the concept of a mentoring relationship with positive expressions such as "very important," "absolutely wonderful," "hugely helpful," "a good / great idea," and "an overwhelmingly positive thing." Both groups of participants cited several specific positive outcomes of mentoring.

Guide, problem solver, and teacher. Two positive advantages of mentoring cited by many of the participants were a mentor's ability to act as a guide to open their eyes to ideas they had not been thinking about and to act as a problem solver. One mentored participant stated that the mentor was a guide and was available for assistance whenever a situation came up; yet, the mentor still allowed the mentee freedom in making decisions. Another participant described the mentor as someone who acted as a guide to help solve problems. One of the interviewed entrepreneurs jokingly commented that it is hard enough being an adult, so it is nice to have a mentor there to offer guidance through difficult dilemmas. One participant, who did not establish

a mentoring relationship, said that a mentor could have helped in navigating through difficult issues during the early stages of the business and helped to understand what pitfalls to avoid. Finally, a non-mentored participant declared that a positive side of mentoring was the opportunity to have a guide to go to with questions on how to develop a business and how to solve problems concerning people with different personalities.

Some of the participants took the concept of a mentor as a guide further, stating that the mentor acted as a teacher, helping them learn the ropes of the business. The view of some participants was that the mentor was someone who knew more than they did and who could come alongside them to teach the business side, especially when the novice entrepreneur had little formal business education. In general, several participants concluded that it is good to have a mentor who is able to tell the protégé what worked for the mentor and what opportunities the protégé should consider. By acting as a teacher, the mentor helps novice entrepreneurs avoid a lot of trial and error, saves them time, money, energy, and possibly grief.

A sounding board. The participants also indicated that the ability to receive feedback from a mentor was an advantage in establishing a mentoring relationship. Receiving feedback from a mentor, who acts as a sounding board, assures mentees that they are doing the right things and are on the path to success. One participant stated that the mentor offered inspiration by giving "a little assurance about making some of the right decisions." Another woman entrepreneur who had a mentor explained that the mentor's feedback was "a validation about doing the right things and being on the right track." Some interviewees believed novice entrepreneurs needed to be able to tell their mentors everything and run every great idea by them to get their feedback. Beyond a sounding board, participants said an advantage of having a mentor is to have someone remind them that there is light at the end of the tunnel and getting

assurance and comfort that they were not the only woman entrepreneur who had encountered the problem.

Summary of Theme 1. This study's participants held a positive attitude and view on mentoring. Overwhelmingly, the participants stated that establishing a mentoring relationship is an important idea. Theme 1 provided insight to support conclusions about RQ1, the first central research question, on the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. Particular patterns from the participants' responses were that mentors could serve as a guide, problem solver, and teacher. Many of the participants held the view that mentors are there to guide the novice through difficult situations during the early stages of the business. Participants also had a positive attitude toward mentoring because the mentor could serve as a sounding board offering encouragement through feedback.

Theme 2: Self-efficacy

One question in the interview asked all participants about their view on a mentor's effect on a mentee's self-efficacy, a construct first proposed by Bandura (1977). This is an important question because, according to Wood and Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is the most effective predictor of an entrepreneur's performance because all other factors of success stem from individuals' internal believe that they can face challenges and accomplish goals. Furthermore, an increase in entrepreneurs' self-efficacy increases leadership ability and enhances the ability to recognize and take advantage of business opportunities (Renko et al., 2015).

For participants that had a mentor, the research asked them, "How did your mentor enhance your internal belief in your ability to face challenges?" Similarly, the research asked participants that did not use a mentor, "If you would have had a mentor, do you believe he/she

would have enhanced your internal belief in your ability to face challenges?" The way the researcher phrased the question for those that did have a mentor assumed that the mentor did enhance the mentee's self-efficacy. The researcher based this assumption on Kruger's (2000) conclusion that mentors are beneficial in developing a mentee's self-efficacy. However, the results of the question for those that did not use a mentor found that nearly 36%, 5 of the 14 participants without a mentor, indicated that they did not believe that having a mentor would have enhanced their self-efficacy.

Increased confidence. Many of the participants, including those who had a mentor and those that did not use a mentor, responded to the question about mentors enhancing self-efficacy by stating the potential of mentors increasing a mentee's confidence in the ability to face challenges. This response supports Barnir's (2014) statement that increasing women entrepreneurs' self-efficacy leads to superior confidence in their ability to make the most of new opportunities. One participant that had used a mentor stated that a mentor gives "a sense of confidence to a novice moving forward knowing there is someone with more experience to tell mentees they are on the right track and doing the right things." Some participants used the term "validation" to describe this increased confidence obtained from the mentor telling them they were on the right track.

This increased confidence also stemmed from participants knowing that they were not the only ones that had encountered a particular challenge. Dempsey and Jennings (2014) found that when women observe someone similar to them face challenges, it has the potential to raise self-efficacy. One participant, whose mother was the mentor, described the increased internal belief in facing challenges due to the mentor's ability to offer a perspective that the mentee was not the only individual facing the problem. Beyond a perspective, participants indicated that knowing a

mentor faced some of their same challenges, even those that, according to one participant, "seemed very daunting and almost impossible," gave them the confidence that if someone else could face the challenge, so could they. One participant, a hair stylist, who had not used a mentor, believed having a mentor could have helped at the start of the business to deal with many different challenges since the mentor had "also started out standing behind a chair."

Encourager and connector. One common pattern among the participants was that mentors increased mentees' internal belief in their ability to face challenges by being an encourager and connector by using feedback. This supports Machida and Schaubroeck's (2011) conclusion that a mentor's encouragement increases a person's self-efficacy. A mentor can increase a mentee's ability to face challenges because mentors "understand what it is like to own it all and have it all on their shoulders." Some participants responded to the question by asking, "What would a mentor do in this situation?" The mentor builds up the novice entrepreneur using an emotional connection by reminding the novice entrepreneur that the mentor had similar experiences. One participant described the connectedness as, "A mentor opens up a novice's eyes, giving a heads up as to what to expect because the mentor has been through a lot of the obstacles already; it's like having a yield sign or a yellow caution light." The findings contradict Dempsey and Jennings' (2014) conclusion that women entrepreneurs have low self-efficacy because they receive less success and more failure feedback from mentors.

Some participants answered the self-efficacy question with a stance indicating a preference for a female mentor. For example, a mentored participant claimed, "Women are different from men and women handle things differently and they internalize things in a different manner, so having another woman to vent to and give encouragement is very important." This response is similar to Kelley et al. (2014) who recommended female mentors take other females

across their perceived hurdles. Dunbar and Kinnersley (2011) supported the stance that women prefer a female mentor by their conclusion that a mentor's gender has a direct impact on the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

Cheerleader was another term given by a non-mentored participant to describe the encouragement a mentor can give to enhance an entrepreneur's self-efficacy saying, "It's very hard when the fire is raging for women to be their own cheerleader and so it's important to have someone a woman entrepreneur can reach out to." Many participants viewed establishing a mentoring relationship as enhancing self-efficacy by the mentor's encouragement, cheering them on even during times when they felt overwhelmed or thought they were heading for failure, due to the connectedness the entrepreneur felt with a mentor.

Objectivity. A final pattern concerning the enhancement of a mentee's self-efficacy was the mentor's ability to give an entrepreneur objectivity in dealing with challenges. According to one participant, a mentor is able to help a novice entrepreneur see a situation in "black and white in order to avoid pitfalls." A mentor can help a novice entrepreneur increase the ability to face challenges by showing how to look at a formidable situation, then break it down into smaller steps in order to successfully accomplish the task. Participants stated that they often felt overwhelmed during their first year in business, and a mentor could guide them objectively better organize their schedule, show them things that really mattered and things that are not necessarily important.

Summary of Theme 2. Theme 2 also addressed the first central research question, RQ1. Theme 2 dealt specifically with the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs as to whether they believed a mentee's self-efficacy is enhanced through establishing a mentoring relationship. Although most of the participants believed a mentor could increase a mentee's self-efficacy, 36%

of those without a mentor believed that having a mentor would have had no effect on their self-efficacy. None-the-less, the majority of the participants stated that mentors increase women entrepreneurs' self-efficacy by encouraging them and by being a connector to help mentees face challenges. Yu and Chen (2016) posited there is a positive relationship between entrepreneurs' self-efficacy and innovative performance. Prior findings also show a heavy reliance on self-efficacy for aspiring entrepreneurs as they faced challenges (Bickel, 2014; Bullough & Renko, 2013). Another way cited by participants that a mentor could enhance a mentee's ability to face challenges was to help them face challenges objectively, breaking down problems into steps, then taking a step at the time to resolve a problem.

Theme 3: Barriers

Another major theme that emerged from participants' responses to the interview was asking those who used a mentor to describe any barriers they had to overcome in establishing a mentoring relationship. Barnir (2014) maintained women entrepreneurs are often at a disadvantage compared men because of perceived barriers. Half of the participants that used a mentor stated that they did not believe they had any barriers. The researcher also asked non-mentored participants to discuss any barriers they perceived that prevented them from establishing a mentoring relationship. Several non-mentored participants began their response to the barrier question by indicating that they never considered mentoring as an option when starting their business venture. It never occurred to some, for others, they did not know at the time it was something they needed to do. In many ways, a novice entrepreneur's lack of knowledge that mentoring is an option is a barrier. Other barriers raised by the participants ranged from not knowing where to find a mentor or believing no one else in the area was

entering their field, inability to find someone they could trust, avoiding becoming a competitor with the mentor's business, to wanting to launch a business on their own.

Lack of knowledge and availability. The most common response from the non-mentored participants was that one major barrier that prevented them from establishing a mentoring relationship was they did not know where to start to find a mentor. Even in a relatively large city like Charleston, many of the participants stated they still felt isolated, believing that they had to make major decisions alone. This supports Xavier et al.'s (2012) claim that feeling isolated is a barrier to establishing a mentoring relationship. Some of the participants, now seasoned wedding professionals, said that in hindsight, it was ironic that they felt there was not an opportunity to establish a mentoring relationship. They either did not know anyone to ask to mentor them or thought a mentor would not be readily available. A few participants, who did not begin their venture in Charleston, but started their business in a smaller town, stressed in their response that location was a major factor in their inability to find someone available to mentor them. This seems to indicate that regardless of the size of the city, knowledge of where to find a mentor is a barrier.

No one else is doing what the novice is doing. One response given often to why participants did not seek to establish a mentoring relationship was the belief that no one else had a business like theirs or was doing exactly what they were planning to do. This response corresponds with Fielden and Hunt's position (2011) that many entrepreneurs believe their business is unique. Participants who gave this response included entrepreneurs providing traditional wedding services such as cake bakers, wedding planners, and caterers. They sometimes clarified their response by mentioning that did not know anyone in their line of business, or did not feel close enough to anyone to ask specific questions about their venture.

Trust and fear issues. According to many participants, one of the biggest barriers to overcome in order to enter a mentoring relationship was finding someone to trust. This was also one of the main arguments from other researchers who maintained the mentee must have respect for the mentor and believe the mentor wanted the protégé to succeed (Bean & Kroth, 2011; Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). The trust issue appeared to be a formidable challenge for many of the participants. Novice entrepreneurs and mentors must overcome the trust barrier. Augustine-Shaw and Funk (2013) maintained a leader must develop a trusting and safe environment in order to establish a mentoring relationship. Many of those interviewed mentioned the difficulty of finding a mentor they felt comfortable with and someone they could trust with their business ideas. Often, when asked about barriers to establishing a mentoring relationship, the participants said they believed finding a mentor would have been difficult because a mentor might have been hesitant to trust them enough to share proprietary information and business secrets.

Other participants divulged that they feared a mentor could purposely lead them in the wrong direction, attempt to sabotage their business, or steal their business plan. One of the initial steps some participants who used a mentor said they had to overcome was getting past the fear that they would mess up. They did not want to disappoint their mentor and feared they might if things did not go well. Other fears participants mentioned were the fear of rejection when asking someone to be their mentor, the fear that they would not be able to take the mentor's criticism, and the entrepreneurs' insecurity at the launch of the business.

Mentee potentially becomes the competitor. There appeared to be a consensus among many of the participants that establishing a mentoring relationship could eventually lead to the mentee becoming a competitor to the mentor. Mentoring involves trusting someone enough to

share sensitive information, even when the mentor knows the mentee could potentially become a competitor. However, many of the study's participants strongly voiced that training the competition was one barrier because many women in the wedding industry career fields are, according to one woman, "kind of secretive and don't love to share what they know." Many of the novice entrepreneurs interviewed felt that asking someone in their field to be a mentor would be an intrusion in each other's business resulting in a conflict of interest for both parties. Linney (2000) maintained the possibility that a barrier to establishing a mentoring relationship was that an entrepreneur might fear rejection by a mentor. This research supported that belief with participants believing potential mentors would not be willing to "just hand over their handbook" to them and might reject their request for mentoring and probably not be willing to "even let them in the door."

Some of the participants remembered that when they were starting their business, they did not want the competition to know what they were doing. Although the competition might have been willing to be a mentor, many novice entrepreneurs feared using experienced entrepreneurs because they might use their ideas for their own business. One female entrepreneur stated what many interviewees alluded to, the market is saturated and cutthroat, and as a new entrepreneur, "new entrepreneurs need a mentor that they can tell every great idea to." Nonetheless, though many of the participants believed in the value of establishing a mentoring relationship, fear of competition prevented many of them from moving forward in finding a mentor.

Desire to go solo. A final common barrier in establishing a mentoring relationship expressed by many of the interviewed women was the need to prove that they could successfully start a business on their own. Even though a novice entrepreneur could avoid pain by having a

mentor, many expressed their desire of wanting to prove they could do it on their own. Tolar (2012) found that one-third of all female entrepreneurs wanted to show they had a personal resolve to be successful on their own. They wanted to do it their way, especially if there was the possibility that the mentor might try to deter them from their core vision and the reason they started the business. A few participants described this barrier as "hardheadedness." Although participants confessed that having a mentor gave them the possibility of making less mistakes, they wanted to "learn from their own mistakes on the battle lines."

Summary of Theme 3. The research addressed Research Question 2 (RQ2) about the barriers women entrepreneurs experience in establishing a mentoring relationship, with theme 3. Half of the participants who had a mentor expressed that they did not have any barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. This might have been because they already knew their mentor either as a family member or as a close friend. For the non-mentored participants, not knowing where to begin to find a mentor was one of the largest barriers. In addition, many of the women entrepreneurs said they thought the venture they were going to pursue was so unique that no one would be able to guide them. Another barrier was a lack of trust, believing that mentors might not have the mentees' best interests in mind and would either take their business ideas to use as their own or mislead the novice entrepreneurs toward the wrong path. The issue of trust related directly to another barrier, the cutthroat nature of many small business owners who viewed each other as competitors. This competitive view results in a hesitancy of an established business' willingness to mentor a novice entrepreneur. Finally, some participants confessed that one barrier was their own hardheadedness. They expressed a desire to prove that they could be successful without any assistance from a mentor.

Theme 4: Positive Outcomes of Mentoring

There are many positive outcomes for entrepreneurs who establish a mentoring relationship including increasing their likelihood of success (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; Ncube & Wasburn, 2010; St-Jean & Audet, 2012. To explore further this concept, the researcher asked participants who had established a mentoring relationship in what ways they believed establishing a mentoring relationship improved their business success, enhanced organizational growth, and influenced their leadership development. The researcher asked a similar question to the women entrepreneurs participating in the interview, but phrased the question in terms of if they had been able to establish a mentoring relationship in what ways did they believe it would have improved their business success, enhanced their organizational growth, and influenced their leadership ability. Both groups of participants gave insightful responses.

Improved business success. Participants cited many different positive outcomes of establishing a mentoring relationship relating to improving the success of their business including helping with daily operations, gaining confidence, avoiding making the same errors made by the mentor, faster path to success, and increased networking. Of the 22 participants interviewed, 41% said that one positive outcome from a mentoring relationship would be having someone help them learn the ropes of running a business because a manual cannot teach novice entrepreneurs everything they need to know when it comes to the day to day business operations or problem solving. A participant who had used a mentor stated, "the difficulty knowing what to worry about or even think about" without having a mentor who had already gone through the issues of running a business. This participant added, "Not having a mentor would have caused a lot of problems with some of the bridal dress orders." Participants who did not use a mentor often cited that they wished they had used a mentor to tell them the ins and outs of business

regulations for small business owners, how to create a website, the procedure for applying for their LLC, and a host of other day-to-day things they needed to do in order to be successful. In other words, a mentor serves as a catalyst for mentees to get them to think of new ways to solve problems and create ideas (Waldman & Bass, 1991). Without a mentor, participants recounted how they had to do a lot of "navigating on their own" after discovering that the internet does not provide an entrepreneur with a checklist or manual of everything required for a new venture's success.

Another positive aspect of mentoring that improved business success was a novice entrepreneur gaining more confidence and an increased level of comfort due to establishing a mentoring relationship. A common reply from the participants was that a mentor could give an entrepreneur more confidence and comfort by assuring mentees they were heading in the right direction. Participants without a mentor discussed how comforting it would have been for them to have a mentor when they started their business to answer questions because a mentor would have already traveled the path successfully. In addition, the non-mentored participants said how they had self-doubts in the beginning of launching their business and establishing a mentoring relationship would have diminished that fear of failure. Some mentored participants said that their mentor would not let them doubt themselves, but instead, encouraged them to put their fears aside.

Mentors are role models not only in what they have done successfully, but can also show their mentees what obstacles to avoid in order for the mentee to become more successful. One participant recalled the mentor stating, "Here are some things not to learn the hard way. Don't try this method, it doesn't work." Another participant recounted a similar mentoring experience. The participant said, "Based on the mentor's experiences, including the wrongs of the mentor, an

avoidance of those same mistakes was advantageous." When a novice entrepreneur has a mentor, there is access to the mentor's experiences, including what worked and did not work for the mentor.

Many participants who did not use a mentor regretted it because they said they would have arrived faster to their current level of business success if they had established a mentoring relationship. When entrepreneurs are on their own, they are "the sole owners and must try everything on their own" slowing down the path toward success. According to one participant, "Starting a business from scratch without a mentor was a slower process because everything was self-taught." The solo effort often leads to entrepreneurs to spin their wheels. Whereby, a mentor could help mentees find traction in the business sooner. A mentor could help novice entrepreneurs to network by referring them to other contacts that might be beneficial to the entrepreneur. These contacts might include connecting the entrepreneur to people who are specialists in things the novice is struggling with like marketing, keeping the books, or creating a website.

Enhanced company growth. When participants responded to the question, about ways they believed establishing a mentoring relationship enhances organizational growth, many of them gave some of the same responses they offered about business success and mentoring. The repeated concepts they often mentioned included more confidence, increased speed of growth, and not making the same mistakes as the mentor. The participants also elaborated on these concepts, giving more details about how they believed a mentoring relationship would enhance their company's growth such as better ways to spend their advertising dollars and how to stay focused on why they started their business in the first place.

One area mentioned by the non-mentored participants focused on how a mentor could have helped them avoid spending money needlessly in order to grow. When speaking of their mistakes, many participants spoke about money spent needlessly and how wasteful some of their investments in advertisements and equipment had turned out. Instead of trying by trial and error to find out where to spend their advertising dollars, a mentor could help a mentee know where to invest advertising dollars and what markets to target. One participant summed it up as, "the first year in business a ton of money was spent in marketing doing things to try and bring business in the door, but it didn't." Many participants believed that a mentor would have enhanced their company's growth by the mentors sharing their experiences. Participants desired their mentors to tell them what worked and what did not work in order to spend money for marketing and advertising wisely.

Another positive outcome of mentoring related to organizational growth that several participants mentioned was a mentor's ability to help novice entrepreneurs stay focused on areas where they are excelling. According to one participant, "A mentor helps a person stay focused, because an entrepreneur might have 50 ideas, but should only focus on one or two of them." A mentor should make mentees aim high by motivating them, but at the same time not allow them to deter from the core vision.

Developing leadership ability. The researcher asked participants how establishing a mentoring relationship either influenced their leadership development if they had used a mentor, or how they believed it would have influenced their leadership development had they been able to establish a mentoring relationship. Once again, the most common response to this question given by the participants dealt with increasing their confidence in their leadership ability, including giving them more courage to lead. The other trends noted for this question were for the

female entrepreneurs to mention more humility and kindness, an increase in certain leadership skills, and learning how to empower their own followers.

Eight participants stated that establishing a mentoring relationship would give them more confidence in their leadership development. Shek and Lin's (2015) assertion that mentoring is an integral part of leadership development supports this finding. Even the participants who stated they were already strong leaders also said a mentor would have given them more confidence to know how to handle certain situations in what they were doing. A mentored participant said that a mentor was a role model in leading because "mentored entrepreneurs could walk into a situation with their shoulders held back and head held high, showing no fear walking into any situation." Mentors lead by example to give their mentees more confidence.

One leadership trait many participants mentioned was that mentoring could enhance an individual's ability to lead with humility and grace. Participants with a mentor mentioned this trait the most. They stated that their mentor did not act more superior or walk over people, but was very humble. One mentored participant recalled the mentor saying, "Mentors put their pants on the same way as everyone else, one leg at the time." The humbleness trait was also expressed as learning from their mentor not to ever ask someone else to do a job they would not be willing to do. The humbleness modeled by the mentor also taught the novice entrepreneur to lead with kindness. For example, one participant learned from the mentor to thank employees every day and show appreciation that they are a part of the entrepreneur's life.

Other participants mentioned the ability to learn and develop essential leadership skills from a mentor. Learning to communicate better was an essential leadership skill that some participants stated a mentoring relationship could help develop. This included the act of listening to followers. Other participants stated that mentoring helped them with their organizational

skills. Bamiatzi et al. (2015) stated that many women entrepreneurs, especially those leading with a transformational style of leadership, found it difficult to empower their employees. Fortunately, one skill participants mentioned that a mentoring relationship would enhance was teaching a leader how to empower followers. One individual said having a mentor, "would have been much better earlier on because of not knowing how to delegate responsibilities and the overwhelming urge to control every single aspect of the business." Establishing a mentoring relationship could develop mentees' leadership ability by teaching that it is permissible to give followers the freedom to succeed, even with the knowledge that sometimes the follower might fail.

Summary of Theme 4. Three related areas of mentoring were address by theme 4. The results from theme 4 provided insight to the central research question, RQ3, regarding the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on whether establishing a mentoring relationship improves entrepreneurs' chance of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. In regards to business success, both sets of participants stated that mentors could help with the ins and outs of running a business, including knowing particular business regulations and day-to-day operations. Many non-mentored participants remarked that they wished they had established a mentoring relationship so they did not have to learn everything on their own. Mentors also gave their mentees more confidence of success in their business and served as a role model in what mistakes to avoid. Topics mentioned for ways a mentor could assist in organizational growth were the mentor guiding the novice entrepreneur in where to market and how to spend money wisely on advertising. According to participants, mentors help their mentees develop their leadership ability by giving them more confidence and courage to lead, including guiding them to lead with humility and grace. In addition, participants mentioned

other specific ways mentors could assist in leadership development including enhancing their mentees' listening skills, improving their organizational skills, and developing the ability to delegate responsibilities by empowering followers.

Theme 5: Leadership Style

The conceptual theories grounding the researcher's questions on leadership style were based on transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1999; Bass, 1985), and Blanchard et al. (1985) situational leadership theory. The research asked each participant who had a mentor nine questions about their mentor's leadership style based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) work. The researcher followed those questions by asking the participants the same nine questions to determine how they led followers. Four of the questions corresponded to leading with a transformational leadership, three to a transactional leadership, and two inferred a laissez-fair style of leadership. The purpose of asking these questions was to determine if the leadership style of the participant's mentor affected the mentee's leadership style, one of the study's central research questions. Furthermore, the researcher asked the participants who did not engage in mentoring the same nine questions about their leadership style in order to compare the leadership style of those mentored to those without a mentor to determine any effect a mentor might have on an entrepreneur's leadership style. The findings supported the claims of prior studies that styles of leadership are not mutually exclusive, but most leaders lead with both a transformational and transactional style of leadership depending on their situation (Bass, 1985,1985a; Yammarino, 1993).

Comparing leadership styles of mentors with their mentee. There were eight participants who had claimed to have established a mentoring relationship; however, one entrepreneur met with a mentor only one time. For the seven participants who had established a

lengthy mentoring relationship, all of the women entrepreneurs said they believed their mentor affected their leadership style. This is quite possibly because the mentor matched the leadership style used to the degree of readiness to the novice entrepreneur in accordance to situational leadership theory (Blanchard et al., 1985). The participant who met a mentor only once did not believe the mentor had an effect on the participant's leadership style. These results help answer central research question, RQ4, about a mentor's leadership style affecting the mentee's leadership style.

When the research asked the participants the nine questions based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) work, 79% of the responses were the same for both the mentor's leadership style questions and the corresponding questions asked about the entrepreneur's leadership style. For example, the researcher asked the participants if their mentor kept track of their mistakes and then asked a corresponding question asking if they kept track of their followers' mistakes. If the participant responded to both questions with the same reply, the researcher counted the responses as the same.

Transformational leadership. Questions 9 and 11, subparts a, c, e and g, were designed to indicate whether the mentor and participant respectively led with a transformational-style leadership. On only one question, 9g, did one participant answer "no" to a question designed to indicate whether the mentor led with a transformational style of leadership. This supports one of the grounding theories of the study that mentors lead with transformational leadership to motivate their followers to do more than expected by inspiring, influencing, intellectually stimulating them, and providing individual treatment (Bass, 1985). Likewise, only one of the mentored women answered "no" to question 11c. Based on the participants' responses, 93.75% of the questions had the same response, giving the impression that the mentor's leadership style

affected these women entrepreneurs to lead with a transformational leadership style. On question 9a, the question about identifying with the mentor because the mentor individually influenced the mentee, one mentored participant answered with "definitely," while another responded how awful it would have been if the reply was "no." Some participants elaborated on 9e, a question concerning the mentor stimulating them intellectually, stating how their mentor would explain in detail how to accomplish a task. The only mentored participant who gave an extended response for question 9g about the mentor giving individual consideration was the participant who only met with a mentor one time. That participant expressed surprise that someone was willing to take the time, free of charge, to invest in helping someone to be successful.

When it came to answering the transformational-style leadership questions about how the participants led their followers, some participants qualified their yes/no responses. Responding to question 11a about individually influencing their followers, one participant planned to "operate in such a way that the people working in the company would be treated fairly." Another mentored participant stated that when it comes to being a good role model for followers, the leaders' mindset should be to live as if someone is always watching their actions. The inspiring question, 11c, had several additional comments including that inspiring followers is a "big deal for women," and "if entrepreneurs quit dreaming, they are in trouble." One participant confessed that inspiring followers could justify any pain a leader might have to endure. However, the one participant who did not have a desire to inspire followers defended the response by saying there was a line between followers' professional and personal life that a leader should not cross. This participant did not want to get so personal with the followers to care about their future dreams. Replying further to question 11e, concerning stimulating followers intellectually, some participants added how important it is to respect followers' opinions while giving them new

perspectives. The mentor should not give unsolicited advice, but should explain the reason for doing something a different way.

Transactional leadership. The researcher also asked questions, 9 and 11, subparts b, d, and f to determine if a mentor and an entrepreneur also led at times with a transactional leadership style. The participants' responses to how their mentor led and how they led based on these questions only matched 67% of the time. Furthermore, while all of the mentored participants stated "yes" to question 11b, and only one said "no" to question 11c, only 25% said "yes" to question 11f. Therefore, based on the first two transactional style questions, the entrepreneurs were likely to lead at times using a transactional style of leadership; however, the final transactional-based question had only 25% answering "yes".

Similar to the transformational-style leadership questions, participants often gave details to explain their answer to the transactional-style leadership questions. Question 9b dealt with whether the entrepreneurs' mentor provided them with any reward or recognition upon accomplishing a goal. No one mentioned a financial or tangible reward. However, nearly half of the mentored participants recalled receiving their recognition in the form of an email or verbal appreciation that they found very encouraging. Some of the participants were not certain if their mentor kept track of their mistakes. If they did keep track of their mistakes, the mentor did not make them aware of it. One participant said the only time the mentor brought up any past mistakes was as a reminder of "that time X happened, when Y was done, and so this time maybe think about doing Z for a different outcome." One participant clearly indicated how the mentor's style influenced leadership development by claiming, "By the mentor not keeping track of mistakes, it is a personal reminder to not be so harsh on employees."

When answering equivalent transactional-style leadership questions about how the participants led their followers, some of those mentored explained further. In the same fashion as the mentors, none of the participants gave a financial reward to their followers for accomplishing a goal. Instead, as they explained in question 11b, they gave a phone call or email, or gave some comment to encourage them to "keep plugging away." Very few commented on question 11d, but many participants gave insightful comments on 11f about keeping track of their followers' mistakes. Although almost all said they did not keep track of their followers' mistakes, the few who said "yes" explained it was "human nature to remember the mistakes as examples for the future." That is, they kept track of their followers' mistakes only so the followers could learn from their mistakes; afterwards, they would "drop it, move forward, and let it go."

Laissez-faire leadership. The final two questions on leadership style dealt with leading with a laissez-faire style. For these two questions, the participants' response about themselves and their mentor's leadership style agreed on 57% of the questions. Of the seven participants with a long term mentoring relationship, there was only a 21% rate of response indicating they led with a laissez-faire leadership style. This indicated that these mentored participants hardly ever led with a laissez-faire leadership style.

One participant stated that the mentor was "always looking for ways to improve;" while another said, the mentor was "always a fix-it kind of guy," and another added that the mentor would, "sometimes do it just for the sake of change," in response to question 9h, the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" question. In response to question 9i, the question inquiring if the mentor took the attitude that however the mentee did the job was OK with the mentor, one participant stated that the mentor was often harsh to indicate that it was not OK with the mentor. One participant that said, "yes," actually defended a "no" answer because the participant's mentor gave

guidelines to follow, but as long as the participant did the job "ethically and with good character"
it was OK with the mentor.

The responses for the laissez-faire style leadership questions, 11h and 11i, where the
participants reflected on how they led their followers yielded several insights. Many participants
with a mentor believed there was always room for improvement. Entrepreneurs should always be
looking for better and more efficient ways to do things. One participant expressed it by the
phrases, "Entrepreneurs don't have to be the best. They just have to be better than last week."
Even when something was not broken, several women stated that they were constantly looking at
the entire picture and trying to figure out a better way to make it work, even if it was only a
slight tweak to their current methods. Although most of the participants took a strong opposition
to the last question, 11i, some answered the question with "yes", but also gave a caveat. The
participants who gave a strong "no" answer followed it with the notion that ultimately they were
the ones who would be held accountable, so it would not be OK for their followers to do the job
however they wished. On the other hand, the caveat given by those answering, "yes," was that
they trusted their followers and had empowered them. Nonetheless, most of these participants
implied that if their followers made mistakes, it would not be OK with them.

Leadership questions for those without a mentor. The research also asked the
fourteen participants who did not establish a mentoring relationship the same leadership style
questions based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) research to determine their leadership style. The
researcher then compared the results with the results of mentored participants to determine if
mentoring affects an entrepreneur's leadership style.

Transformational leadership. Based on the four transformational-style leadership
questions from interview question 18, subparts a, c, e, and g, almost all of the participants

answered "yes" to every question. Only twice did someone answer "no" to any of the four questions. This indicated that the transformational style questions responses were almost identical for both groups of participants. This result supported other research indicating that women entrepreneurs tend to lead most often using a transformational style of leadership (Moore, 2011; Rosener, 1990).

Many of the participants followed their initial responses to the transformational-style leadership questions with supporting comments. For question 18a, when asked if they individually influence their followers by being a good role model, only one participant replied, "no." The typical response was summed it up as, "Totally believe in modeling, practicing what is preached, walking the talk." Others responded similarly, stressing that because leaders are placing demands on followers the followers have the ability to model the leader's strong work ethic by seeing the leader performing tasks harder and better first. Many of the participants elaborated on question 18c, with 100% saying "yes," when asked about inspiring their followers emotionally to reach their dreams. One participant gave the advice, "There is nothing individuals cannot do if they believe that they can do it first and foremost. When people stop believing they can do it, they might as well just go home." Others emphasized the importance of inspiring their followers by encouraging them not to let fear overwhelm them, and one woman added the desire for followers to "follow their dreams, live out their truth, and their reality." Only one participant answered "no" to question 18e about stimulating followers intellectually by imparting new perspectives. The consensus was that in the wedding industry, something is always changing. According to one entrepreneur, "Keeping up with the changes is a challenge for everybody." Participants generally agreed that they were always looking for a better way to do things. There was also a common twist offered by many of the participants to this question. Many of the

participants added that because they empowered their followers, the followers were just as likely to be the individuals to come up with a new way of doing things. The final transformational-style question, 18g, about striving to give followers individual consideration and personal attention, was met with responses to indicate that everybody is different, so it is important to let each person know that they are valued by the leader.

      Transactional leadership. Analyzing the responses to the transactional questions for the non-mentored participants, results were again almost identical to the results from the participants who had a mentor. All of the participants from both groups answered "yes" to question b. Question d had an 88% "yes" from the mentored entrepreneurs, with a 79% "yes," just slightly lower, from the non-mentored participants. For the final transformation-style leadership question about keeping track of their followers' mistakes, 43% of the non-mentored participants claimed that they kept track of their followers' mistakes, as compared to only 25% of the mentored participants who answered "yes" to that question.

      The non-mentored participants often clarified their responses to the transactional-style leadership questions. For question 18b, participants definitely believed in giving their followers recognition to let them know they appreciated them. One entrepreneur compared the approach to "raising children, to compliment them for a job well done." The positive reinforcement and instant gratification, usually verbal or via an email, should make the follower want to work harder for the entrepreneur. Two participants added a similar comment to question 18d about making it clear to their followers what to expect when they reached their performance goals. They maintained how difficult this aspect of leadership was in entrepreneurship because different things motivate different people. The question participants stated was the most interesting was18f when asked about keeping track of their followers' mistakes. Some responded that they

wrote down their employees' mistakes and the list became a part of the employees' files. However, most participants said they only wrote down the mistake and confronted their employee with their error in order to prevent them from making the same error again. Many of the participants maintained that the only reason they kept track of their followers' mistakes was to push for improvement instead of being condemning.

       Laissez-faire leadership. Finally, for the two questions designed to indicate a laissez-faire style of leadership, the one "yes" response from the non-mentored participants closely compares to the two "yes" responses from those who had used a mentor. Therefore, once again, the results for those with and without a mentor regarding leadership style are nearly identical. However, a few of the participants, instead of giving a "yes or no" response, gave an "it depends" response to the questions stating that it depended on the situation whether they typically believed "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

      One general attitude for question 18h, the question about believing that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it," was expressed as, "If individuals know that something works every single time and they believe in it, let it ride. But, if something in the heart tells the person it can be made better, go outside the lines and fix it." Most of the participants said they were open to explore new ways of doing things because, as one participant put it, "liked to move with the times and kind of switch things up every now and then or otherwise boredom might set in." Perhaps the most telling response indicating the significance of being open to new ideas even when things seemed to be going smoothly was, "If individuals find themselves having not stressed about an idea for a while, it is probably something they need to gut and redo to stay ahead; if they do not they are going to go bankrupt." The final question, 18i, had some strong responses from the participants about however their followers did their job was not OK with them. Most indicated that their

followers knew the rules and understood the job's expectations including what was acceptable. Comments indicated that their followers' actions and job performance was a reflection on the entrepreneur, so best practices and non-negotiables must be met every time. One participant remarked, "No desire to answer 10,000 questions every time employees walk through the door, just want them to follow the timelines and rules."

Summary of Theme 5. This theme provided information to address Research Question 4, the central research question about how a mentor's leadership style affected the mentee's leadership style. Based on the results of the nine questions the researcher asked both participants who had established a mentoring relationship and those that did not use a mentor, there appeared to be no difference in the responses given by the two groups. Although all the participants who had a mentor stated they believed their mentor affected their leadership style, the percentage of the mentored participants who answered the questions that they lead with a transformational style, transactional style, and laissez-faire style were nearly identical to the percentage of non-mentored participants. This led the researcher to conclude that although the mentored participants stated that their mentor affected their leadership style, there was no noticeable difference in the percentages of how they led compared to the non-mentored participants.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of this research encompassed all the data gathered. Furthermore, the researcher did not include any data from outside the study, limiting the findings to the data collected from the 22 participants interviewed. This research answered four central research questions. The first question, RQ1, explored the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. Using the conceptual frameworks of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen, 2012; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969) and Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory,

the researcher assumed the best way to predict whether a novice entrepreneur actually found or looked for a mentor would be based on the entrepreneur's positive attitude on establishing a mentoring relationship. Both groups of participants, the group who had used a mentor and the group who did not, had positive attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. The participants cited many positive advantages of using a mentor including having someone to guide them through difficult situations, help them solve problems, teach them instead of having to learn by trial and error, and to act as a sounding board to provide feedback. Because the participants, including those who did not use a mentor, expected positive outcomes from a mentoring relationship, it is very likely that other novice entrepreneurs may have a desire to establish a mentoring relationship knowing the positive outcomes. According to many participants, one positive outcome of mentoring is increasing a woman entrepreneur's self-efficacy. Wood and Bandura (1989) stated an entrepreneur's future success is derived from the level of self-efficacy. Dempsey and Jennings (2014) maintained that when female entrepreneurs see someone with similar characteristics succeed it increases the belief in their ability to do well. Yu and Chen (2016) posited a positive relationship between an entrepreneur's innovative performance and self-efficacy. This research supports those conclusions since the majority of the participants claimed that a mentor's encouragement would increase a mentee's self-efficacy when facing challenges.

Another central research question answered was Research Question 2, exploring barriers women entrepreneurs experience in establishing a mentoring relationship. This is an important issue to address because women entrepreneurs are often at a disadvantage because of barriers (Barnir, 2014). Of the mentored participants, some stated they did not have any barriers. However, the majority of the participants mentioned a wide variety of barriers that hinder

women entrepreneurs from finding a mentor. Understanding these barriers is a first step in finding ways to break down the barriers. The most common barrier mentioned by the participants, the same one Xavier et al. (2012) stated, was a feeling of isolation because novice entrepreneurs do not know where to find a mentor. The research also agreed with Fielden and Hunt's (2011) conclusion that many women entrepreneurs believe they are the only individuals pursuing this type of venture. Therefore, due to the uniqueness of their business, they think there is no one to mentor them. Some of the participants mentioned their inability to trust someone as a barrier to mentoring. This agreed with other research that indicated trust was essential before a mentoring relationship could develop (Bean & Kroth, 2011; Taherian & Shekarchian, 2008). This concept of trust extended into a related barrier of the unwillingness of a novice entrepreneur to approach someone as a mentor in the same career field. Some novice entrepreneurs feared a mentor intentionally leading them away from success or rejecting a mentoring request because the mentor did not want to train someone who could later become a competitor. A final barrier espoused by the research participants was similar to the conclusion of Tolar (2012) which was the desire of some women entrepreneurs to go solo in order to prove their personal resolve in the ability to launch a business without anyone's assistance.

The third central research question, RQ3, explored the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on whether establishing a mentoring relationship improves their chance of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. Participants cited many positive outcomes from establishing a mentoring relationship including a belief that a mentoring relationship could improve their chance of business success. The outcomes cited included, having someone help them learn the ropes of a business, thinking of new ideas, and avoiding the same mistakes the mentor had made in business. In short, mentors may serve as a catalyst for

mentees to advance their business success, a conclusion also made by Waldman and Bass (1991). In addition, participants mentioned the positive outcomes of using a mentor because of the potential growth of the entrepreneur's business due to the mentoring relationship giving the mentee more confidence, a better understanding where to spend money in marketing, and helping the mentee focus on areas where the business is excelling. In terms of leadership development, even those participants who claimed they were already strong leaders asserted that mentoring would give them more confidence in their leadership development. This finding supports Shek and Lin's (2015) statement that mentoring is an integral component of leadership development. The participants cited leading with humility and grace, developing organizational skills, and empowering followers, as specific areas of leadership development enhanced by establishing a mentoring relationship. The difficulty of empowering followers was an area mentioned by several participants that support the existing research (Bamiatzi et al., 2015).

The final central research question, RQ4, explored how the mentor's leadership style affected the mentee's leadership style. The research used the transformational leadership theory (Avolio & Bass, 1999; Bass, 1985) and the situational leadership theory (Blanchard et al., 1985) as the conceptual frameworks. All the participants who had established a lengthy mentoring relationship stated they firmly believed their mentor affected their leadership style. It is possible this was due to the mentors matching their leadership style to the degree of readiness of the mentees in accordance with Blanchard's et al. (1985) situational leadership theory. This research showed a very close match to how the mentors lead and how the mentees lead their followers, which showed that both led primarily with a transformational style, sometimes with a transactional style, but rarely with a laissez-faire style of leadership. This confirmed that the mentors and participants led on a leadership continuum as proposed by Avolio and Bass (1999).

When the researcher asked the participants without a mentor similar leadership questions, their results were similar to those of the mentored group. This research supported prior research (Moore, 2011; Rosener, 1990) that women entrepreneurs primarily lead using a transformational style of leadership. This research also showed that the participants also led with a transactional-style leadership instead of always with a transformational-style of leadership. This research found this was the case regardless of whether the participants had a mentor or not. Even though all the mentored participants stated their mentor affect their leadership development, the result from the leadership questions yielded almost the same responses from both groups. Therefore, it appears that the mentor might not have an effect on the leadership style of women entrepreneurs.

Applications to Professional Practice

The findings of this research are applicable with respect to the professional practice of business for many reasons. First, this research found that almost all the participants held a positive attitude on mentoring and thought mentoring was an important idea. The participants also held the view that a mentor can increase a mentee's self-efficacy. In addition, this research shed light on some of the barriers women entrepreneurs may encounter that either prevents, or makes it difficult for them, to establish a mentoring relationship. The participants believed there are many benefits for female entrepreneurs when they establish a mentoring relationship. The benefits included increasing the women entrepreneurs' probability of business success, organizational growth, and influencing leadership ability. Finally, from a biblical worldview, using Jesus' mentoring and leadership as the ultimate example, the study reinforced the importance of mentoring in respect to influencing a person's ability to lead.

Improving Business Practices

Prior studies have explored the usefulness of mentoring on the success of a novice entrepreneur (Ncube & Wasburn, 2010; Ozgen & Baron, 2007; St-Jean & Audet, 2009). The results of this research supported many of the prior advantages of mentoring. Similar to Taherian and Shekarchian (2008), this research's participants also cited that mentors guide and encourage mentees to find solutions when faced with challenges. Laukhuf and Malone (2015) maintained that mentees learn from their mentors' mistakes. Similarly, many of the participants cited learning from a mentor's past mistakes as a major advantage in establishing a mentoring relationship. This research informs future women entrepreneurs of the importance of seeking a mentor because there are often difficult times in starting a business. A mentor can assist a novice entrepreneur to guide and help solve business problems during the business' launch.

Another major advantage this research found that applies to the professional practice of business is the potential of mentoring to enhance a woman entrepreneur's self-efficacy. Wood and Bandura's (1989) social cognitive theory maintains that self-efficacy is the most effective predictor of an entrepreneur's performance. This research supported Machida and Schaubroeck's (2011) conclusion that a mentor's encouragement increases a mentee's self-efficacy. This research supports the role of a mentor as someone who can increase the mentored entrepreneur's self-efficacy, and raising a person's self-efficacy typically leads to enhanced performance. This outcome informs future women entrepreneurs of another strong reason for establishing a mentoring relationship.

A first step in understanding why over 50% of women of women entrepreneurs do not establish a mentoring relationship (Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015) is to know what women entrepreneurs state as barriers to overcome. This research found many barriers to establishing a mentoring relationship including the novice entrepreneur feeling isolated and not

knowing where to find a mentor, fear of rejection, lack of trust in a competitive business, and hardheadedness. One way to remove the isolation barrier and improve the success of novice entrepreneurs is to make them aware through articles in magazines and presentations at wedding organizations that other women entrepreneurs have experienced the same concerns. This should help eliminate the entrepreneurs' feeling of isolation. In order to break down the barrier of not knowing where to find a mentor, the researcher plans to present the results of this research to local wedding organizations, then nationally through presentations and literature, to encourage the members of these organizations to initiate and promote mentoring programs. The result should be that when novice entrepreneurs contact local wedding organizations, the organization already has established the concept and availability of mentoring. In turn, this may lessen the novice entrepreneur's fear of rejection.

The barrier of lack of trust might be the most difficult barrier to overcome. However, if the mentor and mentee form a relationship through a wedding organization, the members of the organization can hold the mentor accountable for keeping the mentee's best interest in mind. Therefore, the mentee can rest assured that the mentor will not steal any business ideas or lead the mentee down the wrong path. Furthermore, even if a novice entrepreneur knows the barriers, and how to break down the barriers, the individual might still desire to go solo. This might especially be the case if the novice entrepreneur does not perceive a financial benefit to establishing a mentoring relationship.

It is also possible to eliminate the barrier of hardheadedness. According to statements from many of the participants, mentors are effective in guiding their mentee toward success faster and with a higher rate of business growth. In addition, the evidence gained from the participants, many of them seasoned entrepreneurs in the wedding industry, showed that

establishing a mentoring relationship could make novice entrepreneurs more efficient by a

mentor modeling what mistakes to avoid and how they should spend money in marketing and

advertising. This reassurance of quicker success using a mentor might influence even the

hardheaded novices. In essence, breaking down barriers, regardless of which barrier is causing

the novice entrepreneur to resist establishing a mentoring relationship, could lead to greater

business success.

 Two barriers, entrepreneurs feeling isolated and believing their business was too unique

to have a mentor with experience in that field, agreed with current literature (Fielden & Hunt,

2011; Xavier et al., 2012). The researcher found some of the non-mentored participants, in

careers such as cake bakers and wedding planners, who held the belief that their business was too

unique to find a mentor with experience in their field. The researcher posits that in order for

novice women entrepreneurs not to feel isolated, the uniqueness notion must be dispelled.

Novice women entrepreneurs should feel there is a mentor available that can help them improve

their business. One method to dispel the uniqueness notion is if a city has an organization formed

for the benefit of sharing information for a particular industry, such as the wedding industry, to

encourage the organization to invite novice members to join instead of limiting the membership

to only well-established businesses.

 Many of the non-mentored participants gave lack of trust in a mentor as one of the

barriers that caused them not to choose to engage a mentor when starting a business. Developing

a climate of trust was one of Augustine-Shaw and Funk's (2013) tenets for establishing a

mentoring relationship. Another barrier participants gave for not establishing a mentoring

relationship agreed with Linney (2000), who posited novice entrepreneurs' fear that the person

they ask to mentor them would deny the mentoring request. One reason for this fear was that the

mentee might potentially become the mentor's competitor. One way to improve this business practice is to ensure that the mentee and mentor are in related businesses instead of the same business. For example, if the mentee is a caterer, the mentor could be a cake baker. Although both careers are in the wedding industry creating food items, these businesses are not the same. Musicians and disc jockeys would be another example of two related industries, where one entrepreneur could mentor the other without fear of competition. Instead of becoming competitors, the companies could network to help each other gain more customers. When a client reserves the services of the musician for the ceremony, the client might seek the musician's recommendation for a disc jockey, or vice versa. Once barriers are broken, this should lead to improvements in the entrepreneur's business practices such as increased business success, organizational growth, and greater ability to lead.

Theme 4 presented some of the most practical ways to improve business practices by dealing specifically with how mentoring improves an entrepreneur's chance of business success and organizational growth. Regardless of the accessibility of information available through technology, the participants of this research maintained that a mentoring relationship is beneficial in helping a novice entrepreneur learn the ropes of running a business beyond simply reading a manual. This research informs future women entrepreneurs starting a venture that a mentor could increase their confidence of success by acting as a role model and assist them in getting to a level of success faster than going solo. Likewise, this research informs future women entrepreneurs that a mentor can help them avoid spending money needlessly in areas of marketing and advertising that the mentor had already tried with little success. Finally, this research is meaningful to improved business practice because novice entrepreneurs, although

they often have many ideas, need a mentor to help them stay focused on areas where they are

excelling and motivate them to aim high while staying true to their core vision.

Applying the Study's Findings to Leadership

This research is also meaningful with respect to leadership. Entrepreneurs need to be able

to lead, and mentoring is an integral part of leadership development (Shek & Lin, 2015).

Participants often cited that their leadership development either was enhanced by their mentor, or

would have been enhanced if they had used a mentor. Participants stated that a mentor would

increase certain leadership skills such as leading with humility and kindness, increase confidence

to lead, and the willingness to empower followers. Based on this research, establishing a

mentoring relationship potentially increases these leadership skills.

The leadership style of women entrepreneurs has been understudied (Moore et al., 2011).

Some research suggested women entrepreneurs tend to lead using a transformational style of

leadership (Moore et al., 2011; Rosener, 1990). This research supported the claim that most

women entrepreneurs lead with a transformational style. Almost all of the participants, both

those with a mentor and those without a mentor, answered questions based on Avolio and Bass'

(1999) research indicating they most often lead using a transformational leadership style. There

were also times, according to this research, that the participants lead using a transactional style.

Vera and Crossan (2004) also found that entrepreneurs often lead with a transactional style once

the firm grows and the founders begin to standardize operations.

Participants rarely answered the laissez-faire questions positively, indicating that they

rarely lead on the lower end of the Avolio and Bass' (1999) leadership continuum. The women

entrepreneurs interviewed in this survey all currently had successful businesses and were leading

primarily with a transformational and transactional style of leadership, which supported Bass'

(1995) assertion that the best leaders led with these two styles. In addition, similar to Kang et al. (2015) findings, due to the success of the participants' businesses, there seemed to be a positive relationship between the entrepreneur's innovation and the use of transformational and transactional style of leadership. By realizing the correlation between innovation and style of leadership, mentors could improve entrepreneurs' business practices and chance of success by guiding them to lead with a transformational or transactional style of leadership.

The findings on leadership style are important to the practice of business because this research supports prior studies (Bass, 1985, 1985a; Yammarino, 1993) that leaders do not lead with just one style, but typically lead with both a transformational and transactional style as the situation warrants. Mentored participants stated that their mentor affected their leadership style. This is an important finding, because if mentored participants believe a mentor affected their leadership style, it may influence future novice women entrepreneurs to believe a mentor would affect their leadership style. According to the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969), if novice entrepreneurs adopted the same attitude that a mentoring relationship would affect leadership style, they would in turn consider finding a mentor. Because very few of the participants indicated they led with a laissez-faire leadership style, this implies entrepreneurs are always looking for a better way of doing things. Participants with a mentor cited the mentor rarely led with a laissez-faire style. Because mentors are encouraging their mentee to always improve and look for better ways of performing, this should also improve the mentee's business practices. This important business implication reminds mentors to lead with transformational and transactional styles of leadership in order for mentees to improve business practices.

Biblical Framework

Within a biblical framework, the results of this research support the importance of

mentoring followers to develop business and leadership abilities. Jesus is the ultimate example of a leader and mentor. From the moment Jesus called Simon Peter, the first of the twelve disciples, Jesus began mentoring Peter with business advice. Jesus told Peter to cast the fishing net in the deep water even though Peter had been fishing without success all night. When Peter followed Jesus' advice, the catch was so large that the nets began to break and the boat started to sink under the weight of the fish (Luke 5:3-7). Jesus' mentoring advice improved Peter's business success in much the same way that this research's participants stated mentoring would help someone resolve problems and learn the details of a business.

In Matthew's account of Jesus' initial mentoring of the twelve disciples, Jesus advised them where to go, what to preach, to be on their guard, and not to be afraid (Matt. 10: 5-31). Verses from Matthew 10, along with many others (John 4:18; John 14:27; Matt. 6:34), remind Christians that Jesus did not want the disciples to be afraid. Jesus encouraged them to have confidence. This research's participants repeatedly stated that one of the primary advantages to establishing a mentoring relationship was to increase the mentee's confidence in the ability to succeed. Jesus mentored to increase the disciples' self-efficacy. One example is when Jesus walked on the water and commanded Peter to get out of the boat and walk on the water. Though people often focus on Peter's ultimate sinking because of the loss of focus, the disciple had enough confidence due to Jesus' example to take the first few steps on the water (Matt. 14:25-30). Participants stated that mentors lead by example to give their mentees more confidence. The disciples, similar to the participants, often lacked confidence to perform their duties. The disciples even questioned Jesus why they had trouble casting out demons (Matt. 17:14-19), to which Jesus replied, "Because you have so little faith" (Matt. 17:20). The disciples' lack of confidence was early in the mentoring relationship with their mentor, Jesus.

By the end of Jesus' three-year earthly ministry, Jesus had prepared the disciples for the Great Commission to continue to lead all nations to obey Jesus' commands (Matt. 28:18-20). The disciples had followed Jesus' teachings and example, and they were influenced by Jesus' mentoring and leadership. All the mentored participants remarked that their mentor influenced their leadership style. One of the most common responses from all the participants was that establishing a mentoring relationship would give them more courage to lead. One of the final acts of mentoring Jesus gave the disciples was the assurance to be with them until the end. This gave the disciples the courage they needed to carry out Jesus' final command to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20).

Recommendations for Action

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. The researcher concluded that women entrepreneurs have positive attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. Participants cited many positive outcomes from having a mentor guide a novice woman entrepreneur during the launch of a business venture. Positive outcomes included having a mentor help the novice woman entrepreneur solve problems, provide feedback, and increase self-efficacy. The researcher also explored barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. The researcher concluded that some of the common barriers for women establishing a mentoring relationship were a feeling of not knowing where to find a mentor and believing their business venture was too unique to find a mentor with similar experience. The researcher also found other barriers including women entrepreneurs lacking trust in a mentor, fear of competition by the mentor, and a desire to go solo in the business. The researcher also concluded that women entrepreneurs express a positive attitude and view on mentoring because it improves

their chance of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development. Finally, the researcher concluded that although women entrepreneurs lead on a leadership continuum, they most often lead with a transformational and transactional style of leadership. All the mentored participants maintained that their mentor's leadership style affected their leadership style. However, because the non-mentored participants in the research answered the leadership style questions, based on Avolio and Bass' (1999) study, almost identically to the mentored participants, the researcher could not conclude that the mentor had an effect on the leadership style of the women entrepreneurs.

Based on the above conclusions, the researcher recommends the following action. First, a mentoring relationship centers around two individuals, a mentor and a mentee (Ragins & Kram, 2007; Scandura & Ragins, 1993; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; St-Jean & Audet, 2009; St-Jean & Mathieu, 2015). The researcher reminds the reader of this important concept, because unlike when a researcher could disseminate findings directly to established businesses for implementation, the results of this study must reach the hands of individual novice entrepreneurs and potential mentors, the two individuals most impacted by this research.

The first logical step in implementing the findings is getting the positive results of the study into the hands of women who have a desire to launch a business. The positive outcomes of establishing a mentoring relationship include economic advantages. Mysyk (2008) maintained that mentoring is a resource for increasing an entrepreneur's business advancement. This includes increasing a novice entrepreneur's income opportunities (Shek & Lin, 2015). This research found participants believed having a mentor led them to business success faster. Several participants without a mentor maintained they would have arrived at their current level of business success sooner if they had established a mentoring relationship. Many participants

maintained that mentoring may increase their networking opportunities which may increase their business success and organizational growth. Participants also cited another economic benefit of establishing a mentoring relationship was learning from the mentor what costly mistakes to avoid. Many participants mentioned the economic advantage for the novice entrepreneur of a mentor's ability to give advice on where to spend money on advertising. This mentoring benefit prevents the mentee from wasting money on advertising avenues that have little benefit.

There are many magazines, both national and local, that focus on weddings. Although these magazines cater primarily to brides planning a wedding, these magazines would also be an avenue to present the findings to women entrepreneurs considering the wedding industry. The researcher has written for some of these magazines in the past and could approach the editors asking permission to write articles about this research. There are also local magazines in the researcher's area of Charleston that focus solely on women's issues. Someone who knows the editor of one of these local magazines has already approached the researcher to publish the findings in one of these types of magazines. There are also magazines and publications devoted to entrepreneurship where the researcher could share the findings.

Although there is a challenge in getting the findings to women entrepreneurs who want to start a business, the researcher must also provide potential mentors with the conclusions. This should be an easier task, because the researcher can give presentations to organizations devoted to helping wedding professionals. The researcher is currently a member of a wedding organization and could present the findings to this group, then branch out to other similar groups. In addition, most of the wedding professionals are also members of other specialty groups. For example, wedding photographers also typically belong to a photography organization. The researcher could also present the findings to these specialty groups.

After both the mentors and mentees understand the positive results of mentoring, they must also resolve to break down the barriers. The researcher recommends that both the mentor and the novice entrepreneur develop trust in each other and be committed to not becoming each other's competitor. One method to accomplish a non-compete environment is to encourage the mentor and mentee to be in a related field instead of the same career. In addition, regardless of how unique the novice entrepreneur's business idea, the mentor must assure the mentee that other women are also in the same business. Regardless of the potential benefits of establishing a mentoring relationship, some novice entrepreneurs have a desire to launch a business without a mentor. Therefore, part of the implementation of the study is to convince established business people not to force themselves as a mentor onto every novice woman entrepreneur.

It is also important to disseminate the findings to potential mentors to inform them that women entrepreneurs typically lead with a transformational style, sometimes with a transactional style, but rarely with a laissez-faire style of leadership. This is important because if a mentor does not also lead with a transformational or transactional style, the mentor might adversely affect the novice entrepreneur's leadership style. This research should inform a mentor to encourage, through transformational leadership, a mentee to seek out better ways of doing things in order to potentially improve business success, organizational growth, and leadership development.

Entrepreneurs do not launch a new business solely for their benefit. Instead, entrepreneurs are one of the most important actors keeping the wheels of a country's economic wheels spinning (Bullough & Renko, 2013). Therefore, the conclusions of this research go far beyond influencing just a novice women entrepreneur and a mentor. These findings also affect the growth of a community, because if a mentoring relationship results in more business success

for the novice entrepreneur and tends to grow business faster, it also has a positive effect on society (Kelley et al., 2014). This is why the researcher will also target larger organizations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce, to present the findings at their meetings and through their publications. The researcher supports Gibbs' (2014) recommendation for local business organizations to launch mentoring programs designed specifically to assist novice female entrepreneurs when starting their business. The researcher will contact the local Chamber of Commerce to arrange opportunities to share the findings at their meetings.

Furthermore, although the above steps center on the researcher's local area, most wedding professions also have national organizations. The researcher may potentially present the findings to state and national conventions at a conference or in publications. The conclusions of the research are important not only for practitioners, but also for researchers and scholars interested in entrepreneurship, mentoring, and leadership. Therefore, the researcher will also attempt to have the findings published in scholarly and business journals.

Recommendations for Further Study

Recommendations for future research include increasing the sample size, extending the research to other geographic areas, exploring the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in other industries, conducting research on medium to large businesses, asking men entrepreneurs the same interview questions, and conducting a quantitative study. One of the limitations to this research was that the researcher interviewed only 22 participants and only eight of the participants had established a mentoring relationship during the startup of their business. Therefore, one recommendation would be to increase the sample size. Future research could extend the study to other geographic areas and interview women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry in another city. There is a possibility that another geographic area's culture may be

different from the culture of Charleston, South Carolina. Culture might have an effect on the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs on establishing a mentoring relationship. Alternately, researchers could conduct research using a different, but similar sized industry, and compare their findings with the ones in this research.

The researcher chose to study women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry, where each business is usually small, in order to keep the size of all businesses approximately the same. The researcher recommends conducting a study of women entrepreneurs who lead medium to large sized firms to explore their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship. Another area for future study includes conducting a similar study of men entrepreneurs. Researchers could explore the same four central research questions and then compare the results to those of the women of the present research.

Finally, the researcher recommends conducting a quantitative study to explore further research question RQ4 about a mentor's leadership style affecting the mentee's leadership style. Although the mentored participants all maintained the mentor affected their leadership style, the non-mentored participants answered Avolio and Bass' (1999) leadership questions almost identical to the mentored participants. Therefore, the researcher could not conclude if the mentor actually affected the mentee's leadership style. One limitation was that the researcher asked participants only nine of the 80 questions from Avolio and Bass' (1999) MLQ 5X to measure the style of leadership. Furthermore, researchers could conduct a quantitative study using statistical methods in order to determine the correlation between the mentee's responses on the MLQ 5X to determine the degree of how novice entrepreneurs perceived their mentor's leadership style with its effect on their leadership style.

Reflections

Conducting the research, although challenging, was an exciting process for the researcher. The researcher had a possible bias because the researcher is also an entrepreneur and chose to interview participants operating in the wedding industry, the same industry that the researcher has worked in for 35 years. The researcher had a bias going into the research because the researcher did not establish a mentoring relationship when starting a wedding-oriented disc jockey business. Therefore, the researcher recalled personal attitudes and views about mentoring including some of the barriers preventing the researcher from establishing a mentoring relationship. However, as a well-established entrepreneur, the researcher has also had the opportunity to serve as a mentor for other disc jockeys and recalled many of the challenges encountered. For example, some of the individuals the researcher mentored later became competitors.

Another challenging aspect of the research was that participants who knew the researcher appeared more comfortable answering the researcher's questions. Participants the researcher already knew had responses to the interview questions that were freer flowing. They also provided a greater level of depth than participants the researcher did not know prior to the research.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the study was a sense of the participants' enthusiasm and enjoyment to assist in the research. The researcher initially believed there would be difficulty persuading women entrepreneurs to participant in the research. This was because the researcher conducted the interviews in May and June, two of the busiest months in the wedding industry. Despite the participants' busy schedules, very few candidates for the research refused the researcher's request to meet for a face-to-face interview. During the interview, the

researcher was pleasantly surprised how many of the respondents who had not been mentored reflected on the topic in such a thoughtful way, often stating that the questions alone gave them reason to ponder why they had not been mentored or to see the importance of mentoring someone themselves. This attitude was most evident by the many participants who stated a desire to see the results of this research.

Due to the findings of the research, the researcher has a better understanding of the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs in the wedding industry. The researcher had expected to find that the women led primarily with a transformation and transactional style of leadership and the findings supported those expectations. One of the findings that perplexed the researcher was how many of the participants believed that their business was either so unique that a mentor could not be found, or that they were otherwise all alone when they started their business. The researcher, having been in the wedding industry for 35 years, knows people in all the varied wedding businesses. Therefore, the researcher was surprised that many of the participants had no idea about who to ask to mentor them when they started their business.

A central biblical principle, as reflected in Jesus' teaching, is the responsibility to serve others. Jesus "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45). Mentoring is a method for one person to serve another as exemplified by a mentor guiding a mentee toward reaching a higher stage in life. Paul mentored Timothy and Jesus mentored the disciples. Both of these examples, Paul loving Timothy and Jesus loving the disciples, show how to put into action the Second Great Commandment of loving others (Matt. 22:39). The Bible is also replete with how mentoring leads to a mentee's growth and development. Jesus mentored the disciples throughout three year of earthly ministry taking them from a stage of fear and doubt to being able to lead others to know Jesus by following the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

This research also gave the researcher a broader understanding of leadership styles. Although the study focused on the leadership style of mentors and mentees in their business, the researcher can now apply a richer understanding of leadership styles to a personal view of evangelicalism. Transformational leadership is the ability for a leader to inspire, individually influence, stimulate intellectually, and give individual consideration. There is perhaps no greater example of this style of leadership, than to lead individuals to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the attitudes and views of women entrepreneurs regarding establishing a mentoring relationship. Women entrepreneurs face many challenges when starting a business and establishing a mentoring relationship may help them overcome many of these challenges. However, despite the advantages of mentoring, including increasing the chance of business success, organizational growth, and leadership development, over 50% of women entrepreneurs do not have a mentor when launching their business (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016; Davis, 2011; Gibbs, 2014; Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012)..

The researcher conducted the study using network sampling and interviewed 22 participants using a semi-structured interview. Eight participants used a mentor upon launching their business; the other 14 participants did not have a mentor. Overall, all the participants had a positive attitude and view of establishing a mentoring relationship, stating that mentors serve as guides, problem solvers, sounding boards, and teachers. Another cited advantage was a mentor's ability to increase the novice entrepreneur's self-efficacy by the mentor being a connector and encourager. Participants gave many economic reasons for establishing a mentoring relationship

including an increase in business success and organizational growth. A common example was the ability to learn to avoid the mentor's costly mistakes and the mentor guiding the novice entrepreneur where to spend money in marketing and advertising.

The research also explored the barriers in establishing a mentoring relationship. Although the participants espoused many barriers, the most common barriers were the feeling of not knowing where to find a mentor, lack of trust in a mentor because a mentee had a fear that the mentor would steal business ideas, fear that the mentor and mentee would become each other's competitor, and a desire to go solo. Of all the barriers mentioned, participants mentioned the barrier of trust most often. This was due to the novice's fear, especially in a competitive business such as the wedding industry, of mentors stealing a novice's ideas to increase their own business success and growth to the ultimate disadvantage of the novice entrepreneur.

The research also explored the leadership style of the entrepreneurs and the mentors. All the participants led with a transformational and transitional style of leadership. Less than 25% of the time did any of the participants lead with a laissez-faire style of leadership. In addition, all the mentored participants claimed that their mentor influenced their leadership style. However, since the mentored and non-mentored participants both answered the nine leadership-continuum questions nearly the same, the researcher could not conclude that the mentor actually had an effect on the novice entrepreneur's leadership style.

The results of this research help address a gap in the current body of literature concerning entrepreneurial mentoring. This qualitative phenomenological study of women entrepreneurs provided a further understanding of their attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship and found that an overwhelming positive attitude exists. Prior studies did not elaborate on the nature of the perceived barriers. This research provided a further exploration of

barriers novice entrepreneurs perceives prevent them from establishing a mentoring relationship. Finally, the findings found several positive outcomes of establishing a mentoring relationship including increased business success, organizational growth, and leadership development.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

1. Did you establish a mentoring relationship with a mentor when you started your business or at least within the first year of your business?

If "YES", the researcher will ask questions 2-12.

If "No", the researcher will ask questions 13-19.

2. How did you find your mentor?

3. Was your mentor male or female?

4. Was your mentor in the same career as your business?

5. In general, describe your attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship.

6. How did your mentor enhance your internal belief in your ability to face challenges?

7. Describe any barriers that you had to overcome in establishing a mentoring relationship.

8. In what ways do you believe establishing a mentoring relationship

    a. Improved your business success?

    b. Enhanced your company's growth?

    c. Influenced your leadership ability?

9. The following questions deal with how you feel about your mentor's leadership style.

    a. Did you identify with your mentor because he/she *individually influenced* you by being a good role model, who you had complete faith in?

    b. Did your mentor provide you with any reward or recognition upon accomplishing a goal?

c. Did your mentor *inspire* you emotionally to reach for your future dreams?

d. Did your mentor make it clear to you what to expect when you reached your performance goals?

e. Did your mentor *stimulate* you *intellectually* by imparting new perspectives and asking you to question the old way of doing things?

f. Did your mentor keep track of your mistakes?

g. Do you feel your mentor gave you *individual consideration* and personal attention by treating you in a way that showed he/she truly cared about you and your development?

h. Did your mentor typically believe that, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it"?

i. Did your mentor take the attitude that however you did your job was OK with him/her?

10. Do you believe your mentor affected your leadership style?

11. The following questions reflect how you lead your followers.

a. Do you try to *individually influence* your followers by being a good role model, so others can have complete faith in you?

b. Do you provide your followers with any reward or recognition upon accomplishing a goal?

c. Do you *inspire* your followers emotionally to reach for their future dreams?

d. Do you make it clear to your followers what to expect when they reach their performance goals?

e. Do you attempt to *stimulate* your followers *intellectually* by imparting new perspectives and asking them to question the old way of doing things?

  f. Do you keep track of your followers' mistakes?

  g. Do you strive to give your followers *individual consideration* and personal attention by treating them in a way that shows you truly care about them and their development?

  h. Do you typically believe that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it"?

  i. Do you take the attitude that, "however your followers do their job is OK with you?"

12. Would you recommend other novice women entrepreneurs to establish a mentoring relationship based on your mentoring experience? Why?

Answer the following questions if you did NOT have a mentor:

13. Did you ever consider finding a mentor as you started your business?

  a. If yes, what prevented you from finding one?

14. In general, describe your attitudes and views on establishing a mentoring relationship.

15. If you would have had a mentor, do you believe he/she would have enhanced your internal belief in your ability to face challenges?

16. What barriers prevented you from establishing a mentoring relationship?

17. If you had been able to establish a mentoring relationship, in what ways do you believe it would have:

  a. Improved your business success?

  b. Enhanced your company's growth?

  c. Influenced your leadership ability?

18. The following questions reflect how you lead your followers.

  a. Do you try to *individually influence* your followers by being a good role model, so others can have complete faith in you?

b. Do you provide your followers with any reward or recognition upon accomplishing a goal?

c. Do you *inspire* your followers emotionally to reach for their future dreams?

d. Do you make it clear to your followers what to expect when they reach their performance goals?

e. Do you attempt to *stimulate* your followers *intellectually* by imparting new perspectives and asking them to question the old way of doing things?

f. Do you keep track of your followers' mistakes?

g. Do you strive to give your followers *individual consideration* and personal attention by treating them in a way that shows you truly care about them and their development?

h. Do you typically believe that "if it ain't broke, don't fix it"?

i. Do you take the attitude that, "however your followers do their job is OK with you?"

19. If you could turn back time and start over in your business, would you attempt to establish a mentoring relationship?