



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCES**

**Master's Degree Short Dissertation**

**Master of Social Sciences (Clinical Psychology)**

**The construction of femininity and masculinity in the views of  
business women in Pietermaritzburg.**

Nonjabulo Prudence Shange

Student number: 208516697

Supervisor: Professor Lance Lachenicht

## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Literature on business ownership has focused mainly on the differences between male and female business owners. Other research has concentrated on how female business owners adapt in a field that is perceived to be dominated by males. There is a scarcity of research about women who own businesses and what it means to them.

**Objectives:** The aim of this study was to obtain a female perspective with regard to what it means to be a business owner. The study also aimed to discover if women value or challenge patriarchal, traditional or other forms of masculinity within their own business. Another aim of the current study was to determine how women distinguish between being successful business women and their identity as women.

**Design and method:** This was a qualitative study which made use of semi- structured interviews.

**Participants:** The sample consisted of five African female business owners from Pietermaritzburg. The age range of the participants was 32-45. Two of the participants were married and the other three were single. All the participants' highest level of education was tertiary. Two of the participants were selected using purposive sampling and the snowballing technique was used to find the remainder of the participants.

**Data analysis method:** Thematic analysis was used to analyse the findings of this study.

**Findings:** The traits that were reported as important for an entrepreneur to possess included patience, dedication and risk taking. Participants believed that there are no gender specific traits for entrepreneurship. The challenges faced by female business owners included gender discrimination and being undermined by male colleagues and others in society. Family responsibility and stereotypical categorisation were reported as traps that hinder the development of businesses for female business owners.

**Conclusion:** There is a need for the creation of an environment that will make it possible for female business owners to work under conditions where they are not discriminated against or undermined because of their gender.

## **DEDICATION**

Firstly I would like to thank the man above, my Lord saviour for his everlasting love and his blessings upon my life and his continuous guidance.

I would also like to show my sincere gratitude to my loving family for their support, my father Meseni Shange, my older brother Syabonga Shange and my niece Busiswa Shange. To my younger brother Simphiwe Shange, thank you for being the best brother in the world and for always supporting me. To my sister Happy Fikile Shange thank you for being my role model, for always motivating me when I feel like giving up and for all the support you have given me from first year until now. To my mother Masoni Shange, the woman who struggled and gave all she had so that I could be someone one day, I don't know how I will ever repay you or thank you enough. Ngiyabonga kakhulu bo Dumakude.

I would also like to thank my first supervisor Dr Michael Quayle and my current supervisor Professor Lance Lachenicht for their assistance.

Thanks to all my participants for being part of the study.

Lastly I would like to thank Thobeka Shozi and Thokozani Sibisi for their support and help.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this dissertation is my own work. All references that have been used in this dissertation have been acknowledged. This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Social Sciences (Clinical psychology) in the school of Applied Human Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. This work has not previously submitted for any degree or examination in any other University.

---

Nonjabulo Prudence Shange

---

Professor Lance Lachenicht (Supervisor)

## **TABLE OF CONTENT**

COVER PAGE	1
ABSTRACT	2
DEDICATION	3
DECLARATION	4
TABLE OF CONTENT	5-11

## **CHAPTER1: INTRODUCTION**

1.1 BACKGROUND LITERATURE	12
1.1.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF SMMEs	12
1.2. WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH AFRICA	13
1.3. GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION	14
1.4. GENDER ISSUES	14
1.4.1. Women's contribution in the private sector	14
1.4.2. Impact of gender issues	15
1.5. PROBLEM STATEMENT	15
1.6. CONTRIBUTION OF STUDY	15- 16
1.7. OBJECTIVES	16
1.8 QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED	16
1.9. OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION	17

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.1 INTRODUCTION	18
2.2. Differences between gender and sex	18
2.3. Conceptualisation and construction of gender	19

2.3.1. Conceptualisation of gender	19
2.3.2. Construction of gender	19
2.4. Socialisation	20
2.4.1. Introduction	20
2.4.2. Gender socialisation implications	20
2.4.3. Challenges with gender socialisation	21
2.4.3.1. Introduction	21
2.4.3.2. Gender contradictions	21
2.5. Theories of gender	22
2.5.1. Biological theory	22
2.5.2. Sex-role theory	22
2.5.3. Social constructionist theory	23
2.5.4. Gender relations theory	23
2.6. Research on masculinity and femininity	24
2.6.1. Introduction	24
2.6.2. Female masculinity	24-25
2.6.3. Masculinity	25
2.7. An entrepreneur, a business women and a business leader	26
2.7.1. Introduction	26
2.7.1.2. Entrepreneur	26
2.7.1.3. Business women and business leader	26-27
2.7.2. Business leader and entrepreneur	27
2.7.3. Entrepreneurship and business ownership	27-28
2.8. Entrepreneurial activity in South Africa	28
2.8.1. Introduction	28

2.8.2. 21 <sup>st</sup> century entrepreneur	29
2.8.3. Perceptions of entrepreneurial intentions	30
2.8.3.1. Perceptions of entrepreneurship	30
2.8.3.2. Entrepreneurial intentions	30-31
2.9. Barriers to Entrepreneurship	31
2.9.1. Introduction	31
2.9.2. Role barriers	32
2.9.2.1. Family responsibility	32
2.9.2.2. Double burden syndrome	32
2.9.3. Societal barriers	33
2.9.3.1. Sex discrimination	33
2.10. Overview of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs)	34
2.10.1. Introduction	34
2.10.2. Micro enterprises	34
2.10.3. Small enterprises	34-35
2.10.4. Medium enterprises	35
2.11. Contribution of SMMEs owned by women	35
2.11.1. Introduction	35
2.11.2. Contribution of SMMEs owned by women in South Africa	36
2.12. How is the government assisting SMMEs?	36
2.12.1. Introduction	36
2.12.2. Importance of government tenders and BEE in building black SMMEs	36-37
2.13. Working women (wage labour) and self employed women	37
2.13.1. Introduction	37
2.13.2. Flexibility of self employment	38

2.14. Feminist approaches to studying entrepreneurship	38
2.14.1. Introduction	38-39
2.14.2. Liberal Feminism	39
2.14.3. Development feminism	39
2.14.4. Marxist feminism	40
2.15. Entrepreneurship: As a gendered phenomenon	40-41

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

3.1. Introduction	42
3.2. Type of research design	42
3.2.1. Qualitative research design	42
3.2.2. Appropriateness of research design	43
3.3. Paradigm perspective	43
3.3.1. Interpretive and social constructivist paradigm	43-44
3.3.2. Social constructivist paradigm	44-45
3.4. Sample and sampling method	45
3.4.1. Sampling	45
3.4.2. Sampling method	45-46
3.4.3. Entry to research participants	46
3.5. Research methods	46
3.5.1. Prior to data collection	46-47
3.5.2. Method of data collection	47-48
3.5.3. Instrument for data collection	48
3.6. Ethical consideration	48-49
3.7. Data analysis	49



3.7.1. Thematic analysis	49
3.7.1.1. Familiarising yourself with data	49
3.7.1.2. Generating initial codes	50
3.7.1.3. Searching for themes	50
3.7.1. 4. Reviewing the themes	51
3.8. Evaluating the quality of research study	51
3.8.1. Introduction	51-52
3.8.2. Credibility, transferability, dependability	52
3.8.2.1. Credibility	52
3.8.2.2. Tactics to help with credibility	53
3.8.3. Transferability	53-54
3.8.4. Reliability/ dependability	54
3.8.5. Confirmability	54

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS**

4.1. Introduction	55
4.2. Brief background to the findings	55
4.3. Gender discrimination	56
4.3.1. Ability undermining	56-57
4.3.1.1. Lack of self confidence	57-58
4.3.2. Sexual harassment	58
4.3.3. Categorisation of gender roles	59
4.4. Entrepreneurial characteristics	60
4.5. Balancing work and family responsibilities	60-61
4.6. Lack of networks and mentors	61

4.7. Challenging the patriarchal system	61-62
4.8. Boundary setting	62

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

5.1. What was learned from the study? (Summary of findings)	63-64
5.2. Entrepreneurial characteristics	64-65
5.3. Discrimination	65-66
5.3.1. Origins of discrimination	66
5.3.2. Role of society	67
5.4. Sexual harassment	67
5.4.1. Introduction	67-68
5.4.2. Occurrence of sexual harassment	68
5.4.3. Socio-cultural theories of sexual harassment	68-69
5.5. Categorisation of gender roles	69
5.5.1. Implications of gender stereotypes	70
5.6. Self esteem	70-71
5.7. Balancing family and work responsibilities	71-72
5.8. Networking	72
5.9. Theories used to understanding the findings	73
5.9.1. Gender theory	73
5.9.2. Social constructivist theory	73-74
5.10. Conclusion	74

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION**

6.1. Summary of findings	75
--------------------------	----

6.1.1. Entrepreneurial characteristics	75
6.2. Challenges faced by women in business	75
6.2.1. Gender discrimination	75
6.2.2. Sexual harassment	76
6.2.3. Categorisation of gender roles	76
6.3. Traps for female business owners	76
6.3.1. Balancing work and family responsibilities	76
6.3.2. Lack of self confidence	77
6.3.3. Lack of Networking and mentors	77
6.4. Conclusions	77
6.5. Limitations of the study	78
6.6. Recommendations	78-79
6.7. Further research	79
Reference list	80-86

## **APPENDIX**

Appendix 1 Consent form	87
Appendix 2 Additional consent for audio recording	88
Appendix 3 Interview schedule	89
Appendix 4 Information sheet	90
Approval letter	91

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

The main aim of this study was to obtain a female perspective with regard to what it means to be a businesswoman. This chapter will provide background literature to the study and briefly discuss the research problems and the objectives of the study. The chapter will then conclude by providing an outline of the dissertation.

### **1. BACKGROUND LITERATURE**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Democracy opened a lot of doors in South Africa, for a number of people to participate in the country's economy through business opportunities made available to South Africans (Chimucheka, 2013). Entrepreneurship and Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) play an important role in the South African economy (Chimucheka, 2013). SMME's are labour intensive, which is of great benefit to a developing country such as South Africa that is faced with high rates of unemployment (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2015).

##### **1.1.2. Contributions of SMMEs**

The government in South Africa is dedicated to empowering small, medium and micro sized enterprises (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2015). There is evidence from research around the world that the creation of an enabling environment for SMMEs to grow and thrive has significant positive outcomes for that country's economy it facilitates the creation of job opportunities (Ahl & Nelson, 2010). In South Africa, during the Apartheid system, there were a group of people who were disadvantaged with regard to being active in the country's economy (Chimucheka, 2013).

Through SMMEs individuals who were previously disadvantaged, such as black people, were given the opportunity to also participate in the country's economy (Chimucheka, 2013). Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises have also empowered more women to be entrepreneurs or to run their own businesses (Chimucheka, 2013).

## **1.2 WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to research on Women Entrepreneurship in South Africa, even though there are fewer women in total when compared to the total number of working men, the proportion of women who own businesses is the same as that of men (Brush, De Bruin & Welter, 2006). In 2006 it was estimated that 11.3 percent of women owned businesses and with men owning 11.5 percent (Brush et al., 2006).

Although there have been an increasing number of women who have entered the field of entrepreneurship, women are still faced with a number of challenges and limitations within the business world (Brush et al., 2006). An important challenge facing policy makers is how to create conditions that will improve work situations for female entrepreneurs (Brush et al., 2006).

One of the reasons that make it difficult for the challenge outlined above to be met is that the words "entrepreneur" and "woman" are rarely used together and women are not perceived as being capable of becoming entrepreneurs (Brush et al., 2006). As a result women face a number of barriers to their development as entrepreneurs due to this social inequality and their roles as entrepreneurs are ignored in society (Brush et al., 2006).

### **1.3 GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION**

In South Africa to make sure that Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises have an enabling environment that allows them to thrive, the government has put in place a number of policies, regulations and laws (Chimucheka, 2013). Even though the government has been dedicated to helping SMMEs thrive, women have experienced challenges due to gender issues in the business sector (Chimucheka, 2013).

### **1.4. GENDER ISSUES**

It is important to take into consideration the gender issues faced by women who own businesses, as this will guide what strategies are needed in South Africa to address these issues (Bajpai, 2014). The main reasons why it is important to address gender issues are as follows; women are contributing in the private sector and it is important to have an understanding of the impact gender disparities have in the growth of women's businesses (Bajpai, 2014).

#### **1.4.1 Women's contribution in the private sector**

Women have played a role in the private sectors in areas such as agriculture and owning enterprises in construction. (Chimucheka, 2013). Women's ability to formalise and grow their businesses in order to create job opportunities and improve their productivity is held back by the disparate treatment of women and men who own businesses (Bajpai, 2014).

### **1.4.2 Impact of gender issues**

There is evidence in research that women who own enterprises, especially at the micro level, experience a lot of gender disparities (Bajpai, 2014). These gender disparities not only impact negatively on the women who own these businesses but also on the country's economy (Bajpai, 2014). The gender disparities make it difficult for women to reach their full potential and grow their businesses to the extent that it strengthens the country's economy (Bajpai, 2014).

## **1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The social construction of an entrepreneur or a businesswomen as masculine has resulted in self employed women being marginalised and rendered invisible (Lewis, 2006). Studying women entrepreneurship or women business ownership is important for two main reasons.

Firstly the topic of women entrepreneurship has been largely neglected in society and in the social sciences (Lewis, 2006).

Secondly, women create their own employment, as most of them become self employed because lack of employment opportunities ((Bajpai, 2014). Self employed women also employ others (Lewis, 2006).

## **1.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

While women are contributing to the economy by being entrepreneurs, there is still a lack of research illustrating what it means to be an entrepreneur from a woman's perspective (Brush, Bruin & Welter, 2006). Furthermore research on entrepreneurship has mainly focused on the differences between male and female entrepreneurs (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

Most studies on entrepreneurship have focused on determining how women and men conform to the masculine principles of being an entrepreneur, without taking into consideration the feminine perspectives of what it means to be an entrepreneur (Brush, Bruin & Welter, 2006).

There has not been a great deal of research that has facilitated a better understanding of women entrepreneurship and how a woman's positioning in society impacts on female entrepreneurs (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009). The purpose of this study is to fill this gap in literature by investigating female perspectives with regard to the construction of femininity and masculinity in business entrepreneurs.

## **1.7. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this study are:

- To obtain a female perspective with regard to what it means to be an entrepreneur
- To discover if women value or challenge patriarchal, traditional or other forms of masculinity within their own business.
- To determine how women distinguish between being successful business women and their identity as women. It has been proposed in literature that business women are expected to adopt an identity that differs from their normal identity as women.

## **1.8 QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED**

- What qualities do women consider ideal for men in a business context?
- What qualities do women consider ideal for women in a business context?
- How do women manage being a woman in a field that was previously dominated by men?
- How do women negotiate the possible conflicting demands of being a woman outside the business and being a successful businesswoman?



## **1.9 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION**

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject of this dissertation and poses the questions to be considered. The second chapter encompasses a review of literature relevant to this study. Chapter three outlines the methodology used in this study. The results and discussion are separated into chapters five and six respectively. Chapter six discusses conclusions, limitations and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to provide literature with regard to gender, entrepreneurship and business ownership. The focus on gender will be to distinguish between gender and sex. Literature will also be provided on the construction of gender along with the theories for understanding gender. To conclude the section on gender, research on femininity and masculinity will be provided.

The chapter will then turn to entrepreneurship and business ownership. In this section the focus will be on conceptually differentiating between an entrepreneur, a businessman and a business leader. Entrepreneurship in the South African context will be discussed and the barriers faced by female entrepreneurs will be explained. The feminist approaches to studying entrepreneurship will be discussed and the chapter will conclude by considering how entrepreneurship is a gendered phenomenon.

### **2.2. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDER AND SEX**

Gender differs from sex on the basis that sex is biological and gender is socially constructed (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). Gender is socially constructed as it symbolises ways in which people talk, describe or perceive women and men (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). Gender is also differentiated from sex on the basis that gender signifies attempts by society and cultures, through the process of socialisation, to create feminine or masculine identities that will correspond with a child's gender role based on the child's genitalia and physical appearance (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010).

## **2.3. CONCEPTUALISATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER**

### **2.3.1. Conceptualisation of gender**

According to Connell & Messerschmidt, (2005), gender has historicity in the sense that it changes over time and the changes that occur are created by human practice, individuals create the social world and react to it (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Gender is more than just an explanation of gender roles. Gender can be broadly defined as the multifaceted social, economic, political and psychological ways in which men and women are viewed (Martin, 2004). Gender is instituted in societies, which indicates that it is a cultural rather than a biological phenomenon (Martin, 2004). As a result, individuals learn the socially acceptable behaviour and expectations that are in line with their sex in their cultures (Paechter, 2006). An individual's culture refers to how individuals in a given community define reality and share a way of life (Martin, 2004).

### **2.3.2 Construction of gender**

Gender is constructed by both sexes (Quayle, Lindegger, Brittain, Nabee & Cole, no date). The fact that gender is not perceived as a natural phenomenon but rather a social one is an indication that gender is learned. Through social learning individuals pass on what they have ascertained about gender through enacting it in their gender roles (Schippers, 2007). Sociologists define the social construction of gender as referring to a number of processes whereby the expectations related to being a male or a female are passed on in society (Sirin, McCreary, & Mahalik, 2004).

These expectations are perceived to create an understanding of what being a woman or a man means. They also influence who individuals become, what other people think of them and what opportunities are available to individuals of each sex (Sirin, McCreary, & Mahalik, 2004). The main way in which individuals learn about gender and the expectations associated with their gender is through the process of socialisation (Schippers, 2007).

## **2.4. SOCIALISATION**

### **2.4.1. Introduction**

Gender socialisation can be described as a process whereby individuals are taught and learn the socially acceptable way of behaving that is consistent with their gender, which is assigned to them through their biological sex (Eddleston, 2006). Through the process of gender socialisation individuals learn the types of behaviours and attitudes that are encouraged and those that are discouraged in both women and men (Mikkola, 2007).

### **2.4.2. Gender socialisation implications**

During childhood and adolescence individuals learn from their parents, peers, schools and mass media the norms and behaviours associated with their gender (Eddleston, 2006). Femininity and masculinity is also learned through gender socialisation (Mikkola, 2007). According to Eddleston (2006) gender socialisation encourages individuals to adhere to gender stereotypes (Eddleston, 2006). Feminists argue that socialising individuals in this way reinforces the subordination of women (Mikkola, 2007). Feminists advocate for the creation of societies where women and men are treated equally and they define their own gender (Mikkola, 2007).

### **2.4.3. Challenges with gender socialisation**

#### **2.4.3.1. Introduction**

Research has indicated that at times it becomes difficult to live up to the assigned norms (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). Males were found to experience more difficulties due to the expectations placed on them such as attaining power, sexual competence and strength. (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). Although not everyone becomes exactly what the cultural ideal prescribes (Edwards, 2006). To some extent individuals probably resist the expectations society has for them (Edwards, 2006).

#### **2.4.3.2 Gender contradictions**

Due to the contradictions between what is expected from each gender and what the individual wishes, individuals tend to fear having traits that are incongruent with their gender expected norms (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). As a result, individuals end up experiencing internal conflicts because of these contradictions. (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). There are certain behaviours and values which may be categorised as either feminine or masculine and it is unacceptable for each gender to display behaviours or values that are not within their expected gender norms (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003).

According to Edwards (2006) as a result of identifying more with the roles of the opposite sex and not behaving in a way that is in line with the individual's expected role, individuals become ostracised and victims of oppression due to societal sex role expectations (Edwards, 2006).

## **2.5 THEORIES OF GENDER**

A number of theories have studied gender. The following theories will be briefly discussed in this chapter; biological theory, sex-role theory, social constructionist theory and the gender relations theory.

### **2.5.1 Biological theory**

Biological explanations became popular during the 1960s and the 1970 (Schneider, 2005).

The main emphasis for this model was determining the differences between women and men (Schneider, 2005). Its major assumption was that the psychological differences between men and women can only be explained by their hormonal and genetic differences (Schneider, 2005).

### **2.5.2. Sex -role theory**

Sex-role theory was first developed in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). It proposed that females and males are conditioned to certain roles and behaviours (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003). This process begins in infancy when both males and females attain certain distinctive traits (for example, beliefs, values and attitudes) that are associated with their biological sex (Watson & Newby, 2005).

The roles are taught by institutions such as the family and schools, with these roles then further determining what careers both genders are expected to pursue that will be appropriate to their sex role (Connell, 2002).

### **2.5.3. Social constructionist theory**

The social constructionist theory's approach to gender has been confused with the socialisation of gender as both propose that gender is social-constructed (Burr, 2003). Social constructionists believe that categories between men and women are formed within the social context (Burr, 2003). Constructionists further argue that individuals in societies are always judged with regard to their behaviour whether their presentation is male or female (Burr, 2003). This theory also places emphasise on the relational aspects of gender and is not concerned with bodily affairs. (Burr, 2003)

### **2.5.4 Gender relations theory**

The gender relations theory which was advocated by Connell (2002) builds on the social constructionist theory and also moves beyond the simple definitions of gender that were mainly based on the differences between both genders (Connell , 2002). This approach considered the importance of the social relations within which individuals and groups interact (Connell, 2002). It takes into consideration the structures; which are defined as the enduring patterns that direct an individual's actions (Connell, 2002). These patterns guide society's gender order, which in turn impacts on how gender is governed in other institutions (Connell, 2002). These patterns also play a huge role in the gender makeup of individuals within the workplace (Connell, 2002).

## **2.6. RESEARCH ON: MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY**

### **2.6.1. Introduction**

According to feminist research femininity and masculinity are not merely synonyms for men and women (Carrieri, Diniz, & Menezes, 2013). Instead femininity and masculinity are understood as historical, social and cultural expectations of how women and men are anticipated to behave (Carrieri, Diniz, & Menezes, 2013). Paechter (2006) argues that femininity and masculinity are not possessions of different sex bodies, because it is possible for a woman to have masculine characteristics and for a man to have feminine characteristics and thus it is possible to speak of female masculinity (Paechter, 2006)

### **26.2. Female masculinity**

This approach perceives gender as being internal to the individual as opposed to biological and that both sexes are able to possess both masculine and feminine characteristics (Paechter, 2006). As a result we are able to talk of feminine men and masculine women (Paechter, 2006). Female masculinity gives women and girls opportunities to act in masculine ways, without having masculinity as the main identifying feature of who they are, and it allows men and boys to behave in feminine ways without having femininity as their central feature (Paechter, 2006). There are cases where some men want femininity as their main identifying feature and some women want masculinity as their main identifying feature (Paechter, 2006).



According to Paechter (2006) even though most men understand themselves as men in male bodies and women understand themselves as women in female bodies, their understanding of themselves as feminine or masculine changes according to circumstance, time and place (Paechter, 2006). It is only when individuals have an understanding that not all masculinities are completely masculine or all femininities that are entirely feminine that they will have an understanding that humans construct their identities in diverse ways (Paechter, 2006).

### **2.6.3. Masculinity**

Masculinity is not a fixed or unchangeable attribute; instead it differs across different contexts (Talbot & Quayle, 2010). For example a form of masculinity that is valued in a sport context may not necessary be the same as the masculinity valued on a date setting (Talbot & Quayle, 2010). Masculinity also differs according to different individuals who are required to enact it in dissimilar contexts (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Research has explored the issue of hegemonic masculinity, which can be defined as a gender tradition that ensures dominance of men in social positions and the subordination of women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Although hegemonic masculinity is indeed a gender tradition that ensures male dominance it is not practised by all men even though most of them benefit from it and the behaviour is supported by some women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Masculinity is produced and reproduced collaboratively by men and women; this makes it possible for masculinity to be maintained because women play an active and passive role in the construction of masculinity (Quayle, Lindegger, Brittain, Nabee & Cole, no date). Women's idealisations of masculinity are important, because they partially determine the types of masculinity that women value and are willing to tolerate (Talbot & Quayle, 2010).

## **2.7. AN ENTREPRENEUR, A BUSINESS WOMAN AND A BUSINESS LEADER**

### **2.7.1. Introduction**

It has been noted that in research literature the concepts such as an entrepreneur, a businessman and a leader are usually discussed together (Eyal & Kark, 2004). It is important to unpack these concepts so as to have a clear understanding as to what constitute an entrepreneur, a businessman and a business leader. The provision of a conceptual clarity amongst these concepts will also provide a better understanding as to how these concepts cluster together.

#### **2.7.1.2 Entrepreneur**

According to the international definition, an entrepreneur is defined as any individual that builds an enterprise or a new business that did not exist before (International Labour Organization, 2015). That individual bears the risk associated with the newly established business and enjoys the rewards and profits from that business (International Labour Organization, 2015). The South African definition of an entrepreneur is in line with the international definition. In the South African context an entrepreneur is defined as any individual who starts a new business by evaluating opportunities in the market and grows the business in order to make profit and meet the demands of the market (Baron & Henry, 2011).

#### **2.7.1.3. Businessman and business leader**

A businessman is defined as someone who sets up a new business based on existing ideas from other individuals (Ahl, 2006). A businessman starts a business that is highly in demand with the aim of making a profit (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

Businessmen have a lot of business rivals and their businesses are usually very competitive. Businessmen do not experience as many risks as entrepreneurs as they learn from other businessmen who run the same type of business as them (Ahl, 2006). On the other hand a business leader is defined as any individual who is involved in a business, not as an owner and has the ability to influence others in order to accomplish a common goal (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

### **2.7.2 Business leader and an entrepreneur**

There is consensus amongst researchers that business leaders and entrepreneurs are similar in some perspectives (Timmons & Spinelli, 2009). Entrepreneurs and business leaders are believed to share the following characteristics; they are both goal oriented, focused, visionary, determined, courageous and competent (Thebaud, 2010). Even though entrepreneurs and business leaders share these same characteristics, they differ in terms of their focus (internal versus external) and application of these traits (Thebaud, 2010). Business leaders for example, tend to focus on the inclusion and inspiration of others while accomplishing success (Thebaud, 2010).

Even though entrepreneurs also need others to assist them with achieving success, their focus appears to be the achievement of desired outcomes for themselves as entrepreneurs from their own ideas (Thebaud, 2010).

### **2.7.3. Entrepreneurship and business ownership**

Researchers argue that even though some large business owners can be regarded as entrepreneurs in terms of their business growth, the majority of small businesses are not always innovative and concerned with business growth (Mitchell, 2004).

In line with this argument Henrekson and Sanandaji (2014) propose that self employed individuals (whom they equate to business owners) should not be regarded as or given the title of being an entrepreneur unless they introduce innovation, grow their enterprises and hire employees (Henrekson & Sanandaji, 2014). Hurst and Pugsley (2013) argue that there are very few small business owners who started their businesses based on a new idea or to offer a new service who therefore qualify to be regarded as entrepreneurs (Hurst & Pugsley, 2013).

## **2.8 ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

### **2.8.1. Introduction**

According to The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2011), before democracy in 1994, there were few entrepreneurs in the South African economy (Mandipaka, 2014). This was due to the fact that there were laws that prohibited previously disadvantaged groups such as black people from being entrepreneurs (Mandipaka, 2014). Another factor that played a role in the country having few entrepreneurs was the lack of understanding of the contribution that entrepreneurs could have in the country's economy (Deborah, Wilhelmina & Oyelana, 2015). There was also a lack of formal and informal education that could assist those who wanted to become entrepreneurs (Deborah et al., 2015).

Post-apartheid South Africa was faced with a number of socio economic challenges that impacted negatively on its economy (De Bruin, Brush & Welter, 2007). The challenges included the following: high unemployment rate, poverty, crime, shortage of skills and high illiteracy rate (De Bruin, Brush & Welter, 2007). These challenges were mostly observed in rural area settings (Chiloane & Mayhew, 2010). Entrepreneurial activity was empowered in South Africa with the aim of trying to address the above mentioned challenges (Chiloane & Mayhew, 2010).

### **2.8.2. 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY ENTREPRENEUR**

#### **Introduction**

South Africa has been participating in The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor survey since 2001. This survey helps in providing useful information with regard to the country's nature and extent of entrepreneurial activity (Chinomona, & Maziriri, 2015). In all the previous surveys, before the year 2010, South Africa was performing below the expected median of a developing country (Chinomona, & Maziriri, 2015). In 2010 South Africa showed an improvement ranking 27<sup>th</sup> out of the 59 countries that were included in the survey (Chinomona, & Maziriri, 2015).

According to The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), there is a consistency across different countries with regard to the age of entrepreneurs (Bajpai, 2014). The most common age ranges are 25-34 and 24-44 (Chinomona, & Maziriri, 2015). There are a number of factors that are consistent in developing countries that hinder entrepreneurial activity. These factors include lack of assets or credit history that can serve as collateral for those who require funding for their entrepreneurial ventures (Bajpai, 2014).

In South Africa, entrepreneurial activity is spread as follows: within the agriculture and wholesale retail sectors, 58 percent of people are entrepreneurs (Agbenyegah, 2013). 46-54 percent of the finance sectors are entrepreneurs but few entrepreneurs are involved in transportation and manufacturing (Agbenyegah, 2013).

### **2.8.3. Perceptions and entrepreneurial intentions**

#### **2.8.3.1. Perceptions of entrepreneurship**

The perceptions and attitudes regarding entrepreneurship play a huge role in the creation of an entrepreneurial culture (Mandipaka, 2014). When compared to other developing countries, South Africa scored below average with regard to entrepreneurial perceptions and attitudes likely to promote entrepreneurship. South Africa also ranked in the bottom third in entrepreneurial intentions (Mandipaka, 2014). This indicates that South Africa still has a long way to go in creating favourable attitudes that will improve entrepreneurship amongst its people. (Mandipaka, 2014)

#### **2.8.3.2 Entrepreneurial intentions**

According to the GEM report that researched entrepreneurial intentions, in South Africa there has been a decrease in entrepreneurial intentions (Mandipaka, 2014). The 2014 statistics show that when compared to 2010, South Africa is 3.6 percent lower than the average expected from an African country (Mandipaka, 2014). Even though there is a decrease in entrepreneurial intentions, research indicates that in 2014 there was an 18 percent increase in establishing businesses due to necessities (Agholor, Smith, Akeem & Seriki, 2015). The businesses were established with the aim of trying to reduce the unemployment rate. (Agholor, Smith, Akeem & Seriki, 2015).

In 2015 entrepreneurs were four times more likely to foresee their businesses as not being able to contribute through job creation. Due to the fact that businesses were experiencing difficulties obtaining finance to maintain their business and therefore experienced unprofitability, 62 percent of small entrepreneurial businesses closed in 2015 (Agholor, Smith, Akeem & Seriki, 2015).

Since 2014, there has been a noted decrease in the number of female entrepreneurs. In 2014 female entrepreneurs were 2.6.times more likely than men to establish businesses due to available opportunities (Mandipaka, 2014). In 2015 the figure of female entrepreneurs decreased to 1.6. When compared to men (Mandipaka, 2014). There was also a decrease noted in black female entrepreneurs (Agholor, Smith, Akeem & Seriki, 2015). In 2014 there was 85percent of the total number of black female entrepreneurs and in 2015 they decreased to 68 percent (Agholor, Smith, Akeem & Seriki, 2015).

## **2.9. BARRIERS TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

### **2.9.1. Introduction**

Barriers to becoming an entrepreneur can be external or internal (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). Barriers can be grouped in the following categories: role barriers, social barriers and infrastructural barriers (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). Infrastructural barriers consist of barriers such as access to credit, information and support services. (Lyness & Heilman, 2006).Social barriers on the other hand consist of social and cultural norms that promote discriminatory practices. (Lyness & Heilman, 2006).

The barriers that women are faced with as they try to enter and be successful in male dominated businesses stem from long-established gender hierarchies and from norms that exist in society (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Even though there is empowerment of women and gender equality, most households still have a traditional structure whereby men are the dominant gender (Hartmann, 2010).

## **2.9.2 ROLE BARRIERS**

### **2.9.2.1. Family responsibility**

One of the barriers that hold a woman back in her career is family responsibility (Lyness & Heilman, 2006). The domestic responsibilities of women exceed that of men (McKinsey, 2007). A child case study found that 37% of working mothers leave their employment voluntarily compared with only 24% of men (McKinsey, 2007).

### **2.9.2.2 Double burden syndrome**

The other barrier that prevents women from succeeding in business is double burden syndrome (McKinsey, 2007). Double burden syndrome occurs as women are trying to improve or grow in their businesses but still have the majority of the responsibility for household tasks when compared with men. This syndrome is most predominant in the Asian and African regions (McKinsey, 2007). Household tasks result in women being less committed to their companies when compared to their male counterparts due to their family responsibilities (Catalyst, 2004).

## **2.9.3. SOCIETAL BARRIERS**

Based on organisational behaviour theory, societal perception can be defined as the means by which individuals view, observe and make interpretations of others and events occurring around them so as to make order in their environment (Catalyst, 2004). Perceptions significantly influence the attitudes individuals have of themselves and others, as well as the types of choices they make about their careers (Catalyst, 2004).



Biases can distort an individual's perceptions, which results in the individual making inaccurate evaluations of themselves and others (Catalyst, 2004). Research has shown that women do not succeed in their profession because they tend to believe the assumptions made by society about their ambitions and abilities (Catalyst, 2004). Yet research has shown that there are no significant differences between men and women's ambitions and abilities (Catalyst, 2004). The following section outlines some of the societal barriers that can impact negatively on a female entrepreneur.

### **2.9.3.1 Sex discrimination**

A number of studies have provided evidence with regard to sex discrimination (Carrieri, Diniz, & Menezes, 2013). Women are not seen as being equal or having the same privileges as men, instead women are perceived as supporting figures behind successful men (Carrieri, Diniz, & Menezes, 2013).

Female entrepreneurs face a number of discriminatory actions which pose a real obstacle to women as they try to establish their businesses (Carrieri, Diniz, & Menezes, 2013). Research indicates that women, when compared to men, experience credit discrimination as they try to access capital to assist with their businesses (Watts, 2009). Other researchers supported this claim and reported that accessing credit for women to start up their businesses was a significant barrier which made it difficult for women to overcome the negative societal belief that women will not succeed in the business world (Watts, 2009).

Female entrepreneurs, due to the difficulties they encounter when trying to access funding for their businesses have resorted to making use of their personal investments as means of financing their businesses (Watts, 2009). According to Rouse and Jayawarna (2006), personal investment is usually accumulated from family savings and previous employment (Rouse &

Jayawarna, 2006). In most cases personal investment is not sufficient for financing the business (Rouse & Jayawarna, 2006).

## **2.10. Overview of Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMMEs)**

### **2.10.1 Introduction**

There is agreement in literature that a discussion of entrepreneurship is considered incomplete until Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises are discussed (Chinomona, & Maziriri, 2015). There are a number of small business enterprises in South Africa that operate in the different sectors such as farming, construction, mining, manufacturing, retailing and wholesaling (Chimucheka, 2013). In South Africa the National Small Business Act 102 of 1996 is used to provide a guideline for describing what constitutes as a Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (Chimucheka, 2013).

### **2.10.2. Micro enterprises**

Micro enterprises are categorised as those small businesses with a single owner, who obtains assistance from his or her family members and employs one or two individuals (Chimucheka, 2013). Micro businesses are operated within the informal sector. In most cases businesses in this category are not VAT registered and do not have a trading licence (Chimucheka, 2013). Their income is generally low. A few individuals in this category manage to grow their businesses to qualify as small or medium enterprise (Chimucheka, 2013).

### **2.10.3. Small enterprises**

In South Africa the small enterprises category constitutes the largest percentage of businesses established in the country. Small enterprises have five to fifty employees (Chimucheka, 2013).

The owner of the business is the one who deals with managing the business (Chimucheka, 2013). Businesses that fall in this category have fixed business premises and are formally registered. The turnover varies for small enterprises depending in which sector the business operates (Chimucheka, 2013).

#### **2.10.4. Medium enterprises**

Medium enterprises, in most cases, are managed by the owner and shareholders (Chimucheka, 2013). In South Africa medium enterprises include limited liability companies and Close Corporations. In this type of enterprise up to 200 employees can be employed (Chimucheka, 2013).

### **2.11. CONTRIBUTION OF SMMEs OWNED BY WOMEN**

#### **2.11. 1. Introduction**

Global studies on female business owners have shown that even though the number of female business owners has increased rapidly in previous years, female business owners tend to focus on specific sectors that do not have a lot of entrance requirements, such as retail (Chiloane, & Mayhew, 2010). However this trend has been noted to be changing in more developed countries as there are a growing number of women who are dominating sectors such as construction which were traditionally perceived as male dominated (Chiloane & Mayhew 2010).

#### **2.11.2. Contribution of SMMEs owned by women in South Africa**

Small business owners play a significant role in the stimulation of the country's economy, through job creation, reducing poverty and improving people's living standards (Van Vuuren & Groenewald, 2007).

Even though female business owners have significantly contributed to the country's economy, their contribution has not been fully developed and nurtured (Maas & Herrington, 2006).

The South African government has been focusing mainly on developing communities that were previously disadvantaged (Chimucheka, 2013). Female business owners were regarded as part of these disadvantaged communities, due to the fact that previously women did not own properties that could serve as collateral when they applied for loans and those who were married had to obtain permission from their husbands to enter any financial arrangements. (Maas & Herrington, 2006).

## **2.12. How is the government assisting SMMEs?**

### **2.12.1. Introduction**

When South Africa became a democratic country, very few black people were involved in the economy. It is estimated that less than 5 percent of black people owned and controlled the country's private economy (Chimucheka, 2013). This was due to the fact that the apartheid system excluded and disempowered black people's involvement in the country's economy (Chimucheka, 2013). The government took the initiative to transform the country's economy by involving previously disadvantaged people. To facilitate this, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) was launched to assist black-owned enterprises (Chimucheka, 2013).

### **2.12.2. Importance of government tenders and BEE in building black SMMEs**

The Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) was launched in South Africa with the aim of addressing the racial inequalities in the economy that were evident after the fall of the apartheid system (Chimucheka, 2013). It was perceived as a process that was to bring change to the South African economy by significantly increasing the number of black people who owned, managed and controlled it (Friedrich et al., 2003).

This was done through empowering more black people to become managers and owners of enterprises (Friedrich et al., 2003). When the recession of 2012 made its mark on the South African economy and other countries, the majority of small businesses suffered as there was a loss of business opportunities (Chimucheka, 2013). The South African government offered tenders as a source of income and to increase business opportunities for Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises. Guidelines were made available with regard to understanding the procurement process to be followed with regards to obtaining government tenders (Chimucheka, 2013).

## **2.13. WORKING WOMEN (WAGE LABOUR) AND SELF EMPLOYED WOMEN**

### **2.13.1. Introduction**

Research has shown that there are differences between self employed women and women who are formally employed (Wasilczuk & Zieba, 2008). The differences are evident in their work demands, flexibility and ability to manage work and family responsibilities (Wasilczuk & Zieba, 2008). According to Hilbrecht and Lero (2014), self employed women have control over their working hours and are able to decide a suitable time for them to spend with their families (Hilbrecht & Lero, 2014).

Balaji (2014) conducted a study on the various factors that result in work and family conflict and stress amongst employed women (Balaji, 2014). The results of the study indicated that married employed women experience family and work conflict due to the inflexibility of their work hours and having many dependants (Balaji, 2014).

### **2.13.2. Flexibility of self-employment**

Flexibility is regarded as an important aspect for women who are working and have children (Hilbrecht & Lero, 2014). Most women are now choosing self employment due to the benefit of being able to merge working and family responsibilities (Wasilczuk & Zieba, 2008). When comparing waged labour and self employment amongst women with children, it has been found that women with children are better able to balance their family and work responsibilities if they are self employed (Balaji, 2014).

In some cases women have even left higher paying jobs to have enough time to allocate to their work and family responsibilities (Balaji, 2014).

It has been further expounded that flexibility is not only obtained by being self employed but also that the type of business one starts determines how flexible an individual will be (Wasilczuk & Zieba, 2008).

## **2.14. Feminist Approaches to the Study of Entrepreneurship**

### **2.14.1. Introduction**

There have been a number of scholars within the feminism research field who studied entrepreneurship from a feminist perspective. (Ahl, 2006; Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Bourne, 2006). Within the feminist perspective the aim of studying entrepreneurship was to discover where gender stereotypes come from, to provide an understanding of how gender stereotypes influence women's entrepreneurial propensity and the impact they have on the differences in entrepreneurial activity between men and women (Ahl & Marlow, 2012).

According to Sullivan and Meek (2012) the assigning of gender specific roles and gendered socialisation results in a number of barriers for women who want to become entrepreneurs

(Sullivan & Meek, 2012). The barriers include unequal access to opportunities and gendered expectations in the work place (Sullivan & Meek, 2012).

#### **2.14.2. Liberal Feminism**

The liberal feminism theory argues that there are no biological gender differences between men and women. It further claims that men and women are the same (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Due to the fact that the liberal feminism theory perceives men and women to be the same, it places emphasis on the fact that men and women should be treated in the same way by the law (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). This theory further proposes that women are entitled to similar rights as men with regard to work and educational opportunities (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Liberal feminism activists have paid attention to the evident sources of gender discrimination such as cultural institutions that discriminate against women and gendered career opportunities (Sullivan & Meek, 2012).

#### **2.14.3. Development Feminism**

The development feminism approach was mainly concerned with addressing the exploitation of women economically in post colonial countries (Sullivan & Meek, 2012). This theory claims that the majority of women in developing countries are paid less than men in sectors that are perceived to be dominated by men (Sullivan & Meek, 2012). This theory further claims that, in a developing country gendered division of labour exists because of that country's long colonial history (Ahl & Marlow, 2012).

#### **2.14.4. Marxist Feminism**

Marxist feminists propose that it is important that both males and females are socialised with caring for a child and household work as well as equality within the work environment (Bourne, 2006; Eddleston and Powell, 2012). The focus of Marxist feminism on entrepreneurship is on the provision of needs (Bourne, 2006). The focus is on economic life, where the economy serves its people (Matthaei, 2012) and where the economy allows people to take ownership of their finances through self employment (Bourne, 2006). The Marxist feminism approach rejects domination and prejudice of others, unequal economic opportunities and marginalising and disempowering others (Matthaei, 2012).

#### **2.15. ENTREPRENEURSHIP: AS A GENDERED PHENOMENON**

It has been argued in literature that entrepreneurship is not a gender neutral phenomenon (Gupta, Turban & Bhawe, 2008). Entrepreneurship is believed to be socially constructed within social systems where individuals share beliefs with regard to characteristics and behaviours that are considered appropriate for women and men who are entrepreneurs (Verheul, Uhlaner, & Thurik, 2005).

Entrepreneurship is usually associated with masculinity (Gupta, Turban & Bhawe, 2008). An entrepreneur is expected to possess masculine traits such as assertiveness, competitiveness and self reliance (Gupta, Turban & Bhawe, 2008). In literature entrepreneurship tends to be presented as a career mostly suitable for men rather than women (Verheul, Uhlaner, & Thurik, 2005).

.



Entrepreneurs have been found to also contribute to the construction of entrepreneurship that perpetuates gender stereotypes. A study conducted by Verheul, Uhlaner, and Thurik (2005) on entrepreneurship and economic development, found that female entrepreneurs were less likely than males to consider themselves as entrepreneurs even when they meet the defining criteria for being entrepreneurs ( Verheul, Uhlaner, & Thurik , 2005) .

There was evidence in research that female entrepreneurs when compared to their male counterparts tend to specify that they run their businesses in gender stereotypic way even though there were no observable differences in practice ( Verheul, Uhlaner, & Thurik , 2005).

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

This aim of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the research design employed and defend its appropriateness for this study. This chapter will also discuss the paradigm that was chosen for this study. A description of the population and sampling method used will be provided. The instruments used for data collection will be discussed and explanations will be provided as to why they were appropriate for this study. Ethical principles that were taken into consideration in this study will be presented. Lastly a description of the data analysis method employed in this study will also be presented.

### **3.2. TYPE OF RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.2.1 Qualitative research design**

In this study a qualitative research design was employed. Qualitative research can be broadly defined as any type of research that generates findings that are not obtained by means of quantification or using any statistical methods (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Instead it is any type of research where the findings are obtained by studying phenomenon in their natural settings (Patton, 2001).

The analysis of qualitative research yields a different kind of knowledge as opposed to quantitative research (Patton, 2001). Due to the underlying nature of the qualitative paradigm it mostly uses detailed interviewing as opposed to numbers (Patton, 2001).

### **3.2.2. Appropriateness of research design**

A qualitative research design was developed so as to permit the researcher to study cultural and social phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). A qualitative research design was chosen as the study aimed at understanding the subjective experiences of business women with regard to the construction of masculinity and femininity in business. The qualitative research design was also chosen due to its flexibility and because, through the use of a qualitative research design, one is able to obtain rich and detailed data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

### **3.3. PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE**

A paradigm is a system of beliefs or a theory that directs how researchers do things and create certain practices that should be followed for each particular paradigm (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). Different disciplines or researchers can make use of different types of paradigms such as positivism (e.g. experimental testing), interpretative and social constructivism paradigms (Baptiste, 2001).

Baptiste (2001) stated that ontology is concerned with the nature of reality (Baptiste, 2001). It focuses on the natural world and how it came about rather than trying to analyse it (Baptiste, 2001). The ontological approach determines the type of information to be recorded, captured, interpreted and communicated (Baptiste, 2001).

#### **3.3.1. Interpretive and social constructivist paradigm**

Both the interpretive and the social constructivism paradigms are qualitative, concerned with meaning and are interpretive (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). The difference between these two paradigms is on their ontological approach (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). The focus of the researcher within the interpretive paradigm is on the subjective understandings and the experiences of individuals or groups (Cresswell, 2003).

Social constructivist researchers, on the other hand, are concerned with showing how experiences and understanding originate from larger discourses (Cresswell, 2003).

### **3.3.2. Social constructivist paradigm**

This study was carried out within a social constructivism research paradigm. The constructivism paradigm does not deny reality; rather, it denies the perception that reality is something that can be discovered prior to social invention (Cresswell, 2003). This paradigm emphasises that reality is constructed by members in their societies through human activity (Cresswell, 2003).

Epistemology can be defined as the theory of knowledge as it focuses on how we obtain knowledge (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). This paradigm rejects the idea that there is one knowable truth; researchers using this paradigm propose that knowledge is a process of actively interpreting and constructing individual knowledge representations (Silverman, 2000). They further add that knowledge is also a human product and is socially and culturally constructed. Individuals create meaning through their interactions with each other and with the environment in which they live (Kwan & Tsang, 2001).

Researchers in this paradigm make use of meaning oriented methods such as interviewing and observations that are based on the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). This paradigm does not aim to define dependent and independent variables, but instead focuses on making sense of human experiences (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

This paradigm was appropriate for this study as it was in line with the aims of the study. The study aimed at understanding how women in business construe what it means to be a business woman. The study also aimed at understanding how culture and gender impact on women's understanding of what it means to be a businesswoman.

### **3.4. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD**

#### **3.4.1 Sampling**

The researcher aimed at finding eight participants to interview but ended up with only five. The five participants were women located in Pietermaritzburg who owned businesses and were self-employed. The age range for the participants was 32-45. Two of the participants were married and the remaining three were single. All the participants were African and their highest level of education was tertiary. The aim of the study was not to target a specific type of business; as a result two of the women were in trucking industry (owned trucks) and the other three were in the construction industry.

A smaller sample was used as this is in line with research by Babbie and Mouton (2001) that specified that a sample of 5-20 in qualitative research is appropriate in the South African Master's level (Babbie & Mouton , 2001). The other reason was that the study was exploratory in nature and did not aim to make generalisation but instead to get rich data.

#### **3.4.2 Sampling method**

Purposive sampling was used to identify suitable participants; once this was done a snowball technique was employed to recruit more research participants.

Purposive sampling can be defined as a non-probability sampling method that is primarily about subjectively selecting participants who have the desired characteristics and will be able to provide meaningful information that will answer the researcher's research questions (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

On the other hand the snowballing technique is also a type of non-probability sampling whereby participants who are part of the study direct or refer the researcher to other potential participants (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

### **3.4.3 Entry to research participants**

The researcher approached the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Business and left with them the information sheet (see **appendix 4**) which contained information about the study and whom to contact should one wish to participate in the study. Two of the research participants contacted the researcher and they were checked for suitability for the study. The remainder of the research participants were referred by other participants to the researcher.

## **3.5. RESEARCH METHODS**

### **3.5.1. Prior to data collection**

Before the interviews began, the participants were requested to introduce themselves; information was obtained with regard to their work settings so as to confirm that they were indeed in business and self employed. The researcher also introduced herself to the participants. The purpose of the research was explained. Informed consent, ethical requirements were met by explaining to the participants that they were not forced to participate and they could withdraw at any stage of the interview.

Participants were given a consent form to sign for voluntary participation (see **appendix 1**) and for permission to audio tape the interviews (see **appendix 2**). All participants were interviewed in places where they felt at ease, which was at the comfort of their offices upon their approved appointment date. There were minimal distractions in their offices.

### **3.5.2 Method of data collection**

Data in this study was collected through the use of semi- structured interviews. Semi structured interviews are a form of qualitative inquiring method where by the researcher has a predetermined set of open ended questions that allow for further questioning (Angen, 2000).

The aim of using semi-structured interviews is not to make generalisations about the individual's behaviour, but instead to understand the individual's view point (Mason, 2002). It makes use of open-ended questions, and additional questions may arise during the interviewing process (Angen, 2000). Semi- structured interviews were appropriate for this study as participants could answer the questions in depth and provide rich data (Mason, 2002). Another reason why semi-structured interviews were appropriate for this study is that semi-structured interviews make it possible for the researcher to ask further questions if the participant's responses are not clear (Mason, 2002).

The interviews were recorded through the use of a voice recorder and taking notes manually. Both these methods were used simultaneously, so as to improve the recording process. The use of a voice recorder allows the researcher to be fully present in the interview, as the researcher cannot be distracted by trying to write word for word what was spoken by the participants (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

Taking notes manually was useful as the researcher was able to write analytical codes that assisted with data analysis. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed word for word so as to make the data analysis process easy.

### **3.5.3. Instrument for data collection**

The instrument for data collection was an interview schedule with open ended questions (see **appendix 3**). The use of open ended questions allows the researcher to obtain rich information about the phenomenon being investigated as it allows the participants to openly discuss their viewpoints (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999). According to research conducted by Terre Blanche and Kelly, (1999) research that aims to explain individuals' subjective views about their world makes use of open ended questioning, which was found to be approximate for this study (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999).

### **3.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Autonomy was ensured in this study, as the participants were informed about what the study entails, that participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any stage of the interview without any penalty. Consent was only obtained from research participants as there were no gate keepers in this study. Confidentiality was maintained in this study by storing the audio tapes in a safe place and anonymizing the extracts from the interviews used in the data analysis. Anonymity could not be sufficiently preserved as it might be possible for others to identify the participants by virtue of the industries they work in.

There was on-going respect for the research participants during and after the interviews. A brief summary of the research findings will be reported to the research participants as a way of showing appreciation for their participation.



Other considerations included full disclosure to the research participants with regard to the commitment requirements, i.e. length of the study, the nature and aims of the research.

### **3.7. DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **3.7.1. THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

Thematic analysis is a method used in qualitative research to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher in thematic analysis is able to organise and describe the data in rich detail. The researcher then further interprets the various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It has six phases namely; familiarising yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

##### ***3.7.1.1 The first phase: familiarising yourself with your data.***

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that this first stage of analysis is mainly about reading and re-reading the research material up to a point where the researcher is comfortable with the material, as this will assist the researcher in the identification of patterns or themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While the researcher familiarises himself or herself with the material, the process of note taking is also very important at this stage (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

This phase was achieved by continuously listening to the recording after the interview up until the stage of writing the dissertation. The recordings were transcribed word for word. Constant checking of whether the transcriptions corresponded with the recordings was done, so as to be sure that the interpretations to be made were supported by what was discussed by the research participants.

### **3.7.1.2 The second phase is generating initial codes.**

This phase is concerned with creating codes, through the use of participants' terminology as a point of reference for their experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher attempts to refine codes by subtracting, splitting and adding potential codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process of coding enables the researcher later in the process to locate the pieces of data and recognise why they were included (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Initial coding is a very crucial phase for later detailed analysis, due to the fact that, at this phase, the researcher is constantly reorganising the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The dependability of the study increases as the researcher makes use of concrete codes that are descriptive in nature.

To ensure that this phase was done properly, the researcher went back to the data and coded freely the responses while paying special attention to the language used by the research participants. The coding was done manually. The transcripts were written in English and when the participants spoke in IsiZulu those sections were translated into English. The researcher avoided being too interpretative at this phase.

### **3.7.1.3 The third phase is searching for themes**

During this phase the researcher reads through the initial codes from phase two and begins to produce tentative themes, which can be changed if there is insufficient support from the textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher is able to combine many of the initial codes to form a single theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The examination of how the codes join to form over-reaching themes is important for this phase (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher will have a number of themes and start focusing on the broader patterns and combining coded data with proposed themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### **3.7.1.4. The fourth phase is reviewing themes**

At this point, the researcher is expected to have a number of potential themes, as the reworking of themes occurs at this phase (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher has to look for data that will either support or refute the proposed theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This will make it possible to revise the theme, as some themes might collapse into one another and others might need to be condensed into smaller units (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

There are two levels involved in the reviewing of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In level one, the researcher reviews the coded data extracts to identify whether the themes form logical patterns. The researcher then proceeds to level two once level one has occurred (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In cases where the themes do not form coherent patterns, the researcher has to determine whether the data does not fit that theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Level two entails considering whether the individual themes are valid, by assessing whether they are an accurate reflection of the participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The fifth phase is defining and naming themes and the sixth phase is producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To avoid repetition these two phases will be discussed in detail in the discussion chapter.

### **3.8 EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF A RESEARCH STUDY**

#### **3.8.1 Introduction**

In quantitative paradigms reliability and validity are important principles for evaluating the quality of a quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Even though some researchers in the qualitative paradigm urged that the terms reliability and validity are not applicable to their type of research, they were in agreement that they needed to check or assess the quality of their research (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Healy and Perry (2000) stated that when evaluating the quality of any study, it is important to use or judge that study based on its paradigm's terms (Healy & Perry, 2000). Qualitative researchers then created their own terms for reliability and validity which were found to be appropriate for qualitative research, terms such as credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability (Healy & Perry, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability are the important principles for evaluating the quality of any qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)

### **3.8.2 Credibility, Transferability, dependability and confirmability**

Guba constructed these four principles to correspond with principles used by researchers using quantitative paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is considered similar to internal validity; transferability corresponds with external validity/generalisability; dependability is similar to reliability and confirmability is similar to objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

#### **3.8.2.1 Credibility**

In positivist research internal validity, is concerned with the logic of the study so that causality can be inferred from the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) credibility is the most essential principle for establishing trustworthiness or quality of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility is concerned with addressing the question; "How congruent are the findings with reality?"

### **3.8.2.2. *Tactics to help with credibility***

Before beginning the interview process, the participants have to be informed that participation is voluntary and that they are allowed to refuse to participate or to stop at any stage of the interview (Krefting, 1991). This will ensure that data is collected from individuals who are genuinely willing to be part of the study (Krefting, 1991). The participants also have to be encouraged to be honest when answering the research questions and to be informed that there are no right or wrong answers (Krefting, 1991).

In this study credibility was maintained by firstly explaining in detail to participants, while the researcher was making the appointments for the interviews, what the study would entail and what would be expected from the researcher participants. The voluntary nature of the study was also explained to the participants, as this was believed to encourage participants to be honest. The word for word transcriptions were double checked with the recordings to ensure the credibility of the data.

### **3.8.3. Transferability**

External validity assesses whether the research findings from one study can be applicable to other situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In quantitative research, researchers aim to apply the findings from their studies to a large population (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Due to the fact that in qualitative research a smaller sample is used it is impossible to make generalisation for a larger population based on a very small sample; as a result transferability is used instead of external validity or generalisability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability can be defined as an extent to which the results of the study can be transferred to other contexts rather than just the one under which it was being studied. For example, if a researcher was doing a study on the experiences of patients with incurable illnesses in a hospital setting, this could be transferable to the experiences of patients with incurable illnesses in hospice settings (Terre Blanche Durrheim & Painter, 2006). In this study transferability will be achieved by providing precise descriptions of the research process, research context and research situation, so that the reader will have an understanding of the structures of meanings that develop in the context of this study and be able to transfer them to other studies with different contexts.

#### **3.8.4. Reliability/ dependability**

In quantitative research reliability assesses whether the measure produces consistent findings (Terre Blanche Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Dependability defines the extent to which the reader is convinced that the results come about as the researcher explains them (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability for this study will be ensured by providing rich detailed information of how data was collected and analyzed. This assists in providing a prototype model should a researcher wish to repeat the study in the future, but not with the aim of gaining the same results.

The in-depth discussion of how data was analyzed and collected also allows the reader to develop an understanding of the methods used and their effectiveness.

#### **3.8.5 Confirmability**

Confirmability occurs whereby the findings of the study can be confirmed by the findings of other studies on a similar topic (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study confirmability was ascertained in the integration of the findings with relevant literature.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter will set out the findings from the five individual interviews that were conducted with the female business owners who were part of this study. The findings are reported according to themes. The broadest theme that was evident from the findings was gender discrimination. Gender discrimination had sub themes such as sexual harassment, ability undermining and categorisation of gender roles. The sub theme, ability undermining, gave rise to a theme labelled lack of self confidence. In addition to the gender discrimination theme, the following themes were also evident from the interviews: entrepreneurial characteristics, balancing work and family responsibilities, lack of business networks and mentors, challenging the patriarchal system and boundary setting.

To ensure anonymity of participants they will be referred to as follows: the first participant will be P#1, the second participant will be referred to as P#2, the third participant will be P#3, the fourth participant will be P# 4 and the fifth participant will be referred to as P#5.

### **4.2. Brief background to the findings**

The findings from the interviews that were conducted with the research participants revealed that gender and societal expectations have a huge impact on women who own businesses. This was evident with regard to how female business owners are defined. This also influenced how women are treated in their places of work and the challenges they are faced with as business owners.

### **4.3. GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

The participants reported that being business owners in a perceived male sector poses a lot of challenges for them. The participants reported that they had experiences where they were discriminated against by their male counterparts who ran comparable businesses as them. The discrimination was based on the fact that these women had chosen a career that is not in line with their gender. To support this claim, participants 2 and 4 discussed the following:

*“I think discrimination is one of the biggest challenges facing any woman in business. From my experience in the trucking industry, I get discriminated against based on my gender. I have had occasions where people told me in my face while I was still new in the business that women never succeed in this business. I think being undermined and discriminated against simply because you are a woman is wrong” (P#2)*

*“The biggest challenge facing women is the treatment. The treatment is not the same in some places women are discriminated against, they say she can’t do this and she won’t be able to do this just because she is a woman and that should not be the case” (P#4)*

#### **4.3.1. Ability undermining**

Women being discriminated against based on gender gave rise to the sub theme of ability undermining. In this theme, women’s ability to be business owners is questioned. The findings from the interviews revealed that it is not only businessmen but society and other women who question women’s ability to be business owners. They query whether women are competence business owners. Women are not perceived as good enough business owners. Participant 5 reported the following to support this claim:



*“Women are perceived as not good enough to succeed in business; this is not only done by business men but also our societies. It very difficult to try to overcome not being seen as not good enough or competent to be a business leader because of being a woman, what is sad about this is that it’s not only men who undermine woman, when I was informing my friends that I wanted to be in the truck industry, some of them told me that women are not meant to be business leaders as most of them do not succeed in business” (P# 5)*

#### **4.3.1.1. Lack of self confidence**

From the interviews it emerged that due to being undermined with regard to not possessing the necessary qualities to succeed in business, the research participants reported that in most cases lack of self confidence stems from being undermined by others. The findings further revealed that not believing in one’s self results in women giving up easily when they are faced with a difficulty as they believe this is due to not being competent at running their business. One researcher participant further explained that that women’s lack of self confidence results in them not being respected as they do not avail themselves as business owners. A lack of self confidence is found to hinder the development of women’s businesses.

*“Firstly most women do not believe in themselves due to how we have been socialised that being an entrepreneur is for men, so when we enter into business most women will have the mentality that is a man’s world, so when faced with challenges women might think that it because this is really not meant for women, then they end up doubting their abilities” (P#5)*

*“Women not believing in themselves is a problem, the business world is a challenging sector like any other job, so if you don’t believe in yourself that might hinder one’s development in business, because there is a high probability that if you think you are not competent in doing something you give up easily when faced with challenges” (P#3)*

*“Women are not confident enough, I’m telling you, I’ve observed that in most cases they doubt themselves, they you are not assertive, they don’t avail themselves, if you want to be a leader you should lead, you should be available, you should avail yourself so really until women learn to avail themselves and to be confident this thing will just go on and on and on that women are not respected at work” (P#1)*

#### **4.3.2. Sexual harassment**

Another form of discrimination that the participants reported having experienced in their line of work is sexual harassment. The participants reported sexual harassment to be a trap in the development of their business. The findings revealed that the form of sexual harassment experienced by women in business is that of men requesting sexual pleasures from women. The occurrence of sexual harassment has been noted to occur when women are pursuing business deals. The participants also reported experiencing sexual harassment when they wanted to be in a partnership with men who have already established their enterprises. The findings revealed that in order for the women to get business deals or be in a partnership, the men requested sexual pleasures such as sleeping with the women.

*“I think more than anything else the trap is with the men. When I say men, I keep repeating myself because I think that it’s something that one has been exposed to, where one would want to give you a business deal in exchange for sexual pleasure so if you don’t conform to that obviously that deal won’t exist, in that way you just have to keep on pushing” (P#1)*

*“If that woman for instance is not an entrepreneur and is going to work with someone else or maybe get into a business that already exists or be in partnership with someone else some people want to sexually harass women first before they can actually get into business, they say you will get in partnership with me if such and such happens between us, for instance if that partner is a male, they first want to sleep with them which is not right”. (P#5)*

### 4.3.3. Categorisation of gender roles

The categorisation of gender roles was revealed by the participants as one of the factors that perpetuate the discrimination of women in business. For some of the research participants the categorising of gender roles does not occur solely in the workplace. The participants reported that society plays a role in the categorising of gender roles between men and women. Women are assigned certain roles which are not in line with being a business women based on societal expectations. This categorising of gender roles is perceived by the research participants to result in women being treated differently when they choose careers that are perceived to be for males.

*“Women are discriminated against, this does not only occur in the workplace, in society women and men are categorised, women are expected to be nurturing, caring and men are expected to be strong and providers and there are certain jobs associated with men and women. So as a woman when you enter into the world of business which is regarded as for men, definitely people will look at you differently than men in business, simply because you are a woman and they don’t believe that you are best suited for being in business”. (P#5)*

*“I think that also it depends on the type of business that you are involved in, for me I chose the trucking industry. I love trucks and I’m very passionate and I just love trucks and it’s very “abnormal” you know for a woman to be in trucking because most women are associated with businesses like catering, of which I have been involved in a long time ago, but I was just not passionate so that’s why I decided to leave it but I know that most women go for catering and it’s like every woman should be involved in catering or you know they have a way of categorising you know that if you are a woman you need to have a salon you know. I’ve heard so many questions from say, in fact the minute I meet someone who is also in the trucking industry and is a man, the first thing they’ll ask me, “ But why trucks, in all business sectors why the trucking industry I mean there are so many challenges here you know. (P#1)*

#### **4.4. Entrepreneurial characteristics**

When the research participants were asked about the characteristics that define a good business owner or an entrepreneur, there was consistency amongst them that there are no gender specific characteristics that define a good female or male entrepreneur. Instead the participants emphasised that traits such as being focused, dedicated, taking risks and patient apply to both male and female entrepreneurs.

*“You should also be focused, be a focused person because if you lose focus it will have detrimental impact on whatever it is that you are pursuing in your business”.(P#1)*

*“I think a business leader should be someone who is dedicated to his or her business, be willing to take risks and be patient”. (P#2)*

*“Be patient, uhm because things sometimes won’t go according to the way they had anticipated them to go and uhm they have to be willing to take risks, uhm calculated risks in order to eliminate possible mistakes or over spend more than they had wished to spend, yeah that’s about it. (P#3)*

*“You need to be very dedicated to your business” (P#4)*

#### **4.5. Balancing work and family responsibilities**

Two of the married participants expressed the difficulty of finding a balance between family responsibility and work responsibility as both are demanding when not wishing to compromise either one. One of the participants further explained that if the individual does not have a supportive family it becomes very difficult to balance work and family responsibility.

*“Family responsibility is one of the things that I believe can be a trap in women trying to succeed in business, the reason being that family responsibility requires a lot from women , you have to be a mother and a wife and that on its own is like a full time job and your business as a business woman requires you to spend time here, so if you don’t have a supportive family it becomes very difficult to balance the two and this can lead to either one suffering, if you put your business first your family suffers and if you put your family first , your business will also suffer” ( P#3).*

*“For me I would say family responsibility, it so difficult to trying to balance being a mother, a wife and a business woman, the reason being that all roles require you to be involved and invest time” ( P#2).*

#### **4.6. LACK OF NETWORKS AND MENTORS**

The issue of lack of networks and mentors was one of the themes reported by the participants. The general agreement was that it is very difficult for female business owners to get support as business women; this is due to the fact that there are few women who are in business. The lack of networks and mentors makes it more difficult for women to get assistance and support when they need it.

*“The other barrier is that it’s very difficult for a business woman to find networks or a mentor who is in the same business as you who will be able to provide you with the support and possible guidance should a need arise” ( P#2)*

*“I would say the lack of mentors is another barrier for female entrepreneurs. For me when I was starting my business, because at that time most people I knew who were in business were male, it was so difficult to get support when I experienced some challenges it was so difficult to get someone to mentor me ( P#5)*

#### **4.7. Challenging the patriarchal system**

It was evident from the research findings that women are challenging the patriarchal system that encourages the dominance of men over women.

Most of the participants, when discussing the issue of gender discrimination placed an emphasis on that fact that men should not be seen as more capable than women, as women are also able to work as well as men in male dominated sectors. The participants further explained that systems that promote male dominance make it possible for women to continue being marginalised.

#### **4.8. Boundary setting**

When the participants were asked how they differentiate between who they are as business women and as women in general, the participants reported that there is not much of a difference between their identity as business women and being a woman away from home. From the findings it was evident that women conduct themselves in the same way at work and at home. The only difference is that at work they set boundaries.

*“The only difference is that as a business woman I have a lot of boundaries, for example I have a good relationship with my employees but our relationship is strictly a professional relationship I don’t open much about my personal life as compared when I am not at work” (P#2)*

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter will integrate the findings of this study with the literature. It was evident from the research findings that individuals might have their own subjective classification of how they define themselves in the work environment, such as being business owners, but there are larger discourses that influence how others see or define women in business. The two larger discourses that were evident in the findings were gender and societal expectations.

### **5.1. What was learned from the study? (Summary of findings)**

What was learned from the research findings is that women have their own subjective explanations of what means to be a good business owner. The participants down played the issue of females and males possessing different qualities with regard to being good business owners.

The business sector appeared to be very challenging for the women in this study. The participants reported that they are faced with the issue of gender discrimination. The participants outlined that they are not only discriminated against by men who are in business, but society and other women also seem to play a role in discriminating against the participants for being business owners.

The issue of gender discrimination appeared to occur in different forms, such as sexual harassment, undermining women's abilities to be business owners and the categorisation of gender roles. A lack of self confidence resulted from the undermining of the women's abilities.

The participants challenged the patriarchal system and societal expected gender roles. The participants emphasised that men and women should not be treated differently, as women are capable of doing what men do, hence they are now working in male dominated sectors.

The married women in this study appeared to face the challenge of balancing their work and family responsibilities, as they found both to be demanding of their time. This was not an issue for the participants who were single.

The lack of business networks and mentors impacted negatively on the growth of the women's businesses. The participants reported that it is so difficult to obtain support as a business woman.

## **Literature**

### **5.2. Entrepreneurial characteristics**

In literature there are different views with regard to the characteristics that define a good entrepreneur, as female and male entrepreneurs are assigned different characteristics (Agholor, Smith, Akeem, & 2015). There are those that characterise female entrepreneurs as possessing traits such as patience and taking into consideration the feelings of others (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Males on the other hand are believed to possess characteristics such as assertiveness and being concerned with making profit (Ahl, & Marlow, 2012).

Research has shown mixed perspectives with regard to characteristics such as risk taking and dedication. There are those researchers who believe that male entrepreneurs take more risks when compared to their female counterparts and are more dedicated to their businesses (Eagly & Karau, 2002).



Other researchers, on the other hand, argue that with regard to entrepreneurial characteristics such as risk taking, propensity and dedication, female and male entrepreneurs do not differ significantly (Ahl & Nelson, 2010).

In this study when women were asked about the characteristics that make a good entrepreneur, there was agreement amongst the participants that there are no gender specific characteristics. Instead the participants proposed that the characteristics they had discussed covered both male and female entrepreneurs. Characteristics such as risk taking and dedication were two of the themes for entrepreneurial characteristics, giving an indication that female entrepreneurs regarded these characteristics as important for both genders to possess in order to be regarded as good entrepreneurs.

### **5.3. Discrimination**

Mathur-Helm (2005) found that women in male dominated professions are treated differently to men, specifically in a negative way due to societal beliefs, values, attitudes, norms and stereotypes about men and women (Mathur-Helm, 2005). The major social constructions with regard to sex roles seem to be biased against individuals with regard to the kind of employment or profession they can take (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This biased evaluation can result in the individual experiencing work stressors which can impact negatively on the individual's performance at work (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Women working in male dominated professions are mostly disadvantaged by these social constructions (Franks, Schurink, & Fourie, 2006). Women are expected to fulfil their stereotypical obligation which is taking care of their households (Franks, Schurink, & Fourie, 2006).

When women work in male dominated professions they face a number of challenges that result in them being treated unfairly as male dominated professions are perceived as not being in line with the professions in which women are expected to be (Franks, Schurink, & Fourie, 2006).

There is evidence in the literature that when comparing male and female business owners, female business owners experience greater challenges by. In this study the participants reported experiencing some kind of discriminatory attitudes due to their gender.

These discriminatory attitudes originate from societal and cultural norms where women are expected to be submissive to men and to follow traditional patriarchal structures and ways of behaving, which in turn continue the discriminatory and biased role allocations. These discriminatory actions pose a real obstacle for women as they try to establish and grow their businesses.

### **5.3.1. Origins of discrimination**

In different countries, culture and tradition play a huge role in defining individuals (Agbenyegah, 2013). Culture and tradition, especially in patriarchal societies, shape individuals' expectations with regard to the attributes and behaviours that are deemed appropriate for both males and females (Agbenyegah, 2013). The common pattern is that women have fewer resources and limited abilities to influence decision making that will impact on the shaping of their societies (Mathur-Helm, 2005).

It has been noted in literature that the challenges women face as they enter sectors that are perceived as male dominated seem to originate from the traditional gender hierarchies that continue to exist in their societies and in their households (Hartmann, 2010). Even though there is empowerment and promotion of gender equality among men and women, this seems not to be evident in male dominated sectors (Hartmann, 2010).

### **5.3.2. Role of society**

Social institutions such as societies are perceived to have the ability to influence behaviours, decisions and choices that are regarded as acceptable or unacceptable in a given society. As a result societies are seen as playing a vital role in the maintenance of the marginalisation of women. These social institutions evolve with time. Even though societies are not inherently bad, it is their discriminatory practices that still exist and that portray a negative outlook of societies. The discriminatory practices that are viewed negatively are those that limit access to resources, opportunities and power.

Before discriminatory practices are evident in societies, they firstly occur in private spheres such as families, where there is an uneven distribution of power between men and women (Agbenyegah, 2013). These discriminatory practices reproduce and not only affect families and societies but also become evident in working environments (Agbenyegah, 2013).

## **5.4. Sexual harassment.**

### **5.4.1. Introduction**

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome attention that is of a sexual nature which occurs in the work environment (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). The kind of behaviours that are considered as sexual harassment include, any sexual behaviours which make an individual uncomfortable such as inappropriate touching, rude gestures, unwelcome questions about the individual's sex life, unwelcome sexual jokes, staring at an individual in an offensive way and requesting sex (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

Researchers argue that sexual harassment does not rely much on the biological differences between men and women, but seems to be focused on gender and social roles that are ascribed to women and men in the social and economic world (Anderson & Taylor, 2006).

Women across different countries from an early age are socialised to be subordinate to men. They are expected to be sexually passive and compliant. Men on the other hand are expected to be the ones to start sexual relationships.

#### **5.4.2. Occurrence of sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment occurs in the majority of work settings, but there are work environments where the level of sexual harassment is much higher (Wharton, 2006). The factor that seems to perpetuate sexual harassment is a high male to female ratio in the work place (Wharton, 2006). As a result women who work in male dominated sectors, such as the business world and mining are vulnerable to sexual harassment (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008). Feminist researchers associate sexual harassment with broader patterns of power, sex based inequality and discrimination (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008).

Even though both men and women are prone to sexual harassment, research indicates that the likelihood of women being sexually harassed is greater than compared to men (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). Studies have revealed that sexual harassment is under reported, due to the fact that individuals are not aware of the proper channels for reporting such issues (Pina, Gannon & Saunders, 2009). Women in male dominated areas of business also resist reporting sexual harassment as they believe that not much will be done to stop such behaviour (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

#### **5.4.3. Socio- cultural theories of sexual harassment**

Socio- cultural theories that are feminist in orientation, have studied the social context where sexual harassment is created and likely to occur. The socio-cultural theory argues that sexual harassment is a reflection of societal uneven distribution of status and power between men and women (Anderson & Taylor, 2006).

Sexual harassment is also regarded as a mechanism that maintains male dominance over females within the workplace (Pina, Gannon & Saunders, 2009).

The participants reported experiences of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment appeared to be evident when the women were seeking business deals or when they wanted to be in partnership with their male counterparts. The males wanted to dominate the female business owners but emphasised that if they wanted to obtain the business deals or be in partnership they had to exchange sexual pleasures.

### **5.5. Categorisation of gender roles**

Scholars assert that individuals learn gender stereotypes from an early age; this causes individuals to act and think in ways that are consistent with their gender stereotypes, because these stereotypes are perceived as the truth (Gupta, 2008). Research reveals that gender stereotypes have an influence on the aspirations of both men and women to pursue careers in business ownership (Gupta, 2008).

Research also reveals that being a business owner is viewed as a career path that has traits traditionally associated with the masculine gender (Gupta, 2008). For example, most case studies about business ownership define business owners as possessing traits including aggression and assertiveness. Feminine traits such as being affectionate and sympathetic are not associated with being a business owner (Gupta, 2008).

### **5.5.1. Implications of Gender stereotypes**

The gender stereotyped roles from societies are passed on to individuals' places of employment especially those working in male dominated sectors, as there is evidence that women are still being marginalised in male dominated sectors (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011; Cha, 2013). A gender bias culture becomes entrenched in male dominated sectors as the marginalisation of women continues. (Prescott & Bogg, 2011).

It is only when individuals become aware that they are being negatively stereotyped in their roles that a gender based stereotype is formed (Urban, 2010). These negative gender stereotypes have been noted to affect the individual's performance when they are attempting a difficult task that is not in line with their expected gender role (Urban, 2010).

### **5.6. Self esteem**

There are contradicting views in literature with regard to gender discrimination at work and the impact it has on the individual's self esteem (Urban, 2010). There are researchers who argue that when an individual is aware that she is being discriminated against because of her gender, this tends to protect the individual's self esteem (Heilman, 2012). The argument was that if the individual knew that she was negatively viewed because of her gender, this would protect her from thinking that the problem was internal such as a lack of understanding or not possessing the qualities needed in order to succeed (Heilman, 2012).

On the other hand, other researchers argue that awareness of discrimination against oneself is damaging to the individual's self esteem rather than being a protective fact. Schmitt and Branscombe (2001) argue that an individual's social identity (which they equate to how others in society perceive the individual) plays a vital role in how the individual perceives himself or herself and impacts on the individual's self esteem. They further add that a number of correlation studies have been conducted on discrimination and self esteem. The common finding was that the more individuals are discriminated against based on their gender, the more likely they are to have low self esteem and poor psychological well-being (Schmitt & Branscombe , 2001).

### **5.7. Balancing family and work responsibilities**

There are contradicting views with regards to work and family life being a barrier to female business owners (Bourne, 2006) Studies have also revealed that it is very important for a business woman to have a supportive family environment as this will make it possible for the female entrepreneur to have a good balance between family and work responsibilities (Bourne, 2006).

A study conducted by Stigter (2002) on business owners found that the majority of female entrepreneurs, in addition to running their businesses also have other responsibilities or roles that they have to fulfil such as performing household activities and looking after their families (Stigter, 2002). Due to the fact that female business owners have to combine family responsibilities with running their businesses, female business owners, when compared to their male counterparts, spend more time on household activities, which limits the time spent on their businesses (Stigter, 2002).

Research then compared self employed women and formally employed women (wage labour) and found that self employed women can better balance their work and family responsibilities because of the flexibility that comes with being self employed ( Hilbrecht & Lero, 2014).

Family responsibility was experienced by women as one of the traps that could hinder the development of their businesses. The women in this study reported that they have difficulties with finding a balance between their family responsibilities and their work as both are demanding and require a lot of time from them and this can result in one suffering if too much time is spent on the other. This was only evident amongst the participants that were married and had children.

## **5.8. Networking**

The personal networks that a business owner has are essential for the growth of their business. It has been found to be beneficial for a business owner to have strong social network ties. These social network ties will allow the business owner to engage with others in order to search for opportunities that will facilitate business growth and to obtain support when faced with a challenge (Marlow and Patton, 2005).

Studies that explored networks within business ownership, found that male networks were more powerful compared with female networks (Brush et al., 2002; Marlow & Patton, 2005). Female business owners were found to have fewer contacts and the contacts were mainly comprised of family members and friends (Shaw et al., 2006). Other studies have found that female business owners have more loosely connected networks (Ahl & Nelson, 2010).



## **5.9. Theories used to understand the findings**

### **5.9.1. GENDER THEORY**

Society's expectations, attitudes and beliefs with regard to gender roles for women and men in the household and in the work environment are important, as they shape both men and women's perceptions when choosing a career path (De Bruin, Brush & Welter, 2007). Although having an understanding of the societal accepted gender norms is not adequate in challenging the institutions that discriminate against women, it is of great benefit in understanding the impact gender has on the type of careers women choose and the implications that come with choosing such careers (Ahl and Nelson, 2010). The participants faced challenges in the work environment because of their gender. They were discriminated against because they did not fulfil their societal expected roles but rather became business owners.

### **5.9.2. Social constructionist theory**

The main argument for using a social constructivist perspective in understanding the findings of this study was to establish the different socially constructed meanings individuals have about business ownership and the role played by these social constructions. The information provided in the findings indicated that the construction of what is means to be a business owner reflects a complex interaction process between individuals and societal expected gender roles.

On an individual level the participants in this study did not perceive any difference between the two genders with regard to business ownership, but they were aware of how others in society define women in business. The societal constructions of business ownership appeared to affect women negatively as they were treated differently in business because of these social constructions.

#### **5.10. Conclusion**

There have been a number of actions and discussions in South Africa with regard to addressing gender inequality. Due to the country's patriarchal history, which was evident across the different cultures, it will take time and a lot of hard work for gender equality to be practised and be evident everyday life. The issue of having gender equality evident in everyday life in South Africa is equivalent to challenging cultural accepted norms. It will take several generations for South Africa to move away from gender discrimination as has been the case with racial discrimination created during the apartheid system.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION**

This chapter will briefly summarise the research findings. The limitations of the study will be explained. Recommendations based on the findings from this study will be provided. This chapter will then conclude by offering suggestions for the focus of future research that will aim to study women who own businesses.

### **6.1. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **6.1.1. Entrepreneurial characteristics**

When the participants were asked about the characteristics of a good female and male entrepreneur, there was consistency amongst the research participants that there are no gender specific characteristics in entrepreneurship. The participants reported traits such as dedication, risk taking and patience as characteristics that define a good entrepreneur for both genders.

### **6.2. Challenges faced by women in business**

The challenges faced by women in business were explored. The findings indicated that female business owners experienced gender discrimination in their line of work. Gender discrimination was evident in different forms, such as sexual harassment, the undermining of women's abilities to be effective business owners and the categorisation of gender roles.

#### **6.2.1. Gender Discrimination**

The findings indicated that women within the business sector experience gender discrimination. Women's abilities to be business owners are questioned. The participants revealed that they are not only undermined by men who are in business, but by society and other women who also question women's abilities to be effective business owners.

### **6.2.2. Sexual harassment**

Gender discrimination was also evident in the form of sexual harassment. The participants reported experiencing sexual harassment when they were seeking business deals or when they wanted to be in a partnership with male business owners who were already in business. The participants reported that their male counterparts would request sexual pleasures in exchange for business deals.

### **6.2.3. Categorisation of gender roles.**

The participants reported the categorising of gender roles as perpetuating the gender discrimination of women in business. The participants reported that this was due to the fact that in the societal expected gender roles women are not categorised as business owners. As a result when women become business owners, they are treated differently to men, mostly in a negative way.

## **6.3. Traps for female business owners**

In addition to understanding the challenges faced by women in business, the findings showed that women also experience traps that hinder the development of their business. The following traps were evident in the research findings: difficulties with balancing work and family responsibility, a lack of self confidence amongst female business owners and a lack of networks and mentors.

### **6.3.1. Balancing work and family responsibility**

Family responsibility was also reported in the findings to be one of the traps that could hinder women's growth or development in business, as women were reported to have a lot of family responsibilities which required their time. As a result of pulling of their time, women reported finding it hard to balance their work and family responsibility. In this study this appeared to be a trap for those participants who were married and had children.

### **6.3.2. Lack of self confidence**

Women's lack of self confidence was evident in the findings as one of the traps that hinder women's ability to develop their businesses. The results indicated that lack of self confidence worsens when women are discriminated against and undermined. This results in women questioning themselves as to whether they are competent business owners.

### **6.3.3. Lack of networking and mentors**

The findings indicated that a lack of mentors and networking is seen as a barrier for female business owners in growing their businesses, as they find it difficult to obtain support from their male colleagues.

## **6.4. Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, a conclusion can be made that even though women have the ability and the potential to be business owners, they face a number of challenges and traps that often hinder the development of their businesses. It is not only internal factors such as women's low self confidence that can impact on the success of their business. The findings have shown that external factors such as stereotypical categorisation, discrimination, undermining of female business owners, sexual harassment, lack of networking and mentors and family responsibility all have an impact on the success of female business owners.

Based on the theories that were examined in the literature review, the findings from this study supported the social constructionist approach. The participants placed so much emphasis on the social constructions of society as to who is expected to be a business owner and the qualities they should possess.

## **6.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The limitation of this study, like most qualitative studies, involved using a small sample group. In the present study, a sample made up of five female business owners from two different industries was used. The industries included in this study are only a fraction of the numerous industries in which women set up businesses. Another limitation is that all the women were from the same ethnic group.

As a result generalisations of the findings of this study could not be made about the industries that were included and about the women of other races. However the participants were able to provide rich information with regard to the phenomenon under investigation.

## **6.6. Recommendations**

As women are increasingly attracted to working in industries that are perceived as male dominated, the industries should not assume that women will integrate automatically and successfully in their professions. These industries need to make some efforts to ensure that women are able to integrate in such environments. For example, women who have already established their businesses can assist those who are new in business, acting as mentors.

Since the findings indicated that the majority of women do not believe in themselves and that this can result in women not running their businesses to their full potential, there is a need for women to be encouraged to work on their self doubt, and to not internalize what people say about their incompetency to run businesses. Women need an effective way to address their self confidence issues.

It has been discovered that women's experiences, particularly when being business owners can be extremely challenging in male dominated professions. There is a need to create an environment that will enable women who work under these challenging areas.

This environment should aim to create a culture where female business owners are able to run their businesses without being discriminated against because of their gender and their abilities being questioned.

The cessation of stereotypically categorising women in business requires not only the transformation in the mindsets of male business owners but also societies and cultures. Based on the findings from this study it is recommended that there should be strategies from the societal level that will ensure that in the business sector women are not undermined and they are respected and that these stereotypes are challenged.

### **6.7. Future research**

Further research focusing on female business owners could also include female business owners from other types of businesses that were not included in this study so as to enhance the body of knowledge about women in male dominated businesses.

Further research on female business owners could also investigate the effect that different cultures have on the integration of women in these professions. In order to have a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of women in business, future research could also include women who worked as business owners but left to work in female dominated environments due to the challenges that they faced as business women.

## REFERENCE LIST

- Agbenyegah, A.T. (2013). Challenges facing rural entrepreneurship in selected areas in South Africa. PhD thesis Business Administration. North West University.
- Agholor, E. D., Smith, W., Akeem A. O. & Seriki, I. I. ( 2015) . Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and strategies adopted by women Entrepreneurs to ensure small business success in Nkonkobe municipality, South Africa. *Journal of Economics*, 6(1) 37-49.
- Ahl, H. 2006. Why research on women entrepreneurs needs new directions. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 30(5): 595-621.
- Ahl, H.J., and Marlow, S. 2012. Exploring the dynamics of gender, feminism and entrepreneurship: advancing debate to escape a dead end? *Organization* 19(5): 544–562.
- Ahl, H.J., and Nelson, T. 2010. Moving forward: institutional perspectives on gender and entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 2(1), 5–9.
- Anderson, M.L., & Taylor, H.F. (2006). *Sociology: Understanding a diverse society*. Belmont, MA: Thomson Learning.
- Angen, M. J. (2000). Evaluating interpretive inquiry: Reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*. 10(3), 378-395
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2001). *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Balaji, R. (2014). Work Life Balance of Women Employees. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology*, 13(10), 2319-8753.
- Bajpai, G.C. (2014). African women entrepreneur problems, challenges and future opportunities. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 2 ( 5), 17-22



Baron, R.A. & Henry, R.A. (2011). Entrepreneurship: the Genesis of Organizations, Baron, R.A, in Zedeck, S. (Ed.), *APA Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* APA, Washington, DC. 241–273.

Baptiste, I. A. N. (2001). Qualitative Data Analysis: Common Phases, Strategic Differences. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 2(3), 1-14.

Bourne, K.A. (2006). *In and out of balance: Women entrepreneurs and the gendered 'work' of work-family*. University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, MA.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101

Brush, C. G., De Bruin, A., & Welter, F. (2006). Introduction to the special issue toward building women`s entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 585-593.

Burr V. (2003). *Social constructionist* (2nd Ed.). New York, NY: Routledge

Carrieri, A. P., Diniz, A. P. R., & Menezes, R. S. S. (2013). Gender and Work: Representations of Femininities and Masculinities in the View of Women Brazilian Executives, *Gender and work*, 10(3), 281-303.

Catalyst (2004). South African Women in Corporate Leadership, Census 2004, Catalyst, New York.

Chiloane, G.E., & Mayhew, W. (2010). Difficulties encountered by black women in accessing training from small enterprise development agency in South Africa. *Gender & Behaviour*, 8 (1) 2590-2602.

Chimucheka. T ( 2013). Overview and Performance of the SMMEs Sector in South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4 (14), 783-795.

Chinomona, E. & Maziriri, E. (2015). Women in action: challenges facing women entrepreneurs in the Gauteng province of South Africa. *International Business & Economics Research Journal*, 14 (6) 835-850.

Connell, R. W. (2002). *Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press

Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender and society*, 19(6), 829-859

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory and Practice*, 39(3), 124-131.

De Bruin, A., Brush, C.G., and Welter, F. (2007). Advancing a framework for coherent research on women's entrepreneurship. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 31(3) 323-339.

Deborah, A.E., Wilhelmina, S., Oyelana, A.A & Ibrahim, S.I. (2015). Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs and Strategies Adopted by Women Entrepreneurs to Ensure Small Business Success in Nkonkobe Municipality, South Africa. *Journal of Economics*, 6(1) 37-49.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). *The landscape of qualitative research: theories and issues*. CA: Sage Publications

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Boston, MA: Harvard business school press.

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role Congruity Theory of Prejudice towards Female Leaders. *Psychological Bulletin*. 124 (4): 143-168.

Eddleston, K. A., & Powell, G. N. (2006). The role of gender identity in explaining sex differences in business owners' career satisfier preferences. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 23, 244-256.

Edwards, T. (2006). *Cultures of masculinity*. Oxon: Routledge

Eyal, O., & Kark, R. (2004). How do transformational leaders transform organizations? A study of the relationship between leadership and entrepreneurship. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 3(3), 211-235

Franks, K., Schurink, W., & Fourie, L. (2006). Exploring the social constructionist of life roles of career-oriented women. *South African Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 32(1), 17-24.

Gupta, V. K., Turban, D. B. (2008). The effect of gender stereotype activation entrepreneurial intentions, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(5), 1053-1061.

Haralambos, M., & Holborn, M. (2008). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives*. (7th edn.). London: HarperCollins.

Hartmann, H. (2010). Capitalism, patriarchy and job segregation by sex. In J. Goodman (Ed.), *Global perspectives on gender and work: Readings and interpretations*, (pp. 54–62). Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Haywood, C., & Mac an Ghail, M. (2003). *Man and masculinities*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Heilman, M. E. (2012). Gender stereotypes and workplace bias. *Research in Organizational Behaviour*, 32, 113–35.

Hilbrecht, M., & Lero, D. S. (2014). Self employment and family life: Constructing work life balance when you're 'always on'. *Community, Work & Family*, 17, 20- 42.

Hurst, E & Pugsley, W.B. (2011). "What do Small Businesses Do?" *Brookings Papers On Economic Activity*: 73-118.

International Labour Organization (2015). Jobs, Gender and Small Enterprises in Bangladesh. Retrieved from [http://www.cartierwomensinitiative.com/docs/ILO\\_Bangladesh.pdf](http://www.cartierwomensinitiative.com/docs/ILO_Bangladesh.pdf)

Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in Qualitative research: the assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45(3), 214-224.

Lewis, P. (2013). The Search for an Authentic Entrepreneurial Identity: Difference and Professionalism among Women Business Owner, *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(3), 252-266.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newburg Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Lyness, K., & Heilman, M. (2006). When fit is fundamental: Performance evaluations and promotions of upper level female and male managers. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 778-785.

Maas, G, & Herrinton, M. (2006). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM). South African report. Cape Town:University of Cape Town.

Mandipaka F., (2014). Overview of Women Entrepreneurs in South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 5(9) 127-130.

Marlow, S. and Patton, D. (2005). All credit to men? Entrepreneurship, finance and gender. *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 29, 717-35.

Martin, P. Y. (2004) Gender as a social institution. *Social forces*, 82(4), 1249-1273

Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching*. Thousand Oaks, London: Sage Publications.

Mathur-Helm, B. (2005). Equal opportunity and affirmative action for South African women:a benefit or barrier? *Women in Management Review*, 20(1), 56-71.

Matthaei, J. (2012). “Beyond Hegemonic Economic Man: Economic Crisis, Feminist Economics, and the Solidarity Economy.” Unpublished paper.

McLaughlin, H., Uggen, C., & Blackstone, A. (2012). Sexual harassment, workplace authority and the paradox of power. *American Sociological Review*, 20 (10), 1-23.

Mikkola, M. ( 2007). Gender Sceptics and Feminist Politics”, *Res Publica*, 361–380.

Mitchell BC. (2004). Motives of African entrepreneurs: a case of South Africa. *Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 13(2) 167-183.

Nieman, G & Nieuwenhuizen, C. (2009). *Entrepreneurship: A South African perspective*. 2nd. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Paechter, C. (2006). Masculine Femininities/ Feminine Masculinities: Power, identities and gender. *Gender and Education*, 18(3), 253-263.

Patteon, M. Q. ( 2001). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.

Pina, A., Gannon, T.A., & Saunders, B. (2009). An overview of the literature on sexual harassment: Perpetrator, theory, and treatment issues. Retrieved May 15, 2016, from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1359178>.

Powell, G. N., & Greenhaus, J. H. ( 2010). Sex, Gender and Decisions at the Family; Work Interface, *Journal of Management*, 36(4), 1011-1039

Prescott, J., & Bogg, J. (2011). Career attitudes of men and women working in the computer games industry. *Eludamos*, 5(1), 7–28.

Quayle, M., Lindegger, G., Brittain, K., Nabee, N., & Cole, C. (No date). Context and complicity: an empirical exploration to the extent to which women value traditional norms for ideal masculinity across social contexts.

Schippers, M. (2007). Recovering the Feminine other: Masculinity, Femininity and Gender Hegemony. *Theory and Society*, 36(1), 85-102.

Schneider, V. (2005). *The relationship between masculinity, body image, and ego strength in male university students*. Unpublished Master's dissertation: Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand.

Sirin, S. R., McCreary, D. R., & Mahalik, J. R. (2004). Differential reactions to men and women's gender role transgressions: Perceptions of social status, sexual orientation and value dissimilarity. *Journal of Men's Studies*, 12(2), 119-124.

Sullivan, D.M. & Meek, W.R. (2012), "Gender and entrepreneurship: A review and process model", *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 27(5), 428-458

Talbot, K. & Quayle, M. (2010). The Perils of Being a Nice Guy: Contextual Variation in Five Youth Women's Constructions of Acceptable Hegemonic and Alternative Masculinities. *Men and Masculinities*, 13(2) 255-278.

Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (eds). (2006). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*, 2nd edition. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Terre Blanche, M., & Kelly, K. (1999). Interpretive methods. In M. TerreBlanche & K. Durrheim (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* ( 123-146). Cape Town, SA: University of Cape Town Press.

Thebaud, S. (2010). *Institutions, Cultural Beliefs and the Maintenance of Gender Inequality in Entrepreneurship Across Industrialized Nations*. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Timmons, J., & Spinelli, S. (2009). *New Venture Creation, Entrepreneurship for the 21st Century*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 8th ed/2009.

Urban, B. (2010). A gender perspective on career preferences and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8(1), 1–8.

Valla, S. (2001). Barriers facing female entrepreneurs: A study in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. MBA thesis. University of Wales.

Van Vuuren, J., & Groenewald, D. (2007). A critical analysis of the influence of start-up factors in small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures in South Africa. *Acta Commercii*, 269-280. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2263/4288>

Verheul, I., Uhlaner, L., Thurik, R. (2005). Business accomplishments, gender and entrepreneurial self-image. *Journal of Business Venturing* 20, 483-518.

Watts, J. H. (2009). “Allowed into a man’s world” Meanings of work-life balance: Perspectives of women civil engineers as ‘minority’ workers in construction. *Gender, Work and Organisation*, 16(1), 37-57.

Watson, J. & Newby, R. ( 2005). Biological, sex, stereotypical sex roles and the SME owners characteristics, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 11(2), 129-143.



## Appendix 1

### CONSENT FORM

I hereby agree to participate in a research regarding the construction of femininity and masculinity within the business context. I understand that I am participating freely and without being force to do so. I understand that I can withdraw at any stage of the interview and this decision will not affect me negatively in any way.

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I understand what is expected of my participation.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues that may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the interview questions and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that feedback will be given to me on the results of the complete research.

---

Signature of participant

---

Date



## APPENDIX 2

### **Additional consent for audio recording**

In addition to the consent to participate, I hereby agree to the audio recording of the interview for the purpose of data capture. I understand that no personally identifying information or recording will be released in any form. I understand that these recordings will be kept in a secured environment and will be destroyed after data capture and analysis are complete.

---

Signature of participant

---

Date





## APPENDIX 3

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please introduce yourself

1. What characteristics do you believe every business leader should have?
2. What do you think are the main features needed by a man to succeed in business?
3. What qualities do you think a good business woman should have?
4. Do women have to do anything differently to men if they want to succeed in business?
5. Prompt: You said that men need to be [refer to characteristics that they mentioned in q2]. Do women need to do the same things? What happens if women act just like men in business?
6. How do you differentiate between who you are as a woman and as a business woman?
7. What are the biggest challenges facing women in business?
8. Are there any traps for women who are trying to succeed in business?
9. Do people look at you differently than they look at men?
10. What do you think are the most significant barriers to women being leaders?
11. What should we be teaching young girls at school to prepare them for succeeding in business?



## **APPENDIX4**

### Information Sheet

Hello I am Nonjabulo Shange. I'm a Masters psychology Student at UKZN. I am conducting a study on the construction of femininity and masculinity within the business context as part of my course work.

The purpose of this study is to discover if women value or challenge patriarchal, traditional or other forms of masculinity within the business and to determine how women distinguish between being a successful business woman and their identity as a woman.

Please understand that participation is voluntary and you are not forced to take part in this study and you can withdraw at any stage of the interview.

Semi structured interviews will be used in this study. I will be asking you a few questions and request you to answer them as open and honest as possible. There are no wrong or right answers. The information revealed in this interview will remain confidential, it will be kept in a safe place and because I am working under supervision, only the supervisor and I will have access to this information.

The interview will not take more than 1hour and 30 minutes. If I ask you a question that makes you feel uncomfortable, we can stop and talk about it. If possible I would like to come back and give you feedback on my findings.

The results of this study will be released in a thesis format but no personally identifying information will be released in the thesis

If you have any questions or a complaint about this study, you can contact me on 072-394-7489 / email: [208516697@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:208516697@stu.ukzn.ac.za)

Or contact my supervisor Dr Michael Quayle on 033-260-5016/ email: [QuayleM@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:QuayleM@ukzn.ac.za)



12 May 2014

Ms Nonjabulo Prudence Shange (208516687)  
School of Applied Human Sciences – Psychology  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0359/014M  
Project title: The construction of femininity and masculinity in the views of business women in Pietermaritzburg

Dear Ms Shange,

**Full Approval – Expedited Application**

In response to your application dated 10 April 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the accelerated application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its Implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shreyuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Michael Quayle  
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor D McCracken  
cc School Administrator: Mr Shonda Duma

**Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

Dr Shreyuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X64001 Durban 4005

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/03594557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4604 Email: [shreyuka@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:shreyuka@ukzn.ac.za) / [msmanm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:msmanm@ukzn.ac.za) / [training@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:training@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



1911 - 2010



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses



Edgewood



Howard College



Medical School



Pietermaritzburg



Westville

