THE DESIGN AND EXECUTION OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES FOR BLACK-OWNED SMALL ENTERPRISES IN THE NORTHERN CAPE

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DECLARATION

I, Xolile Titus (Student No: 2015156041) am a student registered for Masters in Development Studies at the University of Free State in the year 2017. I hereby declare that the mini- dissertation I am submitting is my original piece of work. I further confirm that where someone else's ideas and thoughts have been used, I have followed the required convention in referencing that work.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late grandparents who instilled the love for education in me Mr. Livo Caga and Mrs. Sanah Caga. I would not be what I am today if it was not for the values they espoused. I am eternally indebted to them.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. BBBEE – Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
2. BDS - Business Development Services
3. BER - Bureau for Economic Research
4. DTI – Department of Trade and Industry
5. GEM - Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
6. MFQ - Mentoring Functions Questionnaire
7. NYDA – National Youth Development Agency
8. RSA – Republic of South Africa
9. SEDA – Small Enterprise Development Agency
10. SEFA – Small Enterprise Finance Agency
11. SMEs – Small and Medium Enterprises
12. SMMEs – Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
13. UFS – University of Free State

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ABSTRACT

Small enterprises have an important role to play in fostering growth and creating jobs in the economy, however, South Africa is currently experiencing the highest small business failure rate compared to other countries around the world (Ramukumba, 2014:19). It is estimated that the failure rate of small businesses in South Africa is between 70 and 80% (Brink, Cant & Ligthelm, 2003:1; Fatoki, 2014:922). In order to deal with this high rate of small enterprise failure, particularly among black-owned enterprises, a number of business support interventions were proposed post-1994 by government in South Africa. (DTI,2005:31). Some of the support interventions that have been offered to small enterprises include technical advice, general business advice, access to markets, provision of finance and physical infrastructure (World Bank, 2007:39). This means that the predominant form of imparting knowledge/skills transfer to small enterprises is mainly achieved through training (Peter & Naicker., 2013:16). Despite these various interventions, the performance of small enterprises has not been optimal. This means that other interventions have to be considered to capacitate small enterprises.

In this regard, mentorship is becoming a popular alternative to accelerate capacity enhancement of small enterprises and in particular, black small business owners both by government and the private sectors. This means that considerable financial investment is going towards mentorship interventions. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how mentorship programmes are designed and executed in order to optimise their contribution towards the enhancement of capacity, particularly of small black business.

Whilst there has been an increase in mentorship programmes targeting small Black-owned enterprises, there is limited understanding of how the programmes are being implemented by both government and the private sector in South Africa. It is for this reason that this study looks at how mentorship programmes implemented in both public and private sector are designed and executed.

1. CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Black-owned small businesses are the worst affected by the skills deficit relating to running a small enterprise (Rootman, Venter, Matabooe, 2017:3). This, in turn, has contributed to high rate of small business failure in South Africa. In order to deal with this high rate of small enterprise failure, a number of business support interventions were proposed post 1994 by government (DTI, 2005:31). Some of the support interventions that have been offered to small enterprises include technical advice, general business advice, access to markets, provision of finance and physical infrastructure (World Bank, 2007:39). Over the years, the main interventions for imparting knowledge and skills to small enterprises have mainly been through training (Peter & Naicker, 2013:16).

Small businesses can be defined as those enterprises or businesses that employ fewer than 100 employees and have a turnover of less than R40 million per annum, as per definition in the National Small Business Amendment Act of 2003 (RSA Government, 2003:8). For the purpose of consistency, this research will make use of the term small enterprises, rather than small businesses to refer to this category of businesses.

When referring to Black-owned enterprises, in this instance, it is a reference to enterprises owned by Black people. Black people are defined according to the definition provided in the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act. According to the BBBEE Act, Black in its generic term refers to African, Indian and Coloured people (DTI,2004:5).

The study will focus on understanding how mentorship programmes are designed in order to optimise its impact on the enhancement of capacity, particularly of small black enterprise owners.

Mentorship has been prevalent inside organisations or companies to help inexperienced employees to advance in the organization. As a result, most research on the subject of mentorship is based on mentorship taking place in an organisational context (Collins,1994:413). There is therefore still limited understanding of mentorship taking place in small enterprise development context. In particular, information about how mentorship programmes are executed to ensure positive outcomes for the small enterprises, the value and economic benefit of mentorship to small enterprises is largely unknown (Gold, Devins & Johnson, 2003:53).

It is only recently that mentorship is being considered as an important intervention that could also enhance the capacity of small enterprises (Morgan,2002:63). Abbott, Goosen and Coetzee (2010) note that there is a lack of information on how different enterprise mentorship schemes work. As a result, it is not clear how small enterprises are benefiting from mentorship. Pompa also reiterates that there is limited literature that cites the benefits and impact of enterprise mentorship (Pompa, 2012:9). Cull (2006) further states that one of the problems with respect to enterprise mentorship in the United Kingdom for example is not whether the intervention took place but how it was executed. It is for this reason that the study will particularly look at how mentorship targeting small enterprises is executed and what the impact is on the affected small enterprise has been. The research will focus particularly on Black-owned enterprises.

Furthermore, whilst there has been an emergence of a myriad of various interventions to support small black enterprises, there has been no assessment of the success of these programmes. In this regard, it is important to look at each intervention and understand how it is executed and its successes. Once all of these aspects are understood, more effort should be placed on scaling up the programmes.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The development of small enterprises in South Africa remains a major challenge despite a number of support initiatives that have been put in place (Rootman, Venter & Matabooe, 2017:1). This has resulted in the introduction of additional interventions, such as mentorship. According to Copeland and Calhoun (2014) the design of a mentorship programme is an important determinant to the success of a mentorship programme. This suggests that poorly designed and executed mentorship programmes face risk of failure.

Whilst there has been an increase in mentorship programmes targeting small Black-owned enterprises, there are limited successes recorded as a result of a mentorship intervention. This can be attributed to a lack of understanding of how an effective mentorship programme should be designed and implemented by both government and the private sector in South Africa, as well as how to measure the effectiveness of mentorship programmes on small enterprises. Limited understanding of the benefits of mentorship programs on small businesses therefore imposes limitations on the scalability of these programs. It is therefore important to understand how mentorship programmes are designed and executed in order to understand their effectiveness, thus satisfy the needs of the small business owners.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 Primary objective

To investigate the design and execution of mentorship programmes for Black-Owned Small Enterprises in the Northern Cape

1.3.2 Secondary objective

The secondary objectives of this research are:

1. To investigate how mentorship programmes are designed in public and private sector;

2. To investigate how mentorship programmes are initiated in both public and private sector;
3. To investigate how mentorship programmes are executed in both public and private sector;
4. To gain insight into the mentorship styles adopted by the mentors in execution of mentorship form the perspective of the protégé;
5. To understand the different functions that the mentors perform during mentorship.

1.4 SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT - A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

South Africa identified small enterprises as key in fostering economic growth and creation of jobs. However, South Africa's SMMEs are less dynamic (DTI, 2008: xxv) and this limits their potential to make a credible contribution. Entrepreneurial dynamism or capacity includes all the skills required in order to make a success of a business venture (DTI,2008: 46). According to the 2006 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report, entrepreneurial dynamism is very low in South Africa. This trend seems to have continued unabated as the 2014 GEM shows that the total early stage entrepreneurial activity (measure of people who are in a process of starting a business or have started a business) declined by 34 % from 10.6% in 2013 to 7.0% in 2014 (Herrington, Kew & Kew, 2015:22).

Small business development has been an integral component of South Africa's government programme of fostering economic growth (Luiz, n.d.:1). This resulted in government looking at various ways of stimulating growth and capacitating of this sector. Over the years, the focus of support interventions directed at small enterprises has been supply side interventions. These supply side interventions include provision of training and finance to small enterprises. There is a strong belief that improving the capacity of small businesses will contribute to their performance in the economy. This has resulted in a growing interest in the implementing mentorship programmes for small business owners by both government, as well as the private sector.

Various theories are attributed to the development and growth of small enterprises. Some theorists argue that institutional context contributes to the development of small enterprise growth (Hoxha, 2013:12). According to institutional theorists, the nature and form of institutions in different contexts impact on the behaviour and growth of small enterprises. Institutions, in this instance, include structures or entities that provide rules of the game, namely, the regulatory and policy environment that small enterprises are exposed to and operate in. Whilst institutional aspects determine the small business development in a particular environment, there are other aspects that should not be ignored. Human capital is also another important element.

Human capital theorists argue that there is a relationship between human capital and small enterprise development and growth, particularly in countries in transition (Hoxha, 2013:14). According to these theorists, high human capital influences performance on specific tasks. For them, human capital variables, which include knowledge, education, skills and experience are key influences in the development of small enterprises. For countries in transition, events such as political upheavals may prevent the accumulation of business experience, thus impacting on the grown of small enterprises. There are parallels between this theory and what happened in South Africa. During the apartheid period, Black South Africans were prevented from getting into business, not because they were incapable, but due to the deliberate efforts to exclude them from entrepreneurial ventures (Rootman, Venter & Matabooe, 2017:3). The supply side interventions, which include training, are part of the human capital support provided to small enterprises. These range from business training, information provision and mentorship. However, mentorship has been largely missing in the support packages of small business development offered by government, in particular.

Although mentorship is an old concept (St Jean & Audet,2009), it is only recently that mentorship became popular as an additional intervention that could assist in enhancing the capacity of small enterprises. In South African, there has been a move towards extending mentorship support to small enterprises in different sectors, which include

Black-owned enterprises. Some mentorship programmes that emerged were offered by government support agencies, such as Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). Whilst this interest in mentorship programmes is welcome, there seem to be no documented information on how these programmes are benefiting small enterprises. It is for this reason that the study will particularly look at how mentorship is executed.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

This section will describe the methodology deployed for this research. The inherent strengths or weaknesses in each approach was used to guide the selection of an appropriate method. The study is a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted mainly on small enterprises that have participated or are participating in mentoring programmes offered by government and private sector. The use of cross-sectional analysis is preferred because it has enabled the researcher to investigate more than one case and ascertain if there are any variations in how the mentorship programme is offered.

A mixed research methodology was used, as a result both qualitative and quantitative research methods were considered. A 15-minute quantitative questionnaire was used to collect data from 40 (n) small enterprises across various industries. These questionnaires were completed by the owners/ directors of the small enterprises surveyed. A total of 7 (n) 30-minute qualitative, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the sponsors/funders of the mentorship programmes, four from a government organisation and three from private sector institutions. Geographically, all research participants were Northern-Cape based. Mentors were excluded from the sample.

1.6. RESEARCH ETHICS

This section will explain how issues of ethics have been handled during the research. Paramount in this research is that the researcher endeavoured to ensure that the research is conducted according to ethical social research principles. Establishing a

rapport and consent is a critical element of social research (Bryman 2001:114). In the first instance, the researcher sent to the respondents a letter of endorsement from the University together with a letter requesting their consent to participate in the research. This communication highlighted the objectives of the research and served as a form of introduction of the researcher to the respondents.

All respondents who participated in the survey provided consent to participate which was voluntary. Privacy and confidentiality is one of the crucial research ethics that this research took into cognisance. All information collected and shared with the researcher by the respondents was treated with utmost confidentiality. The researcher signed a confidentiality form with all the respondents who participated in the research which guaranteed protection of data that the respondents shared with the researcher. Should there be a need to share data with third parties, the researcher will seek consent from the respondents prior to sharing the information.

Furthermore, deception is another research ethic that was considered. All respondents were informed about the true purpose of the research before they participated. This will help to avoid raising unnecessary expectations.

In addition, all information pertaining to refusal and reasons for refusal was recorded. According to Mouton keeping track of refusal and response rate is an important part of quality assurance (Mouton,2001:107). All the information collected was kept in a code book which will be constructed particularly for the purpose of documenting the process followed in the research.

1.7 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The contribution of the study is at three levels. The first level is at funder or sponsor level. The research findings have outlined what funders or sponsors of mentorship programmes

should consider when structuring effective mentoring programmes. There is currently no template on how to implement an effective and successful mentorship intervention. This study will therefore be useful in assisting improved execution of mentorship interventions targeted at small enterprises and minimize wastage of resources.

At the second level, the research sought to understand how protégés are experiencing mentorship from their perspective. The majority of the protégés get into mentorship programmes with limited understanding of what they should expect from such an intervention. This research will help empower other small enterprises with what they can derive from mentorship to maximise potential benefits that arise from it.

Although the research deliberately excluded the mentors from the research as the focus of the study was not on the mentors experience, but rather the experiences of the protégés and parties responsible for rolling out of the mentorship programs, the final level the outcomes will provide insights that will benefit current and potential mentors on how they can be effective in their delivery of a mentorship intervention.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLAY

Chapter 2 provides a conceptual framework which highlights small business learning development theories and mentorship theories. In addition to the conceptual framework, the chapter reviews literature based on existing research relating to the mentorship in general and mentorship of small enterprises in particular. Key aspects that the literature review explored include the definition of mentorship, evolution of mentorship, types of mentorship and nature of mentorship that is aimed at developing small enterprises.

Chapter 3 highlights the data collection and analysis approach chosen for this research and what lies behind the selection of the approach. Furthermore, the section describes

the sampling design that the research has considered highlighting the benefits of the selected sample. Limitations of the methodology used are also highlighted in this section.

Chapter 4 presents the results from the data collected in the survey and interviews with the funders/sponsors.

Chapter 5 presents key findings that have emanated from the analysis. In addition, to the findings the study gives high level recommendations that could be considered by both the public and private sectors.

Chapter 6 offers concluding remarks on the study.

2. CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide a conceptual framework for this study and examine literature relating to the mentorship in general and enterprise mentorship in particular. The main focus of the study is to examine the design features of mentorship programmes targeted at small Black-owned enterprises. As previously mentioned mentorship is one of the support interventions that are utilised to enhance capacity for growth of small enterprises. These support interventions include a number of supply side programmes such as provision of training, provision of information, business counselling/advice and mentorship. As mentorship is a recent phenomenon in capacity development of small enterprises, there is still limited understanding of how it works. It is for this reason that it is important to understand the design and execution aspects of various mentorship programmes. The following conceptual framework highlights of some of the elements that are crucial for the design and execution of mentorship programmes.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to delineate the research problem, it is important to look at a theoretical base of knowledge, learning process in a small business environment and mentorship in general learning context as well as mentorship in small enterprise context. In doing that, a particular focus will be given to the design of the mentorship schemes to understand how these schemes are implemented.

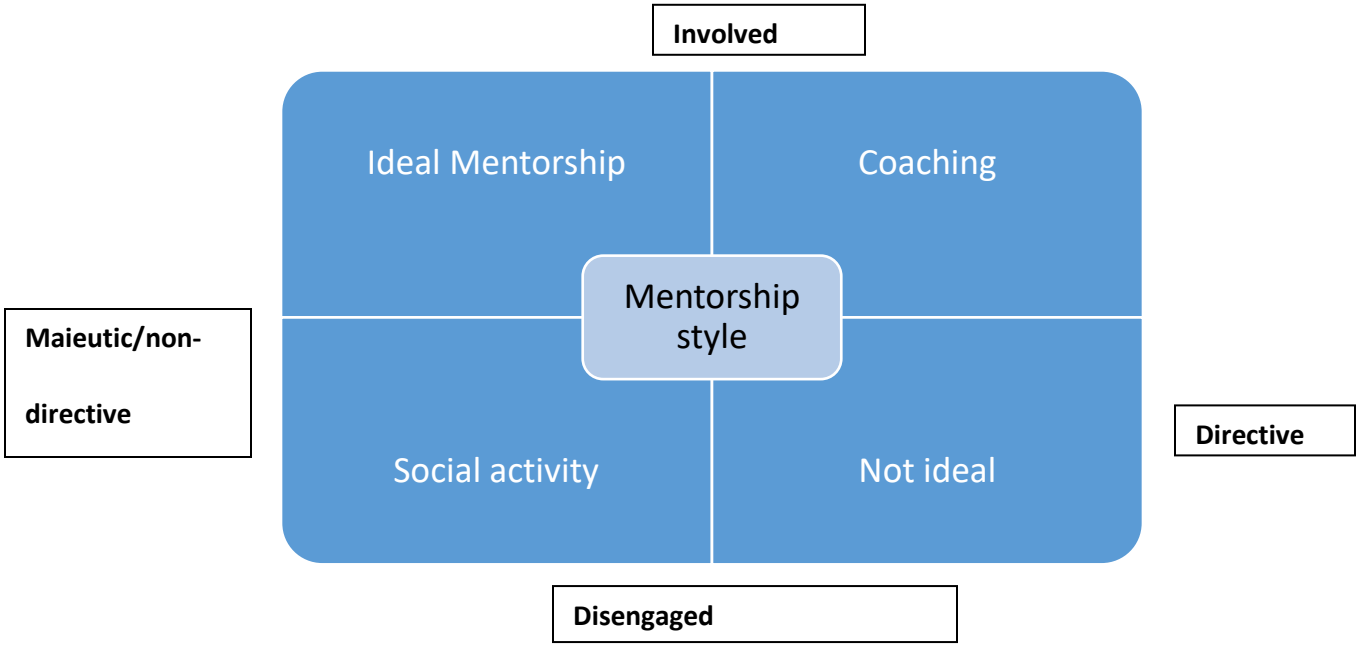
Entrepreneurial learning by small enterprises is something that has been a subject of attention. The key issue that researchers seek to understand is how small enterprises assimilate knowledge. It is widely understood that mentorship has been regarded as an effective intervention for personal and career development as it attends to both psychological and skills needs of the protégé within an organisation.

In looking at entrepreneurial or small enterprise learning, there are two approaches that are specified. One approach focuses on the individual entrepreneur whilst the other approach focuses on the business or organisational context (Erdelyi, n.d.:4).

With mentorship, it is important to understand what it means for the individual entrepreneur and also the business or organisation. Furthermore, other scholars point to experiential learning to understand learning by small enterprises. Experiential learning theorists such as Kolb use the learning cycle to highlight the self-reflective nature of entrepreneurial learning (Deakins & Wyper,2010:36). It is therefore imperative that the mentorship process incorporates experiential learning as a design feature.

Gravells (2006) argues that relevant mechanisms to optimise conditions for the success of mentorship schemes is the selection and training of mentors and protégés, as well as the design of the mentoring programme. This study focusses on the design of mentorship programmes. The mentorship style is one of the features that impact on the design. The diagram below shows that maieutic or non-directive mentorship combined with an involved mentor is an ideal mentorship approach. Research conducted by St Jean and Audet (2013:110) showed that a mentorship approach with low directivity combined with high levels of involvement by the mentor produced best outcomes.

Figure 2.1: Mentorship style model



Source: St Jean & Audet, 2013

What is also important as part of the design of any mentorship scheme is the function or role played by the mentor. A study conducted by Kram on the contribution of mentorship among young adults and mid-career individuals identified two primary functions of mentorship. The first one relates to career development of the protégé, such as general management skills needed to progress in an organisation (Kent, Dennis & Tanton, 2003:441). The second function is psycho-social development, wherein a mentor acts as a friend and confidant. According to Kram, any mentorship intervention should, therefore, focus on how it fulfils these two functions (Kram, 1983:608).

In the final analysis, the conceptual framework for this study will therefore seek to understand and analyse which mentorship style is adopted by the mentors, and also ascertain whether the various stages of mentoring, as described by Kram's are adhered to, in the implementation of mentorship schemes, thus gaining better insights of the design of the mentorship programmes.

According to Kram, mentorship should be composed of four stages, the first being the **initiation** of the relationship stage, followed by the **cultivation**, then the **separation** of the relationship and lastly the **redefinition**. The four different phases will now be described in some more detail.

The initiation phase is the phase when the relationship between the mentor and the protégé begins (Kram, 1983:614). It follows the phase where the pre-planning takes place, which includes recruitment of mentors and protégés. During this stage both the mentor and the protégé set out expectations, goals and clarify the role of each party in the relationship. The clarification of role process can be structured as an induction session for both parties. According to Kram (1983), this phase can last between six and twelve months. It is also at this stage that rapport and trust between the two parties will be established. It is for this reason that Clutterbuck (2005:3) refer to this phase as the rapport building phase. In a nutshell, this phase is about the mentor and the protégé getting to know each other, and also deciding whether they should continue with the relationship.

The cultivation phase is a crucial stage of mentorship, as this is where the actual mentorship takes place. This phase could last from two – five years depending on the needs of the protégé. It is at this stage that the mentor and the protégé devise an action plan of what has to be accomplished during the mentorship. In addition, the mentor applies his/her skills and shares knowledge with the protégé, using the approach or terms agreed upon. For example, the mentor and protégé may agree that they shall meet face-to-face at least once in two months and other interactions will be online via email or telephonically.

The separation phase is when the relationship reaches an end. Clutterbuck (2005:4) refer to this phase as the winding down phase which occurs when the relationship has delivered the desired outcomes. It is important to note that the separation can take place either because the mentorship has reached its goals or the relationship has broken down.

During this phase the relationship between the mentor and the protégé may take a different form. The relationship may evolve into a friendship. In some instances, the separation may take place when the protégé has acquired all the skills and knowledge to operate the business independently from the mentor, and in other instances, be driven by dissatisfaction of one or either of party.

The redefinition is when the mentor and the protégé reconnect at a later stage as equal partners or peers (Van der Sjide & Weijman, 2013:195). The mentor and the protégé relate to each other as equals and no longer as mentor-protégé. They no longer relate professionally, but are now on a casual and equal footing with each other.

Having looked at the conceptual framework that will form the basis of this study, the next discussion will move into the literature about the research topic. The literature review will cover aspects relating to the evolution of enterprise mentorship internationally and locally, the difference between enterprise mentorship and organisation mentorship, the importance of mentorship for Black-owned businesses, the types of mentorship, small enterprise support through mentorship, the role of mentors and the profile of a mentor.

Further, the discussion will highlight how the aspect of mentorship design and execution is important in determining the success of mentorship programmes.

2.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.3.1 The State of Small Business Activity in the Northern Cape

Whilst the research is about understanding the design and execution of mentorship programmes, with particular focus in the Northern Cape, it is important to look at the general state of small business activity in this province. The Northern Cape although big in terms of size, has the lowest number of small enterprises. According to the 2016

Bureau of Economic Research (BER), the Northern Cape has 18823 small enterprises compared to just over 2 million that are found nationally (BER, 2016:13). This report (BER, 2016) also shows that there has been a drastic decline in small enterprise activity in the Northern Cape compared to marked growth in Limpopo and Gauteng. Between 2008 and 2015, the Northern Cape lost the highest number (31%) of SMEs among provinces in South Africa.

The demographic distribution of small enterprises nationally shows that the majority (80%) of small enterprise owners are Black (BER, 2016:22). It is therefore imperative that support programmes target Black-owned enterprises to reduce business failure which will impact these enterprises most.

Having looked at the state of small enterprise activity in the Northern Cape, the following section will look at the issue of mentorship. This section will review what has been researched and written on the subject of mentorship, as it took place in different contexts. In particular, the focus will be on what has been considered in the design and execution of mentorship programmes. It is important to note that as the study is more focused on enterprise mentorship, emphasis in the review will be placed mainly on mentorship as it relates to mentoring of small enterprises.

2.3.2 Mentorship Defined

It is critical to understand first what mentorship is and in what environment it takes place. Accordingly, the following section will look at how mentorship has been defined by various authors, and how mentorship has been approached in the context of small enterprise development.

Mentorship is not a new phenomenon. The meaning of mentorship is itself derived from the book, *The Odyssey*, written by Homer around 700 BC (St-Jean, 2012:201). In the

book, Odyssey left his son, Telemachus, with his good friend, Mentor, before he embarked on a trip. Telemachus was to be guided by Mentor for his education and development needs. It is in this context that the concept of a mentor and mentorship emerged. With respect to the concept of mentorship in general, Bozeman and Feeney (2007:721) state that research can be traced back to the seminal work of Kathy Kram conducted in the 1980s.

Chao (1998) states that lack of a proper definition of mentorship presents challenges to research conducted on mentorship. This view is further supported by Bozeman and Feeney (2007:721), who argue that only few researchers have provided the definition of mentorship in their research. A common understanding of what mentorship means is critical for any research. The next section will look at how different scholars have defined mentorship.

According to Mullen (1998), mentorship is a one-on-one relationship between an experienced person (mentor) and a less experienced person (protégé) where the former provides a range of developmental functions. Bridle (2009) defines mentorship as a process of sharing knowledge that the mentor has with the person being mentored. St-Jean and Audet (2012) also concur with Mullen's definition of mentorship. They define mentorship as a support relationship between an experienced business person (mentor) and novice entrepreneur (protégé) in order to foster the protégé's personal development. In further defining mentorship, a distinction is made between coaching and mentoring. Coaching is defined as a process of preparing someone for a particular task or role (St-Jean & Audet,2012). The coach does not provide answers to questions on the execution of tasks, whilst a mentor does.

Morgan (2002:67) further states that there should be a distinction made between mentorship and consulting. Consulting is an established business practice where a consultant moves in to fix a problem and leaves thereafter. Mentors, on the other hand,

tend to be with the business for a long haul (Morgan, 2002). For this research, the researcher will define mentorship as a formal process of offering one-on one advice and guidance by an experienced mentor to the protégé to enhance the capacity of the protégé to run their business.

2.3.3 International Enterprise Mentorship Programmes

Internationally there are a number of mentorship programmes that have been implemented targeting various types of small enterprises. Some of the programmes targeted novice entrepreneurs, whilst others focused on youth or women-owned enterprises. In the United States of America for example, the Small Business Administration created the Service Corps of the Retired Executives (SCORE) programme which focused on small businesses in general (St-Jean, 2012:201). In England, there is Business Link, and in France, the Initiative for France. Whilst Morocco introduced a programme targeted at women entrepreneurs called Moroccan Women Mentoring and Networking, Canada (fourth on the Entrepreneurship Index overall) has a six-month, one-on-one mentoring programme that pairs entrepreneurs with a qualified mentor to support them during the early phases of starting their business.

2.3.4 The development of the enterprise mentorship

According to Waters, McCabe, Kiellerup & Kiellerup *et al*. (2002), mentorship of small businesses has received limited empirical investigation. St–Jean and Audet (2012) also support this view and argue that there have been few studies conducted on the benefits of enterprise mentorship (St-Jean & Audet., 2012:123). About 500 articles were published in management and education before 1997 focusing on mentoring in the workplace (Bozeman & Feeney., 2007:720). Some of these seminal works on mentorship were conducted by Levinson, Darrow, Klein, McKee in 1978 and Kram (1983). In these published works these scholars concluded that mentorship plays a vital role in career development (Scandura & Pellegrini., 2007:1).

Other areas that previous mentorship research tackled are the common features of different mentorship programmes. One such study was conducted by Morgan in South Africa. According to Morgan (2002:65) one of the common features of agriculture mentorship programmes is that the mentorship tends to be unstructured and voluntary.

In addition to the issues raised above, it is also important to note that mentorship of small enterprises is similar to the mentorship that takes place in a corporate context or in organisations, however, there are certain nuances between the two. In an enterprise mentorship for example, the career-related function performed by the mentor is based on the mentor's business experience rather than mentor's organizational influence, power and networks which tends to be the case in organisations (Waters *et al*., 2002:109). This study will however, not be comparing mentorship taking place in these different contexts with mentorship of small enterprises.

2.3.5 Enterprise Mentorship versus Organisational mentorship

Having looked at how enterprise mentorship has developed, it is also equally important to look at the difference between enterprise and organisational mentorship. As already mentioned in the previous sections, enterprise mentorship emerged after the introduction of mentorship in an organisational context. Mentorship taking place in an organisational context is what is called organisational mentorship. Enterprise mentorship therefore can be defined as mentorship support provided to owners of both start-up and established enterprises or businesses (Gravells, 2006:5).

What is also important to note is that mentorship models used in organisational mentorship may not necessarily be suitable for enterprise mentorship, as small enterprises have a different approach to learning and development. In most instances, small enterprises learn by doing. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to understand the needs of the owners of small enterprises before considering mentorship as an intervention. This will assist in determining whether those needs will be best met through

mentorship or another form of enterprise support. The tendency however, is to assume that mentorship will address all the needs of a small enterprise owner.

Furthermore, whilst organisational mentorship puts emphasis on individual psycho-social and career benefits, enterprise mentorship requires that benefits to the enterprise also be considered (Gravells, 2006:22). This means that success of an enterprise mentorship intervention should not only be measured by only focusing on the two aspects, but should also look at whether the business, as an entity, benefited from the mentorship.

2.3.6 Types of mentorship

Mentorship relationships take various forms. Although most mentorship programmes are face-to-face, there has been an emergence of online mentoring, as shown by an evaluation study of online mentoring conducted by Richard (2004:394). St-Jean and Audet (2012:122) also concur that there has been an increase in the number of remote mentoring programmes (e-mentoring). Scandura and Pellegrini (2007:2) further revealed that new types of mentorship, such as team and network mentoring, have also emerged. Mentorship constructs have therefore evolved from traditional face-to-face, single, dyadic and hierarchical relation into online and team mentoring (Scandura & Pellegrini., 2007:2). According to Scandura and Pellegrini (2007:2), face-to-face mentorship can be categorized as traditional mentorship. What distinguishes these varying mentorship modes includes the intensity of the relationship between the mentor and the protégé, the amount and focus of mentorship and the method of engagement. Whilst the traditional mentorship constructs tend to be face-to-face and/or one-on-one, contemporary mentorship, is usually conducted in group and/or online. The Barrera (2003) report also confirms that mentorship can either be one-to-one (one mentor and one protégé), one-to-many (one mentor with more than one protégé) and many-to-one (one protégé with more.

Furthermore, research conducted by Scandura and Pellegrini (2007) shows that most mentorship relationships, whether traditional or contemporary, tend to be positive and productive. This means that depending on the rationale for the programme, in some instances face-to-face, one-on-one, mentorship will be more suitable than online. In other cases, a combination of both modes would also be sufficient.

This research however, will neither focus on team or online mentoring, but face-to-face, one-on-one mentoring. Online mentoring or team mentoring will only be covered if it emerges during the course of the research.

The use of a particular model of mentorship is largely influenced by the preference of funder/sponsor of the programmes and the needs of the protégé. These mentorship models can be applied individually or in combination. For example, face-to-face mentoring can be combined with online mentoring.

Again, mentorship can either be formal or informal. According to Bozeman and Feeney (2007:732), the common definition of formal mentorship is that it is a relationship that is organized and planned by an organisation, and is not spontaneous. In other words, formal mentorship is a structured and deliberately planned process of assigning a mentor to a protégé. Informal mentorship on the other hand happens by coincidence and it is normally a protégé who identifies a mentor for himself or herself. Desimone, Hochberg, Porter, Polikoff, Schwartz and Johnson *(*2014) also confirm that informal mentorship is different from formal mentorship in that in formal mentorship duties and personnel (the mentor) are assigned by an organization. Waters *et al.* (2002) note that mentorship offered to small enterprises is more likely to be formal than informal.

Another distinguishing feature between formal and informal mentorship is the duration. According to Kent *et.al*. (2003) formal mentorship usually runs over a year whilst informal mentoring may take three to six years (Kent *et.al*., 2003:442). Scandura and Pellegrini

(2007) maintain that since the inception of mentoring theory, the concept of time has been considered as an important aspect of mentorship relationship. Although there is no prescribed standard on the duration of these mentorship interventions, it is important to highlight that on average the entire mentorship relationship is about five years. Whilst this assertion is based on organisational mentorship experiences, the situation may be different for enterprise mentorship. A study conducted by Cull (2006:17) for example highlighted that a mentorship programme does not necessarily have to be long for it to achieve the desired outcomes.

According to a study conducted by Desimone *et al.* (2014: 91) on mentorship of teachers it was found that the difference between formal and informal mentorship lies in the inception of the relationship. Bozeman and Feeney (2008:469) in their 'Goodness of Fit Model' completely dismiss formal mentorship in their definition of mentorship. From the onset they view mentorship as an informal approach of knowledge transmission and social exchange and therefore to them formal mentorship is an oxymoron (Bozeman & Feeney,2008:469). Despite these varying views, it can be concluded that informal mentorship is an unstructured process whilst formal mentorship is a structured and planned process. Showing the distinction between these two types of mentorship is important as this research will only focus on structured or formal mentorship.

Furthermore, most studies conducted on mentorship are based on dyadic conceptualization of a mentorship relationship (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007:470). Apart from the dyadic nature (i.e. relationship between two people) of mentoring, other studies point to the importance of time in mentoring (Scandura & Pellegrini., 2007:7). Kram, in his seminal research on mentorship (1983:614), also added that mentorship goes through four phases which include initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition. According to Kram, each phase is important in influencing the entire mentorship process and its outcomes. This Four-phased approach to mentorship will form the theoretical basis of this research. As indicated in the previous sections, the intention is to examine whether the approach used in offering mentorship impacts on the outcomes.

2.3.7 The mentorship process

It is strongly believed that the execution of a mentorship programme could influence its outcomes. Therefore, there needs to be proper introduction of the programme to the protégé and the mentor. This means that some form of training of the mentor and the protégé should be undertaken before any mentorship commences. According to St-Jean and Mitrano-Méda, mentorship relationships are more likely to succeed if mentors and protégés have been trained (St-Jean & Mitrano-Méda, 2016:42). Mentorship, therefore, should be based on a specific framework that will be followed during the mentorship process. One of the mentoring frameworks as developed by one of the researchers of mentorship, Pegg as cited in Kent (2003), is called the five Cs which is a head and heart approach to mentoring (Kent *et.al*.,2003:443). The five Cs are based on identifying the **c**hallenge, **c**hoices to be made, looking at the **c**onsequences, **c**reative solutions and **c**onclusion during the mentorship process (Kent *et.al*., 2003:443).

Equally important, before any mentoring process commences, a certain level of rapport should be established between the mentor and the protégé. Therefore, it is important to build trust to enable the relationship to develop. Research conducted by Cull (2006) also found that there is a need for a different approach at key stages of the relationship. For example, during start-up phase, a mentor and protégé have to adopt a different approach which will allow the relationship to take off seamlessly. Cull (2006:14) states that it is very important to ensure that there is a match between the mentor and the protégé based on mentor experience geography and protégé needs. Once the relationship progresses to the mid-point phase, the mentor and the protégé both have to adopt a different approach. As the relationship progresses, the needs of the protégé also change and this may require a mentor to introduce other approaches to respond to those needs. For example, at start-up phase of the relationship, the protégé may require encouragement, positive support and advice. This may mean that the frequency of interaction between the mentor and the protégé will be intense at the beginning. As the relationship progresses, the interaction will taper down.

2.3.8 Design features of formal mentorship programmes

As mentioned in the previous sections mentoring can take various forms including formal mentoring. Allen, Eby and Lentz (2006:567) stated that although mentorship is gaining momentum there is limited research regarding how the programmes must be designed to achieve maximum effectiveness. This is the key question that this research seeks to shed light on. For example, Krams's work emphasizes the importance of mutual liking, identification and attraction as important aspects that determine the sustenance of a mentorship relationship (Allen, *et.al*.,2006:568).

Allen *et.al*. suggested three features that need to be looked at in the design of a mentorship programme. The first feature is participation and input of the protégé in the mentorship process. This feature is about whether the protégé feels his or her participation in the programme was voluntary and also had input in the matching process with the mentor. It is believed that both the mentor and the protégé must be given a voice in the mentorship process and must also give input into the matching process. Failure to do this may result in dysfunctional mentorship relationship where a mentor may neglect the protégé or the protégé resist learning from the mentor. The second feature is about the dyadic structure of the relationship (Allen *et.al*., 2006:577) which involves issues like physical proximity of the mentor and skills profile. According to Allen *et.al.* (2006), physical geographic proximity is important for the mentorship relationship. It also helps with building of stronger psychological ties. The last feature entails formal programme training which looks at whether there was any training provided before the mentorship started. The purpose of the training is to clarify objectives and expectations as well as set up parameters for the relationship.

Kubberoed and Hagen, on the other hand, came up with a two-dimensional model of mentorship which includes mentor focus and objective orientation (Kubberoed & Hagen, 2015:4061). These two dimensions determine the four mentorship roles that could form

the basis for entrepreneurial learning. These roles include role modelling, expert learning, facilitator and coaching roles. Role modelling is based on modelling and learning by example whilst expert learning role uses counselling skills and direct advice. The learning facilitator role emphasizes facilitation in identifying learning areas and the protégé is responsible for finding own solutions. Secondly, in the coaching role both the coach and the protégé work together towards a same goal (Kubberoed and Hagen, 2015:4062.). This shows that mentorship cannot be delivered in a standard format. There needs to be flexibility and diversity of mentoring roles must be based on the needs of the business. In line with Clutterbuck view, these roles indicate that mentorship can either be directive/non-directive or stretching/nurturing (Brodie, Van Saane, Osowska, n.d.:3). This then brings to the fore the question of whether the design of the mentorship programme influences outcomes.

The study conducted by Barrera Associates also highlighted key programme elements that need to be looked at in designing mentorship schemes. These include planning, design, promotion, recruitment and support. Planning is the first activity that and organisation embarks on to prepare for the programme launch. It is important to note that planning does not only take place at the beginning of the programme, it must be an on-going exercise. It is believed that the success of protégé and mentor matching relies on the amount of planning that has been put in place. The design aspect maps out how the programme will be executed. This process entails orientation, induction or training of both the mentor and the protégé which will then lead to strategic matching. Promotion focuses on showcasing programme quality and growth to the recipients and also to those who are not yet part of the programme. Recruitment involves proper screening of protégés and mentors to ensure that the mentorship takes place between individuals who are committed to the relationship. Support is about ensuring that the relationship is properly constituted and on-going interaction between the mentor and the protégé.

2.3.9 The value and benefit of mentorship

A study conducted by Collins (1994:413) focused on the value of mentorship for the social work profession. Desimone *et al*. (2014:88) researched the role of formal and informal mentorship to develop novice teachers. The research found that both formal and informal mentors are desirable because they play complementary roles (Desimone *et al.*, 2014:103). Terblanche (2011) also conducted further research on mentorship of youth empowerment and farming.

Similar to other management training and development programmes that are aimed at enhancing the capacity of small enterprises, the value of mentorship is not well recognised. It is argued that it is difficult to make training and development attractive to small enterprises, as they tend not to see value in such interventions (Gold *et.al.*, 2003:51). Small enterprises usually rely on on-going interaction and conversation with others and social processes for their learning and development and will put more value in such engagements than training. Learning takes place organically through learning by doing and dealing with day-to-day issues as they arise (Gold *et.al.*, 2003:52; Kubberoed & Hagen., 2015:4060). Roberts argues that without the clear knowledge of how the role of mentors affect those who are involved in the mentorship programme, there is potential danger that the value of mentorship would be overlooked (Roberts, 2014:1).

Quite often small enterprises are not required to be away from their businesses when mentorship is offered. This has resulted in mentorship being considered as the preferred learning mode by most small enterprise owners. The question that only lingers on is whether mentorship is any different from the traditional learning and development programmes.

For the enterprise, the success of a business can be assessed by looking at the performance of the enterprise in business related outcomes such as profit and turnover

(St-Jean & Audet., 2012:136). The contribution of mentorship to the success of businesses should therefore focus on these business success indices. Laukhuf and Malone's study (2015:79) on mentorship of women entrepreneurs, found that women entrepreneurs with access to mentors were successful in making business decisions crucial for the success of their businesses. On the other hand, Waters *et.al.* (2002) found that mentorship did not appear to have contributed to the success of new businesses. Another study conducted on mentorship of African Americans entrepreneurs found that there is a positive relationship between career success and mentoring (Roberts, 2014:21).

It is also important to understand in which areas the mentorship has been most beneficial. According to a study conducted by St-Jean and Audet (2012), mentorship had positive outcomes in two areas, cognitive learning (60%) and affective learning, whilst impact on skill learning (technical) was low. Cognitive learning deals with learning of business operation and management skills whilst affective learning includes development of self-image or self-confidence (personal attributes). In support of this view, Gravells's study found mentorship to be effective in marketing, pricing, financial planning, regulations, record keeping and access to information (Gravells, 2006:12). These aspects are all linked to business operations and management.

Pompa also pointed out that a study conducted by Garvey and Garret Harris found that the benefits of mentorship to the protégé included improved performance and productivity, improved knowledge and skills, greater confidence, motivation, encouragement, improved understanding of the business, enhanced decision-making abilities and development of leadership abilities (Pompa, 2012: 9). Further, a study conducted for the Department of Business Innovation and Skills of Warwick Business School (BMG Research & Galli., 2013: 45) found that 43% of those enterprises which received help from mentors agreed that mentors helped them achieve better outcomes than it would have occurred otherwise. A further 33% indicated that the mentors helped them achieve outcomes faster than would have occurred otherwise.

Although mentorship is geared towards the development of the protégé, mentors also do attain some value from it. According to Pompa, the value derived by mentors include increased business activity, networking, increased idea generation and knowledge, fulfilment of human psycho-social needs, personal gratification, rejuvenation and improved motivation (Pompa, 2012:9).

2.3.10 Contributors to positive outcomes of mentorship

As already mentioned, there is a general lack of in-depth analysis about the contribution of mentorship as a management development discipline on the small enterprises. As a result of this absence of authoritative insights about mentorship, general inferences have been made about the potential of mentorship in boosting small enterprise capacity. To understand what contributes to the positive outcomes of mentorship, Gravells suggests that a distinction must be made between what he calls absolute and relative conditions. Absolute conditions include mentor/protégé capability, scheme design and protégé/mentor characteristics. Relative conditions, on the other hand, refer to compatibility of protégé needs with mentor knowledge and chemistry between mentor and protégé (Gravells, 2006:26). Research conducted by Sijde and Weijman found that trust and intensity play a significant role in influencing benefits of mentorship (Van der Sijde & Weijman, 2013:199). A study conducted by Brodie, Van Saane and Osowska also highlighted that sensitive issues relating to the business were only discussed after a high level of trust was developed (Brodie, Van Saane, Osowska, n.d.:15).

This has led to researchers like, Gold *et.al* (2003) to use a narrative evaluation technique to assess the outcomes of mentorship as experienced by a small business owner. According to the findings of this by Gold *et.al* (2003) study, the participant in the mentoring programme initially thought that the process might be consuming for his business. It also highlighted that genuine commitment by the protégé contributed to attaining value from the mentorship.

Other studies, (Abbott *et al.*, 2010:1; Collins, 1994:416; Gold *et al.*, 2003:52) show that the outcomes of mentorship are influenced by the method used in the mentorship. Unlike organisational mentoring, enterprise mentoring requires a different approach to learning and development (Gravells, 2006:7). It does appear that the approach used in enterprise mentoring could contribute towards the nature of outcomes of a mentoring intervention on small enterprises.

The study conducted by St-Jean, on the other hand, highlighted that the career function played by mentors in the mentorship is more important in stimulating learning (St-Jean, 2012:210). Career functions include integration or facilitation of other business linkages, information support, confrontation of ideas and being a guide. However, the study conducted by Van der sijde and Weijmans (2013), purported that career-related support does not contribute significantly to perceived benefits. In addition to career function, psycho-social function was also found to be important in producing effective learning. Another interesting point that came out of the study is that trust plays an important role in stimulating psycho-social and career functions (St-Jean, 2012:211).

Besides the approach or method used in mentorship, it is suggested that the skills set of the mentor also plays a role in determining the positive outcomes of mentorship. However, there seems to be no consensus on whether mentors need to be generalists or should have sector-specific knowledge in order to make mentorship effective. The issue of whether mentors should possess certain attributes depends highly on the needs of the enterprises. Therefore, the pairing of mentors with protégés should take this into account. There may be cases where protégés require intensive technical skills guidance, in that case a mentor with a knowledge of the sector the protégé is involved with will be more beneficial than a generalist.

Based on the above literature, it is evident that there are various aspects that need to be taken into account to maximize learning through mentorship. Aspects such as how to

select participants and mentors, the process, approach and mentor functions/role of mentorship should be taken into cognisance. With respect to selecting participants and mentors, screening of both the mentor and those who are to be mentored is a critical component of an effective mentorship programme (Foster,2011:10). Furthermore, the process of introducing the mentorship programme, which includes orientation and training of the mentor and the protégés, is also crucial. The approach applied by the mentors in their mentorship interactions is equally important. The mentor's functions/roles have to be clearly defined and in line with what mentorship intervention seeks to achieve. All these elements are critical in ensuring proper and relevant programme design and execution. It is hoped that this research will provide some insights in some of these aspects.

2.3.11 Role of mentors in mentorship

In a mentorship relationship, mentors play various roles and functions and these are referred to as mentoring functions (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2007:2). These mentoring functions include career development and psycho-social support (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007:468, Scandura & Pellegrini, 2007:2). It is not always clear which functions or roles yield better results for the protégé. Kram refers to two mentoring functions, vocational and psycho-social functions (Chao, 1998:333). Vocational function is similar to career development function specified by Bozeman and Feeney.

Besides the functions performed by mentors, a study conducted by St-Jean and Audet (2012) suggests that there is also a relationship between learning outcomes of mentorship and the method used. Verbal exchanges, explanation, questioning and mentor and protégé working together produce better results on cognitive learning, for example learning specific business procedures, how to find suppliers, how to approach financiers and so forth (St- Jean & Audet, 2012:128). It is therefore crucial to understand what outcomes are expected from any mentorship intervention before assessing its impact or results. It may also happen that the outcomes that were stipulated were not accurate or suitable for a mentorship intervention.

In all the above approaches the functions or role of the mentor tend to be the same. The functions include career-related and psycho-social support functions. Career-related functions include advice on legal, technical, financial and marketing aspects whilst psycho-social functions include emotional support, friendship and general motivation (Waters *et.al.*, 2002:111).

Gravells (2006) further argues that the role of the mentor should be based on the protégé needs. It may happen that mentoring may not be the most appropriate means of delivering on a particular need of the protégé. In such instances, it is of utmost importance to define clearly the role of the mentor to avoid creating expectations that will not be met. Failure to meet expectation may impact on the perceived outcome of the mentorship provided.

2.3.12 Mentor Profile

The profile of the mentor is an important component in determining the impact of the mentorship programme. In most mentorship programmes mentors tend to be either specialists or generalists. Generalist mentors possess general business skills which may include but not be limited to marketing, finance, human resources and strategy. Specialist mentors, on the other hand, have specialist skills in particular technical areas, for example car manufacturer, baking, hair and beauty specialist, retail and so on.

The profile of a mentor is quite critical in pairing of the mentors with the protégé (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015:75). An activity-based theory approach becomes relevant in this instance. An activity theory emphasizes the importance of field experience in professional development (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999:24). This means that it is important for mentorship to be offered by someone who has experience in running a business, particularly a small business in cases of small enterprise mentorship.

2.3.13 Small enterprise support through mentorship

The previous section looked at what the literature says with respect to mentorship in general. This following section will look at what has been researched by various scholars on mentorship as it relates to enterprises. St- Jean and Mitrona-Mada (2016:39) state that for many years there have been several forms of support for small enterprises. As already highlighted, mentorship is one form of enterprise support that is gaining momentum and popularity (St-Jean & Mitrona-Mada, 2016:39).

The discussion about the benefits of enterprise mentorship and small enterprises requires an understanding of how mentorship supports the development of small enterprises, including specific types of small enterprises (i.e. youth owned, Black-owned or women owned enterprises). According to Mckevitt and Marshall there are four support roles of mentorship in an enterprise. These include opportunity identification, opportunity enactment, business development and business continuity (Mckevitt & Marshall, 2015:269). The opportunity identification role takes place when an enterprise is still at a business conceptualization stage and the mentor helps with refinement of value proposition and business strategy. Opportunity enactment role focuses on how the opportunity can be realized. The enterprise is clear on what needs to be done but lacks the know-how on execution. Career support, in this instance, would be most relevant. The third role which entails business development is mainly for enterprises that are at an advanced stage and the focus is on assisting with acceleration of growth. The last role is business continuity which is more about the on-going interactions between the mentor and the protégé throughout the relationship. All these roles require the mentors to adopt a different approach. Furthermore, the mentorship should also consider the development stage of the enterprise in the process.

2.3.13.1 What type of enterprises receive mentorship?

Theories of adult and career development suggest that the need for mentorship is greatest among those employees who are new in the world of work and have less work

experience (Kram,1983:611). Similarly, in enterprise development, mentorship is mostly offered to start-up enterprises (Ramukumba,2014:22). Most small enterprises experience problems in running their businesses, particularly when they are in the start-up phase (Ramukumba, 2014:25). According to Deakins, Graham and Sullivan (1998:159), lack of capacity in new enterprises is overcome by offering of mentorship to these enterprises using other entrepreneurs as mentors. Mentorship support, however, is not limited to start-ups. Established small and medium sized enterprises also receive mentorship.

In South Africa, enterprise mentorship, in some cases, has been offered as a value-added service to the small enterprises that received finance from the financial institutions. For example, Khula Enterprise Finance, the predecessor of Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA) followed this approach in its mentorship (Fischer & Herrington, 2004:12). Mentorship was offered by Khula accredited mentors and the service was at no cost to the enterprise receiving the service. The mentorship was also structured formally. Some institutions, such as the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) opted for mentorship offered by volunteer mentors recruited from the private sector (NYDA, 2012:40).

It is important to note that mentors who provide mentorship are accredited mentors who have gone through mentorship training. Others are just general business advisors who are usually recruited by the sponsor/funder to participate in a mentorship programme.

Although there have been attempts to formalise the discipline of being a mentor, the discipline still requires a lot of attention. It is not immediately evident whether accredited trained mentors or non-accredited mentors impact on the mentorship outcomes. This is an area that requires further research.

2.3.13.2 Mentorship Challenges of SMEs

As mentioned earlier, mentorship of small enterprises is a fairly new phenomenon when it comes to small enterprise development. As a result, there have been a number of barriers that inhibited the introduction of mentorship to SMEs. One of these is that, SMEs, in general, find it hard to see value in any form of workplace development, including mentorship (Peel, 2008:3). According to Peel's research findings, close to 80% of SMEs expressed doubt on whether mentoring will improve business performance as there is lack of evidence on whether mentoring does really help with business performance. Introducing mentorship to SMEs has therefore not been easy. Lack of time is the second element that most SMEs normally raise as the reason for their lack of interest or participation in management development programmes such as mentorship. Although mentorship does not require SMEs to be off-site most of the time when it is offered, SMEs still believe it is time consuming.

As stated above, mentorship sometimes is not seen to be adding value. Issues that are highlighted as being responsible for this include differences in business culture, communication and the learning style (Brodie *et.al*., n.d.:6).

Clear communication about what the mentorship intervention is about and its goals is important. This communication is on-going and takes place between all the parties involved which are the mentor, protégé, and the funder or sponsor. According to Brodie (2017), when mentorship intervention lacks clear articulation of roles at the start, it may have a negative impact on the mentorship including the performance of the protégé.

The business culture of a small enterprise is not as structured as that of big organisations. Peel stated that one of the greatest barriers identified in small enterprise mentorship is the difficulty to persuade SMEs of the benefits of training, including that of mentorship (Peel, 2008:3). This means that although the SMEs may participate in a mentorship

programme, they may still be suspicious of whether there would be any value of such an intervention.

As indicated earlier, it is important to acknowledge that the learning style of entrepreneurs or small businesses is different from the learning style undertaken to individuals in an organisation. Whilst giving advice during mentorship may be something that is not encouraged in organisational mentorship, for enterprise mentorship it is crucial.

2.3.14 Conclusion

Notwithstanding all the various pieces of research, Bozeman and Feeney (2007:735) believe that there are conceptual gaps in mentorship research and theory. Studies that have been conducted focused on mentoring of novice entrepreneurs or start-up businesses, franchise businesses, youth businesses, farmers and women owned businesses (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015; St-Jean & Audet, 2012; Terblanche, 2011; Waters *et al*., 2002). Gold *et.al* also argued that there still remains a significant gap of knowledge of what happens in mentoring, what participants experience and what value they gain in mentoring (Gold, *et.al.*,2003: 53). It is for these reasons that this research was undertaken.

3. CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to plan the ways in which to gather the data for a research project in a proper way. This chapter looks at the research design, data collection methods and sampling approach that were followed in undertaking the research. In order to collect data suitable to respond to the research question, it is important to describe how the data collection process was be approached. Therefore, the research design explains how the aims and objectives of the study have been attained.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

As stated above, research design is an important element of any research. Bryman defines research design as a framework used for the generation of evidence that is suitable for the research question (Bryman, 2012:45). The study is a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted mainly on Black-owned small enterprises that have participated or are participating in mentorship programmes offered by the government and private sector. According to Hopkins (2000:12) a descriptive study assists in founding an association between variables. It is for this reason that a descriptive method is preferred for this study. Similarly, a cross-sectional study enables collection of data on more than one case at a single point in time (Bryman:2012:59: 2012:59). The use of a cross-sectional study will therefore assist the researcher to investigate more than one case and also see if there are any variations in how the mentorship programmes are executed by both government and the private sector.

Certain scholars believe that some research questions lend themselves to either use of quantitative or qualitative methods (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007:376). Other scholars believe that researchers should only limit themselves to one method of research (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007:384). These scholars fall into a category that is referred to as epistemological purity. Epistemological purity refers to those researchers who limit

themselves to either quantitative or qualitative methods (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007:384). Therefore, in deciding on the method to use the researcher should be guided by looking at which method will better provide answers to the issue being studied (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007:377). Furthermore, the inherent strengths or weaknesses in each approach should be used to guide the selection of an appropriate method. Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:132) also reiterate that certain research topics sometimes require specific research design. It is against this background that a mixed method research design approach was used for this study. Therefore, this study is based on both quantitative and qualitative research design.

As stated above, there are advantages and disadvantages of using either quantitative research design or qualitative design. For this research, the first advantage of the quantitative design is reducing researcher subjectivity. Secondly, generalization of the findings to the broader population will be enhanced. The limitation however, is that quantitative design confines outcomes to what the researcher has framed in the questions as most questions are closed ended (Matveev, 2002:61). The qualitative component on the other hand has assisted with refining the questionnaire as new issues emerged during the interviews with the funders. Furthermore, the qualitative component helped with gathering insights from the funder's perspective as these were likely not to be picked up in the survey of the small enterprises.

3.3 SAMPLING

This section defines the sampling approach that will be followed in undertaking this research. In doing so, a clear explanation of the sampling universe, sampling frame and why a particular sampling technique is preferred for this study will be provided.

3.3.1 The sampling universe

The study population includes Black-owned small enterprises that are participating in a mentorship programme. The mentorship programmes that the study has targeted are those that are either funded or implemented by the public and private sector in the Northern Cape. For the private sector, small Black-owned enterprises that are part of an Enterprise Development Programme of Kumba Resources and Allan Gray formed the sampling frame. On the other hand, for the public sector, enterprises that were included are from the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) mentorship programme.

3.3.2 The Sampling Unit

The sampling unit also known as the unit of analysis refers to those enterprises from which data for the study will be collected (Bless, *et.al*., 2013:133). As stated earlier, the goal of this research is to describe the method or approach used in mentorship. Thus, small enterprises and the funders of the mentorship programmes were the unit of analysis. The small enterprises are the small Black-owned enterprises that are in mentorship programme. The funders on the other hand are the public and private sector organisations that are implementing the mentorship programme. For the private sector, enterprises funded by Kumba Resources and Allan Gray were the respondents. Whilst for the public sector, enterprises coming from the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) mentorship programme were included.

3.3.3 Sampling Design

3.3.3.1 Small enterprise survey

There are various sampling techniques that can be used in research. There is the probability and the non-probability technique. In probability, each unit in the sample population has an equal chance of being selected whilst in non-probability sampling some units are more likely to be selected than others. For this research, it is not possible to have a list of all Black-owned enterprise that are in mentorship or have received mentorship. As a result, the researcher relied on those enterprises that are accessible to

the researcher and possess some characteristics of what the research seeks to examine. A non-probability convenience sample was then selected for this research. As stated above, the convenience sample consists of those small Black-owned enterprises who are participating in the mentorship programme implemented by SEDA, Kumba and Allan Gray based in the Northern Cape. White owned small enterprises owned will be excluded from the study as they are not the main focus on the research.

Bryman argues that convenience samples are more prevalent in studies of organisations. As this research is focusing on entities, namely small enterprises, convenience sample was deemed to be suitable in this instance. Bryman further argues that sample selection should not only be based on representability but also on the appropriateness for the purpose of the investigation (Bryman,2012:12). It is also on this basis that this type of sample was chosen. A convenience sample is also less costly with respect to time and money (Marshall, 1996:523).

A convenience sample has some limitations in that it may be difficult to make generalisations. This is because it is not known of what population this sample represents. There is currently no complete database of small Black-owned small enterprises which are in mentorship programmes either funded by government or the private sector.

3.3.3.2 Funders semi-structured interviews

The small enterprises that participated in the survey are part of mentorship programmes implemented by the funders/sponsors. Semi-structured telephonic interviews were conducted with key individuals, predominantly project manages responsible for or knowledgeable of mentorship programmes of funding organisations, namely Kumba Resources (private sector) and Small Enterprise Development Agency (public sector). A purposive or judgmental sampling was used because the funders are selected specifically for the purpose of giving in-depth insight about the design of the mentorship programme.

Bryman (2012:418) states that purposive sampling is useful when you want to sample only participants or respondents relevant to the research.

3.3.4 Sampling Size

Determining the size of sample can be based on a number of factors (Bryman, 2012:197) which include the level of sampling error you want to tolerate and costs. For this research however, sample size was based on what is academically desirable for this Masters programme taking into cognisance budgetary and time constraints. The research targeted Black-owned enterprises which are participating or have participated in a mentorship programme managed by government and private sector. These different programmes are chosen to reflect different patterns in the delivery of mentorship by government and private sector. The sample was 50 small Black-owned enterprises which obtained from the funding organisations.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

This section describes the data collection methods and tools that were used for this research. As mentioned earlier, the research utilised a mixed research design. In this regard, a survey questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data. A survey research is suitable for a descriptive, exploratory and explanatory research. As this research is more descriptive, this survey is therefore preferred for data collection.

3.4.1 Survey Questionnaire

In order to answer the research question, a survey of participants of Kumba Resources and SEDA mentorship programmes was undertaken. The tool that was used for data collection was a standardized questionnaire. The formulation of the questions for the questionnaire incorporated questions from the Mentoring Functions Questionnaire (MFQ) developed by Scandura (2004) for various research projects. Some questions were however adopted for this research. For cost effectiveness and speed, an online emailed

questionnaire, complemented by telephonic interviews and hand delivered questionnaires were used for the data collection. Telephonic interviews and hand delivered questionnaires were utilised in order to supplement the low response rate of online survey. Both the email and telephonic survey utilised the standardized questionnaire. Data analysis and recording of responses was improved, as a result.

3.4.1.1 Questionnaire Layout

The majority of questions were closed ended questions, in other words structured questions. Closed or structured questions provide a range of possible answers for each question asked (Bless *et.al.*, 2006:130). Although use of closed ended questions helps to simplify data processing, the major limitation is that important categories in possible answers may be left out. In order to reduce this risk, the questionnaire was piloted and furthermore funders were interviewed first.

The questionnaire was further structured into themes which were based on the key issues the research seeks to investigate. Theron and Saunders in Davids and Theron (2014:176) suggest that specific research issues to be investigated should be specified first and thereafter look at what information will be needed to respond to the issues. For this reason, the small enterprise questionnaire was structured according to the main questions the research seeks to understand. These themes included initiation, execution of mentorship, perceptions on the value of the mentorship and description of success.

For consistency, the questionnaire was in English, as this is the business language that is used in South Africa. Moreover, black small business owners are more likely to be comfortable articulating their responses in English, as opposed to their mother tongue. It was assumed that all the respondents have at least basic understanding of English. Translation of the questionnaire was not considered as it is time consuming and costly.

3.4.1.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were used to collect data from the organisations that implement or fund mentorship programmes. The three organisations that were covered included from the private sector Kumba, Allan Gray and Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA). The purpose of the interviews with funding organisations was to ascertain how mentorship is delivered according to them. Semi-structured interviews unlike structured interviews provide minimal structure in the questions that are asked (Bryman, 2012:212). Furthermore, the interviewer in semi-structured interviews has more latitude and was encouraged to probe further on some questions, based on the responses received from the respondents. The respondents were the mainly project managers who are directly involved in the implementation of the project. The reason for targeting the project managers was that the research was more concerned with the actual implementation process than strategic aspects of the mentorship intervention.

3.4.1.2.1 Interview Schedule

The tool that was used is an interview schedule which contained mainly open-ended questions. The advantage of open ended questions in this case is that respondents had an opportunity to express freely their own answers (Bless et.al., 2006:130) without being limited to answers provided by the researcher. These interviews with the funders were conducted before administering the questionnaire to the small enterprises. This allowed for modifications to be made to the questionnaire.

3.5 LIMITATIONS

As foreseen, it was not an easy task to access the list of enterprises from the identified organisations. Out of the 5 organisations that were requested to assist with the list only three responded. From the three that responded, it is only Kumba and Allan Gray who easily shared the list of their enterprises. It took more than three months to access the list from SEDA.

On receipt of the lists, enterprises were reluctant to respond to the online questionnaire. More than five reminders were sent to the 20 respondents who were sent the online survey. This led the researcher to consider a telephonic survey to complete the remaining reach a total of 40 responses that the study managed to cover.

Another limitation was the availability of respondents to respond to the questionnaire. Respondents are busy people who do not have a lot of time to complete the questionnaire. To deal with this challenge, the researcher had to make appointments with some of the respondents who were not available on first engagement. This further delayed data collection as some of the times were outside the set timeframe for data collection.

Finally, due to challenges of accessing enterprises and also availability of the respondents the research was delayed tremendously. To limit further delays of the research, follow up telephone calls were made to the respondents to request their time to participate in the survey.

4. CHAPTER 4 – RESULTS

4.1 SURVEY RESEARCH

This chapter will provide the results from both the small enterprise survey research and semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with the funders. The section is structured according to the major themes that are important in designing an effective mentorship programme.

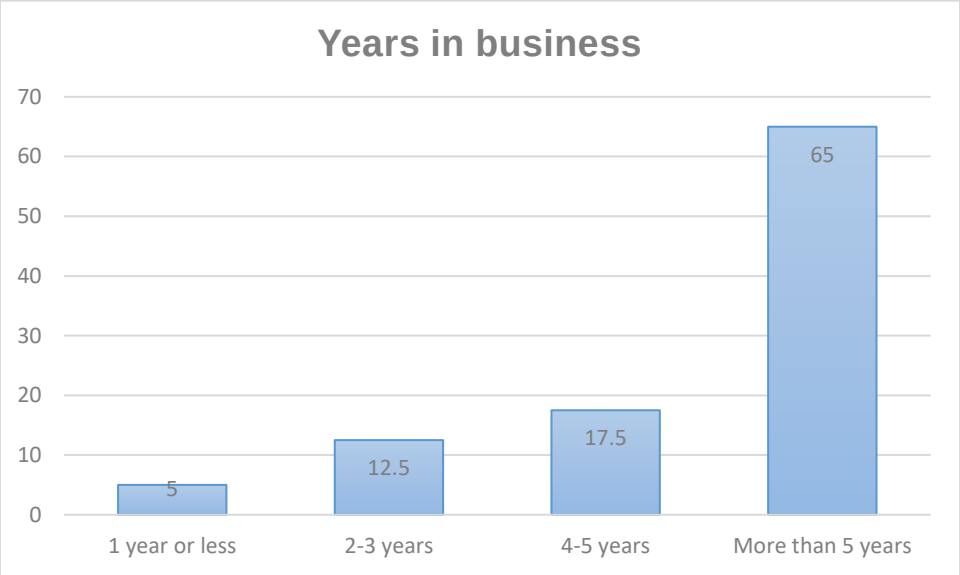
4.1.1 Profile of Respondents

A total of 40 respondents completed both an online and a telephonic survey. In looking at the gender spread, 30% were female and 70% were male. The high percentage of male respondents is possibly due to the number of respondents who came from Kumba which is mainly a mining company. The mining sector has traditionally been dominated by males. The Kumba figure has therefore skewed the gender distribution.

The average age of the respondents is between 35 and 44. This could be because most people tend to start working before they consider going into business. No respondents were below 24 years of age. Youth, meaning those below 35 years constituted 30% of the sample.

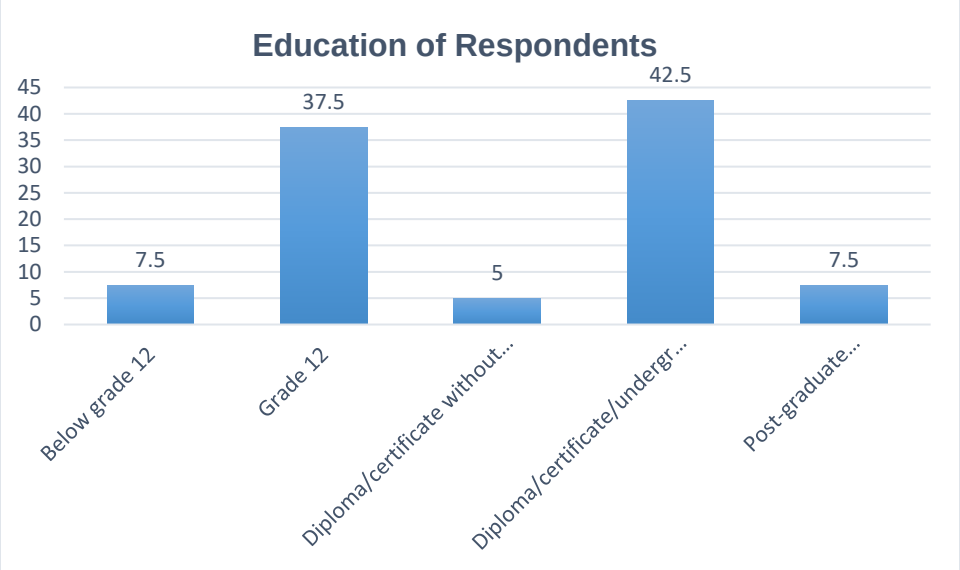
It is also important to note that the number of years that the majority (65%) of the respondents have been in business is over five years. Whilst mentorship is typically earmarked in most instances for start-ups it is not unusual for enterprises that have been in business for a longer period to receive mentorship.

Figure 4.1: Number of years in business



With respect to education, the number of respondents with no matric qualification is only 7.5%. Whilst most respondents have a matric qualification, the percentage of those with post matric (meaning diplomas, post matric certificate or degree) is higher.

Figure 4.2: Education Level



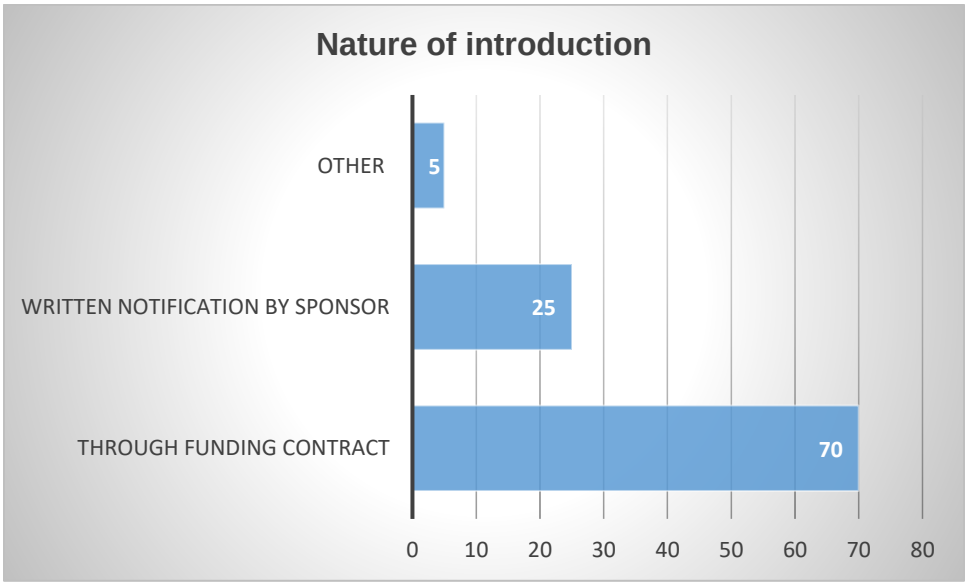
4.1.2 Mentorship Execution Process

Kram (1983:614) came up with four phases for implementation of mentorship programmes. These research findings highlight the extent to which these phases are taken into cognisance in the execution of mentorship programmes.

4.1.2.1 Introduction to mentorship

The approach used in introducing the mentorship programme to both the mentor and the protégé is an important component of the mentorship programme. The results show that 70% of the respondents were introduced to the programme through a funding or sponsorship contract. Both the private and public sector funded mentorship programmes used the mentorship contract as first step of formalizing the participation of the protégés in the programme. On the other hand, about 5% were informed about the mentorship via advertisement.

Figure 4.3: Introduction of protégés to the mentorship programme



Whilst for most respondents mentorship was introduced through funding, 60% indicated that it was not compulsory for them to participate in the programme. This means that for the majority of participants the involvement in mentorship was voluntary. This could be attributed to the fact that the protégés were from programmes sponsored or funded by

organisations which did not necessarily offer them financial support in the form of a loan or a grant. This is supported by St-Jean (2012) who argues that mentorship programmes should include protégés who have shown willingness to be part of the programme. This therefore is one of the design features that a mentorship programme should take into cognisance.

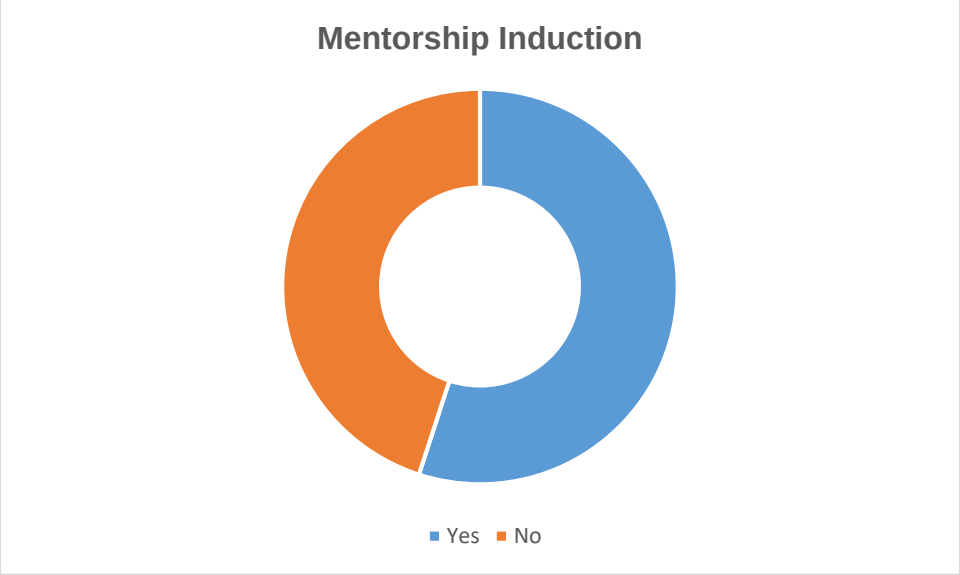
4.1.2.2 The role of protégés in mentor selection

The protégés were not involved in the selection of their mentors. The results show that 99% of respondents were not involved in the selection process. The 1% that indicated that they were involved can be treated as an outlier which may be due to response error by the participant. This means that almost all the protégés were not aware of skills and knowledge the mentor brought. The research conducted by Barrera Associates found that effective mentor-protégé matching at the planning stages of the programme is crucial in ensuring success of the relationship. The protégé has to be aware of the expertise the mentor possesses whilst the mentor has to be aware of the development needs of the protégé. Failure to do that may result in mismatch between the mentor and the protégé which will ultimately lead to a dysfunctional mentorship relationship. As Bozeman and Feeney (2007:720) stated in their 'Goodness to Fit' it is important to have the acceptable fit between the mentor and the protégé.

4.1.2.3 Mentorship Induction

It is important to note that on the issue of induction, there is almost equal split between those who went through an induction before starting with their mentorship and those who did not. According to the survey, the induction sessions conducted before mentorship commenced focused mainly on clarifying the roles and expectations of the protégé and highlighted the objectives of the mentorship programme.

Figure 4.4: Protégé Induction

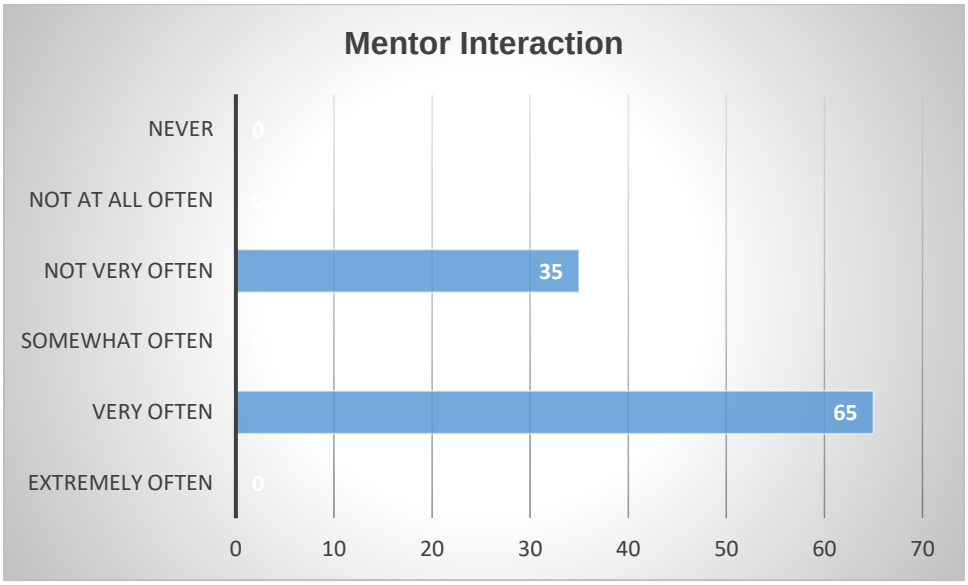


4.1.3 Mentorship Model

4.1.3.1 Engagement between mentor and protégé

Key to a mentorship intervention is the mentorship model applied by a mentor during the interactions with the protégé. First, the frequency of interactions is crucial and also delivery approach. On the issue of frequency of interactions, Figure 4.5 shows that whilst one would expect that the interactions with the mentor are frequent, the results surprisingly show that there are instances where this interaction was less frequent than expected.

Figure 4.5: Frequency of interaction between mentors and protégés



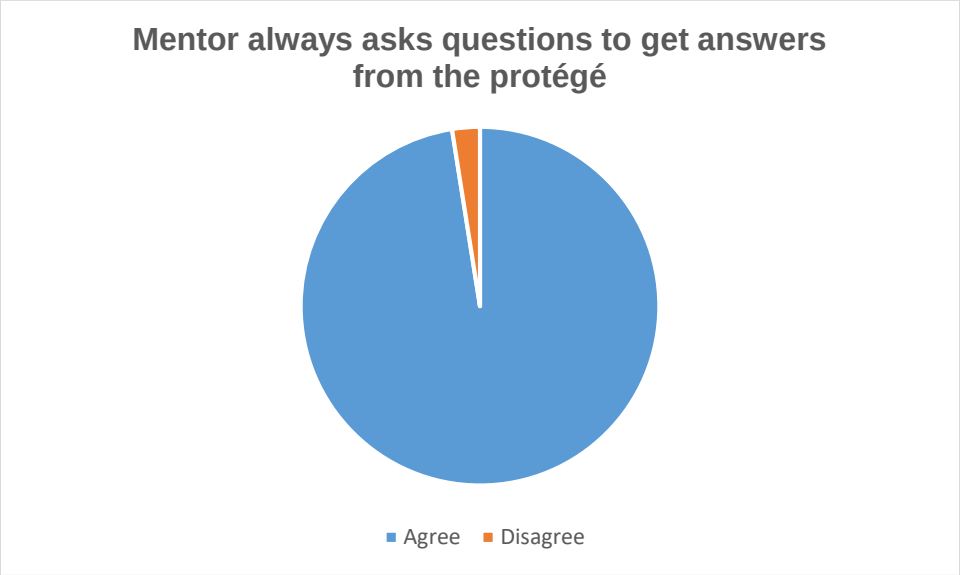
According to the survey results, the predominant approach of engagement used by mentors in the delivery of the mentorship were written explanation (email) and verbal exchanges which took place telephonically or face-to-face. Working together at the business premises and modelling or demonstrating were not very popular approaches. Research (Brodie, n.d.:5) suggests that a mentor should be able to switch between the different approaches or styles when helping and imparting knowledge to the protégé. This implies that a combination of face-to-face and online interaction is acceptable as long as the mentor knows when to use a particular style of interaction with the protégé.

4.1.3.2 Mentorship Delivery

Important in a mentorship intervention, is how the actual mentorship is delivered. Data from the Likert scale were narrowed down to the nominal level by combining all ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’ and ‘strongly disagree’, ‘agree’ responses into two categories ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’. The results based on Likert scale used show that the mode or most common response in almost all the statements was the agreement with various statements. The percentage of those who agreed, indicated by top 2 box response selection, or disagreed, indicated by bottom 2 box response selection to the various statements is detailed below.

Figure 4.6 below shows that for almost all the respondents the mentor asks questions in order to get answers from the protégés themselves.

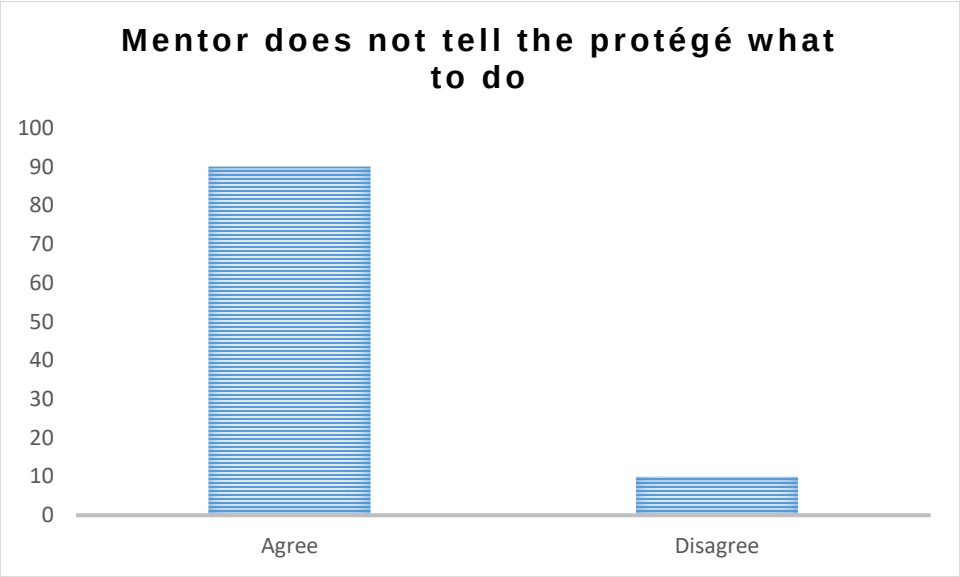
Figure 4.6: Asking of questions by the mentors



Linked to the above aspect, 95% of respondents selected the top 2 boxes, indicating that the mentor asked the right questions to make them think. There seems to be a correlation between whether the mentor asks the right questions and questions asked encourage protégés to come up with own answers to issues they seek answers from the mentors. Clutterbuck (2005:5) also suggested that the most effective mentors are those who place emphasis on listening and encouraging their protégés to speak.

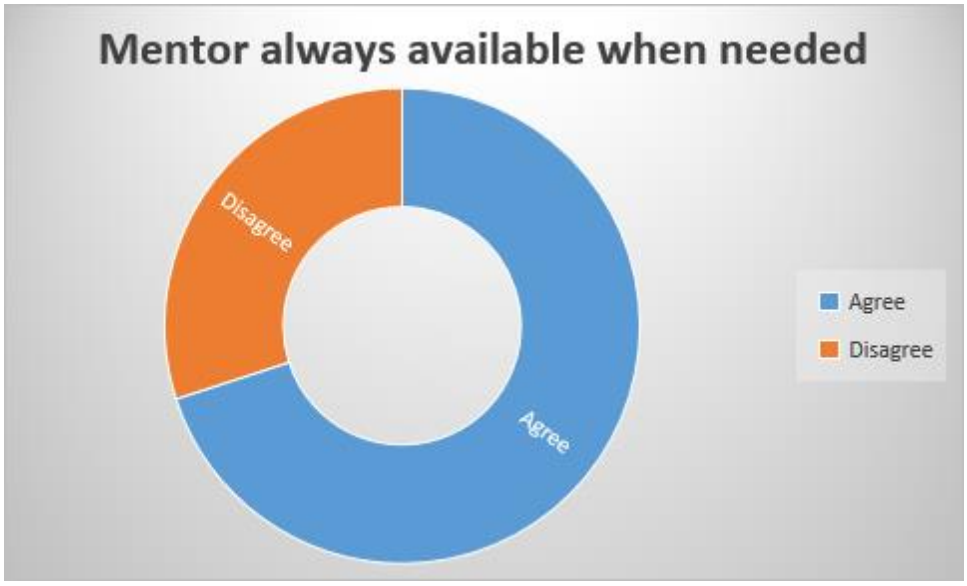
The other issue that produced overwhelming response from the respondents is whether the mentor told his or her protégé what to do. As figure 4.7 below shows, 90% of the protégés indicated that the mentor did not tell them what to do. According to Gravells (2004) non-directive mentorship combined with an involved mentor is an ideal mentorship approach. This means that a mentor must find a way of assisting the protégé without relying on just giving instructions on what to do. The protégé must find a way of finding the solutions to the problem whilst the mentor provides guidance.

Figure 4.7: Directive or non-directive approach to mentorship



A non-directive approach however does not mean hands-off. This means that the mentor should have an ability to communicate. A study conducted by Brodie *et.al*. (n.d.13) highlighted that poor communication from the mentor may result in the immediate breakdown of a new relationship. With respect to availability of mentors the results are not as colossal as the previously presented aspects. Compared to the 90-95% positive response, in this case 70% indicated that the mentors were always available when needed.

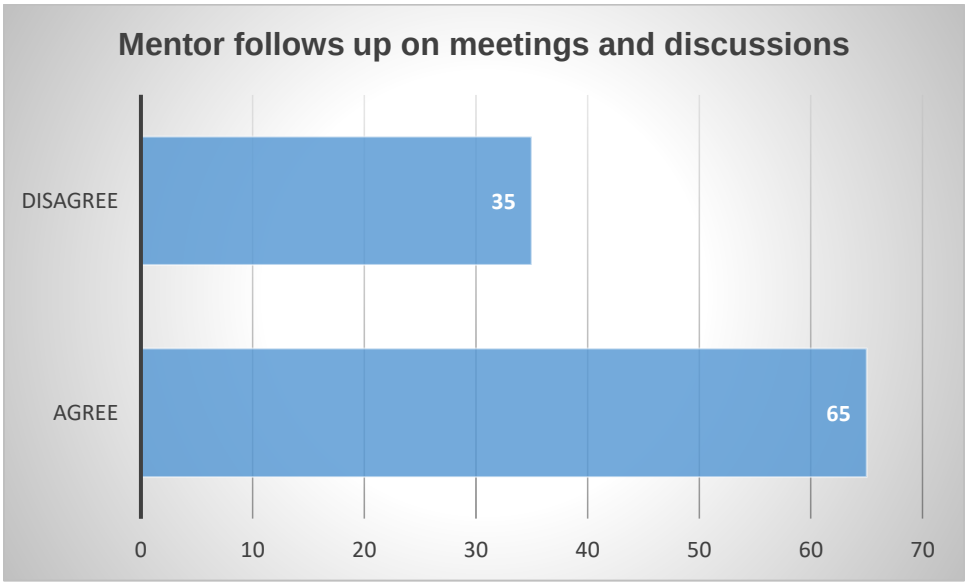
Figure 4.8: Availability of mentors



Knowledge is one of the important aspects in the delivery of mentorship. The respondents were asked to assess whether they felt their mentor had adequate knowledge and good understanding of the sector or industry in which their business operated. The result shows that on knowledge 90% of the respondents seemed to think their mentors had adequate knowledge and 80% on general understanding of their sector.

The interesting aspect that showed some marked difference is with respect to the follow ups conducted by the mentors after mentorship sessions. Although 65% agreed that mentors did conduct these follow ups, 35% disagreed. It is important that following the initial kick-off meeting, follow up sessions were arranged between the mentor and the protégé. According to Brodie (n.d.:14) frequent contact between the mentor and the protégé is crucial to create an effective structure in the relationship. Hence follow-up sessions have to be scheduled.

Figure 4.9: Follow ups by mentors on meetings



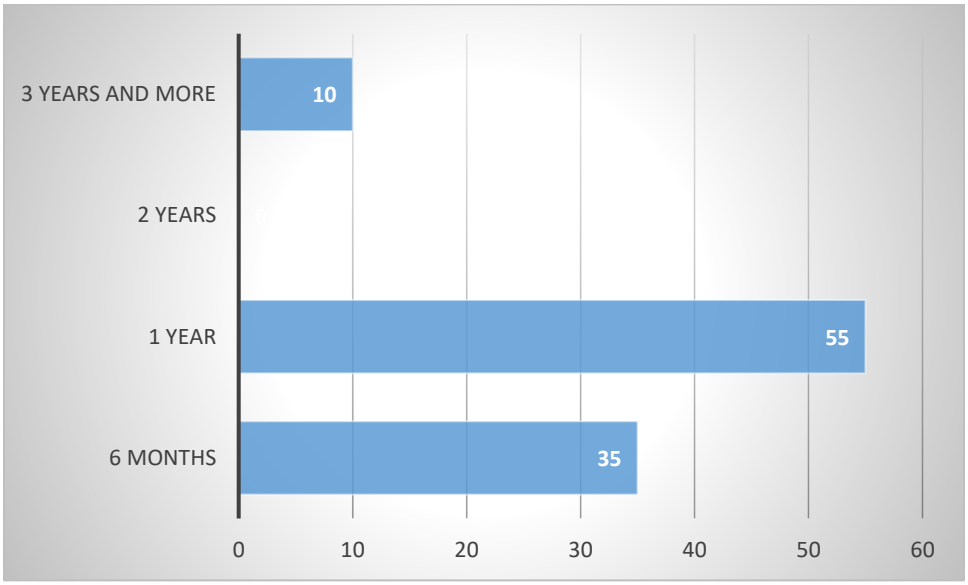
4.1.3.3 Structure of mentorship

Whilst the delivery model is important for a successful mentorship programme, how the relationship is structured is also important. In looking at the structure, it is important to look at the proximity of the mentor to the protégé and the skills of the mentor. On the issue of proximity, 98% of respondents indicated that the mentor was located in close proximity to the protégé. On skills of the mentor, it is interesting to note that there is almost equal spread between those who knew the skills their mentor possessed and those who do not. 52% indicated that they do not know what skills their mentors have, whilst 48% had some knowledge. Although this study shows that the proteges were not made aware of the skills of their mentors, Clutterbuck (2005) emphasized the importance of having mentoring standards. For these scholars, the rapid rise in mentorship programmes targeting youth or vulnerable requires great focus to be placed on the skills of the mentor to manage any risk that may arise from exposure of protégés to unskilled and inexperienced mentors (Clutterbuck, 2005:2). Therefore, it is important for the protégés to be aware of what skills the mentors possess.

4.1.3.4 Mentorship Duration

The duration of a mentorship programme is important in designing the mentorship programme. According to the survey the average duration of the mentorship is 1 year.

Figure 4.10: Mentorship duration

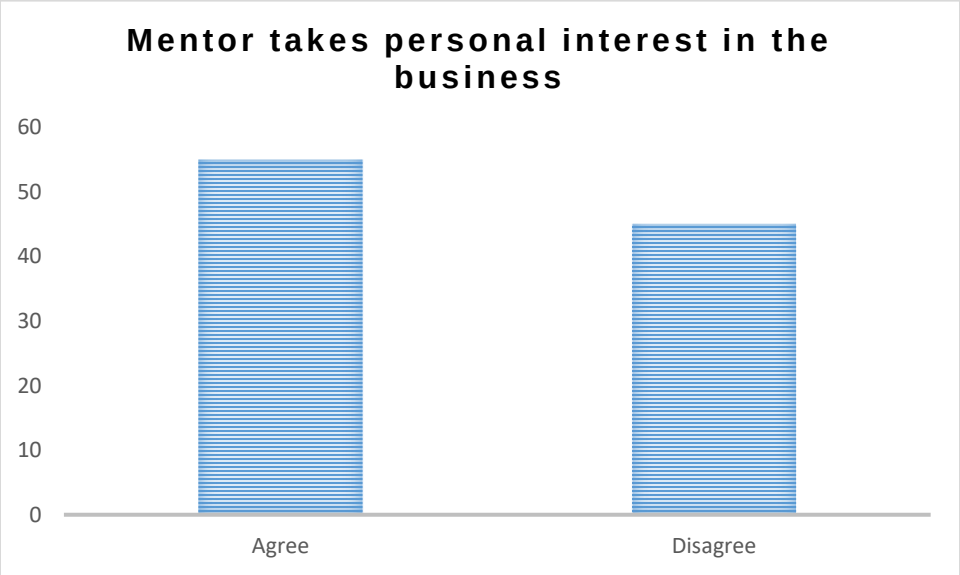


Contrary to what the literature shows the average duration of an effective mentorship should at least be 5 years particularly in organisational mentorship. Whilst acknowledging that organisational mentorship is different from enterprise mentorship, the 1-year average duration of the programmes covered in this study is concerning.

4.1.3.5 Mentor focus and orientation

Equally important in the design of a mentorship intervention, is what the mentor focuses on when mentorship is conducted and mentor positioning. There is great difference in the responses given by the protégés on the issue of mentor focus and mentor orientation. As figure 4.11 shows, the percentage of those respondents who felt that the mentors took personal interest in their business was almost equal to that of those who disagreed with this sentiment.

Figure 4.11: Level of interest show by mentors towards protégé's business



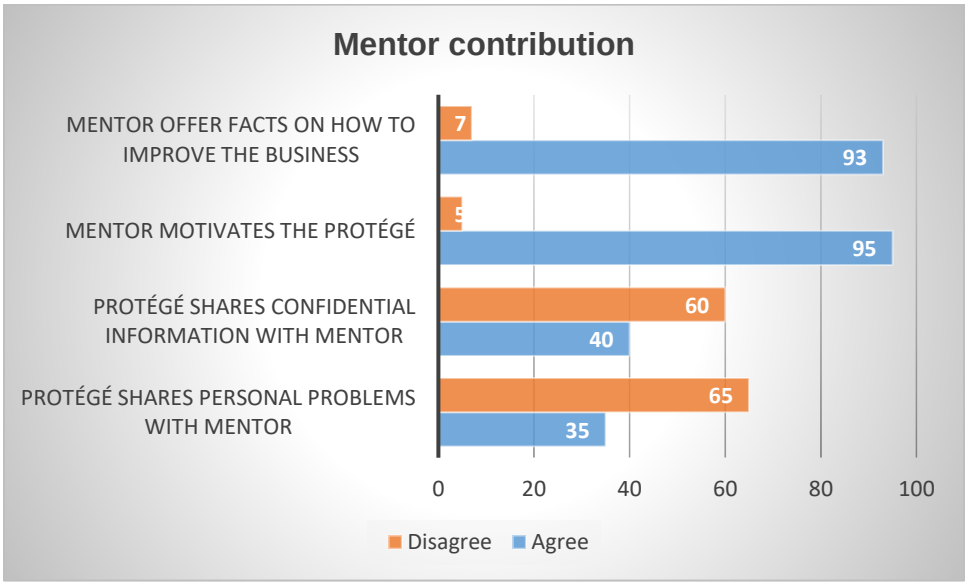
Furthermore, there seems to be equal split between those who were of the view that the mentor took personal interest and devoted special time to their businesses.

Table 4.1: Mentor devotion to the protégés business

Time devoted by mentor to the business	**Total (%)**
Agree	43
Disagree	37
Neither agree or disagree	20
Grand Total	**100**

On the various items assessed through the Likert scale, there are elements where there is consistency in the responses. More than 90% of respondents agreed with the two items as detailed in figure 4.12 below.

Figure 4.12: Mentor roles



An analysis of variance (ANOVA) highlights that there is a great deal of variance on the most elements measured. In line with non-directive and involved mentorship model 93% of respondents indicated that the mentor provided them with information on how to improve the business. Unlike organisational mentorship, giving of advice in enterprise mentorship is encouraged. However, this advice may easily be regarded as directional advice, something that is not in line with non-directive mentorship model. This means that a mentor should have the ability to understand how far he/she can go with giving advice.

In terms of the design approach of mentorship programmes, mentors are also expected to offer motivation to the protégé. The result of this study which shows that 95% of the respondents indicated that their mentors motivated them is encouraging.

Furthermore, it is argued that once protégés are comfortable with their mentor, it becomes easy for them to share personal problems and confidential information. The results show that the protégés in the programmes were not yet comfortable to share personal and confidential information with the mentors.

4.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS RESULTS

4.2.1 Objectives of the mentorship programme

From the interviews conducted, the main motivation for introducing a mentorship programme was to capacitate the entrepreneurs. The funders realised that a 'one size fits all' approach of generic training was not sustainable. Small business owners were also beginning to be reluctant to attend the structured training. Another approach was then sought.

4.2.2 Initiation of the Intervention

Before inclusion into the programme, small enterprise owners go through an assessment and thereafter are categorised according to their needs or development gaps and stage of business. Further, the assessments are used to assess locality, legitimacy, maturity and business acumen. Once the assessment was complete, a development plan was drawn up which forms the basis of mentorship.

Following the selection, protégés are placed in the programme. There seems to be no induction conducted in the three programmes included in the study. However, it is important to note that this contradicts what the protégés stated as the majority indicated that they had been through some induction. In some cases, the programme funders only took the protégés through their mentorship agreement which clarified the roles and responsibilities.

4.2.3 Expected role of the mentors

The funders listed a number of roles that they expect the mentors to play. With respect to what the funders/sponsors expect from the mentors, they indicated that they expect mentors to discuss issues with honesty with the protégé, conduct site-visits or

scheduled meetings and maintain confidentiality. Using their technical abilities and skills, the mentors are also expected to provide advice to the protégés and critique where appropriate. These expectations are incorporated in the agreement that is signed with the protégés and the mentors.

4.2.4 Mentorship Approach

The results show that the funders/sponsors of mentorship programme do not prescribe the mentorship model the mentors should adopt. That decision is left to the mentor. Whether this is the correct way of structuring a mentorship programme will be dealt with later in the findings. However, the funders define what they expect of their mentors and protégés.

4.3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results show that in as much as mentorship originates from an organisational context, mentorship of small enterprises is different. Therefore, there is a need to re-engineer the mentorship models promoted by scholars such as Kram to fit the context of small enterprises whether they are start-ups or established, black-owned or not. This means that mentorship models targeting small enterprises need to be designed in such a way that they accommodate other roles that the mentors have to take into cognisance small business context. In addition, concepts that were applied in an organisational context must be changed to fit the context of enterprise mentorship. Critically, it is important to acknowledge that accepted models of mentorship may not suit enterprise mentoring because small enterprises have a different approach to learning and development (Gravells, 2006.:7).

5. CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will present a summary of the theory, the main findings from the data analysis and the main recommendations of the study. In presenting the findings the report will concentrate on the mentorship process and mentorship style as they are the two key components that influence the design of a mentorship programme.

5.1 SUMMARY AND MAIN FINDINGS

5.1.1 Mentorship Process

5.1.1.1 Initiation Phase

Kram's model (1983:614) of mentorship includes four phases of mentorship. Initiation phase is the first of those phases. This phase is about establishing the relationship between the protégé and the mentor. A number of design elements take place during this phase. These include, selection of the protégés, the involvement of the protégé in the selection of his or her own mentor and the structure of the relationship. On the issue of selection, the process is mainly managed by the funder/sponsor. The research found that the capacity needs assessment is quite important in enabling how the mentorship programme should be tailored to the needs of the protégé.

As Allen has stated, both the mentor and the protégé should play a role in the selection process. This is important in ensuring the relationship works and can be sustained. With respect to all respondents from both the public and private sector, the involvement of the protégé in the selection of the mentor was very minimal.

Importantly, for both public and private sector participation in the mentorship programmes was not compulsory. This is encouraging as studies show that if protégés are forced into

the mentorship, the success will be compromised. In other instances, this may lead to dysfunctional mentorship relationships.

The structure of the relationship is also a critical aspect of the initiation stage. The research found out that whilst with some funders, the issue of location of the protégé is important in determining structuring of the mentorship, with others this was not important.

Furthermore, the skills profile of the mentor is critical for matching purposes. The research could not establish the extent to which this is considered by the funders. Safe to say the protégés were aware of the skills set of their mentors.

In summary, the initiation phase is not approached with constancy and sometimes does not incorporate all the key elements that have to be included in the design of a mentorship programme. This is something that the funders or sponsors of mentorship programmes must take into account.

5.1.1.2 Cultivation Phase

Cultivation phase is the core of mentorship programme. This is the phase where the actual mentorship takes place. Similar to initiation phase, there are important design elements that should be incorporated in this phase to guarantee effective implementation of the mentorship programme. These include induction, mentorship model and mentorship style.

Training or induction is important in defining the scope and terms and conditions of the mentorship programme. Failure to undertake such an induction may lead to misunderstandings between the mentor, the protégé and the funders/sponsors. Both the funders and the protégés indicated that induction was not an important of the programme. Emphasis was mainly placed on the mentorship agreement.

On the issue of mentorship model, Kubberoed and Hagen (2015) emphasized four mentorship roles that a mentorship programme must incorporate. These include role modelling, expert, learning facilitator and coaching roles. This research has found that role modelling is the lesser role mentors play during mentorship. This could be caused by the fact that mentors in most instances interact with their protégés electronically through emails or telephones. Face-to-face interaction was limited. This is something that programme implementers need to note. Mentorship agreement should prescribe the nature of interaction and ensure that there is suitable use of the roles of each. For example, one may find that the situation requires the mentors to play all the four roles. But due to not being prescriptive, mentors end up playing roles that are convenient for them and not necessarily what the business requires.

With respect to the mentorship style the research conducted by St Jean and Audet (2013) proposes that the maieutic or non-directive mentorship and high level of involvement by the mentor is an ideal mentorship approach. This research found that the level of involvement of the mentors, together with giving of directives, had a positive impact of the protégé. However, the fact that close to 40% of the mentors are not utilizing this style implies that there is still a lot that mentors need to do.

In support of Kubberoed and Hagen, it is evident that mentorship cannot be a one size fits all process. Variations taking into account the business needs of each protégé must be considered.

5.1.1.3 Separation Phase

This phase occurs when the mentorship has been completed. None of the surveyed small business owners reached this stage. As discussed in the previous sections, the separation phase is a winding down phase which takes place when the relationship has

reached its end and delivered on the desired outcomes. On average, the majority of the respondents have been in the mentorship programme for about three years. However, none of the respondents have reached a stage where they feel they don't need a mentor. This means that none of them did not reach the separation stage. Therefore, there was no finding.

5.1.1.4. Redefinition Phase

The redefinition phase occurs when the mentor and the protégé no longer relate professionally to each other. The relationship evolves to that of peer interaction. Similar to the cultivation phase, all the enterprises covered in the survey had not yet reached the redefinition phase.

The main aim of the study was to examine the design and execution components of mentorship schemes implemented by both public and private sectors. In particular the study examined the elements of the design considered by both sectors, the style adopted by mentors and the functions/role played by the mentors. Taking into consideration what the study wanted to achieve, the key findings from are detailed below

- Design in both public and private sector is not well structured. There is no specific mentorship model that each sector is following. There is no conscious focus on the various mentorship phases, as devised by Kram. However, both sectors do try to incorporate some elements of what is deemed to be good practice when it comes to the design of mentorship programmes. These include frequency of interactions between the mentor and the protégés and the role/functions mentors play.
- Mentor-protégé matching is arbitrary. Whilst a number of research studies have emphasized the importance of proper matching between the mentor and the protégé, for both public and private sector mentorship programmes this aspect is given little attention. This was evidenced by the fact that some protégés were not aware of the skills their mentors possessed and were not involved in the selection

of their mentors. Further no proper induction of the mentor and protégés was conducted.

- What also emerged from the research is that although not necessarily spelt out or prescribed, **the non-directive and involved mentorship approach** seemed to be the common approach adopted by mentors in their delivery of mentorship. The functions and role of the mentors complement the roles and functions identified by St Jean's mentorship framework. These include psycho-social, career support and role modelling.
- Finally, participation of the protégés in the programme was not compulsory. This is in line with what is recommended for an effective mentorship programme.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section will provide recommendations on what could be done to improve the design of mentorship interventions targeting small business owners. This is for both organisations that are in the public and private sectors.

5.2.1 Mentorship Design

5.2.1.1 Mentorship execution process

On the issue of mentorship execution processes the following is recommended:

- Foremost, the mentorship execution process should commence with the identification and matching of mentors and protégés. Whilst the vetting of the mentors should be undertaken by the programme implementers, it is equally important that the protégés are involved and consulted when mentors are being allocated or matched to them. In this regard, it is highly recommended the matching of mentors with protégés be an integral component of the programme design and should ensure that protégés are consulted when matching takes place

- There needs to be a mentor and protégé combined induction session. It is in this session where both parties will be taken through what the mentorship is all about, the role of the mentor, protégé, expected outcomes, nature of the delivery, duration. Furthermore, the mentorship model or approach to be adopted must be discussed at this session and also agreed to in advance with the mentors to ensure consistency in the delivery and better monitoring and evaluation. Some of these issues that will be dealt with at the induction session should be incorporated in the mentorship agreement that the mentor and protégé must sign. For example, the mentorship agreement should stipulate the amount of time the mentors must spend with the protégés. It became apparent in the survey that some protégés felt the mentors were not spending a lot of time with the mentor.

  "I expect to have a mentor full time"- Protégé respondent.
- A formal agreement between the mentor, protégé and the programme implementer must be signed specifying among other aspects the roles of each part in the process, expectations and outcomes.
- To ease communication between a mentor and the protégé concerted effort should be made to ensure that the protégé can access communication electronically.

5.2.1.2 Mentorship model

The literature suggests that a non-directive-involved mentorship model is an effective model for mentorship. The recommendations with respect to a mentorship model are therefore as follows:

- As some interactions with the mentor take place electronically, internet access by of the protégés must be guaranteed.
- There needs to be a kind of a template that the entrepreneur must use to report on so that the mentor can evaluate what the entrepreneur needs.

- The programme must be professionalised. This is particularly so when it comes to mentors. Mentors that are used should at least have some form of accreditation or an equivalent recognized qualification.
- The programme must balance its focus between general business skills advice and technical skills. In this instance. a mentor needs to have a minimum skills level and practical experience in, if possible, the industry the entrepreneur does business in.

5.2.1.3 Design Elements

It was evident from the research that there were no structured phases that the mentorship programmes followed. In this regard the following is recommended.

Contrary to the four-phased approach championed by Kram, for enterprise mentorship the researcher recommends a three-phased approach.

- Phase 1 – Initiation
- Phase 2 - Cultivation
- Phase 3 - Close- out

Phase 1 – Initiation

This phase should precede planning stage. Planning stage is where all the administrative aspects of the programme are attended to. This includes, securing of budgets, development of programme plan and recruitment or identification of mentors and protégés. It is at this stage where mentors are screened and consent to participate from the protégé is secured.

At the core of the initiation phase is the induction, matching, goal setting, contracting and rapport building. These elements have been discussed in the previous sections.

Phase 2 - Cultivation

The cultivation phase is the core of the mentorship. This is where most of the design components of mentorship come to play. At this stage the mentor is expected to execute his/her role as per principles and protocols agreed to at the initiation phase. It is also at this stage where the mentor performs all the roles and functions expected of him or her. The initiation phase would have prepared the mentor about the needs of his or her protégé and what type of intervention would be appropriate for the business.

Phase 3 – Close-out

This phase takes place when the mentorship reaches its end as per contractual duration. It is at this stage where all the administrative closure processes are undertaken. This includes project reporting by both the mentor and the protégé. A standard report format which is not cumbersome for the protégé can be used. An end of the mentorship event can be held with the mentors and protégés. Such a session will encourage interactions, networking and also serve as an informal review of successes and failures. The session will also pave a way for less formal interactions between the mentors and protégés to take place after the end of the formal programme. It is at this stage that the programme implementers/funders can commission a formal independent critical evaluation of the programme.

6. CONCLUSION

As the intention of the study was to examine the design approaches of enterprise mentorship targeting small black enterprises, the following conclusion can be drawn.

In looking at the design of mentorship, it is important to understand how mentorship was initiated and executed. It is the view of the researcher that in both public and private sector, there seems to be no robust mentorship framework or model adopted by entities before executing mentorship programmes. Although this research did not assess in-depth the outcomes of mentorship, it can be deduced that more structure in design could result in better outcomes. More in-depth investigation is however required to assess that fully.

On the issue of mentorship style adopted, the conclusion is that the failure to prescribe the preferred style the mentors must adopt result in each mentor using his or her own style. However, it can be concluded that the current programmes of mentorship are cognisant of the suitable mentorship style. This is despite the fact that this is not documented upfront.

Lastly, the functions performed by the mentors are an important aspect of the design of the programme. However, lack of proper induction raises unnecessary expectations. Therefore, any design of a mentorship programme should be specify the functions that the mentor will perform.

Whilst there is a general euphoria with respect to use of mentorship to support small enterprises, more work is still required to address the inconsistencies in the design of these programmes. Further research of what influences the particular design of a mentorship scheme and outcomes would also be beneficial to the successful implementation of these programmes.

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APPENDICE I – SME Questionnaire

Dear Business Owner,

I invite you to participate in a research study entitled 'The Design of Mentorship Programmes for Black-owned small enterprises in the Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces'. I am currently enrolled for the Masters in Development Studies at the University of Free State in Bloemfontein, and am in the process of completing my Master's Thesis. The purpose of the research is to examine the design of mentorship programmes offered to Black small business owners. The outcomes will help to improve the implementation of mentorship programmes implemented by both the government and private sector.

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions you don't wish to answer. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you for participating. Your feedback is important.

1. Name of Business	

2. Location of Business (Physical Address)	

3. Years in Business		1 year or less
		2-3 years
		4-5 years
		More than 5 years

4. Is your business a franchise?		yes
		No

5. What is your gender		Female
		Male

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?		Below Grade 12/Matric/Standard 10
		Grade 12/Matric/Standard 10
		Diploma/Certificate without Grade 12/Matric/Standard 10
		Diploma/Certificate/undergraduate degree without Grade 12/Matric/Standard 10
		Post-graduate degree/diploma

7. What is your age?		18-24
		25-34
		35-44
		45-54
		55-64
		65-74
		75+

8. When did you start your mentorship?		2017 (Less than a year ago)
		2016 (One year ago)
		2015 (Two years ago)
		2014 (Three a years ago)
		2013 (More than years ago)

9. What is the duration of your mentorship?		6 Months
		1 year
		2 years
		3 years or more

10. Is your participation in the mentorship compulsory?		yes
		No

11. Have you ever participated in any other business mentorship before this current one?		Yes
		No

12. Do you know what expertise or skills does your mentor have?		yes
		No

13. Which expertise/skills does your mentor have? ***Tick all relevant answers.***		General business management knowledge
		Technical knowledge about my sector
		Networking
		Other (please specify)

This section seeks to understand how the mentorship programme was introduced to you.

14. How was the mentorship you are part of introduced to you?		Through a funding/franchise contract
		Notified in writing by the sponsor
		Other (please specify)

15. Did you receive any induction about the mentorship programme before you commenced with your mentorship?		Yes
		No

16. If yes, what aspects were covered in the induction? ***Tick all relevant answers.***		Clarify mentorship objectives
		Define the mentorship process
		Describe role and expectations
		Other (please specify)

17. Have you signed a mentorship contract which explains the details about the mentorship process?		yes
		No

18. Were your needs determined before mentorship was offered?		yes
		No

19. Did you have any involvement in the selection your mentor?		yes
		No

20. How many sessions have you had with your		0
		1

mentor since you started your mentorship?		2
		3
		4 or more

21. How did you become part of the mentorship programme? ***Tick all relevant answers.***		Part of franchise contract
		Part of funding (loan/grant) agreement
		Selected by funder/sponsor of the mentorship programme
		Other (please specify)

22. How would you describe the mentorship approach used by your mentor. ***Tick all relevant answers.***		Written explanations(email)
		Verbal exchanges (telephonic or face-to-face)
		Working together at the business premises
		Working together at the business premises
		Modelling/demonstrating
		Other (please specify)

23. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Choose 1 answer from the five choices.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2 = DISAGREE; 3 = NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE; 4 = AGREE; 5 = STRONGLY AGREE

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
My mentor always asks me questions to find answers on					
My mentor asks the right questions to make me think					
My mentor does not tell me what to do					
My mentor is always available when I need him/her					

My mentor makes sure I am making progress by constantly checking on me					
I feel he/she is involved in the mentorship relationship					
He follows up on our meetings and discussions					
My mentor has adequate business knowledge					
My mentor understands the sector or industry of my business					

24. How often do you interact your mentor?		Extremely often
		Very often
		Somewhat often
		Not very often
		Not at all often
		Never

25. Is your mentor located closer (less than 100 kms) to your business?		Yes
		No

26. If your answer to question 25 is N**o**, please indicate approximate distance		101-200kms
		201 to 300kms
		Above 300kms

27. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Choose 1 answer from the five choices.

1 = STRONGLY DISAGREE; 2 = DISAGREE; 3 = NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE; 4 = AGREE; 5 = STRONGLY AGREE

	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
My mentor takes a personal interest in my business					

My mentor has devoted special time and consideration to my business					
My mentor helps me coordinate professional goals					
I share personal problems with my mentor					
I consider my mentor to be a friend					
I exchange confidential information with my mentor					
I try to model my behaviour after my mentor					
I admire my mentor's ability to motivate others					
I respect my mentor's ability to teach others					
My mentor motivates me					
My mentor guides me					
My mentor introduces me to people who can help					
My mentor asks the right questions appropriately in order to see problems in the business					
My mentor offers facts about how to improve my business					
My mentor provides alternative views to solve problems					

28. How satisfied are you with your mentor?		Very satisfied
		Somewhat satisfied
		Somewhat dissatisfied
		Very dissatisfied

29. Have you reached a stage where you feel you no longer need your mentor?		Yes
		No

		Self confidence

30. If yes, what have you achieved from the mentorship?		Self-reliance
		Business planning
		Other (please specify)

31. Has the relationship with your mentor reached an end?		Yes
		No

32. If yes, are you now interacting with your mentor as equal partners?		Yes
		No

33. What would you recommend improving the design of mentorship programme?

You have reached the end of the survey. Thank You for your participation!

APPENDICE II – Interview schedule

Name of organisation:……..

Name of respondent.……

Interview note: The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The interviewer will observe the respondent and their engagement, and will also probe on key points to gain further insights. The anonymity of respondents is of utmost importance. Responses will only be used for the purposes of this research study.

Section 1 – Initiation of the mentorship

In this section, we are interested to know how you initiate your mentorship programme.

1. Can you tell me about your mentorship scheme.

    - When was it started?

    - Why was it initiated?

    - How do your select protégés who participate in the programme?

2. What processes do you follow before commencing with mentorship for the protégés?

- Do you hold an orientation programme for both mentor and protégé?
- How do you conduct matching process?

Section 2 – Approach in starting a mentorship relationship

In this section, we are interested to know how you approach your mentorship programme.

3. What functions do you expect your mentors to perform during mentorship?

4. Were these communicated to both the mentor and the protégé?

5. Can you describe in detail the mentorship approach that your mentors follow during mentorship?

Thank you for taking your time and trouble to complete the questionnaire. Your input is most valuable.