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MENTORSHIP IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE OF PRIVATE-SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

by

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Abstract

The South African government has assertively promoted skills development initiatives, through vehicles like Employment Equity (EE), Affirmative Action (AA), Skills Development Levy (SDL), Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE). The programmes were promoted by the post-apartheid South African government as a way to re-dress past injustices. In the management of diversity, mentoring can be used as a tool to redress the injustices of the past. To pursue mentoring as a form of skills development, particular attention was given to an SME (Small Medium Enterprise) organisation in the IT/Service sector in Tshwane, in the Gauteng province. To gain deeper insight, participants who took part in the programme were interviewed. Wide ranging global literature was reviewed. However, locally, in South Africa, there was a general dearth of information on the subject.

Globally, mentoring literature had similarities in race, gender and cultural diversity impacting on transformation in organisations. Even though there is scarcity of local literature on the subject, the little evidence found, showed that mentoring has a definite transformational agenda, and in particular, in a post-apartheid South Africa.

The qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interviews conducted during fieldwork, highlighted key themes and the theory implications. Firstly, the mentoring criterion of the programme researched was aligned with literature, with structured formal and informal aspects having clear goals; and a two-dimensional model with career and psychosocial elements. The area of reciprocal relationships was a limitation though. Mentors did not experience the same benefits as mentees. Social Exchange theory states that the nature of people is to join together with others if it will be rewarding. In the research, the mentors were all white, senior and mostly male. The Social Exchange and Social Capital theories found that the value of the relationships is characterised by power, resourcefulness and networks. The limitations in social relations between the parties seemed to result in possible impact on information access, influence and support.

The 'internal' network culture researched was high however the 'external' components of networking, exchange and knowledge remained strained. Social Exchange theory states that the pursuit or termination of a relationship depends on the rewards or lack thereof. The recommendation is for organisations to give mentor incentives or rewards and promote longevity in mentoring programmes. This might minimise possible termination or suspension of relations caused by unmet expectations.

Secondly, as the 'internal' nature of the networking relationships and knowledge exchange, showed high levels of trust, the reciprocity element was absent. Evidence shows that mentors are willing to impart information but this could possibly be a sign of patriarchy in the workplace. The researcher recommends research on workplace patriarchy in mentoring and knowledge sharing in learning spaces.

Thirdly the research focus on race and gender stereotypes found blatant stereotypes in the structural composition of the company. The composition lends itself to the exploitation of power and status in relationships that might lead to exploitation of human behaviour. The awareness of 'inter-sectionality' in race and gender issues is a recommendation within mentoring studies.

Finally, areas identified in the research as limitations were the company's structural composition; the lack of consistency in learning spaces; inflexibility in external networking and the knowledge sharing culture. The study based on Simmel and Homans' theory of Social Exchange and Bourdieu's Social Capital theory, shows that mentoring is a power transaction with costs or benefits. The study based on both theories, show that people might benefit/or might not benefit relationally in effective mentoring, particularly in South Africa's private sector workplaces.

Acronyms/List of Abbreviations

AA-	Affirmative Action
BBBEE-	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
CPA-	Certified Public Accountant
EE-	Employment Equity
IT-	Information Technology
MBA-	Master of Business Administration
PDI-	Previously Disadvantaged Individual
PDP-	Previously Disadvantaged Person
'S' dimensions-	systemic, structure and support
SDL-	Skills Development Levy
SME-	Small Medium Enterprise
USOPM-	US Office of Personnel Management

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF MENTORSHIP IN ORGANISATIONS

1.1   Background/Introduction

The primary objective of this study was to carry out research on mentorship relationships and the status and position between mentors and mentees, in private organisations. The study was conducted from November 2014 to February 2015. The exploratory, qualitative research methodology used in this research enabled a narrative description of the study (Letts et al 2007: 4; Sullivan 2012: 18). Based on the exploratory nature of this research, the problem statement has been made clear (Skold & Toyra 2010). The qualitative research methodology managed to uncover meaning and understanding through its people-centred approach and interaction and allowed full involvement (Neuman 2003: 17). The mentorship participants interviewed were identified through non-probability, purposive sampling. The principles of the research which were followed and practically applied were voluntary participation, informed written permission and confidentiality (Creswell 2003: 73-76; Cohen et al 2007: 65-77; Van Esch et al 2013: 235).

Based on research conducted in mentorship, a national random sample that was administered in the United States of America (USA) of 3 000 surveys found non-mentored individuals giving account of lessened job satisfaction, decreased promotion opportunities, and diminished levels of organisational and career commitment (Ragings et al 2000: 1183). Two qualitative studies, one of mentor-protégé and another between non-mentored and mentored individuals, in the USA, found that career consequences and the quantity of promotions tends to be higher in mentored individuals. The same studies discovered that mentored individuals were more content in their careers and jobs, with more probability of commitment, than their counterparts (Allen et al

2004: 1-130). The research conducted shows the clear place mentorship holds, versus lack thereof, in development and career progression. Previously, South Africa's workplaces were imbued in racially defined occupations, skills, income as well as power. The workplaces were racially repressive and segregated, controlled and influenced by race. Racial identity was set up in order of rank and autocratic managerial styles, skills clampdown and inefficiencies (Buhlungu et al 2003: 248-249), while entry, authority and rank in relation to skill and knowledge was defined by a past of colonialism and apartheid (Von Holdt 2010: 12). The apartheid workplace was operated by prejudiced legislation mobilised to restrict opposition between race groups, in favour of the white minority. The consequence was the formation of different forms of labour market imbalances, generating race, gender and wage disproportion. Black workers were not guaranteed entry to formal training and fair job-related and professional opportunities (Surtee & Hall 2010: 3).

The post-apartheid private sector in South Africa has been recognised by scholars such as Hassim (Marks et al 2000: 35) to be a small-scale environment of the large apartheid environment and formation. Now, years into democracy, South Africa's post-apartheid workplace remains challenged, with a variety of pressures being placed on organisations to improve the position of disadvantaged groups and elevate their situation (Von Holdt & Webster 2003: 1-2; Webster & Von Holdt 2004: 1). Mentorship, thus, has become foremost to transformative policies and discourses in organisations in South Africa. Mentorship in a post-apartheid South Africa is observed in light of global research and also structural and systemic challenges.

The study on mentorship was conducted in Tshwane which is part of the Gauteng province, in an SME (Small Medium Enterprise) of a private sector company. The Gauteng province is highly urbanised and at 12.2 million, it has a sizeable population of all SA provinces (Statistics South Africa 2011: 2). Most private sector organisations are in Gauteng. Eight participants were part of the study, with four mentors and four mentees. The company researched

had a full mentorship programme in place and there was willingness to participate in the research.

1.2   Literature Review

Mentorship research has different theoretical frameworks. In this research two of those frameworks will be examined in detail, being, the Social Exchange theory and the Social Capital theory. These two theories that have been suggested and also found to be useful in the past to explain mentorship and protégé studies are the Social Exchange theories of Simmel (1964), Homans (1961), Blau (1964), Emmerson (1976), and the Social Capital theory of Bourdieu (1977,1993). Briefly, the mentorship relationship can either be formal or informal, one-on-one or in groups. Besides this characteristic, there are different types of mentorship relationships and these will be discussed in the next chapters.

The mentorship relationship necessitates in most cases a mutual, beneficial relationship that comes in the arrangement of a formal or informal mentorship relation (Collin 2001: 311; Zachary 2005: 10). Mentorship can be in group form or one-on-one basis. A formal mentorship relationship is ordered, managed or maintained, reinforced and monitored by the larger organisation. The order includes established goals, plans, training for mentor and mentee as well as assessments (Zachary 2005: 4). Meanwhile, informal mentorship relationships are unrehearsed and develop naturally through mutual recognition. Albeit encouraged by the organisation, the informal mentorship relationship is not started off or administered by the organisation (Ragings et al 2000: 1179; Day 2001: 593; Zachary 2005: 4).

However, the definition of mentorship and its approach has created conceptual and definitional confusion amongst scholars (Garvey & Alred 2003; Allen et al 2007: 6). An attempt to define and conceptualise mentoring was initiated by

Kram (1985), who noted that mentorship necessitates an exceptional relationship where a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) provides two functions for a junior person (the mentee). Mentorship is when a more experienced employee performs a leading, encouraging and supporting role to a normally younger, less experienced employee. One function implemented being to enhance, advise, model and develop career and the second function is that of psycho-social support (Collin 2001: 311; Bozeman & Feeney 2007: 6; Volti 2008: 185). The conceptualisation of mentoring through the Social Exchange and the Social Capital theories is outlined below.

1.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchanges and learning is perpetuated by both parties within the relationship (Jones 2012: 59). For social exchange to occur there has to be valued joint undertaking between actors (Lawler 2001: 322). A qualitative case study on mentors' and mentees' conducted at West Midlands Healthcare Trust in the United Kingdom (UK), found that both parties benefitted, portraying the nature of a mentorship relationship (Jones 2012: 67). Interestingly, global research in countries like the UK and the USA, has produced consistent results on the positive benefits of mentoring to mentored individuals such as 'greater career satisfaction, commitment, mobility and positive job attitudes as compared to non-mentored individuals' (Ragings et al 2000: 1177). A USA study of 142 informal mentoring protégés found vocational support to be the only type of support that envisage protégé job satisfaction and perceived career success. Protégés with mentors had greater job contentment. This is in line with social exchange theory and literature showing that mentors have greater access to power, influence and resources (Porters 1998: 2; Ensher 2001: 434; Majiros 2013: 537). In South Africa, a study of a mining company in the North West province was piloted to investigate the experiences of mentors and mentees regarding mentoring relationships in a South African organisational context. The study found that both mentors and mentees

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preferred informal mentoring relationships, with relationship calibre being a major factor (Gilmore et al 2005: 1).

1.2.2 Social Capital Theory

Another theory reviewed to explain the mentorship process is Bourdieu's (1977) social capital theory. Like the social exchange theory, social capital is based on exchange networks and power relationships. Bourdieu's concept of social capital is based on conflict and power as a social function, propagating imbalances and increasing the ability of actors to promote and follow their own interests (Siisiainen 2000: 3-10). Bourdieu (1993) sees social capital as an investment in social contacts by individuals (Raiser 2001: 2; Adler 2002: 17). In addition, Bourdieu contends that social capital has two elements. Firstly, the relationship itself that allows access to another's possessions and secondly, the resource amount and quality (Portes 1998: 3-4). The nature and quality of these relationships' is on the combined resources contained in and accessed through these relationships (Kumra 2010: 2).

Social capital theory aims to explain social relationships with the individual fixed in a social structure of the group and the support resources providing access to information and impact necessary to realise career success (Van Emmerik 2008: 577). Research on social capital in a UK firm discovered gender bias and an existing masculine model of success in mentorship (Kumra 2010: 7-18). A study on lawyers in the USA, found that males derived more from their mentor-acquired social capital than females (Kay & Wallace 2009: 218). The consequences of gender bias and a masculine model in organisations can amount to lack of variety within the levels, decreased productivity and profitability. Stereotypes promote lack of cultural awareness, lesser equity, more segregation and increase in stereotyping. Consequences can be dire as there might be increased litigation and harassment complaints against the company. Other consequences might be employee disengagement that leads to possible personal ineffectiveness (Wilson 2014: 83).

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Meanwhile, findings from another study on female consultants in the USA, found negative gender stereotypes (Kumra et al 2010: 1-4). Locally, South African studies in the area of mentorship, showed mining and construction industries being mainly white, with male mentors dominating, contrary to other races and gender (Gilmore et al 2005: 28; Agumba & Fester 2010: 1958). In construction particularly, mentoring relationships were riddled with race and gender cultural stereotypes (Gilmore et al 2005: 28; Agumba & Fester 2010: 1958-1962) with women receiving external mentoring in one particular study conducted (Mabokela & Mawila 2004: 402-404). The above shows a private sector that is highly racial and gendered as far as mentorship relationships are concerned (Kumra & Vinnicombe 2010: 4-5). Both global and local studies indicate the levels and probable intensity of race and gender bias and stereotypes in mentorship practices within organisations. According to Social Capital theory, there is a challenge to different gender representations in group mentoring as the mentoring is based on actors' relations, networking, respect, values and trust.

Given the above extensive literature on mentorship, the researcher found it worthwhile to explore the perceptions and experiences of mentors and mentees. This enabled the researcher to identify gaps towards the improvement of the quality of mentorship programs and practices in South Africa. Through working with one organisation in the private sector much needed qualitative information was gathered for such improvements. Literature on a post-apartheid South Africa workplace seemed to suggest that due to the apartheid legacy and the allegiance to white managerial influence, as well as the exclusivity in networks on the basis of gender and race, mentorship might still be fraught with a lot of unevenness. The restrictions to individual freedom and lack of exclusivity in the mentoring relationships become detrimental to the actual mentoring concept based on the Social Capital theory of mentoring. It was, thus, important to conduct a study on mentorship in South Africa's post-apartheid private sector, to get a sense of how mentors and mentees perceive the process in the workplace, bearing in mind social exchange and social capital dynamics. In light of the above, the main research question investigated

was: '***What is the nature of mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations?***'

The data to answer the above research question was collected through (a) Semi-structured face-to-face interviews (b) pre-set interview guide, and (c) audio tape recording. Through semi-structured face-to-face interviews, data was gathered allowing the researcher to build rapport and get detail while remaining neutral. A framework of pre-set questions in the form of an interview guide was also prepared (Neuman 2003: 292). An audio tape recorder was used to gather data after getting consent from the participants to do so (Patton & Cochran 2001: 22).

1.3 Research Problem

The current position the post-apartheid workplace is in and literary studies brings the application of mentorship into question. From a theoretical perspective, past mentorship studies administered have tended to find Social Exchange and Social Capital theories applicable. Most researchers like Lawler (2001); Ensher (2001); Majiros (2013); and Jones (2012) proposed that the Social Exchange theory may be suitable for explaining the mentoring process as well as protégé choice (Ensher et al 2001: 421; Allen 2007: 128). Emerson sees Social Exchange theory as a compelling 'lens' to view mentoring relationship trade-offs (Jones 2012: 59). Even though research is restricted on mentorship theory, Social Exchange theory is ordinarily used to explain mentorship. Social exchange is a theory based on human conduct and views interaction between two people as a type of mutual interchange, where the cost of the relationship is compared to the benefits of the relationship (Ensher et al 2001: 4; Washington 2007: 65). The sub-questions used in this research are outlined below in order for the objectives of the research to be fulfilled.

The matrix of the research question was re-interpreted by sub-questions. The following are the subsidiary research questions that were presented to address the major research question.

- ✓ Has Mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations shifted from that of the apartheid era?
- ✓ Is mentorship commonly practiced in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations?

1.4   Methodology

The research took place in Tshwane which is part of the Gauteng province. Eight participants were part of the sample, divided into two groups of mentors and mentees.

1.4.1 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative methodology was employed to allow both the researcher and participants to have full involvement and participation during the research. The exploratory nature of qualitative research allowed the researcher to probe information that is lacking in some of the literature in mentorship studies. With the use of qualitative research, critical perceptions were gathered and detailed experiences unearthed. Extensive, qualitative data was generated from the participants in the programme.

1.4.2 Interviews

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with eight participants. Two sets of questions were constructed: one for mentors, the other set for mentees. A pilot study was conducted prior to the interviews, to test the interview tool, four interviews for mentors and mentees, were conducted. Individual interviews were held and each participant asked the assigned questions based on their roles, as prepared in the questionnaires.

Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to one hour. A separate boardroom was allocated for these interviews. The Human Resources Manager coordinated the time slots and movement in between the interview interval periods. A pre-planned interview guide was used to conduct the interviews. A simple process was followed where the researcher introduced the study and herself, highlighted issues of confidentiality, anonymity and the right of the participant to withdraw. The purpose of the study was explained fully to the participants.

An informed written consent form was given to the participants to sign before commencement of the interviews. Before commencement, all participants were asked whether they had any questions.

1.4.3 Challenges

During the interview process, there were challenges of intermittent disturbances with the arrival of the next participant. The boardroom meeting place was also a high traffic space. During the interviews, one candidate rushed through the interview due to work commitments and the interview lasted only 20 minutes.

Another challenge was with some of the mentees who needed an explanation of the mentoring related terms. The mentors also wanted to know much more about the researcher's background thus taking more time than scheduled.

The aspect of pseudonyms was not handled at the interview seating, only afterwards.

1.5 Challenges and Limitations

Overall the study had challenges and limitations. These are outlined in brief.

- The biggest limitation and challenge was the time factor. Due to the participants being mostly consultants working in a pressurised environment, some of the interviews were cut shorter, for example, instead of one hour or 45 minutes for an interview, one of the participants could only spend 20 minutes on the interview.

- During the interviews the aspect of pseudonyms was not addressed and had to be handled via the Human Resources Manager who was officially contacted only afterwards. This did not prove to be a problem as the participants did not mind the researcher using their real names anyway.

- On a lesser scale, there were occasional interruptions during the interview sessions with the announcement of the next participant's arrival.

Data analysis took time as the researcher identified numerous factors that emerged from the research which had to be collated based on the literature.

1.6 Value of the Study

Mentorship research and literature on career and psychosocial structure of the program within the company researched seem to show alignment. The research on the actual impact of the career and psychosocial elements, on career focus and success, was not conducted as part of the study though. The study was able to point out through the fieldwork conducted that the company's overall mentorship programme was well structured.

1.7 Outline of Chapters

The following is a summary of how the dissertation is presented.

Chapter two's primary aim and goal is to review and discuss as well as present the literature review on mentorship, available both abroad and locally. It explores and draws on the conceptual and first-hand, verifiable literature through the 'lens' of social exchange and social capital theories and the approaches. In this Chapter, the definition of mentoring, the nature and

characteristics of mentorship are explored on the backdrop of South Africa's historical perspective.

Chapter three aims to outline and present the research methodology and the structure thereof through the use of a qualitative approach, research design and methodology; the research site, population, sample and tools used, and how data was analysed. In this Chapter, the chosen philosophical and methodological approaches are reviewed and discussed. The section aims to explain how cases were selected and what data collection methods were used in the mentorship research conducted.

Chapter four focuses on the presentation of fieldwork in order to interpret, analyse and discuss the findings in response to the research question. Emerging themes that the researcher identified from the research and data analysis are submitted as part of the findings. Opportunities for future research are identified based on observable trends and themes emerging from the coding of the research.

Chapter five closes off by encapsulating the study, foregrounding key findings and highlighting possible limitations, lessons learned and recommendations. This Chapter provides a discussion of the key findings in depth, linking these to current literature and theory with possible conclusions. Recommendations for future research with limitations and strengths are also provided.

CHAPTER TWO

PUTTING MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIPS INTO CONCEPTUAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1   Introduction

The primary aim and goal of this chapter is to assess and analyse the scope of mentoring literature that is available both abroad and in South Africa. With this literature, an outline of the definition of mentoring, the nature and the characteristics of mentorship are explored on the backdrop of a historical perspective. The section also looks at theories and perspectives of mentorship drawing on international and South African literature and case studies.

Literature studies point out that the act of mentorship evolved as a practice in the 17th century, being explained traditionally as a relationship of a trusted advisor, friend and wise person (Darwin & Palmer 2009: 12-13). Today, mentorship has different forms with diverse styles of mentoring depending on the type of organisation. It seems the time for mentorship has come in organisations, due to the need for continuous learning. Therefore, the main objective of this chapter is to explore a range of available literature on mentorship in South Africa and abroad separately, and provide an expository summary, assess and highlight research gaps within mentorship studies. This section also looks at theories of mentorship and conceptual positions on the mentorship process overall, both in South Africa and globally. International and South African literature and research on mentorship relationships and practices are discussed in depth with the view to identify gaps prevalent within mentorship studies in the South African context. The terms mentorship and mentoring are used interchangeably in the study.

2.2   Background to Mentoring

Globally within organisations, there is a clear need for a highly skilled workforce (Salzman 1998: 126). Therefore, mentorship plays a much needed role in individual growth and retention of needed skills within organisations. However, mentoring as a concept poses some definitional and application challenges that need to be reviewed in line with the literature on mentorship relationships.

2.2.1   Defining Mentorship and Mentoring

The definition and application of mentorship has caused conceptual and definitional confusion amongst scholars (Garvey & Alred 2003: 1-9; Hall 2003: 2). Mentoring relationships are contained within difficult contexts. For example, the new meaning of work, transformation in organisations and technology among others, will necessitate a new theoretical view that will give an accurate meaning of mentoring as a concept. There is no guidance of empirical research and new theoretical models in mentorship studies. The conceptualisation of mentoring was initiated by Kram (2001) and according to him, mentorship involves an exceptional relationship where a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) provides two principal functions that of career and psychosocial support, for a junior person (the mentee) (Ragings et al 2000: 1183). In an effort to define mentorship, a common frame of reference is followed (Eby et al 2007: 7).

According to Eby et al (2007) mentorship, firstly, reflects a unique relationship between individuals. The uniqueness in this relationship has characteristics of the dual effect of trust and dependence. Secondly, mentorship is a learning, developmental partnership. The partnership aspect of mentorship is described as a bi-functional association between two people's relationship (Higgins &

Kram 2001: 264). Within this relationship, learning and development happens. Thirdly, Eby states that mentorship is a process defined by the broad type of psychosocial and career support, which are the two main functions of mentorship also cited in Ragings et al (2000; 1183). The career focus of mentorship is also said to be holistic intentions associated with career focus and success, according to literature by Corporate Executive Board (1999: 2), Clutterbuck (2012: 4) and Agumba and Fester (2010: 1955). This is where the third frame of reference by Eby aligns on mentorship as a career support mechanism. Mentorship transmits work and career related knowledge, social capital and psychosocial support between a more experienced and less experienced person (Bozeman & Fenney 2007: 6). This assertion is in line with Eby's frame of reference stated above concerning the career dimension of mentoring.

Literature states that a more experienced employee, often a manager, fulfils a guiding, encouraging and assisting role to a less experienced and generally younger employee. This enhances and develops the mentee's career and psychosocial functions (Collin 2001: 311; Volti 2008: 185). Fourth, according to Eby's frame of reference, a mentorship relationship is reciprocal, both mentor and mentee benefit within their different roles and responsibilities in the relationship. The reciprocity element of mentorship is also alluded to by Allen (2007: 143). Fifth, mentorship is a relationship that unfolds over time according to Eby (2007). Given that mentoring is a process towards transition in knowledge, work or a thinking pattern, time is crucial for the establishment of such a relationship. In the absence of a solid mentoring definition, mentorship is, thus, defined as a relationship between a less experienced individual (mentee) and a more experienced person (mentor), for purposes of personal and professional growth of the mentee. The mentor can be a peer, supervisor, someone within or outside the organisation or chain of command. In business mentorship specifically, the two parties, mentor and mentee, are not connected within a line-management structure, the relationship is outside the mentee's chain of supervision (Eby et al 2007:14; Zachary 2005: 10).

Historically, in South Africa, the legacy of apartheid has affected education, mostly as a consequence of separate development and as a form of apartheid practices. Below are some of the historical perspectives on skills development internationally and within the South African context that has a possible impact on mentorship as a concept (Moller 2007: 187).

2.2.2 Historical Debates within a Skills Development Framework

A critical aspect to mentorship is the place mentorship occupies within a skills development framework. It is key to define skills development as the acquisition of any ability or proficiency in demand in the workplace, generic or technical, regardless of how acquired (Dunbar 2010: 3). Therefore, mentorship is personal skills development defined as acquisition of new skills and abilities enabling better working relationships (Lankau & Scandura 2013: 780). Mentorship is in the form of skills acquisition, which is a mutually beneficial, protected relationship (Collin 2001: 311; Zachary 2005: 10).

Globally, skills demand increased while little attention was paid to provision of continual support for skills training leading to a significant decrease in active development in organisations. However, in the private sector it is encouraging that firms seem to invest in transferrable skills in the form of mentorship programmes (Handel 2003: 150; Conger & Benjamin 1999: 7; Milburn & Easterbrook 2010: 25).

A study, conducted in the USA on skills mismatch found that in general there is an indication of a shift toward jobs requiring more skills (Handel 2003: 150). Mentoring, thus, provides a resource and an outlet for continuous development, for learning and utilising training as well as development options within a skills development framework (Hutchins & Lockwood 2002: 3).

With mentoring as part of skills development, research discovered that employees with mentors reported high levels of job contentment and commitment (Allen et al 2004: 128). The opposite was found of non-mentored individuals in a national random sample conducted in the USA by Ragings et al (2000: 1183). A qualitative study of mentor-protégé and another research between non-mentored and mentored individuals discovered that career results and the number of promotions tended to be higher in mentored individuals. The same studies found mentored individuals more content in their careers and jobs, with more likelihood of dedication, than their counterparts (Allen et al 2004: 1,128-130). Another research found the same with mentored individuals that they have more career motivation and career self-efficacy (Day & Allen 2004: 128). Findings from a USA study on science, engineering and technology found senior women who are mentored to have increased confidence, they felt supported and were exposed to knowledge sharing (Prescott & Bogg 2012: 221). One, however, finds different dynamics in South Africa than those in the USA, as far as skills development is concerned.

Skills shortages that are a result of lack of availability of competent people and the scourge of unemployment are a reality in South Africa (van Schalkwyk et al 2010: 1; McCord 2005: 565). Skills cannot be discussed without a review of the backdrop of the apartheid legacy inherited and the review of a post-apartheid workplace which is in contestation according to studies by Von Holdt and Webster (2003: 1-2; 2004: 1) conducted in organisations in South Africa. A study on skills, conducted at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, pointed to shortages in occupational groups in the country (Daniels 2007: 36). For South Africa to be particularly competitive, appropriate skills across occupations and professions are needed (Kerr-Philips & Thomas 2009: 1). Research also found the country's skills shortage at the top-end of the labour market and semi-skilled workers to be in short supply. South Africa's skills shortage at leader levels in the private sector is a detriment to the skills pool and affects the overall economy (du Preez 2002: 80; Bhorat & Lundall 2002: 17-80).

Research review on two South African surveys, conducted in Gauteng province, over 1 400 enterprises, concerning the improvement of knowledge of the urban economy and another on 300 large manufacturing companies, found evidence of skills shortages. In manufacturing, companies were exposed to poor working conditions, trade union disruptions, insufficient equipment and poor employee motivation which influenced the skills base. In order to address productivity caused by the above mentioned factors, manufacturing firms were more likely to invest in training than the other sectors surveyed (Bhorat & Lundall 2002: 38-43). In South Africa, specifically, due to cultural diversity within organisations, mentoring needs more attention and proactive management (Luthans et al 2002: 4). The cultural diversity in organisations is a result of the apartheid legacy which will be discussed below.

2.2.3 The Post-Apartheid Workplace

Having discussed skills development in the past, it is also important to view mentorship in light of the apartheid legacy. South Africa has a history of protection of minority interests through methods of labour market closure and the job colour bar. A legacy of policies with systematic discrimination on racial grounds enforced racial and socio-economic discrimination (Cornfield and Hodson 2002: 180; Nattrass & Seekings 2001: 471-472). Rights in the political arena cannot be separated from rights in the workplace (Rothschild 2000: 195).

The racially oppressive workplaces culminated in a racial identity formed into rank and dictatorial managerial styles, skills crackdown and structural inefficiencies. Access, authority and hierarchy were in relation to skills and comprehension defined by a past of colonialism and apartheid (Buhlungu et al 2003: 248-249; Von Holdt 2010: 12; Dames 2009: 66). The apartheid workplace was driven by discriminatory legislation arranged to restrict contests between race groups. The manifestation was the design of different forms of

labour market imbalances. For example, black workers were not assured entry to formal training and fair occupational opportunities (Surtee & Hall 2010: 3).

The workplace was characterised by racial division of labour, with a racial structure of power and segregation of facilities (Bezuidenhout 2004: 4), with an almost non-existent African corporate middle class (Modisha 2007: 123). Now, 20 years into democracy, due to political, economic and social restructuring of work, the post-apartheid workplace is in transition (Von Holdt 2005:4; Modisha 2007:120). South Africa's post-apartheid workplace is contested, with pressures that are inclusive and exclusive to employees on the basis of interactions (Von Holdt & Webster, 2003: 1-2; Webster & Von Holdt 2004: 1). It seems South African workplaces have highly resistant work cultures as a consequence of apartheid and are thus plagued by such inefficiencies (Buhlungu et al 2003: 248-249). The consequence of apartheid, in a post-apartheid workplace, is ambivalence about skills (Von Holdt 2010: 13). This links to the previous skills development debates. Role modelling through active coaching and mentoring is an alternative to South Africa's skills debacle (Gbadamosi 2003: 274-280).

In a post-apartheid workplace, there is a generation of conflict based on access to position power (authority), information and expertise, alliances and networks, control of agendas, control of meanings and symbols and control of rewards and sanctions. Power still lies in the hands of white, upper-middle class, heterosexual men. According to Marks et al (2000), alliances between men act as a real barrier to addressing the intersections of race, gender, and class and have re-shaped forms of white and black patriarchy in the workplace. Given the above, it seems mentorship has been highly racialised and gendered in South Africa. South Africa is not exempt from the potential conflict that impacts mentorship practices globally due to the control nature of rewards and sanctions that are characteristic of mentorship processes (Marks et al 2000: 10-37).

The current condition of the post-apartheid workplace and studies thereof brings the practice of mentorship into question within the South African context. In order to understand the mentoring practices fully, the nature of the mentoring relationship needs to be unpacked.

2.3   The Nature of Mentorship

Mentoring relationships evolve through phases reflecting different functions, experiences, and patterns of interactions. Kram's (1983: 5) study of 18 mentoring relationships, identified four distinct phases in the relationship: initiation, cultivation, separation, and re-definition phases. Ragings and Kram (2007: 6) also cite the same phases. Mentorship is an evolutionary process (Daniel et al 2007) and it starts with the initiation stage, which is a matching process, be it informal or formal, between the two people entering the relationship. The cultivation stage is the next process in the evolution which is that of learning and development. The separation stage is at the end of the mentorship relationship. Finally, there might be a re-definition stage, according to him, where both mentor and mentee may continue the association, however, not within a mentorship relationship (Daniel et al 2007: 6).

The mentorship association is in most cases interactive, beneficial, and can be formal or informal (Collin 2001: 311; Zachary 2005: 10). A formal mentorship association is orderly, managed or maintained, supported and observed by the larger organisation. The structure includes set goals, schedules, training for mentor and mentee as well as assessment by the organisation (Zachary 2005: 4). Meanwhile, informal mentorship relationships are unrehearsed and develop naturally through mutual recognition. Albeit encouraged by the organisation, the informal mentorship association is not started off or administered by the organisation on behalf of the parties (Zachary 2005: 4; Day 2001: 593; Ragings et al 2000: 1179). Within the mentorship relationship, the mentor can be a peer, supervisor, or even someone within or outside the organisation or chain of command (Allen et al 2007:14). Mentoring is motivational and

relational according to Kalev et al (2006: 594). The mentor works as a role model, protector, advisor and cheerleader in this case. Mentors also provide road maps for understanding and may warn young protégés of interdepartmental 'dirty tricks', according to Hodson and Sullivan (2012: 292). Skills transfer in the form of mentoring enhances confidence in performance, increases potential and allows employees to have identity and belonging within their organisation and even hierarchical structures (Podolny & Baron 1997: 675).

Zachary gives different types of mentoring styles. These styles depend on the type of organisation and the individuals involved in the mentoring process. Zachary also mentions casual mentoring which is role modelling. In most cases, the mentor is unaware of being used as an example and there is no formal structure or any objectives attached to the role. The informal mentoring relationship, through goal setting and timeframes, may become formal in approach. Part of informal mentoring programmes is non-facilitated mentoring, with support of materials and if needed, resource persons (Zachary 2005: 5).

Within the formal mentoring approach is facilitated mentoring, which provides a structured, coordinated programme as part of the company's developmental strategy. Literature shows that mentorship can be in group form or on a one-on-one basis. Literature shows that mentorship can be in group form or on a one-on-one basis. Another form of formal mentoring is group mentoring which constitutes of a resource group of mentors bringing a variety of skills but also sharing responsibility for mentees' growth. Multiple mentoring happens when a mentee wants to have different mentors offering different skills and scope of experience in a beneficial relationship. Peer mentoring occurs with two peer individuals as it establishes comfort and openness in equality of rank. Finally, distant mentoring, as another form, includes e-learning, electronic meetings and other forms of technology (Zachary 2005: 5; Berg 2005: 65).

2.4   Contextualisation of Mentorship

Mentorship research shows increased progress in a variety of new and relevant subjects that covers the topic itself, however, there is little attention paid to mentorship core concepts and theory. Mentoring has ample published research, though there is a shortage of theoretical frameworks. To some extent, the limited progress in mentoring theory seems attributable to a focus on the instrumental, but neglecting to explain the mentoring concept. Critics of mentoring research have lamented the absence of theory-driven research with 'once off' studies based on a few limited samples. Despite the publication of hundreds of studies on mentoring, findings are many, but explanations are not. According to research, fundamental conceptual and theoretical issues are skirted. Thus, not only is mentoring research important, but theory is also useful and both aim to provide practical findings relevant to individual and social needs (Bozeman & Feeney 2007: 3-4). Not only are there conceptual and definitional controversies relating to mentorship studies amongst scholars, researchers have yet to find consensus over functional or scientific definitions of mentorship (Garvey & Alred 2003; Allen et al 2007: 6; Ehrich et al 2001: 12).

Literature based on business studies shows that there is a dearth of theory in mentorship research; 35% of the conceptual frameworks in the field of mentorship studies has been drawn from theories in other disciplines like sociology, among others (Ehrich et al 2001: 12). Burke and McKeen state in their research that "research on mentoring has typically lacked an integrated research model or framework…and most research findings are merely listings of empirical results" (Burke & McKeen 1997: 43-57). It is in this view that two theories, Social Exchange theory and Social Capital theory, which are most frequently used to explain mentoring; form part of the theoretical framework of this study on mentorship.

2.4.1 Social Exchange Theory

One of the theories commonly used to explain mentorship is the Social Exchange Theory. The major proponents of the Social Exchange Theory are George Simmel (1964), George Homans (1961), Peter Blau (1964) and Richard Emmerson (1976). Social exchange is a theory constructed on human conduct and views interaction between two people as a type of mutual trade-off, where the cost of the relationship is contrasted to the benefits of the relationship (Washington 2007: 65). Another reiteration of Social Exchange theory explaining the reciprocity element of mentorship is given by Allen (2007: 143). The theory is also associated with power and status relationships where there is an exploitation of human behaviour in the context of the mentorship relationship (Ensher et al 2001: 4-9).

Social Exchange theory views social forms and the individual as one, everything interacting together, beginning and ending with the individual, hence most social interactions are motivated by individual needs and desires (Trevino 2000: 21). In mentorship relationships, the Social Exchange theory explains interaction between the mentor and mentee and the benefits as well as the exchanges associated with this type of relationship. As has been cited previously in research, mentorship's holistic intentions are associated with career focus and success as a benefit and an exchange in the relationship (Clutterbuck 2012: 4; Agumba & Fester 2010: 1955). Such interactions are guided by norms and values of society which are internalised within the individual's consciousness. From such internalisation, social behaviour can be observed as can conditions that influence such behaviour. Social behaviour is an exchange of material and the non-material which could be approval and prestige symbols. Social Exchange theory highlights the possibility of expectation of fairly equitable exchange of rewards and costs between persons (Trevino 2000: 21). According to Homans (1961) under the social exchange theory, people act to maximise rewards with each other in an

exchange of approval/disapproval, reward or punishment, whichever exchange it may be.

In the mentorship process, an interactive exchange happens when there are costs, benefits, material and non-material rewards involved (Porters 1998: 8; Majiros 2013: 535-536). Social exchange theory is based on the premise that human behaviour is an exchange of joint rewards equally valued (Lawler 2001: 322). Blau (1964), like Homans (1961), uses rules governing relations, but gives more importance to social structures and rules thereof. The basic assumption, according to Blau (1994) is establishing and continuing social relations on the basis of mutual advantage, however, he says, inequalities result from some actors controlling more highly valued resources than others (Cook & Rice 2003: 57; Adler et al 2002: 18).

Knowledge is one of the valuable currencies controlled in mentorship relationships; it is a process towards transition in knowledge, work or thinking patterns. Emerson (1981) and Homans (1974) point out that social exchange theory is an assumption that individuals construct, conserve, or terminate relationships with each other on the basis of benefits to costs recognised in these network relationships (Ensher et al 2001: 421). The maintenance factors of networks are the flow of information, influence and solidarity that keeps the actors engaged (Adler 2002: 19).

In addition, encounters with others facilitate reciprocal exchanges that have value in them (Zafirovski 2005: 17). The needs and desires determine the level of interaction in the value exchange relationship as far as costs and rewards are concerned. In social exchange, the relationships are central, regardless of material goods and associated gains and sacrifices involved. Most social exchanges involve no sacrifice of useful goods, but are purely personal, independent of an exact bartering outlay (Mitchell & Nikiforakis 2011: 3). The processes that guide face-to-face interactions in exchange relations and the roles that power, inequality and norms of legitimacy play in interaction are

basic and need to be uncovered. These are building blocks of social interaction. Inability to offer any type of reward makes you dependent on the other individual.

Social Exchange theory is also associated with power and status relationships where there is an exploitation of such in the context of the mentorship relationship (Ensher et al 2001: 4-9). Since social exchange is about knowledge transfer, it is a currency that allows mentorship exchanges to take place between the parties involved (Majiros 2013: 536-537).

In summary, Social Exchange theory is about the maximisation of rewards or sanctions that are a result of a mentorship relationship as a form of exchange. In a mentorship relationship, there will be rewards and penalties for both the mentor and mentee. Each actor will try to maximise the benefits and lessen the cost, though each party expects the other to maximise their costs and not for the other actor to have equal benefit, even though the nature of social exchange is for both parties to have mutual advantage. This is the case in a mentorship relationship, where the mentee seems to benefit from a psychosocial and career point of view with the mentor investing in a cost of sacrificial time and networks in the relationship. Within any mentorship relationship, it is not possible for both parties to have equal advantage due to the nature of such a relationship.

Depending on whether the relationship is more beneficial or costly, this will determine whether the relationship is pursued or terminated in some instances. As much as there are benefits amongst actors in a social relationship, there are also costs. The social exchange relationship is a give-and-take relationship amongst actors, albeit at different levels. Leaders seem to control most valuable resources in the exchange, as those who are in power within the relationship. They are able to bring favours or penalties within the exchange relationship. This potential imbalance in the relationship brings inequality within the relationship. Leaders control the exchange relationship

while the nature of mentorship at a basic level is such that it benefits the mentee more than the mentor.

2.4.2 Social Capital Theory

Bourdieu's (1977) social capital theory is functional in explaining the mentorship process in organisations. Social capital theory aims to explain individual social relationships rooted in the social structure of the group and the support resources necessary to accomplish career outcomes (Van Emmerik 2008: 577). Like the social exchange theory, social capital theory is based on interchangeable connections and power relationships. In mentorship relationships, mentors largely control the value within the relationship. This value is characterised within the mentorship relationship by power, exchange of resources and networks from the mentor's point of view in group mentoring. People act to maximise rewards with their social action and with each other in an exchange for approval/disapproval, reward or punishment (Mitchell & Nikiforakis 2011: 3). Bourdieu's concept of social capital is based on conflict and power as a social role, reproducing inequality and increasing the ability of actors to promote and follow their interests (Siisiainen 2000: 3-10). Bourdieu (1984) sees social capital as an investment in social connections or networks by individuals (Raiser 2001: 2; Adler 2002: 17).

In addition, Bourdieu contends that social capital has two elements. Firstly, the social association and connection itself allows access to another's possessions and secondly, the amount and standard of such resources is critical. To possess social capital, relations to others are the source of advantage within the relationship (Portes 1998: 3-7). The essence and calibre of these relationships is on the joint resources contained in and accessed through these relationships (Kumra 2010: 2). In mentorship relationships, research found that employees with mentors reported high degrees of job satisfaction and dedication as a positive indication of quality of resources (Allen et al 2004: 128). Not only is there access to resources but the

relationship wields results in the form of job satisfaction and commitment. Contrary to the above, as noted earlier in the literature, non-mentored individuals reported less job contentment, minimised promotion opportunities, and low levels of organisational and career dedication (Ragings et al 2000: 1183). This bears testimony to the quality and resources accessed or not accessed in other instances, from such a social relationship.

Social capital theory relates to an individual's position in a social network of relationships and focuses on the resources contained in, accessed through or stemming from these networks (Kumra 2010: 2). In mentorship relationships, mentors are normally at higher levels and senior to the mentee internally or even externally, thus, demarcation in position levels is the norm (Ragings et al 2000: 1183). Seniority allows and gives advantage to the mentor to provide resources and networks of quality within the mentoring relationship. In some cases, mentorship relationships might be used for moral, material, work and non-work support or/and advice according to Adler (2002: 17). That is when the over-seeker in the relationship is in danger of being ostracised within the social capital network. The nature and quality of personal relationships and the stock of the combined resources accessed via these relationships are referred to as social capital (Kumra 2010: 2).

An interesting survey conducted from 2010 employees in multiple industries in South Korea, showed that social capital contributes significantly to enhance employees' tacit and explicit knowledge sharing intentions (Haua et al 2012: 1). However, even in the face of career advantage social capital can have costs and social ties can be liabilities (Woolcock 2000: 6). From a social capital perspective, advice seeking creates obligations and active seekers become unpopular with active advice givers (Woolcock 2000: 6). Mentorship relationships might become strained as a result of active advice seeking or knowledge seeking especially so where race and gender stereotypes are in practice.

Social capital theory aims to describe social relationships with the individual rooted in the social structure of the group and the support resources that provides access to information and influence necessary to accomplish career success (Van Emmerik 2008: 577). Research on social capital in a UK firm has already shown gender bias and an existing masculine model of favourable outcomes in mentorship (Kumra 2010: 7-8,18). According to the social capital theory, mentorship in a group setting with different gender representation in such a study, might be detrimental to the group's mentorship programme and affect even the networks involved.

A study on lawyers in the USA, discovered that males obtained more from their mentor-acquired social capital than females (Kay & Wallace 2009: 218). Access to knowledge and information amongst the males and females in the mentorship group is compromised according to the above research conducted and the nature of social capital. Meanwhile, findings from another study on female consultants in the USA, discovered negative gender stereotypes (Kumra et al 2010: 1,4). These findings may lead to compromised support, resources, influence and non-accomplishment of career success for the female consultants in the mentorship programme researched. There seems to be direct relatedness on gender stereotyping between the research conducted in the UK, USA and South Africa.

As briefly stated in the introduction, South African mentorship studies in the mining and construction industries discovered dominance of white males at higher ranks in organisations and male mentors in general, with other races and female mentors being low in numbers (Gilmore et al 2005: 28; Agumba & Fester 2010: 1958). In a construction survey, conducted on students at the University of Johannesburg, SA, problems were discovered in mentoring relationships and indications of a cultural divide in relation to gender and race (Gilmore et al 2005: 28; Agumba & Fester 2010: 1958-1962). Another study of 20 black women scholars and administrators in four post-secondary institutions in Cape Town found that three of the 20 women received some mentoring outside their workplace (Mabokela & Mawila 2004: 402, 404). The studies conducted in South Africa show that mentorship has been highly racialised and

gendered (Kumra & Vinnicombe 2010: 4-5). It seems, according to the above global and local studies, that mentorship practices are generally biased towards race and gender stereotypes. This makes the mentorship relationships in South Africa highly contested.

There is acknowledgement that even though social capital has benefits with social ties that can be assets, it also has costs and social ties that can be liabilities (Woolcock 2000: 6). Social capital theory is treated as a concept, sometimes as a theory. As a concept, investment in identifying resources of value is important, while as a theory the process of capturing and reproducing for returns is key (Kay & Wallace 2009: 30). The nature and quality of these personal relationships focus on the combined resources contained in, accessed through or stemming from these relationships (Kumra 2010: 2). Social capital is also the information, trust, reciprocity in networks and the actions of individuals within these (Majiros 2013: 535). Social capital can be generated by reciprocal expectations and group enforcement of norms. The nature of social capital is based on actors' social relations to others within a mentorship relationship focusing on content and structure (Porters 1998: 8). In social capital there is a barring of others from access, for example in the race and gender stereotypes, with a restriction on individual freedom (Portes 1998: 8). For social capital behaviour to work, there is a need for maintenance in mentorship relationships with relationship bonds renewed and reconfirmed or else there is loss of effectiveness within the relationship. Bourdieu (1993) defines social capital in the context of reciprocity, a give-and-take, in social and economic relationships (Raiser 2001: 2). Therefore, social capital is the ability of actors to secure benefits and pursue own interests, through exchange of ideas and goods, in social networks or structures (Burt 2000: 2-3). It is a network of mutual relationships made up of collective social obligations based on mutual respect, shared values and trust (Majiros 2013: 538). Stereotypes and biases compromise the effectiveness of mentorship relationships for reciprocity, exchange, respect, values and trust elements. The principles underlying social capital theory is the reward of allegiance and long term network benefits with the environment as influence. Both reciprocity and enforcement of norms have the consequences of privileged access to

information, knowledge and exclusivity in relations (Majiros 2013: 535, 539). Individual motivations and social capital precedes knowledge sharing.

In summary, due to conflict and power being a social function that increases the activity of self-pursuit of interests, as discussed social capital theory has a tendency of race and gender bias towards others. With gender biases towards masculinity, males gain more from social capital than females in the workplace. In research studies, racial bias has also been identified with non-white groupings (Kumra & Vinnicombe 2010: 4-5). To possess social capital, relations are advantageous and due to the gender and race biases evident based on research, networking which includes elements of respect, relationships, values and trust becomes a barrier. Social Capital theory also has a strong network investment with personal connections and interpersonal relations in value sharing. The gender and race stereotypes will be prevalent also within the mentorship relationship networks to the detriment of benefits to be secured and interests pursued, with possible limitations to access to information, knowledge, relational exclusivity and legitimacy for parties who are outside the social capital networks (Woolcock 2000: 6; Majiros 2013: 539). All this stifles mentorship relationships in private sector organisations in South Africa.

2.5   Existing Limitations in Literature and Conclusion

Social Exchange theory is associated with power and status relationships. It is associated with exploitation of human behaviour within the context of the mentorship relationship (Ensher et al 2001: 4-9). Also, social exchange theory is linked to cultural diversity in organisations (Luthans et al 2002: 4), inequalities resulting from actors controlling more highly valued resources than others (Cook & Rice 2003: 57; Adler et al 2002: 18), affecting the nature of the mentorship relationship. Social exchange involves subjective sacrifices. Sacrifices will be to a certain extent; as soon as perceived lack of sacrifice emerges, social exchange might seem impossible if not non-existent. Therefore, given the above points, maintenance factors of networks in the flow

of information, influence and solidarity might be affected within the relationship (Adler 2002: 19). Possible exploitation of the mentorship relationship might lead to race, gender and class stereotypes and biases in the workplace.

In the same way, social capital is based on exchange networks and power relationships. As much as there can be approval and/or reward, there can also be disapproval and/or punishment within the mentorship relationship (Mitchell & Nikiforakis 2011: 3). Social capital can be a source of advantage or disadvantage in mentoring. Mentorship relationships can either allow or disallow access to necessary resources and the amount and quality of such resources can also be compromised. Therefore, based on research undertaken, and based on social capital theory, there seems to be a strong leaning towards gender, race and class stereotypes within mentorship relationships that places the relationships in jeopardy.

Literature on the post-apartheid South Africa workplace seems to suggest that due to the apartheid legacy, the loyalty to white managerial influence, as well as the limited exclusivity in connections on the basis of gender and race; mentorship might still be fraught with a lot of imbalances. The work order in a post-apartheid workplace that is in transition from past to present affects mentorship relationships (Von Holdt 2005:4; Modisha 2007:120). It was, thus, important to conduct a study on mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector, to get a sense of how mentors and mentees distinguish the process in the workplace, based on the usefulness of social exchange and social capital theories in mentorship as previously used in other studies. The main research question answered being: '*What is the nature of mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations*?'

Based on the limitations identified in the literature, this study was, therefore, undertaken to explore and gain a greater understanding of the perceptions of the eight employees who are part of the mentorship programme at an IT/Consulting private organisation in Gauteng province. The study was also conducted to research not only the programme but interview the participants in

order to gain their experiences regarding the mentorship programme. Both the Social Exchange theory and the Social Capital theory were adopted to bring contextual understanding to the mentorship concept within the South African context. So far, extensive literature has been reviewed concerning the topic of mentorship and the theories associated with this concept.

In conclusion, the main aim and goal of this chapter was to firstly conceptualise mentoring relationships and to give a brief overview of the historical and theoretical perspectives of mentoring. Secondly, the chapter gave an overview of international and South African literary research studies in the area of mentoring.

CHAPTER THREE

PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1   Introduction

The two chapters before articulated the background of the study, rationale and justification, as well as the literature review deliberation. This chapter is aimed at outlining supporting arguments for the chosen theoretical and methodological approaches to studying mentorship programmes in private organisations. The research methodology section aims to explain how cases were selected and what data collection methods were used in this research. Methodology helps the researcher to make appropriate choices for the study on the application of research practices and how the methods chosen connect with the research question (Bryman 2012: xxxii). A qualitative methodology has been used to answer the question. The qualitative methodology chapter, in this study, includes the research design, research methods inclusive of sampling and data collection methods and finally data analysis (Marvasti 2004: 9). In this study, the researcher embraced the interpretive phenomenological method of inquiry as a research design to guide both research methodology and analysis.

3.2   Overview of the Philosophical and Methodological Approach

Research has three forms, these forms are positivist, interpretive and critical (Merriam 2009:8). Qualitative research is normally interpretive research as reality is socially constructed based on different interpretations. The purpose of interpretive research is to describe, understand and interpret within the type of approach used which is phenomenology (Merriam 2009: 8-11). The interpretive phenomenological approach allows for a rich and detailed account of every participant's perspective to be investigated. It is also a framework for

analysis of qualitative data and exploration of participants' experiences and the meanings attached to them (Phellas 2005: 69).

In this study, the researcher adopted the interpretive phenomenological approach as the influential philosophical framework guiding the methodology of the study. The researcher used the lens of Social Exchange theory by proponents like Simmel (1964), Homans (1961), Blau (1964), Emmerson (1976) and Social Capital by Bourdieu (1977,1993) to analyse and interpret the mentorship process and its practice in private sector organisations in post-apartheid South Africa.

3.2.1 Phenomenological Philosophical Approach

In this study, the researcher used the philosophical assumption of a qualitative approach and phenomenological research design to interpret the research inductively, generating meaning from data collected from the fieldwork (Creswell 2014: 9). Through this framework, the social world and its meaning was understood from participants' points of view. To understand the participants' explanations and responses, the approach afforded the researcher the opportunity to have one-on-one discussions (Bryman 1984: 77-78). Such interactions offer depth. The findings in a qualitative study emerged from the data, 'making it the best tool for data collection and analysis' (Patton & Cochran 2002: 2) that was rich enough for the mentorship research question to be addressed (Kumra 2010: 2).

Research and literature review showed a dearth of information on mentorship studies in a post-apartheid South Africa. Literature on the post-apartheid South Africa workplace seems to suggest that due to the apartheid inheritance and the loyalty to white managerial influence, as well as the exclusivity in connections on the basis of gender and race, mentorship might still be fraught with a lot of imbalances. In this study, a qualitative research methodology was used based on detailed description of the quality of the experience of the

respondent as well as full involvement of the researcher to probe responses. The above gaps were investigated through the research and interview questions posed to determine the nature of mentorship in a post-apartheid South Africa.

3.2.2 Qualitative Methodology

The main study approach used for the mentorship research topic, the design, methods and data analysis thereof was the qualitative methodology. Through the qualitative approach, the perceptions of the participants were crucial and were investigated based on the research question. The qualitative method aimed to understand what mentorship is, interpret the perceptions of those in mentorship programmes and, to a certain degree, explain why mentorship is the way it is in the private sector. Qualitative research allowed for a detailed description of the quality of the experience of mentorship (Marvasti 2004: 7). There was a need for this type of approach as the social world and its meaning is understood from participants' point of view. Qualitative research was justified as an approach that seeks meaning and understanding on how mentorship relationships work. The benefit of qualitative research is people-centred interaction, thus, both mentors and mentees allowed the researcher full involvement. The qualitative approach allowed one-on-one discussions and as such enriched the study (Neuman 2003: 17). Through the in-depth exploratory research, which clarified and gave insight into the nature of the study, a description of the study was possible (Letts et al 2007: 4; Sullivan 2012: 18). The qualitative study allowed the data and findings, making the research approach the best tool for data collection and analysis (Patton & Cochran 2002: 2) that was rich enough to enable the research question to be addressed (Kumra 2010: 2).

A quantitative approach was not used as part of this research. Quantitative research approach involves representation of a human experience in a causal way which is numerical and statistical in analysis while the qualitative

approach offers a detailed description of the mentorship human experience. In qualitative research, purposive sampling and a theoretical, conceptual rigour of the research was opted for, rather than the random and technically rigorous method to determine the selection process of participants (Creswell 2003: 18; Marvasti 2004: 7-12). Based on the above approaches, the qualitative approach was the best approach to use for the mentorship research question. Also practical considerations had a direct influence on the researcher's choice of the qualitative methodology, for example limited time, small sample size, few resources and limited financial resources.

A sample of eight participants, consisting of four mentors and four mentees, was used to gather extensive data through in-depth semi-structured interviews from 28 November 2014 to 6 February 2015, which was the period in which the fieldwork was done.

3.3   Research Questions

3.3.1 Defining the Research Question

Upon completion of the pilot study, some of the questions were re-framed for clarity, in order for the participants to respond with more precision to the interview questions.

3.3.2 Key Research Questions and Justification

The key guiding questions were posed to the mentorship programme participants in order to address the main research question. These questions helped the researcher a great deal in constructing the semi-structured interview schedule *(Appendices B and E)* that was used in the field to gain an understanding of experiences of mentorship participants and their perceptions regarding the impact of the programme.

3.4   Research Design

Research design is defined by Burns & Grove (2003: 195) as a blueprint for conducting a study to seek answers to the research questions. Some of the types of research designs are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Creswell 2003: 5). This study is based on a qualitative research design.

3.4.1 Location

The study was based in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The province is highly urbanised and at 12.2 million, it has the largest population of all provinces (Statistics South Africa 2011: 2). Due to economic positioning, more private sector organisations, eligible for the study, are in Gauteng than in other provinces.

3.4.2 Selection of Participants

According to the qualitative approach chosen, the researcher wanted to gain greater explanation from fewer participants in an organisational setting. The private sector as a type of organisation was chosen due to its attributes like organisational capacities, motivation, skills and highest levels of involvement (Harel & Tzafrir 2001: 342). Furthermore, the private sector organisation offered research access as management is independent and decision making is fluid unlike in state organisations where the access rules are stringent.

As learning and deep understanding, rather than numbers, is the objective of qualitative research, three private companies, including large companies and SMEs were approached. The similarities with the companies were that they were all running mentorship programmes. Upon investigation, the companies had active participants in their programmes and as permission was sought, the

Human Resources Managers disclosed willingness to allow access to conduct the research. However, there were also differences in the three private companies approached.

The first company (company X) that was approached was a large manufacturing company and the dynamics concerning the structure of the programme as well as the participation in the mentorship programme was not conducive to the study. For example, the manufacturing company had four mentees interested although not all were part of the same company, but, all had the same mentor who was part of the large company. The second private company (company Y) approached, was an SME in the IT sector. The programme had just been launched and the participants were still new in the pilot programme and had no experience of it. The third company (company Z) approached was an SME in the IT/Service industry, after the other two companies (X andY) approached could not meet all the key criteria and requirements for the study, this company was used. Company Z had a mentorship programme that had been running for a specific length of time, participants were active and willing to be part of the research and access was granted immediately. With the criteria in place, the SME approached also had a culture of organisational flexibility, service orientation and due to the facilitation of the Human Resources Manager, the researcher was able to proceed with the research. The SME company Z, that was researched is based in Tshwane, which is part of the Gauteng province.

With the Human Resource Manager's assistance, a list of names was acquired of all the programme participants, both current mentors and mentees in the programme. An investigation of the programme in place within the company revealed a formally structured, managed and monitored mentorship programme. The execution of the company's programme is formalised with signed mentorship agreements, quarterly reporting and evaluation, as well as structured time frames. This is in line with the nature of mentorship programmes (Zachary 2005: 4). The company also had an informal way of

executing mentorship meetings which may be telephonic and/or very informal in the form of corridor meetings and offsite meetings. Both formal and informal aspects of mentorship can be observed through the company's mentorship programme, which made mentorship an interesting research project in the above mentioned company. The participants of the study were selected from the existing pool of mentors and mentees which were initially 12, of the six mentors, two never made an effort to continue with the programme. The study was, thus, conducted with eight participants four mentors and four mentees who had started the programme at the onset and were a current part of it.

3.4.3 Unit of Analysis

In this research the focus of the study was in a Small Medium Enterprise (SME) in the IT/Service sector. The private sector company is in the information technology consulting services sector. Besides management employees, the only other type of employee in this company was administrative employees. My target population was, thus, senior management, middle management and junior management officials. The target population focused on is the primary recipient and target of the mentorship programme in this private organisation. A total of 10 participants were purposefully selected from within this particular SME, however, only eight participants qualified for the study. The selection criterion of the eight participants was based on continuous active participation in the programme and availability for interviews on the research topic. The target population was originally made up of five mentors and five mentees identified by the organisation for the study. Six mentors were identified by the company, of which only four completed the programme to the end whilst two did not finish the entire programme on mentorship according to the report by the company representative. A decision was made with the supervisors of the research topic to continue face-to-face interviews with the remaining four mentors and their respective mentees. These participants were diverse in age, gender and race generally (though age, gender and race were not asked for by the researcher

from an ethical point of view) and they hold different positions within the organisation.

Pilot interviews were scheduled by the Human Resources Manager with individual participants, with two of the mentors and two of the mentees. Instead of joint interviews, separate interviews were held to create an atmosphere that was relaxed and free for each participant to express themselves without any form of intimidation. Pilot interviews were conducted as a test using the interview schedule (see attached interview schedule - Annexure B). Interviews were scheduled individually, with the mentors and mentees being interviewed separately as per interview guide.

The mentoring relationship in this programme is formally structured, managed and monitored by the organisation. Formal signed mentorship agreements are in place with quarterly reporting, evaluation and structured time frames. Besides the formal regular meetings, the programme also allows for informal meetings which may be telephonic and also one-on-one communication in the corridors.

Further interviews of outstanding participants were conducted using the amended interview schedule (see attached interview schedule - Annexure E) which was accordingly re-framed to give clarity to the questions posed, specifically towards mentee respondents. Most mentees were not familiar with terms such as 'social capital' and 'social networks', causing the re-framing of questions, in line with the participants' understanding of the questions being posed. Each interview lasted from 45 to 60 minutes, except one interview that lasted 20 minutes due to the participant's time constraints.

In order to enforce confidentiality and clean the data, information that identified respondents, such as names were replaced with pseudonyms. Every respondent gave consent for direct identifiers to be used, however, they did not specifically want to be recognised for their contributions. Due to the

personal data not being critical for the research itself and without assuming respondent confidentiality, the researcher took the decision to use pseudonyms to protect respondents. Name anonymity was the key decision taken to enforce confidentiality (Cohen 2007: 65; Finnish Social Science 2014: 35; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006: 319). Name identifiers were deleted from the data released on the respondents.

The qualities of a good informant should be: 1. knowledgeability and involvement in the topic researched, 2. ability to reflect and provide detailed experiential information about the area of research, 3. willingness to talk and be interviewed (Whiting 2008: 39). All of the above qualities were met by the respondents in the research. Non-probability sampling was used for the study.

3.4.4 Sampling Strategy

A number of private sector organisations ranging from large to SMEs, based on researcher judgement and purpose of research, were approached for permission to conduct the research. One such permission was granted by an IT/Consulting SME in Gauteng.

The study used the qualitative method of study, with non-probability sampling being the technique that is less rigid and that gives a wider range of selection. With this technique, a purposive sample was most appropriate for the selection of participants based on the theories of mentorship already explored (Marvasti 2004: 9). Purposive sampling allowed a selection of a representative sample of the population, in this case four mentors and four mentees, with full variation that yielded meaningful data. The sampling method was less resource intensive, more attainable and suitable (Pell Institute 2013: 10, 12). With this sampling method, researcher judgement was used towards achievement of the research objectives (Onwuegbuzie & Collins 2007: 287).

The Human Resources Manager facilitated access to all the current participants of the mentorship programme within the company. With such information on mentorship programme participants, the researcher was able to select those who participated actively in the programme. From the total programme, only two mentors never actively participated and this formed the basis for exclusion from the research.

The pilot study was conducted on four participants on 28 November 2014 and the other four interviews were finalised on 6 February 2015, meaning the fieldwork (data collection) was done within a period of three months. The arrangement with the company was to conduct a pilot study on two participants, however, on the day of the interviews four participants were lined up by the company. The researcher, thus, proceeded to test the tool on all four participants.

3.4.5 Methods of Data Collection

The data gathering method was in the form of interviews which are discussions (Patton & Cochran 2002: 11) suitable to answer to the problem statement. The interviews allowed exploration for personal experiences and accounts (Polkinghorne 2005: 138). Through semi-structured face-to-face interviews, data was gathered allowing the researcher to build accord and get detail while remaining impartial (Neuman 2003: 292). A framework of pre-set questions in the form of an interview guide was prepared (Neuman 2003: 292). An audio tape recorder was also used to gather data after getting consent from the participants (Patton & Cochran 2001: 22).

3.4.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The method used to gather data for the study was in the form of semi-structured interviews which are conversations used mostly in qualitative research (Patton & Cochran 2002: 11). The semi-structured interview is a

method that was used to collect qualitative data and this method was chosen. The main purpose of the one-on-one, semi-structured interviews was to find answers to the main research question of this study.

As the sole data source for qualitative research, the key features of the semi-structured interviews as followed in the mentorship fieldwork were: scheduling of interviews in advance at a designated time, location arrangements, organised pre-determined questions, consent to conduct interviews, emergence of other questions from the interview dialogue, interviews lasting from 45 minutes to one hour (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006: 315).

3.4.5.2.1 Interview Process

Interviews were suitable to allow deeper exploration for personal experiences and descriptions (Polkinghorne 2005: 138). The participants' inner feelings and attitudes were revealed through the interview technique that was used in the mentorship research (Marvasti 2004: 146).

There were also dynamics in the interview process and time was one of the factors within the interview process that is alluded to by the researcher. Time was a constraint especially towards the end of the research and the researcher had one interview lasting only 20 minutes as the participant had already raised the issue of time as a hindrance and, thus, the answers were kept short deliberately and the researcher was unable to probe deeper with follow-up questions.

Other Interview dynamics that were especially witnessed by the researcher pertained to senior, male, white participants. One senior manager was rushing to the next meeting and, thus, not enough attention was paid to the process and there was restlessness on the part of the respondent. The interview process is covered further under reflexivity.

(a) Scheduling of Interviews

The manager coordinating on behalf of the company was the Human Resources Manager. Due to the nature of the business, the researcher had to 'pre-book' managers. The managers were also only available on Fridays. The researcher, together with the help of the Human Resources Manager coordinated the names, times and dates for such interviews, one week in advance every time.

(b) Location

Location is important in research as it ensures a private, confidential and relaxed place for the participants to meet. The Human Resources Manager arranged the venue prior to every interview. Interviews were conducted in the boardroom which was secluded and private, however, other employees were using other smaller venues close by. Even though there was ample privacy and an enclosed venue there was also lots of movement from other rooms which could be witnessed through the glass window.

(c) Pre-set Questions

A framework of pre-set questions in the form of an interview guide (Neuman 2003: 292) was prepared and is attached (Annexures B and E). Also an audio tape recorder was used to gather data, with agreement from the participants (Patton & Cochran 2001: 22). Upon finalisation of interviews, evidence was analysed and responses recorded by the researcher. The interview schedule with amended questions for both the mentor and the mentee is also attached (Interview Schedule – Annexures B and E amended).

The wording and framing of interview questions is important in the research process. The researcher undertook a pilot interview. During the pilot project, some questions seemed not to work as concepts seemed to be difficult to

understand conceptually. This was especially on the mentee interviews. This resulted in some questions being re-framed for the remaining interviews, in order for participants to respond to the research question.

(d) Consent

 Firstly, consent was acquired through the company's management to conduct the study. Thereafter, individuals were consulted by management to give permission to be interviewed. A written consent form was handed to all participants for completion before commencement of interviews (see attached Annexure C). Consent was also sought from each participant before the interviews were recorded.

(e) Follow-up Questions

During the interview, follow-up questions were posed to the participants to ensure that the questions were fully responded to. The researcher also clarified some of the questions to get desired responses to the questions posed.

(f) Interview Time Frames

The researcher ensured before the interview started that the time frame was clearly communicated to all the participants: the interview would last 45 to 60 minutes. However, due to the participants' time constraints, one interview lasted only 20 minutes.

Upon conclusion of the interviews, evidence was then analysed (Polkinghorne 2005: 138) and responses were documented (Seale 2004: 506). The researcher summarises the evidence and responses in the following chapter.

3.5 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a process that involves self-awareness and conscious self-reflection on how the researcher influences the research, and how the participants react to this influence and the process itself. The level of self–awareness and self-consciousness is critical for researchers to capture the view of the world of research of which they are a part (Mauthner & Doucet 2003: 418-425; Hennink et al 2011: 19).

Reflexivity and self-searching is important in various stages of research, in wording and re-framing of questions, ascriptive characteristics of gender/race/age/class, social location, findings, ongoing analysis. In the study, introspective reflexivity to review the bias and preconceptions that arise in qualitative research (Roller & Lavrakas 2015: 4) was used by the researcher. Also general points like time, shortcomings in the interview process and fieldwork came up for reflection.

3.5.1 Ascriptive Characteristics

By ascriptive characteristics the researcher means age, gender and race. Even though age was not disclosed, the spectrum of respondents ranged from young recent graduates to older senior managers. The senior management interviewed were also mentors, mature in age, and none were mentees. All the younger, junior managers were mentees, some had just finished university. The researcher identified correlation between age and status within the organisation. Age affected the research outcome as it impacts on the status of the participant's roles within the research. The impact was on subject knowledge and the understanding of questions based on career experiences. Gender was another characteristic that also had a role to play in the reflexivity of the researcher.

The company's top tier was male dominated automatically making females subordinate not only in the organisation but in the mentorship and learning programmes. The correlation between gender and level subjected the mentorship programme to gender bias, with more male being mentors and most female being mentees. Most research participants on the programme were white and also mostly male. The African participants in the research were all female. The researcher saw the race dynamic as more pronounced than the gender dynamics in the interviews. Structural, systematic organisational barriers were evident within the different managerial levels and within the mentorship programme impacting on the mentoring relationships.

Generally, there were no observed shortcomings in the interview process except a constant referral to stringent time schedules from the research participants. The researcher's use of body language eg nodding to encourage answers from respondents was also a perceived shortcoming. Non-verbal communication is an essential part of qualitative research (Given 2008: 563). In the researcher's case, the role was blurred as the non-verbal communication in some instances was reinforcing the verbal communication while in other cases it might have possibly replaced the verbal communication. Overall, as the researcher was encouraging participation, clues to lack of response to the non-verbal body language were also observed.

3.6   Data Analysis

In examining the data, notes from the interviews and the audio tape were used. The content of the study was analysed by reading, and re-reading each record, highlighting and noting key themes of similarity or difference. Formulation of classifications and continuous data review ensured reliability and accuracy of the data, thus keeping credibility in the study.

Qualitative data analysis identifies, it codes and categorises patterns or themes discovered in the data accumulated from fieldwork (Woods 2011: 20).

Upon completion of interviews, all data was categorised into similar themes and the process of analysis took place. Analysis of data involves creating categories or themes, sorting answers to questions posed to participants from the fieldwork and placing them into categories or themes with names and summarising them afterwards (Berg 2004: 201). Data analysis normally runs concurrently with data collection in qualitative research (DiCicio-Bloom & Crabtree 2006: 317). In analysing data, notes from the interviews and the audio tape were essential. The process of audio recording, transcribing, and analysing textual data is still the accepted standard and still most common (Markle et al 2011: 1). Audio recording contributes to free the interviewer from note taking and allows a more relaxed atmosphere which is conducive to concentration on questions (Whiting 2008: 36-37). In the mentorship research, data was collected and qualitative data analysis used after the completion of fieldwork. This is outlined in the next chapter which discusses the study's findings.

3.7   Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis of data pays attention to the qualitative aspects of data accumulated and the coding and analysis thereof. Thematic analysis is analysis of meaning in context based on the data from the fieldwork (Marks & Yardley 2004: 56).

Thematic data analysis as a method of 'identifying, analysing and reporting' is the process used to identify the main themes in this research (Patton & Cochrane 2002: 22-24). The themes are allocated codes which form part of the study and findings. In this study, an inductive approach to coding was followed where themes, patterns, labels, categories emerged and cross analysis was done from the interpretation of data from the fieldwork (Mills et al 2013: 3). A thematic data analysis method of 'identifying, analysing and reporting' was used to identify the main themes (Patton & Cochrane 2002: 22). Six themes emerged and patterns were identified. These will be discussed in the next chapter on findings. The main themes identified were:

- Career and Psychosocial elements of the mentorship programme

- Relational elements emerging from mentorship

- Networking and exchange nature of mentorship

- Knowledge as a mentorship currency

- Mentorship biasness - gender and race stereotypes

- The transformational agenda in mentorship

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In this mentorship study, the participants' contributions were requested formally and an informed written consent signed. An informed consent is a 'written or verbal statement providing research participants with a general description of the project including the harms and benefits of the study' (Marvasti 2004: 139). It was clarified in the consent form that participation is voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time. As much as participants can consent to be part of interviews, informed consent also implies informed refusal (Cohen et al 2007: 77). Research participants were also informed at the beginning of the study that the conversations would be confidential.

Within the findings, all participants were given pseudonyms and thus their identities concealed for confidentiality and protection. Confidentiality was applied to the research process by removing the names of participants and research sites to protect identities (Cohen et al 2007: 65-77). Even though all participants did not believe there were any concerns regarding their identities being revealed, pseudonyms were used. The above measures follow the ethical recommendations of John Creswell (2003: 73-76), Cohen et al (2007: 65-77) and Van Esch et al (2013: 235). Aspects of trustworthiness used in the study include credibility which will hopefully be achieved through accuracy in describing human experiences collected during the interview process arising from the data. In qualitative research multiple standards of quality are embraced, like rigour and trustworthiness (Morrow 2005: 250). Qualitative research espouses levels of ethics like informed consent, voluntary participation and

confidentiality. Voluntary participation means the participants were not coerced to participate in the research or put under any undue pressure (Klenke 2008: 50). Participants in the research were told before the interviews that they could pull out of the research at any time thus ensuring that this ethical consideration was met. Data is categorised in themes and confirmability, through reflexivity and objectivity in capturing of detail where possible (Patton 2002: 685). Reflexivity is a record of experiences, reactions, and awareness of assumptions and biases that make up self-understandings that can be examined and incorporated into the analysis (Morrow 2005: 254). All these aspects increase the rigour of the study.

3.9   Conclusion

The qualitative methodology chosen for this study has given insight and understanding in defining the nature of the research problem, thus, ensuring the credibility and integrity of the study through which hopefully, there can be a contribution to the overall body of knowledge. The methodology used has given a clear indication of the fieldwork the researcher undertook to secure data towards the answer to the main research question which is: '*What is the nature of mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations*?' The steps of the research process undertaken in the mentorship study are summarised and implemented in line with the recommendations from the book 'Our Social World' by Ballantine and Roberts (2015: 33).

The following chapters will focus on the presentation, interpretation, analysis and discussion of results generated and the emerging themes and trends observed out of the study conducted. Chapter four follows to discuss the interpretation of the data gathered and the key findings that emerged.

In conclusion, the above chapter focused on the topic of mentorship in a post-apartheid South Africa, with specific reference to the case of private-sector

organisations. Research questions were formulated in line with the research question posed and the interview guide as attached in the appendix. The qualitative research method chosen to conduct the mentorship research and the data gathering was in the form of in-depth face-to-face interviews. The tool used was an audio recorder not only to gather data but as a reference tool.

A small sample was identified, which was in line with the qualitative research approach. Originally a total of 10 participants were anticipated, however only eight participants completed the study. The other two did not continue nor complete the mentorship programme with the organisation researched and this factor disqualified them from the mentorship research. The research conducted was ultimately conducted with four mentors and four mentees identified by the organisation to participate in the study.

An interview schedule with open ended questions was used to gather data through face-to-face interviews. An audio recorder helped to keep the focus on questioning, rapport and recording for data analysis. Data was analysed through categorisation or thematic analysis. The data gathering method identified significant trends observed during the mentorship research conducted on the eight participants.

The next chapter will thus conclude and finalise the report based on the presentation and analysis of data in response to the research question. The final chapter also includes limitations and challenges encountered during the research and the fieldwork.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

The previous chapter presented the methodological approach used and the fieldwork experiences of the researcher in an IT/Consulting private sector organisation, in Gauteng. In this chapter the key statements of the nature of mentoring relationships in corporate South Africa are herewith covered.

Data was collected through eight in-depth interviews conducted with participants who are in a mentorship programme. Based on a thematic analysis process, the themes outlined below emerged from the data summary based on the respondents' feedback to the questions. The main themes identified and hence covered are:

- Career and psychosocial elements
- Relational aspects
- Networking and exchange
- Knowledge as a currency
- Biases and stereotypes
- Transformation

The mentoring criterion in mentoring relationships in corporate South Africa was generally aligned with literature, with both formal and informal aspects having clear goals and a two-dimensional model based on career and psychosocial elements. However, the mentorship relationships researched lacked reciprocity.

Another key argument is based on the internal and external network culture. The network culture of the nature of mentoring in corporate South Africa was

found to be high internally yet low externally, as far as outside networks and contacts were concerned. The learning spaces were found to be inconsistent with exchange and knowledge affected by the network culture. The network culture has impact on information access, influence and support.

The nature of mentoring in corporate South Africa has generally been affected by structural composition as far as race and gender is concerned. The composition lends itself to the exploitation of power and status in relationships that might lead to exploitation of human behaviour

4.2   Career and Psychosocial elements

Literature points mainly to a two-dimensional model of mentoring being the psychosocial and career aspects of mentoring (Ragings & Kram 2007: 234). Career related functions are coaching and advice towards professional performance while psychosocial functions are support and modelling roles which the mentor plays (Sadler-Smith 2006: 305). The researcher established that the two primary functions of career and psychosocial mentioned above are represented in the structure of the organisation researched. The participants pointed out during the interview process that both the career and psychosocial elements are represented within the company mentoring structure. The two primary functions are in line with literature. Programme documentation disclosed by the Human Resources Manager also documented the structure followed in the mentorship programme.

4.2.1 Elements of the Programme

For mentorship programmes to be balanced in approach, the researcher referred to the organisational dimensions of mentorship programmes, the three 'S' dimensions posited by Kochan (2002: 276). The three 'S' dimensions are

systemic, structure and support. The characteristics found through the research undertaken on the mentorship programme were:

- Length of the programme determined beforehand

- Requirement for formal and informal meetings

- Requirement for self-reflection and preparation

- Contract of participation put in place

- Monitoring and Evaluation: Progress reporting

The research on mentorship found the above elements to be in line with literature (Zachary 2005: 4). The mentorship structure includes 'established goals, schedules, training for mentor and mentee as well as evaluation' (Zachary 2005: 4). The criterion of the study programme researched is also in line with literature reviewed on general criteria of structures of mentorship programmes (Clutterbuck 2012: 4, Agumba & Fester 2010: 1955, Ragings et al 2000: 1179). The mentorship programme within the company addresses goals, needs of individuals, planning, assessment, preparation and support for both mentees and mentors (Kochan 2002: 276-277).

4.2.2 Formalisation of the Programme

The mentorship programme in the study has both formal and informal aspects. The structure of the company's programme is made up of five phases: planning, design, enable, implement and feedback as per a written document provided by the Human Resources Manager. At the planning phase of the programme, objectives were pre-determined prior to communication. Literature states that formal mentoring programmes are structured, with clear and specific goals (USOPM 2008: 4).

Even though the programme has a formal structure it is, however, a hybrid model with informal practices. A senior manager, who is a mentor, reported that:

> *The programme is less structured and the mentor and mentee define their own themes. It is formal in the beginning then flexible afterwards, left to both the mentor and mentee to define our own themes and draw them out (Pieter, a Senior Manager).*

A mentee, who is part of junior management, also commented:

> *The programme is informal…the responsibility lies with the mentee to make it happen (Rienier, Junior official).*

Another mentee, also a junior manager had this to say about the structure of the mentorship programme:

> *The programme started as strictly structured by mentee-mentor. Now, it's mostly structured with assignments while others meet at restaurants informally. In early stages, you were guided in a Structured way and as you grow then a flexible programme was better. I am very happy with the programme (Judy, Junior official).*

While the mentees focused on the informal aspects of the programme, a mentor, who is a senior management official, commented on the structure of the programme:

> *Ideally I prefer a formal structure with an informal side as well. There needs to be maturity in exposure though. Tools should be at your disposal. A person should get enough but dependency should not be on the mentor (Pieter, Senior official).*

The mentorship relationship is therefore fashioned around and takes the form of both a formal or informal mentorship relation (Collin 2001: 311; Zachary 2005: 10). The participants when interviewed stated that they preferred the hybrid model rather than a formal programme. This also proved to evolve from a structured formal process in the beginning and later becoming an informal relationship.

The research participants preferred the programme as it progressed from a formal structure to an informal, flexible one, opening up for relationships to develop. A senior manager and a mentor pointed out about the relationship side of the programme:

> *The relationship is a strictly professional relationship (Pieter, Senior official).*

A mentee, made the following remark concerning relationships:

> *There is evolution from mentor to mentee to a bit of friendship which is nicer (Judy, Junior official).*

According to literature, some organisations have developed hybrid programmes which allow mentees to find their own mentors but having the organisational support that comes with a structured relationship (Reinstein 2011: 5). This attests to the nature of this programme. As a mentee, commented on the programme:

> *We are allowed to pick one or two mentors from the list at the beginning of the program (Rienier, Junior official).*

A study in a South African mine discovered that both mentors and mentees tended to prefer informal mentoring relationships, with the standard of relationship being a major factor (Gilmore et al 2005: 1). This is in line with participant views concerning the type of preference in a mentorship programme. A study conducted in the United Kingdom within a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) firm looked at preferences for formal or informal

programmes. Results showed that juniors preferred formal programmes, while seniors preferred informal mentoring programmes (Ragings & Kram 2007: 256).

At the beginning of the programme, volunteerism in participation was encouraged and according to the participants, it gave them the freedom of choice and allowed independent thinking as well as making a positive contribution towards the programme. One of the mentors, remarked:

> *Even though there is a balance in gender and race, this is not the specific focus. There is more men than women but it's mixed…and it's a voluntary programme (Pieter, Senior official)*

A mentee, who did not have a formal academic background and had little experience was excited to join the programme. As part of the junior management team, the mentee enthused:

> *You choose to join the programme…there is no race basis, it is purely voluntary. For me, it's good to join the programme. I had no experience and I didn't study like others hence I joined the mentorship programme (Rienier, Junior official).*

4.2.3 Relational Aspects in Mentoring

Research in workplace mentoring conducted by Allen and Eby (2008) on formal mentoring showed that both mentees and mentors reported that mentor commitment was positively related to mentee reports of relationship quality (Poteat et al 2009: 333). Meanwhile failed mentoring relationships were characterised by poor communication, lack of commitment, amongst other issues (Strauss et al 2013: 3). With this direct correlation between mentor commitment and mentee relationship quality, the researcher explored the relational aspects of mentoring.

4.2.3.1 Relationships in Mentoring

Relational aspects were an overarching pattern in this research. However, in most cases, the participants stated that the relationships were not always mutually beneficial on the mentor's part as the programme was perceived as support and of benefit mainly for mentees. Other mentees saw their mentors as 'cool', 'admirable', for example in one mentee interview (who is an African female in junior management). The respondent had just joined the company a few months before. On being asked how long in the mentorship programme, the response was:

> *Four months…it's cool. I admire my mentor. It's challenging due to business because of time issue but the programme is beneficial.*
>
> *I'm able to use email to 'complain' and communicate about something (Vuyo, Junior official).*

A senior manager was able to point out on relationships:

> *The relationships are relaxed, good, consistent with past mentorships, previous mentees track me down for references and also for business contacts due to the previous support (Mahoney, Senior manager).*

Workplace mentoring is associated with positive relational outcomes that might lead to positive expectations on interpersonal relations with others, even in the home (Eby 2007: 9).

A successful mentoring relationship is made up of five key features which are: reciprocity in a network, mutual relations and respect, clear expectations and obligations, personal trust and connection, shared values (Strauss et al 2013: 3).

According to the social capital theory, to possess social capital relations is advantageous as it provides access to information, influence and support (Bourdieu 1985:724-725).

4.2.3.2 Reciprocal and Mutual Relationships

Social exchange theory and literature states that people join with others if it will be rewarding for them to do so, being a reciprocal relationship (Rajendran 2012: 9-10). Mentors in this study did not perceive the mentorship relationship as beneficial, but rather as less beneficial, having an indirect benefit in their career and psychosocially. On the other hand mentees were the beneficiaries, which to the mentors was the main focus.

Mentors perceived their role professionally, as 'giving back' to mentees and also as support for readiness of mentees in their career paths. Some mentors saw it as getting them up to speed. A mentor, who is a senior manager, observed:

> *For me…it's a good view of what new people are exposed to. We give back to mentees, prepare and support them (Pieter, Senior official).*

Mentors also felt there were no rewards within the relationship, as the reward of actions is not mutual, with no mutually rewarding transactions (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005: 890). A mentor, noted the following about the relationship:

> *We look at it as giving back to the community. We mentors, drive sessions, with no preparation by mentee (Mahoney, Senior official).*

Mutual advantage is part of the relationship and lack thereof determines the direction the relationship will take. Instead of benefits of mentoring for the mentor, there might be feelings of cost in the relationship, thus, weighing the mentor down within the relationship. The element of interdependence or

indirect dependence in relationships is compromised as the mutually dependent elements of the relationship are non-existent (Molm 2007: 207).

Social Capital theory's focus is on networks, reciprocity, trust and norms (McGonigal & McAdam 2012 :3). Literature suggests that individuals without mentor experience do not have a realistic preview of the relationship, underestimating the benefits for a mentor (Inzer & Crawford 2005: 34). Most mentors in the study had previous mentoring experiences, though most mentees had not. This led the researcher to assume that reciprocity was indeed lacking within the mentorship relationships researched. Also, the lack of networks in the research led to an imbalance in reciprocity between mentor-mentee and benefits could not translate and be appropriated in the social capital perspective for both parties.

4.2.3.4 Trust and Connection

Relationships are established, however, the dependence of mentees on the mentors outweighs in the relationship, making the relationship skewed towards a dependent,   solely professional relationship. Literature states that social capital is a network of mutual relationships made up of collective social obligations based on mutual respect, shared values and trust (Majiros 2013: 538). In the study, the participants agreed that there was trust within the relationships irrespective of the mentee dependence factor. This becomes a contradiction as the trust element is high whereas the relationships are not at the same levels.

Mentors tended to accept that there is dependence due to mentees in need of support. A paternalistic trend was identified, a sort of big brother relationship emanating out of the mentorship relationships. Even though trust was mentioned by the participants, not all values were shared jointly, for example, benefits for the mentor. According to the literature, successful mentorship

relationships are built on social exchange benefits and trust (Harris & Short 2014: 106). High levels of career and psychosocial support have a strong trust foundation in the context of a psychological contract (Scandura & Williams 2000: 172).

In the research conducted, the researcher found that there were extremely high levels of personal trust, such as trust of a mentee in a mentor, which is a vital characteristic (Taylor 2008: 56-57). A successful social exchange relationship and a social capital element based on trust are consistent with the application of theory in this research.

4.2.3.5 Expectations and Obligations

The study revealed a form of generalised exchange experienced by mentors. Mentors perceived the programme as a sacrifice and 'giving back' to their workplace community, according to one of the mentors, Mahoney, cited above.

Mentorship was also seen as a company grooming process, a way of being aware of who's there in the company. Mentors saw the programme as a passive reward system. A senior manager who is also a mentor, when asked about what the rewards of mentoring were, commented about his expectations and obligations, thus:

> *Initially….none. In time, there's feedback down the line that you have played a role…there is a passive reward system in mentoring others (Mahoney, Senior official).*

Social Exchange theory and literature speak about reciprocity which may be in the form of a long term favour expected by a mentor from the protégé (Rajendran 2012: 9-10). Even though mentors don't see immediate benefits, there is a futuristic benefit to mentorship within the relationship. One of the officials said:

> *Previous mentees track me down for references also with business contacts (Mahoney, Senior official).*

In generalised exchange, neither the original giver nor the recipient receives benefits but the giving and receiving is indirect, occurring amongst members of the group (Flynn 2005: 738-740).

Mentors raised issues of time and workplace pressures which were a result of the type of industry and consulting work they did. On numerous occasions, time and workplace pressures came up as key constraints and all participants agreed that balance is necessary.

Even though time was an issue, both mentors and mentees agreed that time is always made up for and any cancellation is re-scheduled. A senior manager, who is a mentor had this to say:

> *Sometimes it is difficult to make time…I am pro-active...I try to schedule well ahead of time….and stick to it (Pieter, Senior manager).*

One of the senior managers, who is a mentor, expressed the following sentiments concerning time constraints:

> *Mentorship is outside day-to-day functions in the job…we do it afterwards, we make time for sessions. Mentorship is not pressure, you can do it with a light heart…you can also have working sessions during lunch times. This puts them (mentee) at ease if it's a graduate, it builds relationships between the two of you (Mahoney, Senior official).*

To most mentors, the time constraints and workplace pressure were a cost, with no other obvious benefit. Literature has shown that there are two problems common to mentors and these are time and lack of training (Ehrich 2001: 12).

For mentees, even if time was a cost, there was a benefit of being involved actively in their development through the mentorship programme. Mentees benefitted more from offsite meetings where their career and other social matters are discussed, according to the study. Literature states that the benefits for mentees outweigh those of mentors as mentees receive both tangible and intangible benefits from the mentoring relationship (Eby et al 2007: 7).

4.2.3.6 Values in Mentorship

Values guide actions and decisions (Trevino 2000: 133-134). Internationally, research findings show values playing an important role in decision making. Values also influence behaviour by framing, supporting, motivating and giving self-definition to individuals (Fritzsche et al 2007: 335-343; Hitlin & Paliavin 2004: 383). The researcher found that in the study, values mentioned were mainly based on relationships and trust. However, values like networking and dependability were missing in the relationship. A study in the United States on global leaders showed the importance of relationships and networking as values that are important in interactions in a leadership role in order to change employee values (Terrell 2011: iv; Grojean et al 2004: 224-226). The researcher found that the networking value being almost absent was a significant part that was missing in the research findings. Networking as a value, is covered in-depth below.

4.2.4 Networking Exchanges

Exchange and networks are part of mentorship and also key to the mentorship relationship. In the study, the researcher saw no clear network sharing strategy. Participants attributed this to organisational immaturity (the company has only been in existence for eight years). Also, the researcher found that the

concept of workplace networking had to be explained clearly, especially to mentees. A mentee, noted the following on networks:

Through networks and relationships, that's how we get business…Mentors don't introduce us…some of us are in different Industries from them (Rienier, Junior official).

Another mentee also added the following about networking:

Networking is not known, we're not exposed…just slightly exposed. No social networks to advance our careers (Vuyo, Junior official).

Some of the mentors were in different departments to their mentees and had different functions. As a result they could not share the same networks. A mentor contended:

We introduce mentees to networks just through them listening to us as we conduct business and through engagement…it is a gradual process (Weno, Senior official)

Social capital is the ability of actors to secure benefits and pursue interests, through exchange of ideas and goods, in social networks or structures (Burt 2000: 2-3). In this study, there was no clear indication of any social network investment and social network strategy as there were different interpretations and understandings on what network exchanges were really about, based on the participants' comments.

A mentee commented about networking within the company:

Networks are not explicit…there's indirect networking, we work around principals on site…then work around the person (Judy, Junior official).

The role of mentors in mentorship programmes aside from their psychosocial role, can be that of facilitators of professional networks and career contacts

that might lead to important milestones in a mentee's professional life. Mentees may become successful in their careers leading to a positive impact in salary, promotions and job offers (Bland et al 2009: 11). According to a mentor, the forms of networking that the mentees are exposed to are varied:

> *We expose mentees through contact details, references, briefs, introduce them sometimes…not full introduction due to organisation maturity (Mahoney, Senior official).*

The researcher in this study, found no constant, structured and consistent exposure of mentees to networks by the mentors.

4.2.5 Knowledge as a Currency

The participants in the research conducted found mentored versus non-mentored individuals to have differences in ambition and leadership traits. This is in line with the research by Eby et al (2007: 12) which found that mentoring relationships promote career success as mentors are able to share specific knowledge, expertise and professional networks.

A junior manager, who is a mentee, just started working in the company. She had this to say about both mentored and non-mentored individuals:

> *Non-mentored individuals don't have someone who understands them…mentored individuals don't feel alone, they belong*
>
> *(Vuyo, Junior official).*

Another participant, who is a mentor, added on mentored and non-mentored individuals:

> *Mentored people are extra mile people…more ambitious, development minded. They have leadership traits and sacrifice more unlike non-mentored people (Jamy, Senior official).*

For both mentors and mentees, the one general positive view of mentorship was linked to skills development, leadership and grooming of new graduates. Both mentor and mentee participants agreed that mentorship was crucial in development and belonging. However, mentors perceived this benefit as a benefit 'given' only to them (mentees). All agreed that knowledge was a valuable currency. The social environment and interaction within is based on rewards and articles of trade, exploiting behaviour for power and status (Majiros 2013: 535-537). Non-monetary forms, like information sharing, can be sources of power and influence. Both expertise and knowledge were found to be non-monetary sources of power and influence. However, the researcher found that the absence or withholding of network sharing in itself, posed as a form of power and influence over the mentees especially concerning their career development. Power as a knowledge tool is covered in-depth below.

4.2.5.1   Power as a Knowledge Tool

The researcher found that all participants did not have the same level, quality and quantity of knowledge. There was no consistent availability of resources to the mentees. In some instances, some mentees received more support than others. Some mentors went the extra mile to provide information. One mentee, made the following assertion:

> *Mentors have done surveys on personality…helps know the person. There's also different training…on-the-job training, daily reports going to mentor now from me but other mentees don't go through same (Judy, Junior official).*

A mentor, who is a senior manager, substantiated the above point on knowledge sharing:

> *I give support with previous mentor studies, models…I give emotional intelligence tools…assessment tools…I provide tools, exposure, practical application (Mahoney, Senior official).*

Those that gave more perceived the exchange as a 'gift' or as 'helping' as much as they can. Others confined the knowledge transmission to regular contacts and relationships, nothing formal.

The Social Exchange theory states that inequality happens when some control valuable resources more than others in the exchange, those in power bring favours into the exchange due to their privileged access to information and knowledge. Interests, resources and rewards available are controlled by those in power to bring about social exchange of favours and gifts in relations (Adler et al 2002: 18). Knowledge can either be transferred or withheld depending on the relationship between mentor and mentee or based on the organisation's culture.

4.2.6 Biases and Stereotypes

The researcher found that predominantly within the company, most mentors were white, males, older and occupying senior management positions. The composition of mentees was made up of mostly young people, mostly black women, then white and Asian males. These factors brought in the dynamics of race, gender, age and level/position in the research. There was no opportunity to probe the reasons for such lack of diversity within the organisation as this was evident only by the end of the study, when all participants had been interviewed. However, responses concerning race dynamics have been captured during the interviews. Previous research conducted found that problems associated with mentoring for mentees, amongst others, were gender and race problems (Ehrich et al 2001: 12). Concerning the research conducted, the specific aspects covered are race, gender and culture biases and stereotypes.

4.2.6.1 Race

The majority of mentoring relationships consist of white male mentors and protégés who are mainly women and minorities (Bland 2009: 95). Literature shows that the post-apartheid South Africa workplace is shaped by systematic discrimination that was based on racial grounds. These perpetuated racial and socio-economic discrimination which impacts on organisational structures (Cornfield & Hodson 2002: 180; Nattrass & Seekings 2001: 471-472). In the absence of clarity of such imbalance in diversity, especially amongst mentors in this particular workplace, out of four mentors, three were white, senior managers and males. It seems power still lies in the hands of white, upper-middle class, heterosexual men and there is interrelatedness between male privilege and white privilege (Mcintosh 1986: 1).

One of the middle managers, who is a white male, agreed that there is racial imbalance in leadership:

> *The company is generally white in leadership but it is also diverse (Mahoney, Senior official)*

Another senior manager who is a mentor said that:

> *Company Z is predominantly white and Afrikaans…all the leaders that mentor are white however the mentees are representative (Pieter, Senior official).*

The above point was reinforced by a mentee, an African female who disclosed that:

> *Mentors are management, older and are mostly white males (Vuyo, Junior official)*

Research and literature has shown that race is embedded within the social and organisational fibre of mentorship relations. Race influences mentorship access in two ways; access to type of mentoring relationship and who one gets access to for a mentor (Blake-Beard et al 2006: 10).

4.2.6.2   Gender

All mentors were white in this study and of the four mentors, only one was female. There seemed to be a gender bias towards masculinity, with males gaining more from social capital than females. A study of 729 black and white MBAs in the United States of America, found that black MBAs had less access to mentors than whites. Also, many women interviewed in the follow-up study, indicated problems in gaining access to mentors. Those who ended up having mentors, found them predominantly to be white males (Blake-Beard et al 2006: 11).

A mentor, who was the only white female manager in the study, said this about gender:

> *There is gradual change…women must definitely be represented…also company very white, it needs to change (Weno, Senior official).*

However, participants interviewed in this study, stated that the company has no race or gender issues. One of the mentees commented:

> *No matter of gender or race, you get a mentor based on personality, connection, experience as long as they are good at their job. That is the basis of finding a mentor (Rienier, Junior official).*

The participants saw no race, gender and sexuality stereotypes within the general company and also as far as the programme selection was concerned.

The participants responded that stereotyping was not a factor as no biases existed. Both mentors and mentees raised the fact that the programme was based on volunteerism and that there was freedom to exit the programme at any time. One of the mentees commented:

> *As far as race and gender is concerned, it is a matter of*
>
> *upbringing from home, it probably affects relationships in*
>
> *corporations (Jesse, Junior official).*

The only visible aspect was that young mothers were not positioning themselves as far as development was concerned, they were perceived as not 'going for it'.

The participants otherwise refuted any other suggestion of bias stating that if any, it might be due to favouritism linked to personal, individual relationships.

4.2.6.3   Culture

Cultural diversity is part of a successful mentorship programme. Mentors and mentees bring their cultural values and assumptions to the relationship. Behaviour that is culturally appropriate facilitates mentoring relationships that are meaningful (Osula 2009: 37-38). In cross-gender and cross-cultural mentoring relationships, there are uncertainties based on culture, experiences, values, thus having a mentoring relationship that is ineffective (Bland 2009: 95).

In this study, participants perceived culture from a learning perspective not from a values and relationship basis. Culture has to be embraced within any organisation. A mentor, pointed out about company culture:

Mentors give or hands over company culture to the mentee…also

individual culture is important to understand…know cultures, practices.

It opens opportunities for mentor to also learn (Pieter, Senior official).

One of the mentors, added:

Mentors are open to learn from other cultures…a mentor has to learn

from a mentee. Values are due to heritage (Jamy, Senior official).

A mentor, who is senior, their comments on culture were:

We are taught about culture, other cultures…respect and awareness is

important (Weno, Senior official).

Diversity of race and gender was welcome in workforce representation, however, when it came to the interpersonal effects of culture on the mentorship relationship and programme, participants saw culture as less important. One mentor commented that the cultural dynamics seem to be less important than in other organisations he had worked for and that no particular importance is placed on it.

4.3 Transformation in Mentorship

According to Social Capital theory, having capital makes you an agent of transformation, the power that gives ability to get things done (Stanton-Salazar 2010: 2). The researcher could not identify any specific transformational initiatives within the organisation. The participants felt that 'there was no post-apartheid catching up' that had to be done. A mentor, who is also a senior manager expressed views on transformation:

W*e have aspirations as a company to move individuals*

through the ranks. Transformation is based on demographics

and also based on skills sets…I agree with transformation.

Strategically, the focus is on traditional transformation…

in mining/resources/utilities lack of transformation affects our client base (Mahoney, Senior official).

Most mentors and mentees believed that the focus of the company is on merit, competence, respect for all not on what is called Previously Disadvantaged Individuals (PDIs). One of the mentors, responded to the PDI question:

The mentorship programme is voluntary….the company has not earmarked anyone for grooming per se as far as PDI is concerned (Pieter, Senior official).

There was no distinction between PDIs, nor on other sexualities according to participants. A mentor said this about other sexualities:

The company looks at different people with respect…all are embraced from different backgrounds, expressions. We just need to understand how they got there (Jamy, Senior official).

However, mentors saw a trend with so-called PDIs that there was a difference between them and other employees in the programme. A senior manager commented:

PDIs are more open to opportunities, previously advantaged ones' don't care (Mahoney, Senior official).

Some mentors felt that the company's focus on transformation was lean and had an effect on client base and business externally. Another mentor added:

Transformation is based on merit, competence…not the aim of the programme. Everyone has a place in the sun…there is balance, no

more PDPs. We obviously want to see young, black women succeed (Jamy, Senior official).

4.4 Conclusion

The findings chapter gave a clear indication of the researcher's fieldwork experiences and relevance of the study concerning mentoring. This study took place in Tshwane, which is the northern part of the Gauteng province. Literature review and the theoretical framework are briefly linked to the six themes identified in the fieldwork and data of the research, below.

Firstly, the career and psychosocial elements as the two main functions are reflected in the mentorship programme researched, and this is in line with work by various scholars like Corporate Executive Board (1999); Ragings et al (2000); Zachary (2005); Eby et al (2007), Agumba and Fester (2010) and Clutterbuck (2012). According to the above scholars and the literature studied, career and psychosocial elements influence career focus and success. Given the literature and the data derived from the fieldwork, the theoretical mentorship element on this programme is in line with the structural proposition. However, the researcher has no evidence of career focus and success according to the findings of documented literature as this was not part of the research.

Secondly, the relational factor of mentoring is another theme that was picked up in the research. Based on the data collected and the findings, the reciprocal nature of mentorship in the research was not so strong, contrary to literature. Even though mentees in this research were happy with the relationship, the mentors did not experience any mutual advantage, contrary to Social Capital scholars (Majiros 2013; Ziakas 2014). Literature states that a mentorship relationship should be reciprocal, to the benefit of both parties and should contribute to their different roles and responsibilities within the mentorship relationship (Allen 2007). There has to be cost and benefit in the relationship

according to Social Exchange scholars (Washington 2007). The downside of the mentorship programme researched is that it has a short term nature to it contrary to literature (Eby 2007; Zachary 2005). This lack of continuity might be the hindrance in the relationship, to the detriment of the mentor becoming reasonably established and entrenched in it (Eby 2007). Relationships are crucial to mentoring relationships. In the research issues of benefit and reciprocity, dependency and relations were highlighted. There seems to be a patriarchal relationship between mentors and mentees. To ensure continuity in the relationship, mentors should find benefit in the relationship.

Thirdly, the networking and exchange nature of mentorship in this research showed that the flow of information was not consistent with literature. Based on such flow, actors should remain engaged according to literature (Adler 2002). In this research the flow/transmission and sharing of information and knowledge in external, not internal networking, was non-existent.

The fourth element links to the previous element, the knowledge factor as a mentorship currency. During the data analysis from the fieldwork, the researcher discovered that subtle power was part of the relationship as mentors had privileged access to knowledge (Adler et al 2002). Knowledge can be withheld knowingly or unknowingly and this culminates in the issue of power in the relationship. Based on this, inequality sets in within the same relationship. Quality of resources is also a contributory factor towards the exertion or withholding of such power (Allen et al 2004). The knowledge currency in mentorship, depending on the quality and privileges exercised and associated with power, allows a symbiotic tension to develop within the relationship. In this research the same quality of resources were not given to mentees. This leads the researcher to believe that this obvious inequality might lead to an effect on job satisfaction and commitment of mentees according to literary studies (Ragings et al 2000; Allen et al 2004). This is an area of possible further research.

The fifth theme identified through the fieldwork was mentorship bias and stereotypes. Due to the past inequalities that are still present and visible in workplaces today, the majority of senior managers are white and male. The structure of the present workplace imbalances are documented by scholars like Buhlungu (2003), Dames (2009) and Von Holdt and Webster (2003, 2004). Workplaces are characterised by white male patriarchy impacting on the nature of sanctions and rewards (Marks et al 2000). The social exchange and social capital theories researched are based on exchange networks and power relationships (Van Emmerik 2008). The access of power and exchange of networks and resources are in the hands of the mentors, hence, therein control lies (Ensher 2001; Majiros 2013). Joint activity is required for social exchange to happen (Lawler 2001). In this research there might be possible barriers caused by the racial and gender composition within the researched workplace. The stereotypes and perceptions manifesting as a result of past inequalities perpetuate power relationships and conflict within the relationship in the workplace.

Finally, the transformational agenda in mentorship links closely with the inequalities that were prevalent in the workplace in South Africa but must now be redressed. The transformational agenda is important in workplaces and institutions in South Africa. South Africa has a dominance of top management from the white culture reflective of values from the same communities (Amos & Pearse 2002: 22). Research shows that men and women prefer different forms of mentoring. Women prefer psychosocial elements of mentoring while men prefer instrumental elements. This also affects them as mentors (Brockbank & McGill 2006: 88-89). Diversity in mentoring affects degrees of power and influence in roles given over time and access to resources. The area of race, gender, levels needs crucial address in order for both parties in the mentorship relationship to benefit to the maximum. Research pointed to most organisations having race and gender stereotypes. Mentoring relationships represent power or powerlessness and in South Africa, race to a large extent will be the catalyst for change. Transformation should be at the centre of debates in the workplace in South Africa.

The next and final chapter summarises the study, the limitations and challenges of the study and foregrounds key findings highlighting possible lessons and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS, STRENGHTS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The main research question that the study sought to answer was: 'What is the nature of mentorship in post-apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations?' This broad question was answered by the literature review in Chapter Two and the findings in Chapter Four. Following is a brief highlight of key findings, based on sub-questions as submitted in the previous chapter. The closing chapter provides a discussion of the key findings and an attempt to link these to current literature and theory discussed in Chapter Two. In order to see whether the aim and goals of the research have been met, the theoretical and literary relevance of this study is highlighted and the possible conclusions that form the closing to the study presented. Recommendations for future research with limitations and strengths are provided.

The researcher has divided the chapter into two sections: the first section indicates key findings, general conclusions and possible recommendations. The second section highlights strengths, limitations and the summary of the study.

5.2. Summary of Key Findings and Conclusions

5.2.1 Structure of the Mentorship Programme

The mentorship programme researched follows an example of a theoretical and literary model of how mentorship programmes are structured. The programme elements and formalisation are in line with mentorship literature

researched and studied by the researcher. The relationships researched were between a senior person who is more experienced and a junior person, who were participants in the study (Ragings et al 2000: 1183). Relationship is a key aspect in any mentorship and should reflect a unique relation between individuals (Eby et al 2007: 7). A successful mentoring relationship is made up of five key features which are: reciprocity in a network, mutual relations and respect, clear expectations and obligations, personal trust, connection, and shared values (Strauss et al 2013: 3). According to the interviews, mentors saw the relationship as strictly professional, while mentees' perceptions were that the relationship was at a friendship level. This leads the researcher to believe that some sentiments are not shared equally based on such varied perceptions. Even though there is evidence of some form of relationship between mentors and mentees, there is an absence of some elements cited as being part of a successful relationship by Strauss et al (2013). The observation from the researcher is whether the absence of some elements in the relationship disqualify it as fully relational as far as mentoring is concerned.

According to literature, some of the failed mentoring relationships are as a result of trust, accountability and failure to define and understand the relationship (Shontz 2004: 469). The absence of some elements in the relationship brings into jeopardy the relationship between parties. A secure mentor might expect a mentee to be independent while the mentees may resist any attempt to dislodge themselves from dependence on their mentor. In such instance the mentor might lose interest in the mentee and their relationship will most probably be dysfunctional (Lane & Clutterbuck 2004: 92). The absence of some mentoring relationships disqualifies the relationship and short-circuits it to a point of dysfunction or even to the point of a completely failed relationship.

Higgins and Kram (2001: 264) say that a relationship is a bi-functional partnership between two people. Based on the same relationship of mentorship, the process must transmit 'knowledge, social capital and

psychosocial support' that relates to work, career or professional development (Bozeman & Fenney 2007: 6). Literature is, however, clear on the evolutionary nature of mentorship relationships (Nigro 2007: 259). Mentoring is a process towards transition in knowledge, work or thinking patterns, time is crucial for the establishment of such a relationship. This causes the researcher to critically assess the length of the mentorship programme, which in this research was an annual programme. The duration of this particular programme may lend itself to short-circuit the actual relationship between a mentor and a mentee, making it ineffective to grow into a well-established, fruitful relationship.

Social Capital theory points to mentoring relationships being reciprocal, beneficial to both parties in their designated roles and responsibilities (Majiros 2013; Ziakas 2014). Social Exchange theory meanwhile says there are costs and benefits in the relationship (Washington 2007). In the research the reciprocity and the equal sharing of costs and benefits were not obvious.

Even though the model researched was hybrid, with volunteerism on the mentor's part, both career and psychosocial elements were present. However, the third dimension equally important to mentoring is the role modelling dimension, and this seemed to be absent (Ragings & Kram 2007: 234).

Also, in order for the process of mentoring to be fully established, longevity in mentoring programmes is recommended in order to curtail unmet expectations from both parties within the relationship. Other areas of the researched programme were in line with literature researched locally and globally. A full programme has been presented outlining elements of the researched programme.

Another aspect in the structure of mentorship programmes is networking and exchange. Networking and knowledge sharing is a big part of mentoring. The

research showed an extremely low level of transfer and exchange of information. Of importance is knowledge sharing, an impetus in learning spaces whether at a micro or macro level, in mentorship is required. For career advancement, mentees ought to be exposed to all facets of learning. The research showed that this area was lacking and therefore needs to be explored further and the same structure and standards meted equally. This factor was not consistent with literature as according to literature, actors should remain engaged (Adler 2002).

The following key points were found by the researcher on networking and exchange elements of the mentorship relationship.

(a) Expectations and Obligations

The researcher found the benefits for mentees far outweighed those received by mentors in the research. Mentees received both tangible and intangible benefits from the mentoring relationship. They were supported with resources and also with both career and psychosocial support. Within the relationship, the mentees were unable to offer any type of reward according to the research and in the opinion of the mentors. This in essence makes the mentees dependent on the mentors as individuals. The social exchange relationship is a give-and-take relationship amongst actors, albeit at different levels and quantities. Due to this type of dependency, leaders seemed to control most valuable resources in the exchange, due to the power relationship. This potential imbalance within the relationship brings inequality. Leaders control the exchange relationship while the nature of mentorship at a basic level is such that it benefits the mentee more than the mentor. The social capital element of the relationship is fully in the control of the mentors, making it a power relationship which can be accessed or not accessed, with the relationship either having rewards or costs and liabilities.

(b) Trust and Connection

Trust was one of the elements both the mentors and mentees confessed to having towards one another. However, a contradictory view was picked up by the researcher because even as the trust elements were high within the relationships, the actual relationships were not at the same levels of

expectations. Mentees expected much from the mentors while mentors expected less in terms of benefitting from the mentees. In this case, the trust ratio from the mentees was high while low on the mentors' side.

(c) Reciprocity and mutuality

The researcher found mentors not experiencing mutual advantage as part of the relationship, which leads the researcher to question whether the mentor-mentee relationships truly exist in this particular organisation. There is no mutuality contrary to social capital theory which is about a network of mutual relationships with collective social obligations (Majiros 2013: 538). When a mentorship relationship is reciprocal, both mentor and mentee benefit within their different roles and responsibilities in the relationship. The reciprocity element of mentorship is also alluded to by Allen (2007: 143). Social capital has two components, the social relationship itself that allows access to another's possessions and the amount and quality of such agency (Ziakas 2014: 57). The quality of the resources keeps on being a point of contention within this research, which shows that social capital is not fully possessed by mentees and, thus, has no real advantage within the relationship. The give-and-take within the relationship is not strong based on a social capital model. Also, as soon as there is a perceived lack of sacrifice, social exchange is compromised.

(d) Knowledge sharing or transmission of knowledge

As mentorship relationships are time sensitive, the knowledge sharing or transmission aspects of mentoring might be at risk at all times, due to various factors within the relationship. In network relationships, one of the maintenance factors of networks is the flow of information that keeps the actors engaged (Adler 2002: 19). According to the Social Exchange theory, the reciprocity element of mentorship is when two individuals interact in a relationship of exchange where there is a cost and a benefit to the relationship (Allen 2007: 143; Washington 2007: 65). The area that the research highlighted was the network relationships that were not fully developed between mentors and mentees within the study. This may lead to a deficiency in transmission or

sharing of knowledge. The networks in this research are not formalised due to company maturity according to one respondent's perception. Networks are based more on relationships though without real depth, formalised structure and company buy-in.

(e) Knowledge as a tool

The researcher found differences in levels and quality of resources given to mentees by mentors. Some mentors gave various types of resources, while others gave none, which led the researcher to believe that power can be used as a knowledge tool. Some mentors did intelligence tests while others gave support in the form of time. Inequality happens when some control valuable resources more than others in the exchange. The inequality was amongst mentees and mentors, the relationships themselves. Those who had power had more or less resources to yield than others and also were willing to share or not share those resources. Power is about monopoly in resource exchanges. Any privileged access to information will automatically culminate in an 'exclusive' club for others within the exchange relationship and the group as a whole (Adler et al 2002: 18).

The above findings on knowledge sharing or transfer leads the researcher to assume that contrary to research undertaken that employees with mentors reported high levels of job satisfaction and commitment as a positive indication of quality of resources (Allen et al 2004: 128), mentees in this research due to quality of resources might fare low on job satisfaction and commitment. Therefore social capital is not accessed through the resources or the networks contained within the group. There might be a danger of active seekers becoming unpopular with active advice givers (Woolcock 2000: 6) thus leading to strained mentorship relationships.

5.2.2 Stereotypes: Race and Gender

Another theme which emerged as a key finding in the study was the composition of race, gender and levels. The gender and race stereotypes will be prevalent also within the mentorship relationship networks to the detriment of benefits to be secured and interests pursued, with possible limitations to access to information, knowledge, relational exclusivity and legitimacy for parties who are outside the social capital networks (Woolcock 2000: 6; Majiros 2013: 539).

The researcher found an imbalance in the ratio of race and gender levels within the mentorship relationships. A barring of others from access as in race and gender stereotypes restricts individual freedoms (Portes 1998: 8). Coming from this premise, social capital is not distributed fairly and exchange relationships are compromised. Diversity in the workplace is about valuing differences, addressing discrimination and promoting both gender and racially diverse groups (Green 2008: 2).

Research on volunteer mentorship programmes has shown that women and minorities have a harder time finding mentors than white males. This certainly has a significant impact on relationship and trust levels (Taylor 2008: 57). To possess social capital, relations are advantageous. Race and gender stereotypes do not lend themselves to an open, free atmosphere that nurtures relationships between people of different backgrounds. Respect, values, trust, network investments, personal and interpersonal relations, become barriers.

Within the researched company, there was a significant lack of women at mentor level, which structurally were senior levels and all African participants interviewed were mentees. Within the company structure, most mentees were African and all were female. There was scarcity of gender and race representation at senior management levels, all mentors being white males. Access to knowledge and information amongst the races and genders within

this particular mentorship group can be seen to be compromised through such a structural composition.

There is need for a robust programme on transformation and diversity, a rigorous transformational agenda to address race and gender dynamics. Research on workplace patriarchy is also necessary. The race, gender and class issues are of critical importance in a post-apartheid South Africa. Culture, values and transformation was a key finding in this research. Research indicates that in volunteer mentorship programmes, mentors agree to work with persons similar to them or who have the same interests and values (Taylor 2008: 57). Under this theme, the researcher discusses culture from a learning perspective and transformation within the context of personal mentorship relationships. Culture and transformation certainly have a significant impact on relationship and trust levels (Taylor 2008: 57).

Due to the gender and race stereotypes, diversity in the valuing of differences in this workplace is compromised. In this instance the researcher refers to the lack of women at senior levels, thus, at mentor levels, and the lack of Africans at both senior and mentor levels. There was scarcity of gender and race representation at senior management levels, all mentors were white males. Overall, most participants in the research were white and at senior management level and all were mentors. The African counterparts were all female and at junior levels and were mentees. Also all senior management were mentors. All senior management were also male, meaning females were mostly at middle to junior levels. A race and gender bias was observed by the researcher.

Organisations have a workplace function of unifying diverse races, cultures and backgrounds represented in their workplaces (Blake-Beard et al 2006: 6). Race is one of the crucial factors that impacts on transformation within organisations. In mentorship relationships, barriers of race, gender and class in alliances re-shapes stereotypes and patriarchy in the workplace (Marks et al

2000: 10). Where race and gender is involved in a stereotypical way there are automatic barriers. These barriers will be inclusive or exclusive, not everyone is allowed within the relationship circle. Also, the group dynamics change to either include or exclude within the relationships. The changes in dynamics will reinforce stereotypes. In cases of race, gender and cultural stereotypes patriarchy manifests as a form of power in the relationships. The power factor will be the dominating factor within the workplace and will set itself as 'the' power driving 'the way things are done'.

There are two ways race influences access to mentorship, one, with regards to type of mentoring relationship, secondly who the mentor is one has access to. Research conducted in 1990 and a subsequent study in 1996, on 729 black, Hispanic and white MBA graduates from top business schools in the US yielded key findings. The research found that MBAs of colour, were less likely to establish relationships with white mentors than their counterparts. A form of 'mentoring tax' is experienced by people of colour as an additional burden on types of relationships and social networks. There are a myriad of crucial barriers ranging from race, gender, level, to organisational culture, stifling the mentoring relationship within race relations. Research conducted found that people of colour have two sets of mentorship relationships, contrary to their white counterparts (Blake-Beard et al 2006: 11-14).

Literature researched also found homogenous mentor relationships to be more acceptable to people of colour (Smith 2006: 38). Besides the element of race, gender is another factor that impacts on organisational transformation and mentoring relationships. A study conducted in 2009 in the South African construction industry revealed that there was minimum integration of females and of female mentors (Agumba & Fester 2010: 1962). The previous study conducted in 1996, on 729 black, Hispanic and white MBA graduates, found that many women indicated difficulty in accessing mentors and those who did, revealed their mentors as predominantly white males (Blake-Beard et al 2006: 11). Based on the research and literature presented that men and women

prefer different forms of mentoring and women prefer psychosocial elements of mentoring while men prefer instrumental elements, women will be affected as mentors (Brockbank & McGill 2006: 88-89).

The transformation climate in the company researched showed a need for race and gender composition to be addressed. Racial composition was such that all mentors were white, senior managers, and mostly male. The gender composition was such that all mentees, except one, were women and black juniors. The researcher does not believe transformation should be top of the agenda for just this one organisation but in many organisations and not only in South Africa's private sector but in the public sector as well. Even after 21 years of democracy, the realities in the new dispensation range from 'fears within' and 'fears without', issues of power, job opportunities, mobility and income (Amos & Pearse 2002: 6-7). These have an impact on transformation within workplaces in a post-apartheid South Africa. This proves that in a post-apartheid private sector, race, gender and levels are associated. Due to the apartheid legacy, this is in line with literature reviewed.

Finally, on the practical implementation of research, during the interview phase, a trend showed that experience/seniority/levels were found to impact the status of the participants. More experienced and mature officials were at mentor levels and also senior while less experienced employees tended to be less mature in the understanding of the questions on the mentorship concept. This showed the levels of experience in relation to the mentoring status of the participants. These employees were found to be at junior levels within the organisation. So, experience and maturity as well as level were found to be factors in the understanding of interview content for some of the questions and in the responses given by the said participants.

5.3   Recommendations

The recommendations are informed by the findings and general conclusions of the study, based on the interviews conducted with eight participants, comprising of four mentors and four of their mentees involved in a research study on mentorship.

The best course of action and proposal for the way forward in this study is the following:

- The researcher recommends based on this research that organisations look at incentives or promotional rewards for mentors.

- The research highlighted the need for a longer mentorship programme that will impact on relationships and the establishment of those between mentor and mentee. The fieldwork highlighted a discourse in the relationship and this research was able to point out the need for a longer commitment in mentoring. Longevity in mentoring programmes is recommended in order to curtail unmet expectations.

- Another recommendation is in the area of transformation and diversity, a rigorous transformational agenda to address race and gender dynamics. The race, gender and culture diversity should be on the agenda of every organisation in South Africa and be actively pursued.

- Of importance is knowledge sharing, an impetus in learning spaces whether at a micro or macro level, in mentorship. South Africa has a sensitive past where the majority of black people and women were excluded from empowerment processes. Not being able to share knowledge resonates with the apartheid South Africa, which is a past that organisations must rid themselves of.

- Finally, research on workplace patriarchy and 'inter-sectionality' awareness is a recommendation for mentoring studies in private sector organisations in post-apartheid workplaces in South Africa.

5.4 Opportunities for Future Research

There are various opportunities that were identified through the research on mentoring. One of the opportunities is:

- Knowledge sharing in learning spaces

The research found differences within the organisation in levels of sharing of knowledge and the quality of knowledge given also differed from one mentor to another. The quality of resources given was also found not to be at the same levels. For example some mentees were exposed to intelligence tests while others were not. Instead support was given in the form of time for other mentees. This can lead to inequality in knowledge sharing with possible consequences on job satisfaction and commitment for mentees. The opportunity is to identify a formal structure on how knowledge resources can be managed and administered, including the resources given and the quality of those resources.

Another opportunity identified through the research is:

- Diversified mentoring relationships

Transformational efforts can be undermined through lack of diversity. Within the research all mentors were white and all male except one. All mentees interviewed were black, except one. The lack of diversity can lead to possible strained relationships. The research also highlighted network relationships that were not fully developed between mentors and mentees within the study. The lack of diversity as well as informal network relationships are not fully matured and may lead to a deficiency in transmission or effective sharing of knowledge. The opportunity highlighted is to incorporate a clear focus and understanding within the company mentoring program on how networking should be conducted and the parameters involved in such.

The final area of opportunity identified is:

- Research on workplace patriarchy and awareness of 'inter-sectionality'.

The company can support the mentoring program and process by incorporating interim transformational workshops on topics like workplace patriarchy, race and gender awareness, inter-sectionality awareness.

5.5 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The final chapter includes strengths, limitations and challenges encountered during the research and the fieldwork. The research is about Mentorship in a Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Case of Private Sector Organisations. The SME, company Z that was researched is based in Tshwane, which is part of the Gauteng province.

From the research conducted at this private organisation, the following strengths and limitations are briefly outlined:

Strengths of Research:

As far as the strengths of the research study, the research site was made accessible with considerations as far as privacy, atmospheric pollution and general participant accessibility. The interviews were well scheduled and participants availed themselves at the scheduled times and were willing to participate. The research project was administered with ethical considerations which meant it had no prejudices or manipulations or motivations when it came to pronouncing the findings. To some extent, the research portrayed an accurate reflection of the impact of mentorship within the private organisation in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Through literature review, there was also evident strength in the contextualisation of mentorship based on the Social Exchange and the Social Capital theories as applicable to the fieldwork and data accumulated from the

study. Data and thematic analysis in the end bore rich results to work from in the compilation of the overall results of the study.

Overall, the research was administered well according to the expectations of the researcher.

Besides the strengths explained above, the following are the main challenges that the researcher encountered during the research process:

Limitations and Challenges:

The biggest limitation and challenge was the time factor. Due to the participants being consultants working in a pressurised environment, some of the interviews were cut shorter, for example, instead of one hour to 45 minutes for an interview, one of the participants could only spend 20 minutes on the interview. On a lesser scale, there were occasional interruptions to announce the next participant's arrival.

During interviews the aspect of pseudonyms was not handled well only afterwards did the researcher liaise with the Human Resources Manager to communicate with the participants about this point.

Another challenge albeit not impossible was the data analysis and the final seamless collation of literature and fieldwork to apply generalisations to the mentoring practice in the broader private sector.

5.6   Conclusion

In conclusion, the section provides a summary of objectives based on the chapters of the report and also provides a summary of the main arguments. Both the Social Capital and the Social Exchange theories are strong theories that took account of the themes highlighted. This study has shown the importance of a well-structured, well executed mentorship programme. The study has also highlighted possible areas of concentration within traditional

mentorship programmes within organisations as well as within post-apartheid South Africa.

The possible areas of concentration in this study are:

The mentorship program should structurally incorporate the reciprocity element through incorporation of incentives or promotional rewards for mentors within the programme. The consolidation of a longer commitment to mentoring others will be beneficial towards the sustainability of such programmes. Longevity in mentoring programmes is recommended in order to curtail unmet mentor expectations.

The area of race and gender composition within the private sector especially at senior management levels, which was part of the mentorship tier researched, is critical. There is an established global trend in mentoring studies of gender and race bias. The area of diversified mentoring relationships, lying within the broader topic of transformation is to be addressed. What are the views of all males and also of ordinary white males both senior and junior on transformation efforts?

Of importance is knowledge sharing, an impetus in learning spaces whether it be at a micro or macro level, in mentorship. Careful consideration is necessary to understand the underlying factors involved in lack of sharing of knowledge within mentorship relationships and the reluctance to share the professional networks that advance a mentees' career towards career success.

Finally, research on workplace patriarchy and race and gender 'inter-sectionality' awareness, as far as oppressive behaviour in form and intensity is concerned, is a recommendation for mentoring studies in private sector organisations in post-apartheid workplaces in South Africa.

The direction is well informed by the findings and broad conclusions of the study, based on the interviews and fieldwork conducted with eight participants, comprising of four mentors and four of their mentees involved in the research study on mentorship. The study has succeeded in showing that mentorship programmes can add immense value to an organisation and its transformation agenda towards the career success of its employees. It is important for organisations to continue to address possible short-comings and hindrances within their overall skills development programmes. Through research undertaken to analyse such programmes, the lives and careers of recipients of these programmes are improved.

The outcome of this study is likely to make a significant contribution to the academic and professional body of knowledge on mentorship in South Africa's post-apartheid private sector organisations.

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APPENDICES

Interviewer name:	Lerato Moleko
Interviewer number	909605502

Interviewer: Please record the details of the final participant below.	
Date of interview	
Interview start time	
Participant name:	
Town / Suburb:	

	Face-to-face:	
Back check method:		

INTRODUCTION:

Hello: Mr/Mrs……….

I am conducting interviews for my Masters study at the University of Johannesburg that focuses on Mentorship in a Post-Apartheid South Africa within Private Sector Organisations.

You are invited to participate in my interview on mentorship relationships and the status between mentors and mentees to assess mentorship practices in your organisation. This interview will be conducted with approximately 10 participants, of 5 mentors and 5 mentees. This interview will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from this interview at any point.

Your responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be only available to myself and my two supervisors. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the interview, you may contact, Ms Lerato Moleko on 0824469792 or by email at lerato@goalnet.co.za

Thank you very much for your time and support.

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. **Introduction**

☐*Introduction by the interviewer (confidentiality/anonymity/right to withdraw)*

☐*Discuss the purpose of the study*

☐*Provide informed written consent*

☐*Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)*

☐*Ask if they have* **ny questions**

☐*Testing of audio recording equipment*

☐*Smile to make the participants feel comfortable*

2. **Goal of study:**

To identify and conduct research on mentorship relationships and the status between mentors and mentees in order to reach a critical summary that will assess mentorship studies and practice in post-apartheid South Africa private sector organisations.

3. **Main research question***:*

Main Research Question: ''***What is the nature of mentorship in Post-Apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations*?"**

4. **Biographical details:**

(i)   Gender: ……………

(ii)   Race: …………

(iii)   Position/Title: ……………………………

(iv)   Sector: ....

SECTION 2   : General Questions

Mentor and Mentee Questions

1. How long have you participated in the mentorship programme in your organisation?
2. What other programmes in mentorship have you been part of?
3. What differences do you perceive in Mentored vs Non-mentored individuals?
4. Statistics of race and gender splits in your company mentorship program?
5. How many mentees are mentored outside your company?
6. How does your company view mentorship in relation to overall organisation and skills development?

SECTION 3   : Mentoring Experience

Mentor Interview

1. What are some of the benefits of mentoring?
2. How do you introduce your mentees to your networks?
3. Which support resources do you avail to your mentee/s?
4. How is your relationship with your mentees?
5. How important is culture to you in mentoring relationships?
6. What kind of mentorship programme do you have in place as an organisation?

Mentee Interview
1. How important is one's *social capital/networks in an organisation in ensuring that one gets mentored?
2. What type of mentoring or social network do you belong to?
3. What kind of relationship do you have with your mentor?
4. What are some of the benefits of being a mentee in the mentorship programme you are participating in?
5. What type of mentorship do you prefer and why?

SECTION 4:   Mentoring -Potential Stereotypes

Mentor Interview

1. What are the limitations on mentorship in relation to past injustices in the workplace?
2. What workplace pressures are experienced that affect mentoring progress?
3. Does the company's mentorship programme address transformation, in what way?
4. Does the mentorship process in your organisation factor in previously disadvantaged racial groups and traditionally marginalised groups such as women and individuals with different sexualities, how?

Mentee Interview

1. Does the mentorship process in your organisation factor in previously disadvantaged racial groups and traditionally marginalised groups such as women and individuals with different sexualities?
2. As a _____(gender) and _____(race) what has been your experience before and current with mentoring?
3. What is your opinion on gender and race stereotypes in mentorship relationships?

Thank you for your valuable contribution.

Consent Form

I _____ have received adequate information regarding the nature of the study *(Mentorship in a Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Case Study of Private Sector Organisations)* and understand what will be requested of me. I am aware of my right to withdraw at any point during the study without penalty.

I hereby voluntarily and knowingly give informed consent to participate in this research study.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Date: _____

INTRODUCTION: (amended)

Hello: Mr/Mrs……….

I am conducting interviews for my Masters study at the University of Johannesburg that focuses on Mentorship in a Post-Apartheid South Africa within Private Sector Organisations.

You are invited to participate in my interview on mentorship relationships and the status between mentors and mentees to assess mentorship practices in your organisation. This interview will be conducted with approximately 8 participants, of 4 mentors and 4 mentees. This interview will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from this interview at any point.

Your responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be only available to myself and my two supervisors. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the interview, you may contact, Ms Lerato Moleko on 0824469792 or by email at lerato@goalnet.co.za

Thank you very much for your time and support.

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (Amended)

1. **Introduction**

☐ *Introduction by the interviewer (confidentiality/anonymity/right to withdraw)*

☐ *Discuss the purpose of the study*

☐ *Provide informed written consent*

☐ *Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)*

☐ *Ask if they have any questions*

☐ *Testing of audio recording equipment*

☐ *Smile to make the participants feel comfortable*

2. **Goal of study:**

To identify and conduct research on mentorship relationships and the status between mentors and mentees in order to reach a critical summary that will assess mentorship studies and practice in post-apartheid South Africa private sector organisations.

3. **Main research question***:*

Main Research Question: ''***What is the nature of mentorship in Post-Apartheid South Africa's private sector organisations*?"**

4. **Biographical details:**

(v)   Gender: …………..

(vi)   Race: …………

(vii)   Position/Title: …………………….

(viii)   Sector: ....

SECTION 2   : General Questions

Mentor and Mentee Questions

1. How long have you participated in the mentorship programme in your organisation?
2. What other programmes in mentorship have you been part of?
3. What differences do you perceive in Mentored vs Non-mentored individuals?
4. Statistics of race and gender splits in your company mentorship program?
5. How many mentees are mentored outside your company?
6. How does your company view mentorship in relation to overall organisation and skills development?

SECTION 3   : Mentoring Experience

Mentor Interview

1. What are some of the benefits of mentoring?
2. How do you introduce your mentees to your networks?
3. Which support resources do you avail to your mentee/s?
4. How is your relationship with your mentees?
5. How important is culture to you in mentoring relationships?
6. What kind of mentorship programme do you have in place as an organisation?

Mentee Interview

1. How important is networks in an organisation in the mentoring process?
2. What type of mentoring networks do you belong to currently?
3. What kind of relationship do you have with your mentor?
4. What are some of the benefits of being a mentee in the mentorship programme you are participating in?
5. What type of mentorship do you prefer and why?

SECTION 4:   Mentoring -Potential Stereotypes

Mentor Interview

1. What are the limitations on mentorship in relation to past injustices in the workplace?
2. What workplace pressures are experienced that affect mentoring progress?
3. Does the company's mentorship programme address transformation, in what way?
4. Does the mentorship process in your organisation factor in previously disadvantaged racial groups and traditionally marginalised groups such as women and individuals with different sexualities, how?

Mentee Interview

1. Does the mentorship process in your organisation factor in previously disadvantaged racial groups and traditionally marginalised groups such as women and individuals with different sexualities, how?
2. As a _____(gender) and _____(race) what is your current experience with mentoring and what suggestions do you have concerning the process?
3. What is your opinion on gender and race stereotypes in mentorship relationships?

Thank you for your valuable contribution.

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