



**A Research Report**  
Evaluating the effectiveness of a  
South African entrepreneur mentoring  
program

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by  
**Benjamin Crede**

CRDBEN001

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Supervised by: Janine Everson



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## Abstract

South Africa is faced with the prospect of low economic growth and a very high unemployment rate. The Government is placing a high emphasis on the development of entrepreneurs to stimulate economic growth and provide much needed jobs. The primary objective of this research is to determine whether the mentoring program at The Business Place, an entrepreneur support organisation based in Cape Town, is effective in providing an entrepreneur with the necessary mentoring support to maximise the entrepreneurs learning through mentoring. The secondary objective is to determine whether St-Jeans (2012) comprehensive framework of entrepreneurial mentoring is applicable in the South African context. A population of sixty entrepreneurs was sampled from the Business Places mentoring program resulting in forty-four respondents to a survey questionnaire. The results of the survey provided some useful insights into the strengths (psychosocial, career and role-model mentor functions) and weaknesses (mentoring relationship factors) of the Business Place mentoring program. Furthermore, the responses closely resemble the predicted values determined by St-Jeans (2012) framework thereby providing evidence that the model accurately reflects the mentoring relationship between mentor and mentee. The research did find a significant difference in the applicability of the model for female respondents raising questions around whether the model takes into account the different experiences of mentoring that men and women have.

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## Title

### **Evaluating the effectiveness of a South African entrepreneur mentoring program**

#### 1. Introduction

Over the past five years South Africa has had to deal with the triple threat of high unemployment, with an official unemployment rate of 25% (Statistics South Africa, 2014), high levels of inequality and very slow economic growth. In order to deal with these problems the government has been attempting to create an environment in which entrepreneurship can flourish (Republic of South Africa, 2004) but there has been very little success so far. Entrepreneurs are seen as the solution to the problem of unemployment and the government is looking to help develop more entrepreneurs in order to help alleviate the high unemployment rate. A study on the prospects of entrepreneurship to the challenge of job creation in South African argues that entrepreneurial action gives rise to growth and employment, and that, in the long term, South African needs to create a more propitious and free environment for entrepreneurs to develop in (Mahadea, 2012).

According to Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen (2014) South Africa is failing to create new entrepreneurs. Using the total entrepreneur activity (TEA) measure, the authors identified South Africa as having a relatively low number of adults (7.3%) starting their own businesses, in comparison to the 14.3 percent which indicates the global average. A lack of motivation and belief amongst South African youth is seen as the cause of low entrepreneurial activity. This is further exacerbated by a culture of entitlement, lack of business experience, and low education levels. In general, South Africans are not provided the necessary education, or socialised, to become entrepreneurs. The apartheid education system, in particular, created citizens who are enabled to enter the market as employees, not as creators of new jobs (Rwigema & Venter, 2004).

In response to the problems created by the apartheid education system, the adoption by government of the Small Business Act in 1996 allowed the department of trade and industry to address small, medium and micro-enterprise development through the creation of a white paper on the national strategy for the development and promotion of small business in South Africa. Furthermore, a statutory National Small Business Advisory Council (NSBAC) was established in 2006 in order to streamline the support provided by the Integrated Small Enterprise Development Strategy (as cited in Wickham, 2006) which aimed to:

- Increase the contribution of small enterprises to the growth of South Africa.
- Create an enabling environment for small business development.
- Help create sustainable long term job in the small business sector.
- Ensure equitable access and participation in terms of race, gender, disability, age, and sector.
- Increase the competitiveness of the small business sector in order to take advantage of global business opportunities.

In 2008 the National Youth Development Agency was created to encourage the youth development and economic participation. Part of the agency included a volunteer youth mentorship program which aims to match mentors with young entrepreneurs in order to provide guidance to start-ups or existing business (NYDA, 2016). Since the dawn of democracy in 1994, the South African government has also implemented various forms of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) in order to address the economic imbalance created by Apartheid. Whether BEE policies would help in developing entrepreneurs is unclear, but Rwigema and Venter (2004) predicted that BEE policies alone would not be sufficient to increase the number of entrepreneurs in South Africa.

A number of researchers (Ahwireng-Obeng & Piaray, 1999; Mahadea, 2012; Preisendorfer, Bitz, & Bezuidenhout, 2012) looked into the factors that would create an environment in which entrepreneurs can develop. Research on the success factors of business incubation in South Africa by Buys and Mpewana (2007) found that networking plays an important role in the success of new business ventures. Furthermore, Preisendorfer, Bitz, and Bezuidenhout (2012), in their study on why there is a lack of entrepreneurial activity in the black South African population, found that a major contributing factor to this phenomenon is the dearth of social capital and network support in these communities. The study also found that due to the deficit in black entrepreneurship caused by the Apartheid imposed economic system there are a lack of social contacts and role models which would help guide new entrepreneurs.

In a separate study on business start-ups in a South African township, Preisendorfer, Bitz, and Bezuidenhout (2012, p. 21) conclude that “Financial support, together with training, mentoring and coaching, will probably increase opportunities for success”. Similarly Griffin (2015) found that an entrepreneurs capacity as a business person was enhanced through mentoring with another entrepreneur (amongst other factors). Griffin mentions that the

engagement with mentoring entrepreneurs provided greater awareness regarding what it takes to run a business for the developing entrepreneur.

This research is being undertaken in order to determine whether more can be done in order to develop new entrepreneurs, who in turn will create new businesses, help to reduce unemployment, and in the long run reduce the inequality gap so pervasive in South Africa. Mentors can provide an important source of knowledge and experience for entrepreneurs but is the mentoring process effective in maximising the learning experience of the entrepreneur? In general, as mentioned by Mckevitt and Marshall (2015), there is very little research into entrepreneurs, small firms and mentoring. A review of mentorship measuring tools by Chen, Watson and Hilton (2016) found a lack of research into the measurement of entrepreneur mentoring programs, with most research being conducted in large businesses, education or the health professions (Nurses, Doctors, etc.). As a result, the relationship between mentors and entrepreneurs is not very well understood and the area of study could provide useful insights into what is needed to create a mentoring environment in which the learning experience of South African entrepreneurs is maximised.

St-Jean (2012) proposes a framework of entrepreneur mentoring containing four characteristics: The mentee's characteristics, the mentoring relationship, the mentors functions, and the learning outcomes of the mentoring program. This model could be used to measure the effectiveness of an entrepreneur mentoring program, allowing for the identification of strengths and weaknesses and, therefore, the ability to improve the mentoring program for the benefit of the mentee.

### 1.1. Research Question and Scope

In the context of developing an environment in which entrepreneurs would thrive, it is important to have a better understanding of whether a South African mentoring program for entrepreneurs fulfils the necessary functions in order to maximise the learning experience for the entrepreneur. Therefore an appropriate research question is:

**Does the mentoring program at the Business Place provide the necessary functions in order to maximise the learning experience of the entrepreneur?**

It is the intention to undertake this research by applying the framework developed by St-Jean (2012) on the entrepreneur mentoring program organised by The Business Place, an organisation that provides small business support to entrepreneurs in Philippi, Cape Town. A

further intention is to determine the validity of the framework to the South African context in order to verify whether the framework could provide a means of assessing other entrepreneur mentoring programs. The framework would allow for researchers to identify areas in which their mentoring program could be improved in order to ensure that the learning experience of the entrepreneurs is maximised. As a result the research is descriptive in nature as it is an attempt to further the knowledge with regard to mentoring entrepreneurs. Descriptive research is used as an attempt to describe phenomena as they exist (Harris, 2011) and in the context of this study St-Jeans (2012) model will be used to better understand the mentoring program at the Business Place, while using the results to validate the models structure.

The scope of the research is limited to the entrepreneurs involved in the mentoring program at the Business Place in Philippi. The Business Places function is to provide support and guidance to entrepreneurs and small business owners in the Philippi area. The entrepreneurs involved reflect a certain demographic of the population of South Africa, and as such the sample used in the study is not representative of the population of South Africa. In this context the results of the research may not be applicable to other mentoring programs in South Africa.

## 1.2. Research Assumptions

The research assumes that the mentoring entrepreneurs undertake all have a similar purpose in attempting to create an environment in which an entrepreneur's learning experience is maximised. Every mentor-mentee relationship is unique and this is not taken into account in the research. The framework assumes that every mentoring process for entrepreneurs should have the same characteristics as identified by St-Jean (2012). In addition, the research relied on respondents to be honest and truthful when completing the research questionnaire. In order to ensure this, respondents are not asked to identify themselves in anyway and as such, their responses were kept anonymous.

Furthermore, the research assumes that the framework to be used to assess the effectiveness of an entrepreneur mentoring program is an accurate description of the mentoring process. Building on this, a further assumption is that entrepreneurs will continue to seek to learn with the help of a mentor, and that organisations will be interested in assessing the effectiveness of their mentoring programs in the future.

### 1.3. Research Ethics

The questionnaire used in the collection of data for the purpose of this research was cleared with the ethics board at the Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town. Informed consent was obtained from the participants through the issuing of a letter to potential respondents highlighting the purpose of the study. The participants were informed of their rights to choose to participate or not participate in the study, which some of the entrepreneurs chose to exercise and not participate. Participants were informed that the questionnaires would be kept anonymous as no personal identifiers would be used. All information collected through the questionnaire would be kept confidential and in the possession of the researcher. In addition, the questionnaire asked the respondent to specify their race, but a respondent had the option of not disclosing this information. Building on this, the questions involved in the research were based on the perceptions of the entrepreneur and only a limited amount of sensitive personal information was gathered through the demographic question section.

The Business Place has requested access to the results of this study as part of the agreement for conducting the research in their mentoring program. The result of this research may affect the relationship between the organisation and the entrepreneurs in an adverse way.

### 1.4. Conclusion

South Africa is a nation that urgently needs to develop and grow its economy, and create jobs for millions of unemployed citizens. The development and training of entrepreneurs is seen as a strong potential solution to the creation of new business which should ultimately result in economic growth and new job opportunities. In this context, mentoring can be seen to be a method to fast track the skills and knowledge development of entrepreneurs in South Africa, thus improving their potential to be successful in their entrepreneurial ventures.

In order to optimise the mentoring approach, this research will look to use an existing model of entrepreneurial mentoring, developed in Canada, in order to measure the mentoring program of an organisation called the Business Place, based in Philippi – a suburb of Cape Town. Furthermore, the research looks to provide further proof that the model is an accurate representation of an entrepreneur mentoring program.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Entrepreneurship

#### 2.1.1. Definition & background

Historically, the term entrepreneur refers to the ability of an individual to transform a vision into a successful business venture (as cited in Kearney, Hisrich, & Roche, 2009). Kearney, Hisrich and Frank (2009) build on this definition, by stating that entrepreneurship requires an individual to be innovative, risk taking and proactive. Similarly Rwigema and Venter(2004, p. 6) define entrepreneurship as “...the process of conceptualising, organising, launching and – through innovation – nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially high growth venture in a complex unstable environment.” Corroborating these definitions, entrepreneurship is understood to be the process that causes changes in the economic system through innovative, risk taking individuals (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2014). Furthermore, entrepreneurship creates value by bringing together a unique set of resources to make use of a gap in the market. Ultimately an entrepreneur is seen as an innovative, proactive, risk taker that has access to a unique set of resources with which they are able to fulfil a societal need.

Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen (2014) determined that it is difficult to provide a definition of an entrepreneur because there is a lack of agreement amongst academics. However, using available literature, Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen identified six key concepts that define an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur:

- 1) Is innovative and creative
- 2) Has access to resources
- 3) Creates and grows a venture
- 4) Is willing to take risks
- 5) Is rewarded for taking risks
- 6) Is directly involved in the management of the business.

Rwigema and Venter (2004) identify entrepreneurs as individuals who have pervasive self-belief, an all-conquering enthusiasm, and far sightedness. In addition, the authors identified the desire to grow and the positive outcomes of that growth as important factors that influence the growth and development of small businesses.

Entrepreneurs define themselves as being self-managing and independent from traditional organisation-based careers (Mckevitt & Marshall, 2015). An important aspect of being an

entrepreneur is their desire to be in control of their own business. They tend to enter into their entrepreneurial venture having built up career expertise which becomes the foundation to their new venture (Zikic & Ezzedeen, 2015). In conclusion, entrepreneurs are seen as important because they create new ideas and are willing to take the risk of implementing these ideas in order to attain a long term gain. As a result they undertake an important role within society, that of social renewal and economic development.

In a study on the prospects of entrepreneurship of providing a solution to the challenge of job creation in South Africa, Mahadea (2012) states that it is only through entrepreneurship, and the creation of millions of sustainable, lasting enterprises that South Africa can create millions of sustainable jobs. This point is corroborated by Thurik and Wennekers (2004) in their paper on the importance of entrepreneurship to the future of economic growth in Europe. Entrepreneurship is seen as an important factor to the creation of growing economies (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2014) and as such the successful development of successful entrepreneurs will play an important role in South Africa's future. The government's aim is to reach a six percent annual growth target in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in order to sustain and improve the economic development of South Africa (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2014). Under these circumstances, it is critical that the factors that contribute to the success of entrepreneurs are fully understood so that the correct support structures can be created in which entrepreneurs can thrive.

#### 2.1.2. Development and training in entrepreneurship

Cope (2011) mentions that the failure in an entrepreneurial venture can play a critical role in the personal and business development of an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial failure allows entrepreneurs to deal with the harsh realities of the real world entrepreneurial process. In the South African context however, failure can often lead to the entrepreneur giving up due to a variety of factors which include limited financial resources, a low level of education and the historical mind-set factor (Preisendorfer et al., 2012). As already mentioned, South Africa desperately needs to develop an environment in which entrepreneurs can thrive in order to grow the economy, and more importantly, to create much needed job opportunities. Mentorships could play a critical role in providing a source of experience and knowledge (Barrett, 2006) in order to reduce the chance of failure occurring in new ventures.

Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that entrepreneurs develop through experiential learning. A study by Choueke and Armstrong (1998) found that ninety-five percent of the

respondents identified past experience as being influential on their personal development. Similarly, Ayala Calvo and Manzano Garcia (2010) found that an entrepreneurs experience has the greatest impact on a new ventures growth. Surprisingly Choueke and Armstrong also discovered that, forty-three percent of their respondents identified mentoring as being an influential factor. Interestingly, this factor was ranked as being more important than higher education but less important than self-learning. As an external resource to entrepreneurial development, mentoring could play a more significant role in a start-ups success than higher education. In addition Carsrud, Gaglio and Olm (1987) state that mentors play an important role in helping novice entrepreneurs in understanding important trade secrets. In contradiction however, Carsrud et al (1987) conclude that their study partially supports the view that mentorship has no influence on the successful development of an entrepreneurial venture.

There have been numerous studies indicating that entrepreneurs benefit from having regular contact with a mentor (Barrett, 2006; St-Jean & Audet, 2012). St-Jean and Audet determined that mentoring provides the entrepreneur with greater flexibility in a situation where the entrepreneur does not have time for formal training, allowing them to receive “just in time” training as the knowledge or skills are required. Furthermore, St-Jean (2012) points out that mentoring behaves like a learning-through-experience process but through second level learning. Similarly, Barret (2006) found that small business owners found the experience of having a mentor to be positive. The process provided the entrepreneurs with increased self-confidence, increased business knowledge, and better skills in running their own business.

In general, entrepreneurs learn by experience, and often go through many failures before achieving the right level of understanding and skill in order to succeed (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). Entrepreneurs need to be familiar with all functions of the business in order to make informed decisions. Rwigema and Venter (2004) identified General Management skills and People Management Skills, along with knowledge of their industry, as being important for the success of an entrepreneur, especially in the context of making informed business decisions.

Table 1: General management and People management skills

General Management Skills	People Management Skills
Strategic management skills	Leadership skills
Planning skills	Motivational skills
Marketing skills	Delegation skills
Financial skills	Communication skills
Project management skills	Negotiation skills
Time management skills	

These are similar to Wickhams (2006) factors that influence entrepreneurial performance. According to Rwigema and Venter (2004) General management skills can be broken down into the following:

**Strategic management skills** – the planning, execution and monitoring of a competitive game plan. This involves a long term view of what the business can and should become, which is important in order to manoeuvre the venture through difficult times.

**Planning skills** – Short term goals in the form of interim goals and programmes, serve as budgeting tools, and frame the entrepreneurs expectations on sales, costs, and profits. Planning skills require the ability to predict profitable and practical customer-focused products.

**Marketing skills** – An understanding of the target market, value creation from the customer’s viewpoint, and determining gaps in the competitor’s value proposition. It is beneficial for entrepreneurs to understand the interdependent aspects of marketing, such as market research, marketing planning, product planning, pricing, and sales management.

**Financial skills** – It is important for an entrepreneur to be able to evaluate an opportunities’ profitability, keep track of the cash flow and source the necessary funds to secure the ventures future. (Cash flow management, credit management, book keeping and basic financial management)

**Project management skills** – Entrepreneurs must be able to organise projects, find the necessary resources, set up goals, and keep reviewing the progress of a project.

**Time management skills** – time is an important commodity to an entrepreneur because of the variety and complexity of the entrepreneurial environment. As such time must be

managed properly which requires discipline, prioritising important tasks, delegating to others and ensuring work is completed on time.

In addition, people management skills can be broken down into:

**Leadership skills** – As leaders, entrepreneurs need to inspire enthusiasm and create common purpose amongst their employees. Leadership skills are important to managing interpersonal relations and keeping the organisation motivated through the good and bad times.

**Motivation skills** – This skill is linked to leadership and involves the urge to inspire and direct the behaviour of others. Entrepreneurs need to be willing to exert high levels of effort to achieve the organisations goal. Motivation skills allow managers to shape behaviour and breed commitment (measured through productivity, staff turnover, stay-aways, and strikes).

**Delegation skills** – No entrepreneur has the time or the skill to perform every task required to keep the venture moving forward. As a result it is important that entrepreneurs learn to delegate work to specialists, while focusing on the more challenging and important work. This involves trusting employees to get the job done, building teamwork, consulting with employees and building employee confidence by allowing them to participate.

**Communication skills** – These determine the entrepreneur's ability to convey vision, build teams, issue instructions, control processes and interact with external stakeholders. Entrepreneurs need to be able to express ideas clearly and efficiently.

**Negotiation skills** – These play a role in creating lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers, distributors and other stakeholders. Entrepreneurs must be willing to concede in order to create win-win situations which are the foundation of long lasting business relationships.

As a result, entrepreneurial performance results from a combination of industry knowledge, general management skills, people skills and personal motivation. Entrepreneurs should look to understand their strengths and weaknesses in these areas and plan how to develop these skills for the future (Wickham, 2006).

### 2.1.3. Entrepreneurship in South Africa

Entrepreneurs are seen as the primary creators and drivers of new businesses and economic growth in South Africa. In 1994, the South African government identified entrepreneurship and small business development as a way to address a variety of development goals,

including job creation, poverty alleviation, wealth creation and social stability. The National Small Business Act was implemented in 1996 and the ministry of Small Business Development was created in 2014. However the government has had limited success in creating a thriving entrepreneurial culture in South Africa. The economic conditions prevalent in South Africa is forcing people to choose self-employment and entrepreneurship as a career path in order to survive (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2014). Entrepreneurship is particularly important in the informal sector as a career option.

Rwigema and Venter (2004) point out that, under the right conditions, a few small scale businesses could grow into large businesses with a big influence on employment and wealth creation. Furthermore they predict that without a creating an environment where entrepreneurs can thrive, South Africa will most likely continue to stagnate and decline economically.

Entrepreneurs face many challenges in the process of developing a new venture and creating value. First time entrepreneurs are particularly challenged by the need to quickly develop management skills, the lack of which is often seen as an important factor leading to business failure (Gartner, Starr, & Bhat, 1999). Entrepreneurs are further restrained by limited resources which do not allow them to outsource or hire employees for crucial tasks, such as marketing, accounting, human resources, etc (St-Jean, 2012). As a result, entrepreneurs are often forced to develop these skills for themselves in order to ensure that their venture becomes successful.

According to Ahwireng-Obeng and Piaray (1999), South African entrepreneurs face a variety of obstacles toward succeeding in their business ventures, such as crime and security, and bureaucratic red tape and corruption. These factors make South Africa a difficult environment in which to succeed as an entrepreneur. Studies by Preisendorfer, Bitz, and Bezuidenhout (2012; Preisendörfer et al., 2012) came to the same conclusion, and provided some insight into what could be done to improve the conditions under which South African entrepreneurs (especially those based in townships) operate under. One of their findings was that there is a lack of suitable role models to provide guidance to new entrepreneurs; an important gap which mentors could fill in the development of entrepreneurs. Rwigema and Venter (2004) identified a number of factors which inhibit new venture creation in South Africa. Lack of training, inexperience, insufficient local skills and a general lack of business

networks for individuals are factors which are particularly pertinent to the importance of mentoring entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Urban, Van Vuuren, and Owen (2001) determined that it is important for entrepreneurs to have a strong personal motivation and will to succeed in order to be successful. The legacy of apartheid can be seen in the lack of motivation, self-esteem and creativity in certain ethnic groups in South Africa (Ahwireng-Obeng & Piaray, 1999). As Urban, Van Vuuren and Owen (2001, p. 2) state: “Many individuals in transitional economies may have the desire to pursue entrepreneurial ventures but are not engaging, not because they do not have the knowledge and skills, but because they are lacking in self-belief, or self-efficacy”. While there is a need to develop entrepreneurs for the growth of the South African economy, there is a greater need to provide guidance and knowledge to nurture the entrepreneurial spirit of South Africans (Preisendorfer et al., 2012).

In conclusion, there is a clear need in South Africa for the development of entrepreneurs in order to grow the economy and create much needed job opportunities. An important factor in ensuring that entrepreneurs are more successful is to provide them with access to knowledge and experience around managing a business. Mentoring is an excellent tool for transferring years of knowledge and experience from one person (the mentor) to another (the mentee).

Taking into consideration the importance of entrepreneurs to the development of South Africa, the scarce resources available to many South African entrepreneurs, and the lack of empirical research into the benefits of mentoring for entrepreneurs, it is important to gain a fundamental understanding of the entrepreneur mentoring process in order to determine how to maximise the learning value for the entrepreneur. It is hoped that this research will provide insights that will allow entrepreneurs and the mentoring organisations to make informed decisions about optimising the mentoring process, taking into consideration the scarce resources available.

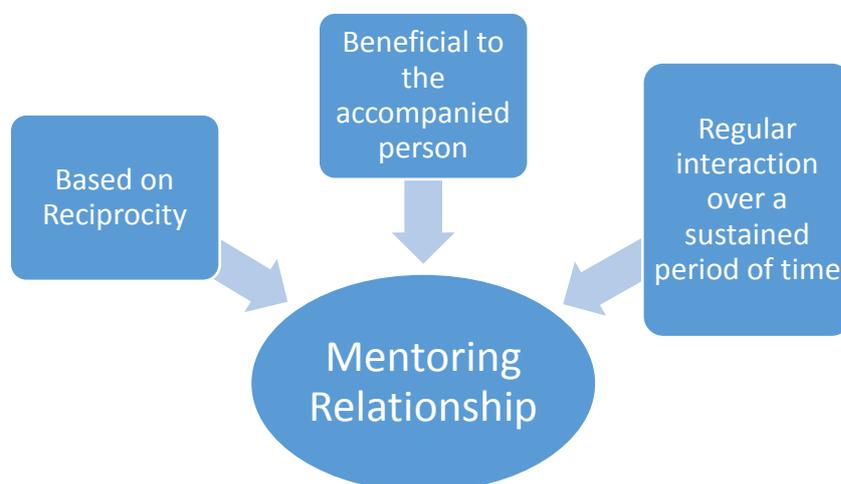
## 2.2. Mentoring

### 2.2.1. Definition & background

While mentoring has become more popular in recent times, especially in large businesses as a form of training, the concept of mentoring is very old (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). The concept comes from *The Odyssey*, written by Homer in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. In the story, Ulysses places his son Telemachus under the care of Ulysses’ friend, Mentor. Mentor was tasked with

the education and development of Telemachus while Ulysses was away. As Ehrich, Hansford and Tennet (2004, p. 2) put it: “The original meaning of the word mentor refers to a father figure who sponsors, guides, and develops a younger person”. The concept of mentoring has become more popular over the last couple of decades especially in the academic world and in the corporate world, as a way of grooming promising leaders. The concept of mentorship has stayed consistent though, with a mentor (Mentor) providing guidance to a mentee (Telemachus).

However, there is no consensus regarding a universally accepted definition of mentoring. Gotian (2010) mentions that mentors have been referred to as advocates, coaches, teachers and advisors over the years, which has added to the confusion over the definition of a mentor. Wilson (2012) identified mentoring as a long term relationship between two or more individuals, based on shared values where both parties contribute personal advice, and the outcomes are insights around career choice and organisational setting. In order to identify a mentoring relationship, Haggard, Dougherty, Turban, and Wilbanks (2011) postulate that three factors must be present. Firstly, the relationship must be based on reciprocity, secondly the accompanied person must gain some benefit from the relationship, and finally, there should regular interactions over a sustained period of time.



*Figure 1: Three factors that define a mentoring relationship*

In general mentoring has been used to nurture new staff, new leaders, and to raise morale in large organisations, while also being used extensively in education in order to reduce student dropout rates and develop new teaching staff (Chen et al., 2016). In essence, the concept of mentoring has applications in many different contexts. Memon, Rozan, Ismail, Uddin, and Daud (2015) describe the mentoring relationship as having a static nature and consisting of

verbal and non-verbal behaviour intended to provide help. In this situation it is important that mentors are able to continuously change their communication to adapt to the changing needs of the mentee.

There are three distinct streams of mentoring; namely youth mentoring, academic mentoring, and workplace mentoring (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & Dubois, 2008). Youth mentoring is about supporting young adults in the area of personal, emotional, cognitive and psychological growth (Rhodes, 2005). Academic mentoring revolves around an older, more experienced academic providing knowledge, support and guidance to a younger mentee (Jacobi, 1991). Workplace mentoring is undertaken in order to provide personal and professional guidance and growth to a mentee (Wilson, 2012). The definition of workplace mentoring seems to be the most applicable to entrepreneurs looking to undertake a mentoring process in order to learn from the mentors experience and knowledge.

#### 2.2.2. Role of mentoring

Learning can be described as the process through which people attain skills, knowledge, habit and attitudes in a behaviour modifying way. Kirkpatrick (1967, p. 96) defines learning as “the principles, facts and techniques which were understood and absorbed by the conferees.” Mentorship is an important tool for training and development, is used in the development process of many occupations, and is identified as a form of learning (Hunt & Michael, 1983). Mentoring is different from other types of support (coaching or teaching) in that the mentor puts the mentees interests as the priority (Memon et al., 2015). Bozeman and Feeney (2007, p. 731) describe mentoring as “a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development”. Mckevitt and Marshall (2015) add to this by stating that mentoring is focused on the long term goals and capabilities of the mentee. For the purpose of this study we will be looking at mentoring as the long term benefit in terms of knowledge, social capital and psychosocial support that entrepreneurs receive through the mentoring relationship.

Sullivan (2000) mentions that mentoring takes place in a variety of contexts, and its precise definition and role is determined by the environment and objective of the mentoring role. The author goes on to state that “The role of the mentor is to enable the entrepreneur to reflect on actions and, perhaps, to modify future actions as a result; it is about enabling behavioural and attitudinal change” (Sullivan, 2000, p. 163). Wilson (2012) predicts that in the future, thirty

percent of a person's career learning will develop through mentoring, as opposed to fifty percent from job experience.

### 2.2.3. Different forms of mentoring

Pompa (2012) identified six different forms of mentoring in her literature review of enterprise mentoring. Pompa states that traditionally there have been two types of mentoring, the formal and informal, but that recently new types of mentoring have developed as the concept of mentoring has become more popular.

Formal mentoring is usually based on one-on-one interactions and is defined by the development of clear objectives and guidelines for the mentoring process (Hudson-Davies, Parker, & Byrom, 2009). One-on-one mentoring is the most common form of formal mentoring and allows for the development of a strong personal relationship which can be a powerful tool in the mentoring process. Hansford, Ehrich and Tennent (2003) determined that formal mentoring became popular as a method to develop women and minority groups within organisations, usually as part of an affirmative action process. Similar forms of mentorship are visible in South African business as a means to rectifying the economic imbalance created by apartheid (Griffin, 2015).

Informal mentoring is characterised by an individual making the selection of the mentor or mentee on their own. Bisk (2002) identifies informal mentoring has a highly elitist process, the initiation of which can be influenced by an individual's bias or cultural background. Informal mentoring usually takes place in a one-on-one setting. In South Africa there are a variety of institutions and businesses involved in business mentoring. Business mentoring is identified as "an ongoing, long term business counselling relationship between an experienced business advisor and a client" (Nieman & Nieuwenhuizen, 2014, p. 214). However access to these institutions is limited and is usually associated with business loans through banks, where a bank is committed to providing support to the entrepreneur to improve the likelihood of success. Bank loans for new business ventures can be difficult to access in South Africa, especially for the poorer communities, and as such entrepreneurial mentoring is often out of the reach of entrepreneurs from these communities.

Outside of informal and formal mentoring types there exist group and training-based forms of mentoring. Group mentoring is characterised by a mentor providing guidance to multiple mentees at the same time. The group meets together, which creates problems around

scheduling and a lack of personal relationship development between the mentor and mentee (Pompa, 2012). Group mentoring is usually based on a formal mentoring agreement.

Training based mentoring is characterised by the relationship between the mentor and mentee being created by a training programme. The relationship is created as part of the learning experience of the training programme for the mentee. The purpose is to allow the mentee to develop a greater set of skills (Pompa, 2012). With the technological advances of recent decades, web-based mentoring has also grown in popularity. Social media allows for the mentee and mentors to access information for a wide range of possible mentoring partners. In most instances web based mentoring allows for better matching of mentors and mentees, and can help to reduce the initial implementation cost of mentorship (Emelo, 2009).

Table 2: The six forms of mentoring

<b>Mentoring Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Formal mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined by clear objections and guidelines.</li> <li>• Often in a one-on-one basis</li> </ul>
Informal mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined by an informal selection process</li> <li>• Often seen as an elitist process where selection is based on the mentors discretion and interest.</li> </ul>
One-on-one mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most common form of mentoring</li> <li>• Allows for the development of a personal relationship between mentor and mentee.</li> </ul>
Group mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mentor works with multiple mentees at a time</li> <li>• Limited by the difficulty of organising meetings and by the lack of personal relationship development between mentee and mentor.</li> </ul>
Training based mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tied to a training program</li> <li>• A mentor is assigned to help mentee with a specific topic (associated to the training program).</li> </ul>
Web-based mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online profiles are used to match mentors and mentees</li> <li>• Mentoring often takes place through online platforms, which provide useful resources to improve the mentoring program.</li> </ul>

#### 2.2.4. Benefits of mentoring

The benefits of mentoring have not been properly measured quantitatively due to the mainly qualitative nature of the mentoring process and to the lack of longitudinal studies in this field (Mckevitt & Marshall, 2015; Pompa, 2012). Furthermore it is difficult to place the effects of mentoring in isolation and measure its benefits, because mentoring is often an accompaniment to a larger training or development program. Building on this Buddeberg-Fischer and Herta (2006) identified certain benefits to the mentoring programmes for

developing doctors, but determined that the lack of long term studies raised questions regarding the long term benefits to having a mentor, as well as a suitable cost-benefit analysis of the mentoring process.

A study by Garvey and Garret-Harris (as cited in Pompa, 2012, p. 9) identified a variety of benefits that mentoring provides to the mentee. These benefits include “improved performance and productivity, improved knowledge and skills, greater confidence, empowerment and well-being, improved job satisfaction and motivation, faster learning and enhanced decision making skills, improved understanding of the business, improved creativity and innovation, encouragement of positive risk taking, and the development of leadership skills”. Many of these benefits are corroborated by a study on the factors leading to satisfaction in a mentoring scheme undertaken by St-Jean and Audet (2009). Similarly, Johnson and Ridely (2008) identified professional development, a stronger sense of competence, greater confidence and increased knowledge of their field as benefits of a mentoring relationship. In terms of the bigger picture, learning speed has become an important factor in differentiating oneself from the competition (Wilson, 2012) and therefore mentoring could play a critical role in providing access to knowledge and experience that would usually take years to develop.

#### 2.2.5. Assessing the impact of mentoring

St-Jean (2012) identified a variety of factors which influence the mentee/mentor relationship and the relationships ability to produce learning outcomes for the mentee entrepreneur. Firstly St-Jean (2012) identified the mentees characteristics as playing an important role in the learning outcome for the entrepreneur. In particular, mentees should be willing to actively participate, be open to their mentors (Clutterbuck & Hirst, 2002) and should therefore be willing to disclose personal information to their mentor. St-Jean points out that self-disclosure can contribute to improving the self-understanding and self-realization of the mentee, thus improving the effect of mentoring on the mentee. Research by Wanberg, Welsh and Kammeyer-Mueller (2007) that high levels of self-disclosure in the mentee, helps to develop the mentoring outcome and has a positive effect on the relationship with the mentor. St-Jean further identified the mentor’s characteristics as important to the learning outcome of the mentoring process. Specifically, the availability of the mentor is a positive influence on the success of the mentoring relationship. The mentor’s availability refers to how often the mentor and mentee meet and the amount of time spent in mentoring. Allen and Eby (2004)

identified that the mentors experience influences the quality of the mentoring relationship. This is corroborated by Wilson (2012) who further contributes that mentors need to be genuinely committed to the development of others and should focus on the mentees learning and development.

The third important characteristic identified by St-Jean (2012) involves the characteristics of the mentoring relationship. What is important in this characteristic is the perception of similarity from the mentees point of view which is seen as an having an impact on the success of the relationship (Allen & Eby, 2003; Wanberg et al., 2007). In particular, similar values, personalities and interests between the mentor and mentee influences the quality of the mentoring relationship (Mitchell, Eby, & Ragins, 2015). The characteristics of the mentoring relationship are strongly influenced by the ability of the mentee for self-disclosure within the mentoring environment. However, as Bisk (2002) pointed out, the mentor does not have to have experience in, or work in, a similar field to the mentee in order for the mentee to benefit from the mentoring relationship.

The final characteristic as identified by St-Jean (2012) is the various roles that the mentor plays in the mentoring relationship, called the mentoring function. Wanberg (2007) defines the mentoring function as the aspect of the mentoring relationship that influences the learning outcome in particular. As St-Jean mentions, mentor functions are traditionally separated into three areas: the psychosocial, the career related, and the role model function. A previous study by St-Jean (2011) confirmed the applicability of these three functions, and further separated the three functions into sub functions (four for the psychosocial, four for the career related, and one for the role model function) and developed an instrument to measure the mentors functions.

Kram (1985) was the first researcher to identify the mentoring functions of career-related and psychosocial support. Huang, Weng and Chen (2016) and St-Jean (2011) identify psychosocial support as the mentors ability to provide advice, recognition and friendship to mentees. Furthermore, the authors determines that the career function is the ability of the mentor to help their mentees improve their skill set, knowledge, and help to challenge the mentee in the workplace. A study by Scandura (1992) determined that there was a third mentoring function, distinct from the psychosocial and career function, which the author termed the role model function. Huang, Weng and Chen (2016) define this third function as

the mentors ability to act or behaviour in a manner that their mentees can follow, the success of which is determined by the level of trust and respect that the mentee has for the mentor.

St-Jeans (2012) research indicates that it is important for mentoring programs to identify entrepreneurs who are willing to be open and honest with their mentors. In addition the program itself must involve an environment which is supportive and builds trust between the mentor and mentee. Understanding that the three functions (career-related, psychosocial and role model) support the entrepreneurs learning in different ways can help the mentor to maximise the learning for the mentee.

Using this information St-Jean (2012) developed a framework which attempts to measure the relationship between the four functions identified and the entrepreneurs learning outcome from the mentoring process. The framework identifies four categories, namely the mentee (Self-disclosure), the relationship (Trust in Mentor, Perceived Similarity) between the mentee and the mentor, the functions (Psychosocial, Career-related, Role-model) of the mentor, and the outcome (Mentees Entrepreneurs learning). A questionnaire was developed using literature and focus groups which was applied to an entrepreneur mentoring program in Canada. The results indicate that the framework is valid and reliable in measuring the relationship between the identified functions and the entrepreneurs learning outcome. A visual representation of this model and its seven factors can be seen in figure 1 below.

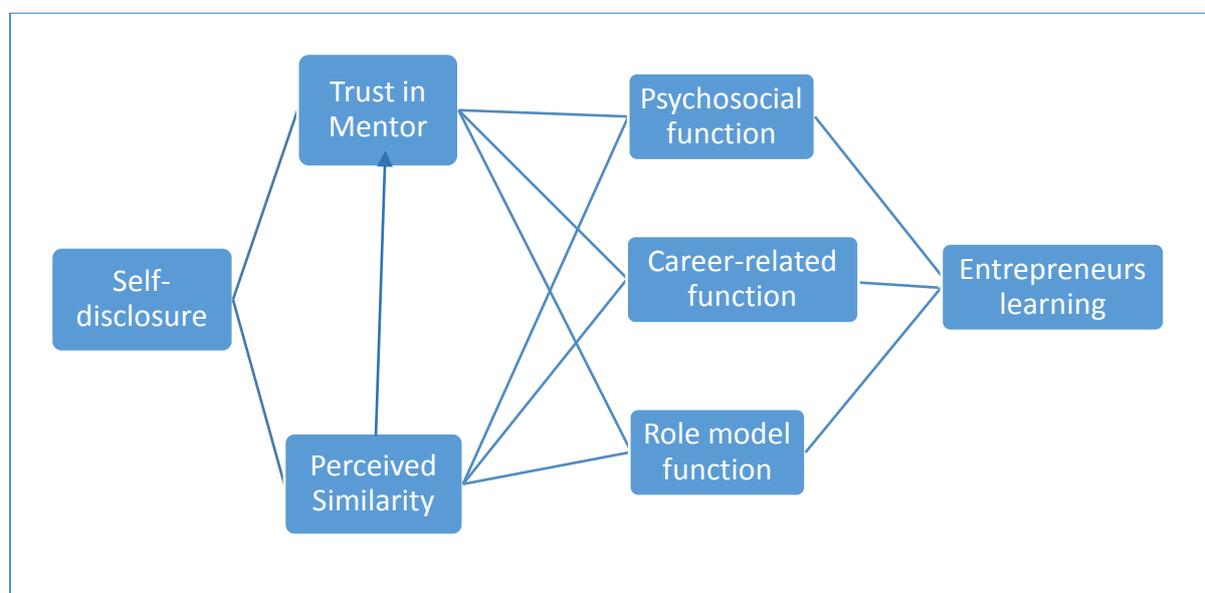


Figure 2: St-Jeans (2012) framework of entrepreneur learning through mentoring

In conclusion, mentoring is an important tool to the education and upskilling of individuals, and, if used correctly, could be very useful in the upskilling and development of entrepreneurs in South Africa. In this context, St-Jean (2012) has accumulated a number of previous studies relating to the measurement of the effectiveness of a mentoring program into a succinct model. The table below (table 3) provides a brief summary of the relevant literature which has influenced the development of the model. The purpose of this model is to show the relationship between a mentees ability to be open and honest (Self-disclosure), the depth of the mentoring relationship (Trust in Mentor and Perceived Similarity), the mentors functions (Psychosocial, Career-related and Role-model), and the mentees Learning Outcomes. The model could provide a useful tool for South African mentoring programs to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring program in helping develop the necessary skills and knowledge for South African entrepreneurs.

Table 3: Summary of mentoring research

<b>Authors (year)</b>	<b>Theory/model</b>	<b>Description</b>
L Bisk (2002)	The importance of matching the mentor and mentee	The results indicate that age and education are factors that impact on the entrepreneurs benefit. Mentors do not have to have experience in the entrepreneurs field in order for the entrepreneur to benefit from the relationship.
C. Wanberg, E. Welsh, J. Kannemeyer – Mueller (2007)	The role of Self-disclosure in formal mentoring partnerships	The research shows that mentees tend to disclose more than their mentors, and that mentee self-disclosure is related to positive mentoring outcomes such as mentoring received, mentoring relationship satisfaction, and the positive influences of mentoring.
T. Allen & L. Eby (2003)	Factors associated with learning in, and the quality of the mentoring relationship	The study identified that a mentees perceived similarity to their mentor is related to a higher quality mentoring relationship, and in greater learning outcomes for the mentee.
Johnson & Ridley (2008)	The Elements of Mentoring	Identified that mentoring helps to improve an individual’s sense of competence, knowledge in their field, and increased the speed at which they developed professionally.
St-Jean (2012)	Mentoring and the learning development of entrepreneurs	The results of a study on novice entrepreneurs indicates that mentoring helps to provide a greater sense of self-efficacy, validates an entrepreneurs self-image, and lowers the entrepreneurs sense of solitude.



St-Jean (2012)	Maximising the learning potential for entrepreneurs through mentoring	The study on 360 Canadian entrepreneurs found that a mentor's career related functions are the most important, followed by the psychosocial function, and the role model function. Furthermore trust and perceived similarity are required in order to build a strong, high quality mentoring relationship.
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### 3. Research Methodology

The Business Place is an organisation based in Southern Africa which provides small business development to entrepreneurs. The aim of the organisation is to provide entrepreneurs with the necessary tools, services and skills that they would need in developing their own business. Furthermore, the organisation looks to connect entrepreneurs with specialists through the implementation of group mentoring programs. The point of the relationship is to allow the new entrepreneur to learn from the experienced entrepreneur in order to fast track the development of the entrepreneur, and the entrepreneurs business. The program focus on structured weekly group mentoring built into a long term approach which attempts to provide entrepreneurs with the necessary guidance to succeed in their ventures.

The research was undertaken at the Philippi branch of The Business Place, which currently has sixty entrepreneurs involved in their small business development initiative, which includes the relevant mentoring program as part of the education of the entrepreneurs. Philippi is a township outside of Cape Town with an estimated population of 191,000 people. The South African government has identified Philippi as ideal location for the development of businesses as the area is a producer of 80 percent of Cape Town's vegetables. As such, The Business Place identified Philippi as a prime location to providing help to developing entrepreneurs in the lower income population of South Africa.

It must be noted that the measurement of the impact of mentoring on entrepreneurs will be based purely on the perceived benefits that the mentees identify as having come from their respective mentoring programme. Entrepreneurs may have undergone differing mentoring programmes and styles which would affect their responses, which is contradiction to the aim of the research which is to provide an assessment of a mentoring program.

#### 3.1. Research approach and strategy

The research was undertaken using a deductive approach in order to assess the entrepreneur mentoring program at The Business Place in accordance to the framework developed by St-Jean (2012). As a result we can determine that the primary, and secondary objectives of the study are as follows:

**Primary objective:** The primary objective of this research is to determine whether the mentoring program at The Business Place is effective in providing an entrepreneur with the necessary mentoring support to maximise the entrepreneurs learning through mentoring.

**Secondary objective:** Determine whether St-Jeans (2012) comprehensive framework of entrepreneurial mentoring is applicable in the South African context.

The research strategy involved the use of quantitative methods of data collection. According to Kraska (2006, p. 2), quantitative research studies are used to “produce results that can be used to describe or note numerical changes in measurable characteristics of a population of interest”. Furthermore, quantitative research is based on methodological principles and requires a strict research design to be developed before the actual research is undertaken (Adams, Khan, Raeside, & White, 2007). A significant benefit of quantitative data is that it allows for greater statistical analysis. Kraska (2006) further notes that quantitative research methods are useful in explaining causal relationships, which is applicable to the model used in the analysis of the mentoring program as part of the data analysis will involve determining the level of correlation between the various factors of St-Jeans (2012) model.

While there have been a number of studies on the topic of entrepreneurial mentoring, the majority of these studies involved the use of qualitative research. Pompa (2012) and Mckevitt and Marshall (2015) identified a lack of specific measurable benefits and impacts from mentoring and identified the lack of quantitative research into this area as the most likely cause. This is due to the problem of measuring the effect of the mentoring process through quantitative means and because qualitative methods allow for greater freedom in the interpretation of the information provided by respondents. St-Jeans (2012) framework is an attempt to provide a better quantitative measurement tool to assess the effectiveness of an entrepreneur mentoring program. Furthermore, mentoring is usually used in conjunction with more complex training or support programmes, which make it difficult to evaluate the benefits of mentoring on their own, hindering the use of quantitative research.

#### 3.1.1. Assumptions

The research assumes that St-Jeans (2012) framework takes into consideration all the factors involved in a mentoring program. While the framework attempts to provide a tool to measure the effectiveness of a mentoring program, frameworks or models rarely provide a perfect mirror of reality. In addition, the research assumes that organisations are interested in being able to measure the effectiveness of their mentoring program, and that mentoring will continue to be a popular form of entrepreneurial training in the future.

Finally, the research is relying on the respondents being honest and truthful in their responses. The research assumes that respondents are able to reflect on their mentoring

process and remove their opinions around their mentoring experience from their overall training experience.

### 3.2. Research design

The study is based on descriptive research, which is an open, flexible approach to research that allows for new insight into areas of interest. For the purpose of this research, we are attempting to assess the association between the following characteristics of the mentoring relationship:

1. the mentee,
2. the relationship between the mentee and mentor, and
3. the mentor functions (Psychosocial, Career related, and Role model) of the mentoring relationship
4. To the learning outcomes for the entrepreneur of the mentoring process.

This framework is shown descriptively below in Figure 3.

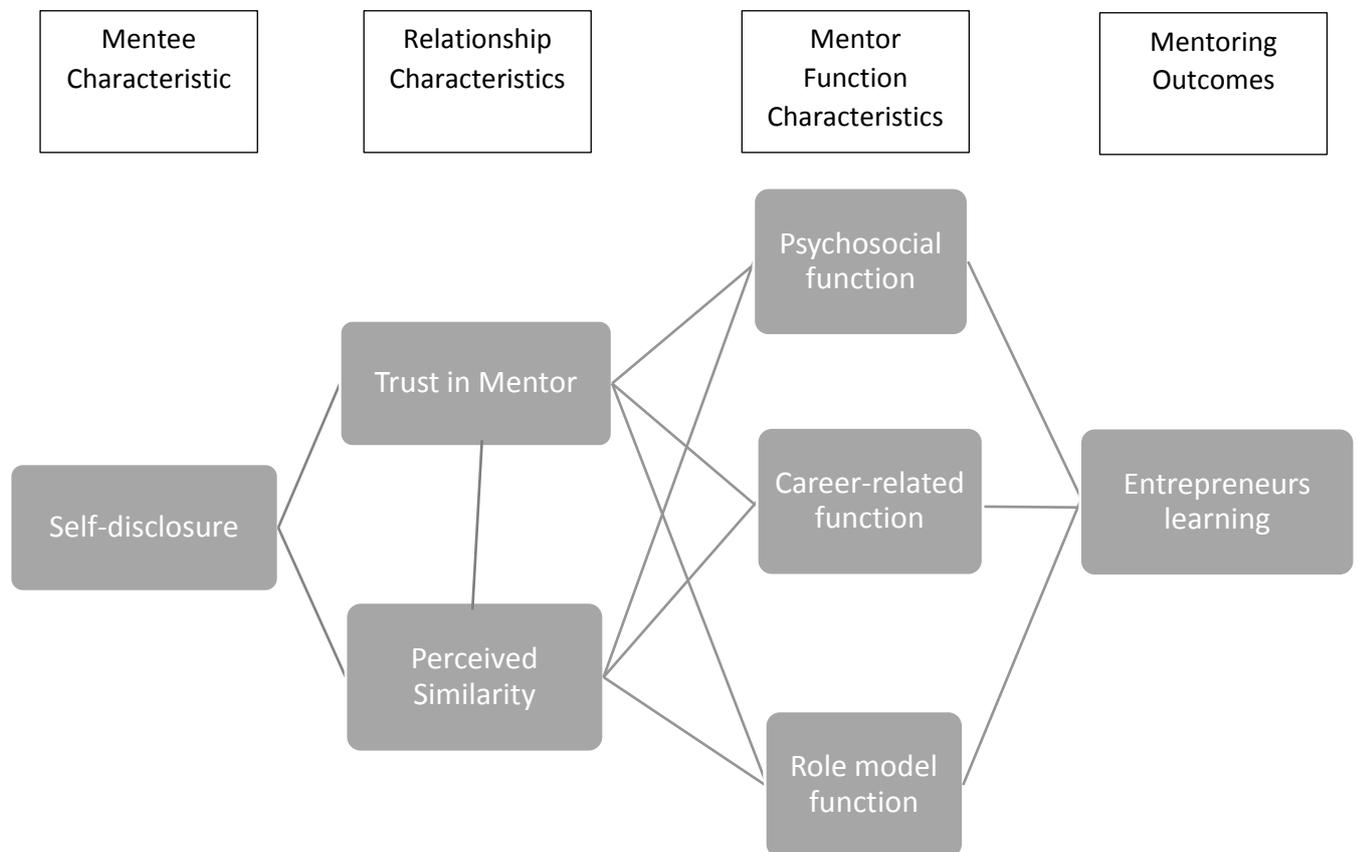


Figure 3: The characteristics and associated factors of St-Jeans framework

Each characteristic of the framework has an associated factor which is measured through the questionnaire. For instance, the mentee characteristic is measured by the Self-disclosure factor, while the mentoring relationship characteristic is measured by both the Percieved similarity factor and the Trust in Mentor factor. The Psychosocial and Career-related functions have four sub factors each, which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.4 (Data collection instrument).

The design of the research is based on a cross sectional study design using a questionnaire which will be physically distributed to the entrepreneurs involved in The Business Places mentoring program. The reason for using this method is based on the quantitative nature of the research strategy, and the time constraints under which the research needs to be completed. Furthermore, physically distributing the questionnaire should ensure a higher response rate then emailing or mailing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire used in this study is a modified version of the questionnaire developed by St-Jean (2012) as a framework to assess an entrepreneur mentoring program aimed at maximising the learning of the mentee entrepreneur. The questionnaire is based on the four characteristics of entrepreneurial mentoring as identified by Wanberg (2007) and St-Jean;

- The ability of the mentee to disclose personal information (Self-disclosure),
- The nature of the mentee-mentor relationship (Perceived similarity and Trust in Mentor),
- the functions of the mentor (Psychosocial, Career-related, and Role-model)
- And finally, the outcome of the mentoring (Entrepreneurs learning).

The structure of the questionnaire has been maintained, but some of the questions regarding the mentee entrepreneurs venture have been excluded as they are deemed irrelevant in the context of this research.

The questions for the 'Self-disclosure' section were developed by Miller (as cited in St-Jean, 2012), whereby respondents indicate how likely they would be to discuss personal subjects with a stranger. The questions are measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 – would never to discuss, to 7 – would discuss completely and fully.

The 'Perceived Similarity' measure is inspired by Allen and Ebys (2003) research which measures the similarities in values, interests and personality. The measure includes an item proposed by Ensher and Murphy (as cited by St-Jean, 2012) with regards to similar points of view. This measure uses a Likert scale ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree and respondents need to rate questions regarding the similarities between themselves and their mentors. The 'Trust in Mentor' measure is based on the components of the trust measure proposed by Rempel and Holmes (as cited by St-Jean, 2012). Respondents are required to indicate their perception of the measure of trust that they have in their mentor.

The three mentor function and sub function measures were developed by St-Jean (2012). Again respondents are required to indicate on a Likert scale how their mentor provided support in the Career function, the Psychosocial function and the Role-model function. The Likert scale measures from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree. The Psychosocial and Career functions are broken into four subsections each. The Psychosocial measure includes the personal reflection, personal security, motivation and confidant function. The Career function includes the integration, information support, confrontation and guide functions.

### 3.3. Data collection methods

The data was collected using a structured research instrument in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaires were self-administrated and are based on Likert scales in order to allow participants in the research to assess the mentoring they are undergoing with regard to the four characteristics of an entrepreneur mentoring program as identified by St-Jean (2012). The questionnaire was made available to respondents as a physical copy that allowed for easy submission straight to the researcher and which meant there was less complication and administration for the participants and their relevant organisation. The questionnaire was supplied in English only.

There are numerous problems related to the use of questionnaires, namely very low response rates (Bourque, 2004) and the danger of questions being misunderstood (Adams et al., 2007). The latter is particularly important in questionnaires as respondents may not have direct access to the researcher in order to receive clarity regarding a question. This problem will be overcome by maintaining the rules outlined by Adams, Khan, Robert and White (2007), namely: Keep the questionnaire short, provide an open layout, use clear, short, unambiguous questions, and provide examples. Furthermore, questionnaires cannot be used on the portion of the population which is illiterate, and there are often problems with understanding the

questions for that portion of the population who use a first language other than English (Bourque, 2004). This is particularly problematic in South Africa and cannot be avoided due to the time constraints and funding available to undertake the research. In addition, the researcher will be available as often as possible while the questionnaires are being completed in order to answer any questions from the participants.

One of the benefits of using a questionnaire is that there is very little cost involved in the distribution of a questionnaire. In theory, questionnaires also allow for greater geographic coverage and larger samples (Bourque, 2004), however this would only be relevant if the study was conducted on more than one organisation. Furthermore, less personnel were required for the data collection, and the processing and analysis of the collected data. All these factors were beneficial to the time constraints under which the research was undertaken.

#### 3.4. Data collection instrument

Through the development of the entrepreneur mentoring model, St-Jean (2012) created a questionnaire based on previous work on measuring the various factors of the model: Self-disclosure, Perceived Similarity and Trust in Mentor, the three mentor functions (Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model), and the Learning Outcomes.

The Self-disclosure measure used in the study was developed by Miller, Berg, and Archer (1983) and uses ten statements where responses are measured on a Likert-type scale. This is a measure of the information that a mentee is willing to disclose about themselves which has an effect on the depth of the mentoring relationship, and helps the relationship to evolve. This scale is identified as a measure of the mentees characteristics in the mentoring relationship.

The Perceived Similarity measure is a combination of the four item measure developed by Allen and Eby (2003) with additional items as recommended by Ensher and Murphy (2011). This measure provides insight into how the mentee sees themselves in relation to their mentor. The Trust in Mentor measure is based on the research conducted by Rempel and Holmes (as cited in St-Jean, 2012) and consists of nine statements. The Trust in Mentor measures the extent to which mentees feel they can disclose sensitive information to their mentors. Both these factors are identified as the mentoring relationship characteristics, and are, in theory, influenced by the mentees ability for self-disclosure.

Finally, the mentor functions measure was developed in a previous study by St-Jean (2011) titled *Mentor Functions for Novice Entrepreneurs* and the mentee learning scale was

designed and tested by St-Jean (2012) as part of his research. Two of the three mentor functions (psychosocial and career) are broken into four further functions:

**Psychosocial Functions:**

- *Personal reflection function:* The mentor is able to reflect the image that the mentee projects
- *Personal security function:* The mentor is able to relieve the stress in the mentees life, and help to provide perspective with regard to the mentees problems.
- *Motivation function:* The mentor is able to provide encouragement which helps to develop self confidence in the mentee.
- *Confidant function:* The mentee is able to confide in the mentor much as he/she would with a friend.

**Career Functions:**

- *Integration function:* The mentor is able to help integrate the mentee into the business community.
- *Information function:* The mentor is able to provide knowledge, information and experience to the mentee.
- *Confrontation function:* The mentor is able to help the mentees personal reflection but confronting their ideas, beliefs, attitudes and habits in order to help the mentee overcome barriers.
- *Guide function:* The mentor is able to help the mentee improve their comprehension of their problem, and provide suggestions and advice with regard to those problems.

**Role-model:** The mentor is able to provide insight into his life which are applicable to the mentees situation in order to accelerate the mentees learning. The mentor may act as a source of inspiration or as a form of comparison.

The mentee learning measure is taken from St-Jeans (2012) original study and contains eighteen questions related to how comfortable the mentees are with regard to undertaking certain task at work as an entrepreneur.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) used in the study was taken directly (with the authors permission) from St-Jeans (2012) research and adjusted structurally to accommodate the

needs of the research being undertaken. Questions regarding age, race, years of work experience, years working as an entrepreneur, etc. were included into the questionnaire. The original questionnaire has been altered slightly to reduce the complexity of the language, taking into consideration the request by the Business Place to change certain words that they felt the mentee entrepreneurs would not understand. These changes were done carefully to avoid losing the purpose of the question.

The questionnaire was printed and physically distributed to the entrepreneurs involved in the Business Place mentoring program.

### 3.5. Sampling

The study population for this research is all individuals involved in the mentoring program at The Business Place in Philippi, Cape Town. This population currently stands at sixty entrepreneurs. Non probability sampling will be used in order to select a suitable sample for the purpose of the research, while the process to identify the sample is convenience sampling. The Business Place agreed to allow the research to be conducted at their Philippi offices and helped distribute the questionnaire to the applicable members. At the time of conducting the research, the Business Place had 60 mentee entrepreneurs who were involved in a mentoring program through the organisation. For the purpose of this study, these sixty entrepreneurs were defined as the research population. Using a 95 percent confidence level and ten percent confidence limit, it was determined that a suitable sample size for a population of 60 would be 37 responses.

The research was undertaken over a number of visits to the Business Place office in Philipps. The entrepreneurs undergoing the Business Place training program are broken into cohorts which meet at different times of the week. Some cohorts only meet every two weeks to undergo the programs mentoring system. A total of six different cohorts were sampled. A cohorts size can vary from anywhere between five and fifteen individuals. In total the six cohorts contained sixty entrepreneurs. At each visit the researcher would distribute the questionnaire to the group at the beginning of their meeting, and collect the questionnaire upon completion. A total of 44 acceptable responses were received from the entrepreneurs providing a 73 percent response rate which is far higher than the expected response rate for survey questionnaires which is usually around 25 percent (Bourque, 2004). The high response rate could be attributed to the commitment by the Business Place to take part in the survey,

and the hands on approach of the researchers in distributing the questionnaires, helping respondents with any queries, and collecting the questionnaires all in the same session.

### 3.6. Research criteria

Reliability is defined by Payne and Payne (2004) as being confident that the way in which the data was captured can be repeated, producing similar results. A measuring device is deemed reliable if it yields consistent measurements, regardless of who is using it. In the study by St-Jean (2012) the measurement tools of the four characteristics (the mentees disclosure, the mentoring relationship, the mentor functions, and the learning outcomes) were tested for reliability using Cronbachs alpha test (table 4 below). The results for each factor are as follows: ‘Self-disclosure’ (0.899), ‘Perceived Similarity’ (0.897), and ‘Trust in the Mentor’ (0.741). ‘Mentor functions’ is broken into three measurements, namely Psychosocial (0.823), Career-related (0.711), and Role-model (0.882). According to Trobia (2011), Cronbachs alpha is a measure of internal consistency among a set of questions that could measure the same construct, may therefore be related to each other and could therefore be formed into a scale of measurement. A Cronbachs Alpha score of greater than 0.70 is recommended in order for the researcher to be confident that the scale is reliable (Trobia, 2011).

Table 4: Reliability of measurement tools (St-Jean, 2012)

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Cronbachs Alpha (St-Jean, 2012)</b>
Self-disclosure	0.899
Perceived similarity	0.897
Trust in mentor	0.741
Psychosocial function	0.823
Career-related function	0.711
Role-model function	0.882

Furthermore, in St-Jeans (2012) original study, the validity of the measurements in the questionnaire was achieved through the use of discussion groups (content validity), and through construct validity. The questions developed for the ‘mentor functions’ section were created using 40 mentee entrepreneurs who were randomly selected from an entrepreneur mentoring program in Canada and were brought together in a discussion group. To avoid bias, a group of eight mentors were also involved in the discussion groups. The discussion group helped to develop the four psychosocial functions, four career-related functions and the

mentoring function (St-Jean, 2011). The validity of the questionnaire of the overall framework was tested in a study undertaken by St-Jean (2012). The results of the survey from 360 respondents closely resemble what the theory predicts and suggests that the questionnaire is accurate in measuring what it intends to measure.

Before this research was undertaken, the questionnaire used in the research was submitted to a manager of the Business Place in order for them to assess whether the language and questions were applicable to the mentee entrepreneurs who take part in the Business Places mentoring program. The manager in question has experience working with the entrepreneurs who take part in the Business Place program and, as such, was in a position to judge whether the language and question styles used in the questionnaire would be correctly understood by the mentee entrepreneurs in the program. After reviewing the questionnaire, the manager asked for small changes to be made regarding certain words used which the manager deemed to be too complicated for the level of English proficiency amongst the mentee entrepreneurs. These words were duly changed and all effort was made to ensure that this change did not adversely affect the point of the related question. Following this, the questionnaire was submitted for testing to three entrepreneurs outside of the Business Place program who reported that the questions used in the questionnaire were understandable, and that the questions were not overly complicated.

The questionnaire used in the study is available in Appendix A, attached to this document.

### 3.7. Data analysis methods

A variety of statistical methods were used to analyse the data collected through the questionnaire survey. Each factor of St-Jean's (2012) model is measured using tools identified in the Data Collection Methods and Data Collection Instrument sections. Each measurement tool is made up of a number of statements, requiring the respondent to identify how they feel about the statement. Respondents use a Likert type scale where:

- 1 – Strongly Disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Disagree somewhat
- 4 – Undecided
- 5 – Agree Somewhat
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly Agree

Upon completion of a questionnaire, it was possible to calculate an average score for each participant per factor. Furthermore, the examination of individual responses provide further insight into a respondents feeling toward specific statements. An overall average score was calculated for each factor to provide insight into how the entrepreneurs, in general, feel about the various characteristics, allowing the researchers to identify strengths and weaknesses in the Business Places approach to mentoring entrepreneurs. This process allowed for the use of data where questions had not been completely answered. As a rule if 50 percent or less of the statements in a particular function were not answered, the respondent's questionnaire would be omitted from the research analysis.

In terms of using the results to determine the validity of the model to the South African content, the framework requires an analysis of the correlations between the various factors of the mentoring process. The figure below (figure 4) indicates the theorized relationships between the various factors of St-Jeans (2012) framework. The arrows indicate where positive correlations should be measured. Correlation is a measure of the strength of the relationship between two variables and can be either positive or negative (Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). With a positive correlation, an increase in the measure of one variable would result in an increase in the measure of the other variable. A negative correlation results in a decrease in the measure of a variable, when the other variable increases, and vice versa. Correlation is measured using the correlation coefficient, which is "a numerical estimate of the degree to which the points on a scatterplot cluster around the regression line. It is a single number that summarises the dispersion of scores on a scatterplot" (Blanche et al., 2006, p. 205). The Correlation coefficient ranges from between -1 and 1, with -1 indicating a strong negative correlation, and 1 indicating a strong positive correlation. A score of zero indicates that there is no linear relationship between two variables (Chung, 2011).

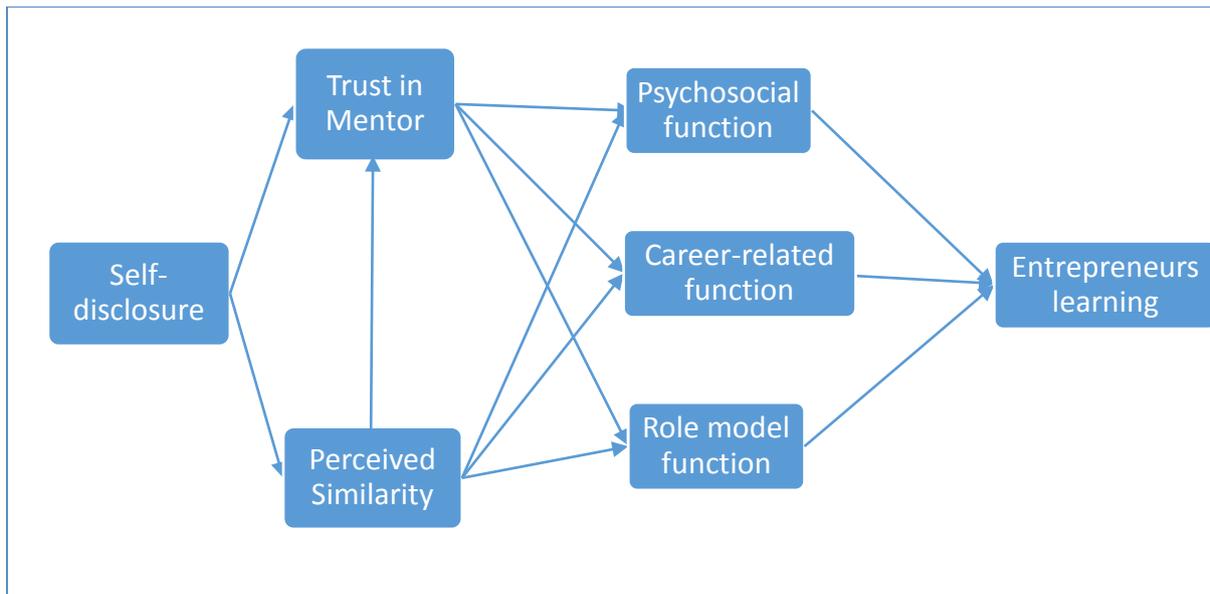


Figure 4: The framework of entrepreneur learning through mentoring (St-Jean, 2012)

Upon identifying whether a positive correlation exists between the various variables of St-Jean's model, we will determine whether we are able to draw inferences with regards to the result. As a result the null and alternate hypothesis can be stated as follows:

**Null hypothesis:** There is no positive correlation between item x and item y,

**Alternate hypothesis:** There is a positive correlation between item x and item y;

where:

x and y = any two of self-disclosure, trust in mentor, perceived similarity, psychosocial function, career-related function, role model function or entrepreneurs learning.

In addition, basic descriptive methods and bivariate analysis were used to determine whether there are differences in the responses along the lines of race and gender. In order to determine whether there is a significant difference in the responses of male and female respondents, the bivariate analysis required an initial analysis to test whether the variances for each of the seven factors were significantly different for men and for women, after which an analysis of the average scores could be undertaken depending on whether the variances differed or not. A bivariate t-test (for either equal or unequal variances was used) was used to test whether there is a statistical difference between the mean responses of male and female entrepreneurs.

## 4. Research Findings, Analysis and Discussion

### 4.1. Research Findings

Of the sixty entrepreneurs involved in the mentoring program at the Business Place as of October 2016, 47 managed to complete questionnaires and return them to the researcher. Not all members of the groups were present while the research was being conducted, and this seems to be consistent with the behaviour of the entrepreneurs (as reported by the Business Place) in that they end up missing group mentoring sessions due to other work commitments. Due to the inconsistent nature of mentee attendance, and the time constraints under which the research was conducted, no attempt was made to follow up with those individuals who were not available. Three of the entrepreneurs chose not to fill out the questionnaire for reasons unknown.

Of the 47 responses, a large number (23) of the questionnaires were incomplete in the sense that a small number of questions were left unanswered. Due to the large number of questions (79) and the measuring technique used, an incomplete questionnaire could still be used for analysis as long as a section was not left out completely. As a rule, if 50 percent or less of a section was not complete then the questionnaire was not used in the analysis. After summarising the results it was determined that three responses were insufficiently complete to be used in the analysis of the research findings. The lowest number of complete questions in an acceptable questionnaire ended up being 72 questions out of 77, with the average number of questions answered being 77 and the median being 79.

For any specific question, the lowest number of responses came to 39 out of 44. This occurred for four separate questions, two of which were part of the Mentee Learning measure (“I can discern opportunities” and “I can manage expenses”), one was part of the Perceived Similarity measure (“my mentor behaves predictably”) and the final one was a question from the Trust in Mentor measure (“Reciprocal learning happens with my mentor”). The Mentee Learning measure and the Self-disclosure measure had the lowest average number of completed questions at 42 responses, while five measures were completed by all 44 of the respondents (Personal Reflection, Confidant Function, Confrontation Function, Guide Function, and the Role-model function).

#### 4.1.1. Reliability

According to Payne and Payne (2004, p. 176) reliability is “that property of a measuring device for social phenomena (particularly in the quantitative methods tradition) which yields consistent measurements when the phenomena are stable, regardless of who uses it, provided the basic conditions remain the same.” As mentioned previously, Trobia (2011) identifies Cronbachs alpha as a measure of internal consistency among a set of questions that could measure the same construct, may therefore be related to each other and could therefore be formed into a scale of measurement. The author defines an acceptable Cronbach alpha score as being anything above 0.70.

Table 5: Internal Reliability (Cronbachs Alpha)

	<b>Cronbachs alpha</b>
<b>Self-disclosure</b>	0,882
<b>Perceived Similarity</b>	0,873
<b>Trust in Mentor</b>	0,700
<b>Psychosocial functions</b>	
Personal Reflection	0,894
Personal Security	0,841
Motivation	0,880
Confidant	0,836
<b>Career Functions</b>	
Integration function	0,948
Information Support function	0,901
Confrontation function	0,723
Guide function	0,837
<b>Role Model function</b>	0,868
<b>Mentee Learning</b>	0,930

The results in table 5 above are relatively similar to those obtained by St-Jean in his 2012 study (see table 4), and shows that all of the functions can be seen as reliable when identifying anything above 0.70 as acceptable. The Trust in Mentor score and Confrontation function are both relatively close to that boundary, and St-Jean (2012) identified a similarly low score for the Trust in Mentor factor. As a result we can determine that the measurements used for the various factors are internally reliable, which indicates that the measures used in this study are consistent in measuring the social phenomena they were designed for.

#### 4.1.2. Respondents demographics

The 44 respondents provided feedback with a number of demographic information questions regarding their age, race, gender, previous working experience, experience as an entrepreneur, and details regarding their relationship with their mentor. This section will analyse the responses to these questions to gain some insight into the background of the entrepreneurs involved in the study, which may help to better understand the results of the factor measurements.

Table 6: Summary of respondent’s demographics, work experience, and mentoring experience

	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Age of Respondent (years)	37,82	35,00	10,30	28,00	65,00
Years of prior work experience	8,98	8,00	6,45	1,00	27,00
Years working as an entrepreneur	5,19	3,00	5,47	1,00	25,00
Length of mentoring relationship (years)	0,81	0,78	0,71	0,00	4,00
Meetings per month	2,55	2,00	1,50	1,00	8,00
Length of meetings (minutes)	80,80	60,00	30,21	45,00	120,00

The average age of the 44 respondents was 38 years with a maximum age of 65 years and a minimum age of 28 years. The data indicates that 93 percent of the respondents are in the age range of between 35 and 55, with only two respondents being younger than 30 and one respondent being older than 60 of age.

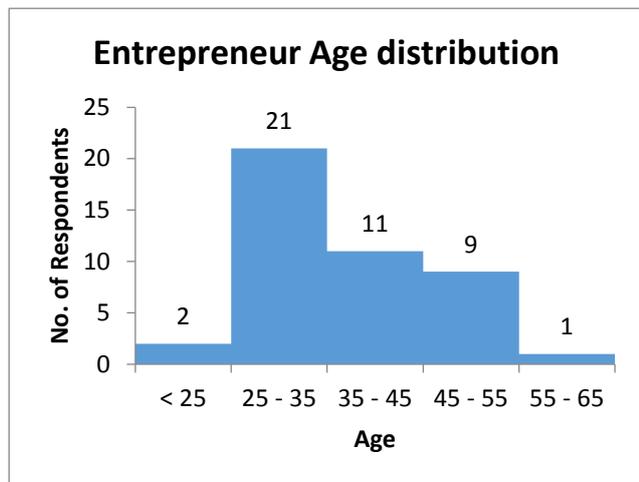


Figure 5: Histogram of the entrepreneur’s ages

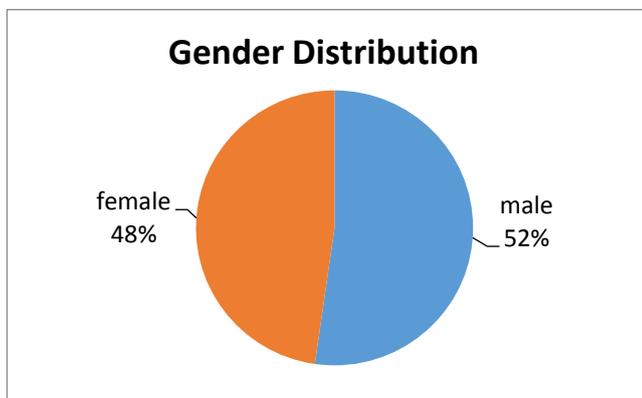


Figure 6: Pie Chart reflecting the entrepreneur’s gender distribution

The gender of the respondents was slightly skewed toward a higher number of male entrepreneurs with 23 male respondents as opposed to 21 female respondents. According to information received from the Business Place, this accurately reflects the overall gender split of the entrepreneurs in their program. 42 of the forty-four respondents (95 percent) identified

themselves as Black/African, with one respondent identifying themselves as Indian, while one further respondent preferred not to answer the question.

With regard to the number of years of work experience before turning to entrepreneurship as a career choice for the respondents, the data shows on average the entrepreneurs have nine years of work experience before turning to entrepreneurship. The years of prior work experience ranges from one year to 27 years, but 88 percent of the respondents have between zero and 15 years of prior work experience.

The entrepreneur's years of entrepreneurial experience varies between one and 25 years, with an average of six years of entrepreneurial experience. Again, a high proportion (83 percent) sit on the lower end of the number of years of experience, with 86 percent of respondents having between zero and ten years of entrepreneurial experience and a total of 33 respondents indicating that they have been an entrepreneur for less than five years. What is interesting is that there were ten respondents who identified as having more than ten years work experience, but who are still willing to take part in an entrepreneurial development program.

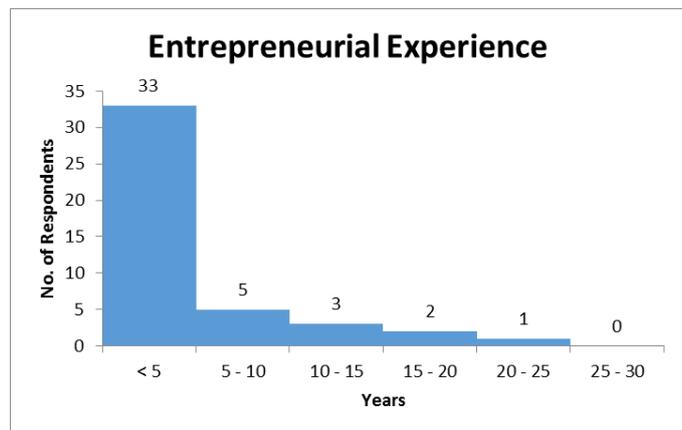


Figure 7: Histogram representing respondent's entrepreneurial experience

Slightly less than three-quarters (72 percent) of the respondents identified that their mentor did not work in a similar industry to themselves. Mentors were also typically identified as being female with only 41 percent of the respondents stating that their mentor is male. On average the mentoring relationship has been in place for just under a year (11

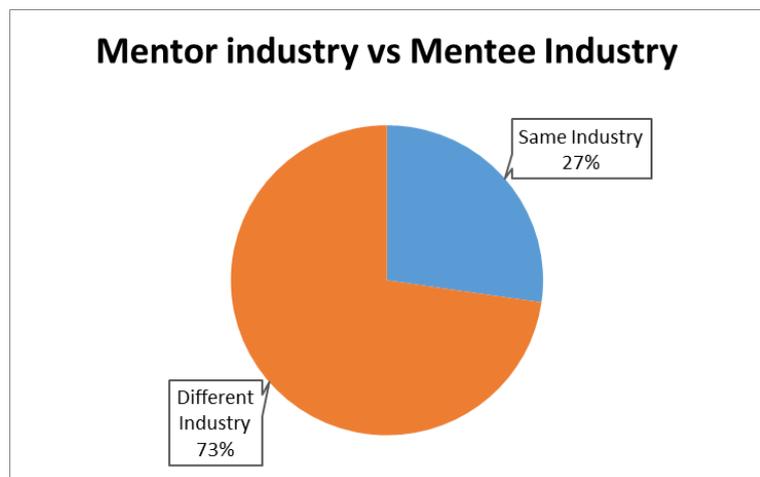


Figure 8: Pie chart indicating the percentage of mentees who identified their mentor as working in the same or a different industry

months), with the longest relationship having been in place for four years and the shortest for two months. These numbers make sense in the context of the Business Place program where entrepreneurs are placed with a mentor as part of the program. There is no opportunity for the mentoring to have begun before the entrepreneur enters the program. Entrepreneurs meet with their mentors either twice a month or four times per month depending on how far along they are within the program. The mentoring sessions are either two hours or one hour, which again is dependent on how far along the entrepreneur is in the program.

#### 4.1.3. Performance of the Business Place mentoring program

A score for each of the seven factors was calculated for the forty-four respondents by taking the average response value for each section. These results were then analysed using basic descriptive statistics, and summarised in order to obtain an overall picture for the responses of the entrepreneurs as a group. The table below (table 7) indicates the mean, median, standard deviation, maximum individual score and minimum individual score for the responses to the seven areas of St-Jeans (2012) mentoring model.

Table 7: Statistical summary of the factors of the mentoring model

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Self-disclosure	4,60	4,60	1,26	7,00	1,00
Perceived Similarity	5,19	5,31	1,17	7,00	1,67
Trust in Mentor	5,03	5,33	0,71	6,25	2,78
Psychosocial function	6,19	6,40	0,82	7,00	4,19
Career function	5,67	5,84	1,07	7,00	2,38
Role-model function	5,65	6,13	1,48	7,00	1,75
Entrepreneurs learning	5,93	6,06	0,82	7,00	3,78

From the results we can see that on the Self-disclosure factor the average score comes to 4.6 out of 7.0 which is the lowest average score for all the factors measured. The highest individual score in this factor was 7.0 out of 7.0 while the lowest score was 1 out of 7.0. A closer analysis of the responses indicate that individuals are least likely to discuss things that make them feel guilty (3.4 out of 7.0), their inner feelings (4.1 out of 7.0) and their habits and quirks (4.1 out of 7.0). However, the entrepreneurs are most likely to discuss what makes them the person they are (5.6 out of 7.0), things that they are proud of (5.6 out of 7.0), and things that are important to them in life (5.4 out of 7.0).

The perceived similarity (Perceived Similarity factor) between the mentee and the mentor provided an average score of 5.2 out of 7.0, with a minimum score of 1.7 out of 7.0 and a

maximum score of 7.0 out of 7.0. This indicates that, on average, the entrepreneurs in the program feel that they are mildly similar to their mentors. The individual responses to this scale indicate that the mentee entrepreneurs feel least strongly that their mentor has a similar personality to their own (4.2 out of 7.0), that their mentor behaves predictably (4.6 out of 7.0) and that they have the same viewpoints as their mentor (4.8 out of 7.0). On the opposite end, the mentee entrepreneurs felt strongly that they can trust their mentor (6.2 out of 7.0) and that their mentor is reliable and can be counted on (6.0 out of 7.0). Overall the results indicate that the mentee entrepreneurs feel that their mentors have similar values and personal interests to themselves, while being trustworthy and reliable.

The third branch of St-Jeans model is the measurement of the extent to which the mentee has trust in their mentor. The average score for this measurement came to 5.0 out of 7.0 with a highest individual score of 6.3 and a lowest individual score of 2.8. On this measurement, all respondents agreed that their mentors had not failed to meet their needs, and very few felt that their mentors had disappointed them. On average, the respondents felt most strongly that they were satisfied with their mentor, while also providing high response scores to the statements ‘I learn a lot from my mentor’ (6.3 out of 7.0), ‘My mentor gives me a new perspective on things’ (6.3 out of 7.0), and ‘My mentor shares a lot of information with me that helped me in my professional development’ (6.3 out of 7.0).

The Psychosocial function is broken into four measuring sub factors, namely the personal reflection sub factor (does the mentor help the mentee understand themselves better), the personal security sub factor (does the mentoring relationship help the mentee feel secure), the motivation sub factor (does the mentoring relationship motivate the mentee), and the confidant sub factor (does the entrepreneur feel they can confide in their mentor). On the personal reflection sub factor, the entrepreneurs gave an average score of 6.1 out of 7.0 with only the question ‘I know very well how my mentor sees me’ receiving a score of under 6.0 (5.6 out of 7.0).

The average score for the personal security sub factor came to 6.0 out of 7.0, with respondents feeling least strongly that their mentors calm them when they are tense, while feeling most strongly that their mentor helps put their problems into perspective. The responses to the motivation sub factor provide an average score of 6.4 out of 7.0, with respondents being very consistent with regard to their answers across the measurements. The confidant sub factor has an average score of 6.2 out of 7.0 and is similar to the motivation sub

factor in that there is no much variation in the scores for the various questions that make up the factor. Overall, the average score for the Psychosocial function came to 6.2 out of 7.0 with a lowest individual score of 4.2 and a highest individual score of 7.0. The scores indicate that the mentee entrepreneurs feel quite strongly that their mentors motivate them to succeed while fulfilling a role as a confidant.

The Career guide measurement is broken into four separate measurement sub factor, namely the integration sub factor (to what extent does the mentor provide access to a supportive network), the information support sub factor (does the mentor provide knowledge and expertise to the relationship), the confrontation sub factor (to what extent does the mentor providing a critical feedback of the entrepreneurs actions), and the guide sub factor (a measurement of the mentors ability to provide a guiding hand to the entrepreneur).

The mentee entrepreneurs at the Business Place indicate that they feel least strongly about their mentors ability to put them in touch with people the mentor knows (5.2 out of 7.0), while feeling most strongly with regard to their mentors ability to provide suggestions to people who they feel could help them (5.7 out of 7.0). This may reflect the nature of the mentoring relationships where 72 percent of the mentors do not work in a similar industry to the entrepreneur, and are therefore less likely to be able to provide access directly to people who could be helpful to the mentee. With regards to the information support sub factor, the average score was calculated to be a relatively high 5.8 out of 7.0, with entrepreneurs feeling most strongly that their mentors share their knowledge and experience (6.0 out of 7.0) and feeling least strongly that their mentor provides them access to their expertise (5.5 out of 7.0).

In looking at the confrontation sub factor we can see that the scores range from 4.6 to 5.9 out of 7.0, giving us an average score of 5.3 out of 7.0. Respondents feel the least strongly that their mentor criticises them constructively, while feeling most strongly that their mentor would not contradict them if he/she disagreed with the mentee. With regard to the final sub factor, the average score for the guide sub factor comes to 6.2 out of 7.0 with a fairly equal distribution of scores for the four measurement questions. The lowest average score was given to the question: “My mentor suggests new options to me” (6.1 out of 7), while the highest average score was given to the question: “My mentor gives me advice about my problems” (6.4 out of 7.0).

The role model factor looks to measure the extent to which the mentor takes on the role of role-model to the mentee. The responses indicate an average score of 5.7 out of 7.0 with a

highest individual score of 7.0 and a lowest score of 1.8. A closer look at the responses indicates that the mentee entrepreneurs feel relatively strongly that their mentor tells them about the mentors business and life experiences, and feel least strongly that the mentor exposes the entrepreneur to the mentors success and failures. The results indicate that the mentors play a significant role-model factor for the mentee entrepreneurs in the Business Place program.

The final factor of St-Jeans model of entrepreneurial mentoring is the mentee learning factor, and is a measure of the extent of the mentee entrepreneurs learning during the mentoring program. The questions in this factor relate to how confident an entrepreneur feels regarding the various skills and abilities that an entrepreneur needs to successfully employ. The results provide an average score of 5.9 out of 7.0, with a lowest individual measurement score for a measurement of 3.8 and a highest individual score for a measurement of 7.0 out of 7.0. Respondents feel least strongly that they have learnt how to control the cost of operating their business (5.3 out of 7.0), to handle the inputs and outflows of their business (5.3 out of 7.0), and to run their business without problems (5.2 out of 7.0). Furthermore, the results indicate that the respondents feel most strongly that, through mentoring, they are able to state the vision of the business and their values (6.4 out of 7.0), they can inspire others to the vision of the business and their values (6.3 out of 7.0), and they have learnt to develop an action plan to pursue an opportunity (6.5 out of 7.0).

#### 4.1.4. The entrepreneurial mentoring model

The secondary objective is to determine whether the St-Jeans (2012) comprehensive model of entrepreneurial mentoring is applicable in the South African context. St-Jean (2012) hypothesised a number of relationships that need to be present between the various factors that St-Jean (2012) determined would maximise an entrepreneurs learning through a mentoring program. In order to determine whether the model holds true for the Business Place mentoring program the results of this study were compared to the correlations between specific factors identified in St-Jeans (2012) original research. Each correlation was analysed to determine whether it is statistically significant in order to make inferences regarding the population of entrepreneurs at the Business Place mentoring program.

Returning to the model of mentoring entrepreneurs as determined by St-Jean (2012) (figure 9 below), we can see that there are certain correlations which we need to calculate in order to

determine whether the model is a suitable representation of reality with regard to the mentoring program at the Business Place.

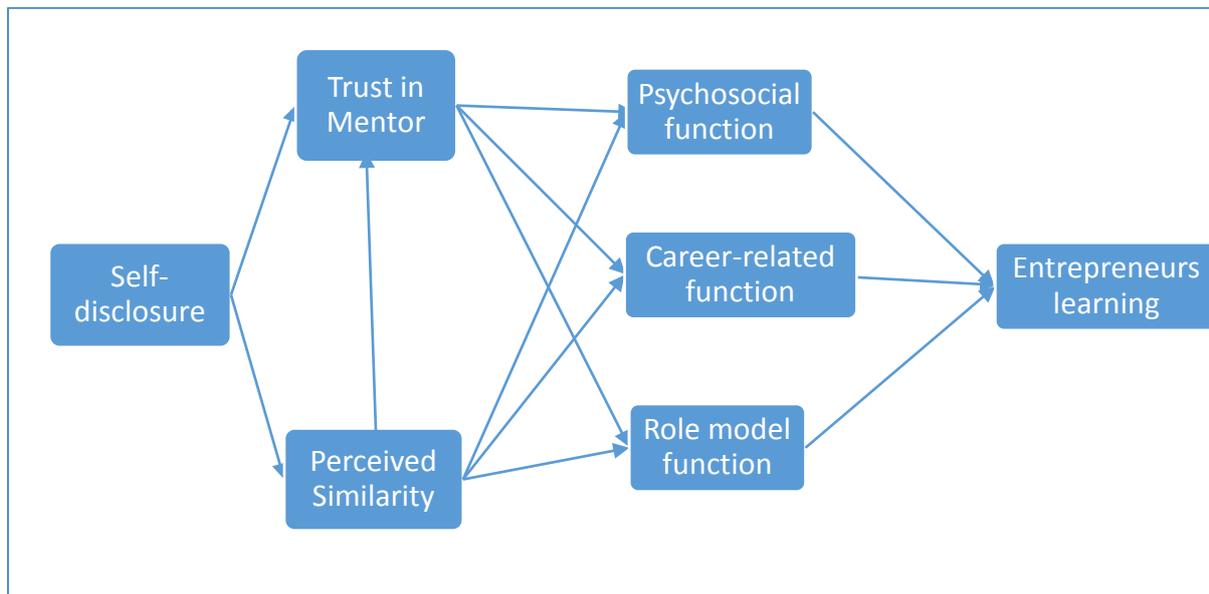


Figure 9: St-Jeans (2012) framework of entrepreneur learning through mentoring

The correlations that are observed in the diagram in figure 9, and which are identified in St-Jeans (2012) research are as follows:

- a. Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor
- b. Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity
- c. Perceived Similarity and Trust in Mentor
- d. Perceived Similarity and Psychosocial functions
- e. Perceived Similarity and Career-related functions
- f. Perceived Similarity and Role-model functions
- g. Trust in Mentor and Psychosocial functions
- h. Trust in Mentor and Career-related functions
- i. Trust in Mentor and Role-model functions
- j. Psychosocial functions and Entrepreneurs Learning
- k. Career-related functions and Entrepreneurs Learning
- l. Role-model functions and Entrepreneurs Learning

The basis of the model requires the existence of a positive correlation between the above listed factors in order to determine whether the mentoring program is correctly fulfilling its purpose to the mentee entrepreneur. We have included the age variable in order to determine

whether there is any significant correlation with any of the model factors and the age of the entrepreneur. The table (table 8) below provides the correlation coefficients for the above mentioned items, as per St-Jeans model.

Table 8: Correlation matrix of the seven factors (and age) of the entrepreneur mentoring model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Self-disclosure	1,00							
2. Percieved Similarity	<b>-0,08</b>	1,00						
3. Trust in Mentor	<b>0,01</b>	<b>0,52</b>	1,00					
4. Psychosocial function average	-0,07	<b>0,50</b>	<b>0,57</b>	1,00				
5. Career function average	-0,06	<b>0,50</b>	<b>0,30</b>	0,60	1,00			
6. Role-model function	0,04	<b>0,48</b>	<b>0,34</b>	0,67	0,73	1,00		
7. Entrepreneurs learning	0,13	0,39	0,30	<b>0,53</b>	<b>0,53</b>	<b>0,53</b>	1,00	
8. Age of mentee	-0,15	0,25	0,09	-0,04	0,11	0,15	-0,04	1,00

The correlations relevant to the analysis of the model are shown in bold in the table above (table 8) and indicate that there is a negative correlation between Self-Disclosure and Perceived Similarity ( $r = -0.08$ ) and a non-existent correlation between Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor (0.01). The age variable has been included in the correlation matrix and shows that there is a limited correlation, neither positive nor negative, with regard to the age of a respondent and the responses to the seven areas of St-Jeans model. There is a slight positive correlation between the Age of the mentee, and the Perceived Similarity of the mentee with the mentor.

Furthermore the data indicates weak positive correlations between Trust in Mentor and Career function (0.30), Trust in Mentor and Role-model function (0.34), and perceived similarity and Role-model function (0.48). Slightly stronger correlations are observed for Perceived similarity and Trust in Mentor (0.52), Perceived similarity and Psychosocial function (0.50), Perceived similarity and Career function (0.50), Psychosocial function and Entrepreneurs learning (0.53), Career function and Entrepreneurs learning (0.53), Role-model function and Entrepreneurs learning (0.53), and Trust in Mentor and Psychosocial function (0.541). These correlations are graphically represented in scatter diagrams in Appendix B.

In order to determine whether the correlations stated in table 8 are useful in order to make inferences with regard to the population we must check whether they are statistically significant. In order to do this, the t value for each correlation coefficient was calculated in

order to determine the relevant p-value at the ninety-five percent significance level. The results of this analysis are shown in table 9 below.

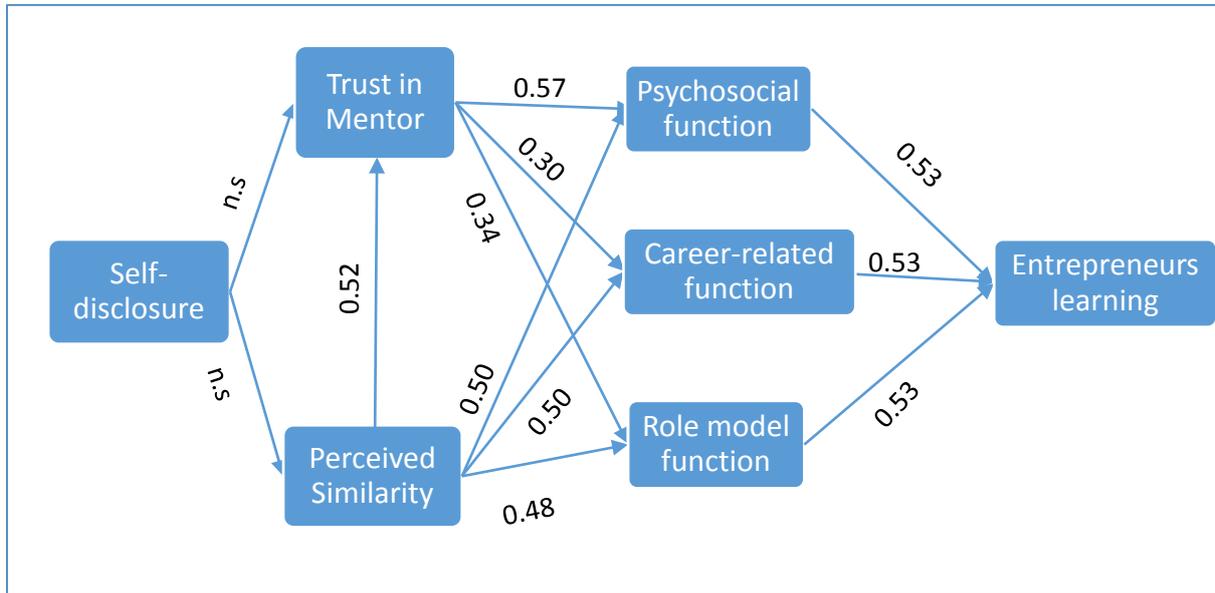
Table 9: Correlation Coefficient, t-stat, and p-value of the entrepreneur mentoring models correlated factors

	<b>Correlation Coefficient (r)</b>	<b>t - stat</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor	-0,08	-0.52	0.3029
Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity	0,01	0.06	0.4743
Perceived Similarity and Trust in Mentor	0,52	3.95	0.0001
Perceived Similarity and Psychosocial functions	0,50	3.74	0.0003
Perceived Similarity and Career-related functions	0,50	3.74	0.0003
Perceived Similarity and Role-model functions	0,48	3.55	0.0005
Trust in Mentor and Psychosocial functions	0,57	4.50	0.0000
Trust in Mentor and Career-related functions	0,30	2.04	0.0239
Trust in Mentor and Role-model functions	0,34	2.34	0.0120
Psychosocial functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,53	4.05	0.0001
Career-related functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,53	4.05	0.0001
Role-model functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,53	4.05	0.0001

Using the five percent confidence interval we can determine that most of the above correlations can be seen as being statistically significant, except for two: the correlation between Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor (p-value = 0.4128) and the correlation between Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity (p-value = 0.2868). All the other correlations are confirmed to be statistically significant, confirming that a linear relationship does exist between the factors as measured through the results obtained from the Business Place mentoring program. The correlations are represented in figure 10 below (n.s represents nonsignificant correlations).

The results indicate that the mentors Career-related function is the most important factor in helping the entrepreneur extract learning from the mentoring relationship, followed by the Role-model function, and finally the Psychosocial function. Furthermore, we can see that having Trust in your mentor has the strongest influence on the psychosocial support that the mentor provides to the entrepreneur, will having less of an impact on the Career-related and Role-model functions. The level of perceived similarity between the mentee and the mentor has the strongest influence on the Psychosocial functions of the mentor, but its influence on the Career-related and the Role-model functions is only slightly smaller. The level to which a mentee entrepreneur is able to disclose private information to their mentor does not seem to influence the level of trust or the perceived similarity between the mentee and the mentor. If

anything the results indicate a negative relationship between the level of Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity of a mentee to their mentor.



*n.s* - nonsignificant

Figure 10: Graphical representation of the correlation results

#### 4.1.5. Male vs Female respondents

Using the same process of identifying correlations between factors of the model, it was determined that a difference exists between the correlation coefficients for the responses from male and female entrepreneurs in the Business Place mentoring program. The results were compiled into a table in order to make comparisons between the male and female respondents correlation between factors (table 10 below). The relevant figures are shown in bold.

Table 10: Correlation matrix indicating the differing correlations per gender

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Self-disclosure	1,00	1,00												
2. Percieved Similarity	<b>-0,05</b>	<b>-0,11</b>	1,00	1,00										
3. Trust in Mentor	<b>0,01</b>	<b>0,05</b>	<b>0,64</b>	<b>0,49</b>	1,00	1,00								
4. Psychosocial function	-0,03	-0,12	<b>0,56</b>	<b>0,51</b>	<b>0,57</b>	<b>0,55</b>	1,00	1,00						
5. Career function	-0,02	-0,10	<b>0,51</b>	<b>0,48</b>	<b>0,31</b>	<b>0,40</b>	0,64	0,62	1,00	1,00				
6. Role-model function	0,04	0,03	<b>0,50</b>	<b>0,46</b>	<b>0,44</b>	<b>0,24</b>	0,77	0,57	0,80	0,64	1,00	1,00		
7. Entrepreneurs learning	0,18	0,07	0,58	0,20	0,24	0,48	<b>0,67</b>	<b>0,12</b>	<b>0,69</b>	<b>0,34</b>	<b>0,74</b>	<b>0,18</b>	1,00	1,00

In the table above (table 10) we can see that there are significant variations between the male respondents and the female respondents in the relationships between the mentors psychosocial function and the entrepreneurs learning (male 0.67 vs female 0.12), the mentors career function and the entrepreneurs learning (0.69 vs 0.34), and the mentors role-model function and entrepreneurs learning (0.74 vs 0.18). Other interesting, but smaller differences between male and female respondents can be seen in the effect that the perceived similarity with the mentor has on the mentees trust in their mentor (0.64 vs 0.49), and the mentees trust in their mentor and the mentors ability to fulfil their role-model function (0.44 vs 0.24).

As with the analysis undertaken in the previous section, the results were analysed to determine whether they are statistically significant or not. Using a similar approach with the t-test for correlation, the p-values for the correlation coefficients for both male and female responses were determined, and summarised in table 11 below.

Table 11: Statistical significance of the correlations per gender

	Male respondents		Female respondents	
	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor	-0,05	0,4104	-0,11	0,3175
Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity	0,01	0,4819	0,05	0,4148
Perceived Similarity and Trust in Mentor	0,64	0,0005	0,49	0,0121
Perceived Similarity and Psychosocial functions	0,56	0,0027	0,51	0,0091
Perceived Similarity and Career-related functions	0,51	0,0065	0,48	0,0138
Perceived Similarity and Role-model functions	0,50	0,0076	0,46	0,0179
Trust in Mentor and Psychosocial functions	0,57	0,0023	0,55	0,0049
Trust in Mentor and Career-related functions	0,31	0,0750	0,40	0,0362
Trust in Mentor and Role-model functions	0,44	0,0178	0,24	0,1473
Psychosocial functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,67	0,0002	0,12	0,3022
Career-related functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,69	0,0001	0,34	0,0658
Role-model functions and Entrepreneurs Learning	0,74	0,0000	0,18	0,2175

In the above table (table 11) we can see that while there are some interesting differences with regard to the responses of male entrepreneurs as opposed to female entrepreneurs, the small sample size of this research makes some of correlation coefficient not statistically significant at the ninety-five percent confidence interval. As with the combined response results, we see again that the correlation coefficient for men and for women for the Self-disclosure and Trust in Mentor (p-value of 0.4104 and 0.3175 respectively) factors, and Self-disclosure and Perceived Similarity (p-value of 0.4819 and 0.4148 respectively), are not statistically significant. Furthermore the correlation coefficient for the Trust in Mentor and the Role-model function, Psychosocial function and Entrepreneur Learning, the Career-related function and Entrepreneurs Learning, and the Role-model function and Entrepreneurs Learning are all not statistically significant for female respondents.

Taking these results into consideration it is useful to examine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the scores received from male respondents as opposed to those received by female respondents in order to determine whether this is influencing the difference in correlation coefficients between male and female respondents. By using a bivariate analysis technique we can determine whether a difference exists between the mean scores for men and women across the seven factors of St-Jeans (2012) model. This method required us to first determine whether there are statistically significant difference between the variances of male vs female response scores, for each of the seven factors. The F-test for variance indicates that only the Trust in Mentor and Entrepreneur Learning factors had statistically significant variances (at the 95 percent confidence interval). The results

determine how we proceeded with further analysis: Trust in Mentor and the Entrepreneur Learning factors were analysed using a t-test for unequal variances, while the other five factors were analysed using the t-test for equal variances. The results are shown in the table (table 12) below and indicate that there are no significant differences (at the 95 percent significance level) between the means of the scores for the seven factors between male and female respondents.

Table 12: Bivariate analysis results - male vs female responses

	Male		Female		p-value
	Mean	Variance	Mean	Variance	
Self-disclosure	4,65	1,37	4,54	1,88	0,7646
Perceived Similarity	5,34	1,13	5,03	1,65	0,3942
Trust in Mentor	4,94	0,73	5,14	0,26	0,3408 <sup>1</sup>
Psychosocial function	6,11	0,91	6,28	0,43	0,4986
Career function	5,80	1,12	5,53	1,21	0,4130
Role-model function	5,82	2,35	5,48	2,05	0,4537
Entrepreneurs learning	5,88	1,01	5,98	0,33	0,6822 <sup>1</sup>

Therefore, we can conclude that men and women gave similar answers to the seven factors of St-Jeans model. Therefore we can conclude that because male and female respondents are statistically the same, the difference in the correlation coefficients between men and women mentees could be due to a problem with the model. The question that arises is whether the model is accurate for both genders or only for male mentees.

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<sup>1</sup> T-test for unequal variances

#### 4.2. Research Analysis and Discussion

The Business Place operates a program whereby they provide business support to entrepreneurs in the suburb of Philippi outside Cape Town. As mentioned previously, the organisation provides a mentoring program to these entrepreneurs, along with a variety of other business support functions. The Business Place as an organisation exists to bring together all SME players together in the Southern Africa region with the purpose of providing business support to entrepreneurs. As a result there is sufficient evidence to suggest that all the respondents are in fact legitimate entrepreneurs undergoing a mentoring program through the Business Place.

Many of the questionnaires were not answered completely, with one or two questions being left out in many of the completed questionnaires. While care was taken to ensure that the language used in the questionnaire would be suitable for the entrepreneurs taking part in the mentoring program, there is evidence to suggest that some questions were not understood correctly. The Mentee Learning measure, the Perceived Similarity measure, and the Trust in Mentor measure contained the highest number of non-response questions and, as such, there is perhaps rooms to adapt the language of these questions to be more easily understood in the South African context.

Taking this into consideration, by looking at the race distribution of the respondents we see that ninety-five percent of the respondents identified themselves as Black/African. While English is a commonly used language in South Africa, the country has eleven official language. According to the 2011 national census results (Statistics South Africa, 2011) only 2.9 percent of Black/African South Africans identified English as their first language, while a quarter of individuals living in the Western Cape identified isiXhosa as their first language with 32 percent of the Western Cape population identifying themselves as Black/African which supports the language issue identified by Bourque (2004). It is also important to remember that the research was conducted in the suburb of Philippi, which is a predominantly Black/African area of Cape Town.

While there is no research or statistics into the gender split for entrepreneurs in Philippi, a 2010 study on South African and Ghanaian entrepreneurs (Abor & Quartey, 2010) found that the majority of novice entrepreneurs in these countries are female. This research is corroborated by a study undertaken by Garg and Letsolo (2016) in the Gauteng province of South Africa, who found that fifty-two percent of their respondents were female. However

this is contradicted by a study by the Global entrepreneurship monitor which found that for every six female entrepreneurs there are ten male entrepreneurs in South Africa (Herrington & Kew, 2015). While the current research shows that 48 percent of respondents were female, this may be representative of the vast difference between rural and urban entrepreneurial activity.

The structure of the Business Place program is such that entrepreneurs meet with their mentors either twice or four times per month. No difference in the responses was found between those who met their mentors more frequently. The length of the mentoring session was also not a determinant in the outcome of respondent's feedback. Interestingly, the age of the entrepreneurs had a very limited effect on the various factors, with only perceived similarity being significantly influenced by the age of the entrepreneur.

#### 4.2.1. Evaluating the Business Place mentoring program

The Primary objective of this study was to determine whether the mentoring program at the Business Place is effective in providing an entrepreneur with the necessary mentoring support in order to maximise the entrepreneurs learning through mentoring. Taking this into consideration we first need to examine the implications of the research for the mentoring program of the Business Place.

On average, the entrepreneurs measured their learning experience as relatively high at 5.9 out of 7.0 and a median score of 6.1. This would indicate that the entrepreneurs feel that they have/are learning valuable entrepreneurial skills through the mentoring program. However, the entrepreneur's response show low levels of agreement (agree somewhat) with some important facets of successful business management: managing inputs and outputs, managing costs, managing expenses, and running the business without problems. On the positive side, the mentoring program is equipping the respondents with the necessary skills to identify opportunities, face up to challenges, recognise opportunities and identify products that can lead to success. These positive aspects reflect the conclusions of St-Jean and Audet (2012) regarding the benefits of mentoring for entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, the responses show that the mentors seem to be fulfilling the Psychosocial, Career and Role-model support functions very well with the average scores for these factors ranging from 5.7 (Role-model and Career functions) to 6.2 (Psychosocial function). Areas of concern for the Business Place, according to the results, are in the mentor Career-related function, with low scores recorded for the integration and confrontation, and the role model

sub factors. With regard to the two career sub factors, the results indicate that there is an opportunity to develop the mentors involved in the mentoring program with regards to being critical of the mentees decisions and asking the mentee to prove the correctness of their ideas. The scores for the Role-model function indicate that the Business Place mentors could work harder to provide more examples of their personal success or failure in entrepreneurship.

On the positive side, mentors at the Business Place are seen as very good at motivating their mentees to succeed as entrepreneurs. Similarly, the mentees feel quite strongly that the mentors can be confided in and that their relationship is more than just about business, which can have a very positive effect on the mentoring experience. A third strength of the mentors is their ability to provide advice to their mentees, suggest alternative courses of action, and help to clarify the problems that the mentee is experiencing.

The scores for the entrepreneurs trust in their mentor, and their perceived similarity to their mentor are slightly lower than for the mentor functions (Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model) (5.0 and 5.2 respectively). This could be seen as an area in which the mentoring program could improve significantly as respondents only agree somewhat, on average, with the statements in these two sections. In particular, respondents are undecided with regard to the similarity between their and their mentor's personality, and having similar views as their mentors. The respondents also do not feel very strongly that their mentors behave predictably, which needs to be explored more deeply as a separate topic as this can be very influential in the development of a mentoring relationship, especially with regard to building commitment to their profession (Mitchell et al., 2015).

Improvements could be made by introducing methods to match entrepreneurs and mentors better (Hamlin & Sage, 2012) or develop training for the mentors to provide them with the necessary skills to foster a better understanding and better communication between the mentor and mentee (Gotian, 2010). There is room to help mentees develop a greater sense of trust and understanding between themselves and their mentors which could further enhance the effect that the mentors three functions (psychosocial, career, and role-model) has on the learning outcomes of the mentoring program (according to St-Jeans (2012) model).

Lastly, the lowest score of all the factors, on average, was for the self-disclosure factor (average score of 4.6) which indicates that the mentees are not very confident with regard to discussing personal information in the mentoring environment. Furthermore, this could be influential in that the entrepreneurs on the program are perhaps limiting their learning

potential by not being completely open to their mentor and the learning process. While this measure is of a very personal nature, the Business Place could look to improve these scores by explaining the benefits of being more open and honest to the mentoring experience. Perhaps there is a lack of understanding regarding the confidentiality of the mentoring program, which means that the entrepreneurs are less willing to be open and honest for fear that their personal information will become public knowledge. In addition, mentors may not feel as willing to express themselves freely in a group situation, the effect of which the Business Place should consider going forward.

Overall, the results indicate that the Business Place mentoring program seems to be doing a good job of ensuring that its mentors fulfil the three mentoring functions and provide the mentees with relevant learning outcomes. However the learning outcomes factor could be improved even further if the Business Place were to place a greater emphasis on the development of the relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Creating a safe space in which the mentoring can take place is critical to the mentoring process and this would reflect in the scores with regard to trust in mentor, levels of self-disclosure and perceived similarity between the mentee and mentor. These are improvements which could, in theory, improve the quality of the learning experience through mentoring for the entrepreneur.

Another concern raised by the results is the difference in responses regarding the mentoring functions between male and female entrepreneurs and this may be an area which the Business Place could consider looking into. There is evidence to suggest that men and women experience mentoring in different ways, which can be exacerbated through cross gender mentoring (when a woman mentors a man or vice versa). The Business Place should be aware that this can be a very influential variable in the mentoring process, and can influence the learning outcomes of the entrepreneurs. Perhaps the development of a mentoring program that takes these differences into account, or separate mentoring systems for male and female entrepreneurs could be introduced.

#### 4.2.2. Evaluating St-Jeans (2012) Mentoring Model

The secondary objective of the research was to determine whether St-Jeans (2012) model of entrepreneurial mentoring is applicable in the South African context. In order to determine this we need to compare the results of this research to those of St-Jeans initial application of the model to an entrepreneur mentoring program in Canada (see table 13 below).

Table 13: Comparison of the results with St-Jean (2012)

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7
	Crede (2016)	St-Jean (2012)											
1. Self-Disclosure	1,00	1,00											
2. Perceived Similarity	<b>-0,09</b>	<b>0,17</b>	1,00	1,00									
3. Trust in Mentor	<b>-0,02</b>	<b>0,04</b>	<b>0,56</b>	<b>0,62</b>	1,00	1,00							
4. Psychosocial function	-0,10	0,29	<b>0,54</b>	<b>0,57</b>	<b>0,55</b>	<b>0,55</b>	1,00	1,00					
5. Career function	-0,05	0,15	<b>0,52</b>	<b>0,49</b>	<b>0,34</b>	<b>0,54</b>	0,62	0,73	1,00	1,00			
6. Role-model function	0,02	0,22	<b>0,49</b>	<b>0,51</b>	<b>0,34</b>	<b>0,37</b>	0,68	0,64	0,74	0,68	1,00	1,00	
7. Entrepreneurs learning	0,10	0,17	0,39	0,68	0,30	0,65	<b>0,53</b>	<b>0,67</b>	<b>0,54</b>	<b>0,67</b>	<b>0,52</b>	<b>0,62</b>	1,00

When comparing the results of this study to the results of St-Jean (2012) (see table 13), we can see that there are many similarities. The mentors Psychology, Career, and Role-model functions correlations to entrepreneurs learning are slightly lower than St-Jeans study, but the results still show a moderate positive correlation, and therefore validates the results of St-Jeans research. Interesting, the research found very similar results for the effect that the entrepreneurs trust in their mentor has on the mentors psychosocial, and role-model functions. Similarly the level of perceived similarity that an entrepreneur has with their mentor shows a moderate correlation with the entrepreneur’s level of trust in their mentor, and the Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model functions of the mentor.

The one significant difference in the current research is that the results indicate a very slight negative correlation between self-disclosure and the perceived similarity with the mentor. In contrast St-Jeans (2012) research identified a mild positive correlation between those two factors. Lastly, again similar to St-Jeans (2012) research, this study identified a very low correlation between an entrepreneur’s level of self-disclosure and their trust in their mentor. This last point indicates that perhaps the model needs to be adjusted slightly as there does not seem to be any significant correlation between the Self-disclosure factor and any of the other six measured factors.

The results provide further evidence that an entrepreneurs learning is influenced by the mentor’s ability to fulfil the Psychosocial, Career, and Role model function in the mentoring relationship. Furthermore, the perceived similarity of the entrepreneur with their mentor has a positive influence on how the entrepreneur interacts with their mentor and benefits from the

Psychosocial, Career and Role-model functions that the mentor fulfils as part of the mentoring relationship. The evidence seems to suggest that the model (except for the self-disclosure factor) holds true for the mentoring program of the Business Place. This is significant in the sense that it could be used as a viable method of quantifiably measuring the learning impact of an entrepreneurial mentoring program.

A mentoring program could justifiably use the model to evaluate how their mentees feel regarding the mentoring program. The feedback would provide useful insight into the various factors that determine the success or failure of the mentoring relationship, and allow the mentoring program to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their program. The conclusion that can be drawn is that these results, while differing slightly, provide evidence that the model has applications outside of the Canadian environment in which it was designed and tested, though this needs to be validated through further study in the South African context.

However, what previous research failed to examine is the difference in the correlation coefficient, for some of the factors, between male and female respondents. Particularly interesting is the fact that the mentors Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model functions have a much smaller impact on the entrepreneurs learning outcomes as opposed to their male counterparts. The original research was conducted on a combination of male and female respondents and there is no indication that the results were analysed according to gender.

Previous research has shown that Psychosocial and Career function measures used in this study are consistent for both men and women (St-Jean, 2011) and it is therefore interesting to note that St-Jeans (2012) model is possibility sensitive to the different experiences of mentoring that men and women have reported (Ensher & Murphy, 2011). While some of these results are not statistically significant, due to the small sample size used in the study, they do raise questions regarding the applicability of the model in measuring female entrepreneurs mentoring experiences.

Taking a closer look, the results of the gender difference imply that, for female entrepreneurs involved in the Business Place mentoring program, whether the mentor fulfils the three mentoring functions (psychosocial, career, and role-model) has less of an effect on learning outcomes than it does for male entrepreneurs. However, the learning outcomes measure for both the male and female respondents were very similar, with female respondents scoring slightly higher on average (6.0 vs 5.9), and producing a lower standard deviation (0.6 vs 1.0). We have also seen that there is no difference in the scores for any of the factors between male

and female respondents. Similarly, the results indicate that the age of the entrepreneur is not a significant determining factor in the mentees involvement in the mentoring process, the mentor's ability to fulfil their functions, and the learning outcome for the mentee.

The topic of the different experiences of men and women to mentoring was not covered in the literature review to this research as there seemed to be limited research into this phenomenon. However, previous research indicates that female mentees receive more psychosocial support than their male counterparts, and experience greater intimacy in their mentoring relationships (O'Brien, Biga, Kessler, & Allen, 2010). Furthermore, research by Ramaswami, Dreher, and Bretz (2010) confirm that gender is an influential factor in mentoring relationships, specifically with regard to cross gender mentoring relationships. Similarly, Ensher and Murphy (2011) found that mentoring relationships for men and women are consistently different. In this context there may be a relational problem with regard to how women perceive the Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model function of the mentors at the Business Place. However, these results are shown to be not statistically significant and as such we should not make inferences regarding the population of mentees at The Business Place. The mentoring environment may be more conducive to helping mentors provide their functional (Psychosocial, Career, Role-model) support to their entrepreneurs.

In conclusion, the research indicates that the results of the study are very similar to the model prescribed by St-Jean (2012). The study produced very similar outcome to those found by St-Jean (2012), providing validation with regard to the purpose of the model. However, the results do raise questions regarding the applicability of the self-disclosure factor in the mentoring model. With regard to The Business Place, on the surface the model seems to be a useful tool to examine the various factors that make up an entrepreneurial mentoring program. The results show a number of areas, particularly with regard to the mentoring relationship (Trust in Mentor and Perceived Similarity) where the organisation could look to improve its mentoring program. However, the difference in the response by male and female entrepreneurs with regard to the interaction between the mentor functions and learning outcome, indicates that the model may not be applicable to women entrepreneurs in the South African context.

### 4.3. Research Limitations

The business of mentoring entrepreneurs is quite a unique and developing area, and as such the organisations that are involved in this industry in South Africa tend to be very small. As a result, the sample size for this research has been relatively small which has made it difficult to be certain with regards to inferring the outcomes to the general population. Furthermore, this puts into question whether the results of this research indicate whether St-Jeans model is applicable as a means of measuring the successful implementation of an entrepreneur mentoring program.

In addition, the large number of questions that were left out by respondents indicates that there may have been a problem with the language, or the complexity of the questions used in the questionnaire. This again puts into question the applicability of the questionnaire in its current form to the South African context.

The results indicate that there are limitations to the applicability of this result of the research in the South African setting as all, except two, of the respondents identified themselves as being Black/African, with only one respondent identifying themselves as a different race (Indian/Asian). South Africa is a very diverse country and as such the applicability of the research to other, more representative, mentoring programs needs to be examined further.

The research is limited to entrepreneurs who are involved in the mentoring program which is being run by The Business Place in Philippi, Cape Town. Furthermore, as pointed out by Pompa (2012), mentoring of entrepreneurs usually takes place in conjunction to other forms of training which is true for the mentoring facilitated by The Business Place. Isolating the benefits of the mentoring process from the rest of the training is not necessarily possible and may influence mentee responses regarding their perception of their mentor, and the mentoring program. As St-Jean and Audet (2009) mention, each mentoring relationship is unique and is very dependent on the expectations, motivations, and objectives of the people involved. As a result assessing a tool for measurement could be difficult under the context of the variety of unique relationships that are involved in the research.

## 5. Conclusions

Taking into consideration the results, and the primary and secondary objectives of the research we can determine that the results of the research support the objectives. Though the research has raised a number of questions regarding the applicability of St-Jeans (2012) model in the South African context, particularly with regard to gender, the research has demonstrated that the model can be used to objectively measure the various factors that make up a mentoring program, according to St-Jeans model.

*Primary objective: The primary objective of this research is to determine whether the mentoring program at The Business Place is effective in providing an entrepreneur with the necessary mentoring support to maximise the entrepreneurs learning through mentoring.*

The research has shown that the mentoring program of the Business Place is providing the necessary mentoring functions (Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model) to the mentees, and these functions are correlating to higher scores in the entrepreneurs learning outcomes. However, the entrepreneurs are showing lower scores for their perception of their trust in the mentor, the perceived similarity between themselves and their mentor, and their ability to be open and honest in the mentoring environment (self-disclosure). Therefore, while the mentoring program is doing an excellent job at fulfilling the mentoring functions, there is evidence to suggest that the entrepreneurs are less comfortable in the mentoring environment which would allow them great relational commitment to the mentoring process. This may be caused by the effect of group mentoring, whereby there are many people involved in the mentoring process, and the Business Place could look at keeping the size of the mentoring groups to an optimum whereby they maximise the entrepreneurs ability to be completely committed to the mentoring process while taking into consideration the operational challenges associated with providing mentoring to sixty entrepreneurs.

In addition, the results showing the relatively low scores that respondents gave for the Trust in Mentor, and Perceived Similarity factors indicate that The Business Place could do more to foster a stronger mentoring relationship between the mentors and mentees. The training of mentors to recognise that they act as role-models to their mentees could prove invaluable to improving the learning outcomes for the mentees. Furthermore, by providing the mentors with a better understanding of the mentoring relationship, perhaps through the use of the model, the Business Place could provide the mentor with a better perception of how they

influence their mentees, and what areas they need to focus on in order to maximise the learning outcomes of the mentoring program.

The model itself proved to be successful at measuring the various factors that play a role in the mentoring program of the Business Place. The research identified a number of strengths and weaknesses (table 14 below) in the mentoring program that will provide the Business Place with a better understanding of how they can improve their ability to teach entrepreneurs the necessary skills to be successful. Furthermore, the study provides further evidence with regard to the benefit that mentoring can have on the professional development of entrepreneurs. In the context of South Africa, being able to measure the strengths and weaknesses of a mentoring program could go a long way in helping to optimise the mentoring program, considering the urgent need the country has for the development of entrepreneurs in order to drive much needed economic growth.

*Table 14: Strengths and weaknesses of the Business Place mentoring program*

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mentors are very good at motivating their mentees.</li> <li>• The mentees feel that their mentors act as confidants</li> <li>• The mentoring relationships at the Business Place are about more than just business.</li> <li>• The mentees feel that their mentors provide advice, suggest alternative courses of action and clarify problems that the mentees are experiencing.</li> <li>• The mentors provide a good level of psychosocial support to the mentees</li> <li>• The mentors provide a good level of career related support and act as role-models to a certain degree.</li> <li>• The Business Place mentoring program is providing a good level of learning to the mentees who seem to be generally satisfied by the learning experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The mentees feel that their mentors are not as good at introducing them to business contacts who could help the mentee.</li> <li>• Mentors could be more forceful in asking mentees to prove their ideas and contradict the mentee if the mentor does not agree with him/her.</li> <li>• Mentors could improve their awareness of being a role-model to their mentees.</li> <li>• The level of trust that the mentee has in the mentor is relatively low</li> <li>• Mentees do not see themselves as being very similar to their mentors, which is an important factor in the development of the mentoring relationship.</li> <li>• Mentees are not very willing to be open and honest in the mentoring process</li> </ul>

*Secondary objective: Determine whether St-Jeans (2012) comprehensive model of entrepreneurial mentoring is applicable in the South African context.*

The results gathered in this study closer resemble the outcomes expected by St-Jeans (2012) model and, as such, we can deduce that the model has some applicability to mentoring programs in South Africa. The results show that higher levels of learning outcome can be predicted by the ability of the mentor to fulfil the three mentoring functions (Psychosocial, Career-related, and Role-model). Furthermore, the mentees' perceptions of the mentor's ability to fulfil the mentoring functions are influenced by the mentees' level of trust in their mentor, and how similar they perceive themselves to be to their mentor. Higher levels of trust in the mentor are also predictors of higher perception of similarity, and vice versa, which in turn influences the mentees' interaction with the mentor, and how the mentor fulfils the three functions.

However, a question has been raised regarding the usefulness of including a self-disclosure factor as the evidence suggests very little correlation between this factor and the trust in mentor and perceived similarity factors. Overall though, the results show that the model has potential to be a tool which would allow a mentoring program to determine whether they are fulfilling the needs of the entrepreneur mentee sufficiently in order to maximise the learning opportunities for the entrepreneur.

Finally, the research has shown that gender may influence (though the results are not statistically significant) the interaction between the three mentoring functions (Psychosocial, Career, and Role-model), and the learning outcomes of the mentoring process. This supports the idea that men and women experience mentoring in different ways, and in this context a model of mentoring entrepreneurs may need to distinguish between the differing needs of male and female entrepreneurs. This outcome was not the intention of the research, and the differences in the experiences of male and female mentees was not covered in the literature review for this research due to the limited work that has been undertaken in that particular area of mentoring.

What the research may indicate is that, for female mentees, there is less of an influence with regard to the psychosocial, career, and role-model on the entrepreneurial learning outcomes of the mentoring process. It is possible that women entrepreneurs require these functions less than their male counterparts in order to benefit from a mentoring process. Why this may be the case is beyond the scope of this research, but it raises interesting questions regarding the

applicability of this model, and the different experiences of male and female entrepreneurs to entrepreneur mentoring.

## 6. Future Research Directions

The results of this research indicates that there a number of further research possibilities around this topic that would be beneficial to developing a better understanding of the mentoring of entrepreneurs in general, and in the context of South Africa.

Due to a general lack of quantitative research into the topic of mentoring entrepreneurs, there is a need to develop the level of knowledge in this are through further research. To begin with further research using St-Jeans (2012) model could be undertaken on other mentoring programs in order to provide further evidence of the validity of the model. A mentoring program with more potential respondents would be beneficial, particularly in the context of comparing results along gender. A larger sample group would be useful in confirming the models applicability in South Africa, especially with a more diverse group of people.

In the context of South Africa, it may be beneficial to undertake similar research with the race of the mentee and the race of the mentor in mind. As mentioned already, South Africa is a country with a deep history of racial discrimination, which has resulted in deeply entrenched prejudice and mistrust between the varied racial groups in the country. Considering this, it would be beneficial to understand how mentees react to a mentor from a different racial group, and what could this mean for the applicability of the model.

Building on to this further, the study identified the possible need for a measuring tool that reflects the languages and levels of education experienced by the entrepreneur's context. The research indicates that an English based questionnaire may not be sufficiently understood by the respondents, which results in a high number of unanswered questions.

Within the model itself, the research raised questions regarding the applicability of the relationship between an entrepreneur's willingness to disclose personal information and the level of trust and perceived similarity that the entrepreneur has with the mentor. While self-disclosure is an applicable factor in mentoring relationships, its relation to the other factors could be reconsidered.

And finally, the applicability of the model, and a better understanding of the different mentoring experiences of men and women entrepreneurs would have much benefit to optimising the learning outcomes for entrepreneurs. It may turn out that the model has limited

applicability to female entrepreneurs, in which case, the reasons need to be understood and the model adjusted accordingly. Similarly, there is evidence to suggest that the mentoring experience is different for women as opposed to men, and understanding those differences could be beneficial to improving the learning outcomes of mentoring programs for women. Therefore the research indicates that there is a need for research into the benefits of mentoring for men and for women, and how a male mentees mentoring experiences are different from a female mentee.

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## Appendix A – Research Questionnaire



### Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey

**Aim of the Research:** The aim of this research is to assess the effectiveness of the entrepreneur mentoring program organised by The Business Place based in Philippi, Cape Town. The research will provide insight into how the mentoring program could be improved for future entrepreneurs taking part in The Business Place business support program.

The research is being conducted by a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) candidate from the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business

**Please take a moment to read through the following:**

This research has been approved by the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You can choose to withdraw from the research at any time.

The questionnaire will take approximately **10 minutes** to complete

You will not be requested to supply any identifiable information, ensuring anonymity of your responses.

Should you have any questions regarding the research please feel free to contact the researcher **Ben Crede**: [crdben001@gsb.uct.ac.za](mailto:crdben001@gsb.uct.ac.za) or **084 769 5409**

**This questionnaire consists of 7 pages (including this page) and consists of a series of questions which need to be answered using Likert Scales. The following question is an EXAMPLE:**

EXAMPLE QUESTION	From Strongly disagree...to...Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I Like soccer					x		

- Where: 1 – Strongly Disagree  
 2 – Disagree  
 3 – Disagree Somewhat  
 4 – Undecided  
 5 – Agree Somewhat  
 6 – Agree  
 7 – Strongly Agree

In the above example the respondent indicated that they agree somewhat to liking soccer.



1. **Personal Information:** Please complete the following section with regard to your personal information

Age		<b>Years</b>
-----	--	--------------

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Gender (please tick)		

	<b>Prefer not to answer</b>	<b>Black/African</b>	<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Indian/Asian</b>	<b>White</b>
Race (please tick)					

The following questions are in regard to your work experience, the mentoring program and your mentor.

How many years of working experience did you have before becoming an entrepreneur?		<b>Years</b>
For how many years have you been working as an entrepreneur?		<b>Years</b>
For how long (in years) has the mentoring relationship been going?		<b>Years</b>
How often do you meet with your mentor per month?		<b>Times per month</b>
On average, how long (in minutes) do your meetings last?		<b>Minutes per meeting</b>
Does your mentor work in a similar industry as you? (tick a box)	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is your mentor male or female? (tick a box)	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>

## 2. Self-Disclosure

The following questions are used to determine certain characteristics of your personality. There is no right or wrong answers. You only need to make sure your answers are honest and truthful.

**When you meet a stranger, how willing would you be to discuss the following topics:**

( **1- I never would discuss** » to « **7- I would discuss without reservation** )

	1-Never Discuss...and...7-discuss without reservation						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My habits and quirks							
Things I've done that make me feel guilty							
Things I would not do in public							
My inner feelings							
What I like and do not like about myself							
What is important to me in life							
What made me the person I am							
About my worst fears							
Things I've done that I'm proud of							
My intimate relationships with others							

## 3. Perceived similarity

The following section is to help us understand how well you relate to your mentor. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

(« **1-Strongly disagree** » to « **7-Strongly agree** »)

	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have the same values as my mentor							
My personal interests are consistent with my mentor							
The personality of my mentor is similar to mine							
My mentor and I see things the same way							
I trust my mentor							
My mentor is a reliable person I can count on							
My mentor behaves predictably							

#### 4. Trust in Mentor

In this section, we would like to know more about the characteristics of the relationship between you and your mentor.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:  
 (« 1-Strongly disagree » to « 7-Strongly agree »)

	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I learn a lot from my mentor							
My mentor gives me a new perspective on many things							
My mentor and I learn together							
Reciprocal learning happens with my mentor							
My mentor shares a lot of information with me that helped me in my professional development							
I am satisfied with my mentor							
My mentor has failed to meet my needs							
My mentor is effective in his role							
My mentor has disappointed me							

#### 5. Psychosocial functions

We would like to better understand some of the roles that your mentor may have played during your mentoring relationship. First, we want to understand the Psychosocial support your mentor provides to you.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:  
 (de « 1-Strongly disagree » to « 7-Strongly agree »)

Personal Reflection function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor helps me to get a clear understanding of myself and my business							
My mentor helps identify my strengths and weaknesses							
I know very well how my mentor sees me							
My mentor provides me with feedback							

Personal Security function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor calms me when I'm tense							
My mentor provides me with a feeling of security							
My mentor helps me put my problems in perspective							

Motivation function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel my mentor has confidence in my abilities							
My mentor motivates me							
My mentor encourages me to persevere							
My mentor thinks I can succeed as an entrepreneur							

Confidant function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor is a good confidant							
My mentor is a person to whom I can confide							
I consider my mentor to be a friend							
The relationship is about more than just business knowledge							

## 6. Career functions

The following four sections are with regard to the career related support that your mentor provides.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:  
(de « **1-Strongly disagree** » to « **7-Strongly agree** »)

Integration function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor puts me in touch with people he knows							
My mentor introduces me to people around him							
My mentor provides suggestions with regard to people who can help me							
My mentor is willing to give me access to his/her contacts							

Information support function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor provides me with information related to the business world							
My mentor shares his/her knowledge and experience							
My mentor provides me with technical information							
My mentor allows me access to his/her expertise							

Confrontation function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor highlights the consequences of my decisions							
My mentor would not hesitate to contradict me if he/she does not agree with me							
My mentor forces me to prove the correctness of my ideas							
My mentor criticizes my decisions constructively							

Guide function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor suggests new options to me							
My mentor offers me other perspectives							
My mentor gives me advice about my problems							
My mentor helps me to clarify the problems I experience							

## 7. Role-model functions

(de « 1-Strongly disagree » to « 7-Strongly agree »)

Role Model function	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My mentor serves as my role model							
My mentor exposes me to successes and failures							
My mentor is a good example of an entrepreneur							
My mentor told me about his business and life experiences							

### 8. Mentee learning

We would like now to what extent you believe you are capable of performing certain tasks at work as an entrepreneur

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:  
(« **1-Strongly disagree** » and « **7-Strongly agree** »)

	From 1 - Strongly disagree...to... 7 -Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I can state the vision I have of my business and my values							
I can inspire others to endorse my vision of my business and my values							
I can develop an action plan to pursue an opportunity							
I can remain productive under continuous stress, pressure and conflicts							
I can tolerate unexpected changes in the business environment of my business							
I can persevere in the face of adversity							
I can perceive the unmet needs in the market							
I can recognize products dedicated to success							
I can discern opportunities							
I can write formal plans							
I can translate my vision into strategy							
I can communicate my goals in writing							
I can manage expenses							
I can control the cost of operating my business							
I can handle the inputs and outflows							
I supervise, influence and lead							
I can organize and motivate others							
I can run my business without problems							

## Appendix B – Scatter Plot representations of Factor Correlations

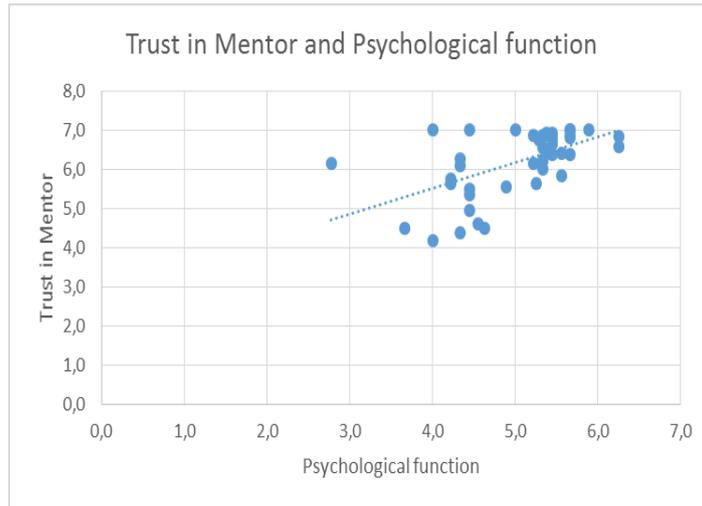


Figure 11: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Self-Disclosure and Perceived Similarity

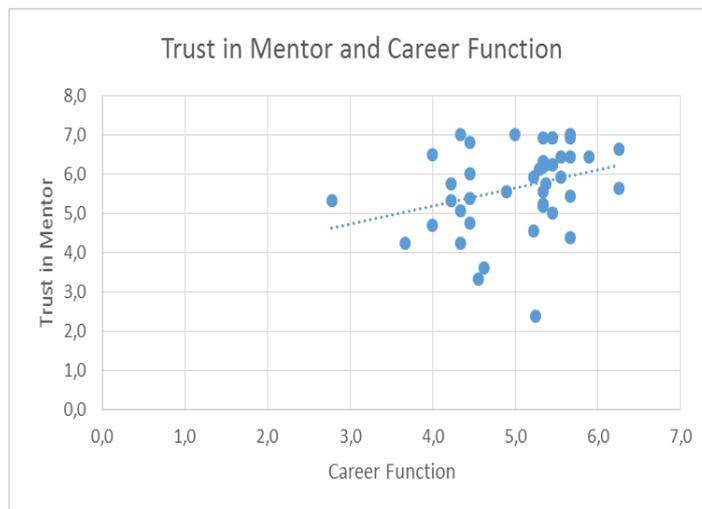


Figure 12: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Self-Disclosure and Trust in Mentor

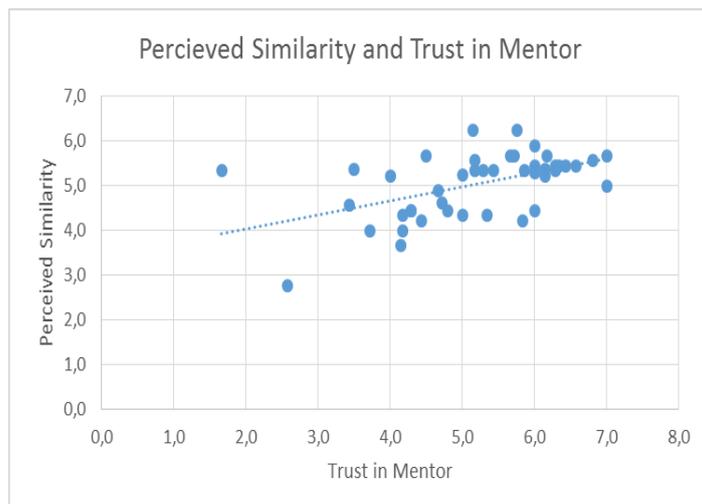


Figure 13: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Perceived Similarity and Trust in Mentor

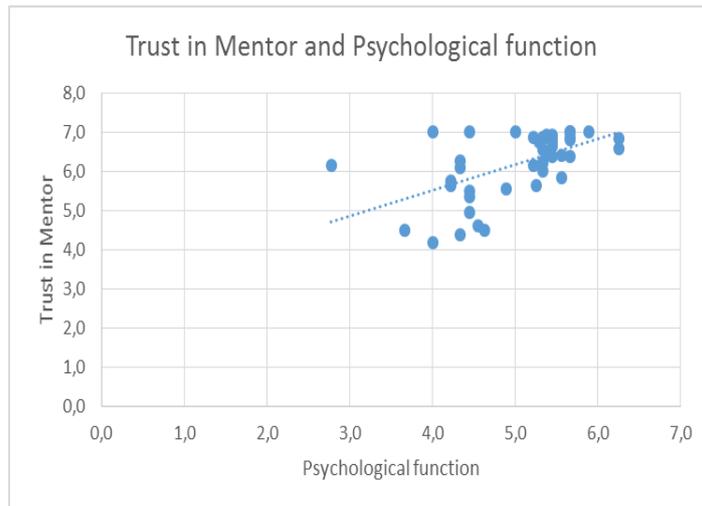


Figure 14: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Trust in Mentor and the Psychosocial Function

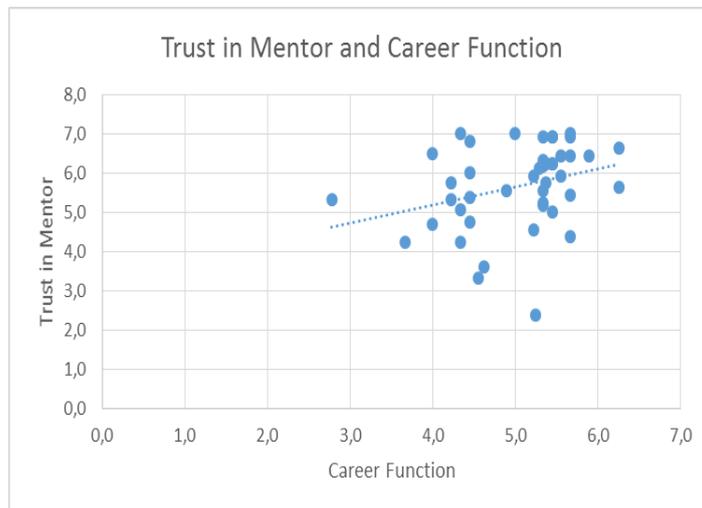


Figure 15: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Trust in Mentor and the Career Function

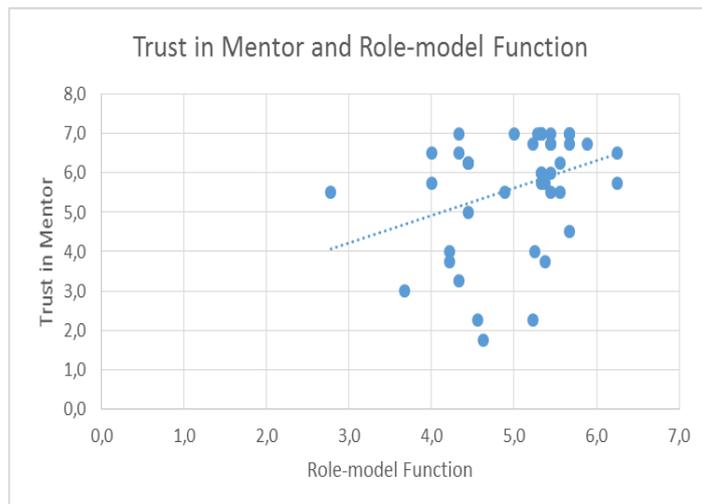


Figure 16: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Trust in Mentor and the Role-model Function

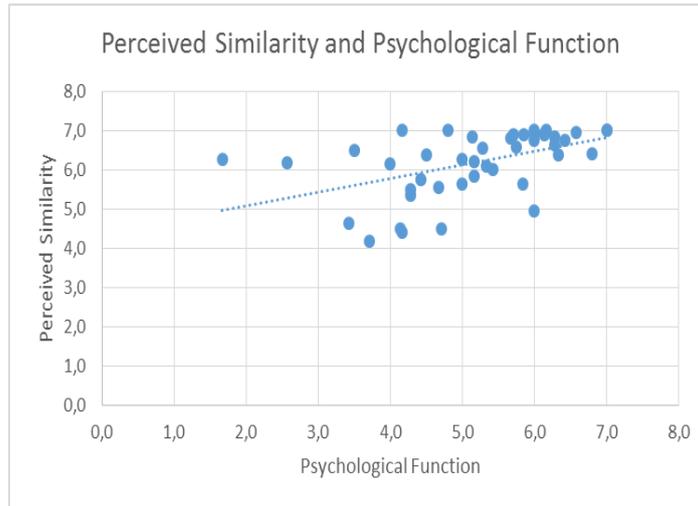


Figure 17: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Perceived Similarity and the Psychosocial Function

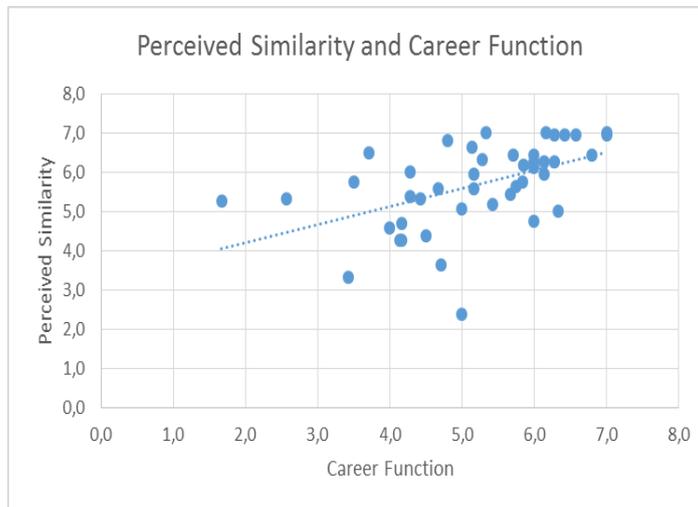


Figure 18: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Perceived Similarity and the Career Function

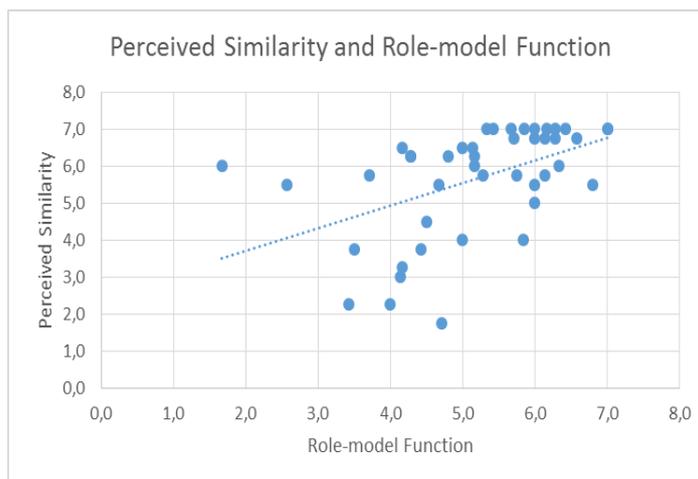


Figure 19: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between Perceived Similarity and Role-model Function

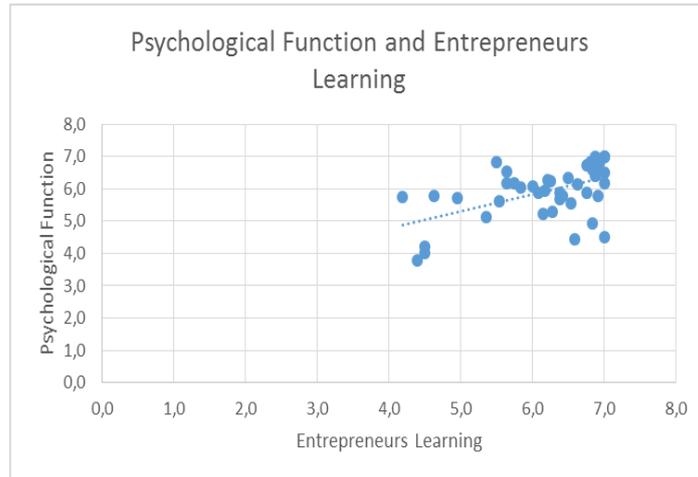


Figure 20: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between the Psychosocial Function and Entrepreneurs Learning

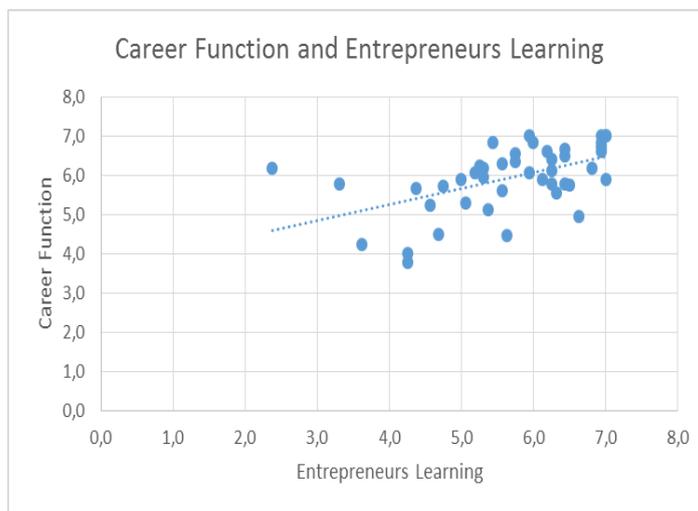


Figure 21: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between the Career Function and Entrepreneurs Learning

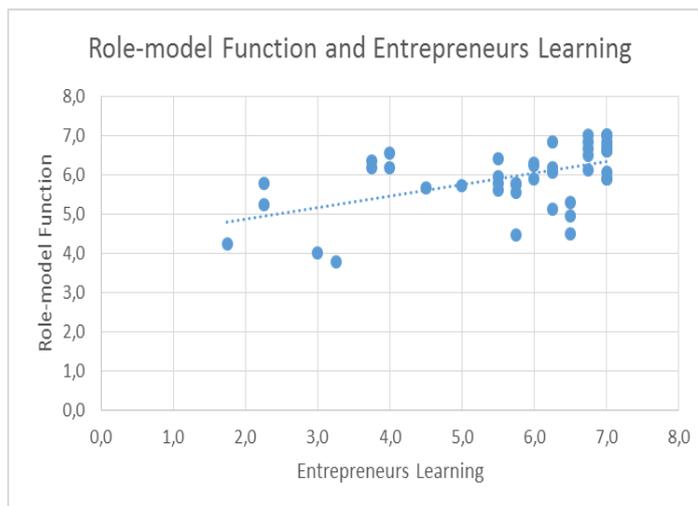


Figure 22: Scatter plot diagram representing the correlation between the Role-model Function and Entrepreneurs Learning