

THE EXPLORATION OF THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY ESTABLISHED SOUTH
AFRICAN FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS RELATING TO COMPETENCIES FOR BUILDING
BRANDS IN THE AFRO-LUXE GOODS AND SERVICES INDUSTRY

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*I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the HBSM412 degree to The
Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to
another university or higher education institution for degree purposes.*

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Abstract

This study has brought forward the analysis of the challenges and successes that established female South African entrepreneurs have encountered through the formation of their brands in the industry of luxury goods and services. The global female presence in the entrepreneurship sphere is increasing dramatically. The phenomena of female entrepreneurship are still developing and hold little valid research that is able to prominently convey the thinking behind successfully established female South African entrepreneurs. This research study aims to decipher the common challenges and competencies that resonates most with established Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs. The theoretical foundation in the secondary data comprised of the Competency Approach and Dilemma Orientated Theory. The primary data was collected via semi-structured interviews. Interviews will allow the researcher to derive the meaning from several female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs of their lived experiences of certain phenomena that will be outlined in various associated themes of challenges and competencies. Significant findings relating to cutting-edge views and perspectives on modern challenges and competencies that can contribute to the overall understanding of the modern day established South African Afro-luxe female entrepreneur will be presented.

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Introduction and Contextualisation/ Background

The topic at hand concerns the challenges encountered by established female entrepreneurs whilst building brands in the Afro-luxe goods and services industry. Modern day South Africa is witnessing an increase in the level of female entrepreneurship and particularly in the Afro-luxe goods and services industry, which has provided a useful canvas for brand creation by South African businesswomen (Hawken, 2016). High influx levels of Afro-luxe female entrepreneurship have given rise to analytic studies regarding identification of the prominent, mutually associated challenges that established female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs have experienced during the construction phases of their brands (Irene, 2017:2). Ultimately this assignment will link these challenges to the core competencies that are evident in successful female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs. Achieving entrepreneurial success in South Africa in its current economic state comes with its challenges. What aggravates this situation is falling under the female wing of gender status (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3)

Female entrepreneurship is considered a key driver in the future of South African economic growth and development and yet a research gap regarding the understanding of the actual challenges encountered by successful female entrepreneurs remains (Madeleine van der Steege, 2014). Past research in this field is lacking, is highly theoretical and does not provide an effective contribution towards practical progress to support women's entrepreneurship development in South Africa (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). The research problem presents as the unclear identification of broadly experienced challenges that have formed the competencies evident in established, successful female entrepreneurs. Furthermore, deciphering the weighting, influence and importance of certain challenges regarding their overall contribution to the success of an established female entrepreneur, specifically in the Afro-luxe industry, will need to be prioritized.

Numerous themes will be established by discussing the experiences of sample participants with reference to the literature applied in this study.

Rationale

The Global Entrepreneurship 2014 Women's Report states that female entrepreneurial activity has surged by 7% across global economies since 2012, with female entrepreneurs across the globe currently numbering over 200 million (Pofeldt, 2015).

Previous research focusing on gender and entrepreneurship regarding South African women has been primarily based on classifying and tackling the challenges that these women face (Ayoub & Udanoh, 2018:19). The development of female entrepreneurship is reliant on numerous factors including gender stereotyping, access to certain levels of education, social capital, age and cultural background (Ayoub & Udanoh, 2018:18).

Contributing to recent demand for luxury brands in Africa, is how Africans are becoming increasingly aware of designer labels via the growth in disposable income, travel and accessible information via social media (Luxity, 2018). *South Africa's female entrepreneurs and luxury brand builders are turning their attention to the rising global demand for luxury products that also have a strong back-story (Hawken, 2016). The weight of their impact on overall brand creation in the Afro-luxe market has been achieved via their businesses, innovation, products, services and craftsmanship, and their overall passion for what they do. This study aims to understand the raw challenges and successes these women have encountered while positioning South Africa on the global map with exquisitely made Afro-luxe products and services (Luxity, 2018).*

Problem Statement

” The glass ceiling that once limited a woman’s career path has paved a new road towards business ownership, where women can utilise their sharp business acumen while building strong family ties” (MacNeil, 2018).

Modern day South Africa is witnessing a surge in the level of female entrepreneurship and particularly in the Afro-luxe goods and services industry, which has a useful canvas for brand creation by South African businesswomen (Hawken, 2016). A recent McKinsey Global Institute report established that 10-trillion Rand could accumulate and hence contribute to the country’s GDP by 2025 by advancing women’s equality in the sphere of entrepreneurship.

The Afro-luxe industry is generating a stimulating new generation of creative women entrepreneurs taking African luxury and artisan craft to the world, and is reflecting the world’s current love affair with all things African (Hawken, 2018). It is evident that a fast growing rate of female Afro-Luxe brand builders are establishing global names for themselves and their businesses, and growing loyal customer networks at the same time (Hawken, 2018).

To gain an appropriate understanding of the overall impact that *established* South African female entrepreneurs have accomplished via brand creation in the Afro-luxe industry, a thorough investigation of the challenges and successes that these entrepreneurs have encountered, is recommended (Irene, 2017:2).

Research Goal and Research Question

This study aims to investigate the challenges and successes that established female South African entrepreneurs have encountered through the formation of their brands in the industry of luxury goods and services.

A. PRIMARY QUESTION

What are the challenges and successes that established South African female entrepreneurs are confronted with when building brands in the industry of African luxury goods and services?

B. SECONDARY QUESTIONS

What are the personal dilemmas, in the context of the basis for Personal Dilemmas of women entrepreneurs?

What are the competencies linked to business success measurement, in the context of the competency approach?

Which dilemmas and competencies correlate between the data obtained from the key theory studies and the data obtained from the sample in this study.

Objectives and Hypothesis

C. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Determine the personal dilemmas, in the context of the basis for Personal Dilemmas of women entrepreneurs.

Determine the competencies linked to business success measurement, in the context of the Competency Approach.

Identify which dilemmas and competencies correlate between the *data* obtained from the key theory studies and the *primary data* obtained from the participants' answers in the interviews.

Theoretical foundation

Refer to appendices, Table 1.5, The Basis for Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs.

Additionally, Table 1.6 shows Mapping between components of the Basis of Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs.

This study considers the primary challenges and successes that South African female entrepreneurs encounter in the industry of luxury goods and services. By applying the Dilemma Theory Orientation, entrepreneurial success amongst female entrepreneurs was examined in relation to how respondents in the study merged the conflicting demands between core stakeholders (Steege et al., 2014:1).

Literature attained from The Basis of Trompenaars Hampden-Turner 10 Golden Business Dilemmas indicated differences in men and women regarding their approaches to life space (Schreuders et al., 2014:4). Due to women's

tendencies not to separate their business and personal lives, a set of personal dilemmas experienced by women entrepreneurs was developed (Table 1.2 of the appendices). (Schreuders et al., 2014:4). This study will form the basis for generating a comprehensive linkage between South African female Afro-luxe entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial borne dilemmas.

To establish the competencies that determine success in South African female entrepreneurship, the Competency Approach adapted from *Women entrepreneurship in South Africa: Understanding the role of competencies in business success* by Bridget N.O. Irene, 2017, will be interpreted. Listed competencies in Irene's study will be correlated against four dimensions of business success measurement, comprising both financial and non-financial indicators.

Refer to Table 1.3 in the appendices.

Competency Approach

To establish the competencies that determine success in South African female entrepreneurship, the Competency Approach will be interpreted. Listed competencies in this approach will be correlated with four dimensions of business success measurement, comprising both financial and non-financial indicators.

Refer to appendices, Table 1.3, Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success

Bridget Irene's study focuses on the salient behaviours that delineate competencies for female entrepreneurs (Irene, 2017:2). The sample in Irene's

study was obtained from a population of female business owners situated in the following provinces; Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape (Irene, 2017:6). The study included qualitative and quantitative research methods which involved 1 075 female business owners (Irene, 2017:6). The definition Irene applies regarding entrepreneurial competencies states, “An individual characteristic that includes both attitudes, opinions and behaviours, enabling the entrepreneur to achieve and maintain business success” (Irene, 2017:2). The Competency Approach states twelve competency domains that are perceived as imperative to the success of women operating in the context of small and medium enterprises (Irene, 2017:2). Vital themes will be extracted from these competencies that will be applied to the primary questions constructed for the interview process in the primary research for this assignment. Innate and acquired competencies of successful female South African entrepreneurs will be examined in Irene’s study and provide further deduction of competency clusters and associated behavioural patterns.

The Competency Approach provides a comprehensive direction for the type of competencies that are evident in the modern day successful female entrepreneur. According to this study focusing merely on external variables can skew findings regarding female entrepreneurship. The study emphasises internal variables of competencies to gain improved understanding of business success amongst South African female entrepreneurs (Irene, 2017:7).

Eight hundred and seventeen behaviours were collected for the study and were associated with entrepreneurial competencies (Irene, 2017:4). Behaviours were grouped under the twelve competency domains. As mentioned earlier in the assignment, the approach adopted four dimensions of business success measurement, including financial and non-financial indicators (Noor, 2007). This approach will aid in the generation of substantial potential competencies that will be applied to the questions posed to the sample of participants.

Dilemma Orientated Theory

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2007) outline entrepreneurial sustainability as the way entrepreneurs handle tensions amongst business processes, clients and shareholders. For instance, the entrepreneurial dilemma of, on the one hand, focusing on the day-to-day running of operations whilst, on the other hand, staying connected to the future and long-term vision is a struggle for many entrepreneurs (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Trompenaars, Steege and Schreuders include literature in their dilemma orientation study that addresses institutional barriers and enablers to female entrepreneurial success (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Trompenaars, Steege and Schreuders tackle external, complex gendered factors that affect women in their overall business development. Female entrepreneurs that formed part of the sample in the dilemma study expressed increased difficulty in gaining access to funding for their business ventures (Brush et al, 2006). Brush, et al (2006) state that this expressed difficulty is due to the phenomenon of 'doing gender'. Gendered factors are constantly reinforced by both men and women via unconscious expectations of what is expected from a person of a specific gender (Myers & Pringle, 2005:422). Society thus produces gender influences which results in major barriers to women's overall ability to successfully engage in entrepreneurial activities and grow their businesses (Marlowa & Swaila, 2013:85).

The adapted ten personal dilemmas in the study will aid in determining which dilemmas had the heaviest influence on entrepreneurial success based on a weighted rating of participants' responses (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Linkage will be implemented with significant identified dilemmas and experiences of Afro-luxe female participants expressed in the semi-structured interview questions in the primary research process.

The dilemma orientation illustrates how female entrepreneurs detect openings in the market that do not conform to conventional frameworks for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial success (Coleman & Kariv, 2013:124). This study provides a clear indication of the inherent entrepreneurial wiring of a female entrepreneur in the modern era. According to (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3), women bear more of a 'gestalt' view towards the world, which results in opportunity identification via a value-based and socially responsible approach (Coleman & Kariv, 2013:130). These approaches aim at generating greater gains than pure financial long-term turnover (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). The study conveys that this will aid the process of tapping into the entrepreneurial minds of Afro-luxe females.

The Dilemma Orientation Theory will establish a direction for identifying the imperative challenges of established female entrepreneurs. These findings will relate challenges to the results obtained from the Competency Approach and achieve connections between specific challenges and competencies. This will ascertain if there is a connection between certain experienced 'entrepreneurial dilemmas' and 'entrepreneurial competencies'. Examples include the dilemma of the balance between individual passion fulfillment and family which gives potential birth to the familism competency (Irene, 2017)

Refer to the appendices, Table 1.4, Rated responses for Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs.

The study includes a sample of twenty-five women entrepreneurs, from eleven different countries. In this study a woman entrepreneur is defined as a woman who had successfully founded a business and is competent in managing an enterprise, thus showing the ingenuity and initiative of a successful female entrepreneur (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). In appendices, Table 1. 4 conveys the weighted rated outcomes regarding which personal dilemmas participants struggled with from most to least. Literature from this source will provide an

effective direction regarding the type of dilemmas participants in the primary research section will be exposed to. Focused open-ended questions will be constructed on these dilemmas. These findings will be taken forward to the competency section.

Literature Review

The focus of this research paper is to give a start-up female entrepreneur an understanding of the commonly expected challenges associated with female entrepreneurship and how these challenges formed the competencies that are evident in established successful South African female entrepreneurs. Future Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs will gain value and guidance from an enhanced understanding regarding the competencies belonging to the current Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs.

Refer to appendices, Table 1.1, Ten golden business dilemmas and Table 1. 2, Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

The literature review will include the application of the Dilemma Orientation Theory that deals with the institutional barriers, enablers and critical dilemmas that successful women entrepreneurs face in growing their business (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Troompenaars & Woolliams (2005:6), developed ten golden business dilemmas that are found in modern businesses, in one form or another. Women have the tendency not to separate their business and personal lives (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Thus, an additional list of personal dilemmas was introduced by Schreuders, Steege and Trompenaars (2014).

This literature review will additionally comprise of The Competency Approach adapted from Bridget N.O. Irene that carries out an analysis of the individual

characteristics, including both attitudes and behaviors, enabling a female entrepreneur to achieve and maintain business success (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Irene's study is an extension of the studies of Man (2001), Mitchelore and Rowley (2007). The behaviours included in these studies reflected twelve competency domains.

The Dilemma Orientation Theory attempts to deliver appropriate, clear identification of the particular dilemmas that successful female entrepreneurs have faced (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Irene's study applied the Dilemma Orientation Theory to determine which personal dilemmas carried the most influence on entrepreneurial success (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). The study provided additional clarity in understanding the entrepreneurial mind of a female which provides increased validity in the formation of the challenges encountered by female entrepreneurs (Marlowa & Swalia, 2013:86). This study implements additional measures to gain a deeper grasp of the dilemmas that participants faced. Further investigation was applied to analysing the underlying values and motives that drove these dilemmas (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3).

A common theme that emerged from Irene's study was how female entrepreneurs do not separate business and personal dilemmas (Coleman & Kariv, 2013:135). The integration of different life spaces with each other was found to be crucial in the success of females embodied in the study (Kawulich, 2012). The theme bearing the need to bring about change in the world was evident in the findings of the study, ultimately that females do business against conventional ways (Van der Steege et al., 2014:3). Females in the study expressed the difficulty in gaining access to external funding and felt that financial institutions seem to consider providing loans to women as a risk (Coleman & Kariv, 2013:140); as well as in order to achieve entrepreneurial growth, gain credibility and ultimately enlarge their impact in the market, a recognition of the importance of financial performance was vital to their overall success (Coleman & Kariv, 2013:140).

Refer to Table 1.2, Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

Respondents' ratings concluded that the dilemma that scored highest was dilemma one which expressed the balance between following one's passion and nurturing one's family and friendships. Dilemma two proved to be an extensive relatable struggle amongst participants. This dilemma conveyed the struggle of steering the consistent development of the entrepreneur's creation whilst entrusting employees and delegating day-to-day business activities to them.

Themes obtained from the Dilemma Orientation Theory:

- Integration of business and personal spaces
- Contributing to change in the world
- Access to external funding
- Recognition of financial performance
- Achieving balance between following one's passion and nurturing one's family and friendships
- Steering the consistent development of one's entrepreneurial creation whilst trusting employees and delegation in day-to-day business activities to them

Irene's study names the research problem of the unclear association between female entrepreneurial traits and their performance (Irene, 2017:3). According to Irene (2017:4), entrepreneurial competencies play a significant role in the overall success of South African female entrepreneurs. Irene's study provides linkage between entrepreneurial competencies and business success (Irene, 2017:6). The study also reflects the realities of entrepreneurial activities and

determines the competencies that form successful entrepreneurial activities (Irene, 2017:5). These findings provide clarity in identifying widely formed competencies evident in established, successful Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs.

The Competency Approach provides a common approach to the research problem of this assignment. The qualitative data obtained in the Competency Approach enables one to generalise about certain aspects of entrepreneurial competencies (Adam & Skyes, 2003:420). Furthermore, the study provides insight into how significant a role the entrepreneur plays in the determination of which competency is regarded as important (Irene, 2017).

The purpose of Irene's study was not to draw definitive conclusions regarding the link between business success and entrepreneurial competencies but rather to integrate the findings into research instruments for a successful quantification study (Irene, 2017:4). The study delivers themes that can be applied to the primary research section.

Themes obtained from the Competency Approach study:

- Elements surrounding the ***familism*** competency imply gender and cultural issues that essentially have an extensive influence on female entrepreneurship
- Competency domains that illustrated the strong correlations with business success were identified
- Satisfaction with ***financial performance***
- Satisfaction with ***non-financial performance***
- ***Strategic*** competency
- ***Relationship*** competency
- ***Performance*** competency

Conclusion of Literature Review

The literature review integrates findings from the Dilemma Orientation Theory and The Competency Approach. The research problem dealt with in this research assignment is the unclear identification of broadly experienced challenges that have formed the competencies evident in established, successful female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs. The Dilemma Orientation Theory outlines important, applicable themed challenges that will be presented to the Afro-luxe participants in the primary research section of this assignment. Themes included gaining access to external funding, achieving balance between following one's passion and nurturing one's family and friendships, and the integration of business and personal spaces. Schreuders, Steege & Trompenaars (2014) developed a set of personal dilemmas applicable to female entrepreneurs due to women tending not to separate their business and personal life (van der Steege and Von Stamm, 2014).

The Dilemma Orientation Theory equipped this assignment with enhanced knowledge about understanding the way in which the female entrepreneurial mind is wired and how women have a 'gestalt' view of the world, which results in opportunity identification via a value based and socially responsible approach (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). This enhanced understanding will underpin the construction of the primary research methods such as the open-ended questions.

The Competency Approach determines the competencies that form successful entrepreneurial activities (Irene, 2017:6). Irene's findings provide precision in identifying widely formed competencies evident in established, successful Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs. With this knowledge, a comprehensive direction of the type of competencies that are evident in the modern day successful Afro-luxe female entrepreneur will be explored. The study emphasizes internal variables of competencies to gain an improved understanding of the business

success among South African female entrepreneurs (Irene, 2017:2). Eight hundred and seventeen behaviours were collected in Irene's study and were grouped under the twelve competency domains (Irene,2017:7). The study provides insight into the behaviours that were prevalent in and relevant to the activities of South African female entrepreneurs (Irene, 2017:6).

Irene's study configures valid and prominent themes from the Competency Approach which will be applied to the construction of the primary research methods of this study. Distinctive themes include the familism competency that implies gender and cultural issues that essentially have an extensive influence on female entrepreneurship. Additionally, the strategic, relationship and performance competencies proved to yield high impacts on entrepreneurial success.

Both the Competency Approach and Dilemma Orientation Theory illustrate the demand for improved feminist models for female entrepreneurship (McGee & Peterson, 2000:19). (BusinessInSA, 2017) Results attained from The Dilemma Orientation Theory will link challenges to results obtained from the Competency Approach and achieve connections between specific challenges and competencies.

Conceptualisation/ operationalisation

Table 1.8 in the appendices illustrates a matrix of interests and conflicts between components outlined in Table 1.5 that formed the basis of the list of personal dilemmas for female entrepreneurs. A detailed summary of the ten personal dilemmas is outlined in Table 1.7

Afro-luxe: This term refers to luxury, high-end goods and services created or curated in South Africa. This term has recently been coined and used to describe the industry that curates luxury goods and services, ranging between a piece of haute couture design, a bespoke perfume, or an exquisitely handcrafted item of jewellery (Hawken, 2018). Afro-luxe is the intersection of an appreciation of African design, respect for provenance, fascination with ancient culture and the genuine value association of artisan skills and ethical and sustainable production (Hawken, 2018).

Established female entrepreneur: This phrase refers to the female entrepreneur who satisfies the criterion set which comprises of market share, industry experience, company size and period of incubation.

A. COMPONENTS IN THE BASIS FOR PERSONAL DILEMMAS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Components are defined in terms of their sectional interest:

Self: Reflected in terms of personal effectiveness, intrinsic drive and motivation

Family/Friends: Entrepreneurs' overall support system and involvement

Employees: Mindfulness and consideration taken into account

Community: Entrepreneurs' personal involvement and contribution

Sponsor/Financiers/Shareholder: Overall growth and expansion

Research Design and Methodology

Research Paradigm

Due to the subjective nature of the research design, a nominalist paradigm will be applied. The research focuses on the distinctive challenges encountered by established South African female entrepreneurs. A constructivist view will conduct qualitative methods to achieve an understanding of the idiosyncratic key challenges South African female entrepreneurs encounter in the modern era of business. The constructivist nature of this assignment follows the principle that there is no single reality or truth (Salma Patel, 2015). The philosophical underpinnings are informed by hermeneutics, the study of interpretation, by Wilhem Dilthey and phenomenology, the study of human consciousness and self-awareness, by Edmund Husserl (Eichelberger, 1989).

The overall reality of established female entrepreneurs regarding their challenges and competencies require interpretation (Eichelberger, 1989). Individuals in groups generate reality; effectively social reality is seen as mutually constructed between people in the real world (Salma Patel, 2015). A critical discursive qualitative method will comprise of semi-structured interviews to obtain the multiple realities belonging to sample participants. The activities and events that these individuals undertook throughout their entrepreneurial journey will comprise of undiscovered meaning. Via semi-structured interviews, meaning will be unlocked and interpreted in a comprehensive manner.

According to Chilisa and Kawulich (2012), an interpretative paradigm places values as an integral part of social life and no collective's values are seen as wrong or right, but merely different. This implies that the values and principles derived from the sample will not translate into textbook right and wrongs but instead inform subjective positions and opinions that can be applied to successful female entrepreneurship (Kawulich, 2012). According to Steege et al (2014), statements are culture bound, historically and context dependent.

Context obtained from Afro-luxe participants will aid in achieving optimal levels of truth engagement (Kawulich, 2012). Truth will be derived by composite descriptions of the participants' experiences.

This paradigm illustrates that there are as many intangible realities as there are individuals constructing them (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, reality is dependent on one's mind and as mentioned above, a social construct (Kawulich, 2012). Interviewees will convey their personal realities regarding their challenges in their entrepreneurial journey and how they made sense of the world surrounding them (Mertens, 2009). Their realities were limited to a particular context, time and space and cannot be generalized into one common reality. For example, what Female A from Grahamstown experienced as her main challenge will not necessarily be applicable to Female B from Cape Town.

The purpose of a constructivist paradigm is effectively to gain an understanding of an individual's experience (Kawulich, 2012). Based on secondary research, assumptions about the multiplicity of realities will initially be made by the researcher in an attempt to understand human experiences (Mertens, 2009). The research questions are thus not fully established before the study began but evolved as the study progressed (Mertens, 2009).

Design/ Conceptual Approach

Summary of Research Design

Research Design	Reasoning
<i>Inductive</i>	<i>Qualitative aspects</i> <i>Open-ended questions</i> <i>Change in direction</i> <i>Ontology: multiple perspectives</i>
<i>Exploratory</i>	<i>Relationship between variables</i> <i>Smaller sample size</i> <i>Variety of recommendations</i> <i>Ontology: multiple perspectives</i>
<i>Uni-disciplinary</i>	<i>Marketing field</i> <i>Expert opinions available</i>
<i>Cross-sectional design</i>	<i>Time efficient</i> <i>Aids in making recommendations</i>

Population

The population of this assignment will be located in South Africa. The majority of the population will be Cape Town based, given budget and time constraints. Cape Town has earned the reputation as a leading luxury hub in South Africa and has witnessed a significant growth in female luxury entrepreneurs who

have taken advantage of the changing consumer income as well as taste (BusinessInSA, 2017). The population will consist of established female entrepreneurs currently involved in building a brand or brands in the Afro-luxe industry, directly or indirectly. Age, race, language and religion will not form part of key characteristics or parameters. The established factor will depend on aspects that include annual revenue, expertise on the type of goods or service and level of brand awareness. The brand or business should have an established customer following and evident market share in the South African luxury goods and services industry. The final sample will take the above characteristics into account, as well as apply various screenings to select candidates that possess high levels of creativity, passion, motivation, optimism and most importantly, entrepreneurial independence (no aid from male financial support).

Sampling

A non-probability sampling method will be implemented. Specifically, for this assignment, Purposive Sampling will be the chosen sampling method. Members of the sample are chosen with a “purpose” to represent a phenomenon (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The sample group for this study will be made up of established South African female entrepreneurs located in the industry of luxury goods and services. Factors such as entrepreneurial experience, company size and period of incubation will be taken into account in the sampling process. The method of sampling will be Purposive Sampling, which falls under non-probability sampling due to the sharply defined purpose of the study, as well as to ensure the correct criteria for choosing respondents. The sample size will range from five to ten respondents.

The following will be used as a basis for sampling:

- The sample will be relevant to the conceptual framework and the research questions addressed by this study.
- The sample will produce rich, useful information on the type of phenomena required to be studied in this assignment.
- The sample will enhance the transferability levels of the findings.
- The sample will generate credible descriptions and explanations.
- The sample will set up ethical preconditions e.g. gaining informed consent.
- Sampling will be feasible regarding money, time and practicality.

Purposive Sampling is implemented when a specific purpose is in mind and own judgement is relied on when selecting sample participants. With the known purpose of this assignment to achieve an improved understanding of the challenges relating to the competencies of established South African female entrepreneurs who have successfully built brands in the Afro-luxe industry, the aim is to access a particular sub-set of women. The following criteria will inform the profile used to choose participants:

- Female gender
- Operating a business in South Africa
- Brand forms part of the Afro-luxe industry, directly or indirectly
- Is considered an established entrepreneur by factors such as their individual net worth, business' reputation, customer following and overall market share, is an owner or owner-manager of the business.
- The factor of age will be discounted in the interests of considering instead the female's success with her brand

Data-collection method

The data gathering technique will originate from the Phenomenology Approach. This approach is relevant to this study because it describes a meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a phenomenon (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Plano Clark, 2016:77). The Phenomological Approach focuses on the meaning that certain lived experiences hold for participants, that is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to deliver a comprehensive practical description of it (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Plano Clark, 2016:77). This assignment will take individual descriptions and derive general or universal meanings (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Plano Clark, 2016:77). This study will describe the meaning for several female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs of their lived experiences of certain phenomena that will be outlined in various associated themes of challenges and competencies.

Data will be collected from the respondents via semi-structured interviews, and thereafter be developed into a composite description of the essence of the experience for said respondents (Creswell et al., 2016:93). Each interview will have a time horizon between 20 and 25 minutes. Seven planned questions will be asked, and three unplanned questions will follow. The aim of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participant and obtain rich descriptive data that will help the researcher understand the participants' construction of knowledge and social reality (Creswell et al., 2016:93). The questions in the interviews will be based on a line of enquiry developed by the researcher in advance of the interview (Creswell et al., 2016:93). Certain open questions will be planned but followed by further probing and clarification. The researcher will identify new emerging lines of enquiry that will directly relate to phenomena under study and thus will be probed and explored in detail.

Interviews will aid in describing commonalities that participants share regarding their experiences of certain phenomena e.g. finances. Fundamentally, phenomenology aims to reduce individual experiences of a phenomenon to a description of “the very nature of the thing” (Creswell, Ebersohn, Eloff, Ferreira, Ivankova, Jansen, Nieuwenhuis, Pietersen & Plano Clark, 2016:77). Questions relating to a specific experienced phenomenon will be positioned in the interviews so that a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the participants can be established.

Two approaches to phenomenology will be used in this assignment. Hermeneutic and transcendental phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology aids the study in identifying the phenomenon relating to the challenges and competencies of female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs (Creswell et al., 2016:93). Essential themes will be presented that will constitute the overall nature of the participants’ lived experiences (Creswell et al., 2016:93). The researcher will construct descriptions of the phenomenon and will maintain a strong relation to the topic of inquiry (Creswell et al., 2016:93). This approach is not merely seen as a descriptive process but also an interpretive one, with the researcher mediating the different meanings of the live experiences of the participants.

Transcendental phenomenology moves away from interpretation and focuses primarily on the description of the experiences of participants. Both the hermeneutic and transcendental approaches give weight to the method of the researcher bracketing himself or herself from their experiences and focusing primarily on the description of the experiences of the interviewed participants. The transcendental approach will enable the collection of data from several female entrepreneurs who have experienced certain phenomena. The researcher will analyse the data obtained from the interviews and advance the findings by reducing the data to significant quotes or statements and thus combine these statements into themes (Creswell et al., 2016:93). The researcher will develop a textural description (what the participants experienced) and structural

description (how they experienced it, in terms of the conditions, situation and context) of the participants' experiences

Data analysis method

Phenomenological data-analysis

This assignment will undertake a phenomenological data analysis approach. The data will be analyzed via reducing the information to significant statements or quotes, ultimately combining these into themes. These themes will then be used to derive the findings of the study. Additionally, a textual and structural description of the respondents' experiences will be combined to convey an overall essence of the experience. Van Manen (2007) states that phenomenology is primarily focused on the sober reflection on the lived experience of human existence (Creswell, 2003). This reflection must be sober, meaning that it is free from theoretical, prejudicial and suppositional intoxications (Creswell, 2003). Phenomenology is driven by a fascination with meaning (Creswell, 2003). Essentially phenomenological data analysis will aid in addressing the research question and achieving the objectives of this assignment by going beyond content analysis to a nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of the each participant (Creswell, 2003). Data-analysis in phenomenology focuses on how individuals experience the world and this relates well to the research question of this assignment regarding how each female experiences the world of Afro-luxe entrepreneurship (Creswell, 2003). Moustakas (1994) emphasises idiosyncratic constructions, which expresses that individuals are personally attached to the phenomena. A key aspect in analysing the data obtained from participants will require the researcher to bracket "the self" out and therefore enter into the participants' perspective and overall experience (Creswell, 2003).

In interpreting the analysed data obtained from the interviews with participants, the researcher will search for emerging patterns, concepts, associations and explanations (Creswell, 2003). The researcher will begin to engage in defining concepts; mapping the range and nature of phenomena to findings in the literature review and ultimately create themes and associations within the data (Creswell, 2003). Achieving new meaning will be reached via moving between existing theory and the insights from the primary data aspects in the primary data that corroborate theory and enhance or question the existing theory (Creswell, 2003).

Validity, reliability and/ or trustworthiness

The validation strength in this assignment will be enhanced by the presentation of solid descriptive data obtained from the data collection and analysis methods (Creswell, 2003). The reader will thus gain an improved understanding of the various experiences of the participants in the study (Creswell, 2003). The open and transparent nature of the research procedures as well as a clear “audit trail” of decisions and interpretations will contribute to the overall validity levels of this assignment. The audit trail is in place to make transparent the various research procedures and to demonstrate the reasonableness of the analysis. The instruments and processes that have been implemented in this study for data collection will be included in this document and are readily available and open for inspection.

The congruency of the findings in this study to reality will be ensured by well-established research methods, a research design that fits the research question and theoretical underpinning that is aligned with the research methods and questions (Creswell, 2003). Credibility will be enhanced via early familiarity with participants and through well-defined purposive sampling and detailed data-collection methods (Creswell, 2003). Debriefing sessions will be implemented between the researcher and his superior, transcripts and field notes will be

checked and examined. If required, subsequent interviews will be organised to verify data collected in earlier interviews to correct and confirm the researcher's interpretations and conclusions. Credibility and trustworthiness will be further improved through the use of dense description of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Creswell, 2003).

Criteria will be implemented as a basis for securing valid and reliable sampling. Purposive Sampling has been found to be relevant to the conceptual framework and research question addressed in this assignment. Participants will undergo screening and be chosen under strict criteria that allows for a true representation of the population and with the purpose to generate rich information on the phenomena in this study. Said sample will enhance the transferability of the findings and produce credible descriptions which are considered true to real life (Creswell, 2003). Various ethical preconditions such as vulnerability and informed consent will be taken into consideration.

Presentation of Findings

The following females from the Afro-luxe industry were chosen to be interviewed:

Linda Givon - Founder of the Goodman Gallery

The Goodman Gallery was founded in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1966 by Linda Givon to represent established and emerging artists shaping the landscape of contemporary art in Southern Africa. Linda Givon is credited with changing the face of South African art.

Candice Johnson - Founder of Miss Knitwear

Miss Knitwear was founded by Candice Johnson in 2013 and produces luxury knitwear, using locally and ethically sourced natural yarns and materials.

Tracy Chiapinni-Young - Founder Taunina

Taunina was founded in 2011 by Tracey Chiappini-Young and produces unique, hand-embroidered teddy bears made by women from impoverished communities across Africa combining hand-crafted perfection with social upliftment. It takes the artist five to seven days to design and embellish each bear.

Debbie Reinders Hall – Founder of The Hall Collection

Debbie Reinders Hall founded The Hall Collection, specialist importers of bespoke mattresses and beds from Elite Beds of Switzerland and the finest linens from Quagliotti of Italy fourteen years back.

Ronel Jordaan - Founder of Ronel Jordaan

Ronel founded her company in 2003 creating handmade high-end soft furniture for interiors and exteriors from felt.

Grace Mumo - Founder & CEO of Luxury Media Africa & Luxury Xclusives

The company was founded in 2017 by Grace Mumo providing an online lifestyle magazine for luxury brands looking for a platform to connect with their ideal high net worth consumer audience.

Please refer to Annexure A for a sample of the interview questions posed to the participants.

In-depth interviews were conducted with participants, predominantly one-on-one, using a predetermined list of questions with the focus of interest being what is specific, unique and deviant. Of the six interviews, four were conducted in person, one telephonically and one with the participant submitting her response electronically. The questions were shared with the participants prior to the interview to familiarise themselves with the content and overall purpose of the interview. The researcher set out to establish a non-judgemental, interactive, co-operative and participative relationship with each participant. The interview was initiated with questions that verified that each participant met the predetermined criteria and overall demographic related parameters. The desired research information was to gain knowledge on what these female entrepreneurs think and do, what kinds of problems they encounter and how they deal with them?

A prevalent theme was that some of the interview questions sparked intense and passionate responses and strong opinions amongst certain participants suggesting that the interview content created resonance with them and reached the core of their entrepreneurial experiences. This provided the researcher with insights from the perspective of the participants, with an attempt to examine and interpret the experiences, perceptions and feelings of the participants vis a vis the phenomena in question.

In searching for patterns, the researcher uncovered prominent and consistent themes across the sample group emerging from each participant's response and the researcher's view into the participant's perspective around their entrepreneurial journey. This generated valid content for the researcher to derive a universal meaning of sort.

The ground-breaking results obtained from the interview was not the linkage between the secondary data and primary but rather between the actual participants themselves. The interviewees were diversely spread in terms of their age, the existence of their business, type of business and overall entrepreneurial story, yet commonalities in answering numerous questions were clearly evident. The primary data obtained from the interviews produced significant contradiction in the findings from the secondary data, especially regarding the type of challenges that established South African females have endured. Participants strongly disagreed with the findings regarding the common challenges stipulated in the secondary data. They conveyed descriptions of their lived challenges and went on to express how commonly shared competencies grew from their experiences. This allowed the researcher to develop a new set of angles to answer the research question, problem and overall objectives of this study.

Interpretation of Findings

Commonalities and discrepancies between the secondary data and the primary data will be analysed and discussed. Several essential themes will be dissected to constitute the overall interpretations of the nature of the participants' lived experiences. Significant quotes from the interviews or statements will provide backing and context for the above-stated themes. A brief analysis will convey insightful commonalities between participants that will provide structure towards future research to be conducted on topics similar to this research study.

Commonalities and discrepancies between the secondary data and the primary data with reference to Table 1.4, personal dilemmas:

The majority of the participants actively agreed with the dilemma," On the one hand I need to fulfil my passion, while on the other hand, I need to nurture family life and friendships". This correlated with the findings from the Dilemma Orientated Theory. The one participant, quoted below, did not relate to any of the listed dilemmas.

"Simply put, when I have a product to sell, require raw materials from a manufacturer or am presenting in a boardroom with twenty males and I'm the only female, I go out and acquire what I need to succeed, and I feel that being a female does not hinder my entrepreneurial outcome. I find it hard to relate with the listed challenges/dilemmas that have surfaced from this study's secondary research."

Participants did not show issues with conveying common challenges incurred with entrepreneurship in general but showed heavy objection towards the type of dilemmas and challenges that were presented from the secondary research and specifically from the Dilemma Orientation Theory. The researcher's interpretation of these phenomena of unrelatable challenges or views on associated challenges stemmed from the insight that achieving the success of an established female entrepreneur innately required the females not to even take into account the idea of potentially experiencing challenges only prone to female entrepreneurs.

"As a woman in a male-dominated industry and a black woman for that matter, this remains a challenge, however I am personally not deterred by that. While most of the personal dilemmas in Table 1.4 are relevant and

resonate quite well with entrepreneurs, I personally acknowledge them but would not label them as relatable 'dilemmas' that I have experienced"

"If you let the thought that because you are a female you are going to be treated differently or experience 'unique female entrepreneurial challenges', then you won't simply make it. You can't control certain external factors but what you can control is making your business soar and grow as a successful entrepreneur, not just as a female entrepreneur"

Common themes amongst participants

Some of the following themes obtained from the secondary data did build into themes that surfaced from the interviews.

Integration of business and personal spaces

One of the prevalent themes that emerged from the various interviews was the entrepreneur's struggle with integrating her business and personal life. An opposite theme obtained from Trompenaars, Steege and Schreuders study, conveyed how female entrepreneurs do not separate business and personal dilemmas. The study went to the extent of developing a separate set of personal dilemmas that women entrepreneurs were anticipated to be faced with (Van der Steege et al., 2014:4). It was clear from the interviewees that the role of the modern women has changed radically thus altering her personal and business life. The number of female entrepreneurs is rapidly increasing and personal matters such as getting married, having children, having a social life and essentially settling down, are now taking a back seat for the current female entrepreneur. Interviewees expressed break-down moments in their careers and personal lives that truly exposed an imbalance.

This theme linked effectively with the secondary data challenge regarding achieving a balance between following one's passion and nurturing one's family and friendships.

"I had a breakdown to the extent that I had to make a decision, it was seven days a week, work, work, work. I was losing my marriage, kids, and friends. Saturday and Sundays, I still worked in my head but I'm not physically at the office, not sitting at my computer doing business-related work"

"The line for a start-up is quite thin and there is no luxury of resources to do everything and therefore you find yourself juggling different roles and responsibilities which eventually take a toll on both family and business time and life. My children call me a workaholic but I know this is just for a short time, the structures are in place and time to grow as a brand which will give me time to create that fine balance. For now, It's a doubled life on both personal and business"

Interviewees expressed that there was a significant difference in female careers in a corporate environment that has a system in place. Work hours are structured from eight to five and integrating your personal life is aided by the company infrastructure in that you go to work, you leave for home at a certain time and weekends are for yourself and family. A female entrepreneur does not have the benefit of this corporate system and working hour structure and is consistently working on ideas, executions and on managing individuals.

"Being an entrepreneur is incomparable to working for a boss or being part of bureaucracy for example at a company there are systems in place that allow a female to take maternity leave when she is expecting a baby."

As an entrepreneur, there is no such period. You are an entrepreneur 24/7 even when giving birth”

Contributing to change in the world

A common thread amongst the interviewees was how their entrepreneurial ventures linked to contributing change throughout the community, country, and world. Prominent examples were in the realm of empowering women through employment and entrepreneurship activities.

“I employ unemployed single mothers, I educate them on the business activities required for the product to be finished and run. Once the individual has a prominent understanding of the business, she is tasked to lead other females similar to her situation. This process results in numerous successes; my business has allowed an uneducated single mother to provide for herself and family, she has become educated in the process (e.g. learn to write, use scissors or a computer) and fundamentally she has been exposed to entrepreneurship and now is taking part in it”

South Africa is witnessing a surge in organisations, businesses, and individuals that are aiming to simultaneously compete in their environment whilst contributing to change in the world around them (BusinessInSA, 2017).

Contributing to employment levels, decreasing poverty and thus educating individuals were immense findings from the stories and experiences from interviewees and essentially were dominating motivational factors that lead to the entrepreneurial journeys of the interviewees.

“I knew one thing. That through entrepreneurship. I was going to make a change in this country. Even if it meant feeding the mouths of one family through employing one individual.”

The theme of contributing to change exposed a correlation between the primary and secondary data regarding steering the consistent development of one's entrepreneurial creation whilst trusting employees and delegation of day-to-day business activities to them.

Interviewees expressed the relentless hours of training that was required by employing certain individuals. Other than training employees in actual production practices, delegating roles and responsibilities appeared to result in stress, challenge, and anxiety by the entrepreneur. Due to the type of product that luxury brands produce, attention to detail and quality is immense. Many of the entrepreneurs interviewed had businesses that produced handcrafted goods that required hours, weeks and even months of training to eventually achieve the standard required for producing the product.

“Our products are seen and priced as luxury items due to the quality, attention to detail and overall finesse. This means every stitch has to be perfect. You can imagine the challenge of now teaching an individual that has never thread a needle, held scissors or who cannot read or write. Other than training my staff in production practices, I cannot oversee all divisions and cannot be present in every scenario, therefore I need to delegate leadership and responsibilities to individuals who will micromanage the business activities. What intensifies this process is dealing with staff who are consistently confronted with transport problems, difficulties at home and now need to produce top quality work. I need to know that I can rely on them if it's finishing stitching or overseeing that a group is up to speed with work etc.”

Passion, the key competency

Interviewees lightly related to Table 1.3, Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success. Strategic competency resulting in the majority pick for most relatable competency (5/6).

“Strategic Competency remains a challenge as technology is constantly changing. We have chosen to remain agile and adaptive to technology to drive our business success. The rules of the game are constantly changing and we cannot be comfortable with our strategy without constantly assessing where we are at. This is something we are constantly monitoring to remain at par with the current time.”

When asked, “What is your best competency as an established female entrepreneur?”, every interviewee answered with the same competency, “passion”. Interviewees again acknowledged that they related to the list of competencies that correlated with business success but emphasized the utter importance of *passion*, representing the competency that enabled them to thrive, succeed and *stay* established. It was this competency that continually stood out for these females throughout their entrepreneurial journey and was the difference between being a ‘good’ entrepreneur and an ‘exceptional’ entrepreneur. Individuals additionally stressed the importance of being able to stay relevant as an entrepreneur. Passion yet again was expressed as the key and vital ingredient of staying relevant. It was this competency factor that ultimately gave these entrepreneurs consistent motivation, insight and competitive advantage throughout the various stages of their entrepreneur careers. Interviewees conveyed that the listed competencies in Table 1.3 are important but depending on the stage of your entrepreneurial career or cycle of your business these said competencies can become *irrelevant*. Passion, on the other hand, is timeless and immortal to the process.

"Entrepreneurial passion is vital for venture triumph. It plays in numerous aspects of entrepreneurship. Passion ignites motivating a team to commit themselves to the venture, passion brings investors over the edge to ultimately back the business, passion pulses throughout the body of entrepreneurship and ultimately results in the consumer ranking your brand as superior. Passion is the differentiating factor between success and failure for the modern-day entrepreneur. It keeps you relevant. It may sound wishy-washy and cliché, but passion is the reason why I believe women like myself have succeeded and become established in this industry"

Pricing products and services in the luxury industry and distributing globally

Interviewees conveyed the struggle in the process of pricing their products and services. Interviewees expressed that in the line of work that they operate in, attention to detail, quality, and high service levels are part of the job which indirectly results in the high prices charged for the product or service delivered.

The pricing of luxury goods and services needs to be based on the perceived value to consumers. Emotional drivers like brand, uniqueness or prestige are the most important for the buying decision, thus, emotion-based value-to-consumer has to be assessed and accounted for in the price of a product.

"The majority of South Africans place functionality over the numerous other value drivers in purchasing a product or service. This results in the pure difficulty in ultimately convincing the consumer that the product and service are worth the price and ultimately quantifying the value to the consumer regardless of costs, competitor or market prices. Combine these phenomena with the weak purchasing power of the majority of South Africans, low levels of disposable income and reality that a luxury

product or service is not viewed as a necessity, convincing locals to purchase a product that is five times the amount of the average monthly salary proves to be challenging.”

A profound trend that emerged from the majority of the participants was that due to the current economic status in South Africa and the overall negative mentality of South Africans towards luxury goods and services, the majority of the interviewees' customers and clients are globally based.

“Over 75% of our products are shipped to global and foreign clients. The South African demand for global products is not strong enough for our brand to survive and therefore we are based online and focus predominantly on global clients”

There are target segments in South Africa that show evidence of healthy demand and interest for luxury goods and services but comprise of the minority and therefore do not make it feasible to solely fuel the survival of the luxury goods and service brands. A global online presence is therefore required in the modern era of Afro-luxe entrepreneurship.

Non recognition of the idea that female entrepreneurs experience unique challenges compared to male entrepreneurs

A common thread that was apparent between the interviewees was the frustration towards the phenomena that female entrepreneurs experience unique challenges compared to male entrepreneurs based on their gender and hence carry different competencies required to succeed. This contradicted the overwhelming insight attained from the literature used to build and support the

secondary data expressing the major differences in the challenges and competencies borne by the opposite genders in entrepreneurship.

The interviewees did not recognise or acknowledge that being a female in the world of entrepreneurship was linked to its own set of unique 'female' challenges and hence required its own set of competencies to succeed. Interviewees were to this extent, annoyed and frustrated that this phenomenon presented an integral segment of this study's academic research.

"I do not see a difference between the challenges and competencies experienced by a female or male entrepreneur. I feel that if you have an incline towards that sort of thinking you should not be in the world of entrepreneurship and simply won't last."

The females interviewed established that challenges and competencies listed in Tables 1.3 and 1.4 were relevant to entrepreneurship in general and thus applicable to entrepreneurs regardless of their gender. The sample went on to convey that as an entrepreneur you will experience countless challenges and hence form numerous competencies to combat these challenges or be formed from these challenges.

"It shouldn't matter the crux or origin of the challenge but how you as an entrepreneur deal with it. South Africa is experiencing the movement towards the equality of females in numerous spheres, entrepreneurship is one of them. Own it and never feel that as a female you should be treated differently, positively or negatively"

Research Question, Problem, Hypotheses/Objectives Addressed

The purpose of this assignment was to achieve valid, concise and relevant insights into the challenges and successes that established female South African entrepreneurs have encountered through the formation of their brands in the industry of luxury goods and services. Challenges and successes differed dramatically in secondary and primary data.

Major challenges that arose from the secondary data:

- Integration of business and personal spaces (correlation found between secondary and primary data)
- Achieving a balance between following one's passion and nurturing one's family and friendships (correlation found between secondary and primary data)
- Contributing to change in the world (correlation found between secondary and primary data)
- Access to external funding (no correlation).
- Achieving financial performance (no correlation).
- Steering the consistent development of one's entrepreneurial creation whilst trusting employees and delegation in day-to-day business activities to them (correlation found between secondary and primary data)

Key challenges that surfaced from primary data:

- Integration of business and personal spaces (correlation found between secondary and primary data)
- Being able to make a contribution to the world (correlation found between secondary and primary data).
- Overall management of employees to ensure effective work practices and optimal quality required for luxury brand or service. This challenge linked to steering the consistent development of one's entrepreneurial creation whilst trusting employees and delegation in day-to-day business activities to them (correlation found between secondary and primary data).
- Being able to price products and services in the luxury industry and still remain viable as a business (variant).

Major successes attained from secondary data:

- Elements surrounding the **familism** competency imply gender and cultural issues that essentially have an extensive influence on female entrepreneurship (no correlation).
- Satisfaction with **financial performance** (no correlation).
- Satisfaction with **non-financial performance** (no correlation)
- **Strategic** competency (correlation found between secondary and primary data)
- **Relationship** competency (no correlation).
- **Performance** competency (no correlation).

Major successes attained from primary data:

- Passion competency ruled as the game-changer competency amongst established female South African entrepreneurs in the Afro-luxe industry (variant).

- Relevant competency that led from passion competency (variant).

The research achieved valuable insights into the world of successful South African female entrepreneurs in the Afro-luxe industry. Further studies into the topic would be advised to take into account discrepancies between academic journal research and firsthand, practical and real-time experience by current female entrepreneurs in this industry. One of the prevalent insights gained from this study was presented by the thinking shared in common by the established female entrepreneurs interviewed. None of the participants agreed that female entrepreneurs should regard their class of challenges and competencies as unique to their gender. This aspect emerged as a potential variant between established South African female entrepreneurs operating in the Afro-luxe sector and other ordinary South African female entrepreneurs warranting further research investigation.

In conclusion, the study made valuable progress towards improving the innate understanding of the thinking behind an established female South African entrepreneur. The world for a female has never been as innovative and transforming as the current time. The role of the female individual is rapidly changing in societies all over the globe and hence affecting the challenges and competencies of the female entrepreneur. Research and findings in the sphere of this topic will continue to change and will prove difficult to establish permanent conclusions and insights on the matter at hand.

] Ethical Considerations

The aim of this study will be made abundantly clear to all participants involved. No incentives will be included in the study to ensure the absence of unethical motives to participate in the study. The researcher will remain an unprejudiced third party to ensure personal bias does not affect the outcome of the study. Participant's identity will only be recorded if permission is given and if permission is not given, the participant will be recorded as anonymous. No individual will be forced to participate in this study. There is free choice to participate in the interview. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wish to do so. Maintenance of the highest level of objectivity in discussions and analyses will be implemented throughout this research assignment.

Interviews will not include offensive, discriminatory and unacceptable language. Each interview will begin with the participant receiving a short introduction from the researcher informing them about the research that will be conducted and the rules the researcher has to comply with. Furthermore, participants are required to sign a permission form that allows the researcher to record the interview as well as make use of the data after transcription. Included in this permission form will be information ensuring the confidentiality of the data obtained from the participant, conveying participant rights, providing contact details in case anyone has queries and a conclusion on the overall motive behind the study. By signing the consent form, participants give permission for their answers to be used for further analysis. Please refer to Annexure A, Permission Form. Research participants will not be subjected to harm in any way whatsoever. Deception or exaggeration regarding the aims and objectives of the research will be avoided. Communication in relation to the research should be implemented with reliability and transparency. Misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way will be avoided.

Limitations

Due to the various constraints in this assignment such as time, budget and resources this study will bear various limitations:

- Geographic reach. The majority of the sample reach will be located in Cape Town.
- The gender of the entrepreneurs will be females; therefore, the study will not be able to be applied to male entrepreneurs.
- Due to the framework of this assignment and specifics regarding the industry understudy, the findings will not be able to be applied to female entrepreneurs based in other industries.
- Sample size is relatively small and can be penalised for the statistical tests not being able to identify significant relationships within data set.
- *Lack of previous studies in the research area. The research problem discussed in the assignment is viewed as an evolving problem. There has been substantial research on female entrepreneurship but insufficient research on South African female entrepreneurship in the industry of luxury goods and services.*

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Appendices

Table 1.1 Ten Golden Business Dilemmas

TEN GOLDEN BUSINESS DILEMMAS
A dilemma describes a situation whereby one has to choose between two good/desirable options. So a dilemma describes the tension that is created due to conflicting demands. Example: On the one hand we need to standardize our systems and procedures to benefit from discipline, order and control as well as economies of scale, while on the other hand our system needs to be flexible in order to respond to the particular needs of particular situations.
Please rate the following list of business dilemmas on a scale of 1 to 5.
1 = Not at all a struggle to 5 = Was/is a big struggle to resolve
0= not applicable
On the one hand I need to develop my people, while on the other hand I need to become more cost-conscious and results-oriented.
On the one hand I need to motivate and reward our people, while on the other hand I need to satisfy our shareholders / investors / owners.
On the one hand I need to focus on cash flow and working capital, while on the other hand I need to serve the wider community in a sustainable and responsible way.
On the one hand I need to supply products and services that enhance our reputation in the wider community, while on the other hand I need to supply products, which our clients and customers specifically want.
On the one hand I need to supply global or standardized products / services, while on the other hand I need to supply products / services that respond to local tastes and needs.
On the one hand I need to educate customers with new solutions we can offer, while on the other hand I need to keep the needs of the customer in focus ahead of our own personal preference.
On the one hand I need to retain equal opportunities for all existing staff, while on the other hand I need to apply some positive discrimination in areas of recruitment.
On the one hand I need to maximise shareholder / partners / owners return from our existing business, while on the other hand I need to adapt to the future a society evolves.
On the one hand I need to satisfy our clients' / customers' needs at all costs, while on the other hand I need to satisfy our shareholders / partners / owners.
On the one hand I need to focus on the day-to-day running of the business, while on the other hand I need to fulfil the "purpose of existence" of the company within society.

(Source:Schreuders, Steege & Trompenaars,2014:16).

Table 1.2 Rated responses for Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

PERSONAL DILEMMAS
Please rate the following list of personal dilemmas on a scale of 1 to 5.
1 = Not at all a struggle to resolve 5 = Was/is a big struggle to resolve
0 = Not applicable
On the one hand I need to fulfil my passion, while on the other hand I need to nurture family life and friendships.
On the one hand I need to spend time being involved with family / friends, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for and involvement with the community.
On the one hand I need to maintain strong relationships that serve the interests of sponsors, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for the interests of the community.
On the one hand I need to maintain trust and good faith, guaranteeing return on investment, while on the other hand I need to sustain employee intimacy, loyalty and commitment.
On the one hand I need to steer the ongoing development of my own creation, while on the other hand I need to entrust employees with the day-to-day running, delegating execution and innovation.
On the one hand I need to take care of the well-being of family / friends, while on the other hand I need to care about the needs and concerns of employees.
On the one hand I need to ensure capital returns, while on the other hand I need to provide for family and friends.
On the one hand I need to sustain self, energy, health and well being, while on the other hand I need to play an active role in the community.
On the one hand I need to deliver meaningful rewarding work, while on the other hand I need to expand and scale up the business.
On the one hand I need to use the best resources available in the community, while on the other hand I need to develop employees to be their best.

(Source:Schreuders, Steege & Trompenaars,2014:16).

Table 1.3, Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success

TABLE 3: Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success.

Variable	<i>p</i>
Learning competency	0.039249
Social responsibility competency	0.045043
Ethical competency	0.028906
Familism competency	0.061354
Technical competency	0.044379
Personal competency	0.073391
Relationship competency	0.074531
Organising and leading competency	0.064611
Opportunity competency	0.049351
Conceptual competency	0.077900
Commitment competency	0.091659
Strategic competency	0.037051
Satisfaction with financial performance	0.123029
Satisfaction with non-financial performance	0.102483
Performance relative to competitors	0.021832
Business growth	0.050538

Source: Irene, B. (2016). Gender and entrepreneurial success: A cross-cultural study of

(Source: Irene, 2017:5)

Table 1.4 Rated responses for Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

Table 10 Personal Dilemmas

	<i>Personal Dilemmas</i>	<i>Mean of all participants</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
1	On the one hand I need to fulfil my passion, while on the other hand I need to nurture family life and friendships.	3,15	1,4
2	On the one hand I need to steer the on-going development of my own creation, while on the other hand I need to entrust employees with the day-to-day running, delegating execution and innovation.	3,1	1,6
3	On the one hand I need to sustain self, energy, health and well being, while on the other hand I need to play an active role in the community.	3,1	1,6
4	On the one hand I need to deliver meaningful rewarding work, while on the other hand I need to expand and scale up the business	3,0	1,7
5	On the one hand I need to ensure capital returns, while on the other hand I need to provide for family and friends.	2,6	1,5
6	On the one hand I need to use the best resources available in the community, while on the other hand I need to develop employees to be their best.	2,5	1,5
7	On the one hand I need to spend time being involved with family / friends, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for and involvement with the community.	2,4	1,5
8	On the one hand I need to maintain trust and good faith, guaranteeing return on investment, while on the other hand I need to sustain employee intimacy, loyalty and commitment.	2,3	1,4
9	On the one hand I need to take care of the well being of family / friends, while on the other hand I need to care about the needs and concerns of employees.	2,3	1,3
10	On the one hand I need to maintain strong relationships that serve the interests of sponsors, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for the interests of the community.	2,0	1,2

(Source:Schreuders, Steege & Trompenaars, 2014:10).

Table 1.5

The basis for Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

<i>Component</i>	<i>Sectional Interest</i>
Self	Personal effectiveness, intrinsic drive, motivation
Family / friends	Support system and involvement
Employees	Mindfulness, consideration, taking into account
Community	Personal contribution and involvement
Sponsors/ Financiers/ Shareholder	Growth / expansion



Table 1.6

Mapping between components of the Basis of Personal Dilemmas for Women Entrepreneurs

<i>Component</i>	Self	Family / friends	Employees	Community	Sponsors/ Financiers/ Shareholder
Self		#1	#5	#8	#9
Family / friends			#6	#2	#7
Employees				#10	#4
Community					#3
Sponsors/ Financiers/ Shareholder					

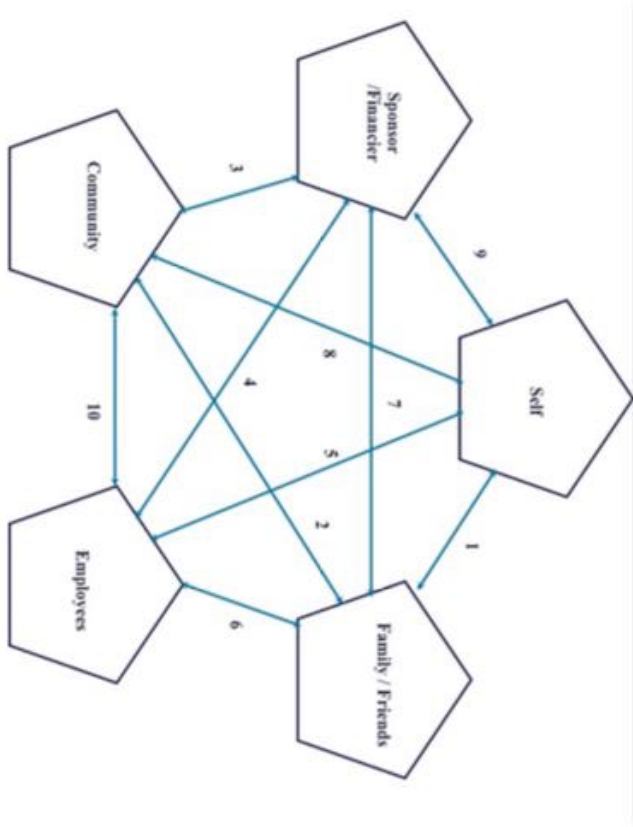
Table 1.7

Detailed summary of the ten personal dilemmas

PERSONAL DILEMMAS	
Please rate the following list of personal dilemmas on a scale of 1 to 5.	
1 = Not at all a struggle to resolve	5 = Was/is a big struggle to resolve
0 = Not applicable	
On the one hand I need to fulfil my passion, while on the other hand I need to nurture family life and friendships.	
On the one hand I need to spend time being involved with family / friends, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for and involvement with the community.	
On the one hand I need to maintain strong relationships that serve the interests of sponsors, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for the interests of the community.	
On the one hand I need to maintain trust and good faith, guaranteeing return on investment, while on the other hand I need to sustain employee intimacy, loyalty and commitment.	
On the one hand I need to steer the ongoing development of my own creation, while on the other hand I need to entrust employees with the day-to-day running, delegating execution and innovation.	
On the one hand I need to take care of the well-being of family / friends, while on the other hand I need to care about the needs and concerns of employees.	
On the one hand I need to ensure capital returns, while on the other hand I need to provide for family and friends.	
On the one hand I need to sustain self, energy, health and well being, while on the other hand I need to play an active role in the community.	
On the one hand I need to deliver meaningful rewarding work, while on the other hand I need to expand and scale up the business.	
On the one hand I need to use the best resources available in the community, while on the other hand I need to develop employees to be their best.	

Table 1.8

Matrix of interests and conflicts between components that formed the basis of personal dilemmas for female entrepreneurs.



Annexure A

Final Research Report Summary Document Table

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach		Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
A clear understanding of the challenges and successes that are endured by the South African Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs when forming their brands.	What are the challenges and successes that established South African female entrepreneurs are confronted with when building brands in the industry of African luxury goods and services.	This study is research worthy because it tackles a field of knowledge that investigates the impact of female entrepreneurship in the exponentially growing Afro-luxe industry.	Vd Steege, M., Schreuders, R. & Trompenaars, F.	Primary Challenges identified: (Will be narrowed down during interview phase) E.g. Sponsors/Finance/S hareholders Primary competencies identified:	Interpretivism The role of competencies and challenges in the impact of female brand creation in the Afro-luxe industry in	Mixed methods Population	Established female South African entrepreneurs in the Afro-luxe industry	The data gathering technique will originate from the phenomenology approach.	The challenge of confidentiality A participant's identity will only be recorded if permission is given, otherwise the stated will be recorded as anonymous.	Particular challenges and successes determine the overall impact that established female entrepreneurs have on the Afro-luxe industry	Collaborating to identify the Personal and Business Dilemmas of successful Women Entrepreneurs. (Working Paper)
		The study also provides substantial contribution to a lacking segment in the area of	Irene, B.N.O.		Due to the subjective nature of the research design, a	Age, experience, company size and period of incubation will		Semi-structured interviews will be implemented. Certain structured questions will be followed by unplanned question that			'Women entrepreneurship in South Africa: Understanding the role of competencies in business success' (Journal)

		South African female entrepreneurship research		(Will be narrowed down during interview phase) E.g. Technical competency	nominalist paradigm will be applied. Research should be constructed and used for support opinions and theories.	form characterize criteria set	will probe further findings.			
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Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses/ Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories	Presentation of Findings	Research Question, Research Problem, Hypotheses/Objectives addressed.	Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	Interpretation of Findings
Which challenges and competencies have the most extensive impact on the female entrepreneurs' hip in brand creation in the Afro-luxe industry?	Determine the personal dilemmas, in the context of the basis for Personal Dilemmas of women entrepreneurs?	Afroluxe: Established female entrepreneur.	The dilemma theory orientation The competency approach theory	Findings presented in a narrative manner that illustrated key themes and insights regarding prominent challenges and successes borne by the participants.	Research question answered via critical examination with clear indication of the solution process. Implications of the findings and Objectives/Hypothesis insightfully addressed.	Non-probability Purposive sampling Size: Six	Unit of Analysis What will you analyse? Reducing the information to significant statements or quotes, ultimately combining into themes. Said themes will translate the findings of the study. Additionally a textual and structural description of the respondents' experiences will be combined to convey an overall essence of the experience.	Biased experiences and knowledge belonging to individual females used in the study Lack of previous sources containing information needed and applicable for this assignment	Significant contribution, it will provide a filling in the gap of knowledge with regards to female entrepreneur ship in the Afro-luxe industry	Commonalities and discrepancies between the secondary data and the primary data. Common themes amongst participants
	Identify which dilemmas and competencies correlate between the data obtained from the key theory studies and the mixed data obtained from the sample in this study.	Employees: Community: Sponsor/Financiers/Shareholder.								

Interview questions

Interview questions for Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs.

Name of Entrepreneur and their brand/company.

Your answer

Number of employees in your business.

☐ 0-10

☐ 10-50

☐ 50-100

☐ 100+

☐ Other: _____

Duration of business existence.

☐ 0-5 years

☐ 5-10

☐ 10-20

☐ 20 +

☐ Other:

What sector does your business fall under?

Your answer

What is the size of your business?

- ☐ Micro
- ☐ Small
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Large
- ☐ Other: _____

Form of business entity?

- ☐ Listed company
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Sole propriotiorship
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Other: _____

What is the Location of your business/businesses?

Your answer _____

Age of entrepreneur

- ☐ 20-30
- ☐ 30-40
- ☐ 40-50
- ☐ 50-60
- ☐ 60 +

What is your home language?

Your answer

What is your Highest level of Education?

Your answer

Please share a brief overview of your brand and personal entrepreneur story

Your answer

What were the main motivating factors in starting your own business?

Your answer

What have been the biggest positives and negatives in building your brand in South Africa and that have impacted your experience as an entrepreneur?

Your answer

What is your best competency as an established female entrepreneur?

Your answer

**How easy is it to separate your business life and personal life?
Can you share some of the challenges you've faced and success tips that have helped you?**

Your answer

Referring to Table 1 Personal Dilemmas. Which dilemma relates most to yourself and why?

Your answer

Table 1 Personal Dilemmas |

PERSONAL DILEMMAS	
On the one hand I need to fulfil my passion, while on the other hand I need to nurture family life and friendships.	
On the one hand I need to spend time being involved with family / friends, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for and involvement with the community.	
On the one hand I need to maintain strong relationships that serve the interests of sponsors, while on the other hand I need to have consideration for the interests of the community.	
On the one hand I need to maintain trust and good faith, guaranteeing return on investment, while on the other hand I need to sustain employee intimacy, loyalty and commitment.	
On the one hand I need to steer the ongoing development of my own creation, while on the other hand I need to entrust employees with the day-to-day running, delegating execution and innovation.	
On the one hand I need to take care of the well-being of family / friends, while on the other hand I need to care about the needs and concerns of employees.	
On the one hand I need to ensure capital returns, while on the other hand I need to provide for family and friends.	
On the one hand I need to sustain self, energy, health and well being, while on the other hand I need to play an active role in the community.	
On the one hand I need to deliver meaningful rewarding work, while on the other hand I need to expand and scale up the business.	
On the one hand I need to use the best resources available in the community, while on the other hand I need to develop employees to be their best.	

Referring to Table 3 Competencies (Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success), which competency applies most to you and why?

Your answer

Table 3 Competencies

TABLE 3: Correlations of entrepreneurial competencies and business success.

Variable	<i>p</i>
Learning competency	0.039249
Social responsibility competency	0.045043
Ethical competency	0.028906
Familism competency	0.061354
Technical competency	0.044379
Personal competency	0.073391
Relationship competency	0.074531
Organising and leading competency	0.064611
Opportunity competency	0.049351
Conceptual competency	0.077900
Commitment competency	0.091659
Strategic competency	0.037051
Satisfaction with financial performance	0.123029
Satisfaction with non-financial performance	0.102483
Performance relative to competitors	0.021832
Business growth	0.050538

Source: Jones, D. 2016. Gender and entrepreneurial success: A cross-cultural study of

Do you face any unique challenges as a female entrepreneur?

Your answer

What would your advice be to an upcoming female afro-luxe entrepreneur?

Your answer

Do you face any unique hurdles as a female entrepreneur in South Africa?

Your answer

What factors influence your intention as a female entrepreneur to remain in business?

Your answer

Referring to Table 2 Ten Golden Business Dilemmas, which dilemma relates most to you and why?

Your answer

Table 2 Business Dilemmas

TEN GOLDEN BUSINESS DILEMMAS
On the one hand I need to develop my people, while on the other hand I need to become more cost-conscious and results-oriented.
On the one hand I need to motivate and reward our people, while on the other hand I need to satisfy our shareholders / investors / owners.
On the one hand I need to focus on cash flow and working capital, while on the other hand I need to serve the wider community in a sustainable and responsible way.
On the one hand I need to supply products and services that enhance our reputation in the wider community, while on the other hand I need to supply products, which our clients and customers specifically want.
On the one hand I need to supply global or standardized products / services, while on the other hand I need to supply products / services that respond to local tastes and needs.
On the one hand I need to educate customers with new solutions we can offer, while on the other hand I need to keep the needs of the customer in focus ahead of our own personal preference.
On the one hand I need to retain equal opportunities for all existing staff, while on the other hand I need to apply some positive discrimination in areas of recruitment.
On the one hand I need to maximise shareholder / partners / owners return from our existing business, while on the other hand I need to adapt to the future a society evolves.
On the one hand I need to satisfy our clients' / customers' needs at all costs, while on the other hand I need to satisfy our shareholders / partners / owners.
On the one hand I need to focus on the day-to-day running of the business, while on the other hand I need to fulfil the "purpose of existence" of the company within society.

What would you consider to be your biggest conflict and biggest interest as a female entrepreneur?

Your answer

Finally, what is your biggest "ask" as a female entrepreneur in South Africa?

Your answer

Ethical Clearance Letter



[29 August 2019]

Student name: Kimon Sarandos Aylett

Student number: 18024805

Campus: Vega School Cape Town



Re: Approval of Honors in Strategic Brand Management Proposal and Ethics Clearance

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and we hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your data collection.

There may be some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. If this is the case, feedback will be provided to you in writing. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor.

In the event of you deciding to change your research topic or methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure that all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued in such instances.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,

[Patrick Pirow]
Supervisor

Dr Franci Cronje
Campus Postgraduate
Coordinator

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Permission form

Participant Number for this study:

PERMISSION FORM

Title of Project: The exploration of the challenges encountered by established South African female entrepreneurs relating to competencies for building brands in the Afro-luxe goods and services industry.

Name of Researcher: **Kimon Aylett**

Contact details: 18024805@vegaconnect.co.za & 0843088988

Please initial all boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated **10 October 2019** for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. ☐
3. I understand that relevant data collected during the study, may be looked at by individuals from **Vega** School of Branding where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records. ☐
4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Originality Report



1 I hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the HBSM412 degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another uUniversity or r Higherhigher eEducation iInstitution for degree purposes.

KIMON AYLETT

Honours in Strategic Brand Management 18024805

Abstract

This study has brought forward the analysissation of the challenges and successes that established female South African entrepreneurs have encountered through the formation of their brands in the industry of luxury goods and services. The global female presence in the entrepreneurship sphere is increasing dramatically. The phenomena of female entrepreneurship are still developing and holds little valid research that is able to prominently conveys the thinking behind successfullsuccessfully established female South African entrepreneurs. This research study aimed to decipher the common challenges and competencies that resonated most with established Afro-luxe female entrepreneurs. The theoretical foundation in the secondary data comprised of the Competency Approach and Dilemma Orientated Theory. The primary data was collected via semi-structured interviews. Interviews will allow the researcher to derive the meaning from several female Afro-luxe entrepreneurs of their lived experiences of certain phenomena that will bewill be outlined in various associated themes of challenges and competencies. Significant findings relating to cutting-edge views and perspectives on modern challenges and competencies that can contribute to the overall understanding of the modern day established South African Afro-luxe female entrepreneur will be presented.

2 Table of Contents

Table of Contents 2

RESM8419_2019_ALL_VGCT - RESM8419_VGCT1

Research Report 1

Kimon Sarandos Aylett on Fri, Oct 25 2019, 12:44 PM

8% highest match
Submission ID: 34b03dd1-051d-45e9-b1a7-2dd7fcd99296

Aylett Kimon-180248...

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