The exploration of stereotypes within selected South African organisations

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REMARKS

The reader is reminded of the following:

- The references as well as the editorial style as prescribed by the Publication Manual (6th edition) of the American Psychological Association (APA) were followed in this thesis. This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Industrial Psychology of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, to use APA style in all scientific documents as from January 1999.

- The thesis is submitted in the form of four research articles.The same characteristics of participants and methodology were employed for all four articles, so the reader should take note that some information will be repetitive across all four articles (although it is adapted or revised to the specific objectives for each article). The table concerning the characteristics of participants may be viewed in Chapter 2 (Article 1), but only the reporting of the table will be used for subsequent chapters (Article 2, 3, and 4).

- The format utilised within each of the research articles (Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) are in accordance with the guidelines for authors of the South African Journal of Industrial Psychology. However, it should be noted that for the thesis, the length of each of these articles will exceed the total restricted by most journals. The content will be narrowed down for publication purposes in future.

- The PhD candidate will make use of the term 'the researcher' throughout this thesis when referring to herself (therefore, she will refer to herself in the third person, except in the next section during her acknowledgements). The PhD candidate adapted a narrative writing style throughout her thesis.

- Research article 1 (Chapter 2) was submitted for publication to the South African Journal of Psychology.

- Research article 4 (Chapter 5) was submitted for publication to the Journal of Psychology in Africa.

- Although the title of this thesis indicate that only selected South African organisations were targeted for this research, the researcher did not make mention of the names of the organisations in order to protect their anonymity (as stated in the methodology section of Chapter 1). However, the researcher did indicate that the organisations that were included were from the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, primary and secondary schools, police services, and the restaurant industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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26 June 2014

To whom it may concern

RE: Language editing of PhD thesis: **The exploration of stereotypes within selected South African organisations**

This is to certify that I language edited the above-mentioned PhD thesis by Mrs Lizelle Brink (student number: 12530115).

Please feel free to contact me should there be any enquiries.

Kind regards

Cecile van Zyl
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DECLARATION

I, Lizelle Brink, hereby declare that "The exploration of stereotypes within selected South African organisations" is my own work and that the views and opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and relevant literature references as shown in the references.

I further declare that the content of this research will not be handed in for any other qualification at any other tertiary institution.

LIZELLE BRINK   JUNE 2014

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SUMMARY

Title: The exploration of stereotypes within selected South African organisations

Keywords: Stereotypes; social constructivism; emic perspective; meaning; origin; race stereotypes; gender stereotypes; age stereotypes; occupational stereotypes; work-related stereotypes; internal dimensions; external dimensions; cognitive experience; behavioural experience; emotional experience; selected South African organisations

After the first democratic election that took place in South Africa in 1994, numerous changes occurred within the labour force. The labour force has become increasingly diverse with individuals from different races, genders and ages now fulfilling various positions within organisations. Consequently, organisations have become more focused on managing this diverse workforce and eliminating stereotypes, and consequently discrimination that accompanies this diversity. Stereotypes that are formed within organisations can be based on various criteria and, if not addressed, can lead to various negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation. It therefore seems that stereotypes are an important topic to research, specifically within the unique South African context.

The objective of this study was to explore the prevalent stereotypes and the experiences thereof among individuals working in selected South African organisations. Within the social constructivism paradigm using an emic perspective, qualitative research from both a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was employed to achieve the objectives of this study. Both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this study after utilising a multiple case study strategy. Employees of selected South African organisations ($N = 336$) were involved in this research study. These organisations formed part of the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. Data was collected by making use of semi-structured interviews, and data analysis was achieved by means of thematic analysis.

The results of this study indicated that individuals working in selected South African organisations are familiar with the meaning of stereotypes and that they are consciously

aware of the origin of stereotypes. Results indicated that although not all of the participants have had direct experiences with stereotyped groups, they are well aware that stereotypes are also caused by indirect sources.

The results of this study also illustrate that various stereotypes exist within selected South African organisations. It was explored on an out-group and in-group level. It was found that not only do employees stereotype others (out-group), they are also well aware of being stereotyped themselves (in-group). The most prevalent stereotypes were based on race, gender, age, occupation, and other work-related dimensions. Stereotypes based on race, gender and age were based on the internal dimensions of diversity. Stereotypes were also based on the external and organisational dimensions of diversity and included occupation, physical appearance, position, qualification, and duration in organisation. Interesting to note is that with in-group occupational stereotyping, most employees felt they are also stereotyped on their internal dimensional characteristics (race, gender and age).

Stereotyped occupations include: academics, administration staff, educators, engineers, finance, human resources, librarians, mining, nursing, police and restaurant waitrons. The findings of this study also showed that when individuals experience in-group stereotypes, they react to these stereotypes on a cognitive, behavioural or emotional level. Results indicated that participants mostly reacted to stereotypes in a cognitive manner and most of these experiences were negative in nature. Recommendations with regard to future research and practice were made. Managers within organisations should eliminate stereotypes from organisational practices and decision-making by not focusing on irrelevant personal differences, but rather on performance-related information. Employees should be trained and educated by the organisation regarding stereotypes and the effects thereof. Employees should also be provided with an opportunity to interact with diverse people within the organisation.

OPSOMMING

Titel: Die verkenning van stereotipes binne geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies

Sleutelwoorde: Stereotipes; sosiale konstruktivisme; emiese perspektief; betekenis; oorsprong; rassestereotipering; geslagstereotipering; ouderdomstereotipering; beroepstereotipering; werksverwante stereotipering; interne dimensies; eksterne dimensies; kognitiewe ondervinding; gedragsondervinding; emosionele ondervinding; geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies

Na afloop van die eerste demokratiese verkiesing in Suid-Afrika in 1994 het talle veranderings binne die arbeidsmag plaasgevind. Die arbeidsmag het gediversifiseer ten opsigte van individue van verskillende ras, geslag en ouderdom wat 'n verskeidenheid van poste in 'n organisasie beklee. Dit het tot gevolg gehad dat organisasies gefokus is op die bestuur van die diverse arbeidsmag en die eliminasie van stereotipes en gevolglike diskriminasie wat met diversiteit gepaardgaan. Stereotipes wat binne 'n organisasie ontstaan kan op verskillende kriteria gegrond wees, en indien nie aangespreek nie, kan dit negatiewe gevolge vir beide die individu en die organisasie inhou. Dit blyk dus dat stereotipering 'n belangrike navorsingsonderwerp is, veral binne die unieke Suid-Afrikaanse konteks.

Die doel van hierdie studie was om die aanwesige stereotipes en die ervaring daarvan deur werknemers in geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies te ondersoek. Binne die sosiale konstruktivisme-paradigma en deur gebruikmaking van 'n emiese perspektief is kwalitatiewe navorsing vanuit beide 'n fenomenologiese en hermeneutiese benadering aangewend om die doelstellings van hierdie studie te bereik. Beide doelgerigte- en gerieflikheidssteekproefneming is vir die doel van hierdie studie gebruik nadat 'n veelvuldige geval strategie gebruik is. Werknemers uit geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies (N = 336) is by hierdie navorsingstudie betrek. Hierdie organisasies vorm deel van die volgende arbeidsektore: bankwese, hoër onderwysinstellings, munisipaliteite, mynwese, verpleging, polisiedienste, primêre en sekondêre skole, en restaurantbedryf. Data is versamel deur van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude gebruik te maak, en data-analise is deur middel van tematiese analise bereik.

Die bevindinge van hierdie studie het getoon dat individue wat in geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies werksaam is, vertroud is met die betekenis van stereotipering asook die oorsprong daarvan. Die bevindinge toon verder dat alhoewel nie al die deelnemers in die studie direkte ondervinding met gestereotipeerde groepe ondervind het nie, hulle wel bewus is daarvan dat stereotipes ook deur indirekte oorsake kan ontstaan.

Die bevindinge van hierdie studie dui ook aan dat verskeie stereotipes in die geselekteerde Suid-Afrikaanse organisasies bestaan. Dit is verken op 'n uit-groep- en in-groepvlak. Individue pas nie stereotipering net op ander toe nie (uit-groepstereotipering), maar is deeglik bewus daarvan dat hulle ook gestereotipeer word (in-groepstereotipering). Die vernaamste stereotipes is dié gegrond op ras, geslag, ouderdom, beroepe en werksverbandhoudende dimensies. Stereotipes gegrond op ras, geslag, en ouderdom is op die interne dimensies van diversiteit gebaseer. Stereotipes is ook gegrond op die eksterne en organisatoriese dimensies van diversiteit en sluit stereotipes in gebaseer op beroep, fisiese voorkoms, posisie, kwalifikasie, en tydperk in organisasie. 'n Interessante bevinding van hierdie studie was dat wanneer dit kom by in-groep beroepstereotipering die meeste werknemers gevoel het hulle word gestereotipeer op hul interne dimensie-eienskappe (ras, geslag en ouderdom).

Gestereotipeerde beroepe sluit in: akademici, administratiewe personeel, onderwysers, ingenieurs, finansies, menslikehulpbronbestuur, biblioteek-amptenare, mynwese, verpleging, polisie en kelners. Die bevindinge in hierdie studie dui ook aan dat wanneer individue in-groepstereotipering ervaar, die reaksie daarop op 'n kognitiewe, gedrags- of emosionele vlak plaasvind. Bevindinge het ook aangedui dat deelnemers hoofsaaklik op kognitiewe vlak reageer het en die meeste ervarings in hierdie verband was negatief. Aanbevelings met betrekking tot toekomstige navorsing en praktyk is gemaak. Bestuurders van organisasies moet stereotipering in die organisasie en besluitnemingsprosesse uitskakel deur nie op irrelevante persoonlike verskille te fokus nie, maar eerder op prestasie-verbandhoudende inligting. Werknemers behoort deur die organisasie opgelei te word met betrekking tot stereotipes en die uitwerking daarvan. Werknemers behoort ook die geleentheid gegun te word om met die diverse werksmag van die organisasie om te gaan.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This thesis focuses on the exploration of prevalent stereotypes and the experience thereof among individuals employed within selected South African organisations. This chapter contains the problem statement and a discussion of the research objectives, in which the general objective and specific objectives are set out. The research design is explained and a division of chapters is given.

1.1 Problem statement

Although 20 years have passed since South Africa's first democratic election (Venter, Levy, Conradie, & Holtzhausen, 2009), diversity within this country and specifically within this country's organisations is still an important issue to consider. It seems that even today, South African organisations still struggle with the effective management of diversity. When reviewing literature, it appears that diversity is a varied topic since it encompasses several elements that could be observable or unobservable (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2002; Owayemi, Elegbede, & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2011; Toga, Qwabe, & Mjoli, 2014). According to Toga *et al*. (2014), diversity brings about differences with regard to perspectives, attitudes and work ethic (usually subjectively determined), while Grobler *et al.* (2002) and Greenberg and Baron (2010) include arguments for language, race, age and gender diversity (observably determined). These aspects make it increasingly difficult for managers to supervise their subordinates while still striving to reach organisational objectives and keeping the workforce committed (Owoyemi *et al.*, 2011). Diversity has always been part of South Africa's history; however, the first democratic election in 1994 brought on various socio-cultural and socio-economic changes to South Africa's labour force (Horn, 2006). As with the general South African population, South African organisations comprise four race groups, namely Black, Coloured, Indian and White (Grobler *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, South African organisations also boast 11 official languages that are spoken by these four race groups (Grobler *et al*., 2002) and differences with regard to gender and age are also increasing (Greenberg & Baron, 2010). From a broad South African perspective, it appears that organisations are a melting pot of diversity where each employee differs not only with regard to their views, beliefs and ideological stances, but also according to their culture, language, race, gender and age. In order for organisations to stay competitive in a saturated

market, it makes it even more important to value and embrace these differences (Venter *et al.*, 2009). For the employee him-/herself it is also important to show understanding and tolerance for his/her fellow diverse employees.

The above paragraph argued the 'what' of diversity, but how can organisations manage it? Each organisation can manage it by its own merit, but there are formal and strict elements that South African organisations need to adhere to. From the literature perspective (Grobler *et al.*, 2002; Nel, 2002), the formal elements may pertain to the governed laws and codes of conduct each organisation develops in order to structure the management of diversity. A governed law used to address diversity in organisations includes the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 (EEA). The focus of this Act is to ensure that the processes of hiring, promotion, training, pay, benefits and retrenchments in organisations are free from discrimination (Nel, 2002). According to the Act (Government Gazette, 1998, p. 8), "No person may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against an employee in any employment policy or practice, on one or more grounds including race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language, and birth". The Act is therefore aimed at creating a workforce that is diverse and broadly represents all people in South Africa (Nel, 2002). This law is not only statutorily implemented, but also aims for organisations to value and embrace diversity.

Many organisations of today make an effort and are more focused on the concept of diversity and the eradication of unfair discrimination. However, efforts from employers to increase diversity in their organisations in order to adhere to the EEA increased the possibility of informal (or subjective) discrimination. From this perspective, employers attempted to decrease informal (or subjective) discrimination by becoming progressively more attentive about hiring non-biased executives, redesigning prejudiced selection and promotion procedures, and eliminating stereotypes from executive decision-making (Greengard, 2003; Rice, 1996). Taking a standstill on the issue of stereotypes, it is clear from the above arguments that stereotypes (as being experienced by employees) may increase as the organisation becomes more diverse. According to Izumi and Hammonds (2007), stereotypes may be inevitable, uncontrollable and difficult to suppress and could be accurate or inaccurate. When stereotypes are inaccurate, they may lead to inefficient and uneconomical decisions, and create barriers in the advancement of minority groups such as women, people

of colour, and people with disabilities (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Van Fleet & Saurage, 1984). Inaccurate stereotypes can also lead to sexism, persecution and racism (Embry, Padgett, & Caldwell, 2008; Ndom, Elegbeleye, & Williams, 2007). In order to address these negative consequences of stereotypes, organisations should consider putting an effort into ensuring that stereotypical beliefs about individual employees do not influence employment and promotion decisions (Newell, 2002). Roberson and Kulik (2007) believe that an organisation can be created where workers can thrive and advance when stereotypes are removed from organisational decision-making. This viewpoint is also supported by the researcher of this study.

Stereotypes within the social constructivist paradigm

In order to adequately reflect on stereotypes, its origins and how it is experienced by the South African labour force, the researcher first aimed to identify and describe a paradigm that may be relevant for this important topic of discussion. The researcher of this study read through a huge amount of literature in order to discover the most relevant paradigm or paradigms to study the phenomenon of stereotypes. It seemed, from reading about stereotyping, and how it is studied in literature, it is different across contexts. Furthermore, studies in South Africa mostly used quantitative methodology to investigate stereotypes and is more contextualised (meaning it explored specific elements of stereotypes) (see Brandt & Carstens, 2011; Collings, 2006; Wessels & Steenkamp, 2009). This made the researcher aware that there is a need to explore stereotypes in the real life setting of individuals within the context of South Africa, therefore the researcher decided to utilise the emic perspective (Nel *et al*., 2012). Since the researcher herself is a registered Industrial Psychologist at the Health Professions Council of South Africa, she was also more interested about what the most prevalent stereotypes are in the world of work, and how employees experience it. With this in mind and after careful consideration and much reading, the researcher systemised her thoughts and chose the social constructivist worldview in order to reach the objective of this study. Social constructivism refers to "the philosophical belief that people construct their own understanding of reality" (Oxford, 1997, p. 36). According to this paradigm, individuals live in a socially constructed world. This means that the manner in which individuals use and process information in order for them to understand, is influenced by the context or society (in this case a diverse South Africa labour force) in which they live and interact (Crump, Logan, & McIlroy, 2007; Ernest, 1995). Within the social constructivism paradigm, it is

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believed that because of social, cultural and historical influences (especially before 1994's democratic elections and then after), individuals develop their own knowledge and meaning about certain phenomena (Creswell, 2009; Hollins, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). These meanings that individuals attach to their world are constructed as they engage with the world in which they live and interpret (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, individuals' reality of certain constructs is therefore developed and influenced by the contexts within which they find themselves in. Because of this, the emic perspective is appropriate to study the phenomena of stereotypes within the social constructivism paradigm.

Pertaining to stereotypes, in order to gain an understanding of the social world, individuals stereotype others to better understand the people they interact with. When looking at individuals, we may simply see that these individuals are a certain race and gender or they are viewed as old or young (without knowing a person's real age). However, individuals attach certain meanings to these constructs, and these meanings become their realities (Crump *et al*., 2007; Ernest, 1995). These meanings that individuals attach may be a product of cultural, societal and historical influences (as construed by the social constructivism paradigm) (Niewenhuis, 2010). The researcher of this study therefore wants to study the meanings that individuals attach to stereotypes, which become their own reality.

Most South Africans are aware of diversity within the overall context of South Africa, but since 1994, these diversity issues entered the world of work more prominently. As an industrial psychologist, the researcher was interested in discovering what stereotypes are experienced in the employees' workplace and which stereotypes are the most prevalent. Are stereotypes about employees in the world of work a more internal dimension (things about yourself you cannot change like race, gender, and age), external dimension (things about yourself you have control over like marital status, geography, and education) and/or organisational dimension (things in a person's organisation that the employees possess such as job level, income, and department in organisation)? (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Additionally, where did the formation of stereotypes begin? Is it influenced or constructed by a person's direct context (world of work, home) or via indirect influences (media)? This study's overall aim therefore is not to test existing theory (by confirming what literature says about stereotypes, its meaning, origin, types and experiences), but rather to add to theory pertaining to this phenomenon within the South African work context. This study aims to explore overall how employees construct stereotypes, and what types of stereotypes are they

experiencing from their perspective. Therefore, by employing an emic perspective, the researcher was able to explore how individuals within the unique South African context experience stereotypes (Nel *et al*., 2012). However, in order to better understand stereotypes, its origin, the types, and how it is experienced, the literature study (which continues further in this section) will review these elements further.

Conceptualising stereotypes

There are various definitions of stereotypes that exist within literature; however, the descriptive definition put forth by Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) has been cited in much stereotype literature (see Campbell & Mohr, 2011; Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010; Whitley & Kite, 2006) and was used to define the concept. According to Hilton and Von Hippel (1996, p. 240), stereotypes are "beliefs about the characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of members of certain groups". By stereotyping, it is presumed that a person or group possesses certain traits and exhibits certain behaviours because of the social group they belong to (Ndom *et al.*, 2007). Usually, people hold stereotypes about persons without necessarily having the correct knowledge or facts about this person or group. This phenomenon is known as out-group stereotyping (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2010). Stereotypes about out-group members (i.e. members of any group to which an individual does not belong) are more likely to be negative, whereas stereotypes about in-group members (i.e. members of groups to which individuals do belong) are more likely to be positive in nature (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2010; Esse, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993; Falkenberg, 1990; Lee, Sandfield, & Dhaliwal, 2007).

In order to enhance the understanding of stereotypes within the social constructivism paradigm, it also important to grasp the theory behind this phenomenon. The social identity perspective is of the premise that people may put more weight on their personal identity (which enforces the self-categorisation theory) or their social identity (which, in turn, enforces the social identity theory) (Tajfel, 1978, 1979; Turner, 1987). Therefore, if a person views him-/herself as 'unique' (or unlike any other) then self-categorisation theory comes into play, and stereotyping may not affect this person that much (regardless of the group he or she is socialised in) (Trepte, 2006). However, if a person puts more importance on the group he or she belongs to, then he or she will be more inclined to experience in-group and out-group stereotypes. The social identity theory claims that people share collective attributes and

develop a 'we' type of attitude (Dovidio *et al.,* 2010). This theory is especially relevant for the South African context, since the aspect of Ubuntu (I am because of others) was found to be prevalent in a cross-cultural study (Nel *et al*., 2012). Therefore, the social identity theory will be applicable in order to research stereotypes within the context of work in South Africa.

Apart from the different theories, there are various places from where stereotypes originate. Stereotypes are learned indirectly from other external elements such as people (i.e. parents, peers, and teachers) and the media (Spittle, Pettering, Kremer, & Spittle, 2012; Timberlake & Estes, 2007). However, stereotypes can also be formed from direct experiences and from observing individual members belonging to a group (Glassman & Hadad, 2011; Plous, 2003). Stereotyping can also start at a very early age (Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000) and may be reinforced by external elements as the years pass. According to Banse, Gawronski, Rebetez, Gutt, and Morton (2010), children at a young age of three years can already distinguish between females and males and are already making gender associations such as dolls are for girls and trucks are for boys. The authors further found that children can distinguish between the different objects used by both females and males, such as irons are used by females and hammers are used by males.

Stereotypes serve various functions. Stereotyping is a useful way of categorising individuals when information or observation is lacking (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2014) and also assist individuals with information processing by making sense of stimuli that they encounter (Embry *et al*., 2008). It means that individuals do not always have the time (or energy) to get to know every new person they encounter. According to Shani and Lau (2008), people will therefore rather stereotype in order to speed up this process in order to save time (or energy). Unfortunately, the perceiver (the one holding the stereotype) may form a false or inaccurate impression of the target (person being stereotyped).

Individuals can be stereotyped on a wide variety of aspects in the world of work. According to Grobler *et al*. (2002), this refers to the internal, external and organisational dimensions of diversity. Internal dimensions, also referred to as the surface levels of diversity, are those dimensions that individuals are born with and have no control over (Grobler *et al*., 2002; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Examples of these include race, gender, age and sexual orientation. External dimensions, or secondary dimensions, are dimensions that individuals have control over and include for example education, income, religion, geography, and work

background (Grobler *et al*., 2002; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Organisational dimensions are those elements that a person possesses within his or her work context (i.e. job level, job specification, and department) (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). However, literature has shown that mostly internal dimensions (race, gender, and age) are the most prevalent stereotypes that are experienced by individuals and therefore the researcher decided to specifically pay attention to these within the literature review (Arnold *et al*., 2010; Shani & Lau, 2008; Weiten, 2008). Additionally, occupational stereotypes seem to be experienced pre-dominantly by employees (apart from the internal dimensions mentioned before) and will also be discussed (Arnold *et al*., 2010; Shani & Lau, 2008; Weiten, 2008). When taking into account the unique history of South Africa and the diverse nature of South Africa, it is the researcher's opinion that these stereotypes may also be experienced within South African organisations. However, the aim of this research is to determine whether these (and maybe other) stereotypes exist in South African organisations and are they experienced on an in-group or out-group level. Following is a discussion of the prevalent stereotypes that exist according to literature.

Race stereotypes

How do we determine what characteristics are attributed to different race groups? Physical characteristics associated with race, such as hair and skin colour, are determined biologically; however, the treatment of different race groups is determined socially (Lerner, 2001). When noticing skin and hair colour, individuals often attach negative value judgements to those individuals (Lerner, 2001). However, these judgements are not necessarily correct; they may only be a product of our socialisation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010).

Racial stereotyping is defined "as the generalised attribution of a set of personal characteristics to members of a *racial/[1]ethnic group" (Aboud, 1988, as cited in Bigler & Liben, 1993). A variety of racial stereotypes exist (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Shih, 2002). Results of a study showed that when African Americans were compared with White people, they felt less accepted by peers, reached career ceilings more often, showed higher levels of job dissatisfaction, and received less favourable performance ratings (Kreitner & Kinicki,

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[1] The majority of stereotype literature refer to race stereotypes and will therefore be used for the purpose of this study. The term ethnicity forms part of a direct quotation and will therefore be used in this instance

2010). Employers often view African Americans in a negative light, such as being demotivated, being disinterested in learning and refusing to follow orders and authority (Shih, 2002). Furthermore, White people are viewed more positively than Hispanics and Asians, and Jews are viewed more positively than White people (Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000). White males are viewed as being more competent for high-status positions and are therefore given positions of higher value in society (Powell & Butterfield, 2002). Within a South African study, it was found that Coloured individuals are viewed positively as friendly and happy, and negatively as violent and criminal (Durrheim & Talbot, 2012). South African organisations comprise different race groups (Grobler *et al*., 2002), thereby increasing the likelihood of employees working with individuals from different race groups, thereby also increasing the possibility of racial stereotyping.

When individuals attach meaning to a certain race group, and make it their reality, they may inadvertently put individuals belonging to this race group to a disadvantage. According to Williams and Williams-Morris (2000), when stigmatised groups internalise racial stereotypes, expectations, anxieties and reactions that negatively affect social and psychological functioning can be created. Furthermore, negative stereotypes about racial group members may cause prejudice when it comes to job suitability (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). According to Jackson *et al*. (1996), racial discrimination is related to physical and psychological problems and lower levels of personal life satisfaction.

Gender stereotypes

Gender is a social construct that is ever-present and which exercises power and control over all individuals within society (Burdge, 2007). Instead of gender being influenced by anatomical factors, gender is influenced by social, cultural and historical factors (Moynihan, 1998). To interpret; the meaning individuals attach to being male or female may not necessarily be based on physical characteristics; it may be that societies differ with regard to the meaning they attach to being male or female. Within the social constructivism paradigm, society believes that being male or female is associated with given and fixed attributes; however, these fixed attributes may vary between individuals and across cultures (Monyihan, 1998). Therefore, the social construct of gender may be interpreted very differently by different individuals within the South African work context.

According to Schein (1978), gender stereotypes exist when it is believed that males and females have different traits and abilities. In other words, these stereotypes describe what is deemed as appropriately feminine and masculine behaviour (Wu, 2006). Research has shown that people view males as assertive, independent, competitive, daring, courageous, aggressive, forceful, ambitious, emotionally stable, decisive, easy-going, and workplace achievers. Females are depicted as gentle, kind, supportive, expressive, affectionate, tactful, emotional, talkative, helpful, sympathetic, patient, attentive, nurturing, creative and concerned about others (Carli & Eagly, 1999; DeArmond *et al.*, 2006; Heilman, 2001; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). These characteristics that are attributed to different genders have a haltering effect when it comes to employment, especially when it comes to the employment of females. In the past, South African organisations have discriminated against females by refusing to appoint them in the same positions as males, denying them advancement opportunities, and offering them lower remuneration than males (Nzimande & Sikhosana, 1996; Reskin & Padavic, 1994).

Research indicated that even today females in the workplace often find themselves in challenging situations. If females fulfil managerial positions, which are traditionally masculine, they may not be seen as feminine enough; however, if they are too feminine, they are not seen as managers (Kelan, 2008). According to Eagly and Karau (2002), females are usually perceived less positively than males are when it comes to leadership roles. These negative stereotypes about females not being leaders in business could cause females to be less successful (Godwyn, 2007). Prejudice against females as leaders results in females having more difficulty to reach elite leadership positions (more commonly known as the invisible 'glass ceiling') and females being viewed as ineffective leaders (Hoyt, Simon, & Reid, 2009). According to Heilman, Block, and Martel (1995), males are perceived as better qualified, having more potential, and being more suitable for managerial positions than their female counterparts. Furthermore, negative stereotypes about females result in females receiving unfavourable performance reviews and females not being promoted (York, Tyler, Tyler, & Gugel, 2008). These gender stereotypes inherently put females at a disadvantage and encourage their poor treatment in the organisation (Bergeron, Block, & Echtenkamp, 2006; Snizek & Neil, 1992). It can be seen that society attaches less valuable meaning to females than to males, especially when referring to females in higher positions. Since the 1994 elections, organisations have become more representative of females and it is more common

for females to be appointed in higher positions; it would therefore be interesting to research whether the same stereotypes still hold true within the present South African context.

Age stereotypes

People construct their own reality when it comes to the description of young or old individuals. Individuals form pictures in their heads of what it means to be young or old, making these pictures their own reality (Barak & Shiffman, 1981), irrespective of whether they are correct or incorrect. When referring to age, what exactly constitutes an 'older worker', or for that matter, a 'younger worker'? Age is chronologically construed and an internal dimension of a person (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010), but usually it is a guessing game between the perceiver (the person who stereotypes) and the target (the person who is stereotyped). Age stereotyping is the belief that different age groups possess different characteristics and traits that make them more or less suitable for different roles (Shani & Lau, 2008). Younger workers may be perceived as liberal, loving, understanding, supportive of others, productive, being competent to handle clients and having the ability to learn new skills, showing more potential for development and having greater overall job qualifications (Chiu, Chan, Snape, & Redman, 2001; Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995; Hummert, 1990). Although numerous positive stereotypes exist about younger workers, and they seem like the ideal persons to appoint, many young people struggle to get appointed because of their lack of work experience.

When referring to older individuals, what exactly does 'old' mean? Is there a specific age that comes to mind when thinking about 'older' individuals? Itzin (1990) indicates that few individuals identify themselves as being old and that there is indeed incongruence between social stereotypes of a negative nature and the personal lived experiences of individuals growing older. Older workers, on the other hand, may be viewed as wise, experienced, loyal, reliable, meticulous, interpersonally skilled, confident, more successful in their occupations and having higher commitment and job satisfaction (Chiu *et al*., 2001; Hassel & Perrewe, 1995; Shih, Ambady, Richeson, Fujita, & Gray, 2002). On the other hand, older workers are also depicted as dissatisfied, showing less involvement in their work, less motivated and committed, less productive than their younger counterparts, more absent from work, and more accident prone (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Furthermore, older workers are viewed as less adaptable, more resistant to change, uninterested in learning and development, less

interested in receiving training, and less interested in gaining new knowledge. They may also experience greater fatigue and have less energy than younger workers do (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Maurer, Barbeite, Weiss, & Lippstreu, 2008; Steinberg, Donald, Najman, & Skerman, 1996; Swift, 2004). When negative beliefs about older workers are present and shared with others in managerial positions, then the feelings towards older workers may be negative, and this, consequently, may develop into prejudiced behaviour towards older workers (Hassel & Perrewe, 1995). Chiu *et al*. (2001) suggest that older workers are often discriminated against by employers through positions advertised as having age restrictions and unfavourable treatment in employment processes such as recruitment, promotion and training. Furthermore, employers may believe that older workers are associated with higher employment costs, because higher health insurance claims are present (Finkelstein *et al*., 1995). It is also possible that less effort is put into older workers' training and development if stereotypes exist about older workers not adapting quickly to new technology (Wallance, 2010).

It seems from the discussion above that organisations may be reluctant to appoint older workers because of the negative stereotypes that are formed (as found in previous studies). Therefore, it may be interesting to uncover whether similar traits may be found within the South African work context.

Occupational stereotypes

Just as individuals attach meaning to race, gender, and age, they also attach meaning to occupations. It is impossible for individuals to be exposed to all the different occupations that exist (Leonardi & Rodriquez-Lluesma, 2013; Loosemore & Tan, 2000); therefore, individuals may rely on society and the meaning society attaches to different occupations in order to gain a better understanding of these occupations. These meanings that are influenced become reality for individuals, whether or not they are correct.

Occupational stereotypes can be defined as "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation, about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's suitability for that occupation" (Lipton, O'Connor, Terry, & Bellamy, 1991, p. 129). Many occupational stereotypes exist today and are activated when individuals from different occupations come together to work on communal tasks (Leonardi & Rodriquez-Lluesma, 2013; Loosemore &

Tan, 2000). Examples of occupational stereotypes include that librarians are serious and intelligent, bullfighters are violent, engineers are good at math and extremely rational, and human resource managers are do-gooders (Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, & Kinicki, 2011; Luthans, 2010; Mullins; 2010; Plous; 2003). A study by Wessels and Steenkamp (2009) found that South African students perceive accountants to be structured, systematic and private individuals. The authors further indicated that when students hold inaccurate stereotypes of what a specific occupation entails, they may become disillusioned when entering the workplace for the first time. Adachi (2013) adds to this by stating that occupational stereotypes can lead young adults to neglect considering factors such as job conditions, responsibilities and requirements when making a career choice. Occupational stereotypes also influence and hamper interactions between individuals and this leads to workplace discrimination when there is a poor match between the individual and the job (King, Mendoza, Madera, Hebl, & Knight, 2006; Larkin, 2008; Newman, 2012).

Not only is meaning attached to different occupations, individuals also construct their own reality of what occupations should be occupied by what gender. According to White and White (2006), it is believed that males and females are suited for different occupations because they are stereotyped to possess certain characteristics and personalities. This phenomenon is known as occupational sex-role stereotyping (Miller & Hayward, 2006). According to Miller and Budd (1999), women show a stronger preference for conventional feminine occupations such as hairdressers and nursery school teachers, than for conventional masculine occupations such as scientists and police officers. They also state that the opposite holds true for males. Even though more open-minded views of gender appropriate occupations exist, children at an early age of six to eight years already associate gender with occupation, thereby also leading them to choose gender-appropriate jobs later on in life (Gottfredson, 1996; Miller & Hayward, 2006). It is therefore possible that individuals may choose to pursue occupations that are seen as acceptable by society in general, rather than occupations that they have a competence and passion for. Within South Africa, different individuals are appointed within different occupations; and the researcher of this study therefore made an effort to include participants employed in various, diverse occupations. By doing this, the researcher tried to paint an overall picture of prevalent stereotypes that exist within the South African working environment.

Other stereotypes

Apart from race, gender, age and occupational stereotypes, other types of stereotypes also exist. One cannot make mention of all the different stereotypes that exist within our society; however, a few examples can be made reference to. Stereotypes about individuals living with disabilities do exist, and these individuals with various negative stereotypes are stigmatised by society in general (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Sexual orientation stereotypes are another form of stereotypes that exist. Females who are physically strong or who have strong personalities are viewed as being lesbian (Crawford, 2012). Stereotypes can also be based on physical appearance. Examples of these include: individuals with red hair are temperamental, blondes are dumb, and overweight people are lazy (Burkley & Blanton, 2009; Mullins, 2010). Examples of stereotypes that are based on social status include immigrants do not want to speak English, and people who are unemployed are lazy (Mullins, 2010).

The employees' experiences of stereotypes

According to Kelan (2008), the fear of knowing that stereotypes are correct may lead to a phenomenon known as stereotype threat (Kelan, 2008). According to Carducci (2009, p. 531), stereotype threat is "a situation where individuals in a group begin to accept the stereotyped beliefs others have about them, and the self-fulfilling impact such beliefs can have on their performance". Research on stereotype threat has shown that stereotypes not only affect how people are perceived and treated, but also directly affect those to whom it applies (Martens, Johns, Greenberg, & Schimel, 2005). To clarify, for the aim of this study, the researcher did not focus on stereotype threat, the researcher of this study only wanted to explore whether individuals are aware of stereotypes that exist about themselves, and when they are aware of these stereotypes, how do they experience being stereotyped. Therefore, the aim was not to determine the extent to which stereotype threat is experienced. When individuals are aware of stereotypes that others have about them, various cognitive, emotional and behavioural consequences can be activated (Inzlicht, Tullet, Legault, & Kang, 2011; Vick, Seery, Blascovich, & Weisbuch, 2008). Because individuals differ with regard to the meaning they attribute to stereotypes, it is possible that individuals also differ with regard to their reactions to these stereotypes.

Cognitive reactions towards stereotypes refer to an individual's thoughts and beliefs toward the stereotype or the person doing the stereotyping (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Behavioural reactions of stereotypes refer to one's behaviour or intended behaviour towards stereotypes or the person who holds these stereotypes (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Emotional reactions refer to feelings and emotions towards the stereotype or the person engaging in the stereotype (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Arnold *et al*. (2010) indicate that emotions and feelings are also reflected in an individual's physiological responses.

Cognitive experiences: According to Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather, and Roberson (2011), individuals can also choose to cognitively react to being negatively stereotyped by engaging in a process referred to as identity bifurcation. Identity bifurcation takes place when individuals detach themselves from their group that is negatively stereotyped (Block *et al*., 2011). Consequently, an individual detaches him-/herself from negatively stereotyped domains; however, still identifying with domains that are unproblematic and positively stereotyped (Pronin, Steele, & Ross, 2004; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Furthermore, when individuals are aware of negative stereotypes that exist about his/her group, the individual may experience an increase in arousal and a decline in cognitive resources. This may lead individuals to have pessimistic thoughts about their performance within a specific domain (Block *et al.,* 2011). Furthermore, negative stereotypes may result in an increase in mental workload and depletion in executive resources such as a decrease in working memory (Croizet *et al*., 2004; Inzlicht, McKay, & Aronson, 2006; Schmader & Johns, 2003).

Behavioural experiences: Roberson and Kulik (2007) state that when individuals are aware of negative stereotypes about their in-group it causes employees to work harder, but not better. According to Block *et al*. (2011), this is known as "fending off the stereotypes" (p. 575). Individuals perform at a very high level to show that the stereotype does not apply to them and that they cannot fail (Bell & Nkomo, 2003; Block *et al*., 2011). This may result in their productivity being higher; however, the psychic costs are also correspondingly high. According to Inzlicht and Kang (2010), when individuals are left to cope with stereotypes, it may result in executive resources becoming exhausted and individuals not being able to restrain their inner aggressions. This, in turn, may lead individuals to engage in aggressive behaviour even among groups that are not stereotyped as being aggressive (Inzlicht & Kang, 2010). When individuals endorse negative stereotypes, it can lead to negative outcomes for the individual by decreasing his/her personal strivings; however, it can also be costly to

society in general by negatively influencing stereotyped individuals' pursuit of social justice (Burkley & Blanton, 2009).

Emotional experiences: According to Roberson and Kulik (2007), societal stereotypes can have a negative effect on employee feelings and behaviour, which makes it hard for an employee to perform to his or her true potential. When individuals are aware of being stereotyped they may feel apprehensive and anxious, and they may even try to block out and deny their emotions in order for others not to have a negative perception of them (Johns, Inzlicht, & Schmader, 2008; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). The anxiety and stress caused when being stereotyped may result in various physiological outcomes such as poor recovery from health problems, increased blood pressure, skin conductance and general arousal (Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, & Steele, 2001; Burkley & Blanton, 2009; Murphy, Steele, & Gross, 2007; O'Brien & Crandall, 2003).

The experiences of stereotypes are not only negative, but can also be positive. Research also indicates that performance can be enhanced by positive stereotypes (Shih *et al.*, 2002). This phenomenon is called stereotype boost/lift and refers to "the enhanced performance resulting from a stereotype that is directly relevant to one's group" (Smith & Johnson, 2006, p. 51). According to Shih, Pittinsky, and Trahan (2006), positive stereotypes induce positive affect and result in enhanced performance by increasing self-confidence and reducing nervousness. However, it is also important to consider the negative effects of positive stereotypes. When an external audience holds positive stereotypes or expectations of an individual, the individual may become nervous about meeting those high expectations and this may cause the individual to "choke under pressure" (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000). Rosenthal and Crisp (2007) state that when individuals are aware of their group being positively stereotyped, it may actually result in them underperforming instead of enhancing their performance.

It can clearly be seen that stereotypes not only affect the organisation, but also the individual, and therefore seem like an important phenomenon to investigate. Considering that South Africa is a multicultural country, where organisations employ individuals from diverse backgrounds, it may be possible that the occurrence of stereotypes in South Africa is more prevalent than in other countries. Internationally, a great deal of research on the topic of stereotypes has been conducted; however, research on this subject in South Africa remains

scarce. With this in mind, it is therefore deemed necessary to investigate stereotypes within the unique South African setting. The ultimate goal of this study is therefore to investigate the different meanings that individuals attribute to stereotypes as a social construct. Furthermore, the researcher aims to investigate the occurrence of stereotypes as individuals experience them within their specific context.

Based on the above-mentioned description of the research problem, a project consisting of three phases is proposed and the following research questions can be formulated:

Phase 1: Investigating the meaning and origin of stereotypes

- How are stereotypes conceptualised according to literature?
- How are stereotypes understood by individuals employed in selected South African organisations?
- What are the origins of stereotypes according to individuals employed in selected South African organisations?
- What recommendations can be made with regard to future research and practice pertaining to the meaning and origin of stereotypes?

Phase 2: Investigating prevalent stereotypes among employees

- What out-group stereotypes do individuals employed in selected South African organisations hold of other individuals in the workplace?
- What in-group stereotypes do individuals employed in selected South African organisations experience about themselves in the workplace?
- Other than the previous stereotypes mentioned, what occupational stereotypes do individuals experience in selected South African organisations?
- What recommendations could be made for organisations regarding prevalent stereotypes?

The reason for research question 3 will be justified in the *Research method* sub-section pertaining to data collection method.

Phase 3: Investigating how employees experience being stereotyped

- What are the effects of stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in selected South African organisations?
- Are the stereotypes experienced by individuals employed in selected South African organisations cognitive, behavioural or emotional in nature?
- What recommendations can be made for future research and practice?

1.2 Expected contribution of the study

Limited research exists within South Africa regarding stereotypes, especially on an indigenous level. With this statement, the researcher meant that context (in this case South Africa) plays an important role in how certain phenomena (in this case stereotypes) are seen (therefore its meaning), how they are constructed (based on internal, external or organisational dimensions) and experienced if individuals know about in-group stereotyping (Creswell, 2010). The researcher is of the opinion that since the South African labour force consists of different employees from different backgrounds (Western vs. Non-Western elements), stereotypes may occur in the South African working environment. By following the social constructivism paradigm (and with it the emic perspective), this study was executed by employing the phenomenological approach, hermeneutics approach and the multiple case strategy. Therefore, this study will contribute towards making a unique discovery in terms of the prevalent stereotypes that are experienced within the broader South African work context. The information collected from the findings can contribute to the development of a new indigenous stereotype instrument measuring the prevalent stereotypes as found in this study. This study therefore forms the building blocks for a bigger research project.

This study will also explore how stereotypes are experienced by employees. An opportunity will therefore be provided for South African organisations to address the different types of stereotypes as experienced both positively and negatively by their workers. The present study will not only explore the stereotypes individuals experience themselves, but also the stereotypes individuals hold of others. Industrial psychologists can assist the organisation in this regard by educating and training the employees to become aware of their own stereotypical tendencies. Furthermore, by teaching employees to make a conscious effort not

to stereotype others, employees will be provided with an opportunity to understand and value the differences among individuals within the organisation. When management is aware of stereotypes that are experienced within organisations, they can assist individuals in effectively dealing with these stereotypes by implementing interventions specifically focused on teaching individuals to change their perceptions regarding stereotypic situations. By addressing stereotypes and the effects thereof, the organisation can benefit from an organisational culture that fosters good working relationships among employees and other relevant parties.

1.3 Research objectives

The research objectives are divided into a general objective and specific objectives.

1.3.1   General objective

The general objective of this research is to explore the prevalent stereotypes and the experience thereof among individuals employed within selected South African organisations. Furthermore, this study also aims to discover whether more internal dimensions are experienced by employees in selected South African organisations, as found in literature or are the stereotypes based more on external and/or organisational dimensions.

1.3.2   Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research are set according to three phases (as with the research questions posed):

Phase 1: Investigating the meaning and origin of stereotypes

- To conceptualise stereotypes according to literature.
- To determine the understanding of stereotypes by individuals employed in selected South African organisations.
- To determine the origins of stereotypes according to individuals employed in selected South African organisations.

- To make recommendations with regard to future research and practice.

Phase 2: Investigating prevalent stereotypes among individuals

- To determine the prevalent out-group stereotypes that individuals employed in selected South African organisations hold of other individuals in their workplace.
- To determine the prevalent in-group stereotypes that individuals employed in selected South African organisations experience about themselves in the workplace.
- To determine (other than the prevalent stereotypes) what in-group occupational stereotypes employees experience in their workplace.
- To make recommendations to the organisation regarding prevalent stereotypes.

The third objective was set and rationalised in the *Research method* section (under data collection method).

Phase 3: Investigating how employees experience being stereotyped

- To determine the effects of stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in selected South African organisations.
- To determine if the stereotypes experienced by individuals employed in selected South African organisations are cognitive, behavioural or emotional in nature.
- To make recommendations for future research and practice.

1.4 Research design

The research design consists of the research approach, research strategy and research method.

1.4.1 Research approach

This research study was qualitative in nature. By making use of qualitative research, the researcher attempted to study the phenomenon of stereotypes by collecting rich data in order to understand what is being studied or observed (Niewenhuis, 2010). Qualitative researchers,

specifically within the social constructivism paradigm, believe individuals within the social world differ with regard to their assumptions, beliefs, intentions, values and attitudes, and therefore individuals also differ with regard to their construction of reality (Niewenhuis, 2010). Therefore, depending on the individual's belief of what social reality is (ontology), and how social phenomena can be known (epistemology), the same phenomenon can be interpreted very differently by different individuals (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). Therefore, the researcher aimed to understand how employees in the diverse South Africa work environment idealise stereotypes (ontology), and how it became known to the employee (epistemology). The researcher, therefore, adopted an inductive and emic perspective (Nel *et al*., 2012). She wanted to explore stereotypes and their construction and determine how it is experienced (Niewenhuis, 2010). The researcher can also discover whether the stereotypes that are experienced are based on internal, external or organisational dimensions or a combination of these factors.

In order to understand the aforementioned elements, as discussed in the previous paragraph, a combination between the phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was chosen to reach the objectives of this research. Phenomenological research aims to study and understand a phenomenon as it is described by the participants experiencing it (Creswell, 2009). This research study is therefore interested in understanding the phenomenon of stereotypes as it is experienced by individuals working within the South African work context. By applying the hermeneutic approach, the researcher of this study aimed to understand the deeper meaning of stereotypes (Niewenhuis, 2010). According to the hermeneutic approach, deeper meaning can only be understood by employing deep reflection by the researcher during and after an interactive process of dialogue with the participant (Ponterotto, 2005; Shwantdt, 2000; Sciarra, 1999). This approach is more useful in order to understand whether the out-group and in-group stereotypes that are experienced are more based on internal, external or organisational dimensions. Furthermore, with hermeneutics, the researcher wanted to determine whether stereotypes are more positive or negative in nature (concerning out-group vs. in-group stereotyping) and how they are experienced. Furthermore, the researcher was also interested to identify the characteristics that were assigned to out-group and in-group members.

1.4.2 Research strategy

In order to come up with the best strategy to employ in this study, the researcher had to answer the following questions 'Where should I look for relevant data (what population group)?' and 'What data should be collected?'. Before the researcher of this study answered these questions, she already decided to use the social constructivism paradigm with an emic perspective as theoretical framework to research stereotypes and to use exploratory approaches (phenomenological and hermeneutics) to assess this aspect. From these decisions already made and answering the 'What data should be collected?' question, the researcher had to decide where to get her information from. At this stage, literature already indicated that race, gender, age and occupational stereotypes do exist (Arnold *et al*., 2010; Shani & Lau, 2008; Weiten, 2008). Since the researcher wanted to explore stereotypes within the work context, she first had to decide how she will go about collecting relevant data. The current work context of South Africa is still misrepresented in terms of race (see Census 2011; Statistics South Africa, 2011). Pre-dominantly, the overall current work context of South Africa consists mostly of White, then Black, followed by Coloured (referred to in some literature as mixed-race) and Indian employees. Apart from this, the world of work consists of diverse occupations (fields of work). With these challenges in mind (as well as the general objective of this study), the researcher of this study decided to implement a multiple case study strategy to collect relevant data (and to generate rich qualitative information).

In order to understand this concept, the premise of the case study strategy is first explained. A case study strategy is usually used to study an event or series of related events in a systematic manner in order to better understand the phenomenon (in this case stereotypes) (Bromley, 1991). By making use of this strategy, the researcher investigated the perspective of multiple participants from multiple organisations in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of stereotypes (Niewenhuis, 2010). Therefore, the researcher was interested in the views of multiple case studies in order to answer "how" and "why" questions (Niewenhuis, 2010), specifically with regard to the experience of stereotypes (how) and their origin (why). However, targeting single cases (or single organisations) may make inquiry more in-depth and improve richness of information derived. Additionally, focusing on a single case (or employees in a single organisation or department) to collect information may stop until data saturation is reached (this happens when no new information can be derived

from cases). However, keeping in mind the general objective of this study (to explore the most prevalent stereotypes within the work context of South Africa, to discover its meaning, origin and how it is experienced) the researcher decided to include multiple cases (Yin, 1994). This ensured that the researcher gained a holistic understanding of what stereotypes entail within the work context of South Africa (Niewenhuis, 2010). According to Yin (1994), multiple case study data have proven to be rated higher in terms of overall quality than those that relied on a single case of information. This strategy also seemed more relevant since the researcher can assess the overall meaning of stereotypes, and its experiences from the perspective of employees within the current work context of South Africa. Furthermore, the researcher of this study was also interested to determine the frequency of certain constructs (out-group and in-group stereotypes) that are experienced; therefore, the replication logic from the premise of multiple cases was utilised during analysis (Yin, 1994).

According to Baxter and Jack (2008), when employing multiple-case studies as strategy, the researcher should carefully choose which cases to include. With this in mind, inclusion criteria were developed in order to approach relevant participants (refer to the explanation of sampling strategies as discussed under sub-heading 1.4.3.4 Sampling). One of the criteria was that participants need to be employed full time in order to answer the questions of 'how' and 'why' pertaining to stereotypes in the workplace. Additionally, the participants should as far as possible be diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation. With this in mind, various sectors were identified (for accessibility purposes), and within these sectors, organisations were selected in order to participate. Organisations employed 50 or more full-time employees.

1.4.3 Research method

The research method consists of the literature review, research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

1.4.3.1 Literature review

A complete review regarding stereotypes, the meaning and origin of stereotype, race stereotypes, gender stereotypes, age stereotypes, occupational stereotypes, and the experiences of stereotypes was conducted. The sources that were consulted included: EBSCOhost, Emerald, Sabinet Online, SA ePublications, A-Z Magazine List, and Google Scholar. Journals, books, and the North-West University library. Specifically journals within the field of social sciences, psychology and industrial psychology were targeted. Organisational behaviour textbooks are also targeted, since stereotypes are a topic often made reference to in these textbooks.

1.4.3.2 Research setting

Numerous employment sectors were targeted for the purpose of this research study (as mentioned in the previous section). Employment sectors included in this study were the following: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. This research focused on various employees from these different employment sectors. Within these industries, organisations were selected and approached to utilise their employees to participate in this study. Organisations that were selected employed over 50 full-time employees. Employees, as far as possible were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation.

1.4.3.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher had numerous roles during the course of this research project. During the conceptualisation phases of this specific project, the role of the researcher was that of a planner. The researcher strategically planned the various steps of the research process by taking into consideration various important aspects. The researcher carefully considered various sampling techniques, how participants should be approached to ensure participation, and how data analysis should be handled. During the data collection phase, both the researcher and trained fieldworkers fulfilled various roles such as interviewers, active listeners, and transcribers (Creswell, 2009). During this phase, both the researcher and fieldworkers interviewed respective participants, while actively listening to their experiences regarding stereotypes, after which the interviews were transcribed verbatim. Afterwards, the

researcher, together with numerous independent co-coders employed in the field of industrial psychology or human resource management, fulfilled the roles of data analysts. The researcher and independent co-coders rigorously analysed the data to ensure that an overall picture of collected data can be captured. In order to present the results of this study in an ordered and structured manner, the researcher acted out the roles of data interpreter and integrator. The researcher interpreted the data in such a way that participants' views were clearly and accurately represented, and thereafter the findings of this study were integrated with relevant literature to support or contradict the results of this study. During the course of this research study, and taking into consideration the various roles that the researcher and fieldworkers were required to play, the researcher and fieldworkers became well aware of their own values, bias and assumptions and made sure not to influence the research process (Creswell, 2009).

1.4.3.4 Sampling

The sampling technique that was used during this research study was a combination of both purposive and convenience sampling. The initial idea of the researcher was to employ the quota sampling procedure to include a diverse South African labour force (according to race, gender, age and occupation). However, the representation of the workforce in South Africa was found to be more inflexible as was found in Census 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Therefore, the researcher decided to employ the purposive sampling procedure in order to explore stereotypes within the current work context of South Africa. By making use of purposive sampling, the employees were chosen or selected to participate in this study for a particular purpose (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The researcher of this study aimed to investigate the experiences of stereotypes as experienced by working individuals within various sectors (and selected organisations within these sectors). Therefore to reach the objective of this study, the researcher chose individuals who are employed within selected South African organisations to provide the researcher with insight into their experiences of stereotypes. The organisations were specifically chosen if they adhered to the following inclusion criteria: 1) the organisation employed more than 50 full-time employees; 2) the organisation functions in one of the following sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry; and 3) as far as possible, the employees within these organisations were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupations. Furthermore, the researcher also had to employ the convenience

sampling procedure in order to approach the employees themselves. According to Struwig and Stead (2001), convenience sampling entails that the researcher chooses the participants based on their availability to participate. By making use of convenience sampling, the researcher included participants (in selected organisations) who are motivated, willing and available to share their experiences of stereotypes. By making use of purposive and convenience sampling, the researcher ran the risk of only including individuals who the researcher believes typically experience stereotypes (Botma, Greeff, Maluadzi, & Wright, 2010); however, by employing the inclusion criteria, the researcher ensured that a diverse population was included in this study. Therefore, by including these criteria, the researcher believed it was possible to truly capture the essence of stereotypes as experienced by various South African employees and to adequately employ the chosen paradigm, approaches and strategy in this research.

From the sampling procedures, and inclusion criteria set, the participants that formed part of this study were full-time employees from selected South African organisations ($N = 336$). It should be noted that the same population group was included in all three phases of the project.

1.4.3.5 Research procedure

It was important for the researcher to receive consent from the selected organisations in which the targeted participants of this study are employed. After consent was awarded, participants were contacted and invited to participate in a face-to-face interview regarding their experiences of stereotypes. Numerous fieldworkers (post-graduate students) assisted the researcher with the interviews. However, before interviews were conducted, it was important that the researcher and fieldworkers were adequately trained and prepared. It was also vital that consistent practises were utilised in the collection of data. The researcher and the fieldworkers therefore attended a qualitative workshop in order to equip them with the necessary interviewing skills and techniques, ensuring that data collection was of a high quality and reliable. During the workshop, the presenter prepared a range of scenarios and role plays that the researcher and the fieldworkers participated in. The actual interview questions were used for the scenarios and role plays, which provided both the researcher and fieldworkers with an opportunity to practise. The presenter observed the researcher and fieldworkers and provided feedback and made suggestions where necessary in order to

enhance the quality of interviews. Before the interviews took place, an interview schedule was created in order to assist the researcher and fieldworkers with the collection of data. During the workshop, the interview schedule was adjusted and refined to ensure that the data collection is optimal.

Dates and times that best suited the participants were arranged in order to conduct the interviews. Interviews were conducted in different venues, which ranged from offices, conference rooms and classroom settings, and it was also ensured that these venues were free from any disturbances. Before the interview commenced, the participants were informed about the context and aim of the research study. The participants gave permission to the researcher and fieldworkers to tape record the interviews. The researcher and fieldworkers indicated to the participants that their identity and personal information will remain anonymous and confidential. Participants were aware of the fact that they can withdraw from the study at any given time. Therefore, before commencing with the actual interview, the researcher and fieldworkers ensured that the participants were familiar and comfortable with the research procedure.

1.4.3.6 Data collection methods

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants in order to investigate and understand how participants of this study experience stereotypes. Numerous fieldworkers (post-graduate students) assisted the researcher in conducting the interviews. According to Holstein and Gubrium (2003), interviewing is a form of conversation, and by asking participants to talk about their lives, the researcher is thereby provided with empirical data about the social world in which the participants live. By making use of interviews, the researcher can gain an understanding of how participants experience stereotypes within their social world and how they construct their reality, and therefore also the reason for making use of the social constructivism paradigm. The researcher chose to make use of semi-structured interviews, because she has various questions or categories that needed to be explored (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005). Furthermore, according to these authors, semi-structured interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to further clarify and explore vague responses given by participants, making semi-structured interviews an effective method of data collection. Therefore, the hermeneutic approach was also utilised to probe more and understand the deeper meaning of the participant's responses. Semi-

structured interviews are also a suitable method of data collection, especially when the topic under discussion is a personal or controversial one (Greeff, 2011), which is also the case with stereotype research (Edwards, 2003).

There are various benefits of using face-to-face interviews as a data collection technique. According to Leedy and Ormond (2001), face-to-face interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to build a relationship with the participants, thereby receiving the cooperation of the participants and ensuring a high response rate. By establishing such as a relationship with the participants, the participants may be even more willing to share information with the researcher, and thereby increase the data collection (Maree, 2010). What is also important to note is that from the researcher's viewpoint this study is to explore what stereotypes exist in the workplace, where they originate from, and how they are experienced by employees if they are stereotyped. No pre-conceived constructs (i.e. race, gender, and age) were included in the interview questions, since within the social constructivism paradigm, the researcher needs to discover what stereotypes are experienced from the participants' viewpoint (therefore, their reality) and how they experience stereotypes (phenomenological approach). If they mentioned their reality in specific terms (such as race, gender or age), then this concept was further explored by employing the hermeneutic approach to uncover the deeper meaning participants attach to this specific concept. Furthermore, the researcher and fieldworkers during data collection wanted to keep from guiding participants too much in order to establish how they experience stereotypes in their social world (organisation). It can be internal (i.e. race, gender, age), external (i.e. occupation, location, marital status), or organisational (i.e. job level, job specification, department) (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). However, during the pilot study with nine participants to assess the adequacy of the interview questions, it was found that participants were inclined to report more out-group occupational stereotypes, but very few participants reported in-group occupational stereotypes. Therefore, after discussions with independent researchers, it was decided to include a question pertaining to in-group occupational stereotyping that employees may experience. The rationale for this decision was to facilitate thought to answer the question pertaining to how stereotypes are experienced by the participant. The pilot study was found to be extremely valuable, since it was used as a "dress rehearsal" for the main research investigation, and aimed to determine the achievability of the research study (Fouché & Delport, 2011; Welman *et al.*, 2005). The pilot study also assisted the researcher in ensuring that participants understand and interpret the interview questions clearly and correctly.

Therefore, in order to reach the objectives of this study, the following questions were asked to participants during data collection.

Phase 1:

- *"In your own words, please explain what you understand about the word 'stereotype'" ("What does the word stereotype mean to you?")*
- *"What are the origins of stereotypes?"*

The aim of phase 1 was to determine whether stereotypes hold the same meaning for different individuals and to investigate how stereotypes originated within individuals, and therefore the reason for asking the above-mentioned two questions. If participants did not understand the first interview question, the researcher rephrased the question and asked: *"What does the word stereotype mean to you?"*

Phase 2:

- *"What stereotypes do you think exist in your workplace?"*
- *"What stereotypes do you hold of other people in your workplace?"*
- *"Do you think there are any stereotypes about yourself within your workplace?"?*
- *"Do you experience any stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?"*

The aim of phase 2 was to determine the prevalent out-group and in-group stereotypes as experienced by participants, therefore the reason for asking above mentioned questions during interviews. The first question was asked to individuals in order to determine whether stereotypes do actually exist within the participants working environment, however, the researcher did not report on the findings of this question. This specific question was posed in order to facilitate the thought process of the participant regarding stereotypes and its existence in the workplace. To clarify, when specifically referring to the third interview question, the researcher did not ask of participants to indicate what stereotypes they hold about their own group (example race, gender or age), the researcher only asked of participants to indicate the stereotypes that they are aware of that exist about themselves (in-group stereotypes). Regarding the fourth question (*"Do you experience any stereotypes about*

the specific occupation you are in?"), this question was asked in order to facilitate thought pertaining to the participants' current occupation in order to answer the last interview question (from phase 3). This question was especially asked since it was found during the pilot study that many out-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned, but very few in-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned when the participants were asked the following question: *"Do you think there are any stereotypes about yourself within your workplace?".*

Phase 3:

- *"How do you experience being stereotyped?"*

The aim of phase 3 was to investigate the cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences of participants with regard to in-group stereotypes. Although participants were not pertinently asked to provide accounts of their cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences, the researcher was interested to assess whether participants experience stereotypes in this manner.

1.4.3.7 Data recording

In order to assist the researcher and fieldworkers to capture the exact spoken words of the participants, tape recorders were used. In order to analyse the interviews at a later stage, the researcher or fieldworkers transcribed the interviews verbatim. The researcher also checked the content and quality of the interviews that were transcribed by the fieldworkers. By doing this, the researcher was already able to gain an overall feel for the data that has been collected. The researcher ensured that all transcribed interviews were safely and securely stored.

1.4.3.8 Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

Confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability are criteria that are considered as important when specifically focusing on the trustworthiness of the findings, and therefore the researcher adhered to these.

Confirmability: Confirmability also refers to objectivity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher and fieldworkers stayed neutral and objective throughout the entirety of the study by not allowing their personal values and theoretical inclinations to influence the research process (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Botma *et al.,* 2010). It was important for the researcher and fieldworkers to remain objective in order to ensure that the findings of this study were indeed a true reflection of the participants' actual experiences of stereotypes and not an account of what the researcher or fieldworkers believe it to be or what theory indicates it to be. The researcher and fieldworkers therefore remained objective during the research process by asking participants about their unique experiences regarding stereotypes and not influencing the participants to provide information that substantiates or contradicts already existing literature.

Credibility: Credibility also refers to the internal validity of a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and ensures that the event or context under investigation is accurately described by the researcher (Maree, 2010). The researcher ensures credibility by carrying out the research according to good practice and also ensures that the conclusions that are drawn from this study are of truth value (Bryman & Bell; 2011; Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). By ensuring credibility, the researcher truthfully reported the results of this study as experienced by participants. Together with numerous independent co-coders, the researcher ensured that reported findings were indeed a true reflection of participant's experiences.

Dependability: Dependability also refers to reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2011). When the reader of a research study is persuaded that a research study indeed occurred as the researcher reported it to occur, this can be referred to as dependability (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The researcher assured that the research process was logical and well documented by richly and densely describing the research methodology (Botma *et al*., 2010; Schurink, Fouché, & De Vos, 2011). By rigorously describing the research process, the researcher ensured that future readers of this study can gain a detailed description of exactly how the research process was undertaken. Furthermore, by describing the research methodology in such detail, the reader can gain an understanding of the reasons for choosing specific research methods and procedures.

Transferability: Transferability can also refer to the external validity of a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2011) and gives an indication of the degree to which the context and data of

a current research study can be generalised to different settings and populations (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). In order for the research to be applied and transferred to other groups, settings and contexts, the researcher clearly and in detail described the setting and context of the data (Botma *et al.*, 2010). By interviewing numerous participants employed in various organisations (therefore employing the multiple case strategy), the researcher attempted to gain an overall picture of the experiences of stereotypes as experienced by South African employees, thereby making it possible for the results of this study to be applied to different contexts and settings.

1.4.3.9 Ethical considerations

Attention was given to the following ethical issues (Struwig & Stead, 2001):

- The researcher and fieldworkers at all times treated the participants with respect by being honest, fair and not misleading or deceiving the participants.
- The researcher and fieldworkers respected the rights and dignity of the participants. They did not discriminate against participants based on factors such as gender or race.
- The researcher and fieldworkers also respected the confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity of the research participants and organisations.
- They did not physically or psychologically harm the participants in any manner when interacting with them during the research process.
- The researcher and fieldworkers clearly and truthfully explained the purpose and context of the study to the organisations and participants, after which the organisations and participants provided consent to continue with the interviews (Welman *et al*., 2005).
- Organisations and participants were not coerced to participate in the study and the researcher and fieldworkers informed the participants that participation is voluntary in nature (Rubin & Babbie, 2005).

1.4.3.10 Data analysis

The researcher made use of thematic analysis to analyse and interpret the data. By making use of thematic analysis, the researcher of this study was enabled to analyse qualitative data

by identifying patterns (themes) within the data, especially since multiple cases participated (Wagner, Kawulich, & Gardner, 2012). Furthermore, thematic analysis makes it possible to explain the dataset at hand (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher of this study was therefore able to describe how different participants experience the phenomenon of stereotyping (Wagner *et al*., 2012). When specifically looking at the content of stereotypes, it is clear that stereotypes involve assigning characteristics to different groups of individuals; therefore, the researcher of this study wanted to identify what groups are stereotyped and what the characteristics are that are assigned to these groups. Therefore, by making use of thematic analysis, the researcher was of the opinion that this can be achieved. However, as reviewed in the discussion of the data collection method, specific questions were posed to all participants, which facilitated the coding process of the analysis. Each question asked represents a code (category) for analysis. Each code (category) had its own set of responses from all 336 participants. The researcher of this study read through all categories' respective responses in order to get a feel for the data and to identify preliminary themes. After this process, the researcher developed sub-themes and/or characteristics (depending on the richness of the collected data). This process is explained in more depth by discussing the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

During this step, the researcher and fieldworkers transcribed the interviews verbatim. Unfortunately, due to the large amount of interviews that were conducted, the researcher was unable to transcribe all interviews herself; however, to ensure that the tape recorded interviews of all fieldworkers were indeed transcribed accurately, the researcher randomly selected one original audio recording with accompanying transcription from each fieldworker to check for comparison and accuracy. Before the initial analysis, the researcher first attempted to become familiar with the data and its content. Two industries (the mining environment and higher education environment; two different selected organisations within these industries) were chosen and the data inspected from these datasets. The researcher inspected the data independently and made an effort to get a feel for the data. After this process, the researcher conducted collective discussions with the fieldworkers, the promoter of this study and independent researchers from the field of industrial psychology and human resource management in order to voice her ideas and initial analysis of the data (especially concerning collective patterns identified in the datasets as the researcher read through it).

After these discussions, all the transcribed interviews from the researcher and fieldworkers were added together to form a dataset consisting of all 336 transcribed interviews, while still keeping taps on the biographical information of the participants. Once again, the researcher read through the entire dataset in order to become familiar with the data and in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the data. This was a very important step in the analysis process, because the researcher did not collect all of the data herself, and needed to immerse herself in the analysis in order to retain the realities and experiences of participants. Follow-up discussions were held with the fieldworkers, the promoter and independent researchers.

Step 2:   Generating initial codes

After familiarising herself with the dataset, the researcher developed initial codes (categories) from the data. According to Botma *et al.* (2010, p. 224), coding is the "process of organising the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to the information". These codes are the most basic elements of the raw data to which meaning regarding the phenomenon of stereotypes can be contributed to (Boyatzis, 1998). The coding process that the researcher utilised was driven by the questions posed in each phase. These questions' responses were transcribed in different documents (excel sheets) and labelled as categories in subsequent empirical articles. Examples of categories (codes) in this stage were meaning of stereotypes, origin of stereotypes, out-group stereotyping, in-group stereotyping, in-group occupational stereotypes and experiences of stereotypes. During the coding process, the researcher ensured that coding was done in a systematic manner, by paying equal attention to all raw data and by keeping track of each and every category attached to the raw data.

Step 3:   Searching for themes

The researcher was now able to produce initial themes based on the list of categories that were developed in step 2. On a separate document, the researcher organised her thoughts by making a visual presentation of the categories and their respective preliminary themes. This document aided the researcher to keep track of generated themes. Depending on the detail of the raw data (which may differ across the three phases), themes were organised further into initial sub-themes (where necessary characteristics describing the sub-themes further were also utilised). In some instances, the researcher also created a separate theme, which included sub-themes and/or characteristics that do not seem to fit within the overarching category.

Instead of disregarding this irrelevant theme and accompanying sub-themes and/or characteristics, the researcher first completed the next step of data analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

The themes that were developed in the previous phase were refined and reviewed after discussions with the promoter of this study and independent researchers. Here, the researcher decided to merge, separate, or disregard themes, depending on the nature of the data. The researcher further ensured that themes were meaningful representations of the categories that were identified in step 2. During this step, the researcher made use of two different levels of reviewing the data. At the first level, the researcher carefully read through each theme ensuring that initial developed sub-themes and/or characteristics fit within the specific theme. When sub-themes and/or characteristics did not fit within themes, the researcher either moved sub-themes and/or characteristics to another theme where it was deemed more appropriate, or disregarded the themes, sub-themes and/or characteristics. Most themes, sub-themes and/or characteristics were disregarded if they were not relevant to the category. When the researcher was satisfied that the themes were meaningful representations of the categories, the researcher proceeded to the next level. During this level, the researcher once again read through the entire dataset, firstly to ensure that themes were indeed a representation of the entire dataset and its relevant category, and secondly to ensure that all data have been coded and correctly coded according to their respective themes, sub-themes and/or characteristics.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Once the researcher was satisfied with the thematic outline of the data, she proceeded to this step. Here, the researcher further refined the themes by identifying what lies at the 'heart' of each theme, thereby indicating the important aspects that are conveyed by each theme. In this case, the focus was on the sub-themes (and/or characteristics) and their responses pertaining to the theme. In this regard, a detailed analysis was written for each individual theme. The researcher determined how individual themes were related to one another, thereby also ensuring that an overlap between themes was minimised, especially concerning the content. During this step, the sub-themes and/or characteristics relevant to each theme were refined further. By the end of this step, the researcher was able to describe the content and scope of

each theme by only making use of a few sentences (as can be seen in the findings of each empirical article after each table). The researcher further decided on the labels of the themes, thereby ensuring that the name of each individual theme was indeed a true reflection of the content and scope of the theme.

Step 6: Producing the report

The importance of this step lies in the explanation of one's data to the reader. The reader should be convinced that the 'story' the researcher is telling in this thesis is preceded by data analysis that has validity and merit. In this regard, the researcher ensured that the write-up of themes is logical, consistent, to the point and non-repetitive. As discussed before, three phases were employed in this study. These three phases generated four empirical articles. Article 1 concerns phase 1 of this project, specifically the meaning and origin of stereotypes. Article 2 concerns phase 2 and include the out-group and in-group stereotypes as mentioned by participants (interview questions 2 and 3 of phase 2). Article 3 includes the data collected for in-group occupational stereotypes that participants experienced and formed part of phase 2 (based on the last interview question). Article 4 is concerned with how participants experienced being in-group stereotyped (this interview question was asked following the third and fourth interview questions pertaining to phase 2).

As can be seen in the four empirical articles under the heading *Findings*, the researcher made use of examples of direct responses from participants to provide evidence of the themes reported. The researcher ensured that the write-up of the themes was in line with the research questions posed by this research study (which in this case are known as categories in the empirical articles).

As was evident in the discussion of the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), the researcher increased the reliability of the results by analysing the data together with numerous co-coders and having discussions. The co-coders in this regard were fieldworkers collecting data from different selected organisations, the promoter of this study and independent researchers who are respectively employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field.

1.4.3.11 Reporting style

In order to present the findings of this research in a systematic manner, the researcher made use of tables to indicate the themes and sub-themes emerging from the data. Furthermore, to substantiate the findings of this study, the researcher made use of direct quotes of participants, which also provides the reader of this manuscript with an overall idea of the type of responses received from participants for a specific theme. Furthermore, following some sub-themes (depending on the richness of the raw data), characteristics were developed in some instances. This doctoral thesis should be viewed as the researcher telling a 'whole story' of the experiences of participants forming part of this study (Myers & Avison, 1997). Therefore, the researcher of this study tried to tell the 'whole story' of participants within each article. The reader should therefore note that by doing this, many aspects of the research design is repeated in all four research articles. For publication purposes the 'whole story' will be divided into smaller parts (Myers & Avison, 1997).

1.5 Overview of chapters

In Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5, the findings of this research study are discussed in the form of four research articles. Chapter 6 provides an overview of the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this research study. Following is an outline of the above-mentioned chapters:

Chapter 2 (Research article 1): Exploring the meaning and origin of stereotypes among South African employees.
Chapter 3 (Research article 2): Exploring prevalent stereotypes as experienced by employees within selected South African organisations.
Chapter 4 (Research article 3): Exploring occupational stereotypes as experienced by South African employees.
Chapter 5 (Research article 4): Exploring the experiences of stereotypes within selected South African organisations.
Chapter 6: Limitations and recommendations.

1.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the problem statement and the research objectives were discussed. Furthermore, the research method was explained, followed by a brief overview of the chapters that follow.

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE 1

EXPLORING THE MEANING AND ORIGIN OF STEREOTYPES AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

Orientation: Stereotypes are defined in various ways and also originate from various sources.

Research purpose: The objective of this study is to investigate how the employees from selected South African organisations understand and define the concept stereotype and what the origins of stereotypes are.

Motivation for the study: Individuals hold different perceptions for the same concept. Therefore, different individuals within selected South African organisations may interpret the meaning and origin of stereotypes very differently. The researcher therefore aimed to discover whether individuals have a shared understanding of the concept stereotypes and whether individuals are aware of where stereotypes originate from.

Research approach, design and method: A qualitative research design from a combined phenomenological and hermeneutical approach was utilised. A combination of both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this study. The sample consisted of individuals working in selected South African organisations ($N = 336$). These organisations formed part of the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. Semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect data and data analysis was done by making use of thematic analysis.

Main findings: The results of this study indicated that people employed in selected South African organisations are familiar with stereotypes, and have a clear understanding thereof. Participants of this study have a conscious awareness of the origin of stereotypes. Although not all of the participants have had direct experiences with stereotyped groups, they are well aware that stereotypes are also caused by indirect sources. The conclusion can be drawn that, although individuals are aware of stereotypes and the nature thereof, they still continue to stereotype others, irrespective of whether these stereotypes are correct or not.

Practical implications/managerial implications: When individuals are aware of where their stereotypes originate from, they should actively attempt not to make use of their stereotypes when coming into contact with stereotyped groups. Organisations should educate their employees on the process of stereotypes and exactly what this means and where they originate from.

Contribution/value-add: Internationally, the meaning and origin of stereotypes has been researched; however, with this study the emic perspective pertaining to the meaning and origin is explored within the South African context. By doing this study, individuals may become aware of the fact that their perceptions and opinions of others may be based on inaccurate information. This study may elicit a motivation among individuals to truly getting to know someone first before relying on their possibly inaccurate stereotypes.

Keywords: Stereotypes; social constructivism; emic perspective; meaning; origin; selected South African organisations

Introduction

The phenomenon of stereotypes has been studied since the early 1900s (see Allport, 1954) and, even today, this phenomenon exists within many organisations across the globe (Luthans, 2010). A wide variety of individuals is commonly stereotyped and may be, among others, managers, supervisors, and individuals from varying demographic groups, such as race, gender and age (Luthans, 2010). It seems that all individuals, both nationally and internationally, fall prey to being stereotyped. However, before one can start to explore whether stereotypes truly exist within different organisations, it is necessary to do some groundwork by first examining whether individuals are indeed familiar with the concept of stereotypes and the origin of these stereotypes. These individuals that the researcher are referring to can be confronted with the same stimuli, but the way in which this stimulus is perceived and interpreted as something meaningful can differ from one individual to another (Mullins, 2010). These perceptions are viewed by individuals as their reality; therefore, many realities exist among individuals, which may make room for misinterpretations (Mullins, 2010). It can therefore be argued that the meaning and origin of stereotypes may be interpreted very differently by different individuals. Therefore, by making use of the principles and assumptions of the social constructivism paradigm, the researcher is enabled to explore the different realities of individuals with regard to the understanding and origin of stereotypes.

Much confusion exists regarding the phenomenon of stereotypes. During the past three decades, stereotypes have been misunderstood in their scientific area (Jussim, 2012). There exists no specific definition of stereotypes that is commonly accepted; researchers in the

realm of stereotypes have, however, agreed that stereotypes do consist of conventional aspects such as attributing characteristics to different social groups (Lee, Jussim, & McCauley, 2013). Furthermore, there are not only one, but many sources that can contribute to the formation of stereotypes. For example, the social environment in which one interacts can contribute to the formation of stereotypes, and can include sources such as parents, family members, media, peer groups and schools (Bar-Tal, 1996). It seems that there are various ontological and epistemological stances behind stereotyping, from there the importance of this study. Because stereotype research within South Africa is limited and mostly focused on content-specific research (see for example Adhikari, 2006; Holtzhausen, Jordaan, & North, 2011; Wessels & Steenkamp, 2009), it is unclear to the researcher whether South Africans are truly familiar with the meaning and origin of stereotypes. Furthermore, because individuals attribute different meanings to the same concepts, as can clearly be seen when following the social constructivism paradigm, it would be interesting to research the perceptions that South African employees forming part of this study have regarding the meaning and origin of stereotypes from an indigenous (emic) perspective.

Research purpose and objectives

Internationally, the meaning and origin of stereotypes has been researched; however, with this study the emic perspective pertaining to the meaning and origin of stereotypes is explored within the South African context. The objective of this study is therefore to determine how the South African population understands and defines the concept stereotype and how, according to them, the process of stereotyping starts. Following are a literature study, empirical study, discussion, and limitations and recommendations.

Literature review

Stereotypes from the social constructivism paradigm

The paradigm that the researcher in this research study utilises is based on the perspective of the social constructivism paradigm and executed by employing various approaches and strategies. According to this paradigm, the social world is dynamic and complex (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi, & Wright, 2010). This may seem a true verification for the context of

South Africa, since the world of work includes diverse employees who vary pertaining to culture, language, race, gender, age, socio-economic status and education (Nel *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, within this paradigm, it seems that individuals construct their own reality of the social world (Botma *et al.*, 2010). There are many truths about the social world in which individuals live; however, no single universal truth on which individuals can rely exists (Whitley & Kite, 2006). In order to understand and navigate their social world, individuals rely on their own experiences pertaining to stereotypes and their perspectives (or understanding) of stereotypes (Whitley & Kite, 2006). The realities that individuals attach to their social world are subjective and it means that individuals' experience of reality may differ (Botma *et al.,* 2010). The meanings that individuals attach to their realities may also be influenced by their interaction with other individuals, as well as influenced by the cultural and historical contexts within which they live (Creswell, 2009). In other words, individuals may differ with regard to their interpretation of the phenomenon stereotypes – what may be regarded by one person to be a stereotype, may be interpreted very differently by the next individual. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore from an emic perspective how stereotypes are understood by individuals within their work context, and how do stereotypes develop.

Conceptualisation of stereotypes

What are stereotypes? The term was first used by Lippmann (1922) to refer to the typical image that comes to mind when thinking about a specific social group (as cited in Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick, & Esses, 2010). Allport (1954, p.191) defined stereotypes as: "an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalise) our conduct in relation to that category". This definition is often quoted in a great deal of stereotype research, especially since Gordon Allport was a well-known psychologist in his time and author of *The Nature of Prejudice* (Dovidio *et al*., 2010). Furthermore, it was found that various social psychologists (see Dividio *et al*., 2010) in the last five decades utilised Allport's writings as a solid foundation for their own work. This definition provides an indication of many of the conventional aspects of stereotypes (Pickering, 2001). When explaining the definition of stereotypes as mentioned by Allport, it can be seen that stereotypes inflate and homogenise traits that are seen to be characteristics of specific categories; in other words, these traits are generalised and/or classified to all individuals forming part of this specific category (Pickering, 2001).

Apart from placing people in groups (or categories) as mentioned above, how are they classified? In order to understand the basics and fundamentals of stereotypes, it is necessary to have a deeper knowledge regarding the classification process (Whitley & Kite, 2006), and therefore this process is explained in great detail. When stereotyping, individuals classify not only others, but also themselves and, by doing this, individuals create an *us* (in-group) and a *them* (out-group) (Bergh, 2011; Plous, 2003). There are various complex processes that are initialised when individuals classify themselves and others as belonging to an in-group or out-group. Members of an in-group not only favour their own group over out-groups, they are also inclined to view members of their own group as being very different from one another, and thereby overestimating in-group differences (Bergh, 2011). At the same time, people underestimate out-group differences by perceiving out-group members as being very similar to each other (Bergh 2011; Dovidio *et al*., 2010; Whitley & Kite, 2006). This process is also known as the out-group homogeneity effect and can be illustrated by the following example: members belonging to the same race groups may think that individual members of their group all look different, but at the same time they think that individuals belonging to another race group all look alike (Bergh, 2011; Whitley & Kite, 2006). It seems that individuals place such a high value on their own uniqueness that they do not take into consideration that there may possibly be some characteristics that they share with fellow in-group members.

Coming back to the discussion of categories (or social groups), it can be defined by any number of criteria, such as race, gender, age and occupation (Arnold *et al*., 2010; Bergh & Theron, 2009). Once these social groups are formed, beliefs or perceptions usually exist about the characteristics, attributes or behaviours of members belonging to that particular group or category (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996; Whitley & Kite, 2006). Most often, a person is stereotyped because the perceiver (the one doing the stereotyping) is only familiar with the overall category or group to which the person belongs (Luthans, 2010). Other research, however, proposes that many people who stereotype do not have broad stereotypes, of example all women, or all men, but that stereotypes are often made about people belonging to a specific group such as old men or old White women (Arnold *et al*., 2010; Stangor, Lynch, Duan, & Glass, 1992). This may possibly mean that individuals who have more information on their hands may make use of more specific stereotypes than individuals who rely on broader stereotypes because of a lack of information.

When thinking about stereotypes, individuals are inclined to believe that all stereotypes are negative in nature; however, this is untrue. Stereotypic beliefs or perceptions can be positive (e.g. "Asians are good students and employees"), negative ("senior citizens are too old to be good employees") or neutral ("Australians like cricket") (Mullins, 2010; Whitley & Kite, 2006). Literature provides examples of the nature of stereotypes ascribed to groups. According to Dovidio *et al.* (2010), groups with a lower socioeconomic status will be stereotyped more negatively as less competent or less motivated, whereas groups with a higher economic status will be stereotyped more positively as more competent or more motivated. Furthermore, individuals belonging to groups that are perceived to be competing with one's own group will be perceived more negatively and unpleasantly (e.g. cold and dishonest), while groups that are viewed as being cooperative and unthreatening will be perceived more positively, such as being warm and likeable (Bodenhausen & Richeson, 2010). It seems that the stereotyping process is much more complex than simply assigning characteristics to members of various groups; the nature of stereotypes is also an important aspect to consider.

Because each individual is unique, it should not be assumed that the actual traits, characteristics or behaviours of the person being stereotyped will concur with those that are suggested by the stereotype (Luthans, 2010). These stereotypes assigned to groups are usually seen to be simplistic, inflexible and inaccurate, and these stereotypes can hurt the personal and social identities of individuals (Pickering, 2001). Stereotypes have a damaging effect, especially since stereotypes do not recognise the differences in social groups and often lead to inaccurate perceptions, and inappropriate behaviour towards people (Bergh & Theron, 2009). This does not mean, however, that all stereotypes are incorrect; many stereotypes have a kernel of truth (Whitley & Kite, 2006). McShane and Von Glinow (2014) concur with this by being of the opinion that not all stereotypes are exaggerations or falsehoods, but that stereotypes often have some extent of truthfulness. Therefore, when stereotyping, individuals should not fall into the trap of believing that all stereotypes are a clear representation of all members belonging to a specific group.

The question remains: Why do individuals engage in the process of stereotyping? Numerous reasons can be inferred to answer this question. Stereotypes aid individuals to deal with large amounts of information that they are bombarded with on a daily basis (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2014; Whitley & Kite, 2006). It also serves as a sense-making and

energy-saving process that helps individuals understand the world around them by simplifying incoming information (Butler & Rose, 2011; McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). Furthermore, both Morris and Maisto (2010) and Weiten (2008) stated that stereotyping is an intentional shortcut that saves people the time and effort required to understand individual people. Furthermore, people have an inherent need to predict and understand how others will behave; therefore, people rely greatly on stereotypes in order to fill in the blanks when meeting someone for the first time (McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). It seems that people engage in stereotyping because it boosts their self-concept, and by specifically stereotyping others negatively, it makes people feel better about themselves (McShane & Von Glinow, 2014; Sampson, 1999). Finally, stereotypes also fulfil a social function (Snyder & Meine, 1994). People are social creatures who have a basic need to fit in with a social group; therefore, by stereotyping members belonging to other groups than their own, individuals strengthen their identification with their own social group (Sampson, 1999; Whitley & Kite, 2006). It is the opinion of this researcher that whatever the reason for individuals engaging in stereotyping is, these should not be considered as reasonable or justifiable grounds for stereotyping others. This opinion is shared by Hall (2001) and Moscowits, Stone, and Childs (2012).

Two theories that can be used to describe the process of stereotyping are the social identity theory and the self-categorisation theory. Social identity theory suggests that individuals view the world from their own point of view and judge others in terms of the group that they belong to (Feldman, 2013). This theory further explains that people derive a social identity from the groups to which they belong or feel emotionally attached to (McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). Therefore, people receive much of their self-esteem from their social identity and when they derogate out-groups they uphold or enhance the self-esteem in their own group even more (Meyers, Abell, Kolstad, & Sani, 2010). Another theory closely related to social identity theory is the self-categorisation theory. The self-categorisation theory states that people undergo a degree of de-personalisation when they identify with their group (Stainton Rogers, 2011). During depersonalisation, people dispose of some of their individuality and they engage in self-stereotyping. In order to identify with the group even more strongly, people are encouraged to take on the stereotypical characteristics of the group (Turner, 1982). The theory goes even further by stating that interpersonal and intergroup behaviours are not opposite poles of one continuum. Rather, personal and social identity can be viewed as different levels of self-categorisation (Trepte, 2006). This is further explained

by Dovidio *et al.* (2010). When personal identity (the self, perceived as an individual) is prominent, the person's behaviour is determined by the person's individual needs, standards, beliefs and motives. On the other hand, when social identity (the self, perceived as a member of a group) is most important, people perceive themselves as more similar prototypes of a social category (Dovidio *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, depending on the salience of personal and social identity, a person will either see him-/herself as an individual with unique characteristics or as a member of a collective group sharing the characteristics of that specific group.

Origin of stereotypes

When reviewing literature, the researcher realised that there are numerous epistemological stances with regard to stereotypes. The researcher will therefore make an effort to provide the reader of this article with a broad picture of the origin of stereotypes. With the globalisation of media coverage over the last few decades, it seems that mass media (which include movies, television, and advertisements) are overflowing with stereotypes and are a main source of stereotypes learned by individuals (Plous, 2003; Whitley & Kite, 2006). For instance, most mafia/mob bosses are from Italian origin, as portrayed in movies (i.e. The Godfather and its sequels), or women are the damsels in distress (i.e. Superman movies; Spiderman movies). Although stereotyping has not been created by the media, modern media have a huge influence on generation and maintenance of stereotypes (Cooke-Jackson & Hansen, 2008). Stereotypical images portrayed in the media are an everyday occurrence, and these stereotypical representations may cause prejudice towards out-groups, leading people to have negative and emotional feelings towards members of these groups (Ramasubramanian, 2005).

Apart from the media, where else does stereotyping originate from? Is it from childhood or influences from the work context? It may be possible that stereotypes that employees hold within the workplace may have originated from various sources in their lives, which they may have transferred to the workplace. Individuals may form stereotypes and specifically assign attributes to certain groups that they may have indirectly learned from influential agents such as parents, teachers and peer groups (Timberlake & Estes, 2007). Parents and other family members are primarily the sources that provide information and strengthen and teach stereotypic beliefs to children, and people may have retained these beliefs throughout

their adult lives (Bar-Tal, 1996; Whitley & Kite, 2006). Bar-Tal (1996) investigated the perceptions that Jewish children in Israel have of Arab people. Results of the study indicated that many of the children had negative stereotypic beliefs of Arabs and associated them with characteristics such as being violent and aggressive. Many of the children also mentioned that their parents (either their mother or father) described Arabs in a negative manner and also warned them to stay away from the Arabs. These images that the Jewish children developed may spill over into adulthood and may be retained throughout (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

According to the social learning theory (Barkley, 1982), people learn social behaviour through direct experience (for example by being rewarded or punished for behaving in a certain way) or through the observation of others (for example by observing the consequences of others' actions). People will therefore uphold those beliefs and behaviour for which they or others are rewarded and put an end to those beliefs and behaviours that will lead to them or others being punished (Whitley & Kite, 2006). By taking this theory into consideration, it can be said that employees can learn to stereotype others because of their direct experiences with a specific group, or by learning stereotypes from influential others (Whitley & Kite, 2006); however, by not being reprimanded for stereotyping others, individuals continue to engage in the process of stereotyping (Ramasubramanian, 2005).

To summarise, it is clear from the above that stereotyping is a complex process that involves categorising individuals into groups and assigning certain traits and behaviours to them. Not only do individuals categorise others, but they also categorise themselves. It is further noted that people engage in stereotyping for a variety of reasons, whether to simplify information, to determine how others will behave or to feel better about themselves. Various sources such as parents and the media transfer stereotypic beliefs to others. The aim of this study is therefore to determine how individuals working in selected South African organisations understand and define the concept of stereotypes. Furthermore, the researcher is interested in discovering how stereotyping started (originated from). It is also important to note that this study forms part of a bigger project, where the aim is not only to determine the meaning and origin of stereotypes, but also to investigate the different types of stereotypes that individuals in selected South Africans organisations experience, as well as the manner in which these stereotypes are experienced.

Research design

The research design consists of the research approach, research strategy and research method.

Research approach

This study was qualitative in nature. In qualitative research, the researcher attempts to understand and explore the significance that individuals or groups of individuals attribute to a certain social or human problem, in this case stereotypes (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative researchers working from the social constructivism paradigm believe that individuals construct their own reality within their minds (Hansen, 2004); therefore, it may be that individuals construct their own reality and meaning when it comes to stereotypes. Furthermore, individuals may differ with regard to the characteristics, properties and qualities they assign to their experience of stereotypes (Botma *et al.,* 2010).

A combination of the phenomenological and hermeneutical approach was followed in this research article. Phenomenological research focuses on how individuals experience social and human phenomena (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005). The researcher of this study was interested in studying the meaning and origin that participants attribute to stereotypes. The researcher more specifically was interested in the participants' views regarding the ontology and epistemology of these stereotypes. The only way in which the researcher was able to truly capture the essence and meaning of what the participants said was by employing hermeneutics, and thereby exploring the deeper meaning of what participants believe their ontology and epistemology of stereotypes to be (Niewenhuis, 2010).

Research strategy

The researcher made use of a case study design in order to reach the objective of this study. When making use of case studies, the researcher is able to obtain a holistic picture of how individuals experience a specific phenomenon – in this case stereotypes (Niewenhuis, 2010). The researcher of this study aimed to capture the views of multiple cases in order to get an overall picture of what participants believed about the meaning and origins of stereotypes

(Botma *et al*., 2010). By using multiple cases the researcher was able to use replication logic in order to assess how frequently a certain meaning or origin of stereotypes was mentioned by participants (Yin, 1994).

Research method

The research method consists of the research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

Research setting

Numerous employment sectors were included to form part of this research study. Employment sectors that were included in this study were the following: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and the restaurant industry. Many employment sectors formed part of this study in order to gain a holistic understanding (as gathered from multiple cases) of the phenomenon of stereotypes as experienced by employees within the South African work setting. Within these industries, organisations (that employed more than 50 full-time employees) were selected and approached to utilise their employees to participate. After this process, full-time employees were asked to participate in this study within the selected organisations.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher had to fulfil various roles throughout this research study. In order to execute this specific research study, it was important for the researcher to first fulfil the role of planner. Here, the researcher planned the study by paying attention to aspects such as sampling, data collection, and analysis of the data. The next roles that both the researcher and fieldworkers fulfilled were the roles of interviewers, active listeners, and transcribers (Creswell, 2009). During this phase, the participants were asked questions specifically pertaining to what they understand regarding the meaning and origin of stereotypes. Thereafter, the researcher, fieldworkers, and several independent co-coders fulfilled the roles

of data analysts. This process was done rigorously in order to truly capture the meaning and origin of stereotypes by participants. Throughout the entire research process, the researcher and fieldworkers made every effort not to influence the participants or data by their own values and beliefs (Creswell, 2009).

Sampling

A combination of both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the sake of this research. When using purposive sampling, the sample is based on the judgement of the researcher, and this means that participants are chosen to be included in a study because the researcher believes that the sample chosen is representative of the relevant population (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2011). A convenience sample is chosen on the basis that participants are easily and conveniently available (Maree & Pietersen, 2010). Using the combining approach, sectors were identified beforehand because they are conveniently accessible for the researcher and fieldworkers (who assisted in data collection). Employment sectors that were included in this study were the following: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and the restaurant industry. With the purposive approach, organisations were selected if they function within these sectors and if they employ more than 50 full-time employees. Also, employees were targeted who were as far as possible diverse in nature (i.e. race, gender, age, occupation). Convenience sampling was used in order to target individuals from selected organisation. By including diverse individuals working in selected organisations from various employment sectors, the researcher believed that she can gain a holistic understanding of the meaning and origin of stereotypes as experienced by participants within the South African work context.

The sample consisted of 336 employees from selected South African organisations ($N = 336$). Characteristics of the participants are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of participants (N = 336)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Race	Black	104	31.00
	Coloured	32	9.50

Table 1 continues

	Indian	11	3.30
	White	188	56.00
	Other	1	0.30
Gender	Males	137	40.80
	Females	199	59.20
Language	Afrikaans	195	58.00
	English	47	14.00
	isiZulu	7	2.10
	Sesotho	14	4.20
	Setswana	30	9.00
	Shona	4	1.20
	Tshivenda	4	1.20
	isiXhosa	8	2.40
	Sepedi	5	1.50
	Setswana	1	0.30
	Xitsonga	1	0.30
	*Afrikaans / English	7	2.10
	*English / Setswana	10	3.00
	*English / isiZulu / isiXhosa / Sesotho	1	0.30
	*SiSwati / Sesotho	1	0.30
Qualification	Higher education and training (NQF level 5)	238	70.80
	Further education and training (NQF level 4)	84	25.00
	General education and training (NQF level 3)	6	1.80
	From grade 1 to grade 9 (NQF level 2)	2	0.60
	Missing values	4	1.20
Province	Free State	47	14.00
	Gauteng	80	23.80
	KwaZulu-Natal	8	2.40
	Limpopo	9	2.70
	Mpumalanga	17	5.10
	North West	152	45.20
	Northern Cape	21	6.20
	Western Cape	1	0.30
Employment sector	Banking	40	11.90
	Higher education institutions	72	21.40
	Mining	63	18.80
	Municipalities	24	7.10
	Nursing	4	1.20
	Police services	20	6.00
	Primary and secondary schools	85	25.30
	Restaurant industry	28	8.30

*These individuals are exposed to a multi-linguistic home setting

More than half of the participants were female (59%). The majority of participants were White (56%), while 31% were Black. Almost half of the participants resided in the North West Province (45%), while 23% resided in the Gauteng Province. More than half (57%) of the participants were Afrikaans speaking, while 14% were English speaking. The majority of the participants (71%) had obtained higher education and training, while 25% had obtained further education and training. Of all the participants, 25% were employed within primary and secondary schools, while 21% were employed within higher education institutions.

Research procedure

Consent was received from organisations (at first) and then from the individuals to participate in this study. Bearing in mind that multiple cases ($N = 336$) were included in this study, the researcher was assisted by various fieldworkers (post-graduate students) with data collection by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants. Before commencing with the data collection, the researcher and fieldworkers attended a qualitative workshop to equip them with the necessary interviewing skills and techniques. An interview schedule was developed beforehand in order to assist the researcher and the fieldworkers with data collection, and, where necessary, the schedule was adapted in order to ensure that participants clearly understood all interview questions. Before any interviews were conducted, the context and objective of the interviews were clearly explained to all participants. Participants were interviewed at locations that suited them best and where they felt most comfortable. The utmost effort was employed to ensure that interviews were conducted without any disturbances. The researcher and fieldworkers introduced themselves to the participants in a forthcoming and welcoming manner, in order for participants to feel at ease. Thereafter, the context of the interview was explained to all participants. The researcher and fieldworkers clearly indicated to the participants that involvement in this research is voluntary, that they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that their personal details will be treated with confidentiality. Participants were required to sign a written consent form and give permission for tape recorders to be used. They clearly understood the context of the research before interviews were conducted.

Data collection methods

Various fieldworkers assisted the researcher with data collection by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants. By making use of semi-structured interviews, the researcher is able to obtain a detailed picture of the viewpoints and explanations that participants have about a specific topic (De Vos *et al*., 2011). Therefore, by conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher of this study is able to explore different realities that participants have regarding the meaning and origin of stereotypes. The following questions were asked in order to reach the objectives of this study:

1. *"In your own words, please explain what you understand about the word 'stereotype"*
2. *"What are the origins of stereotypes?"*

The questions above were not the only questions that were asked during interviews; however, for the purpose of this article, these questions were the sole focus for the researcher. If the participants were not able to answer the first question, they were provided with a descriptive definition of the term 'stereotype', after which the interview proceeded and the question was asked again. In order to ensure that participants correctly understood the questions, a pilot study was conducted with nine participants respectively working in the mining industry and higher education institutions. During the pilot study, questions were refined before starting with the data collection. After each interview, participants were asked to complete a brief biographical questionnaire.

Data recording

Interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants. Interviews were tape recorded to capture the exact spoken words of the participants when answering the two interview questions. After the interviews were conducted, the interviews were transcribed verbatim by either the researcher or the fieldworkers. The fieldworkers were instructed to send their transcribed data to the researcher, where quality control concerning the content of the interviews was conducted. By doing this, the researcher was able to already get a feel for the data even before data analysis began. Furthermore, the researcher made sure that all recorded data was safely and securely stored.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

Various criteria were employed to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, which is an important issue to consider during the research process. For the researcher of this study, the following aspects were deemed important:

Dependability: For the researcher it was very important that the research process throughout was logical, consistently well documented and reviewed (De Vos *et al*., 2011). This entails that records of all stages of the research are not only kept, but are also accessible to the researcher (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, the researcher ensured dependability by documenting all phases of the research process, especially concerning the write up of the methodology of this research.

Credibility: It was extremely important that the research was done according to good practice and that the findings of the research are reported in a truthful manner (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, it was important that the findings were reported according to what the data says (in terms of the meaning and origin of stereotypes) as collected from participants. The truth of the data should not be influenced by the pre-conceived convictions of the researcher of this study. By employing co-coding and rigorous discussions with independent researchers, the researcher of this study ensured credibility by truthfully reporting the experiences of participants specifically with regard to the meaning and origin of stereotypes.

Transferability: Transferability also refers to generalisability. Generalisability can be described as the manner in which the conclusions of the research can be transferred to other contexts and settings (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). This is done by describing the setting of the research in a thick and rich manner (Creswell, 2009). The researcher ensured that she described the context within which this research study was conducted in great detail. The researcher also described the sampling procedure and characteristics of the participants in detail in order to provide the reader of this study with an overall picture of the participants and setting of the research. Since multiple case studies were utilised (different sectors and selected organisations), the meaning and origin of stereotypes could be better transferable to the overall work context of South Africa and to some extent be generalisable.

Confirmability: This also refers to objectivity (De Vos *et al.*, 2011). This is accomplished by the researcher and fieldworkers by not allowing their personal values and theoretical inclinations to influence the research and results obtained from it (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher and fieldworkers ensured that they remained impartial throughout the whole study by truly capturing the meaning and origin of stereotypes as reported by participants.

Ethical considerations

Ethical strategies were employed throughout the research. The researcher and fieldworkers adhered to the following ethical considerations during the entirety of the research study (Welman *et al.*, 2005):

Informed consent: Selected organisations were firstly approached to conduct the study among their full-time employees. The organisations were truthfully informed of the objective of this research after which they granted permission to the researcher or fieldworkers to proceed with the research among their employees. The employees were approached and the objective of the study communicated. They were also informed that they can withdraw from the study at any given time. The consent given by participants meant that they felt comfortable to proceed with their participation in this study.

Right of their privacy: Employees who participated were assured that their identity will remain confidential and that information will not be shared with their employers or any other individual whose name was not mentioned in the informed consent letter. Organisations were also assured that their participation will not be made public. Therefore, the researcher and fieldworkers at all times during the research process did not mention the names of any individual or organisation.

Protection from harm: The researcher and the fieldworkers assured the participants that they will not be emotionally or physically harmed during the course of this research; therefore, expectations from all involved parties were clarified from the onset of the research process in order to make the research process well defined for the participant. The researcher and the fieldworkers treated the participants as human beings by not manipulating them or treating them as objects.

Data analysis

The researcher made use of thematic analysis to interpret the data that has been collected. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a tool used by researchers to help them identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes that have been found within the data that has been collected. During this research process, the participants were asked questions regarding the meaning and origin of stereotypes. When analysing the data that has been collected for the purpose of this article, the researcher identified various themes that relate to the meaning and origin of stereotypes as experienced by the participants of this study. The researcher made use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) steps in order to adequately analyse the data for this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

Interviews collected by both the researcher and fieldworkers were transcribed verbatim. Because 336 interviews were conducted, the researcher made use of fieldworkers to assist her with this process. In order to ensure quality, the researcher randomly checked transcribed interviews from each fieldworker. All transcribed interviews were then added together to form one large dataset. The researcher read through the entire dataset and therefore became emerged in the data. Although this took a long time, the researcher felt it necessary to do so in order to validate the data analysis and to immerse herself into the data. Furthermore, the researcher conducted numerous discussions with several independent researchers in order to ensure that she stays objective during this process.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Responses to two interview questions were analysed for the purpose of this article (please refer to data collection section for interview questions). The first question was regarding the meaning that participants attach to the concept of stereotyping, and the second question pertained to the origins of stereotypes as experienced by participants. Consequently, two categories (codes) were identified and labelled as meaning of stereotypes and origin of stereotypes. The researcher also analysed the data according to these two questions. The researcher ensured the rigour of this step by paying equal attention to all raw data, and not disregarding data that may seem insignificant at the time.

Step 3: Searching for themes

From the two categories identified in the previous step, the researcher was now able to develop preliminary themes. By reviewing the responses from all 336 interviews that related to these two categories, the researcher created overarching themes for each category. On a separate document, the researcher documented the themes and accompanying responses for each category, after which sub-themes were also created. The researcher also created a separate theme, where responses that did not fit within the overarching themes were kept; however, before disregarding these themes for being insignificant, the researcher first completed the next phase of the analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

During this step, the themes identified in the previous step were refined. The researcher ensured that the sub-themes and responses assigned to each theme were indeed an accurate reflection of the theme. By reading through all themes and its content the researcher made the necessary changes and became comfortable with all themes and sub-themes. The entire dataset is once again studied by the researcher in order to ensure that all responses have been coded and that all themes and sub-themes are assigned correctly to each category.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Themes are further refined by the researcher by providing an indication of the important aspects that lie beneath each theme. An analysis for each theme is written (see findings). The researcher also determines the relatedness of each theme. For example, during this step, the researcher realised that there are numerous sub-themes that are shared by numerous themes (see findings). Where necessary, sub-themes were also refined. After the refinement of themes and sub-themes, the researcher was able to explain the content of each theme by only making use of a few sentences (see findings). The researcher ensured that the names of themes and sub-themes are indeed a clear representation of the themes given.

Step 6: Producing the report

The researcher ensured that the findings pertaining to the data are clearly and accurately explained to the reader. The researcher, together with various independent co-coders, analysed the data. Co-coders were employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field. The themes that emerged from the data were clearly and consistently reported by the researcher. The researcher substantiated her findings by making use of direct quotes from the participants.

Reporting style

After the data analysis, categories, themes and sub-themes were reported in table format and quotations were used to substantiate the results of the study. By including direct responses from participants, the reader can see that the researcher reported the findings of this study in a truthful manner.

Findings

The findings of the study were organised into categories, themes and sub-themes. Below, categories, together with relevant themes and sub-themes will be provided in various tables. Quotations that support findings are also included within the tables. The frequency of the themes mentioned is also indicated in brackets next to each theme. The frequency of responses does not indicate the number of participants that mentioned a specific theme; however, it does indicate the number of times the themes recurred, as stipulated by Yin (1994) pertaining to replication logic.

Category 1: Meaning of stereotypes

In this category, participants were requested to provide a detailed description of the term 'stereotype'. It was evident from the results that most of the participants were familiar with the meaning of stereotypes. If participants were unfamiliar with the term, a descriptive explanation was provided to them.

Table 2

Meaning of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Assumptions (24)	Accurate/inaccurate	*"You make your own conclusion whether it's right or wrong."*
	Assign behaviour	*"Because I have an Asian surname, people assume that I will react to them or behave in ways that they have experienced with other Asian people..."*
	Assign characteristics	*"To me it means assumptions made of other people/groups and in most cases they are wrong assumptions about their characteristics."*
	Assign physical characteristics	*"Making assumptions about how people are supposed to look..."*
	Based on behaviour	*"It is making general assumptions about someone because of previous general behaviours...."*
	Based on ignorance	*"It is assumptions that are made without consideration of the facts."*
	Based on narrow-mindedness	*"A fixed way of thinking, making assumptions about groups of people without any sort of allowance, to allow for flexibility in your thinking and it can be very dangerous at times."*
	Based on past experience	*"...automatically assuming that because of such an experience that you've had with an incident...then everything that happens is because of that, you are stereotyping."*
Beliefs (15)	Accurate/inaccurate	*"My understanding of a stereotype is that it is a subjective belief..."*
	Assign behaviour	*"A stereotype is a common belief or idea or behaviour that is expected..."*
	Based on ignorance	*"When you have beliefs about a group before you have the facts right."*
	Based on narrow-mindedness	*"Stereotype means that you have a belief about a person that remains the same every day and doesn't ever change."*
	Based on physical characteristics	*"Stereotypes are feelings or beliefs about a person based on his physical characteristics."*
	Based on past experience	*"...belief held of these people is subjective as it may be based on experience or certain encounters with a certain person..."*
	Based on religion	*"To me, a stereotype means a common belief relating to a specific type of person, be it...religious."*
Categorisation (121)	Accurate/inaccurate	*"...sometimes you put people fairly or unfairly in such a category."*
	Assign behaviour	*"To place people in a particular box and assume that everyone in that box is the same or will act the same."*
	Assign characteristics	*"...if someone does not know me personally it is easy to be put into a certain category and assume the type of person I am."*
	Based on assumptions	*"Stereotypes are when people are sort of divided into categories*

Table 2 continues

		based on assumptions.”
	Based on beliefs; based on behaviours	*“...You put them in certain categories based on similar behaviours or beliefs.”*
	Based on characteristics	*“If you classify certain groups or people according to characteristics that they have.”*
	Based on ignorance	*“...and I think this is due to lack of understanding and people like to categorise something they don’t really understand.”*
	Based on occupation	*“To categorise someone according to...type of work etc.”*
	Based on past experience	*“I think it must be from past behaviour. If people experienced something bad or good in the past I think it comes from there. Past experiences whereby you start stereotyping and putting people in categories.”*
	Based on physical characteristics	*“When a person or group is classified because of race...”*
	Based on social status	*“Stereotyping is classifying, grouping, couple according to social status, highlighting it, expressing your stereotype mentality.”*
	Based on views of society	*“It means to classify a group, a person or people in a certain category based on how society views that type of person.”*
Differences (8)	Based on culture	*“Differences between different cultures.”*
	Based on physical characteristics	*“Different types of gender beliefs, races...”*
Discrimination (14)	Based on physical characteristics	*“Discrimination based on age, gender...”*
Do not know the meaning of stereotypes (11)	No meaning	*“I don’t really know what stereotypes are.”*
Generalisation (164)	Accurate / inaccurate	*“People who make generalisations about a group that can be ungrounded.”*
	Assign behaviour	*“My understanding of stereotype is that you generalise about a specific behaviour and you apply it to a group of people in general...”*
	Assign characteristics	*“It is one attribute that is given for group of people, for example, all blondes are dumb.”*
	Assign thoughts	*“Stereotyping is when a group of people think alike...”*
	Based on behaviour	*“...If you see one or two people behaving this way you generalise that males are like that and to me that is the stereotype.”*
	Based on characteristics	*“When you think bad about one person then everyone is bad with the same characteristics as that one person.”*
	Based on ignorance	*“...generalise without getting to know them or know about their circumstances.”*
	Based on occupation	*“When we generalise about a certain...job...”*
	Based on past experience	*“This is when someone generalises a group about past events and the conclusions are likely to be inaccurate.”*
	Based on physical characteristics	*“A stereotype is a generalisation made about a certain group of individuals, based on race, gender...”*
	Based on religion	*“To give a broad definition, it is groups of people who are the*

Table 2 continues

		same, based on ... religion."
Judgement (45)	Accurate / inaccurate	"...judgemental opinions on individuals from that particular group. Usually these stereotypes tend to be unfair..."
	Based on abilities	"To judge someone based on his/her abilities."
	Based on background	"They judge their...background and any other such traits."
	Based on behaviour	"It is when people judge each other based on ways or behaviours..."
	Based on characteristics	"It is when people judge you because you have a certain aspect or character trait."
	Based on ignorance	"Stereotype is when you judge people without knowing them and labelling them on grounds of what you have heard."
	Based on own beliefs; based on expectations	"You judge people and their behaviour based on your own beliefs and expectation..."
	Based on personal preference	"To me this means the judging of people based on personal preferences."
	Based on physical characteristics	"Judging someone on the way they appear or how they look..."
Nature of stereotypes (8)	Positive / negative	"In most cases this will be a negative stereotype but I do believe positive stereotypes exist."
Perception (98)	Accurate / inaccurate	"It is the perception of an individual on a group of people that is not always the truth."
	Based on behaviour	"Your general impression you have of someone and their behaviour in specific situations."
	Based on characteristics	"...Like this person is like this, because of certain characteristics."
	Based on ignorance	"It is when someone has their own views about certain things or people and just being ignorant without being informed."
	Based on narrow-mindedness	"It's an idea of a particular person or maybe an idea towards something where one is fixated on it and not willing to change their mind-set."
	Based on occupation	"General view that one has of a person in that profession."
	Based on past experience	"The perception or belief held of these people is subjective as it may be based on experience or certain encounters with a certain person from a certain group..."
	Based on physical characteristics	"I think stereotyping is the perception that you have about certain people based on race, gender and so forth..."
Preconceived ideas (13)	Accurate / inaccurate	"Stereotypes mean some preconceived conclusions or perceptions about things or people in whatever form, but are not necessarily confirmed to be reality."
	Based on ignorance	"It is preconceived ideas that you have of someone before you have met them."

Table 2 provides a description of themes and sub-themes as extracted from the analysed data. Examples of original responses by participants were also provided in order to substantiate the findings of this category. It is evident that participants differed in terms of the meaning they attach to stereotypes. Below are the descriptions of the meaning of stereotypes as provided by the different participants:

Assumptions: Stereotypes are assumptions made about people. These assumptions are made based on the behaviour of the people observed, one's own ignorance, narrow-mindedness or your past experience with a particular person. When assumptions are made individuals assign behaviours, characteristics and physical characteristics to others. These assumptions may be accurate or inaccurate.

Beliefs: Participants perceive stereotypes to be beliefs about people. These beliefs may be based on a person's physical characteristics or religion. The origin of these beliefs is because of one's own ignorance, narrow-mindedness, or a past experience with a person. Because of these beliefs, a person is also thought to behave in a certain way. These beliefs may not always be accurate.

Categorisation: Stereotypes are viewed as dividing people into different categories based on various factors such as assumptions, behaviour, beliefs, characteristics, ignorance, occupation, past experience, physical characteristics, social status and views of society. When categorising people, they are also believed to have certain characteristics or behave in a certain way. These categorisations may be accurate or inaccurate.

Differences: Stereotypes are perceived to be differences between individuals. These may be differences based on culture or physical characteristics such as gender and race.

Discrimination: Stereotypes are when people discriminate against each other based on their physical characteristics such as race and gender.

Do not know the meaning of stereotypes: Some of the participants were unfamiliar with the meaning of stereotypes. However, these participants were then provided with a definition, and the researcher made sure that participants clearly understood the meaning of the term.

Generalisations: Stereotypes are viewed by participants to be generalisations made about people based on their behaviour, characteristics, one's own ignorance, occupation, past experience, physical characteristics or religion. When making generalisations about people, certain behaviours, characteristics and thoughts are attributed to them. Generalisations made about others might not always be correct.

Judgment: Stereotyping is judgements made about people. These judgements are based on abilities, background, behaviour, characteristics, ignorance, beliefs, expectations, personal preference and physical characteristics. Furthermore, these judgements may or may not be a true reflection of individuals.

Nature of stereotypes: Some of the participants additionally mentioned that stereotypes can be both positive and negative.

Perceptions: A stereotype is a perception created about others. These perceptions may be based on others' behaviour, characteristics, your own ignorance or narrow-mindedness, occupation, past experience or physical characteristics. Perceptions created might not always be truthful.

Preconceived idea: Participants viewed stereotypes to be preconceived ideas one has about others based on your own ignorance. These preconceived ideas may not be an accurate reflection.

After reviewing the categories, themes and sub-themes, it can clearly be seen that the theme that was mentioned the most by participants was *generalisation* (frequency rate of 164). The theme *categorisation* was mentioned the second most with a total of 121 responses. Categorisation was also the theme that consisted of the most sub-themes. The following sub-themes were continuously mentioned across most of the themes: *accurate/inaccurate, assign characteristics, assign behaviour, based on behaviour, based on characteristics, based on ignorance, based on narrow-mindedness, based on past experience* and *based on physical characteristics.*

Category 2: Origin of stereotypes

In this category, participants were requested to provide descriptions of how stereotypes originate. It is evident from the findings that participants have their own opinion of what causes stereotypes. A large number of participants provided similar descriptions of the origin of stereotypes.

Table 3

Origin of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Do not know the origins of stereotypes (7)	Unaware of origin	*"I have no idea."*
Human nature (23)	From themselves and others	*"...everybody is human, and humans create stereotypes of other people."*
Individual differences (53)	Attitudes	*"Attitude, also the habit of it, you are used to it..."*
	Disrespect	*"The people do not know each other; they do not have respect for each other."*
	Diversity	*"Different cultures and values and beliefs."*
	Frustration	*"Frustrations they might have."*
	High self-concept	*"When you think you are better than others, that's where it all starts."*
	Jealousy	*"They are all just jealous..."*
	Personality	*"Your character determines if you make stereotypes."*
	Poor self-esteem	*"I think that these stereotypes are caused by lack of self-confidence..."*
	Poor values	*"People do not have strong morals and values anymore."*
	Selfishness	*"Maybe because people only think about themselves and don't take others into thought."*
	Spitefulness	*"Many of the stereotypes are a result of...spitefulness etc."*
Prejudice (15)	Discrimination	*"People believe that certain things aren't right according to their beliefs, they discriminate."*
	Hate	*"It is usually because of hatred between different people."*
	Racism	*"I think people still act a little racist..."*
Primary exposure (45)	Past experience	*"This could be because of past experiences, and then generalise a group of people because of that."*
Secondary exposure (252)	Apartheid	*"The apartheid era all contributed to the current stereotypes we are experiencing."*
	Community	*"I really think that society is the main reason for the existence of stereotypes."*
	Culture	*"People's culture also plays a role; we do not always understand*

Table 3 continues

		people's way of doing things."
	Media	*"What people see on TV, and assume it is the same situation as in reality."*
	Observation	*"...but what I have seen and heard I see it as a cause."*
	Politics	*"Politics is the main cause of these stereotypes."*
	Religion	*"Religion...also play a role."*
	Social interaction	*"...and your friends around you."*
	Upbringing	*"If there is a certain belief in a family then the children will also grow up believing it."*
	Workplace	*"It is about where you work and how your work environment is."*
Subjective perception (131)	Ignorance	*"I would say that people that stereotype do not go through the trouble of getting to know you better."*
	Judgements	*"Judgement of other."*
	Narrow-mindedness	*"...not being open minded."*
	Simplification	*"I think it is easier to make an assumption about him rather than getting to know him."*

Table 3 provides a detailed overview of the themes and sub-themes extracted from the data. Findings were substantiated with direct quotes from participants. When requested to provide an account of the origin of stereotypes, the following themes and sub-themes emerged:

Do not know the origin of stereotypes: Some of the participants indicated that they were unaware of the sources of stereotypes.

Human nature: Participants viewed stereotypes to be human nature; it is something people do, for no particular reason, other than human nature. The participants indicated that it comes from themselves and others.

Individual differences: Not all people stereotype, some stereotype because of factors unique to themselves. People stereotype because they have an attitude or a high self-concept. Others stereotype because they show no respect for other people or because people frustrate them. Some participants indicated stereotypes are caused by being jealous of others or having a poor self-esteem. Having poor values, being selfish and spiteful were other sub-themes that were mentioned by participants. People also stereotype because they are diverse. These differences can be based on aspects such as beliefs, values and demographic variables.

Prejudice: Participants indicated that stereotypes originate from prejudice. Discrimination, hate and racism are forms of prejudice that can result in stereotyping.

Primary exposure: This refers to stereotyping that is caused by direct experiences that participants have had in the past with a specific person or group. These experiences caused participants to stereotype other persons or groups that are similar to those they had the experience with.

Secondary exposure: Participants mentioned that stereotypes originate from them being exposed to a variety of influences. It is important to note that these influences are only indirect influences and do not account for any direct experience that participants have had with a particular person or group. These influences include apartheid, the community in which they live, the media (such as TV and newspapers), observing others, politics of the country, religion that they practise, social interaction with friends and family, their upbringing (which includes family and school), and the workplace in which they work.

Subjective perception: This refers to people's subjective views of people and objects. People stereotype others because they are ignorant, narrow-minded and judgemental beings. Participants also reported that stereotyping serves as a simplification process, whereby it is easier to stereotype others than to spend time getting to know them personally.

After reviewing Table 3, it is evident that more than half of the participants are of the opinion that *secondary exposure* (response rate of 252 creates stereotypes. The theme *subjective perception* was mentioned the second most with a total of 131 responses. *Individual differences* were also the theme that consisted of the most sub-themes.

Discussion

Outline of the findings

The first objective of this study was to understand the meaning that employees from various South African organisations attribute to the term 'stereotype'. After a detailed analysis of the findings of this study, it became evident that employees of this study are familiar with the

meaning of stereotypes. Only a few of them pointed out that the meaning of stereotypes was unknown to them; however, they were provided with a detailed description of the term. The participants indicated that different descriptions of stereotypes exist, thereby providing an indication of multiple realities that exist among participants. The following themes emerged when participants were requested to explain their understanding of stereotypes: *assumptions, beliefs, categorisation, differences, discrimination, do not know the meaning of stereotypes, generalisation, judgement, nature of stereotypes, perception* and *preconceived ideas.* Subthemes that emerged continuously throughout the themes included: *accurate/inaccurate, assign characteristics, assign behaviour, based on characteristics, based on behaviour, based on ignorance, based on narrow-mindedness* and *based on physical characteristics.*

Various literature sources confirm the findings of this study. Colquitt, Lepine, and Wesson (2014) elaborate by stating that stereotypes refer to assumptions that are made about individuals based on them belonging to a social category. Stereotypes aid employees in categorising people, events, situations and objects into preconceived categories that are stored in their long-term memory (Ivancevich *et al*., 2014; McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). Participants of this study mentioned that stereotypes are based on behaviour, characteristics and physical characteristics. McShane and Von Glinow (2014, p.53) confirm this by indicating that "stereotyping is the perceptual process in which individuals assign characteristics to an identifiable group and then automatically transfer those features to anyone they believe is a member of that group". These characteristics that are allocated to these group members are often difficult to observe, such as personality attributes and capabilities; however, they can also encompass physical characteristics. Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) suggest that stereotypes are not only beliefs and views about characteristics of persons, but also the behaviours of members belonging to certain groups.

A number of participants mentioned that stereotypes can be either positive or negative. Whitley and Kite (2006) agree with this and further state that stereotypes can disadvantage one group, but can simultaneously favour another. Furthermore, as mentioned above, a recurring theme that was mentioned by many participants is the view that stereotypes can be both accurate and inaccurate, which McShane and Von Glinow (2014) concur with. Crawford (2010), together with Whitley and Kite (2006), suggests that it is important to remember that, even if stereotypes hold a kernel of truth for an overall group, they may still be inaccurate when making judgements about individual members of that group. Although stereotypes help

individuals to cope with large amounts of information, the consequences of assigning inaccurate stereotypes are very negative. By inaccurately stereotyping, it can lead to bias, and people not succeeding in really getting to know others different from them (Mullins, 2010). Although participants themselves indicated that stereotypes can be inaccurate, the participants of this study still engage in the process of stereotyping.

Many participants also hold the view that stereotypes are based on people's own ignorance or narrow-mindedness. Stereotypic beliefs are resistant to change, although social reality is changing and people still stereotype even though they are confronted with new and contrasting information (Crawford, 2010; Von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa, & Vargas, 1995). Instead of challenging or testing existing stereotypes, individuals view and examine new information in ways that confirm already existing stereotypes (Sampson, 1999). This may mean that, although participants are aware of their stereotypes not being true (inaccurate therefore), they still continue to stereotype, because it is easier to do so and saves time, thereby reinforcing already existing stereotypes.

Origin of stereotypes

The second objective of this study was to determine the origin of stereotypes as experienced by employees from selected South African organisations. The findings of the study illustrate that most of the participants are well aware of the factors that cause stereotypes. Only a few participants ($n = 7$) were unaware of where stereotypes originate from. When participants were requested to explain the origins of stereotypes, the following themes emerged: *do not know the origin of stereotypes, human nature, individual differences, prejudice, primary exposure, secondary exposure* and *subjective perceptions.*

Participants indicated that it is human nature to stereotype. Sampson (1999) agrees by saying that stereotyping is a natural part of being a human being. Individuals are bombarded with large amounts of information every day, and by stereotyping others, they make it easier for themselves to deal with this information. Within the work setting, individuals interact with many individuals on a daily basis, such as clients, colleagues and supervisors. By engaging in this natural phenomenon of stereotyping, individuals may restrict themselves from getting to know the people they interact with on a daily basis because they do not have the time to get to know each of these individuals on a more personal level.

Furthermore, participants indicated that stereotypes occur because of individual factors unique to each person. Differences between people that were mentioned include, among others, *jealousy, high self-concept* and *poor self-esteem.* According to Crawford (2010), people want to feel good about themselves and superior to others, therefore they stereotype. In an effort to heighten their self-esteem, they may stereotype their own group (in-group) more positively than other groups to which they do not belong (out-groups); consequently, they undervalue out-groups while simultaneously escalating the characteristics of their in-group (Feldman, 2010). It seems that individuals may stereotype other employees in order to feel good about themselves; however, they do not consider that their stereotypes of others may have the opposite effect on the individuals being stereotyped.

Participants are also of the opinion that stereotypes originate from prejudice. Stereotyping prevents individuals from getting to know others better and leads individuals to maintaining prejudice and discrimination (Sampson, 1996). Although stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination are closely related, the one can occur without the other (Plous, 2003). Plous (2003) provides an example by describing that when there are positive or neutral stereotypic beliefs about a racial group such as "family orientated", this may not refer to prejudice or discrimination. Therefore, when being stereotyped, employees should not instantaneously view themselves as being prejudiced, they should rather reflect on the nature of the stereotype given.

Another finding of this study was the perception of participants that stereotypes occur because of primary exposure. For the sake of this study, primary exposure refers to direct past experiences people have had with others belonging to a specific group, for instance a specific race group. Glassman and Hadad (2013) concur and state that stereotypes of a social nature are formed initially from specific experiences or from observing individuals from specific groups. Participants also indicated that stereotypes originate from secondary exposure. Secondary exposure refers to stereotypes that are learned from various external sources such as parents, schools, culture, society, apartheid etc., and also by observing different people. Relevant literature to support these findings does exist. According to Whitley and Kite (2006, p. 6), stereotypes are learned from a variety of sources such as "media, peers, parents, and even sources such as classic and modern literature". Various studies have found that stereotypes are learned by children from ages three years and up, and influence children's perceptions of various social groups (Plous, 2003; Whitley & Kite, 2006). Cooke-Jackson

and Hansen (2008) also found that although stereotyping may be inevitable, stereotypes become problematic when the media incorrectly portray stereotypes. They further state that these stereotypes ignore the richness of the stereotyped group and can result in social inequality for the individuals involved. Individuals who stereotype others should therefore reflect on whether the stereotypes they have are indeed accurate or if it is just a product of being influenced by others.

In addition to the above mentioned, Durrheim and Talbot (2012) conducted a study among Durbanites who grew up in post-apartheid South Africa. The aim of the study was to investigate whether stereotypes about different race groups remained the same after the apartheid era. To their surprise, the findings indicated that racial stereotypes have not changed much after the historical changes in South Africa took place, thereby suggesting that stereotypes are not fading in post-apartheid South Africa. The conclusion can therefore be drawn that the apartheid era certainly had and still has an influence on stereotypes, whether or not one was directly affected by it. However, Durrheim, Mtose, and Brown (2011) and Durrheim and Talbot (2012) state that regardless of the economic, political and social changes that took place in post-apartheid South Africa, certain race groups are still being underrepresented in social status hierarchies. Durrheim and Talbot (2012, p. 490) further state that "these lines and categories of privilege are clearly visible in the racial stereotypes that prevail in South Africa today".

The results of this study also showed that stereotypes occur because of individuals' own subjective perceptions. The perceptions individuals have of others are not necessarily factual and are based on their own subjective opinions of others. The reasons for these subjective perceptions may be people's own narrow-mindedness, lack of knowledge of others, or simply a time-saving mechanism. Stereotypes are usually applied by people when they are busy and distracted, because stereotypes serve a mental shortcut function by aiding individuals to process large amounts of information with which they are confronted (Dovidio *et al*. 2010; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991). Plous (2003) concludes by suggesting that no matter what the origin of stereotypes, they are self-perpetuating. People have an inclination to notice information that is consistent with their stereotype and to be oblivious to things that do not fit; therefore, the self-perpetuating nature of stereotypes (Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly, & Konopaske, 2012). Individuals should therefore make an active effort to not stereotype others just because they do not have the time or energy to really get to know someone. By doing this, individuals

may realise that embracing the uniqueness of each individual within the workplace can contribute to a better understanding of all people in the working environment.

Practical implications

By doing this study, individuals may become aware of the fact that their perceptions and opinions of others in the workplace may be based on inaccurate information. This study may elicit a motivation among individuals to truly getting to know someone first before relying on their possibly inaccurate stereotypes. When individuals are aware of where their stereotypes originate from, they should actively attempt not to make use of their stereotypes when coming into contact with stereotyped groups. Organisations should educate their employees on the process of stereotypes and exactly what this means and where they originate from.

Limitations and recommendations

There are various limitations with regard to this particular study. The first limitation is with regard to the language that was used to conduct the interviews. It may be possible that some of the participants who completed the interview in their second language have felt challenged when doing this. This may have caused the participants not to be able to articulate themselves properly. It may also be possible that participants were uncomfortable with the use of tape recorders, thereby not fully disclosing their opinion as they were expected to. Participants did, however, give permission for interviews to be tape recorded and the researcher and fieldworkers did inform the participants that their identity would remain anonymous.

Stereotypes are automatic and can be activated without awareness; however, people can make a conscious effort to become aware of their automatic stereotyping by fighting against their natural inclination to make stereotypical judgements about others (Crawford, 2010). Being less judgemental means to stop stereotyping and to make use of correct and accurate information when dealing with people. By being open-minded, paying attention and making mindful decisions, stereotyping can be controlled.

According to Whitley and Kite (2006), inaccurate stereotypes need to be changed. When people are faced with evidence that is incorrect, they have two choices; they can either

change the stereotypic belief or they can find a manner in which to re-categorise the persons who do not adhere to the stereotype. Stereotyping others should especially be avoided when meeting someone for the first time. Although it is human nature to stereotype, the effects of stereotyping are usually to the detriment of someone else; therefore, the necessity to identify the stereotypes one holds and the impact thereof on your perception of others (Bergh, 2011).

With regard to recommendations for future research, it is suggested that interviews should be conducted in participants' home language, by employing trained fieldworkers who are proficient in the home language of participants. By doing this, the likelihood exists that participants will understand the line of questioning better, and will feel more comfortable when having the opportunity to answer questions in their home language. Furthermore, it is recommended that, instead of only making use of qualitative methods of collecting data, a quantitative approach should also be employed, thereby verifying the findings as gathered from the qualitative analysis. Although the meaning and origin of stereotypes were explored among employees from selected South African organisations in order to collect an overall (broad) view of stereotypes, it may also be interesting to assess how different race, gender, age and occupational groups understand stereotypes and from their specific viewpoint how did it originate.

Conclusion

To conclude, it seems that people employed in selected South African organisations are familiar with stereotypes and have a clear understanding of the phenomenon. Although, participants provided different descriptions of the term, as can be confirmed by relevant stereotype literature, there seems to be a consensus among participants of this study of what exactly the process of stereotyping entails. Individuals who had partaken in this study also have a conscious awareness of the origin of stereotypes. Although not all of the participants have had direct experiences with stereotyped groups, they are well aware that stereotypes also originate from indirect sources, as confirmed by literature. Although only employees formed part of this study, it is evident that the origins of stereotypes were described by participants in more general terms and not specifically relating to the workplace (only six participants mentioned the workplace as an origin). In other words, the origins of stereotypes can be contributed to sources that are not specifically found in the workplace; however, stereotypes

stemming from other origins can be transferred to the workplace. The conclusion can also be drawn that, although individuals are aware of their stereotypic tendencies and nature, they still continue to stereotype others, irrespective of whether these stereotypes are factual or not.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH ARTICLE 2

EXPLORING PREVALENT STEREOTYPES AS EXPERIENCED BY EMPLOYEES WITHIN SELECTED SOUTH AFRICAN ORGANISATIONS

Orientation: Different types of stereotypes are prevalent within selected South African organisations.

Research purpose: The objective of this study is to determine the most prevalent stereotypes that are experienced within selected South African organisations.

Motivation for the study: Diversity within South African organisations may increase the occurrence of stereotypes within organisations. Various stereotypes such as race, gender and age exist within organisations and have an influence on both the individual and the organisation. Internationally, a great deal of research has been conducted regarding this; however, research in South Africa from an indigenous perspective (emic) and within the framework of social constructivism is still lacking.

Research design, approach and method: A multiple case study strategy from a phenomenological and hermeneutics approach was utilised. A combination of both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this study. The sample consisted of individuals working in selected South African organisations ($N = 336$), which formed part of the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. Semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect data and data analysis was done by making use of thematic analysis.

Main findings: Individuals employed in selected South African organisations are aware of various stereotypes that exist within their working environments. Individuals do not only stereotype others (out-group stereotypes), but they are also aware of stereotypes that others hold about them (in-group stereotypes). The most prevalent stereotypes included race, gender, age, occupation, and other work-related dimensions. Stereotypes concerning race, gender and age are based on the internal dimensions of diversity, while occupational stereotypes and work-related stereotypes (i.e. qualification) were based on the external dimensions of diversity. Other work-related stereotypes (i.e. duration in organisation and position) are based on the organisational dimensions of diversity. Most stereotypes that were mentioned were mostly negative in nature.

Practical/managerial implications: Management of the organisation should eliminate stereotypes from organisational practices by focusing on performance-relevant information

and not on irrelevant personal information. Individuals should also make an effort to become aware of their own stereotypic natures.

Contribution/value-add: By using the framework of the social constructivism paradigm from an emic perspective, it could be explored what the prevalent out-group and in-group stereotypes were as experienced by employees. The most prevalent out-group stereotypes experienced by employees were based on occupations in the workplace, while most employees experienced in-group stereotyping based on their race. It is significant in the sense that occupational attachment of employees was not significant in the workplace on an in-group level, while in-group and out-group race stereotypes seemed to be prominent throughout.

Keywords: Stereotypes; social constructivism; emic perspective; race stereotypes; gender stereotypes; age stereotypes; occupational stereotypes; internal dimension; external dimension; organisational dimension; selected South African organisations

Introduction

South Africa, as it was once known, changed drastically since its first democratic election twenty years ago. This gave rise to racial segregation (i.e. apartheid) being terminated, and various changes being implemented within the South African labour force (Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2002). Various laws, such as the Employment Equity Act (no. 55 of 1998), also came into effect, which ensures that all individuals, especially previously disadvantaged groups, have equal rights when it comes to employment (Grobler *et al*., 2002). An effort was now being made to include marginalised individuals such as women and black South Africans in the economic mainstream (Burns, 2006). As a consequence, organisations of today comprise a diverse set of individuals, where these individuals differ with regard to age, culture, gender, religion, language, and other circumstances (Werner, Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter, & Viedge, 2007). This increased diversity of employees within an organisation gives rise to complicated human dynamics whereby experiences by individual members are grouped and labelled by others (Seekings, 2008; Shani & Lau, 2008).

This diversity within organisations increases the possibility of stereotypes being experienced (Grobler *et al*., 2002). When it comes to managing diversity, it is important to teach others how to become aware of stereotypes about individuals with characteristics that differ from

their own, and also to confront these stereotypes (Agocs & Burr, 1996). If these unfounded stereotypes are not addressed, it may cause everyday race, disability, gender, and age discrimination within organisations (Martin & Fellenz, 2010). Furthermore, managers who blindly accept and rely on stereotypes will not be capable of benefitting from diversity management (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2014), and therefore, managers are challenged to not let stereotypes influence interpersonal processes and decision-making within their organisation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). However, before management can embrace diversity and address stereotypes stemming from diversity, it first has to be investigated whether stereotypes do actually exist within organisations, as well as the specific nature of these stereotypes.

Research purpose and objectives

According to Seekings (2008), there is lack of post-apartheid studies utilising an emic perspective pertaining to diversity issues within the South African work context. Apart from this, how do the employees experience their workplace post-apartheid? What does it look like now? (Seekings, 2008). By using the framework of the social constructivism paradigm from an emic perspective, it could be explored what the prevalent out-group and in-group stereotypes were as experienced by employees.

Based on the aforementioned, the aim of this article will therefore be to investigate the prevalence of stereotypes specifically within selected South African organisations across different sectors. This article will therefore explore what stereotypes are experienced by employees within the current South African work context, and what stereotypes do employees hold of others working with them. This section will be followed by a section in which a literature study is conducted. After that, the methodology utilised in this study will be explained, followed by the findings of the study, the discussion on the findings and will be concluded with limitations and recommendations.

<u>Literature review</u>

Stereotypes from the social constructivism paradigm

As mentioned before, research pertaining to utilising an emic perspective concerning diversity in South Africa is still lacking (Seekings, 2008). What does the world of work look like now, and what prevalent stereotypes are experienced within the current South African work context? With this in mind, the researcher decided to review the social constructivism paradigm in the exploration of prevalent stereotypes within the work context of South Africa. The social constructivism paradigm holds the view that there are multiple truths and multiple realities, and these realities are influenced by history, culture and society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mayan, 2009). Furthermore, these multiple realities and truths are consequences of aspects such as social status, gender, sexuality and race (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Therefore, individuals who differ with regard to the above-mentioned aspects will construct their own reality of the same event or phenomenon, and their realities may also be influenced by their history, culture and the society in which they live. Furthermore, according to the social constructivism paradigm, when individuals and groups construct their own reality, it is done in the way individuals think, say, and behave (Bergh, 2013). Different individuals may experience the same events; however, the ways in which these events are experienced or described by these individuals differ, and thereby individuals construct their own personal meaning of these events (Kiley, 2011). To interpret, different individuals may all experience stereotypes, but the way in which these stereotypes are experienced and described by individuals may differ, thereby creating different meanings for the same experience of stereotypes. Furthermore, employees may experience different stereotypes from others. For instance, coming back to the emic perspective (to explore the live experiences of employees within their context), the researcher of this study needs to understand how employees within the current South African work context construct stereotypes from their perspective and pertaining to their work environment. This forms part of theory development from an emic perspective (Nel *et al.*, 2012; Seekings, 2008) within the framework of social constructivism (Mayan, 2009). Therefore, although a grounded theory approach may seem appropriate for this study (since four main stereotypes were uncovered in previous studies), this was not utilised since the researcher first wanted to discover what elements of stereotypes are experienced from the employees' perspective and how prevalent are these stereotypes

without any pre-conceived ideas. However, for this article, stereotypes and elements from literature will be discussed further in this section.

Stereotypes

When stereotyping, individuals are inclined to assign certain traits and characteristics to a group, and then to assume that individual members of these groups share those same traits and characteristics (Werner *et al*., 2007). However, these characteristics that are attributed to group members may not necessarily be correct (Crawford, 2012). McShane and Von Glinow (2014) explain that stereotypes may be true for some members of a stereotyped group, but may not accurately describe every single individual belonging to that group. Furthermore, when stereotyping, individuals may assign positive (e.g. engineers excel at math) and/or negative characteristics (e.g. accountants are boring) to these people (André, 2008; Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, & Kinicki, 2011; Mullins, 2010). Additionally, when stereotyping, individuals categorise not only others, but also themselves as belonging to a certain group. This phenomenon is known as in-group and out-group stereotypes. In-group stereotypes can be explained as stereotypes about groups to which individuals belong, and out-group stereotypes are explained as stereotypes about groups to which they do not belong (Holt *et al*., 2012). According to Turner (1987), individuals may value and identify with their in-group; however, when doing so, they derogate their out-group. Feldman (2013) agrees and adds that individuals are therefore inclined to stereotype their in-groups more positively than out-groups. By exploring the different stereotypes that individuals experience, the researcher may gain an understanding of the different meanings and realities these individuals attribute to their in-group and out-group members.

Stereotyping may be learned from various sources such as parents, media, peers and direct observation (Whitley & Kite, 2006). By stereotyping others, various functions are fulfilled, of which one is to predict the behaviour of individuals based on their membership to a certain group (Shani & Lau, 2008). Stereotyping also assists individuals with information processing, especially when individuals are confronted with large amounts of information, which they have to process in a short period of time (Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Ivancevich *et al*., 2014). Whether in a social or organisational setting, when stereotyping others, individuals increase the possibility of not recognising unique and diverse aspects among individual members of the stereotyped group (Martin & Fellenz, 2010). These aspects that individuals may be

stereotyped on include, among others, race, gender, age, occupation, and nationality (Werner *et al*., 2007).

These aspects on which stereotypes are based can be described as the internal and external dimensions of diversity. Gardenswartz and Rowe (1994) explain that the internal dimensions of stereotyping are factors that individuals have no control over, such as race, gender, age, and sexual orientation. On the other hand, external dimensions are factors that can be controlled and managed by individuals, such as occupation, physical appearance, educational background, religion, and work experience. As already mentioned, stereotypes can stem from these different dimensions of diversity (Grobler *et al*., 2002). Since the researcher is specifically focused on the workplace, it would be interesting to assess whether organisational dimensions are also prevalent within this study (Kreitner & Kiniciki, 2010). The most common referred to stereotypes in literature are race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes; thereby, referring to both internal and external dimensions of diversity (Shani & Lau, 2008; Weiten, 2008). The researcher decided that when writing her literature study, she will also focus on describing and exploring race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes. However, it should be noted that by only focusing on these dimensions, the researcher did not assume that these will also be the most prominent stereotypes of this study when using the emic perspective (Seekings, 2008). The researcher's aim was to explore stereotypes that are unique to the South African employees participating in this study.

Race stereotypes

Racial stereotyping is defined "as the generalised attribution of a set of personal characteristics to members of a racial/[2]ethnic group" (Aboud, 1988, as cited in Bigler & Liben, 1993). To explain further, individuals belonging to the same race group may be viewed as all sharing the same characteristics. Many different racial stereotypes exist (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010), this may be even more true for the South African environment, because the country consists of different race groups. A thorough literature review resulted in the researcher being able to describe the characteristics attributed to different race groups. Black individuals are perceived as being athletic, angry, antagonistic, speaking loudly, lazy, irresponsible, superstitious and ostentatious (Cain & Trauth; 2013; Crawford, 2012; Kreitner

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[2] The majority of stereotype literature refer to race stereotypes, and will therefore be used for the purpose of this study. The term ethnicity forms part of a direct quotation and will therefore be used in this instance.

& Kinicki, 2010; Sniderman & Piazza 1993). On the other hand, White individuals are stereotyped as being egotistical, intelligent, intolerant, arrogant, racist and pleasant (Crawford, 2012; Talbot & Durrheim, 2012). Asians are stereotyped as being unmasculine and unfeminine, introverted, intelligent and quantitatively oriented (Crawford, 2012; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Wilkens, Chan, & Kaiser, 2011). Coloured individuals are viewed as gangsters, violent, happy, friendly and criminal (Talbot & Durrheim, 2012). Evidently so, different race groups are stereotyped very differently, in both a negative and positive manner. By conducting this study, the researcher will be enabled to explore whether participants of this study are aware of their own experiences regarding racial stereotypes.

Seemingly, stereotypes about one's race group may influence one's employability within an organisation. In studies conducted by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) and Cotton, O'Neill and Griffin (2008), it was found that employers tend to employ, or consider employing individuals with 'White' names rather than those with 'Black' names. However, on the contrary, Kirschenman and Neckerman (1991) found that White employers choose to employ Black individuals who will not isolate their customers and will assimilate into the workplace. Shani and Lau (2008) further state that racial stereotypes affect how individuals are treated by others in various work situations. They explain that Black individuals experience lower levels of job satisfaction, reach career plateaus more often, they feel less acknowledged by their peers, and their performance ratings are lower. Buelens *et al*. (2011) add to this by stating that racial minorities experience racism, reduced job involvement, higher turnover rates, reduced upward mobility, and receive fewer opportunities than their White counterparts. Furthermore, Plous (2003) provides an example of racial stereotypes, where he states that if it is believed that individuals from a certain race group lack intellectual ability, the perception might be that it is pointless to educate those children, thereby leading to prejudice and discrimination. It seems that negative stereotypes about race groups inhibit individuals belonging to that race group from truly being valued and embraced in organisations where these stereotypes exist.

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotyping is the belief that males and females have different traits and abilities that make them primarily suitable for different roles (Shani & Lau, 2008). Therefore, the realities that different individuals assign to different genders may vary. Females are positively

stereotyped to be nurturing, attentive and having stronger interpersonal skills (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994). However, they are also negatively stereotyped as being timid, unstable and weak, lacking assertive ability, and lacking leadership skills (DeArmond *et al*., 2006; Ridgeway, 2001). These characteristics assigned to females influence the perceptions that others hold toward females, especially with regard to leadership positions. People show a preference for male managers while females are perceived as less effective leaders; however, females are viewed as effective when organisations face a turnaround or crisis (Kinicki & Fugate, 2011). According to Newman (2012), even when females are positively stereotyped, it may limit them to advance economically. They further explain this by stating that professional females who are stereotyped as possessing feminine characteristics are viewed as not being decisive and strong enough to be effective business leaders and competitive business women. Males, on the other hand, are perceived as possessing characteristics such as being assertive, emotionally stable, strong, and workplace achievers (DeArmond *et al*., 2006). Other attributes that they are associated with include that they are less expressive, lacking interpersonal sensitivity and warmth, and are more autocratic and directive than their female counterparts (Buelens *et al*., 2011). Clearly, males and females are viewed very differently from each other, which contribute to different genders being treated very differently within organisations.

Embry, Padgett, and Caldwell (2008), in their review of literature regarding gender stereotypes, concluded that when females occupy leadership roles, they are expected to use a transformational leadership style and have expressive characteristics (e.g. emotional, compassionate and helpful), whereas males are expected to use a transactional leadership style and have instrumental characteristics (e.g. aggressive, competitive, independent and dominant). They further elaborate by stating that when these leaders do not meet expectations, it could possibly influence the effectiveness of the leader and also the manner in which subordinates respond to the leader. It is clear that different behaviours and different characteristics are expected of males and females, although they fulfil the same role or position within the organisation, which raises questions about the fairness of this phenomenon. Furthermore, these prescriptive stereotypes place strong pressure on males to act manly and females to act effeminately (Crawford, 2012) and can also limit the career choices of both males and females, especially when certain careers are seen as more suitable for males or females (Whitley & Kite, 2006). Males and females may therefore try and avoid

these stereotypes by pursuing careers that are viewed by individuals as appropriate for their specific gender.

Age stereotypes

According to Shani and Lau (2008, p. 157), "age stereotypes is the belief that differing traits and abilities make a certain age group more or less suited to different roles or display different behaviour toward work". When having a closer look at the definition provided, it is not surprising then that individuals from different age groups are welcomed or frowned upon when entering the labour force. Numerous characteristics are assigned to both younger and older workers. Younger workers are stereotyped as generally having better job qualifications, being more suitable for physically challenging positions, and having more growth potential than their older counterparts (Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995). Furthermore, younger employees are perceived as less inclined to be absent from work, more productive, more motivated, and more committed than their older workers (Kinicki & Fugate, 2011). On the contrary, older people are often perceived to have unattractive characteristics, such as an inflexible attitude, not open to change, not being trainable and being in poor health (Chiu, Chan, Snape, & Redman, 2001). They are also stereotyped as being conservative, ill-tempered, easily upset, biased, unemotional, and culturally insensitive (Hummert, 1990). Based on the above-mentioned, it may seem that feelings towards younger employees in the workplace are more positive in relation to their older counterparts.

These negative stereotypical beliefs about older workers that are often held by employers, customers and colleagues have an influence on various employment decisions, especially with respect to older employees themselves (Chiu *et al.*, 2001). Employment decisions that are affected include training, benefits, promotion opportunities, termination, redundancy, and retirement, all of which may result in age discrimination (Chiu *et al*., 2001; Dennis & Thomas, 2007). Age discrimination against older employees may result in negative personal consequences for these employees. It may reduce their confidence and motivation, and they tend to withdraw from their work (Ghosheh, Lee, & McCann, 2006). In spite of older workers falling victim to negative stereotypes, literature indicates that older workers are still valued by their employers for many reasons. Older workers show higher levels of commitment to the organisation, lower absenteeism rates, and have more positive work habits, when compared to their younger counterparts (Mondy & Noe, 2005). Furthermore,

older workers show higher job involvement, job satisfaction, internal work motivation, and are less prone to accidents than younger employees (Shani & Lau, 2008). It can clearly be seen that realities with regard to different age groups do differ.

Occupational stereotypes

Occupational stereotypes can be defined as "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation, about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's suitability for that occupation" (Lipton, O'Connor, Terry, & Bellamy, 1991, p. 129). Studies have shown that stereotypes about individuals fulfilling various occupations do exist, and that certain traits and characteristics are seen as more suitable for one position than another (Arkkelin & O'Connor, 1992; McLean & Kalin, 1994). When reviewing literature, the researcher came across numerous stereotypes that are held about a variety of occupations. Examples of these are provided. Librarians are smart and serious, accountants are detail-oriented, and lawyers are manipulative, to only name a few (Bergh, 2011; Martin & Fellenz, 2010; Mullins, 2010; Plous, 2003). Within the workplace, employers may have a specific idea in their head as to what characteristics a job holder should have. Therefore, when employers are confronted with employment decisions such as hiring and promotion, they often base their decisions on the stereotypes they hold of job holders (King, Mendoza, Madera, Hebl, & Knight, 2006). The authors further state that these occupational stereotypes may lead to the occurrence of workplace discrimination.

Stereotypes about occupations can also be gender-oriented (Miller & Hayward, 2006). This may mean that certain occupations are seen as being better suited for males whereas other occupations are seen as better suited for females (White & White, 2006). For example, according to Whitley and Kite (2006), females are stereotyped as being better with children, therefore making it easier for females to occupy positions such as elementary school teachers, whereas males find it more difficult to be appointed within such occupations. According to Miller and Hayward (2006), the career decisions of individuals can also be influenced by the extent to which occupations are stereotyped as being gender orientated.

Other stereotypes

Although the stereotypes mentioned above (i.e. race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes) are the most prominent stereotypes in literature, the researcher also makes mention of other forms of stereotyping that exist, such as stereotypes about sexual orientation. Gay men are seen as effeminate, whereas lesbians are viewed quite oppositely as manly and butch (Kitzinger, 2001). According to Crawford (2012), these stereotypes about sexual orientation remain stagnant because individuals interact and converse with individuals who are gay, lesbian or bisexual without even realising it. By not being aware of the sexual orientation of others, individuals may not realise that they actually do not support these stereotypes. Other stereotypes, such as stereotypes based on nationality also exist (Mullins, 2010). Examples of these include that Australian citizens enjoy cricket and German citizens are hardworking and systematic. Religious stereotypes are also prevalent. In a study conducted by McDermott (2009), it was found that evangelicals are stereotyped as being trustworthy, conservative and competent. Political stereotypes are also apparent, and an example of this includes that conservatives are in favour of privatisation. Based on the literature study, it is clear that numerous stereotypes about different dimensions exist; however, taking into account the diverse nature of the South African workforce, it may be possible that these stereotypes and various others may be experienced by the participants of this study.

Consequences of stereotypes

Stereotypes, regardless of whether it is based on race, gender, age or occupation may lead to a variety of negative consequences for those being stereotyped, especially when referring to their treatment within organisations. Regarding gender stereotypes, females are questioned when it comes to their leadership abilities, especially by male managers (Sczesny, 2003). Furthermore, males are given better performance evaluations than their female counterparts, even when they are rated on identical behaviour (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky 1992; Kulich, Ryan, & Haslam, 2007). Regarding race stereotypes, Buelens *et al.* (2011) have indicated that racial minorities struggle to advance professionally; they earn less, and experience racism. Studies have also shown that employers are more likely to hire White individuals than Black individuals (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; King *et al.*, 2006). With respect to age stereotypes, negative stereotypes about aging individuals leads to biased treatment and

discrimination towards the elderly (Kite, Stockdale, Whitley, & Johnson, 2005; Nelson, 2002). Furthermore, when negative stereotypes about aging are activated, it may lead to a decline in memory self-efficacy and memory performance (Levy, 1996). With regard to occupational stereotypes, King *et al.*, (2006) indicated that when employers allow their occupational stereotypes to influence them, individuals may fall victim to discrimination. Occupational stereotypes may also influence the career aspirations of young adults. To explain, young adults tend to base their career choices on limited information and inaccurate stereotypes about occupations (Greenhaus, 2000; Hiltebeitel, Leauby, & Larkin, 2000). It seems that by becoming aware of these damaging consequences of stereotypes about race, gender, age and occupations, individuals and organisations can make every effort to identify and address their own stereotypes.

Based on the aforementioned, the conclusion can be drawn that organisations of today comprise a diverse set of employees, which increases the occurrence of stereotypes within organisations. Various types of stereotypes exist within organisations, of which the most common are race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes. When individuals are stereotyped within organisations, these stereotypes have various effects on the stereotyped individual and the employing organisation. The aim of this study is therefore to determine the most prevalent stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in selected South African organisations in an exploratory study.

Research design

The research design consists of the research approach, research strategy and research method.

Research approach

This research was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research attempts to describe and explain a specific phenomenon that is being studied (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). Qualitative research within the social constructivism paradigm is of the belief that reality is created in the mind of the individual (Hansen, 2004) and cannot be seen external to the individual; therefore, it can be said that the meaning that individuals attribute to their reality is created in the human mind (Niewenhuis, 2010). The realities that individuals construct in their minds

are subjective, thereby being influenced by aspects such as their perceptions, experiences, and the social environment (Ponterotto, 2005).

Within the social constructivism framework using an emic perspective, a combination between the phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was followed in this article. With the phenomenological approach, the researcher attempts to study how individuals experience their world and how they make sense of it, and the researcher also specifically attempts not to be influenced by her own preconceptions (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher therefore attempted to study the occurrence of stereotypes as the participants experienced it themselves from an out-group perspective and in-group perspective (therefore, their own emic perspective). The researcher can only understand and interpret the true meanings of individuals' experiences of stereotypes by employing hermeneutics, therefore exploring the deeper meaning employees attach to stereotypes (Niewenhuis, 2010).

Research strategy

The multiple case study strategy was employed in this research to reach the objectives of this study. By employing this strategy, the researcher is enabled to explore the out-group and in-group stereotyping that takes place in selected South African organisations across different sectors (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, the researcher was interested in the views of multiple cases in order to holistically understand the phenomenon of stereotype from an out-group and in-group perspective within the current work context of South Africa (Bromley, 1990). By including multiple cases, the researcher is enabled to gain a clear and deep understanding of the phenomenon of stereotypes as experienced by employees participating in this research study.

Research method

The research method consists of the research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

Research setting

Various organisations were selected to participate in this study. Organisations were selected if they have 50 or more full-time employees. Employees, as far as possible, were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation. Organisations that were selected functioned in the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. The reason for this was to effectively execute the research strategy (multiple case studies) in order to gain a replicate logic of the phenomena of stereotypes within the work context of South Africa (Yin, 1994).

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

During the course of this research study, it was required of the researcher to fulfil various roles. Before commencing with the research study, the researcher acted out the role of a planner, where the researcher systematically planned the research process by taking into consideration issues such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis. Thereafter, the researcher, together with trained fieldworkers, fulfilled the roles of interviewers, active listeners, and transcribers (Creswell, 2009). During this phase, participants of this research study were specifically asked questions regarding their experiences of both out-group and in-group experiences of stereotypes. During the data analysis phase, the researcher and several independent co-coders acted out the roles of data analysts by rigorously analysing the data. This was done to ensure that the experiences of the participants regarding their experiences of stereotypes are conveyed in a truthful manner. At all times during this research study, the researcher and fieldworkers were aware of their own personal belief systems, thereby making an effort not to influence the participants or data (Creswell, 2009).

Sampling

For the purpose of this study, a combination of both purposive and convenience sampling was used. Purposive sampling enables researchers to deliberately obtain participants to form part of a study that they believe is a relevant representation of the population (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). Convenience sampling is the most frequently used method of sampling where participants are chosen based on their availability (Gravetter & Forzano,

2009). By including diverse individuals working in selected organisations from various employment sectors, the researcher believed that she can truly understand the meaning that these individuals attribute to their experiences of stereotypes. When taking into consideration the research sample chosen, the following criteria were adhered to: 1) organisations have 50 or more full-time employees; 2) employees were respectively employed in selected South African organisations from various employment sectors; and 3) employees, as far as possible were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation.

By employing the multiple case study strategy and sampling procedure, employees ($N = 336$) participated. A large proportion of the participants were female (59%). The White participants constituted 56% of the participants, while 31% were Black. Most of the participants resided in the North West Province (45%), whereas 24% originated from Gauteng. The majority (58%) of the participants were Afrikaans speaking, whereas 13% were English speaking. Most of the participants (71%) have acquired higher education and training, whereas 25% of the participants have acquired further education and training. Of all the participants, 25% were employed in primary and secondary schools, while 21% were employed in higher education institutions.

Research procedure

In order to conduct this research study, it was imperative that the researcher first received consent from organisations and then employees to participate in this study. Semi-structured interviews were arranged with participants after the organisation provided consent for this study to commence. The interviews with participants explored their experiences pertaining to stereotypes within their workplace. Because 336 individuals formed part of this study, the researcher was unable to conduct all of the interviews herself, and therefore numerous fieldworkers (post-graduate students) assisted with the process of data collection. The researcher and fieldworkers attended a qualitative workshop before commencing with the data collection. The workshop provided the researcher and fieldworkers with the necessary interview skills and techniques. Beforehand, an interview schedule was also developed to aid with the data collection. The interview schedule was also refined and adjusted during the workshop, in order to ensure that participants understood and are capable of answering all interview questions. The researcher and fieldworkers arranged dates and times with participants in which interviews were conducted. Interviews were conducted in various

settings as deemed comfortable by participants. It was required of the participants to first have a clear understanding of the aim and background of the study before the interviews commenced, and therefore these aspects were clearly explained to the participants. Participants gave permission to the researcher and fieldworkers to make use of tape recorders; however, only after the researcher and fieldworkers assured the participants that their identities and personal information would remain confidential and that if they felt uncomfortable that they could withdraw from the study at any given time.

Data collection methods

Fieldworkers (post-graduate students) and the researcher collected data in order to reach the objectives of this research study. Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were deemed as the appropriate manner in which to conduct the data collection. By making use of semi-structured interviews, the researcher and fieldworkers were provided with the opportunity to ask the same set of questions to each participant; however, also being allowed to vary questions depending on the answers provided by participants (Welman *et al*., 2005). These interviews enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of how participants experience out-group and in-group stereotypes (applying phenomenology and hermeneutics) and what can be regarded as each individual's reality.   The following questions were asked to all the participants:

1. *"What stereotypes do you think exist in your workplace?"*
2. *"What stereotypes do you hold of other people in your workplace?"*
3. *"Do you think there are any stereotypes about yourself within your workplace?"?*

The questions above were not the only questions that were asked during interviews; however, for the purpose of this article, these questions were the sole focus of the researcher. The first interview question did not form part of the data analysis. The question was only asked to participants in order to stimulate a thought process among the participants in order to establish whether participants were indeed aware of stereotypes that existed in their workplace.   The second question was asked to determine the out-group stereotypes participants experienced, whereas the third question was asked to determine the in-group stereotypes that participants experienced. By utilising the hermeneutics approach, the interviewer probed the participants further regarding the out-group and in-group stereotypes

they experienced. By doing this, the researcher was able to determine the characteristics assigned to various types of stereotypes. Also, the researcher was able to determine the specific nature of out-group and in-group stereotypes mentioned.

A pilot study was undertaken in order to ensure that the participants of this study clearly and accurately understood the questions. Nine individuals formed part of the study, and were respectively employed within the mining industry and higher education institutions. A biographical questionnaire was also handed to the participants to complete.

Data recording

Participants gave permission to the researcher and fieldworkers to make use of tape recorders to record their exact spoken words. In order to rigorously analyse the data at a later stage, it was necessary for the researcher and fieldworkers to transcribe the interviews verbatim. The researcher also checked the content and quality of the interviews transcribed by the fieldworkers. By doing this the researcher already emerged herself with the data that have been collected. The researcher also took special care to ensure that the transcribed interviews were safely and securely stored.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

Trustworthiness of the research findings is a very important aspect to consider, therefore criteria such as confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability were given special attention to.

Confirmability: It was very important for the researcher and fieldworkers to not allow their own values, opinions, or knowledge of theory to influence the findings of this study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher and fieldworkers remained open-minded and unbiased throughout the entirety of this research study by trying to capture the real experiences of the participants regarding stereotypes in order to assess their realities.

Credibility: The researcher ensured that her conclusions of this study were indeed a true reflection of the data obtained (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The researcher therefore

attempted to truthfully describe the lived experiences of the participants regarding stereotypes (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi, & Wright, 2010).

Dependability: The researcher did indeed report the findings of this research study as it did occur (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The researcher further ensured dependability by keeping records of all phases of the research, and frequently reflecting on the research procedure (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Maree, 2010). The researcher specifically gave attention to the write-up of the methodology of this research study.

Transferability: When conducting a research study, it is important to describe the setting and context of the study in detail in order for the study to be transferred to other settings and contexts (Creswell, 2009; Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The researcher therefore attempted to do so by richly describing the context in which this research study took place, and also describing the sampling and characteristics of the participants of this study.   By doing this, the reader of this research study is able to more clearly picture the context and setting of this study.

Ethical considerations

There are various ethical considerations that the researcher paid attention to when conducting this research study and these included the following:

Informed consent: The researcher and fieldworkers clearly and truthfully explained the aim and background of the study to each and every participant; this ensured that the participants felt comfortable to provide consent and to continue with the interviews (Welman *et al*., 2005). Consent was first received from organisations, thereafter consent was received from individual participants.

Voluntary participation: Because participants were not forced to participate in this study, the participative nature of this study was voluntary (Rubin & Babbie, 2005) and they were informed that they can withdraw at any given time if they felt uncomfortable during the process of data collection.

Protection from harm: It was deemed important that both the researcher and fieldworkers protected the participants of this study from both emotional and physical harm (Welman *et al.*, 2005). The purpose of the study was explained, and expectations from both the interviewer and interviewee were communicated first in order to minimise harm towards the participant.

Confidentiality: The researcher and fieldworkers guaranteed the participants that their identity and personal information would remain private and confidential, thereby also providing the participants of this study to share their unique experiences regarding stereotypes (Welman *et al.*, 2005). They were also informed that the information will not be shared with their employers or fellow colleagues in the selected organisation.

Data analysis

By making use of thematic analysis, the researcher is provided with a strategy to analyse and interpret the data that has been collected. Thematic analysis is a data analysis method that assists the researcher to identify, analyse, and report collective themes or patterns that have been found to exist within the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Specifically, when analysing the data that has been collected for the purpose of this research article, the researcher identified themes that relate to the out-group and in-group experiences of stereotypes by participants of this study. The following steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were used by the researcher to analyse the data of this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

Interviews conducted by the researcher and fieldworkers were transcribed verbatim. All of the interviews were not transcribed by the researcher, therefore fieldworkers assisted with this process. The researcher randomly checked transcribed interviews from each fieldworker to ensure that the process was done accurately and in accordance with tape recorded interviews. Thereafter, all the transcribed interviews were added to form one large dataset comprising 336 transcribed interviews. In order to emerge herself in the entire dataset, the researcher read through the dataset. This was a lengthy process, however, the researcher found this process to be crucial in order to validate the data analysis. Additionally, she

conducted discussions with various independent researchers in order to fully grasp the data objectively without her personal convictions playing a role.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

During this phase, the researcher developed codes from the data. Responses to two interview questions were analysed for this specific article (see the data collection method section to view the interview questions). The first question pertained to out-group stereotypes the participant experienced, and the second question pertained to in-group stereotypes the participant experienced. Subsequently, the two codes (categories in this case) were identified and labelled as out-group stereotypes and in-group stereotypes (Boyatzis, 1998). The researcher ensured that this step is done rigorously by paying attention to all raw data, and not disregarding data that may seem insignificant. In this process, for instance, all out-group stereotypes were assessed collectively in order to prepare for the next phase of the data analysis (the same was done with in-group stereotyping).

Step 3: Searching for themes

From the two categories identified in step 2, the researcher was able to create preliminary themes. By reviewing responses from all 336 participants pertaining to the two categories, the researcher formed overarching themes (for example race, gender and age). In order to work in a systematic manner, the researcher documented the themes and accompanying responses on a separate document. Taking into consideration the detail of the raw data and the themes initially identified, sub-themes (and characteristics assigned to the respective sub-themes) were also created. The researcher also created a separate theme, where responses that do not fit within the overarching theme were kept, however, before disregarding these themes for being insignificant, the researcher first completed the next phase of the analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Themes that were developed in the previous step were refined during this step. The researcher also ensured that the responses, characteristics and sub-themes accompanying the various themes, are indeed a truthful and accurate representation of the various themes. By reading through the themes and its content, and making necessary changes, the researcher

became comfortable with the themes, sub-themes, and characteristics. The researcher once again reads through the entire dataset to ensure that the process of reviewing themes was satisfactory and that all responses have indeed been coded.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

The researcher further refined the themes by indicating the most important aspects that underlie each theme. A detailed analysis is written for each theme (see findings). The researcher also determined the relatedness of each theme, thereby minimising the overlap between themes. For example, during this phase, the researcher realised that the most prominent themes (i.e. race, gender, age) were indeed perceived as the internal dimensions of diversity. Sub-themes and characteristics of sub-themes are also refined during this step. After refinement of themes, sub-themes, and characteristics, the researcher was able to describe the theme and content of the theme by only making use of a few sentences (see findings). By deciding on appropriate names for themes and sub-themes, the researcher ensured that the content of the theme is clearly represented by the names of themes and sub-themes.

Step 6: Producing the report

During this step the researcher ensured that she clearly and accurately explained her findings of the data to the reader. Throughout the data analysis, the researcher together with various independent co-coders analysed the data. Co-coders were employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field. The researcher reported the themes that emerged from this data in a logical and consistent manner. The researcher also made use of direct quotes to provide evidence for the themes that were reported in the findings.

Reporting style

By making use of tables, the researcher presented the themes, sub-themes and characteristics of sub-themes in an orderly and systematic manner. Example of direct responses of the participants were also included to illustrate the results of the study, and provide the reader of this article with a general idea of the type of 'real' responses that were given by participants.

Findings

Categories, themes, sub-themes, and characteristics were utilised in order to structure the findings of this study. Direct citations of the participants are indicated within respective tables, in order to corroborate the findings of this study. The frequency of which the themes were mentioned is specified in brackets next to each theme. The frequency of the themes mentioned provides detail on the number of times a particular theme was mentioned and not the number of participants that mentioned the theme. By employing replication logic (Yin, 1994), the researcher is able to view the frequency with which a certain construct was mentioned.

Results are divided into two categories. Category 1 includes the stereotypes that participants hold of others in their workplace (out-group stereotypes) and are indicated in Tables 1 to Table 7. The second category discusses the stereotypes that individuals are aware of that others hold of them (in-group stereotypes) and are illustrated in Tables 8 to 17. With respect to the specific findings of this study, it can clearly be seen that the most frequently mentioned stereotypes include those of race, gender, age and occupational stereotypes. Occupational stereotypes were the most frequently mentioned stereotypes in the out-group category, while race stereotypes were the most frequently mentioned stereotypes in the in-group category.

The reader should not that a separate table indicating stereotypes based on simultaneous internal dimensions was also utilised. This was done in order to provide the reader with a clear picture of stereotypes that were based on more than one internal dimension simultaneously. However, the reader should also note that tables pertaining to occupational stereotypes included occupational stereotypes that are also based on internal dimensions. The reason for not separating these themes within the occupational stereotype tables was because within the occupational tables a clear distinction can be made between internal (i.e. race, gender, age) and external dimensions (for example education as occupation).

Category 1: Out-group stereotypes

This category provides an explanation of the different types of stereotypes that participants hold of others working in their organisation. Findings indicate that the most frequently

mentioned stereotypes are occupational stereotypes (90), race stereotypes (66), age stereotypes (50), work-related stereotypes (50), and gender stereotypes (39).

Table 1

Out-group stereotypes: Occupation (90)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Occupation	Academics	All-knowing; conceited	*"Academics are pompous; they think they know it all..."*
		Critical	*"...The academics...They will always criticize or question HR processes. It is so irritating. It's like we always have to defend our work."*
		Undermining; Suspicious	*"Most academics would undermine you. They think we are not learned. When you tell them something they will just verify with the line manager."*
	Older academics	Impolite	*"...Older academics are rude and mean to the support staff members."*
	Educators	Government employed	*"Yes, educators work for the government..."*
		Not hardworking	*"Educators who do not take work home do not prepare for their lessons and are not good teachers."*
		Suspicious of speech therapists	*"The teachers always think that we (speech therapists) do not have enough work and to a certain extent I think they do not trust us."*
		Work half day	*"There definitely are educators who make a half day job of it."*
	Black educators	Limited extramural activities	*"If you look at the various cultures n South Africa, the educators who teach at the Black schools are far less involved in extramural activities because they do not have these big rugby, netball, cricket and hockey teams, debates and cultural activities..."*
	Female educators	Limited extramural activities	*"...women are less involved with extramural activities."*
		Undermined	*"...Men have more authority than women in the teaching field".*
	Male educators	Competent to fix problems	*"...males should be able to fix any problem that occurs in the school."*
		Disinterested in education	*"They are not really interested in education."*
		Involved in culture if dressed a certain way	*"In our workplace, I would categorise a man who is dressed effeminately as the choir leader or someone in the cultural direction who might be*

Table 1 continues

			directing the musical this year.”
		Insensitive	*“Male teachers are not as sensitive to the children’s feelings as the female teachers.”*
		Not hardworking	*“They only do sport and nothing else.”*
		Responsible for sport activities	*“Yes, it mostly occurs when the sport fields need to be ready for sport, women assume that the men will do it.”*
		Responsible for doing physical labour	*“Men do more hard labour at things such as sport days at school.”*
		Unreliable	*“If you want something done you cannot really depend on the male staff to do it.”*
		Uninvolved	*“Male teacher’s involvement with training and teambuilding is poor; they do not really want to be associated as personnel.”*
	Old educators	Limited extramural activities; more admin	*“In the Afrikaans model C schools, there are certain age groups...They have more administrative work, but do not have to coach rugby, netball and hockey teams.”*
		Hardworking	*“Although older people do not want to coach sport, while still having the necessary skills, they still work hard.”*
		Not hardworking	*“And then you get the educators who really do the minimum, you call them the pensioner workers, people who are only still working to build up their pension...”*
	Young educators	Eager; optimistic	*“New educators are in a class of their own. We are negative towards these educators who approach their job with great zeal and optimism, but this could be a good thing.”*
		Involved in extramural activities	*“The younger educators have more responsibility with respect to activities for which they are responsible example sport, culture and training, where the older educator is no longer so active.”*
	Drama educator	Talkative	*“Drama teachers might be slightly more verbal.”*
	Language educator	Hardworking; more marking	*“Apart from the language teachers who work very much harder than the other, far more marking.”*
	Mathematics educator	Intelligent	*“Maths teachers are clever.”*
		Quiet; not expressionistic; reserved	*“People will always think that Maths teachers are very quiet, not expressionistic and very reserved.”*
	Engineers	All-knowing; rigid	*“Engineers are rigid, they think that they know everything.”*
		Conceited	*“Engineers are typically more arrogant and think*

Table 1 continues

		they are cleverer than others."
	Procedural	*"Just like engineers, I feel that they are specie unto their own...They are process driven..."*
Black engineers	Conceited	*"The engineering guys, they are awfully arrogant and think they are everything in the business. Especially the Black people who think that they know more than everyone else."*
Finance	Analytical	*"Financial people are very similar to us, they are analytically orientated."*
	Beancounters	*"...the financial people are beancouters."*
Females in finance	Conceited	*"The women in finance imagine themselves to be something that they are not. They think that they are better than the remainder of us."*
White people in finance	Readily accepted in occupation	*"There are only White people in the finance department."*
Human resources	Competent with procedures and people; incompetent with finance	*"HR people should work with procedures and people only and not with finance."*
	Not hardworking; talkative	*"HR people...they talk a great deal and do very little."*
Police	Criminal	*"Yes, the police are perceived as the biggest criminals."*
	Drink a lot; incompetent	*"Yes, many police officers are corrupt, they report drunk for work, and they don't have the necessary knowledge to do their work"*
	Violent	*"There was a policeman who beat up a criminal to get information from him and now the whole community thinks all policemen are like that."*
Reservist	Incompetent	*"I believe that those who are not capable of doing police work should not be here, like the reservists."*
Restaurant waitrons	Only suitable as part-time occupation	*"And also maybe that it is a job for young people, maybe a part time work while you are busy studying."*
	Poor	*"...people that are waiters are not that wealthy, and might be struggling in life."*
	Unintelligent	*"Waiters are regarded as less intelligent than others because they do this specific work."*
	Unsuitable occupation for person with family responsibilities	*"I do not think this kind of work is for people who should be settled and have a family for whom they need to provide."*
Black restaurant waitrons	Unhygienic	*"Black waiters are not as hygienic as what they should be."*
Student restaurant	Not serious about	*"I do not think students take this work very*

Table 1 continues

waitrons	work	*seriously because to them it is just extra money."*
	Not hardworking	*"Students are not very hard working."*

Table 1 provides an indication of stereotypes that individuals hold of other's occupations. Occupations that were stereotyped included the following: academics, educators, engineers, finance, human resources, police and restaurant waitrons. Following is an explanation of stereotypes attributed to each of these occupations:

Academics: Academics are perceived as being all-knowing, conceited, critical, suspicious and undermining. Specifically, older academics are also negatively stereotyped as impolite.

Educators: Educators are negatively stereotyped as employed by government, not hardworking and working only half day. Educators are also stereotyped as being suspicious of speech therapists with whom they work. Many stereotypes about educators were specifically based on race, gender, age, or the subjects educators teach. Following is an explanation of these:

Race stereotypes: Specifically Black educators are perceived as being less involved in extramural activities.

Gender stereotypes: Female educators are perceived as being undermined and they are stereotyped as having limited extramural activities. Both of these stereotypes are negative. On the other hand, male educators are stereotyped positively as competent to fix any problem at school. They are also negatively perceived as being insensitive, not hardworking, unreliable, uninvolved and disinterested in education. They are further stereotyped as being involved in cultural activities at school if they dress a certain way, and they are responsible for sport activities and for doing physical labour.

Age stereotypes: Older educators are viewed as having limited extramural activities, while having more admin. Older educators are stereotyped as both hardworking and not hardworking. Younger educators are stereotyped more positively than older educators and include stereotypes such as being eager, optimistic and being involved in extramural activities.

Subject-related stereotypes: Stereotypes about educators teaching a specific subject are also present. Drama educators are stereotyped as talkative, while Mathematics educators are stereotyped as being intelligent, quiet, not expressionistic and reserved. Educators who teach languages are perceived as being hardworking and having a great deal of marking.

Engineers: They are negatively stereotyped as being all-knowing, rigid, conceited, and procedural. Specifically, Black engineers are also stereotyped as being conceited.

Finance: These individuals work in banks or financial departments within organisations. Individuals working in finance are stereotyped as being analytical and beancounters. Specifically, females in finance are negatively stereotyped as being conceited. On the positive side, White individuals are readily accepted within finance.

Human resources: They are negatively stereotyped as being talkative, not hardworking and incompetent with finances, while they are positively stereotyped as being competent with people and procedures.

Police: Individuals working within the police services are stereotyped negatively as being criminal, drinking a great deal, incompetent and being violent. Specifically, reservists working together with the police are also seen as incompetent.

Restaurant waitrons: Restaurant waitrons are stereotyped as unintelligent, poor, occupying a job that is only suitable on a part-time basis and that is unsuitable for a person with family responsibilities. Specifically, Black restaurant waitrons are perceived as being unhygienic and restaurant waitrons who are also students are stereotyped as not hardworking and not taking their work seriously. All stereotypes mentioned were negative.

Table 2

Out-group stereotypes: Race (66)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Race stereotypes	Black	Accepting	*"...African people are accepting..."*
		Backchat	*"Black people backchat."*
		Committed	*"...and I think that Black people are far more loyal to their work than White people."*
		Do not eat pork	*"...mostly Black people do not eat pork..."*

Table 2 continues

		Do not listen	*"For example, an instruction to a Black person must always be repeated because they do not listen the first time..."*
		Incompetent	*"...African people rely on the other race groups to help them and to do their work for them."*
		Inferior	*"The stereotype that I hold of other people is that other people in terms of race (Whites) regard the other race (Blacks) as inferior and the racial undertones are still currently explicit..."*
		Kind; humble	*"...Black people are nicer and not snobbish".*
		Not hardworking	*"The Black people I work with are lazy..."*
		Racist	*"...Black people are racist..."*
		Receive preferential treatment	*"...Because the school only has Black children they can say anything and get away with it..."*
		Speak about other races	*"...the Black people discuss the White people."*
		Supportive	*"...because I have more Black than White colleagues, I feel that they stand together..."*
		Unwilling to work with people speaking a different language	*"Yes, Blacks don't want to work with me because of the language barrier."*
	Indian	Only eat Halaal food	*"All Indians eat only Halaal food."*
	People of colour	Incompetent	*"Whites do not think that other races are capable."*
		Not time efficient; not rule bound	*"Yes, this is when people of colour do not pay attention to time or rules."*
	White	All-knowing	*"...you have White people that do not have an education, but they feel they can say something about my field".*
		Conceited	*"...Whites think they are cleverer than other racial groups. By just observing their behaviour of being arrogant..."*
		Complaining	*"White people like complaining..."*
		Emotional	*"Whites become very emotional when others complain."*
		Friendly	*"...Some are really friendly..."*
		Ignorant about other races	*"...White people lack knowledge of Black people, that's a racial stereotype also".*
		Pretentious	*"...that's why I also think people are very pretentious, especially your White folk".*
		Racist	*"Most people think that White people are racists."*
		Receive preferential treatment	*"...I believe Whites are still getting preferential treatment. They get better positions and usually get support from management when they want to do*

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Table 2 continues

	Resistant to change	*"...Especially White people, they are afraid of change..."*
		anything within the workplace."

Table 2 illustrates the out-group stereotypes that exist about race. Coloured individuals were the only race group that was not stereotyped by participants. It was mostly White participants who stereotyped Black people. Indian individuals were stereotyped by Black, White and Coloured individuals. White individuals were mostly stereotyped by Black individuals.

Black: Black individuals are stereotyped as being incompetent, not hardworking, racist, and receiving preferential treatment. There is also a belief that they do not eat pork, they do not listen, they speak of other races, and they backchat. They are also stereotyped as being unwilling to work with people that speak a different language than them. However, they are positively stereotyped as being accepting, committed, kind, humble, and supportive.

Indian: These individuals were viewed as only eating Halaal food.

White: White individuals are stereotyped as being all-knowing, conceited, complaining, emotional, pretentious, racist, receiving preferential treatment, and resistant to change. They are also viewed as being ignorant about races different from their own. They are positively stereotyped as friendly.

Findings suggested that people of colour are seen as not being rule bound, incompetent, and not being time efficient; however, it is unclear which race was referred to.

Table 3

Out-group stereotypes: Age (50)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Age stereotypes	Old	All-knowing; do not provide young people with growth opportunities	*"For me it's just the age issue. The rest of my colleagues are young, few are older, and they think they know it all. Because they have been here for longer they think they know it all, they don't give the younger ones a chance to grow..."*
		Conceited	*"That older persons think they are cleverer than the young employees on an education level."*
		Experienced;	*"...With all due respect, they are the ones who have*

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Table 3 continues

	helpful	*worked here a 100 years. When we need help or advice we go to them."*
	Narrow-minded about youth; do not trust youth with responsibility	*"...older generation not being open minded to the youth and not letting them take up responsibilities...and not trusting and believing in the youth."*
	Not adaptable	*"Older people take too long to adjust."*
	Not energetic; impact productivity	*"Age, old people...they lack energy and impact productivity."*
	Not technologically advanced	*"...I have an idea that older people cannot handle computers. You cannot send them electronic stuff."*
	Perfectionist	*"Older people are perfectionists..."*
	Receive preferential treatment	*"The older people in the office get preference for promotion and that is unfair."*
	Resistant to change	*"I think in my opinion the older people struggle more with change so the people that have been here for 20 years do not want to change."*
	Respected; Knowledgeable	*"In a good sense, there is an older professor here and I respect him and see him as very knowledgeable."*
	Set in their ways	*"I'm sometimes reluctant to work with old people, as I feel they are stuck in their ways..."*
	Serious	*"...they are more serious. You know what elderly people are like, they hardly laugh..."*
	Slow	*"...they are not able to keep up with the pace."*
Young	Conceited	*"...Younger employees think they are wiser than older employees..."*
	Do what they want, when they want	*"The young people do just what they want to when they want to."*
	Incompetent	*"The age. I feel the younger ones can't do the work the way they are supposed to do it."*
	Inexperienced	*"I just feel that the older people here like myself have more experience than all the young people here in the workplace."*
	Playful; sociable	*"Stereotypes about teenagers. All teenagers are playful and would rather drink and party..."*
	Racist	*"I also think the younger generation are a little racist towards the other groups..."*
	Technologically advanced	*"...Youngsters are so advanced technologically. They have all this gadgets and everything is so easy for them."*
	Undermined	*"...The younger people feel undermined by the older."*

Table 3 provides an illustration of stereotypes that participants have with regard to age. Participants indicated that they stereotype both young and old individuals working within their organisation.

Old: Individuals of an older age are stereotyped as being all-knowing, conceited, not adaptable, not energetic, not technologically advanced, resistant to change, set in their ways, serious and slow. It is also believed that they have an impact on productivity. They are also perceived as having a negative attitude towards younger individuals, and specifically in this regard older individuals are viewed as not providing younger individuals with opportunities for growth, being narrow-minded about youth, and not trusting the youth with responsibility. Nevertheless, older individuals are also positively stereotyped as being experienced, helpful, perfectionist, knowledgeable and respected.

Young: Young individuals are viewed negatively to be conceited, doing what they want when they want, incompetent and inexperienced. They are furthermore stereotyped as being racist, sociable, and undermined. On the other hand, they are stereotyped positively as being playful, and technologically advanced.

Table 4

Out-group stereotypes: Work-related dimensions (50)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Work-related dimensions	Lengthy duration in organisation	All-knowing; conceited	*"People that have been here longer think they own the mine, they know everything."*
	Short duration in organisation	Not knowledgeable; inferior	*"Yes, length of service in the company. I stereotype people who have shorter service than I do as lesser than me; they have less knowledge than what I have."*
	High positions	Avoid interacting with lower positions	*"And like all bosses, they do not mix with the ordinary workers."*
		Conceited	*"The bosses think that they are better than us. Don't even want to shake your hand, they fear they will dirty their hands."*
		Controlling	*"...All managers are control freaks."*
		Give preferential treatment	*"If the foreman likes you, you will be favoured."*
		Greedy	*"...all bosses are greedy."*
		Narrow-minded	*"...Well, maybe one stereotype that I have is that you don't challenge managers. I think our*

Table 4 continues

			managers are not open as much as they claim superficially, that they are open to new ideas and all that, in reality actually that is not the case..."
		Not hardworking	*"But I think people in higher positions give their work to other people, thus they do less work."*
		Receive preferential treatment	*"There are people in my workplace in higher positions, who are treated in a more special way than others."*
		Rude	*"...Therefore, I assume that everybody in top management or high positions is rude...".*
		Unhelpful	*"People who are in higher positions than I am, most of them are not willing to listen to me when I have an idea or complaint."*
		Unknowledgeable	*"...Supervisors don't really know anything ..."*
	Females in high positions	Not readily accepted within high positions	*"Women in positions of authority should prove themselves as being strong enough to do the job."*
	Males in high positions	Readily accepted within high positions	*"When positions of authority arise, men are given preference."*
	Low positions	Hardworking	*"...lower level people have to work harder...."*
		Inferior	*"People who hold lower positions, for me it is just like answering the phone."*
		Knowledgeable	*"...People in the ground are the ones who know everything."*
	High qualification	Broad general knowledge; Insightful	*"People who have studied and those who have not studied, specifically at a university, I can conduct a better conversation with them. They have a broader general knowledge and better insight into life."*
	High qualification with no experience	Incompetent	*"...I believe that having a certain qualification does not necessarily mean you are an expert and competent in what you do. You need to have adequate experience for you to be competent. So people who only have qualifications and no experience are not really competent in their work."*
	Low qualification	Lack initiative	*"Yes, people without matric cannot write letters or take any initiative."*
		Limited frame of reference; immature reasoning	*"For instance people with only a certain level of education, their frame of reference is very limited so is the way they understand and approach things and the maturity they handle things in life with."*
		Narrow-minded	*"People will tend to stick to their frame of reference because it is their reality but they don't see the bigger picture."*
		Unintelligent	*"You would associate the person with*

Table 4 continues

		being...stupid, because they don't have a degree."
	Unable to talk sense	*"I don't think people that do not have education can talk sense."*
	Undervalued	*"If people do not have qualifications I find it difficult to take their reasoning into consideration.*

The above-mentioned table illustrates stereotypes that are held by individuals regarding work-related dimensions such as duration employed within the organisation, position within the organisation, and qualifications of others within the workplace. These stereotypes can be regarded as stereotypes that are based on external or organisational dimensions. Following is a discussion of each of these dimensions:

Duration in organisation: Individuals who have been working in the organisation for a longer period of time are negatively stereotyped as being all-knowing and conceited. On the other hand, individuals who have been working in the organisation for a shorter time are stereotyped as unknowledgeable and inferior.

Positions: Individuals occupying higher positions are stereotyped as avoiding interaction with lower positions, conceited, controlling, giving and receiving preferential treatment, greedy, narrow-minded, not hardworking, unknowledgeable, rude, and unhelpful. All stereotypes mentioned were negative in nature. Individuals occupying low positions are negatively stereotyped as inferior and positively stereotyped as being hardworking and knowledgeable. Females in high positions are specifically stereotyped as not being readily accepted within these positions, while males are contrastingly stereotyped as being readily accepted in higher positions.

High qualification: These individuals are perceived as being insightful and having a broader general knowledge; however, and more specifically, individuals with high qualifications but no experience are viewed to be incompetent.

Low qualification: Stereotypes about individuals who are not highly qualified are only stereotyped negatively. Characteristics associated with these individuals include that they lack initiative; they have a limited frame of reference and immature reasoning. They are further stereotyped as being narrow-minded, unintelligent, undervalued, and not being able to talk sense.

Table 5

Out-group stereotypes: Gender (39)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Gender stereotypes	Female	Competent	*"Yes, I do my work so the women can also do their jobs."*
		Competent with admin	*"I do not think we like admin, so one would say that the ladies' preparation and files is always spot on and ours not ..."*
		Emotional; sensitive	*"It's women, they are emotional beings and very sensitive..."*
		Gossipy	*"I think all women gossip."*
		Incapable of performing physical labour	*"It increases my perception of women not being able to do physical work."*
		Incompetent	*"...women cannot do the job."*
		Lack employment opportunities	*"I have never seen many women being given sufficient opportunities."*
		Neatly dressed	*"Yes, women must always dress neatly."*
		Not hardworking	*"The foreman thinks that all women just talk and do not do their work."*
		Unable to handle pressure	*"Women can't handle the pressure..."*
	Male	Aggressive	*"... Men, they are aggressive..."*
		Conceited	*"The men think they are better than us women."*
		Don't think; inattentive	*"I sometimes feel that men cannot think or listen to you as a woman."*
		Not adaptable	*"I think too much has happened and men find it difficult to adjust."*
		Non-empathetic	*"Men are less likely to be empathetic to certain situations."*
		Not hardworking	*"...Men are lazier than women."*
		Physically strong	*"...because males are stronger."*
		Poor with admin	*"Men are generally not good with admin and that is a fact."*

Table 5 demonstrates that participants stereotype both males and females who work with them in the organisation.

Females: Females are perceived as gossipy, incapable of physical labour, incompetent, not hardworking, and unable to handle pressure. They are also stereotyped as lacking opportunities for employment. On the contrary, they are positively stereotyped as being

competent with regard to administration. They are also stereotyped as emotional, sensitive and neatly dressed.

Males: Males are stereotyped as being aggressive, conceited, non-empathetic, not hardworking, poor with administration, as well as not thinking and inattentive. They are also viewed as not being adaptable. These aforementioned stereotypes were all negative in nature. The only positive stereotype about males is that they are perceived as being physically strong.

Table 6

Out-group stereotypes: Culture/nationality (10)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Culture/nationality stereotypes	Sesotho men	Have final say; respected	*"...like in our South Sotho culture men are esteemed highly. A man is considered to have the final word. You don't challenge men because that is being disrespectful towards them even when you know they are wrong."*
	Zimbabweans	Educated; intelligent	*"The Zimbabweans, I have great respect for them, they are highly intelligent with good qualification."*
		Hardworking	*"Because they are from another country they work very hard to show they are smart."*
	Zulu men	Polygamous	*"...All Zulu men have many wives..."*

Table 6 illustrates culture/nationality stereotypes that participants hold of individuals. Specifically, Sotho males are perceived to be respected and also as having the final say. Zulu males are stereotyped as having many wives. Individuals coming from Zimbabwe are positively stereotyped as being educated, intelligent and hardworking.

Table 7

Out-group stereotypes: Simultaneous shared internal dimensions (8)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Simultaneous shared internal dimension	Black male	Patronising; power hungry	*"Black men are very patronizing and power-hungry..."*
	Black male; White male	Dislike wise women	*"...Black and White men they do not like women who think they are clever."*
	Black young male	Attention seeking; conceited	*"Young Black males always want to be noticed and always have to ask a question, even though it may not be applicable. They must have the last say and show*

Table 7 continues

			that they are better.”
	Indian male	Conceited	*“Indian males are arrogant.”*
	Old male	Surly	*“The older men are always surly.”*

The above table provides an indication of stereotypes that are based on more than one internal dimension simultaneously. In other words, individuals do not only stereotype others as solely belonging to one social group (for example race), they stereotype individuals as belonging to more than one social group at once (for example race and gender). Following is a discussion:

Race and gender: Black males are negatively stereotyped as being patronising and power hungry (as indicated by a Black female). Black males who are young are stereotyped as being conceited and always seeking attention (as indicated by a White male). Both Black and White males dislike wise females (as indicated by a Black female). Indian males are stereotyped as being conceited (as indicated by a White female).

Gender and age: Males who are older are stereotyped as being surly (as indicated by a White female).

Category 2: In-group stereotypes

Findings of this study indicate that individuals do not only stereotype others, but they also experience stereotypes about themselves. The stereotypes with the highest frequency rate are race stereotypes (90), and age stereotypes (41), and gender stereotypes (39).

Table 8

In-group stereotypes: Race (90)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Race stereotypes	Black	Incompetent	*“...they have an opinion that they won't get a good service from me being an African.”*
		Noisy	*“Yes I think stereotypes do exist. We are Black and people think we are loud.”*
		Not hardworking	*“...People from other races tend to think of Blacks as being lazy...”*
		Not readily accepted within high	*“...There are still people that believe in this organisation that as a Black person you are not*

Table 8 continues

	positions	*supposed to work in higher positions...”*
	Not time efficient	*“Another thing, when we are late for a meeting I will get remarks like ‘she is late, African time’.”*
	Racist	*“I do believe that people might think I’m racist, because I’m Black.”*
	Receive preferential treatment	*“Yes because I'm Black people think I will grow faster than them in the company.”*
	Uneducated	*“People think that Black people are not well educated.”*
	Unintelligent; unknowledgeable	*“...The clients normally think that Black people, especially the White ones, are stupid or they don't know a lot of things. That's what I have experienced in the banking environment.”*
	Noisy	*“...when people say Black people are loud.”*
	Unintelligent, incompetent; unknowledgeable	*“...they will call you names like you are stupid, useless and lacking information regarding the core business of the institution.*
Coloured	Abusive; criminal	*“I am a stealer, I am abusive.”*
	Come from Cape	*“Most people stereotype me as coming from the Cape because I am a Coloured; however I actually hail from Bloemfontein.”*
	Extroverted	*“...Due to the fact that I am Coloured people expect me to be...extroverted when I am actually not.”*
	Gangsters; drink a lot	*“Yes, because some people do think that Coloured people are all gangsters and drink a lot. You do get that a lot...”*
	Noisy; impulsive speakers	*“Many people think that Coloureds are noisy and say things just as they see them, but that is stereotyping because I am responsible.”*
	Relaxed	*“...Coloured people go with the flow.”*
	Rude	*“Yes because I am Coloured people think I am rude...”*
	Undervalued	*“I made a statement earlier about coloured people being sidelined.”*
Indian	Criminal; materialistic	*“...I know that people have this idea that Indians are crooks and they like money...”.*
	Enterprising	*“People may also think that because I am an Indian I just want to sell them something, or like a loan.”*
	Excel at Mathematics	*“...They are also good in Maths so me being in the finance department is not a surprise to other people.”*
	Religion frowned upon	*“Being Indian or Hindu in a workplace that is Christian has in the past caused many people to stare at me, almost waiting for a reaction from me during Bible reading.”*
	Untrustworthy	*“People like to believe that Indian people are not to*

Table 8 continues

		be trusted."
White	Conceited; self-centred	*"...People still have this notion that Whites are self-centred and look down on other people from other racial groups".*
	Dominate Black people	*"To be honest, racial. Blacks always think that the Whites want to dominate them."*
	Easily get dismissed	*"In our organisation a stereotype exists that we can be easily dismissed..."*
	Give preferential treatment	*"Yes races, because the Black people think that I will give the Coloureds preference in certain situations, and this is not necessarily the case..."*
	Know their place	*"Our White people know where our place is."*
	Racist	*"Yes, because I am White people think I am a racist."*
	Speak of other races	*"Yes the White people talk in groups, the White people also talk about the Black people..."*
	Successful; wealthy	*"Yes, staff views me as being wealthy and successful because of race. Black people stereotype White employees as more successful."*

Table 8 illustrates the different stereotypes that participants experience with regard to their race.

Black: These individuals are perceived as being incompetent, noisy, not hardworking, racist, not time efficient, unintelligent, unknowledgeable and uneducated. Other stereotypical beliefs about Black people include that they are not readily accepted within high positions and that they receive preferential treatment. All stereotypes were negative in nature.

Coloured: Coloured individuals were viewed as coming from the Cape, noisy, impulsive speakers, relaxed, rude, and undervalued. They are also stereotyped as engaging in bad behaviour such as drinking, being abusive, being criminal, and being gangsters.

Indian: These individuals are perceived negatively as being criminal, materialistic, untrustworthy, and they are questioned with regard to their religion. They are positively stereotyped as being enterprising and excelling in Mathematics.

White: White individuals are perceived as being conceited, self-centred, dominant (especially towards Black individuals), and racist. They are also stereotyped as getting dismissed easily

and speaking about people that are a different race from them. They are positively stereotyped as being successful, wealthy, and knowing their place.

Table 9

In-group stereotypes: Age (41)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Age stereotypes	Old	Good work ethic	*"Yes, our older group was taught certain work ethics and we still work accordingly."*
		Incompetent	*"...if you are old you cannot perform and that is not true. I am a bit older than my colleagues and they treat me as if I cannot perform my duties properly..."*
		Mature; professional	*"...Older people are expected to behave more mature, professional, and be role models to the younger ones."*
		Reached end of career	*"Sometimes you feel that they see me as this old lady who is near the end of her career."*
		Resistant to change	*"Yes, certain young people see me as too old to be doing this type of work because there is change daily..."*
		Role models	*"I realise that when new teachers arrive they see me as the older person...but I feel that we need to set the example and as the months progress I set the example for them."*
	Young	Bossy	*"...People think I am bossy and young...".*
		Incompetent	*"And being young, other people may not see you as capable to do specific tasks."*
		Inexperienced	*"The youth and the learned group, and we don't have enough experience."*
		Intimidated when supervising over older person	*"We all are from different eras and we differ, but often when you are young and you are appointed as an older person's supervisor you feel intimidated."*
		Not serious; fun loving	*"The stereotype is that older people see all youngsters as fun loving and not serious about their work."*
		Playful	*"...You know how old people are, they seldom laugh, while our young people like to make jokes ..."*
		Undervalued	*"Yes my age. I am young and not always taken seriously."*
		Uneducated	*"Yes, because I am young, people think I am not qualified..."*

The table above provides an illustration of age stereotypes as experienced by participants of this study. Stereotypes are experienced by both younger and older individuals.

Old: These individuals are stereotyped as being incompetent, resistant to change, and they are viewed as reaching the end of their careers. They are positively stereotyped as mature, professional, being role models, and having a good work ethic.

Young: These individuals are perceived as being bossy, incompetent, inexperienced, uneducated, and undervalued. Stereotypical characteristics that are further attributed to young individuals include that they are not taken seriously but are rather seen as playful and fun loving, and they feel intimidated when supervising an older person.

Table 10

In-group stereotypes: Gender (39)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Gender stereotypes	Female	Adaptable	*"We women adjust easier."*
		Ambitious	*"...you women want to be bosses."*
		Employ females	*"They think because I am a woman I just want to employ women."*
		Fulfil traditional role	*"...They believe, especially the men, that as a woman you belong in the kitchen and have to dress in skirts..."*
		Hardworking	*"...in most cases we work harder than what they do."*
		Incapable of performing physical labour	*"Oh no that makes me angry. Yesterday I was at a place when a man stated that I would never be able to carry that box."*
		Incompetent	*"They tend to think as a woman, "how are you doing it?" they seem to think it is a man's world."*
		Poor quality work	*"...Gender, because we are women and now the people tend to think the work we produce is not as good as the work of a man..."*
		Underestimated	*"...because people underestimate me because I am a woman."*
		Undermined	*"Yes, as I said because I am a woman certain men believe that it is their culture not to take instructions from a woman."*
		Unknowledgeable	*"...the industry that I am in is very male dominated, therefore I deal a lot with males who think that because I am a female...I am not competent and I have a limited understanding and knowledge..."*

Table 10 continues

		Undervalued	*"...a woman will say something but a man will not always pay attention to this."*
		Work hard to prove oneself	*"...We woman, not just I, have to work twice as hard before we get any recognition."*
	Male	High remuneration	*"Men get higher salaries than females."*
		Not suited for computer work	*"Yes, some people think that this job is inappropriate for a man, especially in my culture men are not supposed to sit in front of a computer all day."*
		Suited for physical labour	*"...men have to do all the outside work."*

Table 10 demonstrates the gender stereotypes that participants perceive about themselves. Stereotypes are associated with both males and females.

Females: Females are perceived as being incapable of physical labour, incompetent, not knowledgeable, underestimated, undermined and undervalued. There is also a belief that their work is of poor quality and that they only employ women. It is also believed that women should fulfil traditional roles such as working in the kitchen and wear traditional attire such as skirts. More positively, they are viewed as being ambitious, adaptable and hardworking.

Males: They are perceived as not being suited for computer work; however, they are suited for physical labour. They are stereotyped as being highly paid.

Table 11

In-group stereotypes: Occupation (31)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Occupation	Educators	Avoid principal	*"...Nobody wants to speak to the principal because then we must discuss work and we don't like that."*
		Blamed for faults; not hardworking	*"Parents believe that you have very little to do and as parents they are always right and the educator is always wrong."*
		Lack of better job	*"The fact that people think that you were too stupid to study anything else."*
		Unintelligent	*"The children immediately think that you have limited intellectual abilities."*
		Work half day	*"We only work half day."*
	Female educators	Undermined	*"Female teachers are seen as the minority."*
	Male educators	Responsible for work outside classroom	*"...but it might be because we as male teachers do all the work outside the classroom."*

Table 11 continues

		Responsible for sport	*"Some men possess sporting skills and should then organise all sporting events and activities."*
	Older educators	Competent; experienced	*"Older teachers have more experience in how to deal with certain situations in the school."*
		Limited extramural activities	*"I am already in the above 50 category and I am not regularly involved with coaching sport."*
		Not hardworking	*"People assume that the older you get, the less you have to do."*
	Young educators	Hardworking	*"Younger teachers work very hard and do most of the work."*
		Undermined	*"Children think they can walk over younger teachers."*
	Art educators	Menial subject	*"In my subject it is that Art is an easy subject and you just draw pictures."*
	Drama / Art educators	Loud; spontaneous	*"...the type of subject I give, one would expect that a person teaching Drama and Art would be spontaneous and loud."*
	Science educators	Difficult subject	*"In my subject, everybody stereotypes Science as being difficult..."*
	Finance	Boring; moody	*"Yes people think that financial employees are moody and boring."*
		High remuneration; highly qualified	*"Yes, people believe that we are highly qualified and get paid too much."*
		Incompetent	*"They think that I cannot handle financial documents, and yet that is what I do."*
		Menial job	*"People will think I sit and type all day and do parrot work."*
		Procedural	*"People think we financial people and very guideline driven."*
		Rigid	*"Things are either right or wrong."*

Table 11 provides an indication of occupational stereotypes that participants experience regarding their own occupations. Occupations that were found to be stereotyped were education and finance.

Education: These educators are employed in either primary or secondary schools. It is believed that educators avoid the principal at the school. Educators are negatively stereotyped as being blamed for faults, not hardworking, unable to find a better job, unintelligent and only working half day. More specific stereotypes are also experienced within the education

profession. These include stereotypes about educators from different age and gender groups. Specific stereotypes with regard to the subjects that educators teach are also experienced.

Gender stereotypes: Female educators are perceived as being undermined, whereas male educators are stereotyped as being responsible for sport and work outside of the classroom.

Age stereotypes: Stereotypes about older educators include that they are competent and experienced. Negative stereotypes that they experience are that they have limited extramural activities and that they are not hardworking. On the other hand, younger educators are stereotyped as hardworking and being undermined.

Subject-related stereotypes: Both Art and Drama educators are negatively stereotyped as being loud and positively stereotyped as being spontaneous. Art educators are also stereotyped as teaching a menial subject, whereas Science is perceived to be a difficult subject.

Finance: Participants working in the finance sector also experienced stereotypes about their own occupation. They may either be working in a bank or within a financial department of an organisation. Participants working in finance are viewed as boring, moody, incompetent, fulfilling a menial job, and being procedural and rigid. They are more positively stereotyped as being highly qualified and receiving high remuneration.

Table 12

In-group stereotypes: Physical appearance (21)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Physical appearance	Attractive	Unable to think outside the box; Unimaginative	*"Well, when people look at your body and you have a doll's face they think that you cannot think outside of the box and you have no imagination."*
	Blondes	Incompetent	*"Yes, my co-workers assume that because I'm blonde I can't do my job as well as them..."*
		Not taken seriously	*"...and because I'm blonde they don't take me or my work seriously."*
		Unintelligent	*"I have blonde hair and will often be stereotyped as a dumb blonde and I have to endure many jokes."*
	Large people	Eat a lot	*"Yes that larger people eat a lot, like takeaways, as in everyday."*

Table 12 continues

| | Unsuccessful | *"Make remarks about my weight and that I will not get anywhere due to my weight."* |

Table 12 illustrates the stereotypes that participants experience because of their physical appearance. Attractive individuals are viewed as unimaginative and not being able to think outside the box. Blondes are viewed as incompetent and unintelligent, and they are not taken seriously. It is believed that large people eat a lot and that they will be unsuccessful in life because of their weight.

Although stereotypes about physical appearance can be regarded as external dimensions of diversity, there are indeed certain physical characteristics that one cannot change about oneself, such as one's natural look (attractiveness) and natural hair colour.

Table 13

In-group stereotypes: Culture/nationality stereotypes (14)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Culture/nationality stereotypes	Foreigner	Consider nationality when seeking employment	*"...when it comes to employment it is also considered that you are a foreigner, so they take that into consideration ..."*
		Speak different language; unfamiliar with South African lifestyle	*"Yes, as a non South African, it is normally believed that I speak a language different from any South African language, and that I am not exposed to the modern South African lifestyle."*
	Zimbabwean	Hardworking	*"If they say the Zimbabweans are hardworking then you are going to start working hard because that is what they feel about you."*
		Poor	*"I come from Zimbabwe and the perception is that Zimbabweans are poor, you are viewed with that kind of attitude."*
		Unintelligent	*"If negative, if they say Zimbabweans are not intelligent, they are dumb, you will feel offended..."*
	Portuguese	Greasy; unhygienic	*"I think people think that Portuguese people are greasy and because of this we will be unhygienic."*
		Successful	*"Also that people think Portuguese people are always very successful and well off in their own businesses."*

Table 13 demonstrates stereotypes that participants experience with regard to their culture/nationality. Participants indicated that because they are foreign, their nationality

influences employment decisions. Foreigners are also stereotyped as speaking a foreign language, and being unfamiliar with the lifestyle of South African individuals. More specific stereotypes existed with regard to Zimbabweans who are seen as poor, unintelligent, however, also hardworking. Portuguese individuals are perceived as being greasy, unhygienic and successful.

Table 14

In-group stereotypes: Simultaneous shared internal dimensions (11)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristics	Response
Simultaneous shared dimensions	Black female	Bully; disrespectful	*"...As an African female they see you as a bully because you cannot give them what they want. Males would tell you, you do not have respect because I do not give in to their demands..."*
		Work hard to prove oneself	*"Yes. I think being a Black African female you always have to work twice as hard than everybody else to prove your worth..."*
	Coloured females	Wild	*"...all Coloured girls are wild..."*
	Indian females	Dependant; incompetent	*"Yes people think I am not competent enough because of stereotypes surrounding Indian women, that they are not independent."*
Age stereotypes	Old female	Experienced; helpful	*"So that could be a stereotype that I am the older lady with experience...and they can come to me with their problems."*
	White female	Submissive	*"...especially because I am a White woman and have to help a Black man he will think that I must be submissive to him..."*
	Young female	Disrespected	*"They probably judge me. I am 22 years old and female, they either feel intimidated because I am in their age group or they feel they can mess around with me."*
		Treated differently	*"No, I don't associate myself by type, although I feel that occasionally people treat me differently because I am a woman and still young in my career."*

The abovementioned table provides an indication of in-group stereotypes where individuals stereotype themselves as belonging to more than one group simultaneously.

Race and gender: There is a belief specifically with regard to Black females that they are bullies and disrespectful. However, they are also viewed as having to work hard in order to

prove themselves to others. Coloured females are perceived to be wild and Indian females specifically are viewed as being dependent and incompetent. White females are stereotyped as submissive.

Gender and age: Older females are positively viewed as being experienced and helpful. Young females are treated differently because of their gender and age in the workplace and they are disrespected.

Table 15

In-group stereotypes: Work-related dimension (9)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Work-related dimension	High positions	Conceited	*"My colleagues don't want to speak in front of me in the tearoom due to my position. I think that they feel that I think I am better than them."*
		Disliked	*"People don't really like me because of the type of work I do, I supervise over them and make sure they follow the rules."*
	Females in high positions	Incompetent	*"People have the perception that being a female I will not be able to run the sports office effectively and efficiently."*
	Low positions	Hardworking	*"People think I don't mind being overloaded with work."*
		Helpful	*"Everyone thinks we don't mind doing other people's work and we want to help everyone."*
		Inferior occupation	*"Yes, top management may think I am a low-class worker."*
		Undervalued	*"...management positions and senior management definitely stereotype people on lower levels than themselves as less important, less access to resources and less decision making."*

Participants not only mentioned that they experience occupational stereotypes, they also mentioned that they experience stereotypes regarding work-related dimensions such as the position they fulfil within the organisation. Table 15 provides an account of stereotypes that are experienced by participants who are employed in either higher or lower positions within their organisation.

High positions: Participants occupying high positions are negatively stereotyped as being conceited and disliked. All stereotypes are negative. Specifically, females in high positions are also negatively stereotyped as being incompetent.

Low positions: Participants in low positions are positively perceived as hardworking and helpful, and negatively stereotyped as being undervalued and inferior.

Table 16

In-group stereotypes: Language (7)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Language stereotypes	Afrikaans	Expected to communicate in Afrikaans	*"...You are an Afrikaans person so you will offer your training only in Afrikaans, give your lectures in Afrikaans..."*
		Incapable of speaking English	*"Many people think that none of us can speak English because our home language is Afrikaans."*
	Not Afrikaans speaking	Ignored	*"Yes, people won't talk to me because I can't speak Afrikaans."*

Table 16 provides an indication of the language stereotypes that participants experience themselves.

It is believed that Afrikaans-speaking individuals should always speak in Afrikaans and that they are incapable of speaking English. Non-Afrikaans-speaking individuals are ignored by people who speak Afrikaans. Participants specifically made reference to the Afrikaans language. This may be because the majority of the participants who participated in this study were Afrikaans speaking.

Table 17

In-group stereotypes: Sexual orientation (7)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Sexual orientation stereotypes	Female homosexuals	Disliked	*"...people hate lesbians and I'm a lesbian myself."*
	Perceived homosexual	Specific hairstyle	*"Some people do believe that I am manly and even a lesbian because of the manner in which I wear my hair."*
	Perceived male homosexual	Artistic; fine features	*"Yes definitely, many stereotype me as gay because I am more delicate than the normal rugby player and*

Table 17 continues

		because I am artistic.”
Concerned with physical appearance; neat		*“Just because I am neat on myself and concerned with my appearance people call me gay.”*

Table 17 describes the characteristics that participants experience with regard to their sexual orientation. Males are presumed to be homosexual if they are artistic, concerned with their appearance, and have finer features. Females are presumed to be homosexual if they wear their hair in a certain way and female homosexuals are disliked by others.

Discussion

Outline of the findings

The objective of this study was to explore the most prevalent stereotypes that exist within selected South African organisations. More specifically, the objective was to determine what stereotypes individuals hold of others (out-group stereotypes), and what stereotypes are perceived about oneself (in-group stereotypes). Various stereotypes are experienced within organisations and include the following: age, gender, language, culture/nationality, physical appearance, sexual orientation, occupation, race, and other work-related dimensions. However, the stereotypes that were most often mentioned were race, gender, age, occupation, and other work-related stereotypes. This specific finding of this study is confirmed by Shani and Lau (2008) who indicated that race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes are indeed the most prominent stereotypes that exist. Attention will therefore be given to these different stereotypes, but before the discussion commence on these aspects, the discussion concerning the internal and external dimensions found in this study is evaluated further.

Internal and external dimensions of diversity

Based on the different stereotypes that were reported by participants, it is clear that the most frequently mentioned stereotypes (i.e. race, gender and age stereotypes) are based on the internal dimensions of diversity (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005), which are dimensions that individuals are born with and have a major influence on them (Grobler *et al.*,

2002). Occupational stereotypes were also frequently mentioned; however, these stereotypes are based on the external dimensions of diversity (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005). Other stereotypes mentioned that were also based on the external dimensions of diversity included physical appearance and qualification. Stereotypes that were based on the organisational dimensions of diversity included stereotypes based on duration in the organisation and position (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010) According to Grobler *et al*. (2002), individuals can change, modify and discard external dimensions throughout their lives. This may mean that if individuals are experiencing stereotypes specifically related to external dimensions, they are able to change these stereotypes by changing the external dimension that they are stereotyped about. The opposite is true with regard to stereotypes about internal dimensions, therefore individuals may learn to accept or challenge these stereotypes. However, Kreitner and Kinicki (2010) state that individuals' attitudes, perceptions, expectations, and behaviour towards others are influenced by both these internal and external dimensions. This is evident, especially when reviewing the out-group occupational stereotyping elements mentioned. Occupational stereotyping (as an external dimension) seemed to be the most frequently mentioned out-group stereotype by the participants; however, when the researcher inspected the data further, it seemed internal dimensional elements were specified or associated with certain occupations. This will be evaluated later on in this article. Firstly, the researcher's aim is to explore the different internal and external dimensions mentioned by participants.

Race stereotypes

The findings of this study show that all four indigenous race groups present in South Africa are stereotyped (i.e. Black, White, Indian and Coloured). Results indicate that Black individuals are stereotyped more than any other race group and Indian individuals are stereotyped less; however, this may be a result of Indian individuals being the race group that is the least represented in this study. Stereotypes with regard to all four race groups are also mostly negative in nature. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2010), racial stereotypes are specifically challenging, because they result in an occurrence called micro-aggression. They further explain by saying that micro-aggressions are "biased thoughts, attitudes, and feelings" (p. 196) that exists at an unconscious level. These micro-aggressions can also influence individual's behaviour and unfavourably influence people of colour. According to Finchilescu (2005), South Africa's history of apartheid makes it particularly difficult to

overcome racial barriers. Generations who had not directly experienced apartheid, have nevertheless still been influenced by individuals such as their parents and older community members who were directly influenced by apartheid. Expectations and lack of knowledge have therefore been transferred between generations through socialisation, thereby causing stereotypes to continue thriving.

Gender stereotypes

Findings of this study demonstrate that both males and females are stereotyped (out-group stereotyping) and that both genders experience stereotyping themselves (in-group stereotyping). Furthermore, as is the case with age stereotypes, stereotypic attributes about different genders are predominantly negative in nature. According to Crawford (2012), gender stereotypes have not changed much since the 1950s, irrespective of changing attitudes and behaviour with regard to gender. However, some negative stereotypes about females have reduced. The author demonstrates this by indicating that females have apparently become kinder, but not more capable. Although gender stereotypes are widespread, they have a more negative influence on females than on males (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

Stereotypes about females may result in discrimination, such as them being excluded from executive positions, a phenomenon referred to as the glass ceiling (Johnson & Powell, 1994; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). According to Schein (2007), male mangers still believe that females do not possess the characteristics to be successful executives; however, female executives view both males and females as successful executives. The findings of this study concur with the above-mentioned literature. The findings of this study showed that females are not readily accepted within high positions, whereas the opposite is true for males. Regardless of these attitudes, both males and females do not feel optimistic about the probability of the consequences of gender stereotyping changing in the near future (Wood, 2008).

Age stereotypes

Findings of this study indicate that stereotypes exist about both young and old employees and that they are stereotyped in equal amounts. Participants indicated that they stereotype both young and old (out-group stereotyping), and that they are also aware of stereotypes that exist

with reference to their age group (in-group stereotyping). Stereotypes about both young and old individuals were mostly negative in nature; however, a few positive stereotypes were apparent. This can be explained by a study conducted by Casper, Rothermund, and Wentura (2011) that found that both negative (e.g. young – when discipline or manners are asked for; old – nursing home) and positive stereotypes (e.g. young – having to cope with multiple demands or new situations; old – taking care of others) of both young and old individuals become activated and are influenced by the contexts within which young or old individuals are found, or the particular behaviour that is demonstrated by young or old individuals.

According to McCann and Giles (2002), age stereotypes about older individuals do not only occur within the workplace, but are prevalent in society in general. Age stereotypes about older workers have an effect on the behaviour of the older person being stereotyped (Maurer, Barbeite, Weise, & Lippstreu, 2008). When older individuals become aware of being negatively stereotyped, it leads to various negative consequences, such as choosing to retire, although they would rather stay on in the organisation, and choosing not to commence with demanding work tasks (Greller & Stroh, 1995). On the other hand, positive stereotypes about age were associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, especially for older individuals (Kornadt & Rothermund, 2011). Greller and Stroh (1995) further state that older individuals may also internalise these stereotypes, whereby they start behaving in ways that are consistent with the stereotypes, resulting in a self-fulfilling prophecy. However, in a related study, Kornadt and Rothermund (2012) found that although to a lesser extent, younger adults also engage in this process of internalising stereotypes.

Occupational stereotypes and other work-related stereotypes

Various organisations formed part of this study, and within these organisations various occupations exist; however, it was found that not all the occupations that formed part of this study were stereotyped. Occupations that were stereotyped included: academics, educators, finance, engineers, human resources, police, and restaurant waitrons. Almost all stereotypes about the different occupations were negative in nature and may be a result of individuals wanting to feel better about themselves and their own occupations. Sampson (1999) explains this by stating that stereotyping serves an ego-defensive function, whereby stereotyping others negatively help individuals feel better about themselves. Eagly and Chaiken (1993) further elaborate by stating that individuals are protecting their self-concept against internal and external threats by engaging in these negative beliefs about others. Another explanation

of occupational stereotypes being negative may be that individuals are ignorant of positions and occupations different from their own. Their ignorance may be a result of the lack of interaction with other occupational groups, thereby leading them to form their own perceptions about occupations different from their own. Although not based on a specific occupation, various stereotypes based on work-related dimensions were also found to exist (especially with regards to out-group stereotypes) and these included: duration of employment within a company, position within organisation, and qualification.

Stereotypes based simultaneously on more than one dimension

Many of the stereotypes that were mentioned by participants were simultaneously based on more than one dimension. For example, Black males, Coloured females and young females are stereotyped to have certain characteristics. According to Arnold *et al*. (2010), this is not a strange finding. They explain by saying that the stereotypes individuals have are usually very specific in nature such as older Black men and older White women rather than being very broad and including for example all females or all Black people. Furthermore, as already established from numerous stereotype literature (see Plous, 2003; Whitley & Kite, 2006), individuals categorise both themselves and others into groups, by stereotyping more than one dimension at once, it may only mean that individuals see themselves and others as belonging to more than one group. The researcher found this finding to be very interesting, because none of the participants were asked to indicate how they stereotype themselves or others as belonging to one specific group (example race). The participants spontaneously mentioned that they see themselves and others as belonging to more than one group at once.

Contradictory nature of stereotypes

Some of the stereotypes that were mentioned by participants were contradictory in nature. For example, females were viewed as being both competent and incompetent and older educators are viewed as being both hardworking and not hardworking. The reason for this may be that individuals differ with regard to their perceptions of stimuli. According to Creed (2011), this process is known as the paradox of perception, whereby individuals view the same situation in a noticeably different manner. Furthermore, based on the social constructivism paradigm that is used in this study, individuals differ with regard to their reality and the meanings they attach to certain phenomena (Niewnhuis, 2010). Therefore,

stereotypes assigned to different groups may be quite contradictory because what one individual views as his/her reality, may be different from the next person's reality.

Positive and negative nature of stereotypes

It is evident that both out-group and in-group stereotypes were mentioned and were predominantly negative, although only a few positive stereotypes were also found to exist among the participants. Literature has shown that in-group members may be more accepting of a positive stereotype about their own group if they believe that the stereotype holds truth or if they are of the opinion that they indeed possess this characteristic that they are stereotyped about (Gómez, Seyle, Huici, & Swann, 2009; Swann, Polzer, Seyle, & Ko, 2004). However, Newman (2012) indicated that even positive stereotypes can disadvantage a group. The author explains by providing an example. The stereotype of females being more nurturing and kinder than males may seem flattering, but when one investigates further, this positive stereotype can produce harmful expectations and may limit the individual's possibility to be viewed as unique in his/her own right. However, Plous (2003) follows a different point of view. According to the author, discrimination and bias towards groups are not necessarily attributed to negative feelings towards those groups; it can, however, be because individuals give preferential treatment towards their own group. This phenomenon where people are inclined to favour their own group over others is known as in-group bias, and may explain the positive stereotypes individuals attribute to their own group (Aberson, Healy, & Romero, 2000). Contradictory to the aforementioned, both in-group and out-group stereotypes are predominantly negative in nature.

There are various explanations for the negative nature of stereotypes. According to Mullins (2010), individuals, instead of admitting that they have unattractive characteristics, attribute these characteristics in exaggerated amounts to other individuals. This may be true since the social identity theory was premise in the designing of this study. By doing this, individuals project their negative attributes onto others, thereby protecting themselves and engaging in a phenomenon called projection. Whitley and Kite (2006) add to this by indicating that individuals also engage in self-protection when their self-esteem is being threatened. Individuals therefore protect themselves by negatively stereotyping others before others can stereotype them. Furthermore, individuals have a need to belong to social groups; therefore, individuals may choose to express the beliefs and norms of the group (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

It does not, however, mean that individuals embrace or adopt the beliefs of the group; they may only choose to express them in order not to be ostracised from their group (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). To maintain this relationship with group members, individuals may therefore choose to also express the negative stereotypes of the group (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

Practical implications

Although the existence of stereotypes has been studied internationally, the study of stereotypes still remains limited within the South African context, especially from an emic perspective and utilising the social constructivism paradigm. By conducting this study among a diverse South African setting, it is now evident that out-group and in-group stereotyping may occur within the selected population. Of these, occupational stereotypes were mentioned the most for out-group stereotyping, while race stereotypes were the most prevalent for in-group stereotyping. This may be because a diverse work setting was included, which included a variety of occupations. Furthermore, the occupational stereotypes mentioned included in some instances race, gender and age connotations. Stereotypes that were mentioned were also predominantly negative in nature. Organisations therefore have to give specific attention to addressing and eliminating these stereotypes from the workplace by fostering awareness and educating their workforce about the debilitating nature of these stereotypes. Because of South African organisations being so diverse, it may be challenging for them to address these stereotypes. Furthermore, because stereotypes are mostly negative in nature, organisations should address these stereotypes before leading to negative consequences for both the individual and the organisation.

Limitations and recommendations

This study has various limitations. The researcher omitted age from the biographical questionnaire, therefore being unable to describe the population in terms of age. However, Barak and Shiffman (1981) indicate that including age in research may be problematic when chronological age and self-perceived cognitive age do not match, especially when the researcher wants to predict attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, omitting age from the biographical questionnaire may not be a serious limitation. From the findings it was evident

that with age stereotyping participants mostly mentioned it in relative terms (i.e. old, young) with few direct, chronological ages being assigned when mentioning age stereotyping.

In addition, the participants of this study may have felt uncomfortable disclosing information to the researcher and fieldworkers. This may be because the researcher and fieldworkers differed from some of the participants with respect to gender and race, thereby influencing the information collected. Furthermore, participants were not directly asked if they experience specific stereotypes such as gender stereotypes; therefore, participants may have neglected to mention stereotypes that they experience in this regard.

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2010), top management needs to be dedicated and supportive with regard to eradicating organisational practices that strengthen stereotypes. One way in which managers can accomplish this is by becoming aware of his/her own stereotypes and by focusing on performance-related information only, rather than on personal differences that are not pertinent to a specific situation (Werner *et al*., 2007). Employees themselves can also make an effort to reduce their own stereotypes. Plous (2003) confirms this and indicates that although stereotypes are pervasive and unrelenting, individuals can change their stereotypes by making an effort to reduce their own stereotypes, especially when meeting people for the first time (Bergh, 2011). According to Galinsky and Moskowitz (2000), stereotypes can also be reduced by being empathetic toward groups different from our own. Furthermore, according to Plous (2003), one can make an effort to not interact with individuals that are likely to discriminate or have biased attitudes, thereby not leading oneself into temptation to stereotype.

Various recommendations can also be made with reference to future research. A qualitative study can be conducted where the researcher specifically asks participants to indicate both positive and negative stereotypes that they associate themselves and others with, thereby enabling the researcher to investigate the prevalence of both positive and negative stereotypes. In addition, interviews can be conducted with different race, gender, age and occupational groups, where the researcher specifically requests of the participants to indicate the specific stereotypes that they experience with reference to their race, gender, age and occupation. Lastly, different questionnaires should be developed that measure the different characteristics (as found in this study) of different race, gender, age and occupational groups. Individuals who complete these questionnaires can rate themselves and others on the given

characteristics. It will also be interesting to assess (when measuring age stereotypes) if employees classify themselves as old or young when assigning out-group and in-group stereotypes.

Since the specific focus of this article was to determine the out-group and in-group stereotypes employees experience within their work context, it was in most cases easy to identify who is the out-group and who is the in-group (i.e. female vs. male, old vs. young). The in-group specifically was easy to identify (in the descriptions provided by the participants and their biographical information). In the findings it were reported which race group stereotyped whom the most (under the respective tables). However, it will be worthwhile to further investigate the simultaneous dimensions identified in this study. What constitutes out-group stereotyping? In this dataset, a few examples can be provided, but to understand what the researcher means with this statement, one example will be provided. Black males were out-group stereotyped by both a Black female and a White female. They are both female, but from different races, but they stereotyped the same dimensions with different characteristics. The reasons behind this should be explored further.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that individuals from selected South African organisations are aware of various stereotypes that exist within their working environments. Furthermore, individuals do not only stereotype others, but they are also aware of stereotypes that others hold about them. The stereotypes that were found to be most prevalent were that of race, gender, age, occupation, and other work-related dimensions. Race, gender, and age stereotypes stem from the internal dimensions of diversity, whereas occupational and work-related stereotypes (i.e. qualification) are based on the external dimensions of diversity. Stereotypes based on internal dimensions of diversity were more frequently mentioned by participants (even when stereotyping various occupations). These stereotypes were mostly negative in nature; however, positive stereotypes about these groups were also found.

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CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH ARTICLE 3

EXPLORING OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES AS EXPERIENCED BY SOUTH AFRICAN EMPLOYEES

Orientation: Various occupational stereotypes exist that employees hold about themselves within organisations.

Research purpose: The objective of this study is to investigate the occurrence of in-group occupational stereotypes within selected South African organisations within the social constructivism paradigm and utilising an emic perspective.

Motivation for the study: Work is an important human activity that consumes a great deal of one's time. It therefore seems fitting that occupational stereotypes are investigated within the South African context. These occupational stereotypes influence both the individual and the organisation. During the pilot study of this research project it was found that out-group occupational stereotypes are prevalent within the South African work context, however very few in-group occupational stereotypes were prevalent, and therefore the need to further explore in-group occupational stereotypes within this study.

Research approach: Qualitative research from a combined phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was employed to achieve the objectives of this study. Both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this study. Employees from selected South African organisations ($N = 336$) were involved in this research study. These organisations formed part of the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data, and data analysis was achieved by means of thematic analysis.

Main findings: It is evident that employees experience in-group occupational stereotypes within selected South African organisations. In-group occupations that were stereotyped included: academics, administration staff, educators, finance, human resources, librarians, mining, nursing, and restaurant waitrons. Stereotypes were predominantly negative in nature.

Practical/managerial implications: Organisations should make every effort to eliminate stereotypes from organisational processes such as decision-making. Opportunities should be provided for individuals working in different occupations to interact and getting to know one another. By doing this, occupational stereotypes that employees experience can be addressed, deemed subjective or even shown to be inaccurate.

Contribution/value-add: In-group occupational stereotypes are not only experienced internationally, but also in selected South African organisations. Usually, in-group

stereotyping is positive, but it was found that in-group occupational stereotypes are rarely positive. It was also found that in-group occupational stereotypes were based on internal dimensions such as race, gender and age.

Keywords: Stereotypes; social constructivism; emic perspective; occupational stereotypes; in-group stereotypes; selected South African organisations.

Introduction

Within organisations, there is a diverse set of people, and by recognising and understanding differences in people one can understand the workings of the organisation (Butler & Rose, 2011). Furthermore, the manner in which these individuals perceive each other may contribute to stereotypes that influence not only the occurrence and resolution of conflict within the organisation, but also the organisational climate (Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, & Kinicki, 2011). Consequently, by dealing with diversity and stereotypes, the organisational climate can be managed (Buelens *et al.*, 2011).

People tend to stereotype others based on their group membership, and these groups can be based on, for instance, demographic information, occupational information, the organisation where individuals work, or any other subgroup that the individuals can logically think of (Colquitt, Lepine, & Wesson, 2011). It's evident from the above that stereotyping is seen as a social component (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010) and can be studied under the social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1979). This identity theory is based on the assumption that an individual may identify him-/herself strongly towards a single social group or variety of social groups. Within the context of work, people may derive some of their identity from the work group they occupy within an organisation (Hogg & Terry, 2000). There may be a general agreement among employees in organisations of the characteristics attributed to the members belonging to these groups; however, they are not necessarily correct (Luthans, 2010). When someone is categorised as belonging to a specific occupational group, the stereotypic beliefs of that occupational group are transferred to that person, although no effort has been made to verify those characteristics in that person by getting to know them (McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). This usually happens with out-group stereotyping. In-group stereotyping happens when an individual believes that the social group he or she belongs to is stereotyped (Bergh, 2011). These stereotypes (either in-group or out-group) that individuals have about occupational

groups are learned from a young age, from sources such as our families and the media, and have therefore become fixtures that influence the effective everyday functioning of an organisation, and more specifically, they influence and hinder interaction between individuals (Martin & Fellenz, 2010; Newman, 2012). It can therefore be said that researching the experience of occupational stereotypes seems plausible.

Research purpose and objectives

The objective of this study is to investigate the occurrence of in-group occupational stereotypes among individuals working in selected South African organisations. This article follows Article 2 (Chapter 3) from this thesis. This article (and research question) was included since the researcher found from the pilot study that numerous out-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned, however, only a few in-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned (also see findings of Article 2). For this reason, the researcher included the interview questions specifically related to in-group occupational stereotyping (see data collection section). Please refer Chapter 1 for the full account of the rationale of this article. The following sections will follow: literature study, empirical study, discussion, and limitations and recommendations.

Literature review

Stereotypes from the social constructivism paradigm

The researcher of this study employed the social constructivism paradigm from an emic perspective to reach the objectives of this study. Researchers that make use of the social constructivism paradigm believe that individuals construct their own reality of social phenomena, and that there exists no one single reality of a phenomenon (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Because different individuals have different realities of the same phenomenon, there are multiple realities and multiple interpretations of the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, the meanings that individuals attach to a phenomenon or situation are socially constructed; therefore, the meanings that individuals attribute to things are influenced by their interaction with others (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The meanings individuals attach to their reality can also be influenced by their personal experiences and the cultural and historical

context within which they find themselves (Creswell, 2009). By focusing on the social constructivism paradigm, the researcher of this study is interested in understanding the meaning that individuals attach to their in-group occupational stereotypes. Therefore the emic perspective will be utilised in order to explore the in-group occupational stereotypes as experienced by employees within the current South African work context.

Stereotypes can be defined as preconceived ideas that individuals have about others. When stereotyping, individuals assign certain characteristics to individuals belonging to a specific group (Martin & Fellenz, 2010). These characteristics that individuals assign to others may be favourable or unfavourable, and accurate or inaccurate (Buelens *et al*., 2011; Luthans, 2010). However, according to Jussim (2012), some stereotypes might be correct. Crawford (2012) elaborates by explaining that if individuals, for instance, have a stereotype about a computer scientist being male and secretaries being female, they are probably correct, because the proportions of females and males in these occupations do indeed differ. Stereotypes are based on observations that individuals make about their social world and these observations are then investigated by researchers by asking individuals to approximate the possibility or chance that an individual member belonging to a specific social category possesses a certain characteristic (Whitley & Kite, 2006). However, it should be kept in mind that stereotypes are not always correct with respect to every individual forming part of a specific social category (McShane & Von Glinow, 2014). Individual differences and variability are therefore present among members of a specific social category (Luthans, 2010). Therefore, when interacting with others, individuals should consider that not all individuals forming part of a specific group are the same; individuals should embrace the uniqueness of each individual, no matter the group he or she belongs to.

Furthermore, by stereotyping, individuals make sense of the world in which they live, they simplify their perceptual processes and they make judgements of others instead of dealing with complex information (Mullins, 2010), thereby freeing their minds to deal with other more relevant issues. Based on the aforementioned, it is evident that the simplifying nature of stereotypes can be beneficial within the organisational setting (Martin & Fellenz, 2010). However, Martin and Fellenz (2010) further indicate that stereotypes can lead to negative consequences, such as race, gender, age and disability discrimination within organisations, which prohibits individuals from appreciating others' individuality and differences.

Managers, supervisors, subordinates, colleagues, customers, young people, old people, minorities, women, white- and blue-collar workers, accountants, engineers and salespeople are groups that are commonly stereotyped in existing organisations (Luthans, 2010; Martin & Fellenz, 2010). It seems that no matter the occupation or position you fulfil within the organisation, you cannot escape being stereotyped. Based on the aforementioned, it is evident that stereotypes are not only made about internal dimensions such as race, gender and age, but also about external and organisational dimensions (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). For the purpose of this study, in-group occupational stereotypes will be the focus.

Occupational stereotypes

According to Lipton, O'Connor, Terry, and Bellamy (1991, p. 129), an occupational stereotype is "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation, about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's suitability for that occupation". Many stereotypes exist about specific occupations within organisations (Leonardi & Rodriquez-Lluesma, 2013). Occupational stereotypes are triggered when individuals from various occupations gather to work together on a mutual task, such as architects, engineers, and contractors (Loosemore & Tan, 2000). Examples of occupational stereotypes are that lawyers are manipulative, accountants are conforming, detail-oriented and dull, artists are moody, union members are defiant, aggressive, combative and anti-management, and librarians are serious and undemonstrative (Bergh & Geldenhuys, 2013; Martin & Fellenz, 2010; Mullins, 2010). It seems that stereotypes exist about numerous occupations, which leads to the question: "How is your occupation being stereotyped?".

Some occupations are also perceived to have a gender orientation (Okudan & Mohammed, 2006). Males and females are perceived as being suited for different types of occupations and should perform different types of jobs (White & White, 2006). This is because males and females are stereotyped as having different characteristics and temperaments suitable for different occupations. This phenomenon is known as occupational sex-role stereotyping (Miller & Hayward, 2006) or occupational gender stereotyping (White & White, 2006). Occupations that are seen as feminine or more suitable for females are, for example, manicurist, nursing, preschool education, clerical or secretarial duties, and masculine positions are seen as those of managers, miners, construction workers and truck drivers (Brescoll, Uhlmann, Moss-Racusin, & Sarnell, 2012; Crawford, 2012; Lamberton & Minor-

Evans, 2010; Larkin, 2008). It seems that both males and females are expected to fulfil certain positions; therefore, when individuals fulfil occupations that they are not expected to, it may mean that they are not accepted unconditionally within those occupations.

When choosing a career or occupation, Miller and Hayward (2006) indicate that an individual's decisions are often influenced by their perceptions of the workplace and occupations, and the extent to which occupations are gender stereotyped. Students are inclined to base their career decisions and their academic majors on stereotypical beliefs about certain occupations (Baxter & Kavanagh, 2012). At an early age of two and a half years, children are already able to differentiate between feminine and masculine occupations (Gettys & Cann, 1981). Occupational gender stereotyping strongly predicts children's preference for a certain career, even more so than salary, perceived significance, complexity or supervisory responsibilities (Stockard & McGee, 1990). In a study conducted by Miller and Hayward (2006) among male and female pupils between the ages of 14 and 18, results indicated that both male and female pupils preferred occupations that were dominated by their own gender and which they perceived as being stereotypically gender appropriate. Evidently so, the process of stereotypes starts at a very early age, which influences children to make career choices early on. However, it seems that some of these children may restrict themselves from choosing the career they really want to pursue just to avoid being stereotyped because they occupy certain occupations.

Consequences of stereotypes

When stereotypes about other individuals exist, it influences the manner in which individuals respond to others, and consequently, how these stereotyped individuals respond to them (Werner, Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter, & Viedge, 2007). For example, a manager's perceptions of his/her employees influence the manner in which employees are treated, and consequently have an influence on the performance of employees (Werner *et al.*, 2007). Martin and Fellenz (2010) add to this by stating that differences in perceptions between managers and employees can lead to conflict and misunderstandings; however, this can be reduced when managers and employees make an effort to understand each other. Therefore, no matter the occupation or position individuals fulfil within the organisation, one should always try to get to know someone first before relying on one's stereotypes.

Furthermore, according to Mondy and Noe (2005), when stereotyping, one forms mental images of what a typical employee should look like, and when there is a discrepancy between the actual employee and the mental image, it may lead to a person being unfairly judged. They further add to this by stating that when supervisors allow their stereotypes to influence employee ratings it can be damaging to employee morale, it is obviously illegal and it can result in costly legal action. Likewise, Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly, and Konopaske (2012) state that when inaccurately stereotyping others, it may lead to unfair decisions when it comes to promotions, motivation programmes, job design and performance appraisal. They also indicate that stereotyping can lead to selecting the wrong person for a position. This specifically is harmful when taking into consideration the shortage of highly skilled individuals within the labour force, consequently leading to the rejection of an already limited pool of applicants. The consequences of stereotyping differ in severity and may result in occupational segregation and economic disadvantage for those groups involved (Arnold *et al*., 2010).

When people are aware that there are negative stereotypes about their group's ability, they may fear that these stereotypes are correct and that their behaviour will confirm a negative stereotype (Crawford, 2012; Plous, 2003). Furthermore, given that all jobs are assessed and evaluated by others within the organisation, being evaluated can cause anxiety and lead to poor performance on various tasks when individuals fear that they might confirm the negative stereotype (Crawford, 2012; Shani & Lau, 2008; Steele, 1997). Stereotyping can also accentuate differences in status and power, lead to sexist behaviour, and conclude in discrimination (Crawford, 2012).

It is evident that occupational stereotypes do indeed exist within organisations, and have various implications for both the individual and the organisation. It influences not only the career choice of young adults, but also influences decisions being made in organisations. It therefore seems necessary to investigate the occurrence of occupational and other work-related stereotypes within various organisations, more specifically, within the South African context.

Research design

The research design consists of the research approach, research strategy and research method.

Research approach

A qualitative design from both a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was used for the purpose of this study. Qualitative research attempts to understand a phenomenon that occurs in its natural setting (Niewenhuis, 2010). The aim is therefore to understand and interpret stereotyping from the view of the person experiencing it and especially from an emic perspective (Niewenhuis, 2010). The researcher of this study is therefore concerned with whether the participants experience in-group occupational stereotyping and their description thereof (Welman, Kruger, & Mitchell, 2005).

By doing a phenomenological study, the research is enabled to grasp the understanding and perspectives that individuals have about a specific situation; in this case, the experience of in-group occupational stereotypes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The only way in which the researcher of this study can fully grasp how participants of this study understand and perceive their in-group occupational stereotypes, is by employing hermeneutics, and thereby gaining a deeper meaning of what individuals attach to these stereotypes (Niewenhuis, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary for the researcher to understand whether the in-group stereotypes experienced by the participants pertain solely to their occupation alone, or do other elements or characteristics of the participant also play a role with in-group occupational stereotyping (i.e. race, gender, and age).

Research strategy

A case study design was followed to reach the objective of this study. A case study design is useful when a researcher wants to study and learn more about a social phenomenon, in this case in-group occupational stereotypes (Babbie, 2010; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). For the purpose of this study, multiple cases were included in order for the researcher to have an overall understanding of in-group occupational stereotypes as experienced by individuals from the South African work setting (Bromley, 1990). By employing the case study design

and by including multiple cases in this study, the researcher is able to gain a deeper understanding of how individuals within the South African work context experience stereotypes about the occupations they are employed in.

Research method

The research method consists of the research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

Research setting

Numerous employment sectors were included to form part of this research study. Employment sectors that were included in this study were the following: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and the restaurant industry. The reason for including multiple employment sectors in this study is so that the researcher can gain an overall and meaningful understanding of in-group occupational stereotyping as experienced by employees within the South African work setting. Organisations that formed part of the above-mentioned employment sectors were targeted to participate in this study. These organisations employed more than 50 full-time employees. Also, full-time employees within these organisations were approached to form part of this research study and, as far as possible were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Various roles had to be fulfilled by the researcher throughout various phases of this research study. Before this research study could commence, it was important for the researcher to first fulfil the role of planner. By planning this research study, the researcher considered aspects such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis. Both the researcher and fieldworkers had to fulfil the roles of interviewers, active listeners, and transcribers (Creswell, 2009). Here, the participants of this study were asked to answer a question specifically relating to their in-group occupational experiences. After interviews were conducted and transcribed, the

researcher, fieldworkers, and numerous independent co-coders acted as data analysts. The data analysis process was done rigorously in order to truthfully capture the experiences of participants regarding their in-group occupational stereotypes. During the entirety of this research study, the researcher and fieldworkers remained objective by not allowing their own personal belief systems to influence the research process (Creswell, 2009).

Sampling

A mixture of both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this research. Purposive sampling provides the researcher with a means to gather qualitative data, which enables the researcher to explore and interpret experiences, in this case, in-group occupational stereotypes. Participants are therefore chosen on purpose in order to answer a specific research question (Matthews & Ross, 2010). When participants are chosen based on their availability and convenience it refers to convenience sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2005). The employment sectors were selected because of their accessibility to participate in this study. When taking into consideration the research sample chosen, the following criteria were adhered to: 1) organisations employ 50 or more full-time employees; 2) employees were respectively employed in selected South African organisations from various employment sectors; and 3) employees, as far as possible were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation. By including diverse individuals working in selected organisations from various employment sectors, the researcher believed that she can gain an overall understanding of the experiences of participants within the South African work setting, especially with regard to their in-group occupational experiences.

Individuals working in selected South African organisations (N = 336) participated in this study. The majority of the participants were female (59%). More than half of the participants were White (56%), while 31% were Black. Approximately half of the participants resided in the North West Province (45%), whereas 23% resided in Gauteng. More than half of the participants (57%) spoke Afrikaans, whereas 13% spoke English. Most of the participants (71%) had acquired higher education and training, while 25% had obtained further education and training. Of all the participants, 25% were employed within primary and secondary schools, while 21% were employed within higher education institutions.

Research procedure

Consent to conduct this research was first received from organisations and then from full-time employees working within those organisations. Considering that 336 individuals formed part of this study, various fieldworkers (post-graduate students) assisted the researcher with data collection by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants of this study. In order to collect data for this research study, the researcher and fieldworkers attended a qualitative workshop on interviewing skills and techniques. To aid the researcher and fieldworkers with the process of interviewing, an interview schedule was developed in advance. The interview schedule was adapted in order for the participants of this study to clearly understand all interview questions. Before the interviews commenced, the researcher and fieldworkers explained the aim of the research to all the participants. Participants were assured that their participation in this research was voluntary, and that they could withdraw from this research study at any given time. They were also assured that their personal information would remain confidential. It was required of participants to give written informed consent before commencing with the interviews. Participants also agreed to be tape recorded during the interviews. The researcher and fieldworkers once again made certain that all the participants were familiar and comfortable with the aim and context of the research before conducting interviews.

Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews are especially useful when the researcher wants to understand the behaviours and experiences of individuals (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Furthermore, by doing semi-structured interviews, the researcher wants to understand how individuals experience and understand the social world in which they live (Matthews & Ross, 2010). During the interviews and to reach the objective of this article, the participants were asked to answer the following question:

1) *"Do you experience any stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?"*

The above-mentioned question was not the only question that participants were required to answer; however, only this specific question was the focus for this specific article. Additionally, the researcher found from the pilot study that various out-group occupational

stereotypes were mentioned, but only a few in-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned. Therefore, this interview question (in order to reach the overall objective of this article) was posed to all 336 participants. The reader of this specific article should also note that the overall purpose (especially concerning the use of the social constructivism paradigm with an emic perspective, and hermeneutics as one of the approaches) was to establish the overall in-group occupational stereotypes that are experienced by employees (which was why diverse sectors were included). However, as found in Article 2, most stereotypes centred towards the internal dimensions (i.e. race, gender and age) of the participant and the external dimensions (occupations) mentioned were usually oriented towards this as well (i.e. female manager, Black manager, etc.). The question was posed to the 336 participants in the following manners:

- "*From the previous question, you mentioned a few stereotypes that you experience about your own group. Additionally, do you experience any stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?*" – This question was posed to those participants who already mentioned alternative in-group stereotypes (as discussed in Article 2).
- "*From the previous question, you already mentioned a few occupational stereotypes that you experience about your own occupation. Do you experience any other stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?*" – This question was posed to those participants who already answered the previous interview question and mentioned in-group occupational stereotypes (as discussed in Article 2).

Data recording

Tape recorders were used with the permission of the participants. The reason for using tape recorders was to capture the exact spoken words of the participants when asking the interview question pertaining to this research article. Each interview was transcribed verbatim by either the researcher or fieldworkers. The researcher also checked the content and quality of the interviews that were transcribed by the fieldworkers. This also helped the researcher to gain an overall feel for the data that has been collected. The researcher ensured that tape recorded and transcribed interviews were stored securely and safely.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings it was very important that the researcher adhered to various criteria such as credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. The ways in which the researcher adhered to these criteria are discussed below:

Credibility: While conducting this research, good practice was at the order of the day. The researcher assured that the results of this study were reported in a truthful and honest manner (Bryman & Bell, 2011). By employing credibility, the researcher ensured that the data is transparent and makes sense and is believable to the reader (Matthews & Ross, 2011). The researcher further ensured that data analysis was done with rigour. The researcher also engaged in numerous discussions with independent co-coders and truthfully reported the experiences of the participants regarding their in-group occupational stereotyping.

Dependability: The research process was consistent, well documented and assessed (Schurink, Fouché, & De Vos, 2011). Records of the research process were kept safely and securely, although still being obtainable (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Dependability was ensured by the researcher by documenting all phases of the research process. The researcher especially paid attention to the write up of the methodological section of this research.

Transferability: This refers to the manner in which the results of the study can be generalised to different settings (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). The researcher used various sectors in collecting data, and within these sectors, organisations were selected that adhered to inclusion criteria (as described under sampling). By doing this, the researcher attempted to give an indication as to whether the findings are relevant to the wider South African workforce (Matthews & Ross, 2011).

Confirmability: The researcher and fieldworkers made sure that the views, assumptions and theoretical background of the research topic did not influence the findings of this study (Merriam, 1998). The researcher and fieldworkers ensured that they remained objective throughout the entire study by not allowing their personal belief systems to influence the data and by capturing the true experiences of participants regarding their in-group occupational stereotypes.

Ethical considerations

Doing research in an ethical manner was very important to the researcher; therefore, the researcher and fieldworkers adhered to the following ethical considerations at all times (Strydom, 2005):

Avoidance of harm: The researcher and fieldworkers made sure that no physical or emotional harm came to the participants of this study. The researcher and fieldworkers showed the utmost respect to all participants during the entire research process. The researcher and fieldworkers took care not to mislead or deceive participants, either by misrepresenting facts or withholding information (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Role clarification and expectations for all involved parties were done beforehand, in order to ensure that misconceptions during the research process are reduced.

Voluntary participation: Organisations and participants were not coerced to partake in this study (Rubin & Babbie, 2005), and the researcher and fieldworkers clearly stated the voluntary nature of this study to both the organisations and the participants. The organisations and participants were informed of the goal of the study, and the process to be followed. The researcher and fieldworkers also informed the participants that they can withdraw from the study at any given time.

Confidentiality: The researcher and fieldworkers assured the participants that their identity and personal information would remain confidential (Welman *et al*., 2005). Therefore, neither the researcher nor fieldworkers informed the participating organisations of the names of their employees who participated in this study. The names of the participants and employing organisations were also not mentioned during the reporting of the research results.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used in order to achieve data analysis of this study. By using this method, the researcher is able to identify, analyse, and report themes that have been found to exist within the collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the purpose of this article, the researcher asked the participants to answer one question with regard to their in-group occupational stereotypes. When analysing the data obtained from this question, the researcher

identified that there are various themes that can be deduced from the data gathered. The different themes represent a wide variety of occupations. The steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were used in order to adequately analyse the data collected for this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

All interviews (N = 336) that were conducted by either the researcher or fieldworkers were transcribed by either the researcher or the fieldworkers. Because such a large number of individuals participated in this study, various fieldworkers assisted the researcher to conduct and transcribe the interviews. To ensure quality, the researcher randomly checked transcribed interviews from each fieldworker. Thereafter, all 336 transcribed interviews were then added together to form one large dataset. The researcher read through the entire dataset and thereby became emerged in the dataset. This was a lengthy process; however, this was a very important step for the researcher to ensure validity of the data analysis. Numerous discussions were held with several independent researchers. This ensured that the researcher remained objective at all times during the entire research process.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Only one code (category in this case) was developed during this phase since there was only one interview question (i.e. "*What stereotypes do you experience about your own occupation?*"), and therefore only the responses of this question were analysed. This category was consequently labelled as in-group occupational and work-related stereotypes. During the pilot study it became evident to the researcher that individuals mostly experienced out-group occupational stereotypes and not many in-group occupational stereotypes; therefore, the reason for including this interview question. The researcher paid attention to all raw data by not disregarding any responses as unimportant, thereby ensuring the rigour of this step of the data analysis.

Step 3: Searching for themes

The researcher was able to develop preliminary themes for this one category. By reading through all the responses that have been transcribed for this category, the researcher created overarching themes such as academics and administrative staff (see findings for all other

themes). All themes and accompanying responses were respectively documented on a separate document. Sub-themes and characteristics were also created from here on. A separate theme was also created by the researcher. This theme included all the responses that did not fit into the overarching themes that were created. In answering the question, some participants responded by mentioning not their occupation or field of work, but rather elements that cannot be construed as an occupation (for instance qualification, or high position). Therefore, separate themes were developed for these elements. However, before the researcher disregarded themes as being insignificant, the researcher first commenced with the next phase of the data analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

During this step, the researcher refined all themes that were created. The researcher also considered the content of each of the themes together with accompanying sub-themes, characteristics and responses. By doing this, the researcher ensured that sub-themes, characteristics, and responses are indeed an accurate reflection of the accompanying theme. Once again, the researcher read through all the content of each theme to make sure that all sub-themes, characteristics, and responses were indeed placed within the correct theme. Here, changes are made where the researcher feels it necessary to do so. Once again, the researcher studies the entire dataset to ensure that all responses of the participants have been coded and that all sub-themes and characteristics are correctly assigned to each theme.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

By refining the themes further, the researcher is able to provide an indication of the important aspects regarding all themes. An analysis for each theme is written by the researcher (see findings). Where essential, sub-themes and characteristics were also refined. Themes and sub-themes were explained by the researcher after refinement was done. This was done by only making use of a few sentences (see findings). Themes, sub-themes, and characteristics (see findings) were decided upon, and the researcher again ensured that the content of each theme is an accurate reflection of the theme. It is important to notice that in the tables, some themes and sub-themes (i.e. education) correspond. This is to indicate that some participants experienced in-group occupational stereotyping towards the overall field. However, some participants experienced more specific in-group occupational stereotyping centred to other

additional qualities they possess (i.e. female educator; male educator), which rendered additional sub-themes. In order to be consistent, this was employed in all the tables of the findings (even though in some cases only one theme and subsequent sub-theme were identified).

Step 6: Producing the report

The researcher ensures that the reader of this study clearly and accurately understands the findings of this study. The researcher analysed the data together with numerous independent co-coders. Co-coders were employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field. The themes that were deduced from the data were clearly and consistently reported by the researcher in separate tables. To substantiate the findings of this study, the researcher made use of direct quotations from the participants.

Reporting style

Following data analysis, the researcher reported the themes, sub-themes and characteristics in table format. Direct quotations of participants were included to demonstrate the findings of the study and to give the reader of this study a clear, accurate, and truthful picture of the findings.

Findings

The results of this study were structured into a single category, namely in-group occupational and other work-related stereotypes. In this category, various themes, sub-themes, and characteristics are reported in various tables (according to each theme). The reader of this study should note that individuals within various occupations were stereotyped very specifically as also belonging to another social group (example female educator); for this reason, the researcher also made use of sub-themes and characteristics. Direct responses of participants are provided within the tables to substantiate findings. The frequency of the responses mentioned is indicated within brackets next to each theme. Frequency refers to the number of times that the specific theme was mentioned and not the number of participants

mentioning a specific theme. By employing replication logic (Yin, 1994), the researcher is able to view the frequency with which a certain construct was mentioned.

Category: In-group occupational and other work-related stereotypes

Within this category, participants were asked to provide an account of the stereotypes that they experience with respect to the specific occupation they fulfil. It is evident that the participants do experience occupational stereotypes and some even mentioned additional work-related stereotypes (pertaining to the themes, position and qualification). Examples of specific occupational stereotypes are provided within the tables below, together with relevant themes, sub-themes, characteristics and direct quotations. Below each table, a brief discussion follows explaining the findings of the study. Tables 1 to 11 provide an illustration of the different occupational and other work-related stereotypes that participants experienced.

Table 1

Occupational stereotypes: Education (144)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Education	Education	All-knowing; frustrated	*"Teachers are taken to be poor and frustrated people...Teachers are also taken as people who know it all".*
		Bad reputation	*"...I think that often there is stereotyping from the public and parents' side which places us in a bad light."*
		Blamed for poor performance of learners	*"Parents who say Maths is difficult, my child is going to battle and it is the teacher's fault."*
		Calling	*"...This is not true because some go into it for the love of teaching and not the financial rewards..."*
		Childish	*"Educators are children amongst adults and adults amongst children."*
		Dissatisfied	*"That all teachers are unhappy with their work..."*
		Disrespected	*"Years ago, 20-30 years ago the teachers, ministers and doctors had the respect of the community, this is no longer the case."*
		Have debt	*"...and that teachers have a lot of debt."*
		Helpful	*"Because educators are helpful."*
		High remuneration	*"Teachers have a half-day job, four long vacations and a huge salary. This is a misconception people have about teachers."*

Table 1 continues

		Inferior occupation	*"I believe that you have less recognition than in other occupations, you are regarded as less professional."*
		Lack of better job	*"People belittle educators because they believe you had nothing better to study."*
		Lots of vacation	*"People say that it is a half day job with very long holidays."*
		Low remuneration	*"That teacher's pay grade is low."*
		Not hardworking	*"Teachers are seen as lazy."*
		Organised; strict	*"People think that educators are always strict and well organised, which is not always the case."*
		Overworked	*"Teachers are underpaid and overworked."*
		Passionate about kids	*"People believe that teachers have a passion for children, which is not always the case."*
		Role models	*"Teachers should be examples...We're always looking over our backs before we do or say something."*
		Superior	*"People think that educators are high and mighty."*
		Unambitious	*"...you become an educator because you have no ambition in life."*
		Undervalued	*"Learners don't see the importance of becoming teachers in the future, see no value in it."*
		Unintelligent	*"Yes, people in other occupations think teachers are not as clever as they are..."*
		Unsociable	*"If a scholar would see me in a bar, they can't believe it because I'm a teacher and actually I'm just human."*
		Valuable	*"...very busy educating the next generation."*
		Work half day	*"Teachers only work half day..."*
	Black educators	Blamed for faults	*"Yes, most of the time when there is something wrong, Black teachers are the first suspects."*
	Coloured educators	Readily accepted within occupation	*"Yes, people think that teaching is only for the Coloured people, when I tell people I am a teacher they are not surprised because I am a Coloured."*
	Coloured and young educators	Undermined; taken advantage of	*"The leaders don't listen to you because you are a Coloured and young teacher, and they take advantage of you."*
	Female educators	Readily accepted within occupation	*"...women are far more acceptable in this profession."*
		Unintelligent	*"...and the fact that educators, especially female educators are stupid."*
	Male educators	Dominating	*"There is male domination."*
		Lack better job	*"Men teachers are only in education because they are incapable of doing something else."*

Table 1 continues

		Not hardworking	*"That they work half heartedly."*
	Older educators	Experienced	*"Yes older people who are more experienced in the profession..."*
		Undermined	*"The leaders don't take you seriously because you are an old teacher..."*
	Young educators	Enthusiastic	*"...the enthusiasm, many plans typical of a young educator."*
		Incompetent	*"There are older educators who think that because I am a young educator I am incapable of doing my work."*
		Inexperienced	*"...younger people who are less experienced."*
		Responsible for menial work	*"...the younger employees are given all the dirty work."*
		Uneducated	*"The older educator thinks you are not educated enough to teach the subject."*
	Drama educators	Careless; forgetful; unreliable	*"The fact that I am a Drama teacher, people who are in the Arts , are stereotyped as being careless, always late, forgetful and don't arrive for their appointments."*
		Disorganised	*"Drama teachers are disorganised and not systematic, this annoys me."*
	Language educators	High workload	*"Language teachers have a high workload."*
	Mathematics educators	Intelligent	*"Maths teachers are cleverer than example your Tourism teacher"*
	Foundation phase educators	Menial work	*"Foundation phase teachers cut and paste all day long, count to 50 and read a few sentences."*

Table 1 demonstrates numerous stereotypes that are experienced by individuals employed in education. These may be individuals employed within primary or secondary schools. This is also the theme with the highest frequency (144).

Educators are stereotyped in more negative ways. Stereotypes about educators include that they are viewed as being all-knowing, frustrated, blamed for poor performance of learners, childish, dissatisfied, disrespected, having debt, having plenty of vacation, low remuneration, unambitious, not hardworking, unintelligent, overworked, strict, undervalued, unsocial, and only work half day. Education is also seen as having a bad reputation and being an inferior occupation. Individuals are also only employed within education because of a lack on their part to find a better job.

However, a few positive stereotypes are also experienced by educators. These include that educators are perceived as being helpful, organised, passionate about children and teaching (calling), role models, superior (in contrast with negative stereotyping of education being seen as an inferior occupation), and valuable, which is also in contrast with the above-mentioned negative stereotyping of educators being undervalued.

Stereotyping about specific educators is also experienced. These are stereotypes about educators that differ with regard to their race, gender, age and subject that they teach.

Educators from different races: Black educators are viewed as being blamed for faults. Specifically, Coloured educators who are young are perceived as being undermined, even though they (Coloured educators) are believed to be readily accepted within the education system.

Educators who differ with regard to gender: Female educators are stereotyped as being unintelligent, although perceived as being welcomed within the profession. Male educators only experience negative stereotyping, which includes them being domineering, unable to find a better job, and not hardworking.

Educators from different age groups: Older educators are positively stereotyped as being experienced and negatively stereotyped as being undermined. Young educators are viewed as being incompetent, inexperienced, uneducated and responsible for menial tasks at school. The only positive stereotype is that young educators are perceived as being enthusiastic.

Educators responsible for specific subjects or phases: Drama educators are only viewed within a negative light, and are stereotyped as being careless, forgetful, unreliable, and disorganised. Educators responsible for language subjects are stereotyped as having a high workload. Mathematics educators are positively perceived as being intelligent. Foundation phase educators are stereotyped as doing menial work.

Table 2

Occupational stereotypes: Finance (30)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Finance	Finance	All-knowing	*"Some people may think, because you work in a bank you may know everything."*
		Boring	*"I have heard that people think that I am boring because I work in a bank."*
		Employable profession	*"...more and more Black, White and Coloured people would want go to into this field because of employment opportunities."*
		Good with money	*"...they are good with money because they are in banking."*
		Greedy	*"Yes, I have heard that individuals who work with money and finances are greedy..."*
		Highly qualified	*"I think because people think since I work in finance I must have this long chain of qualifications, financial degrees to back it up..."*
		High remuneration	*"People might also think because you are a teller you get a lot of money."*
		Knowledgeable	*"...of course if you are working in finance you are supposed to know everything about finance, be it student accounts, creditors etc. People expect you to know everything that has to do with finance..."*
		Low remuneration	*"...most of the people think that because I am a teller I do not make a lot of money, that's one of the things I've picked up lately."*
		Menial job	*"...people in the institution think our work entails just to press a button and things will happen automatically..."*
		Organised; strict	*"People who work in banks are very strict and organised..."*
		Overestimated	*"... People expect us to work wonders at times."*
		Popular; unpopular	*We are popular when there are profits, but unpopular when there are losses and high costs."*
		Policemen	*"Financial staff is the police in the organisation."*
		Professional looking	*"They would often say that people that work in a bank always look professional."*
		Suspicious	*"People think that financial staff do not trust other people because they are always double checking everything."*
		Unambitious	*"...and that I don't have other aspirations".*
		Uneducated	*"Yes, people believe because I am employed at a bank that I have no qualifications."*

		Withholds budgets	*"The finance department is withholding budgets."*
	Females in finance	Focused	*"Female financial staff is more orientated than male counterparts."*
		Incompetent	*"Men believe that women cannot do financial work as well as what they can."*
		Lack of better job	*"In the past it was believed that if a woman did not know what career to choose she should go and work in the bank."*

Table 2 provides a description of stereotypes that are experienced about individuals working within a financial environment. This environment may include people working within banks or financial departments within various organisations.

Stereotypes about these individuals include that they are viewed as being all-knowing, boring, occupying a menial job, greedy, receiving low remuneration and uneducated (specifically individuals working within banks), strict, unambitious, being overestimated, and they are unpopular when things are going badly for the organisation. Furthermore, they are stereotyped as being the policemen of the organisation, they are suspicious and withhold budgets. Positive stereotypes with regard to individuals working in finance are that they are perceived as being good with money, highly qualified, receive high remuneration, knowledgeable, organised, professional looking, and popular when the organisation is doing well. This profession is also stereotyped as being an employable profession.

Stereotyping is also experienced by females occupying financial positions within organisations. They are stereotyped as being focused, and they are negatively stereotyped as being incompetent and only employed within banking because they are unable to find a better job.

Table 3

Occupational stereotypes: Restaurant waitrons (28)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristics	Response
Restaurant waitrons	Restaurant waitrons	Blamed for poor food	*"Yes, waiters are always blamed when the food is of poor quality."*
		Friendly; helpful	*"Yes it is expected of me as a waiter to be helpful and friendly towards other people."*
		Inexperienced	*"Customers think of us as...inexperienced."*

Table 3 continues

	Inferior occupation	*"People tend to look down on us in this occupation because they see us as waitrons."*
	Lack of better job	*"...Think that because of what I do I can't do any better."*
	Low remuneration	*"Yes, waiters earn very little money."*
	Not hardworking	*"Yes people believe that we do not work hard..."*
	Part-time job	*"People always think that it is a part-time job, where it is actually a full time job to some of us."*
	Poor	*"Yes, people think waiters are poor."*
	Unambitious	*"It is believed that waiters do not have ambition."*
	Uneducated	*"People who work as waiters are regarded as people with very little education."*
	Unintelligent	*"Yes, people think that because you wait on tables you are stupid..."*
	Viewed as students	*"Think you are a student."*

Table 3 provides an indication of the stereotypes that restaurant waitrons experience.

Nearly all the stereotyping that they experience is negative, except for the positive stereotype of being friendly and helpful. Negative stereotypes include being blamed for poor food, being inexperienced, receiving low remuneration, not hardworking, poor, unambitious, unintelligent and uneducated. Furthermore, restaurant waitrons are perceived as being inferior and not being able to find a better job. This occupation is viewed as only being suitable as a part-time job and individuals employed within this occupation are most likely perceived to be students.

Table 4

Occupational stereotypes: Academics (19)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Academics	Academics	All-knowing	*"...someone who knows it all."*
		Glorified administrators; ignorant about bottom line; undermined	*"...you find individuals undermining your input due to the stereotypical assumption of being a glorified administrator, or when business is being discussed and one is overlooked because of lack of understanding bottom line in business."*
		Inferior occupation	*"This occupation is not as good as an engineer's."*
		Intelligent	*"Yes, people think you are super brainy if you are a lecturer."*
		Knowledgeable	*"If people hear that I am a lecturer they think I know everything about a specific study direction,*

Table 4 continues

			this is not necessarily the case."
		Lack of better job	*"You wanted to be a doctor but since you couldn't make it you are lecturing."*
		Not hardworking	*"Yes, in this occupation people are inclined to think you are lazy, do nothing."*
		Superior occupation	*"Yes, especially as a lecturer people look up to me, they are considered a little higher."*
		Unintelligent; viewed as teacher	*"Yes definitely, classifies me as a teacher, and see me as an idiot..."*
		Undervalued	*"...people who feel my teaching position is not of value, but it's my choice."*

Table 4 provides a description of the various occupational stereotypes as experienced by academics who are employed at various South African higher education institutions.

The stereotypes that academics experience are mostly negative. Academics are perceived as being all-knowing, glorified administrators, ignorant about bottom line, not hardworking, undervalued, and undermined. Academics are also viewed as occupying an inferior occupation, and only employed within the occupation due to the lack of a better job. However, academics are also positively viewed as being in a superior occupation and being knowledgeable. They are also perceived as being both intelligent and unintelligent.

Table 5

Occupational stereotypes: Administration staff (16)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Administration staff	Administration staff	Incompetent; naive	*"Yes, I'm naïve and I don't know what I'm doing, because I am a PA."*
		Inferior occupation; undervalued	*"...You are treated as less important than other people, you are less capable and of lesser value than your academics."*
		Lack of better job	*"... I couldn't find a better job."*
		Uneducated	*"...They also tend to assume that one does not need to be educated to excel in the field I am in..."*
		Unintelligent	*"Academics think if you are working in the support department you are kind of dumb..."*
		Unknowledgeable	*"... So I'm thinking they should rather try to know what one knows before they can conclude that just because I am doing admin I don't know anything."*

Table 5 provides an indication of the various occupational stereotypes as experienced by administration staff. These participants are employed within various organisations; however, occupying the same position.

Administration staff experience only negative stereotypes about the specific occupation that they are employed in. They are stereotyped as being inferior, incompetent, naive, unknowledgeable, unable to find a better job, unintelligent, uneducated, and undervalued within the organisation. The researcher found that most of the characteristics were relevant for administrative workers in the academic field, although some of it was also shared in other sectors.

Table 6

Occupational stereotypes: Librarians (16)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Librarians	Librarians	Hair in a bun; wears glasses	*"...the stereotype of "lady" with the bun and the glasses and that kind of stuff..."*
		Ignorance about occupation	*"Yes I believe that people do not always know what we are doing."*
		Menial job	*"I think that many people think we are here to stamp the books and pack away papers, so I think there is stereotyping surrounding our profession."*
		Not hardworking; high remuneration	*"...They think that this group of people don't really do much but they get paid a lot of money."*
		Silences people	*"For example the librarian...looks at you peculiarly and tells you to keep quiet."*
		Strict; not helpful; surly	*"People think that the library assistants could be strict, surly and not always very helpful."*
	Black librarian	Inferior	*"Yes, I am seen as a clerk, and the White man who works with me and does the same work, is seen as the librarian."*

In Table 6, a description is provided of individuals who are employed as librarians within a higher education institution. Stereotypes that they experience are all negative, except for one stereotype, which is that they receive high remuneration.

Stereotypes that they experience are that they are not hardworking, unhelpful, surly, strict, silence people and wear glasses and their hair is tied up in a bun. They are also believed to

occupy a menial job and that people are ignorant about exactly what their occupation entails. More specifically, Black librarians are stereotyped as being inferior.

Table 7

Work-related stereotypes: Position (16)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Position	High positions	Knowledgeable	*"...stereotype me as more knowledgeable."*
		Receive preferential treatment	*"People with higher ranks receive more benefits and does less work to deserve it."*
	Females in high positions	Incompetent	*"But men still make remarks about women not being able to manage."*
	Males in high positions	Readily accepted in occupation	*"Occupation I'm in they still think being a manager should be a man's job..."*
	Low positions	Incompetent	*"Yes, people on a higher level think that we that are on a lower level are not capable of doing our work."*
		Irresponsible; needs supervision	*"Management think we are irresponsible; always want to check our every move as if we are still school children. If you are an employee, you need to be controlled. They think we cannot work by ourselves. We constantly need somebody in control."*

Table 7 provides a description of stereotypes as experienced by participants who occupy high or low positions within organisations.

Participants employed in high positions are viewed negatively as receiving preferential treatment. However, they are also more positively stereotyped as being knowledgeable. Females in high positions are particularly stereotyped negatively as being incompetent, whereas males holding high positions are readily accepted within these positions.

Participants who hold low positions are stereotyped as being incompetent, irresponsible and needing supervision.

Table 8

Occupational stereotypes: Human resources (15)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Human resources	Human resources	Administrators; not self sufficient	*"HR or people working in HR are always regarded as administrative just dealing with paperwork. Just follow processes and procedures. They can't think for themselves, they just take instructions from the seniors and implement decisions. In other words they are just implementers."*
		Bad reputation	*"...people always think badly if they hear you are in HR".*
		Boring	*"People think we are boring..."*
		Inferior occupation	*"...do not see us as their equal partners. Unfortunately we are. They see us as below them you know..."*
		Undervalued	*"Yes. HR is often deemed by the more technical professions as being a fluffy discipline that adds no direct value to the company."*
	Human resource specialist	Academics	*"Yes, HR generalists label HR specialists as 'academics'. They label us because most of the specialists are busy with their postgraduate studies and most of the generalists have either certificates or HR diplomas."*
		High remuneration	*"...they think that we are earning more than them. They think we are earning a lot, more that what they are earning."*
	Human resource practitioner	Isolated from reality	*"As HRD practitioners we are isolated from reality."*

Table 8 provides an indication of the stereotypes that are experienced by individuals employed within human resources. These individuals also experience mostly negative stereotypes with regard to their occupation.

They are stereotyped as being administrators, not self-sufficient, boring, and undervalued. The human resource profession is also stereotyped as having a bad reputation, and being inferior. Human resource specialists are specifically perceived as being academics, since many of them are continuing with further studies; they are also stereotyped as receiving high remuneration. Human resource practitioners are specifically stereotyped as being isolated from reality.

Table 9

Occupational stereotypes: Nursing (14)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Nursing	Nursing	Not passionate about nursing	*"Yes, people think I am a nurse because I want a salary at the end of the day..."*
		Lack of better job	*"People think that I am not equipped enough, so I settled for nursing, because I couldn't be a doctor..."*
	Black nurses	Have an attitude	*"Many patients approach Black nurses with attitude, because they think that we have an attitude towards the work that we are doing."*
		Readily accepted within occupation	*"...it is seen as a Black occupation."*
	Indian nurse	Incompetent	*"By facial expressions, they would specifically ask for a doctor, people tend to ask questions when with an Indian nurse more than with another race."*
	Older nurses	Experienced	*"Patients think that older nurses have more experience..."*
		Knowledgeable	*"When patients come to the hospital, they want to be treated by older nurses, because they believe they have more knowledge."*
	Young nurses	Ordered around	*"Because I am a young nurse, so older nurses think they can order me around, because they are seniors."*
	Female nurse	Competent	*"Yes it is only with the patients because they believe that only a female nurse can do the job."*

Table 9 illustrates the stereotypes that are experienced by those who are employed within the nursing environment.

Stereotypes that are experienced include that nurses are not passionate about their job, and that they are only working within nursing because they were unable to find a better job. Black nurses are readily accepted within this occupation, although they are stereotyped as having an attitude and Indian nurses are viewed as being incompetent. Older nurses are stereotyped positively as being experienced and knowledgeable, whereas younger nurses are being ordered around by older nurses. Female nurses are positively perceived as being competent.

Table 10

Occupational stereotypes: Mining (9)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Mining	Mining	High remuneration	*"Yes, people always assume that miners earn a lot of money."*
		Inferior occupation	*"Many people think that they are better than those who work at the mine."*
		Numerous benefits	*"People believe our lives are easier due to the benefits which we receive on the mine."*
	Females in mining	Incompetent	*"People still think that women cannot do the job, so their behaviour towards women in the mining industry is negative."*
		Should be excluded	*"Negative in the sense that they feel women do not belong here."*

The above-mentioned table provides an indication of the stereotypes that are experienced by individuals working within the mining industry.

They are positively stereotyped as receiving high remuneration and numerous benefits. However, they are negatively stereotyped as fulfilling an inferior occupation. Females who are employed within mines are negatively stereotyped as being incompetent and it is believed that they should be excluded from the mining industry.

Table 11

Work-related stereotypes: Qualification (7)

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristic	Response
Qualification	High qualification	Conceited	*"Yes, that people who are well qualified believe that they are superior to others."*
		Excluded	*"...those who are known to be the educated ones are also in most cases excluded."*
		High remuneration; uncomplicated life	*"People think I make a lot of money and that I have it easy because I have a Tech degree."*
		Open to change	*"People who are qualified are more open to change..."*

The above-mentioned table indicates stereotypes as mentioned by participants who are in possession of a high qualification.

They are stereotyped in a negative manner as being conceited and excluded. However, they are also stereotyped in a more positive manner as receiving high remuneration, leading an uncomplicated lifestyle and being open to change.

Discussion

<u>Outline of the findings</u>

The overall objective of this study was to investigate the existence of in-group occupational stereotypes within selected South African organisations. It is clear from the results collected that occupational stereotypes are indeed prevalent within the occupational groups interviewed. Stereotypes existed about the following occupations: academics, administration staff, educators, finance, human resources, librarians, mining, nursing, and restaurant waitrons. Furthermore, it is important to note that participants were asked specifically if they experience stereotypes concerning their occupation. In the previous article (Chapter 3 of this thesis), the researcher was more interested to assess what elements of in-group and out-group stereotypes are experienced (pertaining to the reality of the participant within his or her social world which in this case is his or her workplace) and in what frequency these elements were mentioned. It was evident that many participants experienced in-group stereotyping in higher frequency concerning their race, gender and age, but occupational elements were mentioned in low frequency. However, it was evident from the previous article that out-group occupational stereotyping was frequently reported to exist. In order to facilitate in-depth thought about in-group stereotypes, participants were asked specifically what in-group occupational stereotyping they experience. The following sections will further analyse the findings.

Negative vs. positive in-group occupational stereotypes

When participants were specifically asked to provide an account of the stereotypes that they experience within their occupation, the stereotypes mentioned were mostly negative. According to Feldman (2013), individuals are inclined to believe that their in-group is better than their out-group, thereby simultaneously increasing the positive features of their in-group and undervaluing out-group members. Therefore, the findings of this study actually

contradict literature. According to Luthans (2010), long-term exposure to negative stereotypes can lead to various problems occurring in organisations, such as the stereotyped individuals having inferiority anxiety and lowered expectations. Gibson *et al*. (2012) provide an explanation of the more negative nature of stereotypes. They suggest that when you know yourself, it is easier for you to correctly understand others, and your own characteristics influence the characteristics you observe in others. People who are accepting of themselves tend to view others more positively. It can therefore be concluded that when individuals view the behaviour of other individuals as being positive or negative, they are being influenced by their own positive or negative character.

Some of the stereotypes that were mentioned by participants were contradictory in nature. For example, academics and educators were viewed positively and negatively as being both an inferior and a superior occupation and individuals working in finance were viewed as receiving both high and low remuneration. The reason for this may be that individuals differ with regard to their perceptions of stimuli. According to Creed (2011), this process is known as the paradox of perception, whereby individuals view the same situation in a noticeably different manner. Furthermore, when referring to the social constructivism paradigm, it can be seen that different individuals have different realities (Niewenhuis, 2010), and can therefore also explain the finding of this study. Therefore, it may also depend on who individuals perceive as their out-group.

Race, gender and age orientation of occupational stereotypes

Many of the in-group occupational stereotypes that were mentioned by participants had a race, gender or age orientation. To explain, when participants were asked about the specific stereotypes they experience about their occupation, some participants answered the question more specifically towards their race, gender or age group. This finding is substantiated by literature. According to Arnold *et al*. (2010), individuals usually do not have broad stereotypes (e.g. of all accountants); however, employees may view the stereotypes about their occupation as more likely centred towards other characteristics they may possess (for example female educator and Black librarian) (Stangor, Lynch, Duan, & Glass, 1992). Additionally, these negative stereotypes females and other minority groups experience within their occupations may lead to the glass ceiling effect, which is an invisible barrier that restricts females and other minority groups in advancing into top management positions

within organisations (Buelens *et al*., 2011). When females and minority groups can clearly see these desirable positions through the invisible ceiling, however, knowing it is unattainable, it becomes particularly demotivating for them (Buelens *et al*., 2011).

In-group stereotypes with a race, gender, or age orientation were found among the following occupations: education, finance, librarians, mining, and nursing. Position within the organisation also included a gender orientation. This phenomenon is known as occupational gender stereotyping (White & White, 2006). Therefore, it seems prevalent in this study that occupational gender stereotyping is indeed experienced by employees of this study. According to Whitley and Kite (2006), stereotypes can be both prescriptive and descriptive. Prescriptive stereotypes provide an indication of characteristics that a specific group should have, whereas descriptive stereotypes provide an indication of characteristics that a group is believed to have. Therefore, it may be possible that certain occupational stereotypes are seen as prescriptive, whereby it is believed that only certain races, genders, or ages should be employed in these occupations, thereby explaining the race, gender or age orientation of certain occupations. This is especially true within the South African working context, where White employees, especially males are restricted to enter the workforce (see Employment Equity Act).

Low positions vs. high positions

A theme that occurred throughout the assessment of in-group occupational stereotypes was about the position one occupies within the organisation. Results indicated that employees who occupy either higher or lower positions within organisations are stereotyped more negatively. More specifically, females in higher positions think others perceive them as incompetent, while people in lower positions also shared this sentiment. Males in higher positions were stereotyped more positively by others. According to Newman (2012), although workers who occupy lower positions are seen to fulfil menial work and are stereotyped as being unintelligent, these occupations often require one to have a large amount of knowledge, judgement and skill (Rose, 2004). Therefore, when stereotyping individuals in lower positions than one's own, one should always remember that these individuals have knowledge and skills unique to the position they fulfil. Werner *et al*. (2007) state that when managers (i.e. individuals in high positions) perceive their employees (i.e. individuals in low positions) negatively, they treat them in a derogatory manner, which consequently leads to

the employees performing poorly. This may also hold true for this study, because the stereotypes assigned to lower positions were all negative in nature. However, the opposite is also true, when managers view their employees in a positive light they tend to provide their employees with opportunities in which they can show their potential and achieve success (Werner *et al.*, 2007).

Practical implications

Occupational and other work-related stereotypes are not only experienced overseas, but also within the unique South African context. These stereotypes are predominantly negative in nature, even though they were explored on an in-group level. Furthermore, many occupations were in-group stereotyped with a race, gender and age orientation. This issue should be addressed in organisations. It seems that many employees still feel they are negatively evaluated pertaining to their race, gender and age and also according to the type of occupation they fulfil. This should concern organisations in South Africa, since it can lead to demotivated employees, dissatisfaction and higher turnover intention for the company.

Limitations and recommendations

There are various limitations in this research study. Interviews were conducted with a wide variety of individuals within various organisations; however, more occupational groups could have been included within this particular study. Also, the total number of participants from each occupational group was unevenly distributed, which makes it difficult to generalise the findings of this specific study.

Additionally, with the use of the social constructivism paradigm, the researcher explored how the reality of the individual is constructed pertaining to what he/she perceives his/her occupation to be and how he/she experiences it in his/her workplace. Therefore, the participants were not specifically asked about stereotypes concerning their position or job level. It was left to the participants to construct their own reality regarding their occupation and how they are stereotyped within that occupation (by using the emic perspective). It was evident that most participants stated their occupation within a broader context (i.e. academic,

finance, human resources) and not always specifically towards a specific position (senior lecturer, researcher, secretary).

Another limitation of this study could be that the researcher and fieldworkers did not ask of participants to specifically describe the persons holding the in-group stereotype about them. Therefore, the researcher of this study could not determine the specific characteristics of the out-group individual holding the stereotypes of the in-group individual. However, the purpose of this study was only to determine the in-group occupational stereotypes as experienced by participants. Future studies can be conducted where the researcher specifically ask of participants to indicate the characteristics of the out-group individual (the one holding the stereotype).

In order to address diversity that occurs within organisations, managers should attempt to perceive each employee as unique and also eradicate stereotypes that could hold back employees (Werner *et al*., 2007). According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2010), managers are faced with the challenge of removing stereotypes from decision-making and interpersonal processes within the organisation, especially concerning the employees' race, gender and age. They further suggest that the organisations should make their employees aware of stereotypes by training and educating them, and providing opportunities for personnel from diverse backgrounds to interact and work together while being of equal status.

With regard to recommendations for future research, numerous suggestions can be made. Of all the selected organisations that formed part of this study, nursing was the occupation in which the least amount of participants was interviewed (*n* = 4). With this in mind, it is still evident that although only four participants from the nursing environment participated in this study, in-group occupational stereotypes are clearly evident within this environment. It is therefore suggested that a study be conducted which follows a case study design in order to explore the different stereotypes that are experienced within this environment. Furthermore, the researcher employed the social constructivism paradigm in this specific study, which explored the reality the employee is experiencing concerning stereotypes pertaining to his/her occupation. An alternative paradigm to critically assess these phenomena within the context of South Africa could be utilised further.

It is also suggested that a quantitative study be undertaken in the future. A measuring instrument should not be developed for a specific occupational group; rather the instrument should include possible universal traits of individuals employed within any occupation. Participants completing the instrument can then rate their own and others' occupations according to the scale provided. This instrument can also include a self-completion section, whereby participants could have the opportunity to provide an account of the characteristics they believe to be their own and that of other occupational groups. By developing this measuring instrument, the researcher can gain more insight into the stereotypes that are evident within various organisational groups.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that various occupational stereotypes and other work-related stereotypes do exist within selected South African organisations. In-group stereotypes are experienced about the occupation individuals are employed in. Occupations that were in-group stereotyped included: academics, administration staff, educators, finance, human resources, librarians, mining, nursing, and restaurant waitrons. Other work-related stereotypes were also experienced and included stereotypes about the level of the position one occupies, and the qualification one has. The majority of the in-group occupational stereotypes mentioned were very negative in nature and in many cases based on the race, gender and age orientation of the participant. Therefore, many in-group occupational stereotypes seem to be experienced in a more specific manner (pertaining to other characteristics of the participant), and not only towards the occupation itself. Furthermore, in some cases, occupational stereotypes mentioned by participants were generalised to the overall field (i.e. academic, mining) rather than the specific occupation or position (i.e. senior lecturer, secretary).

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CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH ARTICLE 4

EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF STEREOTYPES WITHIN SELECTED SOUTH AFRICAN ORGANISATIONS

Orientation: Stereotypes are experienced on a cognitive, behavioural and emotional level.

Research purpose: The objective of this study is to investigate the experiences of stereotypes among individuals working in selected South African organisations.

Motivation of this study: To be stereotyped is rarely a pleasant experience and can have an effect on both individuals and organisations. Stereotypes can be experienced on different levels and influence the thoughts, behaviours and emotions of individuals being stereotyped.

Research design, approach and method: The researcher of this study utilised the framework of the social constructivism paradigm from an emic perspective. Qualitative research from a combined phenomenological and hermeneutical approach was also employed to achieve the objectives of this study. Both purposive and convenience sampling was used for the purpose of this study. Employees of selected South African organisations ($N = 336$) were involved in this research study. These organisations formed part of the following employment sectors: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and restaurant industry. Data was collected by making use of semi-structured interviews, and data analysis was achieved by means of thematic analysis.

Main findings: The findings of this study indicated that individuals experience stereotypes on three different levels, namely cognitive, behavioural, and emotional levels. Because stereotypes are mostly negative in nature, participants' reactions towards these stereotypes are also largely negative in nature. Positive experiences were rarely experienced.

Practical/managerial implications: When organisations are aware of the different ways in which employees experience stereotypes, they can make every effort to support their employees in this regard. Interventions and workshops that specifically address employees' negative thoughts towards stereotypical situations are suggested.

Contribution/value-add: Research regarding the experiences of stereotypes within South Africa is limited; therefore, this study adds value in this regard. Although organisations may be aware of existing stereotypes, the specific ways in which these are experienced are investigated by this study, thereby providing organisations with the opportunity to assist their employees in effectively dealing with the consequences thereof.

Keywords: Stereotypes; cognitive experience; behavioural experience; emotional experience; selected South African organisations

Introduction

When reviewing literature pertaining to stereotypes, it is evident that individuals experience different types (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Lee, Jussim, & McCauley, 2013; Plous, 2003). It seems that these stereotypes that individuals experience are based on various dimensions (i.e. race, gender, age and occupation) (Bergh & Theron, 2009; Shani & Lau, 2008), and are predominantly negative in nature. To be stereotyped is seldom a pleasant experience (Finchilescu, 2005) and is undeniably damaging for the individual being stereotyped (Burkley & Blanton, 2009). Stereotypes not only influence the behaviour of the person being stereotyped but it can also lead to damaging self-fulfilling prophecies when these stereotypes become part of the self-schema (Crawford, 2012; Maurer, Barbeite, Weiss, & Lippstreu, 2008).

When individuals are aware of being negatively stereotyped they may fear that they will behave in a way that confirms these negative stereotypes (Plous, 2003). This may result in the individual experiencing negative emotions and thoughts and becoming anxious, which may also have a negative effect on the performance on various tasks (Aronson, Burgess, Phelan, & Juarez, 2013; Steele, 1997). Other consequences of stereotypes are sexist behaviour, discrimination, prejudice, ineffective decision-making, hindering initiative, and not utilising human resources as effectively as possible (Crawford, 2012; Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2014; Plous, 2003). Evidently so, when individuals are aware of being stereotyped it could result in emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions (Dion, 2002; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Miller & Kaiser, 2001).

These experiences of stereotypes are also influenced by the attitudes of the individual being stereotyped. This is explained by Martin and Fellenz (2010) by stating that attitudes may develop because of an individual's experience with an object or person and these experiences may be positive or negative. These attitudes also consist of three components, namely the cognitive, behavioural, and emotional component (Arnold *et al.*, 2010; Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, & Kinicki, 2011; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Martin & Fellenz, 2010). In other words, when individuals are confronted with an object, individual or situation, their reaction may be cognitive, behavioural or emotional in nature. According to Mullins (2010), it can be problematic when these attitudes are based on stereotypes. These attitudes influence

the morale and efficiency of the organisations and therefore need to be addressed (Mullins, 2010). Seemingly so, whether the reaction is cognitive, behavioural or emotional, different individuals react differently when confronted with the same situation.

Research purpose and objectives

Based on the above, it therefore seems necessary to investigate the experiences of stereotypes as it can have damaging effects on both the stereotyped individual and the organisation. Also, because research is lacking in South Africa with regards to the experiences of stereotypes, this study will contribute to existing knowledge by specifically investigating the unique indigenous experiences of individuals within South African organisations, and therefore the emic perspective will also be utilised in this research. The objective of this study is to investigate how individuals working in selected South African organisations experience stereotypes. Following are a literature study, empirical study, discussion, and limitations and recommendations.

Literature review

Stereotypes from the social constructivism paradigm

According to the social constructivism paradigm, individuals want to understand both their world of work and the world in which they live (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, in order to understand their world, they attribute meanings to their experiences (Creswell, 2009). The meanings that individuals attach to their experiences are subjective and can differ from the meanings other individuals attach to the same experience. Therefore, researchers from the social constructivism paradigm are interested in understanding the lived experiences of individuals, and the meaning they attach to these lived experiences (Shurink, 2003). When individuals are confronted with certain situations, they attach their own meaning and therefore their own reality to that situation (Botma, Greeff, Malaudzi, & Wright, 2010). This means that individuals themselves can therefore choose how they want to react to a certain situation (Botma *et al*., 2010). This may mean that individuals participating in this study may be confronted with the same stereotypes; however, the way in which individuals react to these stereotypes may differ, depending on their interpretation of the situation. For the

purpose of this study, the goal is to determine how being stereotyped (irrespective of whether it is based on the participants' race, gender, age or occupation) is experienced by the participant him-/herself. Therefore, the researcher, within the framework of the social constructivism paradigm, wants to explore how employees experience (their reality) being stereotyped in their workplace (their social world). However, even though this is an explorative study, it is important to understand in what way this may affect the employee. The emic perspective is also utilised in this study in order to investigate the unique experiences of South African employees forming part of this study. The literature study will continue with a review concerning the afore-mentioned cognitive, behavioural and emotional effect that stereotypes may have on individuals.

Cognitive component

The cognitive component is described by Martin and Fellenz (2010) as the beliefs, views, and cognitions one has about an object, person, or situation. Kreitner and Kinicki (2010) explain this further by providing examples pertaining to stereotypes: What do you think of being stereotyped? Do you view this behaviour as positive or negative? The answers to these questions refer to the cognitive component of your attitude toward individuals who stereotype you or about the stereotypical characteristics itself (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). When negative stereotypes are attributed to an individual, they are not always provided with an opportunity to object or show that these stereotypes are incorrect. This may lead to the individual experiencing a drop in his/her self-esteem and his/her self-concept being threatened (Finchilescu, 2005). This may mean that the cycle of stereotyping never breaks; stereotypes continue to flourish at the expense of others.

Furthermore, when individuals are aware of being negatively stereotyped, it may lead them to feel disengaged and withdrawing from their work psychologically (Kahn, 1990; Steele, 1997). Psychological withdrawal refers the negative attitudes that individuals hold towards their organisations and their jobs (Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather, & Roberson, 2011). According to Kahn (1990), disengagement may also result in individuals separating their personal and work roles. By doing this, employees can accentuate their roles as skilful employees even though such skills may be counter-stereotypic for their group (Von Hippel, Issa, Ma, & Stokes, 2011). To explain, a female employee may choose to separate her identity as female from her identity as a worker. This may mean that when this female is at

work, she may see herself as having characteristics such as being analytical and persuasive; however, when this female is at home, she may see herself as having characteristics such as being gentle and sensitive. By doing this, she separates her 'work self' from her 'female self' (Von Hippel *et al*., 2011). However, according to Block *et al*. (2011), when individuals continuously disengage, it may lead to chronic disengagement, which also negatively affects motivation. Consequently, these disengaged individuals may experience less job satisfaction, less commitment and higher turnover intention (Brown, 1996; Brown & Leigh, 1996).

Behavioural component

The behavioural component of attitudes refers to the intended or actual behaviour one shows toward a person, situation or object (Martin & Fellez, 2010). For example, how would you act toward a person stereotyping you or how would you act if you knew a stereotype exists about you? (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). According to Buelens *et al*. (2011), the behaviour of individuals results because of a combination of all three attitudinal components. Kreitner and Kinicki (2010) give an explanation. You are likely to say something to someone who stereotypes you if you are frustrated or irritated by their behaviour (emotional component), if you believe that stereotypes are inappropriate (cognitive component), and you intend to confront this person (behavioural component).

When individuals are afraid of confirming negative stereotypes, it may lead to them taking on additional tasks, thereby hindering their performance and eventually confirming the initial stereotype (Inzlicht, Tullet, Legault, & Kang, 2011). When individuals are aware of stereotypes that exist about them within a specific area, their performance may be hindered specifically within that area (Inzlicht *et al.,* 2011). The reason for this happening is that when individuals become aware of negative stereotypes about their group, they have negative thoughts about their own performance and they also become worried about performing the task at hand (Block *et al*., 2011). Furthermore, the performance of individuals may be influenced when they choose to cope with stereotype stress by containing their emotions, blocking sensations, and rejecting negative thoughts (Inzlicht *et al*., 2011). Steele (2010) indicates that this may eventually have an impeding effect on intellectual and academic performance, and later on resulting in problems relating to educational achievement, occupational choice, and job advancement. Seemingly so, a simple negative stereotype about an individual can have various effects on the behaviour of the person being stereotyped.

Emotional component

According to Buelens *et al.* (2011), the emotional component refers to emotions, moods, and feelings an individual has towards an object, individual, or a situation. Kreitner and Kinicki (2010) provide examples to illustrate the emotional nature of attitudes. How do you feel when someone stereotypes you? If, for example, you feel angered or frustrated with individuals stereotyping you, you are conveying negative feelings towards that person. Contrastingly, if you feel indifferent about people who stereotype you, the emotional component of your attitude is neutral. Arnold *et al.* (2010) further state that the emotional component of attitudes can be seen in both the feelings and physiological responses of an individual.

Literature shows that individuals report feeling more anxious and apprehensive in situations where they are aware of being stereotyped (Marx & Stapel, 2006; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). When individuals do not overtly report that they feel anxious, they may show nonverbal signs of being uncomfortable and nervous (Bosson, Haymovitz, & Pinel, 2004). When individuals are aware of them being negatively stereotyped, it may lead to negative emotional reactions such as anger (Spector, 1998). Research by Hansen and Sassenberg (2006) suggests that individuals not only experience anger towards the person who stereotypes, but also towards the self. To explain, individuals may become frustrated and angry because of not achieving their workplace goals due to their perceptions of being stereotyped (Spector, 1997). In turn, this anger could also result in negative physiological consequences such as lower immune suppression and increased blood pressure (Block *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, when individuals suppress their emotions, it can lead to a variety of consequences such as overeating, attention being distracted, and poor physical stamina (see Inzlicth & Gutsell, 2007; Muraven, Tice, & Baumeister, 1998; Vohs & Heatherton, 2000). It seems that when individuals are stereotyped, it can have lingering effects even when the individual leaves the environment in which he or she is stereotyped (Inzlicht *et al.*, 2011).

As mentioned before, individuals experience different types of stereotypes that are predominantly negative in nature. The next step is therefore to investigate the manner in which these stereotypes are experienced. It is evident from the above literature study that stereotypes give rise to cognitive, behavioural and emotional responses from the person being stereotyped. The aim of this study is therefore to investigate how individuals working in

selected South African organisations experience the stereotypes they perceive others have of them.

Research design

The research design consists of the research approach, research strategy and research method.

Research approach

With this study, the researcher was interested in understanding the subjective reality that individuals attach to their own experiences of stereotypes, therefore the emic perspective was utilised (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delport, 2011). Furthermore, qualitative researchers from the social constructivism paradigm believe that understanding the meaning that individuals attach to their world is important to conduct sufficient research in the social sciences (Willis, 2007). In order to conduct this qualitative study sufficiently, a combination of the phenomenological and hermeneutical approach was followed in this research study. According to Botma *et al*. (2010), phenomenology questions the meaning and experiences of a specific phenomenon. When employing the phenomenological approach, the researcher experiences the world by setting aside his/her preconceived theories and ideas (Frost, 2011). The researcher therefore attempted to study the experiences of stereotypes as they were experienced by the participants themselves. However, for the researcher to truly understand the meanings that individuals attach to their experiences of stereotypes, it is necessary for the researcher to employ hermeneutics. By making use of hermeneutics, the researcher can gain a deeper understanding of the various ways in which individuals experience stereotypes (Botma *et al*., 2010).

Research strategy

A case study design was employed to reach the objective of this study. Case studies provide the researcher with the opportunity to gain an understanding of a broader issue or phenomenon, in this case stereotypes and how they are experienced (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In order to adequately explore the experiences of being stereotyped by employees within the South African work context, multiple cases were used as strategy in order to gain a broad

perspective. By making using of multiple cases and not only a few, the researcher ensured that she gained a meaningful understanding of the overall experiences of stereotypes as reported by the participants of this study. Furthermore, replication logic was the goal in data analysis, where the researcher was interested in exploring how frequently a certain theme was mentioned by participants (Yin, 1994).

Research method

The research method consists of the research setting, entrée and establishing researcher roles, sampling, research procedure, data collection methods, data recording, strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity, ethical considerations, data analysis, and reporting style.

Research setting

Various employment sectors formed part of this research study. Employment sectors that were included in this study were the following: banking, higher education institutions, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, primary and secondary schools, and the restaurant industry. The reason for including multiple employment sectors in this study is so that the researcher can gain an overall and meaningful understanding of the various ways in which employees from the South African work context experience being stereotyped by others. Organisations that formed part of these employment sectors were targeted to participate in this study. These organisations employed more than 50 full-time employees. Also, full-time employees within these organisations were approached to form part of this research study and as far as possible were diverse in terms of race, gender, age and occupation.

Entrée and establishing research roles

The research process is a complex process and requires of the researcher to fulfil various roles. In order to get this research project off the ground, it was first required of the researcher to fulfil the role of planner. The researcher paid attention to various aspects, such as sampling, data collection, and data analysis; this ensured that the research process was carefully planned before commencing with the process. Both the researcher and the

fieldworkers had to act out the roles of interviewers, active listeners, and transcribers (Creswell, 2009). During this phase, the participants of this study were asked to share their experiences regarding stereotypes, and to indicate the different ways in which they experienced stereotypes. The next phase of the research process was the data analysis phase, where the researcher, fieldworkers, and numerous independent co-coders acted as data analysts. The researcher ensured that this process was done rigorously in order to ensure that the true experiences of stereotypes by participants are captured. The researcher ensured that her personal biases and belief system did not influence any part of the research process (Creswell, 2009).

Sampling

Both purposive and convenience sampling was used to reach the objectives of this research study. When using purposive sampling, the researcher specifically chooses to include participants in a study because the researcher believes that he/she will be better able to understand the problem at hand, in this case stereotypes (Creswell, 2009). Convenience sampling refers to both the availability and convenience of participants to be involved in research (Maree & Pietersen, 2005). Employment sectors to be included in this study were identified beforehand, because they were available and accessible to both the researcher and fieldworkers. By making use of the purposive approach, organisations within these sectors that employ more than 50 full-time employees were approached. The researcher and fieldworkers attempted, as far as possible, to include employees who are diverse in nature (i.e. race, gender, age, occupation). By targeting diverse individuals working in different organisations within selected employment sectors, the researcher was of the opinion that she can gain a broad understanding of the different ways in which employees within the South African work setting experience stereotypes.

A sample consisting of 336 from various South African organisations participated in this study (*N*=336). The participants were predominantly female (59%). In total, 56% of the participants were White, while 31% were Black. Nearly half of the participants lived in the North West Province (45%), whereas 24% resided in Gauteng. In total, 58% of the participants were Afrikaans speaking, whereas 13% were English speaking. With regard to qualification, 71% had acquired higher education and training, while 25% of the participants had acquired further education and training. Of all the participants, 25% were employed

within primary and secondary schools, while 21% were employed within higher education institutions.

Research procedure

The researcher and fieldworkers first approached the organisations in order to receive consent to conduct this research study. Thereafter, the researcher and fieldworkers gained consent from the participants working within these organisations to partake in this study. Because this study consisted of a large sample ($N = 336$), various fieldworkers (post-graduate students) assisted the researcher with data collection. The data collection technique that was used in this study was semi-structured interviews. The researcher and fieldworkers attended a qualitative workshop to equip them with interviewing skills and techniques. Prior to commencing with the interviews, an interview schedule was prepared in order to assist the researcher and fieldworkers with data collection. The interview schedule was changed and adapted where necessary; this ensured that all interview questions were clearly understood by all participants. Interviews were scheduled with the participants at times and venues that suited them best. The researcher and fieldworkers paid special attention to the climate of the room by ensuring that the interviews were conducted in a relaxed environment that were free from any disturbances. After the researcher and fieldworkers welcomed the participants in a friendly and warm manner, they explained the aim and context of the interview to the participants. They also explained to the participants that their involvement in the research study is entirely confidential and that their personal information would remain private. It was also expected of participants to complete a written consent form prior to commencing with the interviews. Participants also gave permission to the researcher and fieldworkers to make use of tape recorders during the interviews.

Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants by either the researcher or fieldworkers. Semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to gain an understanding of the views and beliefs that participants have about a certain topic (De Vos *et al*., 2011). Therefore, by conducting semi-structured interviews, the researcher gained an overall understanding of how participants experience stereotypes. This was possible because

participants shared their realities with regard to stereotypes with the researcher or fieldworkers.

For the purpose of this study, only one research question was asked to the participants, and the aim of this question was to determine the ways in which stereotypes are experienced by participants. The interview question was: "*How do you experience being stereotyped?*". As can be seen from the previous two articles (see article 2 and 3), participants were asked to indicate what in-group stereotypes they experience. When participants indicated that they indeed experience stereotypes (irrelevant whether about internal or external dimensions), participants were then asked to indicate the manner in which they experience these stereotypes. Therefore, depending on the answers provided by the preceding questions about in-group stereotypes, the participants were asked to elaborate on their experiences of the mentioned stereotypes. Therefore, depending on the answers provided by previous interview questions, the researcher had various ways in which the interview question of this article could have been posed. Examples of these include: "*You mentioned that you experienced various stereotypes about your occupation, can you explain to me how you experience being stereotyped?*" or "*You mentioned that you experience stereotypes about your race, can you please tell me how you experience being stereotyped?*".

Before the researcher and fieldworkers commenced with the data collection, a pilot study was conducted, thereby ensuring that the interview questions were correctly understood by participants. The pilot study consisted of nine individuals respectively working within the mining industry and higher education institutions. Participants were also required to complete a biographical questionnaire.

Data recording

Tape recorders were used to record the exact words of the participants. However, this was first done with the permission of the participants. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by either the researcher or the fieldworkers. It was requested of fieldworkers to send their transcribed interviews to the researcher in order for her to verify that their transcriptions were done accurately and adequately. When receiving the transcribed interviews, the researcher read through them and thereby already became emerged in the data that has been collected. The transcribed interviews were safely stored.

Strategies employed to ensure data quality and integrity

To ensure the trustworthiness of the results, the researcher made use of techniques such as confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability. It is very important for any research study that the results of a study are trustworthy; therefore, the researcher of this study paid specific attention to the above-mentioned techniques:

Confirmability: During the research process, the researcher and fieldworkers remained free from bias by not allowing their own perspectives and motives to influence the data (Botma *et al*., 2010). The researcher and fieldworkers therefore ensured that they remained objective throughout the entirety of this study by truthfully capturing the experiences of stereotypes as mentioned by participants.

Dependability: The researcher clearly and densely described the research methodology, thereby exactly describing how the data was collected and the type of data that was collected (Botma *et al.*, 2010). The researcher ensured dependability by clearly documenting all the phases of this research process, especially regarding the write-up of the methodology section of this research.

Credibility: The researcher ensured that she reported the findings of the research truthfully, just as they were experienced by the participants of this study (Botma *et al.*, 2010). The researcher ensured that she truthfully reported the various ways in which stereotypes were experienced by participants. By engaging in detailed discussions with independent researchers and by making use of co-coders, the researcher ensured the credibility of the research findings.

Transferability: The researcher ensured that the findings of this research study can be applied to other groups and contexts by describing the setting and context of the data in a rich and dense manner (Botma *et al.*, 2010). In order to provide the reader of this study with an overall detailed picture of the setting and context of this study, the researcher described both the sampling procedure as well as the characteristics of the participants. By including multiple cases from different organisations and employment sectors, the researcher made sure that the findings of this study can possibly be transferred to the overall work setting of South Africa.

Ethical considerations

Various ethical considerations need to be adhered to during a research project; therefore, both the researcher and fieldworkers adhered to the following ethical considerations:

Informed consent: Various organisations were approached to form part of this study. Permission was obtained from the organisations to conduct this study among their full-time employees. Thereafter, permission was granted by the employees of the organisation. The participants were truthfully informed about their role in this research study. This was done by clearly explaining to them the objective and context of the study (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009).

Voluntary participation: The participants freely chose to participate in this study and were therefore not coerced to form part of this research study (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). They were also informed by the researcher or fieldworkers that they can withdraw from the study at any given time.

No harm: The researcher and fieldworkers protected the participants from any physical or psychological harm (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). Expectations were discussed and clarified from the onset of the research process, thereby keeping the research process well defined. Participants were treated with respect by treating them as human beings and not as objects.

Confidentiality: The researcher and fieldworkers adhered to the principles of confidentiality by ensuring that information collected from participants was kept undisclosed and private (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). The participants were also informed that their identities would remain anonymous by not sharing their identities with their employing organisations and by not mentioning their names when reporting the findings of this study.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data of this study. Thematic analysis is a technique used by qualitative researchers to identify, analyse, and report themes and patterns that have been found within the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this research process, the participants were asked to explain the various ways in which they experience

stereotypes. When analysing the data, the researcher identified that there are various themes that relate to the experience of stereotypes. The steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were used in order to adequately analyse the data collected for this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

All 336 interviews were transcribed by either the researcher or the fieldworkers. Considering the large number of participants participating in this study, various fieldworkers assisted the researcher with this step. The researcher randomly checked interviews from each fieldworker in order to ensure quality. All transcribed interviews were then added together to form one large dataset. The researcher became emerged in the dataset by reading through the whole dataset. This took a long time; however, it was necessary for the researcher to do so in order to emerge herself in the data and to ensure that the data analysis is valid. The researcher also engaged in several discussions with numerous independent researchers in order to ensure that she remains impartial during the entire process.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Only one code (category in this case) was developed during this phase because there was only one interview question (i.e. "*How do you experience being stereotyped?*"), and therefore only the responses of this question were analysed. This category was consequently labelled as the experience of stereotypes. The researcher ensured the rigour of this step by paying equal attention to all raw data, and not disregarding data that may seem insignificant at the time.

Step 3: Searching for themes

During this step, the researcher was able to develop preliminary themes for this one category. By reading through all 336 responses relating to this one category, the researcher created overarching themes (i.e. cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences). On a separate document, the researcher documented each theme and accompanying responses for each theme. Hereafter, the sub-themes were also created. The researcher also created a separate theme, where responses that did not fit within the overarching themes were kept; however, before discounting these themes for being unimportant, the researcher first carried on with the next phase of the data analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Themes identified in the previous step are refined during this step. During this step the researcher also paid attention to the content of themes by ensuring that the sub-themes and responses are indeed an accurate reflection of the accompanying theme. The researcher read through all the content of each theme to make sure that all sub-themes and responses were indeed placed within the correct theme. Here, the researcher made changes where she felt a necessity to do so. The researcher once again reads through the entire dataset to ensure that all responses of the participants have indeed been coded and that all sub-themes are correctly assigned to the accompanying theme.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

Themes are further refined by the researcher by providing an indication of the important aspects that underlie each theme. The researcher then wrote an analysis for each theme (see findings). Where necessary, sub-themes were also refined. After the refinement of themes and sub-themes, the researcher was able to explain the content of each theme. This was done by only making use of a few sentences (see findings). Appropriate names for themes (i.e. cognitive, behavioural and emotional) and sub-themes were decided upon, and the researcher once again ensured that the content of the themes are representative of the theme itself.

Step 6: Producing the report

The findings of the data are clearly and accurately described by the researcher to the reader of this research study. The researcher analysed the data together with numerous independent co-coders. Co-coders were employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field. The researcher made sure to report the themes that emerged from the data in a clear and consistent manner. The researcher made use of direct quotations of participants to substantiate the findings of this study.

Reporting style

The researcher accurately and clearly described the findings relating to this study. The researcher, together with various independent co-coders, analysed the data. Co-coders were

employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field. The themes that emerged from the data were discussed by the researcher in such a manner that they can be understood by the reader. Direct quotes of participants were used in order to substantiate the findings of this study.

Findings

Themes and sub-themes were reported in table format in order to illustrate the findings of this research study. Direct responses from participants were also included within the tables to corroborate the findings of the study. The number in brackets next to each theme indicates the frequency with which the themes were mentioned. The frequency of the themes mentioned provides an illustration of the number of times a specific theme was mentioned and not the number of participants who mentioned this theme.

Category: The experiences of stereotypes

The results indicated that stereotypes influence individuals on a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional level. Table 1 provides an illustration of the cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences of stereotypes.

Table 1

Experiences of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Cognitive experience (146)	Accept	*"If there are any stereotypes in terms of people working in banking, I will just accept them and handle them as they occur on a day to day basis."*
	Challenging	*"... I experience it as a challenge."*
	Complimented	*"I take it as a compliment..."*
	Coping	*"You just handle it as it happens and take into consideration the context in which it occurs."*
	Degrading	*"...They just make conclusions about you that are not true and that is degrading..."*
	Dehumanising	*"...dehumanising."*
	Discriminating	*"...It impacts negatively on one's career because you feel that you are not treated fairly..."*
	Doubting	*"...If they are negative you tend to doubt yourself and your capabilities."*

Table 1 continues

	Incompetent	*"Sometimes I just feel incompetent when it comes to my work."*
	Increased self-esteem	*"...If they are positive you feel good about yourself..."*
	Inferior	*"...you feel inferior to everyone..."*
	Insulted	*"I know what I would like to achieve in life so it is insulting when people stereotype me as having no plans for the future."*
	Judged	*"You can feel you are being judged..."*
	Limiting	*"...Stereotypes limit opportunities..."*
	Negative	*"You become negative when you hear people making assumptions about your job without them knowing the facts."*
	Positive	*"...irrespective of the outcome, which also makes this a positive."*
	Proud	*"...If it is good you feel proud of yourself..."*
	Reduced self-esteem	*"...But sometimes if you doubt yourself your self-esteem might actually be affected..."*
	Security	*"Gives you security to some extent."*
	Stereotyping the person who stereotypes	*"If it is negative it would affect me, stereotyping is narrow-minded, I'll fall victim to stereotyping because I will start stereotyping you as a narrow-minded person."*
	Suspicious	*"...You sort of sense it then to say "why does she want to work with us?", "why is she interested?", so there is some level of suspiciousness..."*
	Underestimated	*"People underestimate me..."*
	Undermined	*"Negatively due to being undermined because of age and gender."*
	Undervalued	*"...it feels as if my opinion doesn't count."*
	Unnecessary	*"I experience them as unnecessary..."*
Behavioural experiences (71)	Assertive; strict	*"I need to be very assertive and strict for others to know their ground."*
	Avoiding	*"..If somebody is saying something bad it doesn't help to confront the person. You just avoid that person."*
	Being avoided	*"They avoid you and don't really socialise or interact with you."*
	Conflict	*"It causes conflict."*
	Defensive	*"...you are always on a defensive mode ..."*
	Discussion	*"Arguably, when one's opinions differ from those who stereotype it does lead to further discussions..."*
	Drives people apart	*"Stereotypes drive people apart."*
	Humble	*"I try to stay humble."*
	Ignore	*"I ignore the people."*
	Laugh	*"It does not bother me much, I just laugh it off..."*
	Motivated to improve	*"I only see it as motivation and try to improve on it."*
	Performance affected	*"I think it deeply affects you because in the long run it will have an effect on your work."*
	Prove stereotype to be correct	*"I try to fit into my stereotype..."*
	Prove stereotype wrong	*"I will work harder to prove a negative stereotype wrong."*

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Table 1 continues

	Retaliate	*"Maybe you will start retaliating."*
	Taken advantage of	*"Can affect me, think so, people possibly take advantage of my character."*
	Working hard	*"Sometimes you have to work hard..."*
Emotional experiences (50)	Angry	*"It makes me angry...Everyone makes assumptions that are most often ungrounded, so it angers me."*
	Bad	*"It is not a good feeling when you know that other people have certain views about you and your job that is incorrect."*
	Demoralised; worthless	*"They can make you feel demoralised...you feel worthless and so on."*
	Demotivated	*"It demotivates me..."*
	Disappointed	*"Disappointed."*
	Embarrassed	*"If the stereotype is bad you tend to feel embarrassed..."*
	Frustrated	*"It's frustrating. It really frustrates a person..."*
	Hate	*"...I find that I hate it when people say somebody is not capable of doing something..."*
	Hurtful	*"Actually hurtful..."*
	Irritated	*"It's irritating in a way..."*
	Isolated	*"...You feel isolated, lonely and excluded."*
	Sad	*"Very sad and demotivated."*
	Unappreciated	*"They do not see the effort and hard work that teachers really put in, but they quick to say we have half day jobs and just play all day."*
	Uncomfortable	*"If there should be, you feel uncomfortable..."*

Table 1 provides an illustration of the cognitive, behavioural and emotional reactions that participants experience with regard to stereotypes.

Cognitive experiences of stereotypes

This was the theme with the highest frequency rate. Results indicate that participants choose to accept the stereotypes and cope with them; they did not, however, elaborate on specific coping strategies. They also experience stereotypes to be challenging, degrading, dehumanising, and discriminating. When being stereotyped, individuals doubt themselves and they feel incompetent. They further experience stereotypes as insulting, being judged, and unnecessary. The experience of stereotypes is seen as negative and limiting, which refers to their lack of development or working opportunities. When being stereotyped, individuals experience a drop in self-esteem and become suspicious of others. Stereotypes also lead to cognitive reactions such as being underestimated, undermined, and undervalued. When

individuals are aware of being stereotyped, they often stereotype the people stereotyping them. However few, positive experiences do also exist. These stereotypes are positively experienced and lead to an increased self-esteem, feeling complemented and proud.

Behavioural experiences of stereotypes

Results of this study show that individuals also experience stereotypes on a behavioural level. Individuals indicated that they are assertive and strict with those who stereotype. Participants also indicated that they ignore or avoid the person stereotyping them, and that they are also avoided by other individuals because of the stereotypes people hold of them. Participants also indicated that stereotypes cause conflict between individuals and drives people apart. Participants try to stay humble or contrastingly they will retaliate or react defensively. Stereotypes may also lead to discussion among individuals who disagree with regard to stereotypes. Participants also indicated that stereotypes make them feel as if they are taken advantage of by others. Furthermore, participants mentioned that their performance may be affected by the stereotypes. They also indicated that when negative stereotypes exist about them, they will try and prove the stereotype wrong and work harder. The same holds true for the experience of positive stereotypes. Participants indicated that they become motivated to improve and will work hard to prove a positive stereotype correct. Participants also mentioned that instead of getting upset about being stereotyped, they choose to laugh it off.

Emotional experiences of stereotypes

Emotional reactions are also experienced by participants when they are confronted with stereotypes. This was also the theme with the lowest frequency rate. Emotions were reported to be predominantly negative in nature. Negative emotions that were experienced included the following: bad, angry, demoralised, disappointed, embarrassed, frustrated, hate, hurt, irritated, isolated, sad, worthless, unappreciated, and uncomfortable. Participants also reported to feel demotivated when negative stereotypes are experienced.

Discussion

Outline of the findings

The objective of this study was to investigate the experiences of stereotypes among individuals employed within selected South African organisations. The findings of this study indicate that individuals experience stereotypes on three different levels, namely cognitive, behavioural and emotional. From the participants' responses, it is evident that individuals predominantly react in a cognitive manner when they are aware of being stereotyped. Because most of the stereotypes that participants experience are predominantly negative in nature, it is not surprising then that the participants experienced stereotypes in a predominantly negative manner. Positive reactions to stereotypes were also reported to exist; however, these were mentioned only nine times by participants.

Cognitive effects of stereotypes

The findings of the present study indicated that stereotypes may affect participants in a cognitive manner. Participants reported various cognitive reactions to stereotypes. For example, experiences were reported to be negative. According to Finchilescu (2005), when individuals are negatively stereotyped by out-group members, it may lead to a reciprocal reaction from the stereotyped individual, which may result in the intensification of antagonism between groups. The results of the present study also illustrate that when stereotyped, individuals experience both a reduction and increase in self-esteem. A study conducted by Burkley and Blanton (2009) explains that when individuals embrace the negative stereotypes that predict their group's failure, they can in fact protect their self-esteem. However, stereotyped individuals may over time become disengaged from the stereotyped domain, leading them to not be concerned about their self-esteem or their high performance within that domain. Furthermore, this process of individuals becoming disengaged from the domain in which they are negatively stereotyped is known as identity bifurcation (Von Hippel *et al*., 2011). During identity bifurcation individuals only become disengaged from the negatively stereotyped domain, while still identifying with domains which are unproblematic (Von Hippel *et al*., 2011).

Furthermore, the findings of this study also show that individuals experience stereotypes as discriminating. Plous (2003) corresponds with this finding by stating that stereotypes cultivate discrimination and prejudice. However, numerous researchers have indicated that individuals deny being discriminated against in order for them to avoid feeling mistreated or not having control over a situation (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1997; Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, & Lalonde, 1990). Researchers have also shown that discrimination can lead to various negative outcomes such as increased blood pressure and lower psychological well-being (Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, & Steele, 2001; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997).

As already mentioned, participants reported more cognitive effects of stereotypes as opposed to behavioural and emotional effects. There may be various reasons for this. According to Arnold *et al.* (2010), an individual's cognitive attitude towards work does not always lead to behaviour that elicits these attitudes. Although employees may have negative attitudes towards their colleagues who stereotype them, they may still choose to help and work with them because they value being cooperative and responsible. It may therefore result in behavioural reactions being less than cognitive reactions. According to Glomb and Hulin (1997), stereotyped individuals may also inhibit themselves from expressing negative emotions within the workplace, because expressing these emotions may be viewed as inappropriate. This may explain why cognitive attitudes are more prevalent than emotional attitudes. However, when individuals' cognitive and emotional attitudes are not consistent with their behaviour, it may lead to psychological discomfort known as cognitive dissonance. When cognitive dissonance occurs, individuals are motivated to restore the balance between their attitudes, for example by changing their attitudes, behaviours or both (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010; Martin & Fellenz, 2010).

Behavioural effects of stereotypes

The findings of this study indicate that stereotypes have various behavioural effects on the individuals being stereotyped. For instance, participants reported that they not only avoid the persons who stereotype them, they (stereotyped participants) are also avoided by individuals who stereotype them. According to Finchilescu (2005), when individuals are aware of being stereotyped by out-group members, they may choose to avoid contact with out-group members, or if avoidance is unlikely, hostility towards out-group members may be likely. Furthermore, according to Block *et al.* (2011), individuals can also choose to withdraw from

their work on a behavioural level. When individuals engage in behavioural withdrawal from the workplace, individuals avoid participating in work situations that are dissatisfying to them (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990). Block *et al.* (2011) further state that tardiness, absences, and turnover are typical examples of withdrawal from work.

The participants of this study also indicated that when negatively stereotyped it affects their performance and they try and prove the stereotype wrong by working harder. Numerous researchers confirm that being aware of stereotypes indeed leads to performance decrements (Aronson *et al.*, 2013; Bosson *et al.*, 2004; Schmader & Johns, 2003). Aronson *et al.* (2013) state that when under stereotype pressure, the stereotyped individual may increase his/her effort when he/she wishes to prove the stereotype wrong or to prove themselves by performing well. However, the authors state that when individuals increase their effort and work harder to solve difficult tasks, it does not necessarily lead to better performance; it may, however, have the opposite effect by actually decreasing performance.

Emotional effects of stereotypes

The results of this study indicate that individuals experience various emotions when they are being stereotyped. Some of the emotions experienced by individuals included: anger, hurtful, sad, embarrassing, and frustrating. Numerous studies have shown that being stereotyped leads to negative emotions such as anger, discomfort, uncertainty, and embarrassment (Block *et al.*, 2011; Plous, 2003; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Yang, Hansen, Chartrand, & Fitzsimons, 2013). According to Glomb and Hulin (1997), when individuals are aware if being negatively stereotyped, they are unable to openly express their anger because it is viewed as socially unacceptable within the workplace. Consequently, this unexpressed anger may lead to displaced anger towards oneself and others such as colleagues and family (Gibson & Tulgan, 2002). According to Johns, Inzlicht, and Schmader (2008), individuals may also choose to cope with emotions related to stereotypes in a maladaptive fashion by actively avoiding these emotions and trying to suppress the physical symptoms thereof.

The finding of the present study also indicated that participants feel both motivated and demotivated when they experience stereotypes. This can be explained by Jamieson and Harkins (2007) who state that when individuals are aware of being stereotyped within a specific domain they are motivated to perform better in that domain, thereby attempting to

prove the negative stereotype wrong. On the other hand, other studies have found that individuals may become disengaged and distance themselves from the domain in question, leading them to become demotivated to perform within that domain (Murphy, Steele, & Gross, 2007; Von Hippel *et al.*, 2005).

Practical implications

Although the experiences of stereotypes have been researched internationally, research in this regard still remains scarce within South Africa. Therefore, by conducting this study, organisations can become aware of the different ways in which their employees experience stereotypes. Furthermore, the findings of this study will aid organisations and industrial psychologists to address the negative reactions that stereotypes elicit. The reactions may be mostly cognitive in nature, which could affect the organisation, since employees will rather think about it than to act or show feelings pertaining to being stereotyped. This is concerning, since a manager will not always be aware what his/her employees are actually experiencing in the workplace, because it is not always evident or observable.

Limitations and recommendations

This study has various limitations. Participants may have felt uncomfortable sharing their unique experiences of stereotypes with the researcher or fieldworkers, thereby not fully disclosing valuable information with regard to their experiences. The researcher and fieldworkers did not ask the participants to specifically indicate their cognitive, behavioural, and emotional reactions to stereotypes; instead, it was only requested of the participants to provide an explanation of their experiences of stereotypes in general. This may have resulted in participants only providing an account of their most recent experiences that came to mind during the interview, thereby neglecting to make reference to personal experiences that may have occurred at an earlier stage.

A more diversified and inclusive working environment can be created when organisations have a clear comprehension of how employees experience and deal with stereotypes at work (Block *et al.*, 2011). When organisations are aware of the different ways in which employees cope with stereotypes, they would be better equipped to support employees in this regard

(Block *et al.*, 2011). As the findings of this study indicate, stereotypes have an effect on the performance of employees by causing employees to work harder. However, organisations should keep in mind that even though employees' productivity may increase, these stereotypes are accompanied by higher psychic costs that cause individuals to work harder but not better (Block *et al*., 2011; Roberson & Kulik, 2007).

Because the findings of this study indicate that individuals predominantly experience stereotypes in a cognitive matter, it seems fitting that specific recommendations are made regarding this. Industrial psychologists within organisations can implement interventions that teach employees to change their cognitive appraisals of stereotypical situations and the emotional reactions that accompany them (Johns & Schmader, 2010). Also, according to Inzlicht *et al*. (2011), individuals can change their cognitive experiences of stereotypes by changing their appraisals of situations where they are being stereotyped. When individuals reappraise situations as not being threatening or negative, no stereotype-related thoughts or emotions will be created. Instead, individuals should change their interpretations of situations by viewing stereotypical situations as challenging and not as threats.

With regard to recommendations for future research, qualitative studies can be conducted where the researcher enquires from the participants about the specific cognitive, behavioural, and emotional reactions they experience when faced with both negative and positive stereotypes. Interviews can also be conducted with the top management of organisations in order to establish whether management is aware of the effects stereotypes have on their employees and as a result on the functioning of the organisation.

Conclusion

To conclude, the results of this study indicate that participants experience stereotypes on a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional level. Furthermore, because participants experience predominantly negative stereotypes, their reactions towards these stereotypes are predominantly negative in nature. Very few positive experiences were also reported to exist.

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CHAPTER 6

Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

This chapter comprises the conclusions regarding the study and are provided according to the general objectives of each research article. Furthermore, this chapter outlines the limitations of this project, followed by recommendations for future research, practice and the profession.

6.1 Conclusions

Conceptualising stereotypes according to literature

Within the social constructivism paradigm (and from an emic perspective), elements from the social world become the reality of an individual. Individuals are therefore inclined to assess their social world and attach their own meaning or beliefs towards certain phenomena (Creswell, 2009; Niewenhuis, 2010). When stereotyping, individuals are inclined to attribute certain traits and characteristics to members of a social group different from their own and believe that others do the same towards them (Werner, Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter, & Viedge, 2007). When stereotyping, individuals make the assumption that all members of a certain social group share the same traits and characteristics (Martin & Fellenz, 2010). In making these assumptions (even if it is in-group or out-group stereotyping), the individual may make accurate or inaccurate classifications when stereotyping (Crawford, 2012; Holt *et al.*, 2012). These stereotypes may hold truth for some of the individual members; however, these stereotypes may not be accurate for every single member of that group (McShane &Von Glinow, 2014).

With social constructivism, individuals may stereotype others or themselves based on criteria such as race, gender, age and occupation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Furthermore, stereotypes can be positive, negative and neutral in nature (Whitley & Kite, 2006). According to both Bergh (2011) and Holt *et al*. (2012), when stereotyping, individuals may categorise themselves (in-group stereotypes) in more positive or neutral terms and when stereotyping others (out-group stereotypes), they may assign more negative attributes.

Why do individuals stereotype? According to Mullins (2010), stereotyping assists people with information processing, thereby simplifying the large amount of complex information

with which individuals are faced in order to make sense of their social world. Moreover, stereotyping may be seen as an energy-saving process that helps individuals to understand people without taking the time and effort to really get to know them (Morris & Maisto; 2010; Weiten; 2008). Therefore, they construct their own realities from the social world, which is the premise of the social constructivism paradigm.

Exploring the meaning and origin of stereotypes among South African employees

From the viewpoint of the South African labour force (using an emic perspective), and especially concerning employees from various sectors, it was important to assess how stereotypes are understood and where stereotypes come from. Therefore, Article 1 of this thesis explored how individuals understand the meaning of stereotypes and further also explored the origin of stereotypes as experienced by employees from selected South African organisations. After rigorous thematic analysis, the researcher found that the majority of participants understood what was meant by stereotypes. The meaning of stereotypes was unclear to only a very small number of participants; however, in these cases, participants were provided with a comprehensive explanation before being able to continue with further questioning.

As found in the findings, the participants mostly viewed stereotypes to be generalisations made about individuals belonging to a certain group. However, apart from generalisations, participants accounted other descriptions pertaining to the meaning of stereotypes. This is in line with social constructivism where individuals are inclined to attach different meanings to a certain phenomenon (Mullins, 2010). Therefore, the perception an individual has about a certain phenomenon may be described as his/her reality and may differ from the next person's reality (Mullins, 2010). This was also evident in the data, since individuals attached various terminologies to the description of stereotypes.

When evaluating the origin of stereotypes in South African organisations, it was found that participants of the present study are indeed familiar with the factors that cause stereotypes. Even though not all of the participants have had direct experiences with stereotypes, they were mindful of the fact that stereotypes also originate from indirect experiences. This can clearly be seen from the results, as most of the participants indicated that stereotypes originate from secondary exposure (i.e. stereotypes that originate due to external influences).

Whitley and Kite (2006) confirm this by stating that external influences from sources such as peers, parents and the media contribute to the formation of stereotypes. Most of the participants indicated that stereotypes originate from sources other than the workplace.

Exploring prevalent stereotypes as experienced by employees within selected South African organisations

Following the meaning of stereotypes and how they are formed, it was prudent for the researcher to explore the most prevalent stereotypes in selected South African organisations. Results indicated that individuals do not only stereotype others (out-group stereotypes), but that they also experience stereotypes about themselves (in-group stereotypes). From the findings, it was found that most stereotypes (as perceived by self to others and perceived by others to self) were negative in nature. Furthermore, it was found that various elements of stereotypes are experienced within organisations, which include the following: race, gender, age, culture/nationality, language, occupation, physical appearance, sexual orientation, and work-related dimensions.

Evaluating the prevalent stereotypes further, it was found that most stereotypes were centred on internal dimensions (those dimensions that individuals cannot change about themselves) and included race, gender, and age stereotypes. This is in accordance to what was found by Shani and Lau (2008). According to Grobler, Wärnich, Carrell, Elbert, and Hatfield (2002), these are inborn dimensions that individuals cannot change, thereby making these stereotypes more difficult to change. Additionally, occupational stereotypes and other work-related stereotypes (as an external and organisational dimension) were also found to be prevalent among both in-group and out-group members; however, more so with out-group members. This is in line with what literature argues pertaining to the main themes of stereotypes (Shani & Lau, 2008; Weiten, 2008). Focusing on the most prevalent stereotype mentioned by participants, it was found that racial stereotyping was predominantly experienced by participants (especially in-group members). A reason for this finding can be that the history of South Africa with regard to apartheid makes it especially difficult to triumph over racial barriers (Finchilescu, 2005). Another interesting finding was that most frequencies between out-group and in-group stereotyping were in close proximity (especially concerning race, gender, and age). However, the frequency of in-group stereotyping concerning occupations of

participants differed a great deal from the out-group stereotyping of occupations that were reported.

Exploring occupational stereotypes as experienced by South African employees

The objective of this article was to explore the perceived stereotyping that participants experience pertaining to their current occupations. The reason for the inclusion of this article was because during the pilot study it became evident to the researcher that individuals frequently mentioned out-group stereotypes pertaining to others' occupations, however, very few in-group occupational stereotyping was reported to exist. Various other reasons for including this research article are also provided. Participants of this study were asked to answer a question pertaining to the in-group stereotypes they experience (*"Do you experience any stereotypes about yourself?"*). After this question, an additional interview question was included that specifically asked whether the participant experiences occupational stereotypes about him-/herself in order to facilitate thought pertaining to the objective of the next article (Article 4). Additionally, the researcher, as an industrial psychologist, was interested to assess the participants' perception about their own occupations in their respective organisations to address workplace psychology elements rather than only social psychology elements (i.e. race, gender, and age). It was evident from the previous article's outcomes that many of the out-group occupational stereotypes were mentioned, but only a few in-group occupational stereotypes. Work is a human activity and domain in which individuals spend a great deal of their time (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011), therefore it seems fitting that perceived occupational stereotypes from the employees' point of view within the work domain are investigated.

Stereotypes existed about the following occupations: academics, administration staff, educators, finance, human resources, librarians, mining, nursing and restaurant waitrons. As with the previous article, the largest proportion of the stereotypes mentioned was negative in nature. This finding is contrary to literature, which indicates that stereotypes about in-group members are more positive than stereotypes about out-group members (Bergh, 2011; Feldman, 2013). Findings also indicated that occupational stereotyping mentioned in some cases were further specified according to internal characteristics of participants (race, gender and age). The occupations where these internal characteristics were found included the following: education, finance, librarians, mining, and nursing. A reason for this may be that

certain occupations are seen as being better suited for certain race, gender or age groups (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

Apart from occupational stereotypes, other work-related stereotypes were also reported. These stereotypes included stereotypes about individuals that differ with regard to the level of their position and their qualification. Pertaining to the level of positions, it seemed that females in higher positions perceived themselves to be negatively stereotyped, while males in higher positions perceived themselves to more positively stereotyped.

Exploring the experiences of stereotypes within selected South African organisations

After perceived stereotypes were identified from the participants' in-group(s) (from Articles 2 and 3), the objective of Article 4 could be reached. The objective of Article 4 was to investigate the effects of stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed within selected South African organisations. During the immersing process, it became evident to the researcher that individuals experience stereotypes on a cognitive, behavioural and emotional level. Pre-dominantly, participants reported that they mostly react in a cognitive manner when confronted with stereotypes or experience stereotyping about their in-group. When reacting to stereotypes in a cognitive manner, individuals have certain beliefs and perceptions toward the stereotype or towards the person doing the stereotyping (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). The reason why individuals may react to stereotypes on a more cognitive level may be because it is socially unacceptable to explicitly show one's emotions or behaviour in the workplace when being stereotyped (Glomb & Hulin, 1997). They would rather think about it, and internalise these thoughts than to voice or show it. Bearing in mind that most of the perceived stereotypes about the participants' in-group were primarily negative in nature, it is not unexpected that the participants experienced stereotypes in a predominantly negative manner.

6.2 Limitations

There are various limitations with respect to this particular study. The first limitation concerns the use of tape recorders. Even though the researcher and fieldworkers assured the participants that their identity and personal information would remain confidential, the

participants still may have felt uncomfortable by the use of a tape recorder. This may have resulted in participants not being completely honest when answering the interview questions. Furthermore, because stereotyping is such a sensitive and controversial topic of discussion (Edwards, 2003), it may have been uncomfortable for the participants to disclose information, especially if the researcher or fieldworkers differed from the participants in terms of race and gender. Consequently, the participants may have limited the information they disclosed.

The researcher of this study explored what the origins of stereotypes are as experienced by employees within the broader South African work context. Therefore, the researcher did not ask of participants to indicate where specific in-group or out-group stereotypes originate from. By doing this the researcher, only collected a broad view of where stereotypes come from, not being able to indicate where specific stereotypes (example based on race, gender and age) come from. It is suggested that future studies should focus on investigating the origins of specific stereotypes as experienced by individuals. By using the etic (Nel *et al.*, 2012) perspective, the researcher can make comparisons regarding the origins of for example race, gender, and age stereotypes.

The researcher made use of the hermeneutic approach to understand the deeper meaning of the data collected. By utilising the hermeneutic approach, the researcher was able to understand the deeper meaning of stereotypes as experienced by employees from the current South African work setting. First of all, the researcher identified that most of the prevalent stereotypes mentioned by participants were based on either the internal or external dimensions of diversity. Furthermore, the researcher identified that most of the stereotypes mentioned were negative in nature, and that stereotypes are not just experienced, but are experienced on three different levels (i.e. cognitive, behavioural and emotional). The researcher did not, however, employ further hermeneutics with regard to Article 4, where she investigated the experiences of stereotypes. The researcher only asked of participants to elaborate on the different ways in which stereotypes are experienced, and she did not ask of participants whether they experience stereotype threat, and if this is experienced, what the effects thereof are. Therefore, it is suggested that future research studies should specifically focus on the experiences of stereotype threat and the different effects thereof. Also, when participants were specifically asked to indicate their in-group stereotypes, the hermeneutic approach could have been utilised in order to determine the characteristics of the out-group member doing the stereotyping; however, this may be a suggestion for future research.

Another limitation of this study concerns the language used to conduct the interviews. Some of the participants may have completed the interviews in a language other than their home language, making them feel challenged to express themselves fully and accurately. This could have resulted in participants expressing themselves unclearly and the researcher or fieldworkers understanding the responses incorrectly. The researcher and fieldworkers did, however, enquire from the participants whether they were satisfied with the interviews being conducted in either Afrikaans or English. In addition, where the researcher and fieldworkers did not understand an answer or phrase, they did ask of the participants to provide clarification in this regard.

The biographical questionnaire that participants had to complete did not request of participants to indicate their age. This restricted the researcher in describing the sample of this study with respect to age. Because this study is exploratory in nature and from a broad perspective, the aim is not to quantify or provide a precise measure of a specific concept, therefore not being able to describe the age of the population is not a serious limitation. The general objective was to explore the prevalent stereotypes experienced by participants within the South African work context, the meaning employees attach to stereotypes, where they think it comes from, and how it is experienced. Comparative analysis was done in order to assess the frequency that a certain theme (i.e. race, gender, cognitive experiences etc.) came across, not to compare different race, gender or age groups with each other. Therefore, by not being able to describe the population in terms of age, it did not influence the outcome or results of this study in any manner. Furthermore, as found in the findings, participants mentioned themes such as old workers or young workers (with no age attached).

Value could have been added to this study by including more specific occupational groups, rather than selected organisations in certain sectors. The various sectors that did form part of this study include: banking, mining, municipalities, nursing, police services, higher education institutions, schools, and restaurant industry. Future studies can be conducted examining stereotypes within sectors other than the above mentioned. In order to generalise results, a more even distribution of participants in each occupation (employing quota sampling) could have been conducted. As explained in Chapter 1, quota sampling was attempted pertaining to race and gender in selected organisations, but the workers corps included an uneven distribution. Since the goal was to explore what stereotypes look like within the current work

context of South Africa, the distribution of participants in the present study seemed a good representation (see Statistics South Africa, 2011).

The last limitation with regard to this study is the use of thematic analysis to analyse the data of this study. Thematic analysis is a subjective technique that is used to analyse qualitative data and does not use quantifiable statistical analysis to derive results. However, together with numerous independent co-coders the researcher analysed the data. Furthermore, when doing the data analysis, the researcher did not allow her own opinions and values to influence the interpretation of the data and reported the findings of this study in a truthful manner.

6.3 Recommendations

Recommendations can be made for practice, the profession and future research.

6.3.1 Recommendations for practice and the profession

Even though it is in people's nature to stereotype, stereotyping others leads to individuals being disadvantaged; therefore, individuals should become aware of their stereotypic beliefs and the impact of these on others (Bergh, 2011). Because stereotypes are automatically activated, it is important that individuals make a conscious effort to reduce their stereotypes by fighting against their natural tendencies to place judgement onto others (Crawford, 2010). Individuals can control their stereotypes by being open-minded, paying attention to others, and making conscious decisions (Crawford, 2010).

Stereotypes should especially be avoided when first meeting someone (Bergh, 2011). Although stereotypes save time and effort, it is important to get to know someone before forming stereotypes. Furthermore, incorrect stereotypes of others need to be changed. When individuals are confronted with information that contradicts a stereotype, individuals should embrace this information by changing that stereotype and not re-categorising the individual when that person does not fit the stereotype (Whitley & Kite, 2006).

Furthermore, employees can show empathy towards groups that differ from their own (Galinsky & Moskowitz; 2000). Employees can also avoid the temptation to stereotype by

not interacting with individuals who stereotype, discriminate or show bias attitudes towards others (Plous, 2003). Training and education should be provided (by the industrial psychologist within the organisation) to employees in order for them to become aware of stereotypes within the organisation and employees from diverse backgrounds should be provided with opportunities where they can interact with other employees within the organisation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010).

In order to address stereotypes within an organisation, it is necessary for both industrial psychologists and top management to devote time and effort to eradicate organisational practices that reinforce stereotypes (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). One way in which they can achieve this is by becoming aware of their own stereotypes and by focusing their attention on performance-related information only, rather than on personal differences that are not pertinent to a specific situation (Werner *et al*., 2007). Industrial psychologists and managers should also ensure that decision-making and interpersonal processes within the organisation are free from stereotyping (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010).

The workplace can become diversified and more inclusive when organisations understand how employees experience and deal with stereotypes at work (Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather, & Roberson, 2011). When organisations are aware of the coping strategies that individuals employ in dealing with stereotypes, they will be better equipped to support their employees in this regard (Block *et al.*, 2011). Interventions can be implemented by industrial psychologists that educate employees on how to modify their cognitive appraisals of stereotypes and the emotional reactions that stem from these (Johns & Schmader, 2010). Individuals can change their cognitive appraisals of stereotypic situations by reappraising these situations as challenging and non-threatening (Inzlicht, Tullet, Legault, & Kang, 2011). Consequently, negative thoughts and emotions that accompany stereotypical situations will be eradicated (Inzlicht *et al*., 2011).

6.3.2 Recommendations for future research

Various recommendations can be made for future research. Fieldworkers should be employed and trained in the participant's home language. This may result in participants being more comfortable and better equipped to respond to interview questions. Because many stereotypes are based on internal dimensions such as race, gender and age, it is advised that interviews be

conducted by researchers who share the same physical characteristics as the participants. Participants would most likely be more comfortable to share information with someone who is of the same race, gender or age as what they are.

Further qualitative studies should also be conducted. When collecting data for the present study, the researcher only broadly asked the participants to indicate what stereotypes they experience. The researcher should develop more specific interview questions focusing on race, gender, age, and occupational stereotypes. When thinking about stereotypes, negative stereotypes automatically come to mind; therefore, it is advisable that future researchers should specifically investigate both positive and negative stereotypes. Furthermore, the researcher can employ the etic approach (Nel *et al*., 2012) in order to make comparisons regarding the prevalent stereotypes that different groups experience.

Furthermore, qualitative research with the use of a case study design should be explored further. By targeting a specific organisation it can be investigated what the unique stereotypes are that are experienced within a specific organisation. Evidently so, an article appeared concerning stereotypes in an academic environment pertaining to support staff (see Moloto, Brink, & Nel, 2014). Additionally, in Chapter 4 it was indicated that further research should be conducted within the nursing environment. It would therefore be a valuable contribution if future research focuses on the stereotypes that exist in both private and public hospitals.

More research should be carried out that specifically focuses on the cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences of stereotypes. Participants in this study were only requested to give an account of their general experiences of stereotypes. Interviews should also be conducted with the management of organisations in order to establish whether they are indeed aware of stereotypes that exist within their organisations and the effects of these stereotypes on their employees. Because the topic of stereotypes is controversial and sensitive, it is possible that using self-completion questionnaires instead of interviews will result in better data collection. Participants may feel more comfortable and willing to complete these questionnaires than engaging in an interview with the researcher.

It is further recommended that quantitative methods should also be employed. This study forms part of a bigger research project where the ultimate goal is to develop an instrument/instruments measuring the different types of stereotypes (i.e. race, gender, age and

occupational stereotypes) that were predominantly experienced by participants of the present study. These instruments can provide characteristics according to which individuals can rate both themselves and others. These instruments should include both positive and negative stereotypes, thereby being able to investigate the prevalence of both positive and negative stereotypes. These instruments can then be distributed among different race, gender and age groups, thereby possibly leading to comparison studies.

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