

A qualitative exploration of stereotypes in the South African academic environment

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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 dissertation. This practice is in line with the policy of the Programme in Human Resource Management of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, to use APA style in all scientific documents as from January 1999.
- The dissertation is submitted in the form of two research articles. The editorial style specified by die South African Journal of Industrial Psychology (which agrees largely with the APA style) is used, but the APA guidelines were followed in referencing and constructing tables.
- Although the title of this dissertation makes use of the term ‘academic environment’, only two campuses of one higher education institution formed part of this study. Therefore, the study population that formed part of this study does not represent the entire South African academic environment.

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DECLARATION

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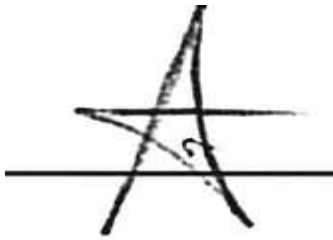
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DECLARATION

I, Annemie Viljoen, hereby declare that “A qualitative exploration of stereotypes in the South African academic environment” 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Viljoen', written over a horizontal line.

ANNEMIE VILJOEN

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SUMMARY

Title: A qualitative exploration of stereotypes in the South African academic environment

Key words: Stereotypes, in-group, out-group, age stereotypes, gender stereotypes, race stereotypes, occupational stereotypes, meaning, origin, behavioural effect, cognitive effect, emotional effect, South African academic environment

After South Africa had adopted a democratic government, the labour force was changed profoundly. With the emphasis on diversity, employees were faced with work teams comprising people from different ages, genders, positions, races etc. The opportunity was given to value and embrace diversity in organisations. On the other hand, opportunities for prejudice and discrimination were greater than ever before. Consequently, stereotyping is evident within these diverse workplaces. If not properly managed, stereotypes can have various negative effects on the organisation. The academic sector in South Africa has to be equipped to manage diversity and therefore stereotypes to ensure the effectiveness of these institutions. The challenge is that employers need to be aware of how to manage such issues. Stereotypes are therefore a significant topic for research, specifically within South Africa.

The objective of this research study was to explore stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in the South African academic environment. A qualitative research study, specifically within the social constructivism paradigm, was employed for this study. A combination of the phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches was employed to reach the objectives of this study. The researcher made use of a case study strategy. Only one single case was utilised in this research study, namely the academic environment. Employees at one higher education institution (and two campuses) ($N = 30$) participated in this research study. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews, where after thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

The results of this study indicated that individuals working in the academic environment in South Africa are consciously aware of the meaning of stereotypes. Most participants were able to illustrate a definition of or meaning for stereotypes. The themes that were mentioned by

participants included assumptions, beliefs, categorisation, generalisation, judgement as well as perception. Participants also indicated that stereotypes originate from various sources. Participants reported that primary and secondary exposure, individual differences, subjective perception as well as the fact that stereotyping was part of human nature were possible explanations for the origin of stereotypes. Participants were well aware of the fact that stereotypes originate from both us and others. When being stereotyped, individuals react to stereotypes in different ways. Participants mentioned that they react on a behavioural, cognitive and emotional level. Participants were also asked questions pertaining to the stereotypes they experience. It was found that various stereotypes exist within the academic environment. These stereotypes are experienced on an out-group and in-group level. Stereotypes mentioned by participants included age, gender, nationality, occupation, sexual orientation, race and work-related stereotypes. There were also participants from the study population who stated that they neither experienced stereotypes on in-group nor out-group level.

Recommendations with regard to future research and practice were made.

OPSOMMING

Titel: 'n Kwalitatiewe verkenning van stereotipes in die Suid-Afrikaanse akademiese omgewing

Sleutelwoorde: Stereotipes, in-groep, uit-groep, ouderdomstereotipes, geslagstereotipes, rasstereotipes, beroepstereotipes, betekenis, oorsprong, gedrageffek, kognitiewe effek, emosionele effek, Suid-Afrikaanse akademiese omgewing

Nadat Suid-Afrika 'n demokratiese regering geword het, het die arbeidsmag geweldig verander. Met die klem op diversiteit, is werknemers nou gekonfronteer met werkspanne wat bestaan uit mense van verskillende ouderdomme, geslagte, posisies, rasse ens. Organisasies is die geleentheid gegun om die waarde van diversiteit te benut en te omarm, maar andersins was die geleentheid vir vooroordeel en diskriminasie groter as ooit tevore. Gevolglik was daar ruimte vir stereotipering in hierdie diverse werkplekke. As stereotipering nie behoorlik bestuur word nie, kan dit verskeie negatiewe uitwerkinge op die organisasie hê. Die akademiese sektor in Suid-Afrika moet toegerus wees om diversiteit en gevolglik stereotipering te bestuur om sodoende die doeltreffendheid van hierdie instellings te verseker. Die uitdaging is om werkgewers bewus te maak oor hoe om sulke kwessies te hanteer. Stereotipes is dus 'n beduidende onderwerp vir navorsing, spesifiek in Suid-Afrika.

Die doel van hierdie navorsing was om stereotipes te verken soos dit ervaar word deur individue in die Suid-Afrikaanse akademiese omgewing. Kwalitatiewe navorsing spesifiek binne die sosiale konstruktivisme paradigma is vir hierdie studie gebruik. 'n Kombinasie tussen die fenomenologiese en hermeneutiese benadering is gebruik om die doelwitte van hierdie studie te bereik. Die navorser het gebruik gemaak van 'n gevallestudiestrategie. Slegs een enkele entiteit is gebruik in hierdie navorsingstudie; die akademiese omgewing. Werknemers van een hoër onderwysinstansie (en twee kampusse) ($N = 30$) het aan hierdie navorsingstudie deelgeneem. Data is deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude ingesamel, waar tematiese analise gebruik is om die data te analiseer.

Die resultate van hierdie studie het aangedui dat individue wat in die akademiese omgewing in Suid-Afrika werk bewus is van die betekenis van stereotipes. Die meeste deelnemers was in staat om 'n definisie of betekenis vir stereotipes te gee. Die temas wat deur die deelnemers genoem is sluit in assosiasie, beginsels, kategorisering, veralgemening, oordeel asook persepsie. Deelnemers in hierdie studie het ook aangedui dat stereotipes uit verskeie bronne ontstaan. Deelnemers het berig dat beide primêre en sekondêre blootstelling, individuele verskille, subjektiewe persepsie asook die feit dat stereotipering deel van die menslike natuur is, moontlike verduidelikings van die oorsprong van stereotipes kan wees. Deelnemers was deeglik bewus van die feit dat stereotipes vanuit beide onself en ander ontstaan. Wanneer daar gestereotipeer word, reageer individue op verskillende maniere. Deelnemers het genoem dat hulle op 'n gedrags-, kognitiewe- of emosionele vlak reageer. Deelnemers is ook vroe gevra met betrekking tot die spesifieke stereotipes wat hulle ervaar. Daar is gevind dat verskeie stereotipes in die akademiese omgewing voorkom. Hierdie stereotipes word op beide die buite-groep en in-groep vlakke ervaar. Die stereotipes wat genoem is deur die deelnemers sluit in ouderdom, geslag, nasionaliteit, beroep, seksuele oriëntasie, ras en werksverwante stereotipes. Daar was ook deelnemers van die populasie wat verklaar het dat hulle nie stereotipes op óf 'n in-groep- óf buite-groepvlak ervaar nie.

Aanbevelings met betrekking tot toekomstige navorsing en die praktyk is ook gemaak.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This chapter focuses on exploring stereotypes in the South African academic environment. The chapter includes the problem statement, the research objectives, outlining the general and specific objectives, and subsequently the research design and division of chapters.

1.1 Problem statement

South Africa is a diverse country, comprising different cultures, languages, races, etc. (Owomoyela, 1996). The reason for South Africa being so diverse is that after the 1994 elections and the end of apartheid, many new policies and laws had been implemented which created an opportunity for diversity (Venter & Levy, 2009). One of the laws that were implemented is the Employment Equity Act which endorses equal opportunity and fair treatment in the workplace, while avoiding discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, sexual orientation etc. (Venter & Levy, 2009). This legislation that came into effect, confronted South Africa with an array of new challenges in the workplace. Management is now confronted with employment equity, affirmative action and black economic empowerment issues (Human, 2005). Thus, the workplace is changing and becoming more diverse as a result of being entered by females, employees of different races, cultures and ethnicity, older workers, people with disabilities etc. (Mondy, 2011).

An example of an organisation that is also being faced with diversity issues is the academic environment and more specifically higher education institutions. According to Thaver (2009), higher education institutions are also attempting to diversify the demographic profile of their employees, which was previously homogeneous. As mentioned above, the reason for the diversification of employees within the academic environment is the implementation of employment equity legislation that specifically focuses on rectifying inequities of the past (le Grange, 2009; Thaver, 2009). According to Thaver (2009), this means that a more diverse community of employees within the academic environment must be established. Enders and Treichler (1997) also stated that the vulnerability of employees in the academic environment has

increased and this may be ascribed to the changes in the structure of the organisation in order to accommodate individuals from different backgrounds entering the workplace.

These demographic changes may lead to problems, such as sexual harassment, discrimination, problems establishing the workplace culture, and bullying (Mello, 2006). In view of these new challenges, stereotyping in the workplace might also be unavoidable (Al Waqfi & Jain, 2007). Abouserie (2006) confirms that these diversity changes may lead to employees in the academic environment being confronted with issues caused by and leading to stereotyping. Various negative consequences of stereotyping can be found in the literature. Stereotypes may cause workplace tension, employee conflict, prejudice and bias; consequently influencing the organisational climate, employee morale, and productivity within an organisation (Solovic, 2010; Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, & Kinicki, 2011; Green, López, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002; Fine & Handelsman, 2010; Kim & Drolet, 2003). It is therefore of high importance for the employer to be aware of these stereotypes and the negative consequences thereof on both the individual and the organisation. It is clear that the topic of stereotypes warrants research.

Conceptualisation of stereotypes

According to Greenwald and Banaji (1995), a stereotype is a commonly held belief about individuals belonging to a specific group. Additionally, stereotypes are judgments or viewpoints about the traits, characteristics, and conduct of individuals belonging to specific groups in society (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). It is when an individual does not have enough relevant facts about a specific person or group of people that he or she then creates a simplified picture or information shortcut of that person in his/her mind and then uses this “picture” to judge that person or group of people (Ndom, Elegbeleye, & Williams, 2008). Kunda and Thagard (1996) classify this selection of pieces of information which influences our impression of certain people or a group of people as stereotypes. When stereotyping, individuals assign certain traits to a person or group of people; individuals thus assume that the person has the same characteristics as the characteristics that are attached to the group to which this person belongs. Moreover, Desforges *et al.* (1991) believe that individuals stereotype when they have inadequate interaction

with group members, generalising that behaviour which they observed as homogeneous to that person's normal conduct and to the rest of the group.

Furthermore, stereotypes are a representation of an individual's approach to processing data (Madon, 1997). This shortens a person's perception process, and as a result of this, perception might be easily distorted (Hepburn, 1985). More importantly, people are mostly not aware of these distortions which lead to stereotypical beliefs, meaning that individuals may form a false belief about a specific person based on the group he/she belongs to (Chen & Bargh, 1997). Devine (1989) supports this statement by suggesting that stereotyping usually happens unconsciously, and is unintentional (Goodwin, Gubin, Fiske, & Yzerbyt, 2000). However, Lee, Jussim, and Rutgers (1995) state that frequently in reality and everyday life, stereotypes are correct and individuals can accurately describe another group and its characteristics.

With stereotypes individuals are more capable of making efficient judgments (Sherman, Lee, Bessenoff, & Frost, 1998) and stereotyping also helps individuals cope with a complex environment (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). According to Devine (1989), our ancestors used stereotypes to quickly determine if they were being welcomed or threatened, if it was a prey or predator; also identifying fellow group members from strangers. Lee *et al.* (1995) add to this by indicating that stereotypes aid in the initial understanding of other groups. The authors further state that because the world and situations are doubtful and unknown, individuals need to stereotype to cope with all this information. In doing so, individuals can more accurately summarise group differences. Furthermore, Fiske (2004) states that stereotyping also plays an important role in the understanding of our social setting and, if managed correctly, may in turn foster a positive self-image.

There are a number of explanations as to where stereotypes originate from. Leippe and Eisenstadt (1994) suggested that stereotypes occur as a result of individuals' past experiences with certain groups or members of certain groups. In this case, individuals base their subjective meaning attached to a current situation on that of a past situation. From a very young age individuals start believing certain stereotypes because of the example they get from their parents (Rohan & Zanna, 1996). Other sources of stereotypes may be television, books, and movies that

portray characters in a certain way and which promote stereotypes, as stated by Ndom *et al.* (2008). Individuals therefore judge others who belong to a specific group based on characteristics that other individuals assign to those groups.

According to Schneider (2004), stereotypes are made on both an in-group and out-group level. In other words, stereotypes are made about in-groups (groups to which an individual belong) as well as out-groups (groups to which an individual does not belong). According to Park and Hastie (1987), this fosters the opinion of “out-group homogeneity”, where an individual believes that out-group members are more similar to one another than in-group members. Also, according to Aberson, Healy, and Romero (2000), and Bergh (2011), a phenomenon known as in-group bias occurs when members of in-groups favour their own group over other out-groups, and mostly attribute positive qualities to the members of their group. For example, Greenberg *et al.* (1990) found that individuals rated other individuals belonging to their own religion more positively than those participants belonging to other religions, because of their connection with their in-group. On the contrary, people stereotype out-group members more negatively (Schneider, 2004). This phenomenon where individuals are more inclined to stereotype out-group members negatively can be explained by the social identity theory. According to this theory, individuals negatively stereotype out-group members in order to feel better about themselves and their in-group (Korostelina, 2014).

Different types of stereotyping have been examined in the past (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996); however, literature mostly focuses on stereotypes related to age, gender, occupation and race (Larkin, 2008). For this reason, the researcher of this study also pays attention to these.

Age stereotypes

According to Sargeant (2011), age stereotyping is concerned with associating specific characteristics with certain ages. Robinson, Gustafson, and Popovich (2008) state that age stereotypes recognise the specific age group as being all similar, rather than distinguishing any differences within that age group. Age stereotyping frequently occurs within organisations (Chen, Pethtel, & Ma, 2010). As explained by Nelson (2002), as individuals develop from a

young age, they already start believing certain negative and positive stereotypes about people that are from different age groups, and because of this, age stereotypes are more eagerly accepted without being questioned. A negative stereotype about aging is that older workers are resistant to change and acquiring new knowledge compared to younger workers (Swift, 2004). Additionally, Chen and King (2002) indicated that older people have more positive stereotypes about their own peers than younger people; for example, older people see themselves as perfect grandparents and that it is easy to talk to elderly people. In a study done by Jackson and Sullivan (2001), young adults evaluated older participants more favourably than young participants in terms of information gathering. According to the literature, older workers are not easily pleased, not as engaged in their work, less motivated and less productive than the young workers (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Younger workers are perceived to be more energetic, passionate and more friendly with regard to information technology (Sargeant, 2011).

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2004), age stereotypes lead to age discrimination. They explain this by indicating that in situations where inadequate information is given, younger workers perform better in performance appraisals when compared to older workers because of the negative stereotypes held by appraisers. Older people are often victims of stigmatisation (Montepare & Zebrowitz, 2002). Important information is rather kept from older adults contrary to younger people (Rubin & Brown, 1975). Also, Levy (1996) found that negative stereotypes about older people even have an effect on their memory. Older people are frequently patronised by talking to them in a childlike way, assuming that older people are confused or forgetful. This may lead to older people starting to accept this tone which may trigger the self-fulfilling prophecy (Nussbaum *et al.*, 2005).

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are socially shared beliefs that males and females are seen as equally exclusive groups (Kelan, 2008). According to Heilman (2001), gender stereotypes are cognitive shortcuts that impact the way people process information about males and females. Moreover, Kelan (2008) states that a differentiation between descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes is possible. Descriptive gender stereotypes explain how males and females behave and

prescriptive stereotypes explain how males and females are expected to behave. Hoyt, Simon, and Reid (2009) state that males are expected to be assertive, competitive, independent, courageous and masterful in achieving their task at hand; whereas females are expected to be helpful, be the nurturer, and have warmth and concern for others. According to Schein (2001), females who adopt these “masculine” qualities are often the victims of being even further stereotyped by others for not acting as a “typical” female is supposed to.

Studies on gender stereotypes are very popular (Mitina, 1999). In the United States females are treated differently, due to the assumptions that females have conflicting workplace demands and family responsibilities (Suk, 2010). All over the world, males are viewed as being better and more successful managers; females are viewed as being “weaker” (Willemssen, 2002) which leads to females not being developed as leaders (Kelan, 2008). However, according to Eagly and Karau (2002), males and females are equally effective leaders. Also, a study done by Goodwin *et al.* (2000) found that the stereotype of females not being good business leaders might challenge their path to success. Stereotypes prescribe what males and females should be and do and therefore gender stereotyping puts limits on what behaviour and characteristics are permissible for both genders (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Puri (2011) explained that broader consequences of gender stereotyping could include imbalances in salaries, females struggling to advance in their careers, and occupations seeming to be unattractive because of the gender linked to it. Gill (2012) continues that gender stereotyping can furthermore lead to high turnover and poor employee morale.

Race stereotypes

Racial stereotyping is the generally recognised traits assigned to members of a racial group (Aboud, 1998). Devine (1989) states that individuals hold stereotypes about different racial groups because of learned assumptions. According to Talbot and Durrheim (2012), various stereotypes exist about the different race groups. In their study it was found that black individuals are for instance viewed as submissive, backward, traditional and less intelligent. Indian people were stereotyped as family-orientated and religious. Furthermore, white people

were stereotyped as rich, privileged, upper-class, educated and racist, and lastly Coloureds were stereotyped as friendly, alcoholic, loud and gangsters.

Fiske and Taylor (1991) found that negative racial stereotypes may lead to prejudice as some individuals are not considered for positions or cannot be trusted in the workplace. Powell and Butterfield (2002) also state that white men are perceived to be better suited for high-status positions. Racial stereotyping will affect how individuals interact with people from a different race (Gordijn, Finchilescu, Brix, Wijnants, & Koomen, 2011). For example, if an individual from a specific race is approached in public by someone from a different race, that individual might assume certain qualities of this person and behave in a way that responds to those qualities. Furthermore, Gilbert, Fiske, and Lindzey (1998) claim that interacting with different racial groups influences the feelings and behaviours towards those individuals. Page (2007) argues that racial stereotyping may cause racism, where whole communities or nations are reduced in the minds of others to a few basic characteristics in order to justify some form of behaviour such as violence or exploitation (Page, 2007).

Occupational stereotypes

Occupational stereotyping is another form of stereotyping that is frequently experienced by individuals within organisations (Spence & Hall, 1996). Occupational stereotyping is the fixed beliefs about a certain occupation or career path, and also about the people in that occupation (Lipton, O'Connor, Terry, & Bellamy, 1991). For instance, Enns, Ferratt, and Prasad (2006) emphasised that negative stereotypes about IT professionals, e.g. that they are “high maintenance” or “technology geeks”, may cause individuals to find this career path unappealing. Occupations that are not seen as a fully specialised position, for example teaching, are often perceived as easy to master, not having a scientific basis of knowledge or self-enriched work environment (Grimm & Kronus, 1973). In the educational environment, negative stereotyping may limit students from choosing specific professions (Enns *et al.*, 2006; Losh, 2001). Thus, the long term effect of occupational stereotyping may lead to educational and job ratio imbalances (Good, Aronson, & Harder, 2008; Schmader, Johns, & Barquissau, 2004).

Yu, Yang, Xun, Lu, and Yan (2014) explain that occupational gender role stereotypes are triggered when males and females are considered to be more appropriate for specific occupations on the grounds of their stereotyped characteristics. The authors gave examples of the former, namely a stereotypical job for a female would be related to qualities such as nurturing, being helpful and sensitive to the needs of others, such as a teacher or a nurse. A stereotypical male job would be associated with attributes such as decision making, coldness, and toughness, such as engineering or a builder. According to Kimmel (2004), from birth children are already placed into either a “girl” or a “boy” class. For instance, Steele, James, and Barnett (2002) conducted a study which inspected the perceptions of female students in a male-dominated academic area such as engineering, maths, and science and found that there was a significant level of stereotype threat and discrimination; consequently those students were more probable to consider changing their courses. According to Blau, Ferber, and Winkler (2002), these occupational gender role stereotypes affect career decision making and contribute to the current occupational separation as well as the pay gap between male and female salaries.

Consequences of stereotypes

Stereotyping is occurring more frequently in the workplace due to organisations promoting diversity which forces individuals from different backgrounds to work together (Glenn, 2003). Al Waqfi and Jain (2007) indicated that stereotyping may lead to biased opinions about co-workers, managers, subordinates or job applicants. This has a remarkable implication in the hiring and performance appraisal process. According to Enns *et al.* (2006), when managers hold the wrong stereotypical beliefs about employees, this may result in human resource complications where different practices will be distorted, even leading to decreased performance and higher turnover.

DeArmond *et al.* (2006) further argue that members of certain groups may form different assumptions about applicants and because of these biased assumptions some individuals may receive more promotions or rewards than others. Powell and Graves (2003) stated that people who are part of making the decision hold the idea of an “ideal” employee for the specific vacancy, and therefore might favour those applicants who most resemble this idea. This may lead

to the appointment of only specific groups of employees (Cockburn, 1990), which may, in turn, affect the composition of the workforce in terms of gender, race etc. Furthermore, Schein (2001) stated that particular groups in the workplace are associated with certain positions, and this may lead to people being treated unfairly or simply not receiving opportunities to occupy those positions. Also, it has been said that individuals are not as successful or are not considered for higher salary jobs, simply because of stereotypes held about their groups (Lane, 2000).

Stereotypes do not only have an influence on the organisation and organisational aspects, but also on the individual. In a study by Allport (1954), certain racial groups start believing all the indictments (e.g. being lazy or aggressive) about their own group, because they have heard it being said about them so often; this may then lead to self-hatred and low self-esteem. According to Page (2007), perceived stereotyping also decreases an individual's motivation. This may also then lead to long-term effects; in fact, studies show that stress associated with negative stereotypes amongst colleagues may result in symptoms such as the inability to make rational decisions, violent behaviour, overeating, and difficulty to concentrate (Burkley & Blanton, 2009). Studies also suggest that stereotyping can lead to mental illness such as depression, and this psychological distress can become psychosomatic and manifest in physical ailments such as abdominal pain, headaches, back pain, etc. (Burkley & Blanton, 2009; Ritsher, Otilingam, & Grajales, 2003). According to a study conducted by Blascovich, Spencer, Quinn, and Steele (2001), stereotypes may also give rise to higher blood pressure.

Whatever kind of stereotype individuals are faced with, or whatever the reason for or influences on the forming of these stereotypical representations, they affect the behaviour of the person stereotyping as well as the person or group being stereotyped (Maurer, Barbeite, Weiss, & Lippstreu, 2008). This affect can be largely attributed to stereotypical threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995). According to Steele and Aronson (1995), stereotypical threat is the fear that an individual experiences that his/her behaviour will confirm the negative stereotype that his/her group is being judged on. Steele and Aronson (1995) state that individuals might succumb to stereotypical threat should they be aware of negative stereotypes about their group. This is regarded as a form of self-evaluative anxiety where the individual acts in a way that is expected of his/her group.

According to Roberson, Deitch, Arthur, and Brief (2002), stereotypical threat is triggered when the stereotype is observed as significant to one's performance; when an individual is working on a task on which his/her group is evaluated poorly (Roberson *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, being aware of this can have a damaging impact on individual performance; this may consequently lead to the individual endorsing the very stereotype that he or she wanted to prove wrong (Kray, Galinsky, & Thompson, 2002). Everyone is familiar with experiencing anxiety and stress when performing a task, and fear of not being up to standard or disappointing others can put added tension on an individual belonging to a specific group (Roberson & Kulik, 2007). Thus, stereotyping has a controlling effect on individuals (Fiske, 1993) and leads to incorrect expectations of oneself (DeVecchio & Honeycutt, 2002).

From the above mentioned discussion it is clear that stereotypes are more likely to occur in a diverse environment such as the academic environment. Also, extensive research has been done on stereotyping; however, research on stereotypes within the South African context, especially the academic environment, is still lacking. The importance and need for empirical research on stereotyping and the different types thereof can therefore be emphasised. Stereotypes do not only hold consequences for the organisation, but also for the individual; thus the further importance of this study. Based on the above problem statement, the following research questions are formulated.

Article 1: The 'what', 'how' and 'why' of stereotyping as experienced by individuals employed in the South African academic environment

- How are stereotypes conceptualised according to literature?
- How are stereotypes understood by individuals employed in the academic environment?
- What are the origins of stereotypes according to individuals employed in the academic environment?
- How do individuals employed in the academic environment experience being stereotyped?
- What recommendations can be made for future research and practice?

Article 2: In-group and out-group stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in the South African academic environment

- What stereotypes do individuals employed in the academic environment experience about themselves (in-group stereotypes) in the workplace?
- What stereotypes do individuals employed in the academic environment experience about the occupation they fulfill?
- What stereotypes do individuals employed in the academic environment hold about other individuals (out-group stereotypes) working with them?
- What recommendation can be made for future research and practice?

1.2 Expected contribution of the study

This study can contribute to literature regarding stereotypes, specifically as experienced within the academic environment. It might also create awareness among South African employees about stereotypes and the effects thereof; an issue which had previously been ignored because of the lack of research on stereotyping in the South African context. It can create awareness within organisations of the different stereotypes that exist within the organisation, thereby providing management with knowledge and tools to address these stereotypes within their organisations. The results of this study will enlighten the individual in realising the effects of stereotyping, appreciating differences in people, and discouraging them to rely on their stereotypes to understand others. This study may also equip management to deal with stereotypes in the organisation and assist with the formation of an inclusive organisational culture which supports diversity. When organisations are aware of stereotypes that exist within the workplace it will lead to objective decision making in recruitment and selection processes, performance appraisals, succession planning, talent reviews and salary negotiations.

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 study is to explore the experiences of stereotypes among individuals employed in the academic environment in South Africa.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of Article 1 are to:

- Conceptualise stereotyping according to literature;
- Determine the understanding of stereotypes by individuals employed in the academic environment;
- Identify the origins of stereotypes according to individuals employed in the academic environment;
- Determine how individuals employed in the academic environment experience being stereotyped; and
- Make recommendations for future research and practice.

The specific objectives of Article 2 are to:

- Identify the stereotypes individuals employed in the academic environment experience about themselves (in-group stereotypes);
- Identify the stereotypes individuals employed in the academic environment experience about the occupation they fulfill;
- Identify the stereotypes that individuals working in the academic environment hold towards other individuals working with them (out-group stereotypes); and
- Make recommendations for future research and practice.

1.4 Research design

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

1.4.1 Research approach

A qualitative research design from a combination of a phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was used for the purpose of this study. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated that qualitative research can be seen as a holistic picture which allows a manifold of meanings of individual experiences. Qualitative research enables the researcher to understand and interpret participants' points of view and the validity of qualitative research is seen as one of its most useful benefits (Hammersley, 1998; Woods & Catanzaro, 1988). Creswell (2009) defines qualitative research as a study where an individual or group's meaning of a problem is explored with the aim towards understanding it. Specifically, qualitative research within the social constructivism paradigm was used with the view that individuals have a need to make sense of the world in which they work and live (Creswell, 2009). Individuals are therefore inclined to assess their social world and attach their own meaning or beliefs towards certain phenomena (Creswell, 2009; Niewenhuis, 2010). The social constructivism paradigm applies the general logical constructivism into social situations; where groups learn from each other; where meanings are shared through history, culture and interaction with others. It concerns collaboration to create a culture of shared knowledge with shared meanings (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

By utilising a phenomenological approach, emphasis is put on an individual's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world (Trochim, 2001). The phenomenological approach pursues creating an understanding regarding a specified research question(s) from the perception of the population that forms part of it (Salkind, 2009). The author further stated that this approach offers data regarding the 'human' side of a subject. The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to determine general themes to explain the sequences of meanings of a phenomenon (Lester, 1999). Therefore, the researcher was concerned with understanding the

phenomenon of stereotypes as experienced by the population of this study. This gave the researcher the ability to understand how the world appeared to participants in terms of stereotyping in the academic environment. Furthermore, the hermeneutic approach enabled the researcher to understand the deeper meaning that individuals attached to their experiences of the phenomenon of stereotypes (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delpont, 2011).

1.4.2 Research strategy

This research was carried out by means of a case study strategy. In a case study an individual, organisation, program or phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008) is studied in depth for a period of time; in this study reference was made to the academic environment as a single case. Robson (2002) defines a case study as using various sources of evidence to do research which entails an empirical analysis of an existing phenomenon within its real life framework; thus the phenomenon of stereotypes in the academic environment was investigated in this study. The researcher also employed a case study strategy to gain a rich understanding of the context of the research and the processes being enacted (Morris & Wood, 1991). This strategy also has the ability to answer the “why”, “what”, and “how” questions. A case study strategy enables the researcher to know more about a phenomenon which has not been researched much or which is poorly understood (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Therefore, by using a case study strategy, the researcher was able to better understand the phenomenon of stereotypes as experienced by individuals within the academic environment.

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

The literature review focused on stereotypes, specifically age, gender, race and occupational stereotypes. Literature on the academic environment and individuals specifically working in the academic environment was also consulted. The sources that were used included:

- Article databases, which included EBSCOHOST, ScienceDirect, Emerald, Sabinet Online and SAe Publications.
- Relevant textbooks.
- Internet-based search engines such as Google Scholar and Google.
- Journal articles from various publications such as: *Personnel Psychology*; *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*; *Industrial and Organisational Psychology*; *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*; and *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

1.4.3.2 Research setting

The interviews were conducted at the academic institution. This was a natural setting for the participants where they felt comfortable. This location was also chosen on the assumption that this was where they experienced stereotypes. As part of the research study, the researcher approached two campuses of one academic institution. Criteria used to select the academic institution were that they employed more than 50 employees. Before the study commenced, the researcher obtained permission from the institution and from the two respective campuses. Thereafter the researcher approached possible participants. As far as possible, the participants were diverse in terms of age, gender, occupation, race as well as the departments in which they worked.

1.4.3.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher had to accomplish different roles during the study; the first of which was the planning role. Here the researcher had to plan what the study entails and also how this study will

be conducted. The second role of the researcher was that of a designer where the researcher had to strategise and formulate the methodological process. As part of data collection, the researcher firstly took on the role of interviewer and then the role of transcriber. After the interviews had been transcribed, the researcher analysed the data received for meaningful themes. Together with several co-coders, the data was analysed by following a systematic data analysis process. Lastly the researcher fulfilled the role of reporter where she had to write a report on what has been found in the study. During all the research roles, the researcher had to remain free from bias and had to stay objective throughout the entire process.

1.4.3.4 Research participants and sampling methods

The population involved employees working in the South African academic environment ($N = 30$). A combination of convenience and purposive sampling was used. MacNealy (1999) states that convenience sampling chooses participants who are easily available and who agree to be part of the study. The sample size is dependent on the number of people who is willing and accessible to participate in the study (MacNealy, 1999). Convenience sampling can be executed in a short period of time and is inexpensive. Purposive sampling is explained by Henning (2013) as a focus on those individuals who will fit the criteria as the ideal participants. Henning continues stating that purposive sampling, also referred to as judgmental sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique. Here, the participants who formed part of the study are chosen on the basis of the researcher's judgment. In purposive sampling the researcher focuses on specific characteristics of a population; those which will assist in answering research questions. In this study, the researcher for instance focused on age, gender and race of those working in the academic environment. Purposive sampling is beneficial because it provides a range of non-probability sampling techniques for the researcher to make use of. Sampling is done by means of convenience sampling until data saturation has been reached.

Criteria for being part of the research pertained to individuals who were 1) employed in the academic environment; 2) able to speak English or Afrikaans; 3) differed according to race, gender, department, and level of employment; and 4) willing to participate in the research and prepared to have a tape-recorded interview with the researcher.

1.4.3.5 Research procedure

After the researcher has obtained permission from the academic institution and its two campuses, she contacted the participants to schedule dates and times for the interviews that best suited them. This research took place at the respective campuses of a higher academic institution within South Africa. The interviews were held in the participants' offices as the venue was suitable for both parties; it was also an appropriate venue due to its privacy and where the participants feel comfortable. The office doors were closed to avoid disturbances. The researcher introduced herself in a friendly and warm fashion and ensured that the participants were comfortable. To ensure that participants were at ease, a detailed explanation of the objective of the research and the process thereof was given in order for the participants to fully comprehend it and to feel content participating in the study. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before commencing with the interviews, and participants were assured that anonymity is promoted and adhered to at all time. The researcher then clearly explained the context of the interview and, with the permission of the participant, the interview was tape recorded. Participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the research at any time.

1.4.3.6 Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews were utilised towards reaching the objectives of this research study. An interview schedule was set before commencing with the interviews. The researcher ensured that all participants had a thorough understanding of each interview question. Cohen and Crabtree (2006) described semi-structured interviews as a formal interview with prior-planned interview questions. The interviewer followed the questions; however, allowing further discussions that may digress from the topic when she deemed it appropriate and if it assisted with acquiring data needed for the research. Researchers make use of semi-structured interviews because questions are prepared beforehand which allow the interviewer to be prepared and competent in what is asked during the interview. Semi-structured interviews also permit participants the flexibility to express their opinions as they wish. Semi-structured interviews provide consistent, comparable qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Data collection was

continued until a point where the data was saturated. The following interview questions were asked to all participants:

Article 1:

1. *In your own words, please explain what you understand about the word 'stereotype'?
(what does the word stereotype mean to you?)*
2. *Where do you think stereotypes originate from?*
3. *How do you experience being stereotyped?*

Article 2:

1. *Do you associate yourself with any stereotypes within your workplace? (in-group stereotypes)*
2. *Do you experience stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?*
3. *What stereotypes do you hold of other individuals in your workplace? (out-group stereotypes)*

A pilot study was done beforehand with four individuals employed within the academic environment to determine if questions were understood and correctly interpreted by participants. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), a pilot study is a brief explanatory investigation to test particular procedures or instruments. The authors further state that this is an excellent way to determine the feasibility of the study, also saving the researcher time in knowing if approaches will be effective beforehand. Every participant was asked to complete a biographical questionnaire measuring age, race, gender, language, province and qualification.

1.4.3.7 Data recording

With the consent from the participants, a tape recorder was used to record all the interviews. After interviews had been conducted, the researcher transcribed all the interviews. The tape

recorder and transcribed interviews were kept safe from unintentional loss and unauthorised access, and therefore only the researcher and the supervisor had access to these.

1.4.3.8 Strategies employed to ensure quality data and integrity

With the goal of ensuring the trustworthiness of findings, the criteria of Trochim (2001) were used. These included credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility: Credibility criteria involve establishing that the results of the research are believable from the perspective of the participant. Streubert and Carpenter (1999) stated that credibility is achieved when participants' own experiences can be differentiated from the reported research findings. This was done by ensuring that the answers given by the participants exactly reflected the same picture as the reported data (Schurink, Fouche, & De Vos, 2011).

Transferability: The importance of transferability is to ensure that the results found in the study can be generalised to other situations and contexts (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Transferability was achieved by explaining the background and context of the study in detail.

Dependability: Dependability stresses the importance of reporting the processes in the research study in such detail and depth that should a future researcher repeat the study, he or she would be able to find the same results. Therefore, the study is viewed as a "prototype model". This will also ensure that correct research practices are followed and that readers have a thorough understanding of the study when reading the report (Trochim, 2001).

Confirmability: Conformability is concerned with objectivity. It is important to ensure that the study's findings are a true reflection of the experiences mentioned by participants, and are not based on the researcher's subjective perceptions of the participants' experiences. The researcher acknowledged her own predispositions. The researcher acted in good faith by ensuring that personal values and theoretical inclinations did not have an effect on the findings (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

1.4.3.9 Ethical considerations

In order to conduct this research, the researcher must first have a thorough knowledge of applicable ethics. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the researcher should behave in such a way that the participants involved in the study and those affected by it are considered. Researchers need to protect their participants, develop trust with them, promote the integrity of the research, and guard against misconduct. The American Psychological Association (2007) provides five guidelines in their code of conduct which the researcher of this study also adhered to. These guidelines stipulate that a) the researcher was qualified and competent to carry out her specific research; b) honesty, integrity, respect and fairness were present in all research activities; c) the researcher was willing to take responsibility for her actions; d) at all times during the research, participants' rights, privacy, cultural preferences, gender and racial heritage were respected in order to ensure that no discrimination takes place during the research; and e) the research project did not harm any participants and was in their best interest at all times.

In this research other ethical considerations that were considered were privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, termination of participants' involvement, and the provision of research attention. All the necessary provisions were made to ensure that all participants have the right to privacy to ensure the protection of their integrity and dignity. Regarding confidentiality and anonymity, all participants were ensured of total anonymity; therefore no names were mentioned. During the data collection period, all participants had the right to terminate their involvement, even if they initially agreed to form part of the study.

1.4.3.10 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the findings of this study. Thematic analysis is concerned with the examination and reporting of patterns or themes within the data. Themes are identified which become the categories for analysis. Thematic analysis consists of six phases in developing meaningful patterns or themes (Guest, 2012). In this study themes from Article 1 were extracted relating to the meaning, origin and experience of stereotypes; for Article 2 themes specifically

relating to in-group, in-group occupational and out-group stereotypes were extracted. The following steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were used to analyse the data in this study:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

All verbal data needs to be transcribed into written data in order to conduct a thematic analysis; a verbatim transcription of all verbal interview answers was therefore created. It is important to be familiar with all facets of the data. This involved repetitive reading of the data, searching for meanings and patterns. Because this phase involves the foundation for the other phases, notes were made regarding ideas for themes and sub-themes. It was vital that the transcript retained the information that was needed, also making sure it remained true to its original nature and that the transcription report was practically suited to the purpose of analysis.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

After the researcher had read and familiarised herself with the data and had generated an initial list of ideas, phase 2 started. The researcher identified initial codes (in this case categories) from the transcribed data. The researcher therefore organised the data into meaningful groups and these groups are broader than the themes identified in the next phase. The researcher worked systematically through the entire data set, focusing on each data item, and identifying aspects in the data that may form themes. Responses of six interview questions were analysed for this research study. In Article 1 three questions were analysed pertaining to the meaning, origin and experiences of stereotypes. In Article 2 another three questions were analysed pertaining to in-group stereotypes, in-group occupational stereotypes and out-group stereotypes as experienced by participants of this study.

Step 3: Searching for themes

This phase started when all the data had been primarily categorised. During this phase probable themes were developed within each category. The researcher needed to document the themes and accompanying responses in a separate document in order to ensure a systematic approach. When

the data allowed for it, themes were further arranged into preliminary sub-themes and, when it was seen fitting, characteristics describing the sub-themes were also employed. Characteristics were created for in-group stereotypes, out-group stereotypes and in-group occupational stereotypes. When necessary, the researcher also created separate themes which included sub-themes and/or characteristics that did not seem fitting for the overall category. These, however, were not discounted yet; the researcher first finalised the succeeding step of the data analysis.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

During this phase, the researcher enhanced the themes created in the previous step. Also, the researcher identified themes that needed to be disregarded, as well as themes that might collapse into others. The researcher ensured that the data within themes bind together meaningfully. This phase involved two levels of reviewing and refining themes. Level one included reviewing at the level of the categorised data extracts. Here the researcher read through all the collated extracts for each theme, and considered whether they appear to form a clear pattern. Level two involved consideration of the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

During this phase the researcher further refined the themes that have been created during the previous phases and also gave attention to the data within these themes. This stage involved identifying the core of what each theme was about and deciding what feature of the data each theme captured. A detailed analysis was written for each identified theme. As part of this phase, the researcher specifically gave attention to sub-themes and, where the data was rich, the characteristics associated with each theme. After refinement of themes, sub-themes, and characteristics, the researcher was then able to describe the theme and content of the theme by only making use of a few sentences. By deciding on appropriate names for themes and sub-themes, the researcher ensured that the content of the theme was clearly represented by the names of themes and sub-themes.

Step 6: Generating the report

Phase 6 comprises the final analysis and write-up of the report (i.e. findings of Articles 1 and 2). The purpose of this stage was to portray the collected data in an understandable and objective way to the readers. It was important that the analysis provides a summarising, clear and rational explanation of the themes and accompanying content. The report needs to be of good quality and therefore provided sufficient evidence of the results of this research study.

The researcher improved the reliability of the results by making use of several co-coders to analyse the data. Discussions and debates were held concerning every piece of data to ensure that the correct analysis had been made. The co-coder team comprised the supervisors of the study and independent researchers who are employed in either the industrial psychology and/or human resource management field.

1.4.3.11 Reporting style

Themes and sub-themes were extracted from the data obtained and direct quotes were used to confirm results. Characteristics were also employed where needed. Afrikaans quotes were translated in order to accommodate all language groups.

1.5 Overview of chapters

The chapters in this dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction.

Chapter 2: Research article 1.

Chapter 3: Research article 2.

Chapter 4: Conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

1.6 Chapter summary

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

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CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH ARTICLE 1

THE 'WHAT', 'HOW' AND 'WHY' OF STEREOTYPING AS EXPERIENCED BY INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Orientation: Different meanings are assigned to stereotypes and individuals also have different ideas regarding the origin of stereotypes. The different ways in which stereotypes are experienced by individuals are also not similar.

Research purpose: This research explores the meaning, origin, and effects of stereotypes among individuals employed in the South African academic environment.

Motivation for this study: In order to manage stereotypes effectively within organisations, it is important to know whether employees have an understanding of this phenomenon. There are also diverse reasons for the forming of stereotypes and where stereotyping originates from. Furthermore, employees within an organisation may also differ with regard to the ways in which stereotypes are experienced. Many researchers have focused on stereotypes; however, very few studies in South Africa have focused on the meaning, origin and effects of stereotypes especially within the academic environment.

Research approach, design and method: The research was done through a qualitative research design from a combined phenomenological and hermeneutic approach. Both purposive and convenience sampling were employed for this study. A sample of 30 employees working in the academic environment formed part of this study and data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

Main findings: The findings show that there are broad meanings assigned to stereotypes and that most people in the academic environment hold a definition of what stereotyping is. It was also found that stereotypes mostly originate from primary experiences or secondary exposure. It is also clear that stereotypes do have different effects on the individuals being stereotyped, whether behavioural, cognitive or emotional.

Practical/managerial implications: If managers are aware of what stereotypes mean, where stereotyping originates from and the effect it has on the employees, an effort can be made to minimise stereotypes and the effects thereof on productivity, employee morale and the organisation as a whole. If employees are informed about and are aware of stereotyping, they can rather endeavour to embrace differences and diversity.

Contribution/value-add: This study will provide useful information to be able to create awareness of how employees understand stereotypes, where stereotyping originates from and the effects thereof on the academic environment. By conducting this study, employees' own stereotypic nature may become known to them. By knowing where stereotypes originate from, individuals can make a conscious effort not to engage in this process. This study will furthermore provide the organisation with an opportunity to minimise the effects of stereotypes on the individual and the organisation.

Key terms: Stereotypes, meaning, origin, behavioural effect, cognitive effect, emotional effect, South African academic environment.

Introduction

Modern society is defined by varied social and cultural interactions which have not only created the opportunity for valuing diversity, but also opened the door for prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping. Individuals participate in stereotyping as a form of resistance to differences in terms of age, gender, race, occupation etc. (Plous, 2003). According to Quinn and Rosenthal (2012), stereotyping is a normal human process which helps individuals to assess and understand other individuals from different social categories (Quinn & Rosenthal, 2012). However, the way in which stereotypes are understood and defined may differ across individuals and contexts. This research study starts off by first exploring whether individuals in the academic environment are familiar with the phenomenon of stereotyping. Various answers are expected from the results as individuals differ in the way they define and understand certain concepts and phenomena (Mullins, 2010). It can therefore be reasoned that the meaning of stereotypes may be interpreted very differently by individuals. This is evident when studying the assumptions of the social constructivism paradigm. The assumptions underlying the social constructivism paradigm state that the very same phenomenon may be interpreted quite differently by different individuals (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Therefore, before one can start investigating the experience of a certain phenomenon, it is first necessary to determine the meanings that are attributed to this phenomenon.

Individuals often engage in stereotyping to reduce the complexity of the cognitive world which allows them to draw rapid conclusions about others, especially in situations where little information is known about a person (Fiske, 2000). Irrespective of the functions that stereotypes serve, it is not always an accurate reflection of the stereotyped individual's true characteristics (Burgess, 2003). The question then remains, "Where do these stereotypic perceptions originate from?" In literature it is found that stereotypes can be ascribed to different sources such as socialisation with others and media (McFarlane, 2014). However, since South Africa is a unique country comprising a diverse set of employees within its workforce (Devine & Elliot, 1995), the origins of stereotypes, especially within South Africa, may be likely to differ from those of other countries. Nevertheless, the perception regarding the origin of stereotypes of South African employees in the academic environment is unclear; therefore the reason for investigating the origin of stereotypes.

Irrespective of the origins of stereotypes, it is the individual at the receiving end of the stereotype that is being affected. Stereotypes about individuals are found to be mostly negative (Harris, 1998), and it can therefore be assumed that the effects of stereotypes will most likely be negative as well. The ways in which individuals react to these stereotypes might also differ. They can choose to react in either a cognitive, behavioural or emotional manner (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). These effects may influence the morale and productivity in the workplace and therefore need to be addressed (Mondy, 2010). Before it can be addressed, however, it is important to explore the different effects of stereotypes as experienced by individuals. The purpose of this research article is therefore threefold, namely to investigate the meaning attributed to stereotypes; to determine the origin of these stereotypes; and to determine the different ways in which these stereotypes are experienced.

Research purpose and objectives

There have been studies regarding the meaning, origin and experiences of stereotypes; however, studies specifically focusing on South Africa and more explicitly the academic environment are restricted. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to determine how individuals in the

academic environment conceptualise stereotypes, what the origins of stereotypes are, and how these stereotypes are experienced by them.

Literature review

Conceptualisation of stereotypes

Stereotyping is a natural human phenomenon; people place others into groups on the basis of perceptually-related characteristics (Quinn & McCrae, 2006). White and White (2006) define stereotypes as a cluster of characteristics that a person explicitly links to members belonging to different groups. It is when an individual is judged and placed into a group based on physical characteristics such as age, race, gender etc. Additionally, stereotypes are judgments or viewpoints about the traits, features, and conduct of individuals belonging to social categories in society (Hilton & Von Hippel, 1996). According to Quinn and Rosenthal (2012), the process of stereotyping involves social categorisation which guides perception and behaviour. To explain, people categorise others in order to understand individuals and predict their behaviour (McGarty, Yzerbyt, & Spears, 2002) According to Hinton (2000), if this person would then behave in a way that is contrary to the prediction, individuals would be surprised and try to find reasons as to why there is a contradiction.

Stereotyping people relies on previous conceptualisations and might therefore be biased, leading to distortion or discrimination (Moore, 2006). Davis and Harris (1998) confirmed this by stating that stereotypes are misrepresented and are negative simplifications of a group of people. Stereotypes are therefore described as inaccurate (Kassin, Fein, & Markus, 2011), but even if stereotypes are wrong, they simplify social perception and serve as rules for social interaction. On the contrary, Fiske (2000) proved that stereotypes might actually be correct assumptions. Although many stereotypes are based on completely nonfactual information, some do stem from a kernel of truth and may be equally accurate (Kassin *et al.*, 2011). These authors further state that some stereotypes might be true for the majority of a group, and then the assumption about a certain individual has the possibility of being correct.

When engaging in the process of stereotyping, individuals stereotype both themselves and others. Stereotyping is therefore concerned with a specific group to which an individual belongs (in-group) or a group that the individual does not belong to (out-group) (Brians, 2005). This can also be explained by the social identity theory which proposes that stereotypes separate groups and form the basis of inter-group attitudes. A person's identity consists of both personal and social identities. Personal identity refers to being a unique and different individual compared to others; whereas social identity defines the individual on the grounds of his or her joint similarities with members of his or her in-group (Turner, 2000). Hence, by stereotyping, individuals are defined by their social identity and the group they belong to. Categorising people into different groups may lead to discrimination as the in-group is more preferable to the out-group, which is at the heart of the basic human need for self-esteem (Houston, 2010). Schneider (2004) confirms the above by stating that out-group stereotypes are often more negative than in-group stereotypes.

Origin of stereotypes

McFarlane (2014) states that it is innate in human nature to stereotype and it has continuously been part of society and may have originated from an effort to define and comprehend the conduct, values, languages, characteristics and ideas of people who are members of an out-group. Stereotyping may result because of past experiences, as argued by White and White (2006). Leippe and Eisenstadt (1994) explain this by stating that stereotypes are a result of previous experiences individuals have had with out-group members. When having an encounter with a person from an out-group behaving in a certain way, it has a lasting effect on an individuals' memory. People remember behaviour and these memories are then used for future stereotyping (Houston, 2010). Fiske (2000) explains that memory appears to reinforce stereotypes; where a person from a specific group was observed behaving in a specific way, his or her behaviour would then in future be generalised to other people belonging to the same group. Houston (2010) further stated that individuals would rather remember positive experiences from in-group members than negative ones, and therefore there are more positive stereotypes regarding in-group members compared to out-group members.

Another source of stereotyping is socialisation and interaction with family and friends (Thompson & Hickey, 1999). Socialisation is a natural human process and cannot be avoided (McFarlane, 2014); what people learn through this process of socialisation can be biased and hold prejudices which in turn create the opportunity for stereotyping. As part of socialisation, perceptions about others are shared through society's mutual knowledge (White & White, 2006). Stereotypes are therefore being explicitly taught to its members (Stangor & Shaller, 1996). The main source of this shared knowledge is what people were brought up to believe and is then transferred to other members of the same group (Rohan & Zanna, 1996). McGarty *et al.* (2002) argue that under the influence of parents, teachers and peers, stereotypes are commonly learned in early childhood. Furthermore, Thompson and Hickey (1999) found that it is nearly impossible not to stereotype as it is deep-rooted within the human mind.

The media also influences how people think about certain groups, leading to stereotyping (Walker & Lawson, 1993). McFarlane (2014) declared that people start believing what they see in the movies or on television, without personally undergoing or challenging the accuracy of what they see. The author continues by stating that through television, radio, the internet and social media, people observe and duplicate stereotypes. For example, librarians are mostly portrayed as “quiet, mean and stern, single, stuffy and in glasses” (Walker & Lawson, 1993, p. 16), and this has created a picture of and expectations about this occupation in reality. This confirms what Ndom, Elegbeleye, and Williams (2008) found, namely that television, books, and movies promote stereotypes. In a study on racial stereotyping in the mass media, Dixon (2014) argues that theories of social cognition emphasise the fundamental psychological mechanisms regarding the media's role in stereotyping. He found that content analyses prove that African people are often portrayed in the media as “mammies”, “coons” or criminals, leading to stereotyping of African people by in-group- as well as out-group members.

Experience of stereotypes

People react differently to stereotypes (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Singletary, Ruggs, Hebl, and Davies (2009) argue that stereotypes frequently cause negative reactions. Stereotypes can have cognitive, emotional and behavioural effects on the stereotyped group (Gordon, 2001). A

behavioural effect refers to behaviour that occurs as a result of a stereotype about one's group (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Cognitive effects occur when individuals have thoughts about the stereotype or the person stereotyping (Gordon, 2001). Emotional effects refer to the feelings that people have as a result of a stereotype (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

Thompson and Hickey (1999) emphasise the strong influence that stereotypes have on people's behaviour. Examples of behavioural effects that stereotypes have on individuals are firstly self-stereotyping (Hogg & Turner, 1987); self-stereotyping is when an individual recognises himself as a member of a specific group and then starts behaving in a way to confirm that group membership (Devos & Yokoyama, 2014). Practising the self-fulfilling prophecy (Steel & Aronson, 1995) could also be an effect; this phenomenon is when an individual falsely believes a stereotype about his or her in-group and then acts in a way to confirm this stereotype (Jussin & Harber, 2005). Furthermore, Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather, and Roberson (2011) found that stereotyping can lead to invigoration, whereby an individual reacts to stereotyping by overcompensating and making a greater effort to meet goals. Other behavioural effects that can be found in literature are underperforming (Jones, 1997); behaving in a way to prove that the stereotype is not true (Von Hippel, Hawkings, & Schooler; 2001); or, on the contrary, being careful of behaving in a way as to confirm a stereotype. Stereotypes can even lead to people over-indulging in unhealthy food, as found by Nauert (2010).

Schmader and Johns (2003) confirm that stereotypes and stereotyping have cognitive effects too. According to Padilla (2008), one of these possible cognitive effects can be described as identity conflict. Identity conflict arises when an individual has conflicting thoughts regarding how to conduct him or herself after being stereotyped (Leong & Ward, 2000). Moreover, people can perform poorly in cognitive ability tests after being stereotyped (Nauert, 2010). Research has proven that the risk of being assessed or evaluated can cause individuals to perform worse (i.e. behavioural effect) in an area in which negative stereotypes exist about the group to which they belong (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999).

Perchance the main reason why stereotyping influences performance is that it distracts the individual's thoughts while trying to complete a task (Schmader & Johns, 2003), which can also

be added to the list of cognitive effects. In their study regarding the influence of stereotype threat on working memory capacity in women, Schmader and Johns (2003) found that stereotypes lead to a decrease in the working memory ability. Specifically in the workplace, Block *et al.* (2011) found that stereotyping may lead to employees being disengaged at work, whereby the second round of consequences pertains to thoughts about leaving the company. Another cognitive reaction is identity bifurcation; this is when employees psychologically withdraw themselves from their work and/or organisation (Pronin, Steele, & Ross, 2004). Stereotyping can even have an effect on an individual's career choice. Gupta and Bhawe (2007) stated that some career paths might look more appealing than others as a result of stereotyping.

Singletary, Ruggs, Hebl, and Davies (2009) argue that stereotyping provokes a variety of emotions. Stereotyping causes employees to feel demotivated at work (Block *et al.*, 2011). Nauert (2010) found that people feel aggressive and find it difficult to control themselves after being stereotyped. People also report feeling irritated and frustrated when hearing stereotypes about their in-group (Blanton, Crocker, & Miller, 2000). Stereotyping can lead to feelings of anxiousness. For example, if a female is about to write a test and she is aware of a stereotype regarding females performing poorly in tests, she might start feeling anxious that she could reinforce the stereotype (Singletary *et al.*, 2009). Tucker (2014) argued that being stereotyped can result in individuals feeling that they are not worthy and it can have an influence on their self-esteem. Moreover, Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, and Bylsma (2003) found that stereotyping provokes feelings of anger. Individuals experience anger towards the person who is stereotyping as well as towards themselves (Hansen & Sassenberg, 2006). People become frustrated and angry when they do not achieve their career goals as a result of the perception of being stereotyped (Spector, 1997).

From the above it is clear that stereotypes are a significant subject that needs further research. Various definitions of stereotypes exist within the literature, and it is also clear that stereotypes have diverse origins as well as different impacts on the individual. However, little research has been done in this regard in South Africa, and specifically within the academic environment. Hence, the objectives of this study are to determine the different meanings that employees

ascribe to stereotypes; to explore the origin of stereotypes; and lastly to investigate the effects of stereotypes on the employee within the academic environment.

Research design

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

Research approach

A qualitative research design from a combined phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was utilised in this study. Qualitative research makes use of data which does not comprise numbers (Tesch, 1990). This allows the researcher to describe, give meaning and understand the topic which is being investigated (Stuwig & Stead, 2001). In a qualitative study the variables of participant answers are not controlled, because it is the flexibility and natural development that the researcher needs to record. The researcher wants to understand, argue and explain the phenomenon with evidence provided by the data (Henning, 2014).

The social constructivism paradigm was further used as part of the research approach. Social constructivism is defined by Creswell (2013) as an explanatory framework whereby people try to find an understanding to their world, creating their own specific connotations to correspond with their experience. These connotations are not fixed or inherent within an individual. Rather, meanings are shaped through interaction with others (Creswell, 2013). Social constructivists view information and truth as developed by the interactions of individuals within a society (Andrews, 2012).

As mentioned above, a combination of the phenomenological and hermeneutic approach was used. The phenomenological approach refers to the researcher understanding numerous individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It is vital to understand these common experiences in order to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994); in this study the phenomenon refers to that of stereotypes. The hermeneutic approach is employed for analysing and interpreting qualitative data. Hermeneutics

concentrates mainly on the meaning of qualitative data, especially textual data. Therefore, the purpose of using hermeneutics is to aid deeper human understanding of a phenomenon (Struwig & Stead, 2011). By utilising both phenomenology and hermeneutics, the researcher of this study is enabled to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of stereotypes within the academic environment.

Research strategy

The research strategy that was used was the case study strategy. This involves comprehensive studies of a small number of participants and was used with the goal of finding detailed data about the research topic. Case studies can focus on different entities such as an individual, an organisation, a program etc. (Stake, 2002). Only one single case was utilised in this research study, and therefore this study focused on the academic environment as a single case. Case studies are used when the focus is a current occurrence with a realistic context (Yin, 2009), therefore the occurrence of stereotypes within the academic environment as workplace.

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.

Research setting

The researcher conducted the interviews in a natural setting where it was assumed participants experienced stereotypes, i.e. in the workplace. The researcher approached a higher education institution (two campuses thereof). This institution was selected because it employed more than 50 employees. After permission had been obtained from the institution and the two campuses, the researcher approached the employees to participate in the study. Employees were diverse in terms of age, gender, occupation, race and department.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

Various roles had to be fulfilled by the researcher throughout the study. Firstly the researcher had to represent the role of planner; here the researcher planned the study and how the study would be conducted. This provided the foundation for conducting the fieldwork, analysis and reporting of the data. Another role that the researcher had to fulfil was that of designer; here the researcher had to strategise and prepare the methodological process. During the data collection phase, the researcher also had to fulfil the roles of interviewer and transcriber; where after the researcher was an analyst. Together with numerous co-coders, the data was analysed by following rigorous data analysis steps. Lastly the researcher acted as a reporter, writing a comprehensive report regarding the findings of this study. Throughout all these roles, the researcher made every effort to stay objective and neutral and not to let her personal biases influence the research process.

Research participants and sampling methods

A combination of purposive sampling and convenience sampling was used and the population comprised individuals working in the academic environment ($N = 30$). Purposive sampling combines different non-probability sampling techniques; also referred to as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, purposive sampling depends on the judgment of the researcher when selecting the people that will form part of the study. Usually the sample being investigated is quite small (Given, 2008). Convenience sampling looks at the availability of participants (Struwig & Steed, 2011). Participants from academic environments that were easily accessible formed part of this research study.

The sample size was determined by the number of participants willing and available to participate. Criteria for inclusion in this research were individuals who 1) were employed in the academic environment; 2) were able to speak English or Afrikaans; 3) differed according to race, gender, department, and level of employment; and who 4) were willing to participate in the research and were prepared to have a tape-recorded interview with the researcher. Table 1 gives a description of the characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of participants (N = 30)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-30 years of age	21	70.00
	31-40 years of age	6	20.00
	41-50 years of age	1	3.30
	51-60 years of age	2	6.70
Race	Black	8	37.00
	Coloured	1	3.30
	Indian	3	10.00
	White	18	60.00
Gender	Male	16	53.00
	Female	14	40.00
Language	Afrikaans	16	53.00
	English	7	23.00
	isiZulu	1	3.30
	Sepedi	1	3.30
	Setswana	2	6.70
	Shona	3	10.00
	White	18	60.00
	Province	Gauteng	11
	Mpumalanga	1	3.30
	North West	18	60.00
Qualification	Further education and training (NQF 4)	3	10.00
	Higher education and training (NQF 5)	27	90.00

The majority of the participants were in the age group 20 to 30 years (70%); 20% of the participants were in the age group 31 to 40 years; 3.3% were in the age group 41 to 50 years; and 6.7% of participants were between the ages 51 and 60 years. The majority of the participants were male (53%); more than half of the participants were White (60%), while 27% were Black; 10% Indian; and 3% Coloured. More than half of the participants resided in the North West Province (60%), whereas 37% resided in Gauteng and 3% in Mpumalanga. More than half of the participants (53%) spoke Afrikaans, whereas 23% spoke English, 10% Shona, 7% Setswana and 3% isiZulu and Sepedi respectively. Most of the participants (90%) had acquired higher education and training, while 10% had obtained further education and training.

Research procedure

Consent was acquired from the tertiary institution as well as employees before the commencement of the study. Thereafter dates and times for the interviews were scheduled with participants. It was imperative that participants were comfortable with the setting; therefore it was best to conduct the interviews in their offices where they were familiar with their surroundings. The door was closed in order to curb interruptions during the interviews. The researcher put the participants at ease by an in-depth explanation of the objective of the research and the process that would be followed. All participants were assured that information gathered would remain confidential and anonymous. The researcher made sure that participants were comfortable with the interviewer making use of tape recorders.

Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews were utilised. The semi-structured interview combines structured and unstructured interviews. Questions are decided on before the interview and are asked in a methodical and consistent way, providing participants with the opportunity to discuss issues that were in the predetermined questions (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Interviews allowed the researcher to investigate the participants' realities which gave meaningful phenomenological data by transcribing and analysing the content (Henning , 2014). An interview schedule was set before commencing with the interviews. The researcher ensured that all participants had a thorough understanding of each question. Data collection continued up until a point where the data was saturated. Questions that were asked were:

1. *In your own words, please explain what you understand with the word 'stereotype' (What does the word stereotype mean to you?)*
2. *Where do stereotypes originate from?*
3. *How do you experience being stereotyped?*

A pilot study with four people employed within the academic environment was completed beforehand to determine whether questions were understood and correctly interpreted by

participants. A pilot study is a small scale initial study employed in order to evaluate viability, time, and opposing events in order to predict a suitable sample size and improve the study design prior to starting with the study (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Every participant completed a biographical questionnaire. In the questionnaire questions pertaining to the following were asked: age, gender, language, race, geographical region and highest qualification.

Recording of data

With the consent from the participants, tape recorders were used to record all the interviews. Tape recorders were used to record each and every participants' exact words. After the interviews were conducted, all data was transcribed into written material. All information obtained was securely and safely stored. The only persons who had access to the tape recorders were the researcher and her supervisors.

Strategies employed to ensure quality data and integrity

In order to ensure trustworthiness of the findings, attention was given to the following (Shenton, 2004):

Credibility: Credibility can also be described as internal validity of a study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Credibility criteria involve establishing that the findings of the research give an accurate picture of what the participant had experienced (Shenton, 2004). Data was reported in a truthful manner by the researcher, truthfully capturing the experiences of the participants.

Transferability: Transferability can also be described as external validity of a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) explain transferability as the extent to which the outcomes can be generalised to other settings and situations. The researcher ensured that should the research be repeated, the same results would be found. For this reason the researcher clearly and in detail explained the setting and context of this research study.

Dependability: Dependability refers to the reliability of a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Dependability is when the reader of the study is convinced that the research study exactly happened as it was recorded by the researcher (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). This was done by the researcher recording the research procedure in a rational and well-structured way (Schurink *et al.*, 2011).

Conformability: Conformability refers to the objectivity of the researcher. Objectivity is reached through the researcher not being biased and not being influenced by personal values (Shenton, 2004).

Ethical considerations

When conducting research, it is highly important that the researcher has in-depth knowledge of applicable ethics. Misleading results are reduced as far as possible by thorough planning in order to meet ethical correctness. Upholding of self-respect and the well-being of interviewees are the responsibility of the researcher. This entails protecting participants from harm, hazards or any uneasiness. The researcher needs to ensure that results are not untrue or inaccurate (Ruzek & Zatzick, 2000). The American Psychological Association (2009) provides five guidelines in its code of conduct and which were adhered to by the researcher:

- The researcher was qualified and competent to carry out her specific research;
- Honesty, integrity, respect and fairness were present in all research activities;
- The researcher took responsibility for her actions;
- At all times during the research the participants' rights, privacy, cultural preferences, gender and racial heritage were respected in order to ensure that no discrimination took place during the research. All the necessary provisions were made to ensure that all participants had the right to privacy to ensure the protection of their integrity and dignity.
- The research project did not harm any participants and was executed in their best interest at all times. During the data collection period all participants had the right to terminate their involvement, even if they initially agreed to form part of the study. All participants were ensured of total anonymity; therefore no names were mentioned.

Data analysis

By making use of thematic analysis, the researcher was provided with a strategy to investigate and understand the data that has been collected. Thematic analysis includes identifying themes and sub-themes or patterns within the recorded interview answers. Themes are described as patterns in the collected data that are related to the phenomenon being studied (Guest, 2012). These themes are then the categories for analysis. Thematic analysis involves coding in six phases to generate established, meaningful patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The following steps by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used in analysing the data of this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with data

It is of high importance that the researcher is well familiar with the data collected. The interview answers were transcribed into written form to enable the researcher to conduct a thematic analysis. The researcher ensured a 'verbatim' explanation of all data. The researcher also ensured that the transcript held all the information needed for coding, preserving the overall meaning of the interview answers. The researcher read through the data several times to ensure she had an in-depth understanding thereof. While reading through the data, she searched for meanings and patterns. Notes were made in preparation for coding of the data, after which the formal coding process could commence.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

After the researcher had thoroughly familiarised herself with the data, codes (categories in this case) were developed. Responses to three interview questions were analysed for this specific article. Subsequently the three categories were identified and labelled as meaning of stereotypes; origin of stereotypes; and the experiences of stereotypes. Hereby the data was divided into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005). Coded data is different from themes as it is broader explanations. This process was performed manually by working through all the answers on a spreadsheet, developing categories. The researcher systematically worked through the entire data set looking for repeated patterns or themes.

Step 3: Searching for themes

This phase involves sorting the different categories into potential themes. Themes and sub-themes were developed by systematically working through the spreadsheet of all the transcribed interview answers. By reviewing responses from all 30 participants pertaining to the three categories, the researcher formed themes. Taking into consideration the detail of the raw data, sub-themes were also created. Categories with accompanying themes and sub-themes were documented on separate pages, in order to work in a systematic manner.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Phase 4 involved the refinement of previously identified themes. Some themes were eliminated, merged or changed, where the researcher deemed it necessary. The researcher ensured that there were clear distinctions between themes. The researcher also considered the validity of all themes relative to the data set. Once again the researcher read through the whole dataset; this was done to ensure that all themes and sub-themes were efficiently extracted from the data and that all interview data had been analysed.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

During this phase the researcher further refined the themes and sub-themes that were needed for the analysis. The researcher defined the core of each theme and made sure that developed sub-themes were relevant to each theme. Thereafter the researcher wrote a detailed analysis about each theme (see findings). Thereafter the researcher decided upon relevant names for each theme and sub-theme, also checking that the content within each theme was clearly represented by its name.

Step 6: Producing the report

Phase 6 involved the final analysis and producing the report. The purpose of the report is to convince the reader in an understandable way that the analysis is valid. The researcher ensured

that the report provided sufficient evidence of the categories, themes and sub-themes. During the data analysis process, the researcher employed the help of co-coders who were working in the field of either industrial psychology or human resource management; further ensuring the validity of the findings of this research article.

Reporting

Themes and sub-themes were extracted from the obtained data and direct quotes were used to confirm results. This was done in table format to give a comprehensive outline of the findings of this study. Direct quotes in Afrikaans were translated to English.

Findings

Following is a discussion of the categories, themes and sub-themes as extracted from the collected data. The findings of this article are outlined in table format. Tables comprise the themes, sub-themes and direct quotes from participants. Three categories were extracted from the data collected and include the meaning of stereotypes, origin of stereotypes and the experiences of stereotypes.

Category 1: Meaning of stereotypes

Participants of this study were requested to give a description of the meaning of stereotypes. The participants gave detailed explanations of the meaning of stereotypes, indicating that all participants understood the meaning thereof. Although different terminology was used by participants, it was clear that participants were indeed familiar with the concept of stereotyping.

Table 2

Meaning of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Assumptions	Based on behaviour	<i>"It is making general assumptions about someone because of previous general behaviours of certain groups."</i>
Beliefs	Accurate/inaccurate	<i>"A stereotype is a subjective belief ..."</i>
	Based on behaviour	<i>"Stereotyping is when you believe something is happening or you relate behaviour to a certain group."</i>
	Based on past experience	<i>"... 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 ..."</i>
	Based on physical characteristics; based on religion	<i>"A stereotype means a common belief relating to a specific type of person, be it racial/gender/religious."</i>
Categorisation	Accurate/inaccurate; based on past experience	<i>"When you categorise someone because of past experiences, and sometimes you put people fairly or unfairly in such a category."</i>
	Assign a label	<i>"It is when a person categorises someone with a term or label"</i>
	Assign behaviour; based on behaviour	<i>"People don't understand that type of person, so they put them into classifications, thinking that everyone who is like that needs to be like that, or anyone who acts like their classification is one."</i>
	Based on characteristics	<i>"It is like a classification of characteristics/traits, something of a person/people."</i>
	Based on ignorance	<i>"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."</i>
	Based on physical characteristics	<i>"When attributes are assigned to people based on race / gender etc. only."</i>
	Based on social status	<i>"Stereotyping is classifying, grouping coupling according to social status, highlighting it, expressing your stereotype mentality."</i>
Generalisation	Accurate/inaccurate; based on characteristics	<i>"... are usually based on a trait, sometimes true, sometimes not, but always blanketed across the whole group."</i>
	Assign behaviour	<i>"If you say a certain group of people all do the same thing ..."</i>
	Assign characteristics	<i>"It is to attach certain characteristics to a certain group"</i>

Table 2 continued

		<i>of people and to therefore define them not as individuals in the group but as a whole group with the same characteristics.”</i>
	Based on physical characteristics	<i>“A stereotype is a generalisation made about a certain group of individuals, based on race, gender...”</i>
Judgment	Based on characteristics	<i>“It is when someone is judged based on the group they belong to, or based on certain characteristics he or she shares with certain groups.”</i>
	Based on personal preferences	<i>“This means the judging of people based on personal preferences.”</i>
	Based on physical characteristics; based on behaviour	<i>“Judging someone on the way they appear or how they look or the way they act”</i>
	Ignoring differences	<i>“When all people are judged or measured in the same way, when diversity and differences are not taken into account.”</i>
Perception	Accurate/inaccurate	<i>“Yes in some occasions there are valid stereotype comments, in some not. However, it does remain an opinion only.”</i>
	Based on narrow-mindedness	<i>“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.”</i>
	Based on past experience	<i>“The perception ... held of these people is subjective as it may be based on experience or certain encounters with a certain person from a certain group...”</i>

Table 2 pertains to the meaning of stereotypes as explained by participants and gives an indication of the themes and sub-themes that were extracted from the data analysis. Direct quotes of participants were also used to further substantiate the themes and sub-themes extracted. When the participants gave descriptions of what stereotypes mean to them, the following themes emerged:

Assumptions: Stereotypes are assumptions made about individuals and based on the manner in which they behave.

Beliefs: Stereotypes are beliefs about individuals based on their behaviour, physical characteristics or religion. These beliefs may also be based on past experiences which an individual has had with another person. These beliefs can be accurate or inaccurate.

Categorisation: A stereotype is a categorisation based on behaviour, characteristics (traits), physical characteristics, social status or past experiences. Individuals also categorise other individuals because they are ignorant about others. When categorising, individuals assign behaviour or labels to others. These categorisations may be either accurate or inaccurate.

Generalisations: Stereotypes are generalisations made about individuals, based on their characteristics and their physical characteristics. Furthermore, generalisation also involves assigning behaviour and characteristics to groups of people. These generalisations can be either true or untrue.

Judgment: Stereotypes are judgments made about others. These judgments are based on characteristics, behaviour, personal preference and physical characteristics. Judgment also involves ignoring differences between individuals.

Perceptions: A stereotype is a perception about others based on one's own narrow-mindedness or past experience with a person. These perceptions can be either accurate or inaccurate.

Based on the above themes and sub-themes, it can be seen that individuals within the academic environment are indeed aware of the meaning of stereotypes. Although different terminology was used by participants, all participants were able to provide a definition of the concept 'stereotype'. It can also be seen that many sub-themes are repeated across the different themes. Therefore, it can be assumed that participants generally have the same description of stereotypes.

Category 2: Origin of stereotypes

Participants of this study were asked an interview question pertaining to the origin of stereotypes. Most of the participants gave detailed descriptions of what they thought the origins of stereotypes were.

Table 3
Origin of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Human nature	From self and others	<i>“People are judgmental beings, we are very judgmental.”</i>
Individual differences	Poor self-esteem	<i>“I think that these stereotypes are caused by lack of self-confidence.”</i>
	Disrespect	<i>“It think it has to do with your own uncertainties and a lack of respect for others and their abilities.”</i>
	Diversity	<i>“Everybody differs and everyone does not like everyone, because of differences between people.”</i>
Primary exposure	Observation	<i>“Observing them coming and going from the workplace as and when they please.”</i>
	Past experiences	<i>“Negative experiences I’ve had with people from the specific group.”</i>
Secondary exposure	Culture	<i>“It is linked to the truth, you cannot link everything, but I believe that within groups there are certain cultural tendencies ...”</i>
	Observation	<i>“...things I experienced or observed happening to people close to me.”</i>
	Social interaction	<i>“... influence from others - both positive and negative...”</i>
	Upbringing	<i>“It is about your childhood home, how you grew up, what your mother and father believed.”</i>
Subjective perception	Ignorance	<i>“It is mainly caused because you don’t know the people, you don’t know what the people are like ...”</i> ,
	Narrow-mindedness	<i>“The fact that people are used to think in one direction only.”</i>

Table 3 consists of the themes, sub-themes and responses that were extracted when participants were asked an interview question relating to the origin of stereotypes. The following themes

emerged when participants were asked to indicate their perceptions regarding the origins of stereotypes:

Human nature: Individuals stereotype others because it is a natural human phenomenon. Participants indicated that they and others engaged in the natural process of stereotyping.

Individual differences: Participants indicated that there were factors unique to each person that caused him/her to stereotype others. Participants indicated poor self-esteem to be one origin. Participants further indicated that people were diverse; therefore they stereotype. Another sub-theme that was mentioned was that individuals stereotype because of their disrespect of others.

Primary exposure: Primary exposure can be described as personal experiences that an individual has had with members of stereotyped groups. Individuals then generalise that experience to the rest of the group members. People also stereotype, because they observe individuals from the stereotyped group engaging in some sort of action or behaviour.

Secondary exposure: Secondary exposure refers to individuals engaging in stereotyping, not because of their own direct experiences with a stereotyped individual, but because of influences from secondary agents. Stereotyping occurs because of influences coming from culture, social interaction, and upbringing (for example parents). Individuals also stereotype because of observing the experiences of those around them.

Subjective perception: Subjective perception is a person's individual view or opinion about something or someone. Individuals engage in stereotyping because they are ignorant about others and because they are narrow-minded.

Category 3: Experience of stereotypes

On the third category, participants were asked to describe the different ways in which they experienced stereotypes. A few of the participants said that they were not influenced by the

stereotypes they knew existed about them, but the majority of the participants explained how they experienced stereotypes in the workplace.

Table 4

Experience of stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Behavioural effect	Assertive; strict	<i>"I need to be very assertive and strict for others to know their ground."</i>
	Discussion	<i>"Argumentably when one's opinions differ from those who stereotype, it does lead to further discussions, irrespective of the outcome..."</i>
	Humble	<i>"I try to stay humble."</i>
	Laugh	<i>"They don't really affect me, some you just laugh at."</i>
	Prove stereotype wrong	<i>"Will maybe try and prove them wrong."</i>
	Prove stereotype right	<i>"I try to fit into my stereotype..."</i>
	Retaliating	<i>"Maybe you will start retaliating."</i>
Cognitive effect	Challenge	<i>"The stereotype presents itself as a challenge to me, to prove myself in my work environment and go above and beyond what is expected of me."</i>
	Complemented	<i>"I see it as a compliment and a challenge..."</i>
	Insulted	<i>"...you will feel offended and then you start acting in a different way."</i>
	Negative	<i>"It makes me negative."</i>
	Positive	<i>"I'm using it to work for me."</i>
	Stereotype the person holding the stereotypes	<i>"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."</i>
	Underestimated	<i>"People underestimate me..."</i>
Undervalued	<i>"...it feels as if my opinion doesn't count."</i>	
Emotional effect	Demotivated	<i>"It demotivates me..."</i>
	Hurt	<i>"People's words hurt you..."</i>
No effect		<i>"The stereotypes do not bother me."</i>

Table 4 provided an indication of the different ways in which stereotypes were experienced by participants of this study. Table 4 further provided a picture of the themes, sub-themes and

accompanying quotes as extracted from the data. When participants were asked to explain how they experienced being stereotyped in their workplace, the following themes emerged:

Behavioural effect: Participants explained that the stereotypes had an effect on their behaviour. When being stereotyped, they behaved in an assertive or strict manner and stereotypes might sometimes lead to a discussion. They also reacted to stereotypes by retaliating, or laughing the stereotype off. Some participants' comments specified that they tried to stay humble or they tried to prove the stereotype either right or wrong, depending on the nature of the specific stereotype.

Cognitive effect: Participants explained that they also experienced stereotypes on a cognitive level. They indicated their experiences of stereotypes to be challenging, insulting and negative. Also when stereotyped, it can lead to individuals feeling underestimated and undervalued. Individuals might also start forming stereotypes of the person stereotyping them. When stereotypes were positive, they led to positive experiences and feeling complemented.

Emotional effect: Participants noted that they felt hurt or demotivated when being stereotyped.

No effect: Some of the participants also indicated that they are not bothered by stereotypes and therefore stereotypes do not have an effect on them.

Discussion

Outline of the findings

The first objective of this article was to conceptualise stereotypes according to literature. McGarty *et al.* (2002) define a stereotype as a perception of a certain group, whereby behaviour and characteristics are generalised to every individual belonging to that specific group. Cox, Abrahamson, Devine, and Hollon (2012) agree with the above indicating that by using stereotypes, individuals assume that someone belonging to a certain group will behave in a

certain way. According to Hinton (2000), individuals make use of stereotypes to draw conclusions about others when there is a lack of further information; thereby judging people on physical attributes. In the literature it is evident that individuals stereotype both themselves (in-group) as well as others (out-group) (Houghton, 2010; McGarty *et al.*, 2002). In-group stereotypes refer to stereotypes that exist about one's own group and to which an individual belongs; out-group stereotypes refer to stereotypes about groups to which individuals do not belong. According to Schneider (2004), people may have more negative stereotypes about out-groups than about in-groups.

The second objective of this article was to establish the meaning that individuals in the academic environment attributed to stereotypes. The findings of this study indicated that participants of this study referred to stereotypes as a process that involved assumptions, beliefs, categorisation, generalisation, judgment and perception. It was also found that when individuals stereotyped, they based their stereotypes on aspects such as behaviour and physical characteristics and these stereotypes could be both accurate and inaccurate. These findings are also supported by literature. Hilton and Von Hippel (1996) described stereotypes as judgments or viewpoints about the traits, characteristics, and conduct of individuals belonging to specific groups in society. The authors further suggested that stereotypes are when the behaviour of one person of a group is generalised to the rest of the members of the group. According to Quinn and Rosenthal (2012), individuals put others in categories based on visible physical characteristics such as age, gender, body posture and so on, triggering categorisation that leads to stereotyping. This is also in agreement with the findings of the current research study. As mentioned above, the findings of this study indicated that stereotypes can be both accurate and inaccurate. This is confirmed by research conducted by McGarty *et al.* (2002). Kassin *et al.* (2011) state that many stereotypes are based on unfactual or unproven information or beliefs; however stereotypes may be true for some members of the stereotyped group.

The third objective of this article was to establish the perception participants had regarding the origin of stereotypes. Participants reported that human nature, individual differences, primary exposure, secondary exposure and subjective perceptions could be the origin of stereotypes. Participants indicated that stereotypes happened due to human nature. This is confirmed by

Ndom *et al.* (2008) who stated that stereotyping is a normal way for an individual to create a simplified picture in his/her mind about someone belonging to an out-group; to make a shortcut when judging someone. The authors further stated that when an individual does not have enough relevant facts about a specific person or group of people, he or she then uses stereotypes to draw conclusions and make assumptions.

Regarding individual differences, it was found that individuals stereotype others because of their own low self-esteem. This is supported in literature in a study by Harrison (2001), where it was found that lower self-esteem may improve the likelihood of implicit stereotyping. This specific finding can be explained by the social identity theory. According to this theory, individuals have a need to maintain and enhance their self-esteem by belonging to a group with joint similarities (Bergh & Theron, 2009; Haslam, Powell, & Turner, 2000). In order to enhance their self-esteem even more, individuals negatively stereotype out-group members (Bergh & Theron, 2009; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991). Gilbert and Hixon (1991) found that when individuals feel that their egos are being threatened, they negatively stereotype out-group members, thereby engaging in downward social comparison which enhances their self-esteem.

Primary exposure relates to people observing or experiencing behaviour or reactions from members belonging to different groups and then generalising that behaviour to the rest of the group. This has also been found in a study by Schneider (2004), suggesting that stereotypes occur as a result of individuals' past experiences with certain groups or members of certain groups. However, individuals who have had much interaction with members from out-groups are inclined to hold less intense and more diverse stereotypes of out-group members (Hewstone & Hamberger, 2000; Kunda & Oleson, 1997; Paolini *et al.*, 2014). These authors further state that multiple interactions with out-group members cause individuals to be less inclined to expect of members of the out-group to confirm or disconfirm the stereotypes held about them.

Secondary exposure refers to individuals being influenced by secondary agents (i.e. culture, social interaction, parents). This is proven by Rohan and Zanna (1996) who postulated that from a very young age, individuals start believing certain stereotypes because of the example they get from their parents. This is also confirmed by McGarty *et al.* (2002) who state that people are

socialised to accept the same stereotypes; these stereotypes can be adopted at any age, but are usually learned in early childhood under the influence of not only the parents, but also educators and peers. Television, books, and movies also portray characters which promote stereotypes (Ndom *et al.*, 2008).

The fourth objective of this study was to determine the effects that stereotypes had on people working in the academic environment. Participants reported that they experienced stereotypes on three different levels, namely behavioural, cognitive and emotional levels. This is supported in literature (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Regarding the behavioural effect, the findings of this study found that the participants wanted to prove the stereotypes right. When trying to prove a stereotype right, people may engage in the process of self-stereotyping and this may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy (Haslam, 2001). According to Latrofa, Vaues, and Cadinu (2012), stereotyped individuals engage in self-stereotyping when they describe and view themselves in a stereotype-consistent way. Subsequently, when individuals internalise these stereotypes that exist about them, they may start behaving in a manner that is consistent with the stereotype, and this is known as a self-fulfilling prophecy (Greller & Stroh, 1995). On the contrary, some individuals (as found in this study) may behave in such a way to deliberately prove that the stereotype about him/her is not true; these individuals are referred to as counter-stereotypic individuals (Von Hippel, Hawkings, & Schooler, 2001). Von Hippel *et al.* (2001) further state that these individuals who try to prove stereotypes about their group wrong may do so in seeking attention, as focusing on one's distinctiveness draws attention.

A cognitive effect is when an individual has opinions about another person, item or condition that they accept as the truth based on their own principles and experiences (Gordon, 2001). In this study it relates directly to how stereotyping in the academic environment affects a person's 'thoughts'. Participants stated that their experiences of stereotypes were negative, challenging and some would even start to stereotype the one stereotyping them. However, according to Arnold *et al.* (2010), even though an individual has a negative attitude towards another person, it does not necessarily mean that he/she will react in a negative way towards that person. People will still work with people against whom they hold a negative cognitive attitude for the sake of cooperation and work relationships. Participants also reported that when they were stereotyped

positively, it led to positive reactions and being complemented. Even if stereotypes are positive or negative, they still have a negative effect on individuals as found in a study done by Siy and Cheryan (2013). When people are being positively stereotyped, individuals report feeling depersonalised, indicating that their individualism is lost.

In terms of the emotional effect, this was the theme least mentioned. Participants mentioned that they feel hurt and demotivated when stereotyped by others. The reason why individuals only mentioned emotional reactions a few times could be because of the importance that is currently being placed on emotional intelligence in the workplace. Employees are being pressured not to react emotionally to situations, but to remain calm and professional (Mohammed *et al.*, 2014). It could therefore be possible that individuals would rather react in a cognitive manner than on an emotional level. However, according to Dillard and Pfau (2002), when one's thoughts (cognitions) and feelings (emotions) are in conflict, it could lead to psychological tension or distress which can be defined as cognitive dissonance.

Practical implications

By conducting this study awareness can be created among individuals in the academic environment regarding their stereotypic tendencies. Individuals may come to realise that the stereotypes they hold of others may not always be a true reflection of the person's behaviour or characteristics. Also, if individuals are aware of the origins of stereotypes, individuals can make a conscious effort not to rely on these, but instead getting to know someone for whom they truly are. This study can further educate employees and organisations regarding the different effects of stereotyping. If individuals are aware of the negative effects thereof, they may possibly think twice before engaging in the process of stereotyping.

Limitations and recommendations

There are some limitations to this study. The sample size comprised only 30 participants in the academic environment; therefore the results cannot be generalised to the whole of the population.

Furthermore, only participants from one tertiary academic institution and two different campuses in two provinces were chosen for this study; therefore the sample size of this study could have been broadened. Some of the participants who had given permission for the use of tape recorders could still have felt uncomfortable with the idea. The language usage could have posed a problem. Participants who formed part of the study and who answered the interview questions in a language different from their home language, could perhaps not have been able to express themselves the way they intended to. Participants could also have felt uncomfortable to share their experiences of stereotypes with the interviewer.

For future research it is recommended that a bigger sample be used which includes academic staff from more diverse tertiary institutions. Furthermore, a subsequent study could focus on what is currently best practice in managing stereotypes and the effects thereof within organisations. This could be administered in a longitudinal study by focusing on larger organisations that are currently making use of diversity training. The stereotypic attitudes of employees can be measured before the training, directly after the training and six months after the training in order to establish whether or not there was any change regarding stereotypic attitudes; also whether stereotypes are further managed on personal and organisational levels. It is also advisable to make use of field workers to overcome language barriers, i.e. interviews must be conducted through fieldworkers who speak the same language as the participants. A future study can also include questions pertaining to the cognitive, behavioural and emotional experiences of stereotypes instead of a general question regarding the experiences of stereotypes.

Mayhew (2014) recommends that stereotypes be managed by making use of various practices. It is recommended that organisations implement policies to reduce stereotyping and discrimination in the workplace. It is also advisable for employers to provide diversity training and training on stereotyping towards creating awareness thereof. It is also recommended to reassign or restructure workgroups to encourage people from diverse groups to get to know one another, and to increase their exposure to dissimilar groups. Employees who personally get to know their colleagues may appreciate differences in people and it may discourage them to rely on their stereotypes to understand others.

According to Hoopes (2010), the following strategies to reduce the effects of stereotyping could be employed in organisations:

- Educate management and employees on the effects of stereotyping as well as how to deal with stereotypes and their effects;
- Educate employees on how stereotypes influence decision making;
- Appoint senior management who are responsible for monitoring organisational fairness;
- Focus on forming an inclusive organisational culture that supports diversity; and
- Aid in building and supporting professional networks that include employees from different biographical backgrounds.

Implement leadership-development programs that include diversity training. Furthermore, the impact of stereotypes can be reduced by creating awareness of the reasons and origins for stereotyping. Training should also be given to aid individuals in managing the effects of stereotypes. If people are aware of the effects of stereotypes, it could help them to manage those specific feelings, thoughts or behaviours.

Conclusion

In the findings of this study it was established that there are broad meanings assigned to stereotypes; however, participants did differ with regard to terminology used to describe this concept. It was also found that stereotypes originate from human nature, individual differences, primary experiences, secondary exposure and subjective perception. It is also clear that stereotypes do have different effects on the persons being stereotyped, whether being behavioural, cognitive or emotional. Participants in this study mostly experienced stereotypes on a behavioural level.

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CHAPTER 3

ARTICLE 2

IN-GROUP AND OUT-GROUP STEREOTYPES AS EXPERIENCED BY INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Orientation: A variety of stereotypes exists within organisations. Individuals do not only stereotype others, stereotypes are also experienced about oneself.

Research purpose: This research attempts to explore different types of stereotypes that exist within the academic environment. More specifically, this research attempts to explore the most prevalent in-group and out-group stereotypes as experienced by these employees. Further, because work is such an integral part of employees' lives, the researcher of this study also explored the various occupational stereotypes that are experienced by employees within the academic environment.

Motivation for this study: After the 1994 democratic elections, South African organisations were legally forced to implement numerous new Acts to promote equality and affirmative action. This resulted in a more diverse workforce, subsequently leading individuals from diverse backgrounds to work together as one team. Because of this increasing diversity within organisations, individuals are faced with an increasing possibility of stereotyping within their workplace. Previous research has repeatedly been done on the phenomenon of stereotypes; however, studies on stereotypes within South Africa are limited, especially within higher education institutions.

Research approach, design and method: The research was done according to the social constructivism paradigm, following a combined approach of both phenomenology and hermeneutics. A case study strategy was further utilised. Both purposive and convenience sampling was employed for this study. A sample of 30 employees working in the academic environment was interviewed through semi-structured interviews. The researcher analysed the data by making use of the steps of thematic data analysis.

Main findings: The findings show that stereotypes indeed exist in the academic environment; individuals hold stereotypes about themselves as well as others. Stereotypes that were identified included age, gender, nationality, occupational, sexual orientation, race, and work-related stereotypes. Stereotypes identified by participants were both positive and negative; however, negative stereotypes were more prevalent.

Practical/managerial implications: If managers are aware of their employees' stereotypes, an effort can be made to minimise these stereotypes. Diversity should be embraced by granting employees from diverse backgrounds opportunities to work together. This may lead to employees realising that stereotypes are not always truthful.

Contribution/value-add: This study contributes to increasing the body of knowledge relating to stereotypes within the South African context and specifically within the academic environment. The findings of this study may help management realise that stereotypes might be evident in the organisation, especially if the organisation employs diverse individuals. By addressing these stereotypes, a positive organisational climate can be created.

Key terms: Stereotypes, age stereotypes, gender stereotypes, occupational stereotypes, South African academic environment.

Introduction

During the past three decades the labour force of South Africa has changed immensely. The labour legislation framework was used as a basis to transform the country from the apartheid period of White minority rule, oppression, and legally enforced racial separation to a country of democracy (Seekings & Natrass, 2006). After the democratic elections of 1994, four significant Acts had been implemented to control labour relations in the country, namely the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995; the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997; the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998; and the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998. Through these amended policies and regulations, the South African society was democratised based on the values of equality, non-racialism and non-sexism (Ferreira, 2005).

South Africa was now pressured with regulations around employment equity, black economic empowerment and affirmative action (Owomoyela, 1996). According to Thaver (2010) organisations were now expected to comply with the employment equity controls which demands greater diversity and wider demonstration of all demographic groups. Different social groups are now replacing a once homogeneous social scene which leads to interpersonal relations becoming more difficult between people (Mondy, 2011). To comply with South African legislation, the labour force has to adapt its thinking and beliefs regarding people that are

different (Niemann, 2006). This is one of the biggest obstacles in dealing with a diverse workforce.

Employment equity legislation that was implemented to redress the discrimination of the past also affected the academic environment (Le Grange, 2009). According to Thavier (2009), the once uniform staff profile of higher education institutions is now forced to diversify. Academic employees are therefore exposed to structural changes to accommodate different ages, genders, races etc. (Abouserie, 2006). Diversity within organisations such as the academic environment can lead to negative attitudes and behaviour such as prejudice, discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment (Al Waqfi & Jain, 2007), also stereotyping which can have a harmful effect on work productivity and employee morale (Esty, Griffin, & Schorr-Hirsh, 1995; Green, López, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002).

Although training interventions have been widely implemented to promote and embrace diversity, stereotyping does exist in higher education institutions (Thavier, 2009). These stereotypic perceptions have a negative influence on a variety of aspects within the academic setting and include aspects such as promotions, interactions with others, and collaboration with fellow colleagues (Fine & Handelsman, 2010). These stereotypic perceptions may also influence the recruitment process when it comes to appointing individuals within academic positions (Fine & Handelsman, 2010). Furthermore, stereotyping in the workplace may result in conflict which may lead to a negative influence on the organisational climate (Buelens, 2006).

Research purpose and objectives

Seeing that the academic environment is also pressured to address diversity within its workforce, stereotyping is also more likely to exist within this environment. The objectives of this study are therefore to identify the stereotypes that employees in the academic environment hold towards other people working with them (out-group), and also to identify the stereotypes that people working in an academic environment experience about themselves in their workplace (in-group). Because work is such an important human activity and because employees spend a considerable

amount of time at work each day, another objective of this study is to identify the occupational stereotypes that employees in the academic environment experience.

Literature review

Conceptualisation of stereotypes

Stereotypes are defined as characteristics that are assigned to a certain group in society (Ho & Jackson, 2001). According to Thompson and Hickey (1999), stereotypes can be described as stagnant and oversimplified views that individuals hold about members of a group or social category. The authors further state that these views have an effect on both the expectations and behaviours of individuals. Bodenhausen (1988) argues that when an individual has certain views about a specific group or social category, these views are not necessarily proven, experienced or observed, and therefore these views are mainly subjective. Devine, Hamilton, and Ostrom (2006) further argues that a stereotype is nonfactual information that includes knowledge and beliefs about groups of people (Devine, Hamilton, & Ostrom, 2006). According to McFarlane (2014), stereotyping is a normal social behaviour, and individuals are genetically inclined to recognise differences among people; thereby influencing individuals' assessment and evaluation of others.

Stereotypes can be either positive, for example older people are more loyal (Mirvis & Hall, 1994), or negative which is more frequently used (Mcleod, 2011), for example older people are less flexible (Hedge, Borman, & Lammlein, 2006). Although positive stereotypes exist, they might be negatively perceived by those being stereotyped. Czopp (2008) found that if a white male told an African American that African Americans are "unbelievable natural athletes", the African American felt prejudiced and not treated as an individual. People see themselves as unique individuals and do not want to be generalised because of a group they belong to (Kim & Drolet, 2003). When this uniqueness is taken away, people respond negatively and try to reinstate their individuality (Kim, Cohen, & Au, 2010).

Stereotypes can take place on out-group and in-group levels. Out-group is defined as a group to which an individual does not belong and in-group is the group to which an individual belongs

(Schneider, 2004). Out-group homogeneity effect is worth mentioning here. According to Aronson, Wilson, and Akert (2010), out-group homogeneity effect happens when it is believed that out-group members are more similar than in-group members. Therefore, out-group members are viewed as having homogenous characteristics, while in-group members are viewed to possess unique characteristics (Park & Hastie, 1987). Schneider (2004) argues that individuals tend to attribute more negative characteristics to out-group members, while more positive characteristics are attributed to in-group members. This process can be explained by the social identity theory. This theory argues that in-group members will enhance their self-esteem by discriminating against out-group members, and therefore in-group members will attribute more negative qualities to out-group members (McLeod, 2008).

Different types of stereotypes are found in literature (Plous, 2003); however, age, gender, occupational and race stereotypes are most often referred to in literature (Larkin, 2008; Shani & Lau, 2008), and therefore the researcher focused on these as well. A discussion of age, gender, occupational and race stereotypes follows.

Age stereotypes

Posthuma and Campion (2009) defined age stereotypes as the attitudes and expectations based on the beliefs of someone of a certain age. Age stereotypes are more easily accepted than other stereotypes because they are developed and believed from a very young age (Nelson, 2002). Cleveland and Landy (1987) stated, however, that whatever the stereotype, it is usually influenced by the age of the person stereotyping. Examples of stereotypes that exist are that older people are seen as absentminded (Brooke & Taylor, 2005), generous, (Hummert, Garstka, Shaner, & Strahm, 1994), scared of new technology (McGregor & Gray, 2002), having a higher commitment to work, and being more loyal with a better attitude (Mirvis & Hall, 1994). Younger people, on the other hand, are seen as rebellious (Gross & Hardin, 2007), yet reliable and intellectual (Buchanan & Holmbeck, 1998), to name but a few.

These age stereotypes affect behaviour and attitudes towards people belonging to a certain age group (Nelson, 2002). For example in the workplace, Jackson and Sullivan (2001) stated that

young adults perform better in performance appraisals when compared to more matured people. Stereotypical expectations can lead to discrimination against older people in terms of fewer training opportunities and being less employable (Fiske, 2004). Perry and Finkelstein (1999) found that age stereotyping is particularly rife in the finance, retail and IT industries. Keaton and McCann (2011) stated that even communication is avoided between different ages in the workplace. Deci and Ryan (2008) stated that age stereotypes halter teamwork, contributions, output, relations, and individual self-esteem.

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are non-factual generalisations and characteristics assigned to individuals because they are either male or female (Kelan, 2008). Gender differences and stereotypes can be observed even amongst kindergarten children as found in a study by Del R o and Strasserm (2013). From a very young age, children are placed into a boy or a girl group and these groups determine which behaviours, characteristics, clothing etc. are appropriate for the group to which they belong (Kimmel, 2004). Moreover, Kelan (2008) states that there can be differentiation between descriptive gender stereotypes and prescriptive stereotypes. Descriptive gender stereotypes clarify how males and females behave and prescriptive stereotypes explain how males and females are anticipated to behave.

Some examples of the gender stereotypes are that females are perceived to score lower in mathematics (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999), and that females run slower than males (Messner, 2002). There are differences in how males and females approach technology; according to Butler (2000), females are believed to be slower in understanding computers compared to males. Hoyt, Simon, and Reid (2009) state that males are likely to be confident, competitive, self-sufficient, daring, and masterful in achieving their task at hand; whereas females are expected to be supportive, nurturing, and kind, showing concern for others.

Although more and more female representation in the workplace can be seen, females are still being discriminated against and are still filling middle-management positions because that is what “suits” them, according to Mirza and Jabeen (2011). Traditional roles suggest that females

should behave femininely and males should behave in a masculine way (Mirza & Jabeen, 2011). According to Schein (2001), females who adopt these “masculine” qualities are often the victims of being even further stereotyped by others for not acting as a “typical” female is supposed to. Furthermore, stereotyping people create beliefs about the competence of others based on the beliefs of society, for example males are associated with high level positions and regarded as more competent for high-status jobs, and, in effect, are more easily appointed in these positions (Powell & Butterfield, 2002). Even if gender stereotypes are positive or negative, they still have a negative impact as found in a study by Siy and Cheryan (2013). According to these authors, females dislike people who stereotype them, irrespective of whether it is positive or negative; gender stereotypes lead to individuals feeling depersonalised, indicating that their individualism is lost.

Occupational stereotypes

Occupational stereotypes are regarded as a predetermined approach or outlook towards a certain job or profession or the people employed in that job or profession, or how suitable one will be or is for a specific position (Enns, Ferratt, & Prasad, 2006). Therefore, individuals have diverse perceptions about the distinctiveness of individuals following certain careers; for example, a builder is believed to be physically powerful and rough and a journalist is seen as an excellent communicator (Dovidio, Glick, & Rudman, 2005). Demoulin and Teixeira (2010) suggest that doctors are characterised as knowledgeable and kind hearted. Another example is mentioned by Yurtseven (2002) who stated that an engineer is believed to be “someone who likes to tinker, work alone, and is a know-it-all inventor” (p. 17). Librarians are not only stereotyped as dull and shy and whose role it is to keep everyone quiet most of the time, but also as an old-maid introvert who severely enforces library rules to keep silence (Mosley, 2003).

It is also important to look at occupational gender role stereotyping, which can be described as assigning a certain gender to a certain job (Williams, 1993). There is research that shows that young children differentiate between occupations in terms of gender and then aim towards occupations “in line” with their gender (Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2002). As an example,

according to White and White (2006), males are identified with engineering and information technology and females with school teachers and nurses (Armstrong, 2002).

Occupational stereotypes are formed from an early age. Keller (2007) found that teachers' stereotypes considerably influence their learners' thoughts and beliefs about occupations. Research suggests that occupational stereotypes have an impact on an individual's motivation to follow certain professions (Leong, Leong, Hardin, & Gupta, 1995). Young graduates trying to enter the workforce may find certain careers looking unattractive because of the perceived stereotypes labelled to them (Enns *et al.*, 2006). Lipton, O'Connor, Terry, and Bellamy (1991) stated that workplace discrimination is caused by occupational stereotypes, having an effect on job compatibility and salary determinations (Beggs & Doolittle, 1993).

Race stereotypes

According to Sanchez-Runde (2007), a racial stereotype is a simplistic and often incorrect view of a group of people belonging to a specific race, linking all the people belonging to that group to certain characteristics. According to Talbot and Durrheim (2012), racial stereotypes in South Africa, specifically, are a problematic issue. Black individuals are often viewed as backward, disrespectful and indolent, and Indians as deceitful and filthy. Asian individuals, for instance, are viewed as being hardworking high achievers in school, especially in mathematics (Ng, Lee, & Pak, 2007). People of mixed race are stereotyped as drinking a lot and being incompetent (Talbot & Durrheim, 2012). Lastly, white individuals are stereotyped as being more competent, especially for high-status positions (Powell & Butterfield, 2002); they are also regarded as being competitive and arrogant (Schneider, 2004).

Even being the target of a positive racial stereotype may be seen as prejudicial, because all individualism is lost. A study conducted by Oyserman and Sakamoto (1997) inquired from Asian Americans about positive characteristics being assigned to them and found that 51.7% of the participants experienced them negatively. Negative comments such as: "...it is still a stereotype"; "to be referred to as a model minority seems to me we are being pet and told good dog"; and "we should not be used as models" were forthcoming, to name but a few (p. 445).

More importantly, according to Page (2007), these stereotypes lead to racism where a population is reduced to basic characteristics in order to justify some of the members' behaviour.

Gilbert, Fiske, and Lindzey (1998), and Gordjin, Finchilescu, Brix, Wijnants, and Koomen (2011) claim that interacting with people from different racial groups influences feelings and behaviours towards those people. Evidence of racial stereotypes was found in a study by Shih, Ambady, Richeson, Fujita, and Gray (2002), who stated that people will employ individuals from certain racial groups because of the positive belief they have about that group. Powell and Butterfield (2002) also explain that racial stereotypes can influence decision making when it comes to choosing suitable candidates for vacancies. McKay, Doverspike, Bowen-Hilton, and Martin (2002) also found that African-Americans performed worse in cognitive-ability tests because of these negative racial stereotypes.

From the above discussion it is clear that broad research has been done on the different types of stereotypes that exist, namely age, gender, occupation and race stereotypes. These all have various effects on the organisation and the individual. However, research on stereotypes within the South African framework, especially in the academic environment, is still lacking. This research attempts to explore the stereotypes that are experienced in the academic environment in the South African context.

Research design

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

Research approach

A qualitative research design was used for the purpose of this study. Qualitative research refers to observing social behaviour and analysing it in a non-numerical way (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). To obtain the best results from qualitative research, data should be collected in participants' natural settings where they experience a specific phenomenon (Heppner, Kivlighan, &

Wampold, 1992). Specifically, qualitative research within the social constructivism paradigm is of the view that individuals have a need to make sense of the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2009). Individuals are therefore inclined to assess their social world and attach their own meanings or beliefs towards certain phenomena (Creswell, 2009). Individuals may be exposed to the same phenomenon; however, the ways in which these phenomena are experienced may differ and therefore multiple meanings of the same phenomenon may exist (Fouché & Schurink, 2011).

A combination of the phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches was employed to reach the objectives of this study. Phenomenological research investigates the ways in which people experience something; it seeks a description, analysis and understanding of experiences (Marton, 1986). Therefore, by employing the phenomenological approach, the researcher of this study is able to understand the different meaning that individuals within the academic environment attach to the phenomenon of stereotypes. Also, by employing the hermeneutic approach, the researcher is able to understand the deeper meaning that individuals attach to their experiences of the phenomenon of stereotypes (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, & Delpont, 2011).

Research strategy

By making use of a case study strategy, the researcher asked participants from the academic environment about their experience of stereotypes in their specific environment. Case studies are used to expand one's knowledge regarding individual, group, social, organisational and associated phenomena, which in this study are the phenomena of stereotypes within the academic environment (Gillham, 2000). Only one single case was utilised in this research study, and therefore this study focused on the academic environment as a single case. Case studies are used when a researcher needs to answer the "how" and "why" questions and when the focus is a current occurrence with a realistic context (Yin, 2009); therefore the occurrence of stereotypes within the academic environment as workplace.

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.

Research setting

The researcher conducted the interviews in a natural setting where it was assumed that participants experienced stereotypes in the workplace. The researcher approached two campuses of one higher education institution to partake in this research study. This institution was selected to form part of this study because it employed more than 50 employees. After permission had been granted by this institution, the researcher approached the employees of this institution to participate in this study. Employees, as far as possible, were diverse in terms of their biographical background.

Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher had to fulfil various roles throughout the study. The first role that the researcher had to portray was that of a planner; here the researcher had to answer the questions of what was going to be studied and how it would be studied. The answers to these questions also formed the basis for carrying out the fieldwork, analysis and reporting of the data. The researcher also had to act as a designer; here the researcher had to plan and prepare the methodological procedure. During the data collection phase, the researcher had to fulfil roles such as interviewer and transcriber, followed by the role of analyst. Together with numerous co-coders, the data was analysed by following rigorous data analysis steps. Lastly the researcher acted as a reporter writing a report on the findings of this study.

Research participants and sampling methods

A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was used and the population consisted of individuals working in the academic environment ($N = 30$). Purposeful sampling is concerned with providing a sample of information-rich participants. Therefore, participants show certain characteristics that the researcher is interested in (Struwig & Stead, 2011). Convenience sampling is where a sample is chosen in order for a researcher to study elements conveniently; therefore participants are chosen based on their availability. Convenience sampling is inexpensive and can be executed within a short period of time (Steyn, Smit, Du Toit, & Strasheim, 2000).

The sample size was determined by the number of available participants that was willing to participate (Burns & Grove, 1987). Criteria for inclusion in this research were individuals who 1) are employed in the academic environment; 2) are able to speak English or Afrikaans; 3) differ according to race, gender, department, and level of employment; and who 4) were willing to participate and have a tape-recorded interview with the researcher. Table 1 gives a description of the characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Characteristics of participants (N = 30)

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-30 years of age	21	70.00
	31-40 years of age	6	20.00
	41-50 years of age	1	3.30
	51-60 years of age	2	6.70
Race	Black	8	37.00
	Coloured	1	3.30
	Indian	3	10.00
	White	18	60.00
Gender	Male	16	53.00
	Female	14	40.00
Language	Afrikaans	16	53.00
	English	7	23.00
	isiZulu	1	3.3.00

Table 1 continued

	Sepedi	1	3.30
	Setswana	2	6.70
	Shona	3	10.00
Province	Gauteng	11	36.70
	Mpumalanga	1	3.30
	North West	18	60.00
Qualification	Further Education and Training (NQF 4)	3	10.00
	Higher Education and Training (NQF 5)	27	90.00

The majority of the participants (70%) were in the age group 20 to 30 years; 20% in the age group 31 to 40 years; 3.3% in the age group 41 to 50 years; and lastly, 6.7% of participants were between the ages of 51 and 60 years. The majority of the participants were male (53%). More than half of the participants were White (60%), while 27% were Black; 10% Indian and 3% Coloured. More than half of the participants resided in the North West Province (60%), whereas 37% resided in Gauteng and 3% in Mpumalanga. More than half of the participants (53%) spoke Afrikaans, whereas 23% spoke English, 10% Shona, 7% Setswana and 3% isiZulu and Sepedi respectively. Most of the participants (90%) had acquired higher education and training qualifications, while 10% had obtained further education and training qualifications.

Research procedure

Consent was obtained from both the campuses of the higher education institution and employees before the start of the study; where after dates and times for the interviews were scheduled with participants. It was important that participants were comfortable with the setting; therefore it was best to conduct the interviews at a place where they were familiar with their surroundings, such as their workplaces. Attention was given to the atmosphere of the room. The researcher ensured that there were no interruptions while the interviews were being held. To ensure that participants were comfortable with participating in this research study, the objective of the research and the process thereof were discussed in detail. All participants were assured that information gathered would remain confidential. Participants also confirmed that they were comfortable with the interviewer using tape recorders.

Data collection methods

Semi-structured interviews were utilised in order to collect data for this study. Semi-structured interviews refer to a combination of structured and unstructured interviews. Questions are established beforehand, but the interviewer and participant have the flexibility to discuss other issues. This method allows the researcher to acquire a variety of responses (Struwig & Stead, 2011). An interview schedule was set before commencing with the interviews. By making use of semi-structured interviews, the researcher was able to gain a deeper understanding of how participants experience stereotyping within the academic environment. The researcher ensured that all participants had a thorough understanding of each interview question. Data collection continued up until a point where the data was saturated. Questions that were asked were:

- 1) *“Do you think there are any stereotypes about yourself within your workplace?”*
- 2) *“Do you experience any stereotypes about the specific occupation you are in?”*
- 3) *“What stereotypes do you hold of other people in your workplace?”*

A pilot study was conducted with four people employed in the academic environment to determine whether participants understood and correctly interpreted the questions. Pilot studies are also called feasibility studies where a small scale of the population is studied to ensure that the research or more specifically interview questions are feasible (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2001). This is done to increase the likelihood of the success of the study (Baker, 1994). Every participant completed a biographical questionnaire. In the questionnaire questions were asked about participants’ age, gender, race, language, geographical region and highest qualification.

Recording of data

With the consent from the participants, tape recorders were used to record all the interviews. The reason for using tape recorders was to record the exact spoken words of the participants. After the interviews had been tape recorded, the researcher transcribed each of the interviews verbatim. Information that was collected (i.e. tape recorded interviews and transcribed interviews) was securely stored in a safe place.

Strategies employed to ensure quality data and integrity

In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, attention was given to the following (Shenton, 2004):

Credibility: Credibility criteria involve establishing that the data collected in an interview is an accurate picture of what the participant said and the meaning of what was said. Therefore, the researcher ensured that the data was reported in a truthful and honest manner.

Transferability: Transferability is concerned with the extent to which the results can be generalised to other contexts and settings (Durrheim & Wassenaar, 2002). Transferability was attained by describing the setting and context of this study in detail.

Dependability: The researcher documented the research procedure in a rational and well-structured manner, thereby enabling a researcher to repeat the study if necessary and to ensure that he or she would obtain the same results (Schurink, Fouche, & De Vos, 2011). The researcher reported the research study in exactly the way it happened, correctly portraying the methodology section and describing it densely (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

Conformability: Conformability refers to the researcher's objectivity. Objectivity is reached through the researcher neither being biased nor influenced by personal values; therefore the researcher remained neutral throughout the entire research study (Krefting, 1991).

Ethical considerations

In order to conduct this research, the researcher first ensured that she had a thorough knowledge of applicable ethics. The research was planned in such a way that the probability of misleading results was reduced for it to meet ethical appropriateness. The researcher was accountable for upholding the self-respect and well-being of all interviewees. This included protecting them from harm, hazards or any uneasiness. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that participants' and the organisation's identities were protected. Participants were also informed that they could

withdraw from the study at any time, if they felt the need to do so. The researcher also ensured that results were not untrue or inaccurate (Ruzek & Zatzick, 2000). The researcher adhered to the five guidelines provided by the American Psychological Association (2009) in its code of conduct:

- The researcher was qualified and competent to carry out her specific research;
- Honesty, integrity, respect and fairness were present in all research activities;
- The researcher took responsibility for her actions;
- At all times during the research, participants' rights, privacy, cultural preferences, gender and racial heritage were respected in order to ensure that no discrimination took place during the research. All the necessary provisions were made to ensure that all participants had the right to privacy to ensure the protection of their integrity and dignity; and
- The research study did not harm any participants and was executed in their best interest at all times. During the data collection period, all participants had the right to terminate their involvement, even if they had initially agreed to partake in the study. All participants were ensured of total anonymity; therefore no names were mentioned.

Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the results of this study. Thematic analysis supports the researcher to categorise, scrutinise, and report mutual themes that have been found within the collected data (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 participants' in-group, in-group occupational and out-group experiences of stereotypes. The following steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were used to analyse the data of this article:

Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data

Interviews were conducted by the researcher and thereafter all 30 interviews were transcribed. The data was first transcribed into written form in order to conduct a thematic analysis. It was important for the researcher that the transcript retained the information she needed from the

verbal interviews in a way which still reflected the original meaning. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher repeatedly read through the data in order to familiarise herself with the content, searching for meanings, patterns, and specifically themes, sub-themes and categories.

Step 2: Generating initial codes

Phase 2 began with the researcher reading and familiarising herself with the data, generating a list of ideas about what was in the data and how this related to her research purpose. She then identified initial codes (i.e. categories) from the data. The researcher organised the data into meaningful groups by developing categories. The researcher systematically worked through the entire data set, giving full and equal attention to each data item, and identifying interesting aspects in the data items that might form the basis of themes across the data set. Responses of three interview questions were analysed for this specific article. The first question involved in-group stereotypes that the participants experienced; the second question pertained to in-group occupational stereotypes; and the last question related to out-group stereotypes that the participant experienced.

Step 3: Searching for themes

Phase 3 begins when all data has been categorised. This phase involves sorting the different categories into potential themes. The researcher was able to identify themes from the three categories identified in the previous phase and by reviewing responses from all 30 participants, the researcher developed themes. In order to work in a systematic manner, the researcher documented the themes and accompanying responses separately. During this phase sub-themes were also created subsequent to the main themes.

Step 4: Reviewing themes

Phase 4 involves the enhancement of themes created in the previous phase. During this phase the researcher realised that some themes needed to be disregarded and some themes might collapse into other themes, while other themes needed to be broken down into separate themes. The

researcher once again read through the entire dataset to ensure that the process of reviewing themes was satisfactory and that all responses had indeed been coded.

Step 5: Defining and naming themes

At this point the researcher defined and further refined the themes for her analysis. She identified the 'essence' of what each theme was about and determined what aspect of the data each theme captured. A detailed analysis was written for each theme (see findings). As part of this phase, the researcher identified whether or not a theme contained any sub-themes and/ or characteristics. 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 was clearly represented by the names of themes and sub-themes.

Step 6: Producing the report

The goal in this phase was for the researcher to explain the data in a way that convinced the reader of the validity of the analysis. The researcher ensured that the analysis provided a brief, clear and logic explanation of the data. The report provided sufficient evidence of the themes within the data. The researcher also employed the help of co-coders to help with the data analysis process.

Reporting

Categories, themes, sub-themes, and characteristics were extracted from the data obtained and direct quotes were used to confirm results. Direct Afrikaans quotes were translated into English; this was done to accommodate different language groups.

Findings

The findings of this article were organised into three major categories and various themes, sub-themes and characteristics. Categories and relevant themes, sub-themes and characteristics will now be discussed. Direct quotations were also included in support of the findings.

Category 1: In-group stereotypes

Participants were asked if they associated themselves with any stereotypes within the workplace; in other words, if they were aware of any stereotypes that others had about them. The data shows that some of the participants did not experience any stereotypes about themselves. However, the majority of the participants gave detailed descriptions of the stereotypes they experienced within their workplace.

Table 2

In-group stereotypes

Theme	Sub-Theme	Characteristics	Response
Age stereotypes	Young	Expected to do all the work	<i>"I think in terms of being young, you are expected to do all the work"</i>
		Incompetent	<i>"Being a relatively young employee with limited experience in comparison, a lot of the time it seems end users/people I work for are often uncertain whether or not I can perform a given task."</i>
		Intimidating	<i>"They probably judge me, I am 22- years old and female, they either feel intimidated because I am in their age group, and they feel they can mess around with me."</i>
		Sociable	<i>"Older people say that all younger people socialise."</i>
		Struggle to be appointed	<i>"At other organisations age does play a role, you will not be appointed if you are young."</i>
		Take advantage	<i>"Age, because you are young,, people tend to try and take advantage."</i>
		Uncommon to be in a position of authority	<i>"Yes, in terms of age, people sometimes think that because I am young, it is unusual to see me in such a position of authority."</i>
		Underestimated	<i>"I would say the underestimation the different"</i>

Table 2 continued

			<i>generations have towards one another, for example baby boomers overlooking talent which exists within Generation Y.</i>
Do not experience stereotypes			<i>"I have not experienced any..."</i>
Gender stereotypes	Females	Emotional managers	<i>"... women in management are seen as being too emotional."</i>
		Gossips	<i>"They say that women only gossip."</i>
		Incompetent	<i>"Gender, women are seen as not competent..."</i>
		Undermined when it comes to decision making	<i>"Females are not offered as many opportunities as our male counterparts with regard to decision making."</i>
	Males	Expected to do physical labour	<i>"Females expect males to do all the physical work if there is any."</i>
Nationality stereotypes	Zimbabwean	Hardworking	<i>"If they say the Zimbabweans are hardworking, then you are going to start working hard because that is what they feel about you."</i>
		Not intelligent	<i>"If negative, if they say Zimbabweans are not intelligent, they are dumb, you will feel offended and then you start acting in a different way."</i>
Occupational stereotypes	Administrative personnel	Slow; not hardworking; not innovative	<i>"All receptionists are slow, lazy and don't use any initiative."</i>
	Graphic design	Weird; artistic	<i>"I think people will stereotype me because of graphic design as being artistic or weird."</i>
	Human resources	Bad reputation	<i>"Yes, HR has or used to have a bad reputation and thus negative connotation to any HR employee..."</i>
	Information technology	Females not intelligent	<i>"I am a female in IT; people think I am not intelligent enough."</i>
	Student advisors	High remuneration	<i>"People and the outside are usually impressed, thinking I earn a lot of money. They think student advisors make a lot of money"</i>
		Incompetent	<i>"... for example the student advisors do everything wrong and it is not always me."</i>
Race stereotypes	White	Interacts with own race	<i>"I am not racist, but I prefer to interact with my own race, I can't say anything about soccer."</i>
Sexual orientation stereotypes	Homosexual	Attracted to every one of the same gender	<i>"Gay people are attracted to everyone that is the same gender as they are."</i>
		Seen as homosexual based on being artistic and on finer physical characteristics	<i>"Yes, surely, because I am artistic and not built like a rugby player, people stereotype me as being gay."</i>
Work-related stereotypes	Short duration in organisation	Given less challenging work	<i>"Being younger and just entering the industry, smaller tasks that are less challenging is given to you."</i>
		Not knowledgeable; bad quality of work	<i>"The period that I have been in the company plays a high role, during a person's first three months in service you get acquainted with your"</i>

Table 2 continued

environment,, work place, colleagues, processes etc. Your focus is therefore not on your standard of work and it comes across as you not having enough knowledge or that you deliver work of bad quality.”

Table 2 provides an indication of the stereotypes that participants within the academic environment experience about themselves within their workplace. Direct quotes are also provided to indicate examples of the themes, sub-themes and characteristics. When participants were asked to explain if they experienced any stereotypes about themselves within the workplace, the following themes emerged:

Age stereotypes: Participants perceived stereotypes about being young. Stereotypes perceived were that young people were expected to do all the work; they were viewed as being incompetent, intimidating, and sociable. Young people were also viewed as struggling to be appointed, taken advantage of and underestimated, and it was uncommon for them to be in a position of authority. Older individuals of this study did not experience any stereotypes about themselves.

Do not experience stereotypes: Some of the participants indicated that they do not experience any stereotypes about themselves.

Gender stereotypes: Stereotypes were experienced by both male and female participants of this study. Females were stereotyped as being emotional managers, gossipy, being incompetent, and being undermined when it came to decision making. Males, on the other hand, were expected to do all the physical labour.

Nationality stereotypes: Participants perceived stereotypes about Zimbabweans as being hardworking; and they were negatively stereotyped as not being intelligent.

Occupational stereotypes: Stereotypes about administrative personnel, graphic designers, human resources (HR), information technology (IT), and student advisors were perceived by

participants. Administrative personnel were stereotyped as being slow, not hardworking and not innovative. Graphic designers were stereotyped as being weird and artistic. People in HR were stereotyped as having a bad reputation. Females in IT were stereotyped as not being intelligent. Student advisors were seen to be highly remunerated; however, incompetent.

Race stereotypes: Stereotypes were mentioned about white people who only interact with their own race.

Sexual orientation stereotypes: Participants of this study, who were homosexual, were perceived as being attracted to everyone of the same gender. Also, participants who were artistic and possessed finer physical features were perceived as being homosexual.

Work-related stereotypes: Participants who have only been in the organisation for a short duration are stereotyped as being incompetent and being given less challenging work to complete. Furthermore, they were stereotyped as not being knowledgeable and delivering bad quality work.

Category 2: In-group occupational stereotypes

Category 2 gives a description of the stereotypes participants experience regarding the occupation they are in. The data collected illustrates that some of the participants did not experience any stereotypes about their occupation, but most of the participants gave comprehensive descriptions of the stereotypes that they were confronted with in their specific occupation.

Table 3

In-group occupational stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Response
Administrative personnel	Dress in a certain way	<i>"People think I am a PA, because of the way I dress."</i>
	Not intelligent	<i>"There are also stereotypes about PAs not being clever."</i>
	Paper pusher	<i>Most definitely, 99.9% of the time, people struggle to grasp what one does and tend to assume that my job is to push paper."</i>
	Uneducated	<i>"They also tend to assume that one does not need to be educated to</i>

Table 3 continued

		<i>excel in the field I am in, as it's a job which anybody can do."</i>
Do not experience occupational stereotypes		<i>"I have not yet experienced any."</i>
Graphic designer	Weird	<i>"Graphic design people are weird"</i>
Human resources	Bad reputation	<i>"People always think badly if they hear you are in HR."</i>
	Inferior occupation	<i>"I sometimes get the feeling that HR is seen as less of a job if you compare it with engineering, project management etc."</i>
	Undermined; undervalued	<i>"HR is often deemed by the more technical professions as being a fluffy discipline that adds no direct value to the company."</i>
Information technology	Boring	<i>"There exists a stereotype that IT people are boring."</i>
	Expected to do all the work	<i>"IT people do everything the other departments don't do; everyone expects that the IT department will do it."</i>
	Females in IT not easily accepted within occupation	<i>"I am a female and if I tell people I am a programmer, I always get these funny looks, people think I am lying."</i>
	Females in IT not taken seriously	<i>"People don't take me seriously as a woman in IT."</i>
	Hardworking	<i>"IT people do everything..."</i>
	Weird	<i>"In IT, people think that the weirder you look the more knowledgeable you are."</i>
Lecturer	Expert in field	<i>"When people hear I am a lecturer, they assume I would be an expert in my field and that is not necessarily always the case."</i>
	Inferior occupation	<i>"This occupation is not as good as being an engineer."</i>
	Intelligent	<i>"Yes, people think you are super brainy if you are a lecturer."</i>
	Lack of a better job	<i>"People feel you couldn't get a better job."</i>
	Not hardworking	<i>"People tend to think that lecturers are lazy and do not do much."</i>
	Perceived as teacher; not intelligent; low remuneration	<i>"Yes, definitely, I am being classified as a teacher, people see me as unintelligent and that I do not earn a lot of money."</i>
	Superior occupation	<i>"Yes, specifically as lecturer, people look up to me, you see him as superior."</i>
	Undermined; glorified administrator; ignorant about bottom line	<i>"...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."</i>
	Undervalued	<i>"I do not experience negative stereotypes about my work, except that people feel that my being a lecturer is not of good value. It is my own choice, though."</i>
Student advisor	Educated	<i>"Yes, people tend to think that only a degree can get you a job and my being a career marketer for a private college usually sees this first hand."</i>
	High remuneration	<i>"Yes, people think that we make a lot of money."</i>

Table 3 gives an explanation of the various occupational stereotypes individuals within the academic environment experience. The table gives an indication of themes, sub-themes and characteristics that relate to occupational stereotypes. Direct quotes from participants were also

provided to substantiate the findings. When the participants were asked if there were any stereotypes about the specific occupations that they were in, the following stereotypes were identified:

Administrative personnel were stereotyped as not being intelligent; being paper pushers; that they did not need to be educated to be in such a position; and that they dressed in a certain way.

Do not experience any occupational stereotypes: Some of the participants also indicated that they do not experience any stereotypes regarding the specific occupation they fulfil.

Graphic designers were stereotyped as being weird.

Human resources were stereotyped as an inferior occupation; with a bad reputation as well as being undermined and undervalued.

Information technology personnel were stereotyped as being weird and boring. It was furthermore said that it is uncommon for females to be in IT; females will not be taken seriously when pursuing a career in IT. Individuals in the IT department are expected to do all the work and they are further stereotyped to be hardworking.

Lecturers were stereotyped as being intelligent, knowledgeable, employed in a superior occupation, and experts in their field. On the contrary, lecturers were described as undervalued, incapable of performing another job, not hardworking, not intelligent and ignorant about the bottom line. They were further stereotyped as being a teacher and being a glorified administrator. They were also perceived as receiving low remuneration, being undermined and in an inferior occupation.

Student advisors (also referred to as a career marketer) were stereotyped as being highly remunerated and being educated.

Category 3: Out-group stereotypes

On the third category, participants were asked to give a description of the stereotypes that they hold of other people in the workplace. Some of the participants did not hold any stereotypes about others, but most of the participants gave detailed descriptions of the stereotypes they held about other people.

Table 4

Out-group stereotypes

Theme	Sub-theme	Characteristics	Response
Age stereotypes	Old	Interact with own age group	<i>"Older people are not part of our younger group of people."</i>
		Knowledgeable, respected	<i>"In a good sense, there is an older professor here and I respect him and see him as very knowledgeable."</i>
	Young	Resistant to change; rigid Inexperienced; lack of working opportunities	<i>"I'm sometimes reluctant to work with old people, as I feel they are stuck in their ways and resistant to change." "Age, young and inexperienced, how will you ever get a job?"</i>
Do not stereotype			<i>"No, because I am sometimes caught in certain stereotypes, I try not to stereotype anybody."</i>
Nationality stereotypes	Zimbabwean	Intelligent; educated	<i>"The Zimbabweans, I have great respect for them, they are highly intelligent with good qualifications."</i>
Gender stereotypes	Females	Not easily accepted within positions of authority	<i>"Females in a position of authority, I feel that they feel they need to prove themselves as strong enough to be in that position."</i>
		Poor performers	<i>"Males are generally uncertain towards females' ability to perform."</i>
Occupational stereotypes	Graphic design	Weird; friendly	<i>"People working in the graphic design field are all a bit different and weird, but mostly friendly."</i>
Race stereotypes	Black	Incompetent	<i>"Black people, stereotypes that maybe they can't do the job because of affirmative action."</i>
		Leisurely	<i>"The black people always come late for work - Africa time."</i>
	People of colour	Preferential treatment	<i>"We live in South Africa, people of colour get preferential treatment, statistics prove it."</i>
Work-related stereotypes	High level of education	Insightful; knowledgeable	<i>"I have better conversations with university graduates, their general knowledge and insight is much better."</i>
	Low job level	Undermined	<i>"People who hold lower positions, for me it is just like answering the phone."</i>
	Short duration in organisation	Undermined; not knowledgeable	<i>"Duration at the company, I stereotype new people as inferior to me, not being knowledgeable."</i>

Table 4 includes themes, sub-themes, characteristics and the original responses from candidates. When participants were asked to give a description of the perceived stereotypes they hold about others, many different stereotypes emerged. The examples of stereotypes are provided below.

Age stereotypes: Participants indicated that they have stereotypes about older people as well as young people. Older individuals were stereotyped as being resistant to change, rigid, but also more knowledgeable and respected. Older individuals were stereotyped as only wanting to interact with their own age group. Young people were stereotyped as being inexperienced with a lack of work experience.

Do not stereotype: Some of the participants indicated that they do not engage in the process of stereotyping others.

Gender stereotypes: Stereotypes about females concern females in management who are poor performers and who are not easily accepted into higher level positions in the organisation.

Nationality stereotypes: Zimbabweans were positively stereotyped as being intelligent and educated.

Occupational stereotype: Participants stereotype graphic designers as being weird, but also friendly.

Race stereotypes: Black people were stereotyped as being incompetent and leisurely. People of colour were stereotyped as receiving preferential treatment. People of colour can refer to Black, Coloured or Indian individuals.

Work-related stereotypes: Participants stereotype others based on their duration in the organisation; whether they are educated, and the job level which they hold in the organisation. Individuals who have been in the organisation for a short period of time are stereotyped as being undermined and not knowledgeable. Educated individuals are stereotyped as being more

insightful and knowledgeable. One's position in the organisation is also stereotyped, where lower positions are stereotyped as being undermined.

Discussion

Outline of the findings

The objective of Article 2 was to investigate the stereotypes that exist within the academic environment. More specifically, the objectives were to identify the in-group as well as out-group stereotypes that individuals working in the academic environment hold or experience. According to Bergh (2011), and Rantanen, Lethinen, and Salmenius (1994), work is regarded as an important and purposeful human activity which serves to fulfill numerous needs within individuals' lives, and where employees spend a great deal of their waking time. For this reason the researcher found it fitting to investigate the occupational stereotypes that individuals in the academic environment experience. Therefore, the third objective of this article was to explore the in-group stereotypes that employees within the academic environment experience about the specific occupation they fulfill.

The study proved that stereotypes are experienced not only about oneself (in-group), but also about others within one's work environment (out-group). The researcher found a lot of overlapping in the in-group and out-group stereotypes as stated by participants in the study. In order to avoid duplication, it was therefore decided to discuss the different types of stereotypes as a whole and not per specific objective of this article. Apart from answers provided by participants when asked the interview question specifically pertaining to their occupational stereotype experiences, participants also mentioned occupational stereotypes as part of their in-group and out-group experiences; therefore, occupational stereotypes in general will be discussed.

It was found in some instances that participants do not experience stereotypes about others. A possible explanation for this could be a phenomenon called stereotype suppression. Stereotype

suppression is when an individual is aware of stereotypes and stereotyping and he or she deliberately tries to suppress these thoughts (Purdon, 2004). Purdon further states that this is likely to happen when an individual is indeed aware of the negative effects that stereotyping holds for the person being stereotyped. In other instances, participants of this study indicated that they did not experience any stereotypes about themselves (in-group). A reason for this is provided by Bergh (2011), who states that this may be possible due to a process titled selective attention. Wade and Tavris (2009) explain selective attention in the following manner: when an individual perceives some information to be unimportant, he/she may consequently not pay attention to that information. Thus, it may be assumed that certain individuals do not deem stereotypes as important and therefore they are likely to be oblivious of them. Still, the other participants gave comprehensive descriptions of both the in-group and out-group stereotypes they experience. Stereotypes stated to exist in the academic environment were age, gender, nationality, occupation, race, sexual orientation and work-related stereotypes. In the following paragraphs the stereotypes that were found to exist in the academic environment will be discussed.

Age stereotypes

Age stereotypes regarding young and old were found to be experienced by individuals in the academic environment. Stereotyping about age is widespread and nearly entirely accepted without question (Kite, Stockdale, Whitley, & Johnson, 2005). Stereotypes about aging could be either positive or negative (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008), which was also the case within the current research study. When participants were asked about their perceived stereotypes about others (out-group), it was found that there are more negative stereotypes about older people, such as that they are resistant to change and only want to interact with people from the same age group. This is consistent with research by Crockett and Hummert (1986) who found that negative stereotypes about older adults happen more frequently and are more dominant.

These stereotypes exist throughout different ages of people, even pre-school children endorse these negative stereotypes about older people (Isaacs & Bearison, 1986). Age stereotypes emphasise age discrimination because of their negative orientation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

Other consequences include that younger workers perform better in performance appraisals when compared to older workers because of negative stereotypes held by appraisers (Swift, 2004). Levy (1996) found that negative stereotypes about older people even have an effect on their memory.

According to Chen and King (2002), people have more positive stereotypes about their own peers; whatever the stereotype, it is usually influenced by the age of the person doing the stereotyping (Cleveland & Landy, 1987). However, the opposite was true in this study. Younger individuals perceived themselves to be stereotyped more negatively within their workplace; they stated, for example, that they were stereotyped as being incompetent, underestimated and that it was uncommon for them to be in a position of authority. This is contradictory to the research of Schneider (2004) who found that people seem to have stronger and more negative stereotypes about groups to which they do not belong, than about themselves and the groups that they belong to. A reason for these stereotypes could be, as stated by Keaton and McCann (2011), that people in the organisation associate more easily with members from their own age group and would rather avoid communicating with people from different ages in the workplace. This may mean that individuals draw on assumptions to understand others whom they do not interact with much, instead of making an effort to really get to know them.

Gender stereotypes

Both out-group and in-group stereotypes regarding females were very negative in nature. Out-group stereotypes about females that were identified include that they are poor performers and not easily accepted within positions of authority. Although the number of females in managerial positions is slightly increasing, females are still stereotyped to occupy lower levels in the organisation (Mirza & Jabeen, 2011). This stereotype could be related to the glass ceiling effect which is used to describe an “invisible” barrier that keeps females and other minority groups from climbing the corporate ladder or occupying high status positions, regardless of their performance, potential or qualifications (Davies-Netzley, 1998).

When participants were asked to elaborate on out-group stereotypes, only the males of this study elaborated. Prime, Jonsen, Carter, and Maznevski (2008) suggest that negative stereotypes of males regarding females' competence in the workplace are likely to undermine females. These kinds of negative stereotypes could lead to stereotype threat, where the fear of confirming an existing stereotype might actually affect someone's performance to endorse that exact stereotype (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Therefore, because females are aware of these stereotypes, it might influence them to perform poorer and seem incompetent.

With regard to in-group stereotypes, males in this study indicated that it is always assumed that they will do all the physical work. On the other hand, females are perceived as being incompetent, emotional managers and being undermined when it comes to decision making. These negative stereotypes regarding females' competence in the workplace can possibly lead to females reacting in a certain way. Schein (2001) explains that females might try too hard to prove themselves in the organisation, attempting to show that they are capable of doing what any male would be able to do. Madden (2011) further elaborated that females might try to portray masculine characteristics, or they might act in a way to deliberately prove negative stereotypes about females in the workplace wrong. Consequently, all their efforts could lead them to actually confirm those very stereotypes that they wanted to demonstrate as untrue, and this phenomenon is then known as stereotype threat.

Occupational and work-related stereotypes

Findings in this study indicate that occupational stereotypes are very dominant in the academic environment. Stereotypes existed about the following occupations, namely administrative personnel, graphic designers, human resource personnel, information technology personnel, lecturers and student advisors. Occupational stereotypes may be caused by diversity in the workplace as stated by Buelens, Sinding, Waldstrøm, Kreitner, and Kinicki (2011). Solovic (2010) further indicates that stereotyping may result in unnecessary workplace tension.

According to Keller (2001), occupational stereotypes are formed from an early age. The author states that teachers' stereotypes considerably influence their learners' thoughts and views about

certain occupations. Leonardi and Rodriguez-Lluesma (2013) confirm that occupational stereotypes are learned when still very young and may also be learned from sources such as the media. These negative occupational stereotypes may cause individuals to find certain career paths unappealing (Enns *et al.*, 2006), which may lead to job ratio imbalances (Good, Aronson, & Harder, 2008). It was also found that females are not accepted in the information technology field; this phenomenon where some genders are perceived to be better suited for certain occupations, is referred to as occupational gender role stereotyping (Wilbourn & Kee, 2010).

Work-related stereotypes were also reported in this study. Work-related stereotypes that were mentioned in this study were based on either external or organisational dimensions of diversity. External dimensions include aspects of individuals' lives over which they have control and which might change over time, such as education and short tenure in the organisation (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). In this study it was found that educated individuals were stereotyped as being insightful and knowledgeable; employees who had only worked at the organisation for a short period were given less challenging work and were stereotyped as not being knowledgeable, undermined, and delivering work of bad quality. Organisational dimensions refer to the aspects in a work setting over which an individual has very little control and are mostly influenced by the organisational culture (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004), including aspects such as job level, income and department. In this study, for instance, it was found that employees who held lower level positions in the organisation were stereotyped as undermined.

Race stereotypes

Stereotypes that were mentioned in this study related to black and white individuals, and individuals of colour which can refer to black, coloured or Indian individuals. The findings of this study showed that there were negative out-group stereotypes about black people, such as being incompetent and leisurely. Individuals of colour were stereotyped as getting preferential treatment in the organisation. The out-group racial stereotypes mentioned were all negative; this is in line with findings from Blaine (2007) who confirmed that stereotypes regarding out-group members are primarily negative in nature. Racial stereotypes could be as a result of the effects of affirmative action. As stated by Venter and Levy (2009) after the 1994 democratic elections,

South African organisations had to implement policies to integrate all people from different races and consequently racial stereotypes may be more prevalent in diverse work environments such as the academic environment. Al Waqfi and Jain (2007) concur that diverse environments with demographic challenges may lead to increased stereotyping in the workplace. This might lead to non-designated individuals feeling that they are now being disadvantaged and that other races are favoured unfairly, as is the case with individuals of colour receiving preferential treatment.

Participants of this study mentioned that white individuals only interact with their own race. According to Wale (2013), the SA reconciliation barometer survey found that 43.5% of South Africans rarely or never speak to someone of another race. It was further found that little more than a quarter (27.4%) interact with a person of another race. Racial stereotyping affects how one interacts with individuals from another race (Gordijn, Finchilescu, Brix, Wijnants, & Koomen, 2011). According to Carpenter and Henewsto (1996), individuals should interact with members of different racial groups, rather than relying on their stereotypical beliefs or opinions. The authors argue that by doing this, individuals might find similarities among different racial groups, thereby minimising or avoiding some of these negative racial stereotypes (Carpenter & Henewsto, 1996).

Nationality and sexual orientation stereotypes

In the study it was found that individuals' nationality and sexual orientation are also being stereotyped in the academic environment. In-group stereotypes about nationality revealed that Zimbabweans felt they were stereotyped as hardworking, but also as not being intelligent. According to Leng and Yazdanifard (2014), national diversity within organisations may lead to bullying where individuals from different nationalities are treated unfairly and being disrespected. Out-group stereotypes that were identified were that Zimbabweans are educated and intelligent. The positive out-group stereotypes regarding Zimbabweans could be ascribed to the fact that the institution where interviews were conducted employed three Zimbabweans who were all perceived to be hardworking and educated. They were lecturers teaching mathematical subjects which could lead to the assumption that they were intelligent and educated; therefore these stereotypes may then be generalised to all Zimbabweans.

In-group sexual orientation stereotypes revealed that homosexual people were assumed to be attracted to every one of the same gender as them. Also, one of the participants stated that people easily label them as being homosexual if they are artistic or if they have finer physical characteristics. No out-group stereotypes regarding sexual orientation were reported by participants. All sexual-orientated stereotypes cited were negative, affirming what Dressler (1979) had found in his research. Terms such as homosexuality, bisexuality, transgenderism, transsexualism and transvestites are commonly known and make room for stereotypes. However, people today are a lot more open about their sexuality, whereas in the past homosexuality was seen as taboo and was not spoken of; a possible reason for these negative assumptions (Stangor, 2000).

Practical implications

In summary, the following are the benefits awareness of in-group, out-group and occupational stereotypes hold for the organisation:

- More effective attraction and recruitment processes. If panel members in the interview are aware of possible biases or stereotypes they might have regarding a prospective candidate from a certain social category, they could make an effort to overcome the biases, selecting the candidate on a fair, and objective basis.
- Reduced costs of labour turnover and absenteeism. When being aware of stereotypes and correctly addressing the challenges they pose, the morale of employees in the organisation can be improved.
- Enhanced creativity and innovation. With stereotyping being addressed in the organisation, people will feel more comfortable to share new ideas without feeling that they might be judged.
- Improved knowledge of how to operate with people from different social categories.
- Improved understanding of the needs of employees, their behaviour, feelings etc.
- Enhanced business reputation and image with external stakeholders.
- Creation of opportunities for minority groups and building social cohesion.

Limitations and recommendations

Research studies are never without limitations. The sample size consisted of only 30 participants in the academic environment; therefore the results of this study cannot be generalised to the whole of the population. Furthermore, only participants from one tertiary academic institution in two provinces were selected to partake in this study. By including a wider biographical area, the sample size could have been broadened. Furthermore, the participants were not evenly distributed across all race groups. This could serve as an explanation as to why stereotypes for only certain races were mentioned. Participants that were interviewed were not from the same age, race or gender groups as the interviewer and might not have felt comfortable to share their true experiences. The process of qualitative data analysis does not rely on specific, predetermined statistical methods and is therefore subjective. The researcher, however, made an effort to stay objective throughout the process, making use of co-coders to validate results. It may also be possible that some of the participants were reluctant to report stereotyping and may therefore have attempted to present themselves in a socially desirable light by denying personal stereotyping. Another limitation of this study could be that participants might have felt uncomfortable about being recorded on tape, although they had given permission for the researcher to do so and despite being assured that their identities would remain anonymous.

For future research it is recommended that a larger sample be used from more diverse tertiary institutions. It is also recommended that fieldworkers be utilised to conduct interviews with participants that share the same biographical characteristics as them. This may put participants at ease when sharing their experiences of stereotypes. A quantitative study measuring the different characteristics attributed to different social groups (i.e. age, gender, and race) could also be employed to avoid interaction between the interviewer and interviewee, making participants more comfortable in giving answers. More probing in interview questions could also be beneficial. By asking more questions and trying to obtain the most detailed answers from each participant, the researcher may be able to collect even richer data. For future research it is recommended that instead of asking participants about stereotypes in general, a study can be conducted where participants are specifically questioned about their thoughts on age, gender and racial groups. Another study that can be conducted is to hold focus groups where individuals with the same characteristics (for instance focus groups comprising females only) share their

experiences regarding stereotypes. By doing this individuals may feel more comfortable sharing their experiences with others from the same biographical background as them. A future study that can be conducted is to investigate the existence of stereotypes within an organisation after employees have been exposed to a diversity management programme.

According to Gobinder (2014), the following strategies could be employed to reduce stereotyping in the organisation:

- Create a culture of respect for others, stressing the importance of valuing differences in people.
- Emphasise commonalities between people, encouraging them to interact with one another and in turn break some stereotypes.
- Avoid making assumptions or creating labels; explain the negative consequences thereof.
- Stress the value of empathy for others in the organisation.
- Make education opportunities regarding different ages, genders, occupations, races etc. available to employees.

Furthermore, management has a direct effect on workplace culture and climate. Management sets the standard for behaviour through their day-to-day conduct. It is therefore imperative for an organisation to emphasise the presence of stereotypes in the organisation. Regular audits will allow the employer to examine current stereotypes and identify areas for change and ongoing programs for employee awareness.

Conclusion

The findings of this study established that stereotypes indeed exist within the academic environment. Individuals hold stereotypes about themselves (in-group stereotypes) as well as others belonging to different groups (out-group stereotypes). Most of the stereotypes that were mentioned were negative in nature. The following stereotypes existed within the academic

environment: age, gender, nationality, occupation, sexual orientation, race and work-related stereotypes.

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CHAPTER 4

Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

This chapter covers the discussions and conclusions regarding the respective objectives that have been dealt with in each research article of the study. Moreover, limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research, practice and the profession are outlined.

4.1 Conclusions

The conclusions of this study will be discussed according to the objectives/findings of each research article.

Article 1: The ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ of stereotyping as experienced by individuals employed in the South African academic environment

The first objective of Article 1 was to conceptualise stereotypes according to the literature. Stereotyping is defined as overgeneralised, frequently judgmental, beliefs people hold toward members of a certain group (Cox, Abrahamson, & Devine, 2012). According to Houghton (2010), stereotyping involves a process of categorisation of individual characteristics that disguises differences among people. Houghton (2010) further states that stereotypes are a result of inadequate or biased data accepted by an individual about another. A stereotype is simply a broad belief or attitude about an individual based on certain characteristics (Schneider, 2004).

The second objective of Article 1 was to gain an understanding of the different ways in which employees from the academic environment define stereotypes. Most participants were able to conceptualise a definition or meaning for stereotypes. The themes that were mentioned included assumptions, beliefs, categorisation, generalisation, judgment as well as perception. From the answers provided by participants, it was established that stereotypes are based on various aspects such as behaviour, characteristics, ignorance, past experience and physical characteristics. Quinn and Rosenthal (2012) are in agreement and indicated that individuals categorise others based on physical traits that lead to stereotyping. As also mentioned by participants, stereotyping involves generalisation. This phenomenon of generalisation was also suggested by Hilton and Von Hippel

(1996). According to these authors, the behaviour of one person of a group is generalised to the rest of the members of the group, thereby ignoring individual differences. It was also mentioned by participants that stereotypes might be both accurate and inaccurate. Kassin, Fein, and Markus (2011) confirmed this by stating that many stereotypes are based on entirely deceptive information or perceptions.

The third objective of Article 1 was to explore the various origins of stereotypes. Participants reported that individual differences such as having a low self-esteem could lead to stereotyping. According to Harrison (2001), people with a low self-esteem might stereotype others in order to make themselves feel better or acceptable. It is also important for such people to influence others to feel the same as they do. Primary experiences were also mentioned as a possible origin of stereotyping. Generalising behaviour experienced from an out-group member to the rest of the group enables the individuals doing the stereotyping to create a mental shortcut and draw more rapid assumptions (Hinton, 2000). This also links with another origin reported, namely that people stereotype because it is human nature. It is necessary for people to create these shortcuts in order to understand the world around them (Brians, 2005). Attention should also be given to secondary exposure, which was another finding of this study. McGarty, Yzerbyt, and Spears (2002) found that parents, society and the media influence how we see members from a specific group and this may therefore lead to stereotyping, which was also the case in the current research study.

The fourth objective of Article 1 was to determine how individuals working within the academic environment experience being stereotyped. When being stereotyped, individuals react in different ways. Participants mentioned that they reacted on a behavioural, cognitive and emotional level. These findings are also confirmed by Kreitner and Kinicki (2004). Many of the participants indicated that they reacted to stereotypes on a behavioural level. For instance, participants indicated that they would try and prove the stereotype correct; a process known as self-stereotyping, according to Haslam (2001). On the other hand, participants mentioned that they would also deliberately try and prove a stereotype wrong. This, however, could lead to a phenomenon known as a self-fulfilling prophecy, where a prediction (in this case a stereotype)

comes true because people are already acting in a way as if the prediction is true. People therefore expect a certain outcome and this changes their behaviour (Kaufman, 2012).

Participants indicated that they also reacted to stereotypes on a cognitive level. Here participants mentioned aspects such as they would challenge the stereotype or try to stay true to themselves. According to Bergh and Theron (2009), individuals can change their cognitions or behaviours and subsequently their attitudes. It may therefore mean that when individuals are stereotyped, they can alter their attitudes towards the stereotype or person doing the stereotyping, by acting or thinking differently.

In terms of the emotional effect, this was the theme that was least mentioned. Participants mentioned that it hurts being stereotyped and that they feel demotivated. A reason for this could be because of the heightened awareness of emotional intelligence within the work environment (Craemer, 2014). According to Salovey, Mayer, and Caruso (2004), people are reluctant to show their feelings as others might use it against them. These authors further stated that it is socially undesirable for an individual to show his or her true feelings in the workplace. It is also possible for an individual to deliberately suppress his/her feelings which are referred to as suppression (Purdon, 2004). An individual can either feel embarrassed or immature for feeling a certain way, which may also explain the findings of this study.

Article 2: In-group and out-group stereotypes as experienced by individuals employed in the South African academic environment

Following is a discussion of the findings of Article 2:

The objective of Article 2 was to investigate the stereotypes that exist within the academic environment. The specific objectives were to identify the in-group as well as out-group stereotypes that individuals working in the academic environment hold or experience. Also, work is an important human activity and employees spend most of their waking time at work (Bergh, 2011; Rantanen, Lehtinen, & Salmenius, 1994); therefore it seems fitting that occupational stereotypes be investigated in this study.

The third objective of this article was to determine the in-group stereotypes that employees within the academic environment experience about the specific occupation they are fulfilling. During data analysis it became evident to the researcher that the types of in-group and out-group stereotypes participants made mention of coincided. The researcher thus saw it fitting to discuss the different types of stereotypes in general and not according to the specific objectives. This was done to avoid repetition. Apart from answers provided by participants when asked the interview question specifically pertaining to their occupational stereotype experiences, participants also mentioned occupational stereotypes as part of their in-group and out-group experiences; therefore, occupational stereotypes as a whole will be discussed.

There were also participants who stated that they did not experience stereotypes. A possible explanation for this is a phenomenon called stereotype suppression. Stereotype suppression is when an individual consciously and deliberately suppresses stereotypes. This is done because individuals are aware of the negative effects that accompany being stereotyped (Purdon, 2004). Also, many participants indicated that they did not experience any stereotypes about themselves (in-group). This may possibly be explained by a phenomenon referred to as selective attention. Bergh (2011) indicates that selective attention is when an individual does not regard certain information as important or relevant and would therefore not pay attention to that specific information. Therefore, if individuals perceive stereotypes as being insignificant, they may be expected to be oblivious to them. Although there were participants that did not experience any in-group or out-group experiences, the remaining participants gave detailed descriptions of both in-group and out-group experiences. Frequent stereotypes conveyed in the study were related to age, gender, nationality, occupation, race, sexual orientation and work-related aspects. Next follows a discussion of the stereotypes found within the academic environment.

Focusing on age stereotypes, older people were stereotyped negatively as being resistant to change and being rigid. Older people were positively stereotyped, on the other hand, as being knowledgeable and respected. As confirmed by Cuddy, Fiske, and Glick (2008), stereotypes about aging could be either positive or negative. However, society places a higher value on youth than aging. Printed media, movies, and television have a tendency to reinforce the idea that young is “good” and old is “bad” (Peppard, 2012). In the current research study it was found that

young people were stereotyped as struggling to be appointed, sociable, expected to do all the work, taken advantage of, incompetent, not taken seriously, and underestimated. This is confirmed in literature where McGregor (2002) established that young workers face prejudice based upon stereotypes. Those mentioned by the author are that young workers are not enthusiastic or focused enough, and the isolation of young people from certain programs or activities in the workplace. According to Kotter-Gruhn and Hess (2012), age stereotyping holds consequences for those being stereotyped. It prohibits younger and older people from interacting; it may also prevent the elderly from taking part in work-related activities. They further state that even positive stereotypes about older people make them feel older; and people wish to be younger after being stereotyped. Thus, it seems both positive and negative stereotypes about aging have negative effects.

Gender stereotypes focused mostly on females. All of the stereotypes mentioned were of a negative nature. Females are being stereotyped, among others, as poor performers, undermined when it comes to decision making and not accepted within positions of authority. These negative stereotypes regarding working females are supported in literature. According to Amble (2005), regardless of how they perform, females in management will always be demoralised and misjudged. Coward (2010) explained that people are accustomed to assume that females are less competent; and according to Still (2006), males are perceived more positively, especially with regard to their competence as managers. These gender stereotypes that are experienced in the workplace can furthermore lead to a gender pay gap, imbalances in occupational ratios, and females struggling to advance in their careers (Puri, 2011).

Occupational stereotypes were focused on various occupations such as administrative personnel, graphic designers, human resources, lecturers, student advisors and information technology (IT) personnel. Positive as well as negative occupational stereotypes were reported, and this is in line with a study done by Onwunta and August (2007) who found that positive and negative stereotypes exist in the workplace. Leonardi and Rodriguez-Lluesma (2013) stated that strong tendencies of occupational stereotypes are found among children and originate from sources such as watching television. However, according to White and White (2006), even though occupational stereotypes are being proven wrong, stereotypes still continue to exist. Mandy,

Milton, and Mandy (2004) explain that occupational stereotypes originate due to the increased lack of understanding of one another's professional role. Furthermore, Sanderson (2010) found that these stereotypes may also lead to prejudice which can affect workers' morale and the organisational climate.

Other stereotypes that were also found to exist in the academic environment were based on workplace dimensions. Workplace stereotypes were focused on the duration of employees in the organisation, level of education, and job level within the organisation. If an employee was new in an organisation, he/she might be undermined and stereotyped as not being knowledgeable. Educated people would be judged to be insightful and knowledgeable; and lower job levels were undermined; a situation known as either external or organisational aspects of diversity. External features of diversity include features over which an individual has control only to a certain extent; these aspects might also change over time (Amelio, 2014). Organisational dimensions refer to the aspects in a work setting over which an individual has very little control and are mostly influenced by the organisational culture (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004).

Racial stereotypes were also reported to exist within the academic environment. Black, white and people of colour were stereotyped in the current research study. Racial stereotypes reported were all negative. According to Fein and Spencer (1997), individuals often negatively stereotype others to make themselves feel better, which may also explain the negative racial stereotypes mentioned by participants in this study. It was stated that white people only interacted with other people belonging to their own race group. This is confirmed in literature as stated by Houghton (2010), that stereotypes create group boundaries. A study by Pauker, Ambady, and Apfelbaum (2010) also state that people are separated into social groups because of their race. Another racial stereotype that was found in the current research study was that black people are incompetent and leisurely. The reason for these racial stereotypes could have historic roots. The population in South Africa mostly consists of individuals who were part of the apartheid regime or individuals whose parents were part of the apartheid regime. Therefore, it may be possible that South Africans hold a lot of learned assumptions from their parents toward other races (Zegeye, 2001). Furthermore, stereotyping relating to race has an influence on how one interacts with individuals

from other races (Gordijn, Finchilescu, Brix, Wijnants, & Koomen, 2011) and may lead to racism (Page, 2007).

Other stereotypes that were reported were stereotypes based on sexual orientation and nationality. In this study homosexual people were stereotyped as always being attracted to everyone from the same gender and one is assumed to be homosexual because of one's physical features. According to Herek (2000), homosexuals are portrayed and labelled in the media in a very specific way and people use that as reference when judging others, which may also explain the results of the current study. Regarding nationality stereotypes, Zimbabweans, for instance, were stereotyped as hardworking and both intelligent and unintelligent. According to Leng and Yazdanifard (2014) national diversity within organisations may lead to bullying where individuals from different nationalities are treated unfairly and being disrespected.

4.2 Limitations

Some limitations of the study were identified. By using a case study as research strategy questions are posed regarding external validity or generalisability of data obtained. The findings might be unique to the sample used and data collected might not be generalised to other individuals and other settings. Convenience sampling can lead to under-representation of specific groups within a sample. For example, in the present study people in the age group 40 to 50 years and Coloured individuals were underrepresented. Only participants from one tertiary academic institution and two different campuses in two provinces were chosen for this study. The sample size could have been broadened to include more than one academic institution from different provinces.

It is also important to note that participants could have been unwilling to report stereotyping and might therefore have attempted to present themselves in a socially desirable light by denying personal stereotyping. Also, there was only one interviewer from a specific age, gender and race group; this could have made some participants uncomfortable to reveal stereotypes related to the same age, gender and race as that of the researcher. By using qualitative research, the outcomes could be easily influenced by the researcher's personal subjectivity. However, the researcher

ensured that she remained objective and unbiased throughout the whole research process, and also made use of the help of co-coders in order to ensure the validity of the results. Also, participants of this study were asked questions pertaining to their general in-group and out-group experiences of stereotypes (except for in-group occupational stereotypes that were explicitly asked). This might have caused participants to evade mentioning all the different types they experienced. By asking participants questions pertaining to specific types of stereotypes, richer information could have been collected.

4.3 Recommendations

Recommendations can be made for future research and practice

4.3.1 Recommendations for future research

For future research it is recommended that a larger sample from more diverse tertiary institutions be used. Other research designs such as multiple case studies should be considered in exploring stereotypes. More probing interview questions could also be beneficial to enable the researcher to obtain more in-depth answers and more examples of stereotypes. For future research it is recommended to specifically focus on sexual orientation and nationality stereotypes as there is limited research on these phenomena within the South African context and little is known about its origins, effects and consequences. A quantitative study measuring the effects of stereotypes as well as the extent to which stereotypes can influence productivity, morale, climate etc. in the organisation could also be developed and employed. By utilising questionnaires comprising different characteristics of social groups which future research participants can rate may minimise the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee; possibly resulting in participants feeling more comfortable to provide answers.

It is also important to do a study regarding the success of diversity training or training relating to stereotype awareness. It is proposed that a longitudinal study be done before and after the training to measure if there is a positive difference in attitudes regarding stereotypes. It is also recommended that the assistance of various interviewers/fieldworkers from diverse backgrounds

be utilised. Fieldworkers and participants sharing the same biographical background should be grouped together; this might minimise the level of discomfort the participants may feel when sharing their experiences regarding stereotypes.

4.3.2 Recommendations for practice

The practice that should first and foremost be employed in any organisation is to create awareness regarding stereotypes, perhaps by means of diversity training. Employees should know what stereotypes are and the effects thereof. Current stereotypes found in the workplace should be emphasised to employees to enable them to recognise it when they encounter it. Differences among individuals should be outlined. This is especially important, since many employees are not even aware that they stereotype (Roberson & Kulik, 2007).

It is recommended by Mayhew (2014) that stereotypes be managed by making use of numerous practices. Organisations can implement policies to reduce stereotyping and discrimination in the workplace. It would therefore also be necessary to research current employment equity legislation in South Africa. It is also advisable for employers to provide diversity training and stereotype awareness training. As stated by Houghton (2010), it is important to create awareness to enable employees to avoid the potential negative effects of stereotyping. Organisations need to encourage open and honest dialogues during training. It would also be wise to reassign or restructure workgroups to encourage people from different races, genders, ages etc. to get to know one another; this will increase their exposure to dissimilar groups. Conducting frequent audits regarding stereotyping would also be beneficial. This will enable the organisation to investigate employees' attitudes regarding stereotypes and the effects stereotyping has on the business. This could be done through surveys as well as feedback from employees in order to establish areas for improvement and change.

Human resource management in the organisation also needs to play a role in managing stereotypes and the effects thereof. HR personnel need to ensure that stereotypes do not influence decision making as part of the recruitment and selection process, as well as with performance appraisals, succession planning, talent reviews and salary negotiations. Management is the

driving force behind the management of stereotypes. Managers set the standards through their own conduct and through coaching everyone can become aware of the following aspects: the possible stereotypes they might hold; to respect differences; to avoid making assumptions or creating labels; to develop empathy for other individuals; to be educated on differences pertaining to race, gender etc.; and not to allow stereotypic tendencies to influence their conduct or thoughts.

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