

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**Evelyn Omayemi Aneke**

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
[eoaneke@gmail.com](mailto:eoaneke@gmail.com)

**Evelyn Derera**

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
[dererae@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:dererae@ukzn.ac.za)

**Mapeto Bomani**

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa  
[mapetob@yahoo.com](mailto:mapetob@yahoo.com)

**—Abstract —**

The potential of the South African economy to achieve desired growth is greatly hampered by the systematic exclusion of women entrepreneurial activity in the key industries that drive the economy. One such industry is the construction industry that contributes positively to the South African's economy. Yet, this industry is highly male-dominated. Despite seeming improvements in women's entrepreneurial participation in different industries, there is still a huge gap between the percentages of men and women participating in the construction industry, particularly from a small business perspective. The construction industry has remained largely closed to women entrepreneurs and posing overwhelming challenges to the few women who have found their way into the industry. This study explores these challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the construction industry as well as the strategies adopted by these women to overcome some of the obstacles they encounter in the construction industry in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Qualitative data was collected using in-depth interviews from a sample of 16 women entrepreneurs. The snowball sampling technique was used to identify the participants. Content analysis was used for data analysis. The results revealed that women face deeply rooted socio-cultural challenges, particularly patriarchal attitudes in the construction industry. The strategies used by the women to

overcome some of the challenges include partnering with male business owners when bidding for construction jobs and forming reliable business networks. It is, therefore, important for policy makers to engage more with women running small businesses in the construction industry in order to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of these challenges. Support should be tailor made to mitigate the specific challenges.

**Key Words:** women entrepreneurship, small businesses, construction industry, challenges, South Africa

**JEL Classification:** M19

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the potential of any economy to achieve desired growth is greatly hampered by the systematic exclusion of women entrepreneurial activity in the key industries that drive the economy (Terjesen *et al.*, 2016). These key industries include among others, construction, manufacturing, technology, health, mining and utilities. These sectors contribute significantly to economic growth and development. For example, the global engineering and construction sector ended the first half of 2017 with an investment interest of \$34.2 billion (PWC, 2017). The forecast for the Global Construction is estimates that the volume of construction output will grow by 85 percent to \$15.5 trillion worldwide by 2030 (PWC, 2017). In South Africa, the construction sector is a significant contributor to employment and economic growth and it contributes 3.9 percent of the GDP (PWC, 2016). Despite the significant contributions of these sectors to the global economy, these industries remain male-dominated (Morales & Saucedo, 2015). Valji (2007) argues that this is indeed a global problem in most of the economic sectors. Blanchflower (2009) concurs that there is a lower percentage of women entrepreneurs operating small businesses in male-dominated industries such as manufacturing, mining, utilities and construction. Developing countries are most affected by this issue (Sospeter *et al.*, 2014), particularly in Africa. Male dominance is evident in managerial positions and the labour force in the critical sectors of the economy. The small business sector is not an exception.

Despite seeming improvements in women's entrepreneurial participation in different industries, there is still a huge gap between the percentages of men and women participating in the construction industry, particularly from a small business perspective (Aulin & Jingmond, 2011). Most women entrepreneurs seem to operate

from traditionally gendered environments such as the retail and service industries. Only a few women entrepreneurs are involved in male-dominated industries (Jaafar *et al.*, 2014). This is a problem, particularly, in the construction industry in Africa where patriarchy and its consequences pose a very significant barrier to the growth and development of women and society at large, both economically and otherwise (Gurjao, 2007). Pulsinelli (2011) argues that the construction industry would benefit hugely if more women are involved due to a different perspective they bring to the industry such as multi-tasking and good relationship building. While previous research has been conducted on gender imbalances (e.g. Gurjao, 2007; Jahn, 2009), with some studies focussing on the economic sphere, few studies have critically examined the construction sector that is male-dominated. For example, Ginige *et al.* (2007) examined the career development of women in the construction industry. The findings revealed that gender stereotyping is a major challenge and that the culture of the construction industry is predetermined by men (Ginige *et al.*, 2007). As a result, “gender stereotypes are visible in the construction industry as a direct antecedent of discrimination of women to achieve desired positions in the industry” (Ginige *et al.*, 2007:8). Worrall (2010) examined the construction industry from a cultural perspective and noted that huge barriers exist for women who intend to join the workforce. These studies highlighted the reluctance of men in the construction industry to accept women into their fold, either as workers or small business owners (Ginige *et al.*, 2007; Worrall, 2010). Those that have, are mostly in developed countries (Verwey, 2005; Blanchflower, 2009), where the gender inequality landscape is slightly different. There is, therefore, a need to explore these issues within the context of developing countries, especially in Africa, in order to inform theory and practice on this research area.

In a study conducted in South Africa, Moodley (2012) examined the role of women in the construction industry and observed that the industry is male dominated, hence restricting women who are not well received by their males counterparts. Moodley (2012) alluded to some of the challenges that women face in the industry. However, the author did not give these challenges an extensive consideration, by using a feminist research methodology in data collection which advocates for the use of interviews. Additionally, the study focused on women in the construction industry as a whole and did not look at women within specific disciplines of the construction sector (Moodley, 2012). This study, therefore, contributes towards this research gap in two ways: (1) by investigating the everyday life experiences of women entrepreneurs operating small businesses in construction industry; (2) by using

feminist research methodology which values women voices by using in-depth interviews for primary data collection. More specifically, this study explores the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the construction industry as well as the strategies adopted by these women to overcome some of the obstacles they encounter in the industry in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The findings of the study are relevant to the discourse on women's participation in male dominated economic sectors as well as gender inequality discourse. The paper is structured as follows. First, an overview of literature on women in construction industry and gender inequality in the sector is discussed. This is followed by the presentation of the methodology. Thereafter, the research results are presented and discussed.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Women entrepreneurship and the construction industry**

The number of women-owned businesses is increasing around the globe (Welsh *et al.*, 2014). This illustrates that women are not just positioned in the traditional industries, but are also diversifying into non-traditional industries such as construction, engineering, manufacturing and others (Jahn, 2009). Despite this growth, women entrepreneurs continue to encounter a plethora of challenges (Sang & Powell, 2012). This is partly due to the fact that entrepreneurship is often considered to be an activity that is dominated by men (Aylward, 2007). However, Adesua-Lincoln (2011) stressed that female enterprises are faced with a myriad of obstacles and challenges which include, among others, poor access to markets, limited access to information technology, difficulty in obtaining finance, poor linkages with support services and an unfavourable policy and regulatory environment. Another significant problem identified is sexual harassment by male colleagues and senior staff, and unnecessary competition in the field (Harbal, 2012). Female entrepreneurs operating in male-dominated industries encounter intense gender stereotyping which includes difficulties in accessing formal networks that provide key resources and information about the sector (Coyle & Flannery, 2005). Despite these challenges, the contribution of women entrepreneurs continues to grow and extends from the economy to the wider process of social transformation (Adesua-Lincoln, 2011).

### **2.2 The construction industry**

The term 'construction' covers a wide range of activities, which include building and civil engineering works (Oseghale *et al.*, 2015). Activities such as installing

floors, roofing, water drilling, sandblasting and painting falls within the construction industry (Vanags *et al.*, 2015). It is axiomatic that physical strength is a basic requirement of the construction industry. According to Bowen *et al.* (2014), not all individuals can participate in the construction industry because of the level of physical strength that is required for all participants regardless of gender. The situation is worse for women who are considered by society to be the weaker gender and that makes it difficult for them to be accepted in the industry (Bowen *et al.*, 2014).

### **2.3 Gender inequality and marginalisation of women**

Gender is understood to be a personal identity, social status and also a set of relationships among men and women (Lorber, 2010). Gender inequality is not a personal issue but it is rather a societal issue which has been integrated into organisations, institutions, the economy and even marriage (Lorber, 2010). The abundance of literature on the issues of gender inequality and the marginalization of women in different sectors as well as the growing interest in these issues is a reflection of reality and the fact that much of its complexity is yet to be adequately explored (Valji, 2007). For example, in the mining industry, women occupy only 13.2 percent and 19 percent in the U.S and Canada respectively. Women in the construction industry in the U.S are also low at 9 percent as compared to 11.2 percent in Canada (Catalyst, 2013). These figures are applicable to countries in the developed world. However, the percentage is not very different from South Africa (Jahn, 2009). As at 2008, a total of 426,169 people were employed in the construction industry and only 28,975 (i.e. 6.8 percent) were women (Jahn, 2009). In another survey covering women and men in construction-related organisations, only 7 percent of construction work was contracted to women entrepreneurs while 93 percent to men (Jahn, 2009). This suggests that there is still a gap between men and women in the construction industry in South Africa. Interestingly, in a keynote address delivered at the 2002 South African housing awards ceremony, Mthembu-Mahanyele mentions that “for centuries women in Africa have been building their huts, houses and homes, clayed floors, thatched roofs, cultivated the land, made money and raised their kids, while men were busy with other responsibilities” (cited in Verwey, 2005: 1). By implication, women have been involved in building and construction in perpetuity.

Gender discrimination is used by feminist researchers in explaining the amount of oppression and subordination found around the world (Oyewumi, 2005). Some

societies continue to assume male dominance and women subordination (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui, 2005). In some cultural groups the problem of gender inequality starts as soon as a girl-child is born (Balogun, 2013). Even in educational institutions girls and boys are conditioned to behave and play roles pre-determined by society (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui, 2005). Questions arise regarding the perceived capabilities and self-image of the girl-child in the performance of carrying out her duties in a society where men are perceived to be dominating (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui, 2005). Balogun (2010:22) notes “the oppression of women is fostered in Africa through cultural vehicles such as proverbs”. In patriarchal cultures male children are given priority and are instilled with a sense of gender superiority (Balogun, 2013). Female children are valued less and their vocation is perceived as just caregivers (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui, 2005).

Although gender inequality is a reality in most societies on a global scale, most governments (South Africa included) have taken a stance against this issue. The South African constitution adopted a bill of rights “which forbids discrimination on the grounds of gender, sex and sexual orientation, among other criteria” (De La Rey & Kottker, 1999). Although this is the case, the construction industry is still male dominated and women are still underrepresented in the sector, not only in South Africa but also around the world (Jahn, 2009).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study is both exploratory and descriptive in nature. An exploratory study seeks to gather detailed information on under researched subjects (Sakeran & Bongie, 2009) such as women entrepreneurs. A descriptive study seeks to answer the following questions (i.e. who, what, where and how) (Sakeran & Bongie, 2009) about women operating their small businesses within the construction industry. Qualitative data was collected using in-depth interviews from 16 women entrepreneurs out of a targeted sample of 30. The low response rate was attributed to the timing of data collection which coincided with the period for bidding for new tenders with various municipalities. In-depth interviews were utilised because studies on women are complex and require an ordered approach to bring out salient or burning issues that women face in the construction industry (Hamilton, 2013). The interviews were conducted for approximately 45 minutes and were tape recorded. A non-probability sampling technique known as snowball sampling was used to identify participants. Content analysis was adopted for data analysis and

themes were extracted from the interview data sources. To protect the identity of the respondents, pseudonyms were used.

#### **4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

##### **4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents**

**Age:** The majority (56%) of women entrepreneurs were aged between 30 and 49 years. Women aged below 30 years represented 25 percent of the sample. The remainder (19%) were over 50 years of age.

**Education:** While education often serves as a foundation where knowledge and skills are developed (Buthelezi, 2012), some researchers (Justo *et al.*, 2015) argue that women with a minimum of a college and tertiary education are more likely to succeed in business compared to women with an educational qualification which is below that level. The results show that the majority (75%) of women had university degrees, while 18.7 percent of the women had completed high school and obtained a certificate (i.e. Matric certificate). The minority (6.3%) of the respondents had a diploma qualification. While the majority of women were educated, only 12.5 percent of women had an educational qualification that was related to the construction industry.

**Number of years of operating the business:** The majority (56.2%) of women had been running their businesses for a period of between 3 to 5 years; while 12.5 percent had been participating in the construction industry for a period of between 6 to 8 years. The other 12.5 percent had been operating their small businesses for more than 15 years and the remaining 6 percent of women had been in the construction industry between 9 to 11 years. These findings reveal that most respondents were relatively young in the construction business. Research has shown that the survival rate for startup businesses in the construction industry is very low and most businesses fail within the first four years of establishment (Small Business Development Center, 2015).

**Business Category:** The term construction covers a wide range of activities, which include building and civil engineering work (Oseghale *et al.*, 2015). In order to establish the activities in which women are participating, the women were asked to mention the category of construction industry within which their businesses fall. The majority (68.7%) of the women were engaged in general construction, while 25 percent were involved in civil engineering, and the remainder (6.3%) were

involved in paving. The construction industry includes construction and reconstruction, renovations and repairs, building and repair of roads and bridges (Vanags *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, installing floors and landscaping, roofing, water drilling, sandblasting, painting and other activities, are some of the areas that fall within the construction industry (Vanags *et al.*, 2015). The results reveal that the majority of respondents were involved in general construction, where they carry out all construction-related duties such as building, renovations and repairs on new and existing residential or commercial buildings. Furthermore, respondents were also involved in installing floors and landscaping, roofing, water drilling, sandblasting, painting and other activities. The results indicate that they did not specialize in a specific area but offered whatever construction industry-related services they could. This is consistent with insights shared by Sinethemba:

*“I get contracts in all aspects of construction whether to renovate an existing building, or road construction”.*

**Source of Start-up Capital:** Raising start-up capital is a minefield for women entrepreneurs (Derera *et al.*, 2014). The results show that the majority (56%) obtained start-up capital through bank loans, 25 percent utilised their personal savings (bootstrapping), 13 percent received assistance from family members and government funded programmes, and 6 percent acquired their capital through inheritance. Studies have shown that most businesses acquire their start-up capital through loans from financial institutions (Pisani &Yoskowitz, 2008).

**Number of employees:** Organisations vary in size and the number of employees and this is often dependent on the number of years in business and profitability of the business (Guiso & Rustichini, 2010). In order to get some insights about the size of their workforce, the women were asked to indicate the number of employees that they have. The majority (37.4%) of the respondents employed between 5 to 9 workers, 25 percent employed 20 workers and above, 18 percent employed between 10-14 workers and the remaining 18 percent employed 15-19 workers. In general, the majority (75%) of the small businesses involved in the study employed less than 20 workers.

#### **4.2 Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the construction industry**

The analysis of the data from the in-depth interview suggests that the challenges confronting women in the construction industry are deeply rooted in sociocultural issues which view women in a patriarchal context. These findings concur with

several authors (e.g. Harbal, 2012; Sang & Powell, 2012). These challenges include, among others, lack of startup and working capital, lack of industry knowledge and experience, difficulty in time management, sourcing of clients and exhaustion. To further illustrate the influence of sociocultural challenges on women entrepreneurs operating in the construction industry, Fezile responded:

*“Having to deal with men in the industry is a very big challenge. I am often reminded that the industry is not for women and that I should go and do another business that is associated with women”.*

This quote reflects deeply rooted socio-cultural challenges that women encounter in their day to day lives as entrepreneurs running small businesses in the construction industry. How are women expected to prosper in the sector where they do not belong? and/or how are women expected to prosper when they are told to go and establish businesses that are associated with their gender? The answers to these questions raise an alarm that the society still believes men are superior over women and some industries are reserved for males. These findings support the issues of gender superiority by males (Balogun, 2013). Thus, in most societies, males are dominant and women are expected to be subservient (Njogu & Orchardson-Mazrui, 2005). Yet, the constitutions of most countries, South Africa included, forbid discrimination on the grounds of gender, sex and sexual orientation, among other criteria (De La Rey & Kottker, 1999). This shows that gender equality in societies is still farfetched. As a society, it is imperative that gender equality values are inculcated at family level. When this happens, change is bound to happen at a broader perspective.

Another important challenge mentioned by women is lack of start-up capital as well as working capital. Although this challenge is common among both genders, women tend to suffer from gender related issues that are inherent in sourcing funding for the business. The following quote from Reshika highlights the nature of this challenge for women in the construction industry.

*“My major challenge was raising funds for the business since I started the business with my own savings..... which was not enough for running my business”.*

The construction industry, by nature, requires huge capital investments including huge working capital. Because of this, it is evident that the construction industry is heavily reliant on loans and the majority of the interviewed women revealed

difficulty in securing loans from financial institutions due to lack of collateral security. Hence, the high probability of women entrepreneurs relying on informal and internal funding such as micro-financers, personal savings or loans from their family (International Finance Corporation, 2011). Taking the quote into consideration, Reshika is either a wealthy woman or that she is operating at the periphery of the construction industry where less capital is required. Even though that might be the case, the money that she raised was inadequate to operate her business. Again, it is generally agreed that very few women are rich in South Africa, which points towards Reshika operating at the outskirts of the industry. In most cases, one needs to participate at the core of the industry for them to prosper. Since the industry is known for its massive and expensive equipment, in most cases, these women outsource some jobs to other construction firms which impact negatively on the return on their investment.

The women also identified challenges that impact negatively on their business productivity such as difficulty in attracting customers, lack of the required knowledge and experience in the industry, poor time management, difficulty in attracting reliable and competent employees, securing strategic location for their businesses, and lack of resources for advertising. To substantiate some of the highlighted challenges, Lauren had this to say:

*“Obtaining industry experience was a major challenge for me as I had little experience in the field of the business I was going into.....so running the business independently was a very huge task since I had limited knowledge about the industry”.*

The ideal situation is for one to establish a business in an industry where they have both relevant experience and considerable industry knowledge (Barringer & Ireland, 2010). From a female perspective this poses challenges as the society in general offers limited exposure to the industry for women. This leaves women with no option, but to force their way into the male dominated industry. As such, this presents a major challenge for equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs forging their way into the construction industry. The strategies adopted by women entrepreneurs to overcome some of the challenges are presented next.

### **4.3 Strategies used by women entrepreneurs to overcome some of the challenges**

When faced with challenges, one has to come up with strategies for overcoming some of these challenges. Eight themes emerged from data set on the strategies adopted by women entrepreneurs. These themes include: belonging to a business networking organisation; attending training and workshops; partnering with males on certain projects; partnering with established women in the industry; forming partnerships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs); and developing a strong character. In support of this, Funeka and Nqobile stated that:

*“.... women must learn to support each other by forming business partnership where they can make use of joint resources such as equipment, and skills ...”*

*“... Women should belong to women’s network or form a union that support businesses owned by women”.*

The above quotes point towards the notion of women supporting each other. Contrary to this, Zama argues that:

*“I am of the opinion that women in the construction industry should form partnerships with men in the industry. This will help to reduce the level of discrimination that women are often exposed to”.*

Some women believe that partnering with men would assist them in securing tenders. Most respondents spoke bitterly against the way tenders are awarded, suggesting gender imbalance in the way business tenders are awarded. This is consistent with Lindiwe’s remark that:

*“In general, men hold prominent positions and are at the hub of affairs in the committees responsible for the awarding of tenders..... this gives men the upper hand.*

Such scenarios create a situation where women are left with no options except partnering with men on certain projects as indicated by Bongiwe who mentioned that: *“...Men can go for bidding while women work from the background...”* These findings are supported by extant literature which argues that, from a skill perspective, the idea of women partnering with men is very necessary in gaining easy entrance into any business situation. Nevertheless, such partnering is not for social reasons but for strategic reasons in a bid to create a more conducive,

harassment free working environment in the male dominated industry (Godwin *et al.*, 2006). Contrary to this argument, one could argue that although women view partnering with men as a strategic tool for business survival, such actions actually promote male dominance as women are seen to be agreeing to surrender power to men by working from the background.

Furthermore, a strong and reliable support system is necessary for women entrepreneurs to survive in a male dominated industry. In agreement with this strategy, Bev responded that:

*“...a good support system involving family, friends, and fellow colleagues is critical for survival in male dominated spaces.....”*

Although, the women suggested several strategies that could be adopted to overcome some of the challenges in the construction sector, these women were also quick to acknowledge the existence of diversity among them. For example, Busi and Fezile mentioned that:

*“We all are not the same, we think and act differently in doing businesses.... so the strategy I use may or may not work. But all in all, every business-minded person needs to be focused on running a successful business”.*

*“The strategy I use may not work for everyone as we all have different ways in running our businesses, so I will say women should always be optimistic no matter how difficult it is to run a business”.*

These quotes reflect that although women can share ideas for dealing with gender inequality, at the end of the day, every woman should identify strategies that work for them. Importantly, the essence of entrepreneurship is to create a sustainable business venture that is profitable, unless it is a non-profitable organisation. In a bid to achieve this, women have to do what they need to do in order to run successful business ventures despite the deeply rooted socio-cultural challenges that they encounter in their everyday lives as women operating small businesses in male dominated spaces.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, women entrepreneurs in the construction industry experience a plethora of challenges which in most cases are gender related. In order to survive in such difficult environments, women developed several strategies. It is critical to point out that some of the strategies used are actually nurturing the existence of

gender discrimination. An example of such strategies is acknowledging the fact that men are superior than women. This is supported by the notion that women still believe that men should go ahead and bid for tenders while women remain in the background. The implications of these findings is that the government should continue to promote gender equality in male dominated spaces. In addition, a comprehensive support mechanism is required for women to progress in such spaces. Furthermore, the family nucleus should be at the forefront of fighting against gender inequality in the hope that this ideology will make significant headway in promoting women in South Africa and the world over. Future studies should investigate women entrepreneurship in other male dominated spaces such as engineering, manufacturing, technology, just to mention a few.

## REFERENCES

- Adesua-Lincoln, A. (2011). Assessing Nigerian Female Entrepreneurs Access to Finance for Business Start-up and Growth. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(13), 5348-5355.
- Adeyemi, A. Y., Ojo, S. O., Aina, O. O., & Olanipekun, E. A. (2006). Empirical evidence of women under-representation in the construction industry in Nigeria. *Women in Management Review*, 21(7), 567-577.
- Amaratunga, R., Haigh, R., Shanmugam, M., Lee, A. & Elvitigalage, D.N. (2006). *Construction Industry and Women: A Review of the Barriers*. Proceedings of the 3rd International SCRI Research Symposium.
- Aulin, R., & Jingmond, M. (2010). *Issues confronting women participation in the construction industry*. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Aylward, E. (2007). Traditional and Non-Traditional Female Entrepreneurs: An exploration into what influences their selection of industry sector. Doctoral dissertation: Waterford Institute of Technology.
- Balogun, T. A. (2013). Panacea to the problems of gender inequality and the building of a gender friendly society in Nigeria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 4(3), 560-565.
- Barringer, B.R. & Ireland, R. D. (2010). *Entrepreneurship: Successfully launching New venture* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

- Blanchflower, D. (2009). "Minority Self-Employment in the United States and the Impact of Affirmative Action Programs". *Annals of Finance*, 5(3), 361-396.
- Bowen, P., Edwards, P., Lingard, H. & Cattell, K. (2014). Occupational Stress and Job Demand, Control and Support Factors Among Construction Projects Consultants. *International Journal of Project Management*, 32(7), 1273-1284.
- Buthelezi, S. (2012). Women in Construction. <http://www.thesbu.com/blog/entry/women-in-construction>. Accessed 2014/05/27
- Catalyst Quick Take. (2013). Women in Male-Dominated Industries and Occupations in U.S. and Canada. <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-male-dominated-industries-and-occupations-us-and-canada>. Accessed 2014/05/28
- Coyle, H. E., & Flannery, D. (2005). Gendered contexts of learning: female entrepreneurs in male-dominated industries within the United States. *Summer Institute of the National Center for Curriculum Transformation Resources on Women*. Turkey.
- De la Rey, C., & Kottler, A. (1999). Societal transformation: gender, feminism and psychology in South Africa. *Feminism and Psychology*, 9(2)119-126.
- Derera, E., Chitakunye, P. & O'Neill, C. (2014). The impact of gender on start-up capital: A case of women entrepreneurs in South Africa. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 23(1), 95-114.
- Ginige, K., Amaratunga, D. & Haigh, R. (2007). Gender Stereotype: A Barrier for Career Development of Women in Construction. Built Environmental Education Conference, 1-10.
- Godwin, L. N., Stevens, C. E., & Brenner, N. L. (2006). Forced to Play by the Rules? Theorizing How Mixed-Sex Founding Teams Benefit Women Entrepreneurs in Male Dominated Contexts. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 623-642.
- Guiso, L., & Rustichini, A. (2010). Understanding the Size and Profitability of Firms: the Role of a Biological Factor <http://econ.sciences->

- [po.fr/sites/default/files/file/DR-entreprenership-Dec-2011.pdf](http://po.fr/sites/default/files/file/DR-entreprenership-Dec-2011.pdf). Accessed 2015/03/24.
- Gurjao, S. (2007). The changing role of women in the construction workforce. <https://www.ciob.org/sites/default/files/CIOB%20research%20%20The%20Changing%20Role%20of%20Women%20in%20the%20Cons%20truction%20Workforce.pdf>. Accessed 2016/03/02.
- Hamilton, E. (2013). The Discourse of Entrepreneurial Masculinities (and Femininities). *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 25(1/2), 90-99.
- Harbal. (2012). Challenges Faced by Women Entrepreneurs. <http://www.studymode.com/essays/Challenges-Faced-By-Women-Entrepreneurs-965924.html>. Accessed 2014/04/07.
- International Finance Corporation (2011). Strengthening Access to Finance for Women Owned SMES in Developing Counties. [http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/a4774a004a3f66539f0f9f8969adcc27/G20\\_Women\\_Report.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/a4774a004a3f66539f0f9f8969adcc27/G20_Women_Report.pdf?MOD=AJPERES). Accessed 2017/08/02.
- Jaafar, M., Othman, R. & Jalali, A. (2014). Main Determinant of Female Entrepreneurs in the Construction Industry in Malaysia. *Project Management Journal*, 45(1), 76-86.
- Jahn, M. (2009). Discrimination against women in the construction industry in South-Africa. Bachelor of Science Honours Dissertation: University of Pretoria.
- Justo, R., DeTienne, D. R., & Sieger, P. (2015). Failure or voluntary exit? Reassessing the female underperformance hypothesis. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 30(15), 775-792.
- Loh, J. M., & Dahesihsari, R. (2013). Resilience and economic empowerment: a qualitative investigation of entrepreneurial Indonesian women. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, 21(01), 107-121.
- Lorber, J. (2010). The Variety of Feminisms and their Contribution to Gender Equality <http://oops.uni-oldenburg.de/1269/1/ur97.pdf> Accessed 2014/06/02
- Moodley, M. S. (2012). An investigation of the role of women in the South African construction industry. Doctoral dissertation: University of Johannesburg.

- Morales, M. C. & Saucedo, L. (2015). Disposability and Resistance in a Male Dominated Industry: Latina Immigrants Organizing in Residential Construction. *Human Organization*, 74(2), 144-153.
- Njogu, K., & Orchardson-Mazrui, E. (2005). *Gender inequality and women's rights in the great lakes: Can culture contribute to women's empowerment?* UNESCO.
- Oseghale, B. O., Abiola-Falemu, J. O. & Oseghale, G. E. (2015). An Evaluation of skilled labour shortage in selected construction firms in Edo state, Nigeria. *American Journal of Engineering Research*, 4, 156-167.
- Oyewumi, O. (2005). *African Gender Studies a Reader*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pisani, M.J. & Yoskowitz, D.Y. (2004). Microcredit and Micro and Small Enterprise Development in Belize, Central America: A Quantitative Study of the Small Farmers and Business Bank, Ltd. *Latin American Business Review*, 5(1), 45-69.
- Pulsinelli, O. (2011). Women provide unique perspective in construction industry. [http://www.mlive.com/business/westmichigan/index.ssf/2011/08/women\\_provide\\_unique\\_perspecti.html](http://www.mlive.com/business/westmichigan/index.ssf/2011/08/women_provide_unique_perspecti.html). Accessed 2014/09/20
- PWC. (2016). Swot Analysis of the Construction Sector in South Africa <http://www.thhp.co.za/swot-construction-southafrica>. Accessed 2015/06/14
- PWC (2017). Global Construction 2030: <http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/industries/engineering-construction/publications/pwc-global-construction-2030.html>. Accessed 2016/05/01
- Sang, K., & Powell, A. (2012). Gender Inequality in the Construction Industry: Lessons from Pierre Bourdieu. [http://www.arcom.ac.uk/-docs/proceedings/ar2012-0237-0247\\_Sang\\_Powell.pdf](http://www.arcom.ac.uk/-docs/proceedings/ar2012-0237-0247_Sang_Powell.pdf). Accessed 2017/03/02
- Sekaran, U., & Bongie, R. (2009). *Research Methods for Business: A skill Building Approach* (5th ed.) New York: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

- Small Business Development Center (2015). Bradley, University of Tennessee Research. <http://www.statisticbrain.com/startup-failure-by-industry/>. Accessed 2016/06/02
- Sospeter, N. G., Rwelamila, P. D., Nchimbi, M. & Masoud, M. (2014). Review of theory and practice literature on women entrepreneurship in the Tanzanian construction industry: Establishing the missing link. *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries*, 19(2), 75.
- Terjesen, S., Hessels, J. & Li, D. (2016). Comparative international entrepreneurship: A review and research agenda. *Journal of Management*, 42(1), 299-344.
- Valji, N. (2007). *Gender Justice and Reconciliation: Dialogue on Globalization*. Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Publishing.
- Vanags, A., Begeç, S. & Zarina, V. (2015). Strategic Partnerships in the Construction Industry in Latvia. *Innovation, Finance and Economy*, 69-78.
- Verwey, I. V. (2005). A comparative analysis between SA and USA women entrepreneurs in construction. Doctoral Dissertation: University of Pretoria.
- Welsh, D. H., Memili, E., Kaciak, E. & Ochi, M. (2014). Japanese women entrepreneurs: implications for family firms. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 52(2), 286-305.
- Worrall, L., Harris, K., Stewart, R., Thomas, A., & McDermott, P. (2010). Barriers to women in the UK construction industry. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, 17(3), 268-281.