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An exploration of the impact of psychological stress and the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in the Gauteng Province

by

Boitumelo Rakau

A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Masters in Research Psychology

(Course work)

in the

Department of Psychology

at the

University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

Supervisor: Dr Linda Blokland

Submitted:

March 2016

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DECLARATION

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To everyone mentioned below please be assured that there is so much more that I would like to say to each of you, but for the sake of being succinct, know that these few words are just a drop to the wells of gratitude I have.

Let me firstly extend my gratitude to my former Supervisor **Ms. Clare Schür**, who has walked the longest distance with me on this journey, your commitment and guidance throughout this long arduous, yet fulfilling, process became my source of motivation. Thank you for your patience. I was honestly allocated a 'God-send' of a supervisor.

Thank you to **Dr. Linda Blokland** for willingly taking the reins after Ms. Clare Schür's departure and for ushering me towards the final lap of this race. Thank you for your tender-hearted assurances.

None of this would have ever been possible without the man who never gave up on me, after years of "bugging" him to re-register me, **Professor David Maree** saw beyond my then current circumstances and took heed to my pleas. I will always be grateful for your empathy.

I was not only blessed with three supervisors, including him, but I was also blessed to find a mentor in my first supervisor, **Professor Patrick Chiroro.** You will be glad to know, Prof. that it is finally over. Now I can badger you for PhD advice!

Thank you to all the respondents who contributed to this study.

There used to be a portrait in my old room that read "*There's no greater force than that of a man (woman) determined to rise"* (Unknown Author). Throughout this long journey I knew I could rely on my family's unwavering support and their belief in me. Thank you to my pillar of strength and my constant source of inspiration, my father **Mr. Daniel Rakau**. Thank you to my source of encouragement, my mother **Ms. Priscilla Rakau**. Thank you to my cheerleader, my brother, **Mr. Tsholofelo Hope Rakau** and thank you to my drill sergeant, my partner **Mr. Christopher Tumusiime** who made sure I typed at least one page a day and thank you to my gem, my daughter little **Ms. Cae-Warona** who has unknowingly been the reason behind my burgeoning passion to ensure that this overdue chapter of my life draws to a successful end.

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Although unorthodox, I owe a huge thank you to myself. Many would have found it easier to concede defeat especially amidst myriads suggestions to do so, but I chose to focus on the end result promised to me. Kings are remembered for the wars they win and not for how long it took them to see victory.

It would be both ignorant and arrogant of me not to thank the One who foreknew me before the beginning of all time, the Captain of this ship and the One to whom all the glory for this accomplishment ultimately bel…y**o**ungswereto the only O ne who knew my heart throughout this entire process and in so doing You granted me my heart's desires. This one is for you. Thank you, **Jehovah: Jireh** through your **Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

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ABSTRACT

Background

The restaurant industry is recognised for its characteristically unconventional operations, which predispose restaurant owners to an array of psychological stressors. The impact that these psychological stressors may have on restaurant owners' ability to successfully function in their establishments was explored in this study. Restaurant owners from the Pretoria area in Gauteng were requested to share their experiences of psychological stress as influenced by their varying contexts; casual franchise restaurants (fast-food restaurants), formal franchise restaurants (family style restaurants) and/ or non-franchise restaurants (fine dining restaurants). This explorative study explored the different coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners as influenced by their respective contexts. It is through the exploration of the psychological challenges shared by the restaurant owners from their own perspectives that an in-depth understanding of the restaurant industry and its intricacies was hopefully achieved.

Research Methodology

To further the exploration of the restaurant industry from the restaurant owners' viewpoints, an Interpretive ontology and an Interpretive Phenomenology epistemology formed a foundation for this inquiry. This resulted in the researcher's utilisation of the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. Thirteen (13) restaurants were observed throughout the data collection process with only an envisaged number of six (6) restaurants needed as the sample to be interviewed. However, due to the busy nature of the industry and the eventual data saturation, the interview sample was reduced to four (4) restaurant owners. This in no way jeopardised the study's or the data's integrity. Smith and Osborn (2008) affirm that the use of three (3) respondents is sufficient for first time users of the IPA approach. With further consideration of the need for data saturation to guide the conclusion of the data collection process, the researcher included the fourth interview and opted to conclude the data collection process thereafter. The restaurant owners were recruited through convenience sampling methods; snowballing and convenient sample selection. Respondents were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide and the interviews were audio-recorded before being independently transcribed for the data analysis phase (IPA analysis).

Findings

The restaurant owners shared numerous challenges brought on not only by the industry they functioned within, but by the individually experienced complexities brought on my each respective restaurant's context. For a better understanding of the six (6) main challenges

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experienced by the respondents, their responses were contextualised into eight (8) broad themes that guided the data collection process, these being the **Choice of enterprise type (Entrepreneurship), Traits of an entrepreneur, Partners/ Investors, Psychological Challenges, Understanding of Psychological stress and its causes, coping mechanisms, Support systems, Collaboration between restaurant owners and support agencies.** As guided by the aim and objectives of the study, the researcher then narrowed in on the shared challenges as experienced by each restaurant owner and also their respective choice of coping mechanisms used as influenced by their different contexts. For a richer exploration, the researcher also conducted observations within all thirteen (13) restaurants that were visited during the sampling process. Findings from the observations were used with those from the interviews to further enrich the recommendations set forth in this research paper.

It was evident from the interviews that the restaurant owners had experienced, although in varying degrees, onsets of psychological stress that had varying impacts on the management of their respective operations. Respondents also shared their experiences of psychological stress as those that could only be experienced, and ultimately, understood by those functioning in the same industry. Although there was an understanding that most entrepreneurs would be inclined to experience incidences of psychological stress due to the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial ventures, the respondents emphasised that their (restaurant owners) experiences were influenced by a unique set of stressors inherently found in the restaurant industry which cannot be understood in isolation from their context.

With the over encompassing aim to bring about an understanding of the often overlooked restaurant industry, the researcher drew upon the findings from the interviews and the observations towards the formulation of the study's recommendations. In order for the restaurant industry to flourish beyond being seen as a commonly considered entrepreneurial venture to a recognised contributor to the labour economic market as well as being a tourist attraction, vast partnerships with relevant stakeholders and networks with support/aid agencies need to be formed and strengthened for this industry's sustainability.

Keywords

Coping mechanisms; Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA); Psychological impairment; Person-Environment Fit Theory; Restaurant Association of South African (RASA); Restaurant industry; Psychological stress; Psychological stressors; Pretoria; Spill over Theory; Support/aid agencies.

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CHAPTER 1
BACKGROUND OF STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The meaning entrepreneurial restaurant owners attach to their experience of running a restaurant will be significantly influenced by the stressors and coping mechanisms employed in response to experiences of psychological stress. A detailed examination of their respective contexts through their descriptions will shed light on how they perceive and cope with the specialized stressors that are unique to the restaurant industry. Understanding these experiences might provide guidance to other entrepreneurs and aid in their ability to create and sustain successful restaurant establishments.

In as much as there are entrepreneurial challenges applicable to all entrepreneurs, there are also those specific to restaurant owners within the restaurant industry. The restaurant industry is known for its unpredictability and unique challenges. One of the main challenges experienced by restaurant owners, and one that was also experienced in the current study, is the instability of the restaurant industry. "… up to 90 percent of independent establishments close during the first year, and the remaining restaurants will have an average five-year life span. Long-term trends show that chains (restaurant franchises) have a longer life span than independents *(independently owned restaurants) …"* Wickford (n.d.).

As with many entrepreneurial endeavors, it is specifically characterized by the innumerable risks to the establishment's financial stability and its ability to remain relevant. According to an article by Compeau (2013), the restaurant industry is susceptible to various risk factors, which may all affect the success of the establishment, such as attaining financial aid. He explains the extensive challenge faced by most restaurant owners when seeking financial aid from financial institutions, especially with regards to restaurant establishments. Financial institutions have become reluctant towards issuing financial aid to potential restaurant owners due to the instability of the establishments and the restaurant owners' inability to make the agreed upon repayments on their loans. It is this instability that negatively affects the success of the restaurants and is also a determinant of the establishment's longevity.

Due to challenges, such as the restaurant industry's susceptibility to competition, the non-conventional working hours, the difficulty in acquiring funding, the inconstant longevity of the establishment and the high staff turnover (Meyers, 2009), it is expected that restaurant owners are exposed to forms of stressors unique to this industry.

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Psychological stress, a negative reaction experienced by individuals who find great difficulty in managing the demands imposed by external occurrences is manifested in severe emotional, mental and physical deterioration when unable to cope. This further impacts their ability to continue functioning in stress inducing environments (Cohen, Tyrell, & Smith, 1993). According to Otsuka and Tatemaru (2010), the extent and prevalence of stressors may have psychological and physical consequences for restaurant owners. It is the continual exposure to such challenges that may increase entrepreneurs' vulnerability to psychopathology (Lazarus, DeLongis, Folkman, & Gruen, 1985). Considering that entrepreneurs may be afflicted by stressors emanating from various other contexts such as family or relations with friends, this necessitates that they develop coping mechanisms allowing them to function efficiently whilst managing the extent of stress experienced from external stressors.

The imbalance between entrepreneurs' ability to manage the challenges encountered from their external environment and those affecting their personal wellbeing may increase their susceptibility to physical and psychological stressors (Cox, 1993). It is common knowledge that the more unresolved stressful triggers individuals are exposed to, the lower their resistance to stressful environments, which may result in a manifestation known as Cognitive Distortion (Meyers, 2009). For this reason, it is recommended that entrepreneurs explore and utilise effective coping mechanisms learnt from stress management programmes, in order to combat the effects of their identified stressors or challenges.

As identified by most conventional stress management programmes, the prevention of continued stress once the sources have been identified, the timely reaction to the stressor and the rehabilitation of the individual are necessary steps for effective intervention (Cox, 1993). Hurley (n.d) asserts that the development of open and constructive communication between the restaurant owners and their staff may foster elements of empathy through the sharing of perspectives, experiences and the understanding of each individual's challenges. Through this process the team may collectively develop their own stress management tactics suitable to their contexts. Further, considering the fast paced nature of the restaurant industry and the unpredictability of the environment, management of stress requires the insurance of both physical and psychological vitality for example, the inclusion of exercise regimes (Hurley, n.d.).

In order to ensure the effectiveness of a stress management programme, its interventions are highly dependent on the context within which the individuals function. For purposes of this study, it is crucial to explore each restaurant owner's experience of the stressors

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prevalent in their respective contexts and how these stressors are uniquely ascribed to the many influencers found in each restaurant owner's context.

It is believed that by magnifying the focus on the restaurant industry, exploring the challenges experienced by restaurant owners and by exploring the coping mechanisms chosen by the restaurant owners as influenced by their various environments, this extensive exploration will broaden an understanding of the restaurant industry, its incumbents and the industry's complexities. What is of crucial importance within this study is the exploration of the various interpretations each restaurant owner ascribes to their experiences of psychological stress within their respective contexts. It is from this exploration that an understanding of each restaurant owner's experience of psychological stress will be formulated based on the constraints of their restaurant as well as the interactions within their contexts that shape the restaurant's experience. From this theoretical standpoint, it is understood that it is from their experiences, the meanings attached to their experiences and their interpretations of psychological stress are products of the context within which they function. Therefore, the restaurant owners cannot be thoroughly understood without considering the impact their contexts have on their worldview. It is from these unique experiences and the experiential learning that a better understanding of the restaurant industry as well as the restaurant owners will be formed. According to Larkin, Watts, and Clifton (2006) Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) concerns itself with the individual's perspective; the perspective that the insider develops based on their interactions within their contexts. Therefore, the individual's story and their relationship with their context are of primary importance in IPA (Chapman & Smith, 2002).

1.2 Research problem/problem statement

Due to the restaurant industry's accessible business model, which makes it effortless for an entrepreneur to establish a restaurant and due to the fact that this industry satisfies a constant basic need for nourishment it has become a stable contributor to the employment of many individuals in South Africa. Considering that every individual has on one or more occasions frequented a restaurant or purchased meals from a franchise restaurant emphasises the exposure received from indiscriminate numbers of consumers.

Therefore, one would expect that such a dynamic and resourceful industry would have support systems that advance its growth and stability, but that is not the case with the restaurant industry. From the literature consulted throughout the literature review process of this study, it became evident that most of the literature honed in on the services provided by

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the restaurant industry, how an individual can establish their own restaurant, but the literature seldom focused on the challenges experienced by individuals functioning in such a fast paced industry and the stress alleviation (coping mechanisms) methods that can be utilised to avert the onset of psychological stress.

The nature of the restaurant industry typically predisposes the restaurant owners to a vast assortment of operational challenges, such as dealing with unreliable suppliers, accommodating broad customer needs, adhering to health inspection regulations and operating during unconventional working hours (Simpson, 2009). Furthermore, Parsa, Self, Njite, and King (2005) have categorised the three main issues that form part of the major challenges and often the reasons for many failed restaurant establishments; these are *economic issues, marketing issues* and *managerial style issues*. In an article by Fatoki and Chindoga (2011), the authors assert to the lack of funding and entrepreneurial skills as the main issues faced by most entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Much like many other entrepreneurial establishments, restaurants are also characterised by innumerable challenges that have the potential of exposing restaurant owners to incidents of psychological stress (Otsuka & Tatemaru, 2010). According to Lazarus, DeLongis, Folkman and, Gruen (1985) the continual exposure to such challenges without any form of stress alleviation may increase entrepreneurs' vulnerability to psychopathology. It is from this identified gap in the literature that this explorative study emanated; where most conventional entrepreneurial ventures have support/aid agencies which are well campaigned, the restaurant industry does not have the same exposure to support/aid agencies that are applicable to this industry's operations. It is the latter issue that predestines most restaurant establishments into a path of uncertainty and ultimate failure. Therefore it is believed that the exploration of the restaurant industry's challenges may effect an understanding of this industry as interpreted by the restaurant owners and this may ultimately influence the development of networks between support/aid agencies and restaurants.

In order to ensure that all facets of exploration are covered within the qualitative inquiry, the study's main research question along with the study's secondary questions had to be explored. The primary research question of this study was:

What are the sources of psychological stress as uniquely experienced by entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry?

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This question not only allowed for the exploration of the different challenges experienced by the various restaurant owners from their varying experiences within their contexts, but it also allowed for an examination of the triggers or the sources of the psychological stress as perceived by restaurant owners. It was expected that some sources of psychological stress may be experienced similarly across some restaurant owners and also completely differently across other restaurant owners. It is through their descriptions or interpretations of these stressors that that understanding of the stressors within the restaurant industry, how these stressors influence and affect the individuals, what impact the various contexts had on the individuals' experiences, how the individuals cope with their stressors and how successful they perceive their coping mechanisms to be.

The secondary research questions, which aimed at further exploring this industry, were as follows:

- *What factors influence individuals' interests in entrepreneurship?*
  Considering the already imminent challenges within this industry this question allowed the researcher an opportunity to understand why there were still individuals who chose entrepreneurship as opposed to conventional employment.

- *What identifiable characteristics do restaurant owners possess that are specific to their industry?*
  In conjunction with the above question, this question helped construct the meaning around the characteristics, according to the restaurant owners, of entrepreneurs who choose to work within the restaurant industry. It is through this process that restaurant owners were afforded an opportunity to describe and interpret their individual characteristics and to reflect on whether they perceived these characteristics to be adequate for their environment.

- *What challenges do restaurant owners experience?*
  This afforded the restaurant owners an opportunity to share their challenges; unique to their personal and social world and the contexts within which they function.

- *What coping mechanisms do restaurant owners utilise in order to alleviate their individual experiences of psychological stress?*
  The examination of the coping mechanisms described by restaurant owners allowed for the exploration of what the respondents considered to be effective stress alleviation means as influenced by their contexts.

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- *What supportive mechanisms are in place for restaurant owners?*
  The purpose of this question was to discover the extent to which restaurant owners were aware of any support/aid agencies that were in place within their industry.

The last research question will consist of the researcher's reflective stance and how the researcher's own biases and experiences may have contributed to the research experience.

1.3 Aim and objectives of study

1.3.1. Aim of the study

This qualitative study explored how restaurant owners experienced and interpreted the challenges faced within their industry as well as within their varying contexts. It was believed that by exploring the sources of psychological stress as experienced by each restaurant owner within their own contexts, and by exploring the different coping mechanisms utilised by each restaurant owner, an in-depth understanding of this industry's complexities may be learnt.

Restaurant owners were afforded the autonomy and precedence to describe their different experiences as influenced by the context offered by their establishments and as per their experiences. Considering that this study was explorative and it required an in-depth understanding of the challenges within the industry, it was crucial that the restaurant owners' experiences as well as their perspectives be given priority within the inquiry.

1.3.2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- To explore the sources of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners within the Gauteng province, specifically within Pretoria.
- To explore the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in order to alleviate their experiences of psychological stress.
- To explore the prevalence of stress management within the restaurant industry and restaurant owners' awareness of any support/aid agencies.

1.4 Rationale of study

The limited research exploring the implications of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners and the fact that the restaurant industry is seldom recognised for its contribution to the country's economic market, are two contributing factors that influenced an interest in this proposed study.

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Although literature consulted identifies the origins of psychological stress amongst entrepreneurs in this industry and discusses the numerous challenges faced by entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry, it omitted the impact of psychological stress as experienced by the restaurant owners. Furthermore, the literature excluded an exploration of the various types of coping strategies utilised by restaurant owners as influenced by their contexts.

It was also evident throughout the literature review phase that with regards to the noted omissions in content, there was limited literature and research conducted on the restaurant industry that honed in on the South African context. This limited literature and research focusing on the South African restaurant industry not only limited the scope of the literature consulted, but it also influenced the type of sources that were consulted for a contextual understanding of the industry, such as Restaurant blogs, articles in restaurant magazines, etc. Therefore, it is with these findings in mind that this study's findings will, hopefully, create a broader awareness of the restaurant industry within South Africa, that an exploration of the restaurant owners' challenges may influence an in-depth understanding of the restaurant industry and that collaborations or networks may be spurred by the study's findings.

The findings will also highlight the impacts of psychological stress prevalent within the restaurant industry, as experienced by the restaurant owners. As guided by the study's epistemology which necessitates that respondents and their experiences need to be understood within the confounds of their contexts as well as in relation to their varying contexts; this exploration may render new discoveries of psychological challenges experienced by entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry. Thus, these findings may contribute to the development of customised stress management interventions aimed at the restaurant industry.

1.5 Description of research methodology

The research methodology utilised within this study is qualitative. Respondents were conveniently selected through the use of snowballing and convenient sampling methods. Two restaurants, based within Pretoria, were selected to form part of the sample; a lavish restaurant (non-franchise restaurant) and a franchise restaurant (fast-food restaurant). Once contact was made with these restaurants, these respondents were requested to suggest additional restaurants owners, who formed part of the study's sampling criteria and those who would be willing to partake in the study. This research study made use of a semi-structured interview guide that contained twelve (12) items, all of which were open-ended

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and allowed for further probing during interviews. The researcher also conducted observations within all the sampled/located restaurants and consolidated these observations by recording each of the observations in writing after each interview, for reflexive purposes. The sample comprised solely of restaurant owners. The data from the interviews was audio recorded, quality controlled, transcribed and analysed using IPA.

1.6 Theoretical framework

Edwards and Cooper (1990) describes stress as a negative reaction caused by an individual's inability to manage the relationship between their internal systems of control, such as their resilience, their ability to distress in highly stressful environments, and the demands of their external environment, such as the demands the restaurant industry. The continued exposure to stressful triggers not only reduces an individual's quality of life, but it deters their cognitive-perceptual functioning and reduces their sensitivity to stress management interventions. The Person-Environment Fit Theory defines stress as an internalised negative perception to an externally stressful situation (Cox, 1993). Therefore, this suggests that the manner in which an individual reacts to a stressful situation determines their ability to overcome stressful situations.

According to Edwards and Cooper (1990), an individual's inability to avert their experiences of continual exposure to stressful incidences, may not only lead to behavioural impediments, but also physiological and psychological challenges that may increase an individual's chances of mortality, if untreated. The Person-Environment Fit Theory makes use of the stimulus-response approach, which purports that a stressful incident can be averted if a new stimulus is introduced; which will result in there being a new response to the initial stressful trigger.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that forms the foundation upon which the remedial exploration of each entrepreneur's perceived challenges or stressors will be explored.

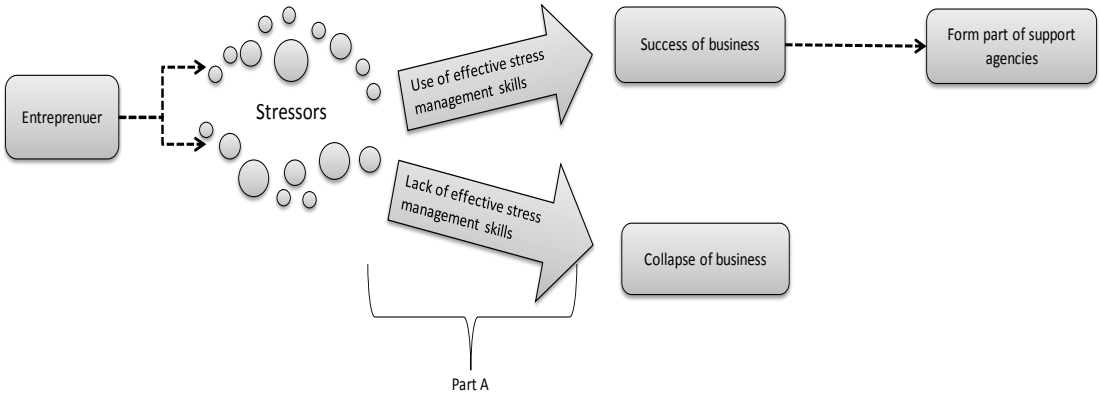

Figure 1: Psychological Stress and this study's aim

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It is from the entrepreneurs'' identification of their individual stressors, and their understanding of the effects of these stressors on the sustainability of their establishments, that this may necessitate their need for seeking stress management interventions. Part A emphasises the introduction of various stress management interventions in order to ensure that entrepreneurial ventures within the restaurant industry are sustained. The knowledge acquired from these interventions will enrich the growth and stability of their varying establishments. It is through this process of gaining an awareness of the challenges their peers are also exposed to that the entrepreneurs may feel the need to liaise with support/aid agencies for furthered networking purposes.

1.7 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter two shall contain the literature consulted throughout the review process. The literature reviewed explored the restaurant industry, the characteristics of entrepreneurs who chose to function in the restaurant industry, the challenges that are faced by most restaurant owners as well as the various stress alleviation methods at the restaurant owners' disposal. This section shall also delve into the various qualitative research studies, pertaining to the main issues applicable to this study, that were previously explored by international as well as local researchers. Where possible, literature offering a South African context was reviewed and included within this chapter.

Chapter three outlines the research study's methodology, the research design, the sampling process and data analysis process. Chapter four shall entail an analysis of the findings, with chapter five detailing the discussion of the findings as well as the study's limitations. Chapter six shall contain the study's recommendations and the conclusion with proposed future research interventions. The informed consent form, the semi-structured interview guide and the pamphlet containing the summary of research findings are also contained herein.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter provided an introduction to the study; it outlined the research problem, the study's aims as well as the study's objectives. The chapter also discussed the rationale of the study and described both the research methodology of the study and the theoretical framework that encompasses the study. The chapter concluded with an outline of the dissertation's structure. The next chapter; shall contain an analysis of literature reviewed pertaining to the restaurant industry and the challenges experienced by entrepreneurs within this industry.

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CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE

2.1 Literature review

This chapter outlines the various perspectives shared by authors and scholars with regards to the concept of entrepreneurship and its benefits. An overview of how entrepreneurship is perceived and described from a South African economic perspective will also be described. The chapter will also discuss the characteristics that are dominant in most entrepreneurs as well as the factors that determine the success of entrepreneurial ventures. The restaurant industry along with its industry-related challenges will also be discussed with reference to previously conducted research studies exploring this industry. The chapter will also delve into an exploration of the nature of psychological stress as triggered by the operations within the restaurant industry. In conclusion, the various types of coping mechanisms identified by stress management experts including those emanating from research studies previously conducted by fellow researchers will be discussed.

2.1.1 Entrepreneurship

According to the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Turton & Herrington, 2012) there are three entrepreneurial classification systems that a country is classified within. These entrepreneurial classification systems are; Factor-driven, Efficiency-driven and/or Innovation-driven systems. These classification systems are influenced by the relationship between a particular country's entrepreneurial activity and the country's economic development. As affirmed by Turton and Herrington (2012), a country's entrepreneurial contribution or activity is influenced by the rate at which that country's economic development occurs. This suggests that countries will have differing entrepreneurial activity dependent on each country's economic development, with the rate of the economic development determining the economic priorities of that country. South Africa is classified as an Efficiency-driven economy, since the country's economy has matured; the country's priorities are "higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market sophistication, technological readiness and market size" (Turton & Herrington, 2012, p.15). Entrepreneurship within the South African context is seen as an economy driver that influences the advancement of the country's economic priorities.

According to the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 74% of the sample, which consisted of an adult population aged between 18 years and 64 years, considered entrepreneurship to be a good career choice as opposed to the conventional means of being employed by

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someone else (Turton & Herrington, 2012). This figure remained constant in the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Amoros & Bosma, 2013), but reduced by 4.4% to 69.6% in the 2014 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Singer, Amoros & Moska, 2014). Therefore, entrepreneurship is still considered a favourable option for a majority of individuals in South Africa. According to (Singer, *et al*., 2014) entrepreneurship is driven by social values. The data indicates that there are high levels of esteem associated with individuals who embark on entrepreneurial routes as opposed to the conventional means of making a living. The pursuit for economic independence and social advancement are just some of the numerous reasons many individuals chose to establish their own entrepreneurial ventures.

The main reason individuals have a preference for entrepreneurship as compared to conventional employment is the autonomy attained from owning and managing their own establishment. The reduction of entrepreneurs' reliability on conventional employment, which due to the fluctuating economic climate cannot guarantee sustained employment, relieves the entrepreneur from this detriment. According to Nieman (2001) the South African government realised the need for more entrepreneurial ventures when it supported the development of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME). The main purpose of the SMME development was to ensure a decrease in the unemployment rate by creating avenues that allowed for the creation of employment through entrepreneurial ventures. Not only did this development fortify the importance of entrepreneurship for the country's economic stability, but it reassured entrepreneurs of their significance as a growing business venture (Nieman, 2001). This was further reiterated within Acs and Audretsch's (2010) publication wherein the authors considered entrepreneurship as a widely recognized engine of economic and social development throughout the world. Herrington, Kew, J., and Kew, P. (2009) assert that due to the failure of the private and public sector to absorb the increasing number of jobseekers in South Africa, this has spurred a number of jobseekers into considering entrepreneurship as a means of ensuring that they can sustain their livelihood.

Entrepreneurship is a dynamic process where incremental wealth and financial stability are envisaged goals for the entrepreneur (Collin & Shin, 2012). In order for this goal to be realised, it becomes the entrepreneur's responsibility to endure and overcome a majority of the risks incurred as part of a business venture. According to Chea (2008), the entrepreneur embarks not only on a journey of risk management, but also of experiential learning where extensive networking is necessary in order to circumvent some of the risks associated with entrepreneurship. These risks may range from financial risks (Antonites & Wordsworth, 2009) to various other uncertainties entrepreneurs may have about their chosen business venture.

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The entrepreneurship process further necessitates the entrepreneur's responsibility to locate adequate resources and identify the most suitable human resources to ensure the success of the business venture (Kearney, Hisrich & Roche, 2009). According to Beauregard (2007) these are some of the challenges and risks that deter most individuals from considering entrepreneurship as a viable option of employment as opposed to the conventional means of employment. Most individuals cited that the barriers between work life, family life and an individual's social life are often blurred once entrepreneurial ventures are pursued. However, in light of all these noted risks or deterrents to entrepreneurship, there are also a plethora of benefits such as the entrepreneur's autonomy to determine their job security and their financial security (Luke, Verreynne & Kearins, 2007).

2.1.2 Benefits of Entrepreneurship

Granted entrepreneurship has numerous challenges and risks that often outweigh the evident benefits. Entrepreneurship, as will soon be described, is not characterised solely by its risks, but also by its merits. The most notable benefit of entrepreneurship is its selfless contribution to a country's improved economy (Sharma & Kulshreshtha 2014) and to the increase in employment opportunities brought on by its operational requirements.

Therefore, some operational risks are greatly outweighed by these macro benefits. Luke, *et al.,* (2007) affirm that most entrepreneurs pursue entrepreneurship as a means of ensuring that they have personal control over their financial security. Entrepreneurship is not always considered in response to an individual's pursuit for a luxurious independent lifestyle, there are also remedial benefits that are gained through entrepreneurship.

According to Praag and Versloot (2007) entrepreneurship offers individuals who, due to past misdemeanours or limited education, cannot be formally employed in conventional establishments an opportunity to generate cash flow. Individuals may be drawn to entrepreneurship for non-financial needs, such as the need to explore new challenges, the need for growth, the need to contribute towards the development of new inventions or skills (Praag and Versloot, 2007) and the over encompassing need for financial independency. In a study conducted by Praag and Versloot (2007), wherein the values attributed to entrepreneurship were explored and it was evident that entrepreneurship not only exposes entrepreneurs to creative means of generating cash flow, but it also predisposes those functioning in entrepreneurial ventures to new skills.

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Entrepreneurship not only reduces a country's poverty levels through its creation of employment opportunities (Efe, 2014) amongst employable citizens, but through its employment opportunities it indirectly minimises individuals' exposure to criminal activities. There is an influential relationship that exists between entrepreneurship and the economy; on one hand the economic conditions of a country influence the level of entrepreneurship and on the other hand entrepreneurship positively affects the country's economy with each individual it employs (Spencera & Gomez, 2003). In an article published in the 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, Turton and Herrington (2012) indicated that the establishment of new entrepreneurial ventures decreased from 9.1% in 2011 to 7.3% in 2012. This decrease, being cited the lowest decrease in four years, not only adversely affected the South African economy, but it also proved the evident correlation between the entrepreneur's educational background and the success of the entrepreneurial venture. According to these findings, most entrepreneurial ventures were successful when operated by an educated entrepreneur as opposed to one without any educational exposure. Entrepreneurship plays a significant role in the development and growth of a country's economy by alleviating poverty and by introducing many new products and new product systems (Acs & Audretsch, 2010). In agreement, Sharma and Kulshreshtha (2014) affirm that entrepreneurship allows for the increased development of more entrepreneurial ventures that lead to the creation of competitive networks all aimed at satisfying divergent consumer needs. Therefore, competitive networks influence the constant improvement of services or products ensuring that consumers are constantly guaranteed better products and services to choose from.

According to Turton and Herrington (2012), entrepreneurs encounter a myriad of challenges within the South African context, most of which emanate from the country's underprivileged education system, the onerous labour laws, the country's incidence of crime, the corruption within government systems and the generally unfavourable conditions for entrepreneurs in South Africa. However, what remains constant is the level of entrepreneurial success attained by educated entrepreneurs than their counterparts. Therefore, there is a need for entrepreneurship to be studied using scientific theoretical frameworks (McKelvey, 2004). The author argues that entrepreneurship needs to be understood as a process that concerns itself with order creation not equilibrium. By understanding that entrepreneurship is a process that entails order creation, this highlights the importance of understanding entrepreneurship through its transitional phases and not as one big process that needs be to be understood once equilibrium is reached. The entrepreneurial phases need to be independently explored and understood in order to understand as well as offer assistance specific to the challenging entrepreneurial phase.

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Most research studies, according to McKelvey (2004), do not consider the specific stages of entrepreneurship most entrepreneurs function within when providing advice. With such theoretical developments in entrepreneurial studies as influenced by the challenges experienced by entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs are assured of improved supportive structures or systems aimed at specific entrepreneurial areas needing urgent intervention (Spencer & Gomez, 2003).

According to an article by Fatoki and Chindoga (2011) entrepreneurship allows for the expansion of economic growth whilst contributing to the government's revenue.

Considering the latest unemployment rate in South Africa, which was reported at 24.1% at the end of the third quarter by Statistics South Africa (Statistics SA, 2014), the increase of entrepreneurs within the labour market will result in a significant contribution to the decrease of the unemployment rate. In an article presented by the First National Bank (FNB) at an annual entrepreneurial dialogue Dempsey (2008) stated that it is imperative for the South African government to recognise the economic contributions made by entrepreneurs to the economic market. A study conducted by the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business further reiterated that innovative and entrepreneurial skills enable job seekers to insure their employability, which also aids the development of South Africa's economy (Kraan, n.d). According to Herrington, et al., (2009), entrepreneurial development is a crucial component to a country's economic development. Thus, it needs to be positively reinforced in order to create a positive perception and a desire for potential entrepreneurs to overcome any risks in their business ventures. Not only will the positive reinforcement and support be an overall benefit to entrepreneurs, it will sustain the growth of more entrepreneurial ventures resulting in new competitive economic markets and an empowered economy.

Not only does entrepreneurship encourage the creation of new products or services (Okpara, 2007) it also has the potential to influence large scale social transformation and social change (Baldwin, 2009). This is what social entrepreneurship concerns itself with. According to Baldwin (2009) social entrepreneurship aims to ensure economic growth, through the development of new products, and it also aims to impart social change by giving solutions to the array of societal issues that may be affecting the society that the entrepreneur functions within. Social entrepreneurship doe s not only benefit the entrepreneur by ensuring that their profits are competitive, but it also benefits the societal plights, such as easier distribution of energy supplies, improved water purification systems, internship opportunities to unemployed graduates and/or monetary donations to orphanages within the entrepreneur's community.

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Steinman (2010) further affirms that social entrepreneurship is a multi-layered concept that concerns itself with community development, community empowerment and societal transformation. By acting as a change agent, social entrepreneurs ensure that not only are the economic benefits realized by their ventures, but that a new social value is created in the community (Meldrum, Simpson, Willington, Holt & Littlewood, 2012). It is through entrepreneurs' involvement in a multitude of functions such as these that their roles within their entrepreneurial ventures become more expansive. It has become a norm for most entrepreneurs to fulfil numerous roles in their establishments whilst combating external factors such as the ever-changing economic climate. While the need for the entrepreneur to satisfy numerous roles is characteristic of many entrepreneurial ventures, this soon increases the entrepreneur's susceptibility to incidences of psychological stress. Due to the existence of some unpredictable stressors that are brought on by the unconventional nature of entrepreneurship, the expectation that all potential entrepreneurs will evolve into successful entrepreneurs is minimal. The success of an entrepreneurial venture is dependent on numerous factors; external factors as well as internal factors such as individual characteristics.

2.1.3 Characteristics of Entrepreneurs

The success of any entrepreneurial venture is dependent not only on the financial investments made by the entrepreneur, but also on the set of characteristics at the entrepreneur's disposal. According to Stephenson (2013) there are a specific set of characteristics that are common across all entrepreneurs which evidently lead to the success of their entrepreneurial ventures. Although it is common for most potential entrepreneurs to have a drive towards fulfilling their entrepreneurial ambitions, it is crucial that this drive be sustained throughout the entire entrepreneurial process and not be prevalent only towards the beginning stages of the venture. Therefore, the entrepreneur's passion or a sincere enjoyment attained from their potential business venture will help the entrepreneur endure all the unexpected challenges that may befall their establishment.

Antonites and Wordsworth (2009) refer to entrepreneurial risk tolerance as a characteristic possessed by most entrepreneurs, which allows them the confidence to capitalise on abrupt conflict situations, whilst ensuring that the risk taken does not destabilise the establishment or negate their positive experiences in the chosen establishment. Stephenson (2013) adds that it is often easier to remain confident and positive through hardships if the entrepreneur has a genuine liking for their chosen type of entrepreneurial venture, as this makes overcoming any challenges a possibility rather than a burden which lends itself to immense psychological stress.

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Although it is pivotal for an entrepreneur to like what they do, it is also imperative that they possess a level of seriousness and direction that will form a foundation for the entrepreneurial venture's success. This also highlights the level of self-belief the entrepreneur has in their vision and makes it easier for investors as well as staff members to trust in the future of the establishment. Stephenson (2013) also emphasises the importance of self-promotion as a method of ensuring that clientele is aware of an entrepreneur's services, products and unique additives offered by the establishment. Self-promotion is one of the most beneficial, yet most underutilised, marketing tools at any entrepreneurs' disposal.

Rao, Venkatachalm and Joshi (2013) further corroborate what Stephenson (2013) mentioned by affirming that a successful entrepreneurial venture is not only characterised by its provision of high quality products and services, but the continued delivery on these aspects and dependent on the sound reasoning, resilience, dedication and passion of the entrepreneur. Often an entrepreneur's characteristics are identifiable from the efficiency of the staff members, their dedication to the entity and the notable growth of the establishment. The researchers further explained that not only are successful entrepreneurs' characteristics inborn, such as the ones already described, but that there are also some characteristics that are learned based on each entrepreneur's exposure to a particular environment. Therefore, entrepreneurs' experiences and their interpreted meanings from these experiences also help create knowledge bases that give each entrepreneur a unique and competitive edge over one another. Other entrepreneurial factors that build entrepreneurs' characteristics are the previous management positions held by the entrepreneurs, previous entrepreneurial experience, the entrepreneurs' family history, the entrepreneurs' functional skills and the relevant business sector knowledge (Rao, *et al.,* 2013). Thus, it is expected that an entrepreneur who has had previous exposure to the entrepreneurial environment or one that has the relevant business sector knowledge would be better equipped for any unforeseen challenges.

According to Beauregard (2007) an individual's familial background, the family support and the actual family dynamics can influence the success or failure of an individual's entrepreneurial venture. In a study conducted in the United Kingdom (UK), it was evident that most of the individuals below the age of 40 years considered their family as the first priority as compared to their careers. This suggests that the mere dissatisfaction or disapproval communicated by their families would influence these individuals not to further their entrepreneurial ambitions. Although this occurs most frequently in collectivist cultures (Beauregard, 2007) as compared to the individualistic cultures, it is evident that familial

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support plays a crucial role in entrepreneurship. McKeever (2005) asserts that family does play an important function in the development of the entrepreneur's identity, most specifically in the entrepreneur's ability to develop, build, and maintain sound networks with peers. However, an entrepreneur's familial background may also be the sole reason that influenced the entrepreneur's pursuit for entrepreneurial independence. According to Pines and Yanai (2001) there are unconscious factors that influence an individual's career choice. Based on an individual's childhood, their familial background or the subconscious influences brought on by their parent's or both parents' career choices, an individual may shape their career identity around these factors. In some instances, an individual's unfulfilled or deprived childhood may influence their pursuit of entrepreneurial ventures in order to redress the past financial deprivation or self-esteem related deprivation. Family is a crucial variable to the success or failure of an entrepreneurial venture, not only does family act as a personal support system for the entrepreneur, but it also fulfils a motivational role in the entrepreneur's life.

In an international study conducted in Indonesia by Indarti and Langenberg (as cited in Ganyaupfu, 2013) it was evident that demographic characteristics, such the entrepreneur's age, gender and educational background contributed to the success of the entrepreneur.

The typical profile of a successful entrepreneur has been found to be that of a male older than 25 years of age, with a business-related or technical degree. In their findings, Rao, *et al*., (2013) also noted that the entrepreneur's gender, age, immigration status and educational background serve as proxies for life experiences that may have offered some entrepreneurs unique avenues for networking opportunities not attainable by entrepreneurs who were not exposed to similar experiences. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000) an entrepreneur's educational background and their experiences underlie the concept of human capital. This was also affirmed by Makura (2008) who described childhood deprivation and an individual's membership to a historically disadvantaged group, as understood within the South African context, as being two of the most recognisable characteristics prevalent in most entrepreneurs' accounts for their success.

Although key demographic characteristics have been identified across all entrepreneurs, it should be noted that each entrepreneur's demographics although similar to other entrepreneurs, may predispose each of them to different experiences. In so far as two historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs may share similar demographics (African males) these demographics are not indicators of the similar experiences that they may be exposed to.

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Each individual's experiences and understanding of their various contexts and the meanings attained from their interactions are different. Thus, each entrepreneur makes use of their unique interpretations of the lessons they have learnt whether through educational systems or though their personal experiences. It is then these interpretations that form a foundation for how their entrepreneurial ventures will be managed. Therefore, for purposes of this study, each restaurant owner's experiences will be understood as a product of their unique backgrounds and the context within which they function.

According to Makura (2008) childhood deprivation and being a member of a historically disadvantaged group, may have motivated Mr. Richard Maponya to actualise his entrepreneurial vision. Mr Richard Maponya pursued his first entrepreneurial business venture in the 1950s, regardless of the limited infrastructure, limited access to capital, education and basic social and economic rights (Njiro, Mazwai, & Urban, 2010). It was through these hardships as well as the vandalism of his first shopping outlet, which was instigated by his own community members, that he gained sufficient experience to eventually establish his own shopping mall. Mr. Richard Maponya is currently the owner of the renowned Maponya Mall, which is the first shopping mall in the historically prominent township commonly known as Soweto (Makura, 2008).

The Theory of Entrepreneurial Discovery identifies three internal attributes that are characteristic amongst successful entrepreneurs; innovation, speculation and arbitrage. An entrepreneur should coordinate the simultaneous buying and selling of commodities from diverse markets (*Arbitrage*), using a precise sense of decision making (*Speculation*) in order to ensure that new or improved products are profitable (*Innovation*). These three dimensions also entail any practical strategies that ensure the entrepreneur's prominence within the market and any creative strategies aimed at out-profiting competitors (Harper, 2003). Kuratko (2007) describes the most successful entrepreneurs as those who are goal-orientated, have an internal locus of control (self-motivated through their belief in themselves) and can be relied on by their employees. There are a number of other theories that attempt to explain why certain individuals are drawn to entrepreneurship whilst others would not. The Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, asserts that there are two dominant factors that drive individuals into entrepreneurship; these are circumstantial factors (the need for financial independence or security) and motivational factors (support structures and sufficient rewards or profits). According to Perera, Khatibi, Navaratna and Chinna (2014) there are circumstances within individuals' external environments as well as motivational factors that may encourage them to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.

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According to the theory, when the two factors; circumstantial factors and motivational factors co-exist, the chances of entrepreneurial success are greater realised. This was further affirmed by the National Knowledge Commission Report on Entrepreneurship (2008), which states that there is not just one factor, but multivariate factors that propel individuals into entrepreneurship. These multivariate factors, also termed motivational triggers, cover a broad spectrum of elements such as the individual's need for independence, the availability of market opportunities, the individual's family background in relation to entrepreneurship, the individual's attraction to the challenge of owning an entrepreneurial venture, the realisation of the individual's entrepreneurial vision and the drive to introduce a unique business concept. All of these factors play key influencing roles in an individual's decision to establish their own entrepreneurial venture. However, none of these factors would be realized without the individual's intrinsic ability to adapt to entrepreneurial environments.

There are a number of personality traits that can further the success of an entrepreneur's business venture, namely the entrepreneur's positive interaction (positive outlook) with their external environment (Bosma, van Praag & de Wit, 2000), their resilience as well as their ability to remain inventive (Di-Masi, n. d). The ability to sustain a business venture through uncertain and risky economic climates as opposed to equipoise economic climates is also a necessary determinant of the entrepreneur's business acumen (Gifford, as cited in Acs & Audretsch, 2010, p. 303). An entrepreneur's ability to satisfy their consumers' varying needs, remain resilient to the deterrents experienced within their contexts whilst having the foresight to sustain their business throughout unreliable economic climates, are some of the essential characteristics that striving entrepreneurs should hone (Harper, 2003).

It can be seen that there is no uniform characteristic that determines success of an entrepreneurial venture, but there are a multitude of them that can influence its success.

Although there are some characteristics that are common across all entrepreneurial ventures such as resilience and passion, there are also some that are unique to each entrepreneur. This allows different entrepreneurs functioning in one industry to have different experiences and challenges. Not only are the entrepreneur's characteristics crucial to the establishment of an entrepreneurial venture, so are the perceived benefits of the entrepreneurial venture.

2.1.4 Restaurant industry

From an international perspective, the restaurant industry contributes a significant proportion towards the employment and economic growth rate of a country, due to the ever constant emand for the dining experience and the convenience offered by restaurants. The restaurant

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industry employs a considerable number of employees on a frequent basis as compared to other industries. According to a 2013 Restaurant Industry Report compiled by Mazzone & Associates, the need for restaurants will not diminish as long as the economy remains stable as it allows consumers access to extra capital that is then spent on entertainment (Mazzone, 2013). The restaurant industry is very consumer-focused and dependent, hence the availability of various types of restaurants. The two main types of restaurants are the quick serve restaurants (franchise restaurants) and the casual restaurants (formal dining restaurants). The main difference between the two is that in quick serve restaurants (franchise restaurants) consumers pay before eating, their purchases may be consumed either at the restaurant, as take-aways or the purchases may be delivered to consumers' homes, whereas casual restaurants prescribe that consumers be served while seated in a formal dining setting and that their purchases be paid for after their meals have been enjoyed (Mazzone, 2013). The restaurant industry is a growing industry that caters to a broad spectrum of consumer needs.

According to an article by Timm (2013) although conventional entrepreneurs are faced with immense financial strain due to the weaker economic growth experienced in South Africa, a research study conducted by Research IQ for the Franchise Association of South Africa (FASA) shows that the restaurant industry, specifically franchising, in South Africa remains relatively strong. As asserted by the findings within this study the restaurant industry generated R302-billion (three hundred and two billion rand) at the end of 2012 and employed more than 300,000 (three hundred thousand) individuals as compared to other industries. Franchises and restaurants contribute to the highest number of franchised units in South Africa and account for 22% of all established ventures. Another strong indication of this industry's growth is that it contributed to the inclusion of 3,700 (three thousand seven hundred) new franchised units in the last financial year. This increased the total number of franchised units in South Africa to more than 30 000 (thirty thousand) with most of these based in Gauteng, hence the focus of the current study on the Gauteng province. As compared to the other provinces, Gauteng has nearly three times as many franchised units as the Western Cape, which is known as the country's tourist attraction, and four times as many as KwaZulu-Natal (Timm, 2013).

Amidst the number of restaurant owners who have had to dissolve their establishments, there were many potential entrepreneurs who pursued the restaurant industry. Therefore, the restaurant industry is considered the most preferred entrepreneurial venture commonly considered by aspiring entrepreneurs (Li, 2011). This is due to its relatively simplistic business model that ensures the provision of food and beverages to its clientele (Crick &

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Spencer, 2011). According to Edralin and Castillo (2001), it is this core function that broadens the scope of its clientele's needs. Therefore, the restaurant industry is not only influenced by the needs influenced by the different lifestyles led by its clientele, but also by the entrepreneur's dynamism and resilience to any external changes.

Today this industry contributes to the large-scale transfer of skills and expertise amongst many seeking employment in South Africa. Findings from a Food and Beverages Study analyzed by Statistics South Africa (2007) showed that the number of individuals employed within the restaurant industry, is subject to gradual increases. A total of 179,119 individuals were employed within the greater food and beverages industry in 2007. Restaurants reported the highest rate of employment (90,479 or 50.5% of 179,119). These figures showed a substantial increase in a follow-up study that was conducted in 2009. The number of individuals employed within the greater food and beverages industry had increased to 195,335, with those employed specifically within restaurants accounting for most of these employees (79,805 or 41% of 195,335).

According to an article in Your Business magazine (2010), the increase in these figures suggests that this industry has low entry barriers for job seekers and the experience gained within this industry increases their chances of furthered employment in various hospitality sectors.

This industry not only allows for the creation of employment opportunities (Mazzone, 2013), but it also allows individuals to function in closely related avenues within the hospitality sector such as hotels and resorts. A study conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers postulated that the average hotel industry occupancy rate will increase from 53% in 2011 to 62% by 2016. This estimated growth is due to the forecasted increases in travel and tourism with the number of tourists headed to South Africa expected to rise to 16 million by 2016. Therefore, the influx in tourists results in an increase in the hotel industry's occupancy rate which then influences an increase in restaurant establishments, which are then utilised for promotional purposes (Forster, Calicchio, Liebenberg & Hassim, 2013).

The development and remodeling of the Northern Cape has also led to an increase in entertainment facilities, restaurants being part of them. This was influenced by the opening of 13 new iron ore and manganese mines, which resulted in a massive growth in population that necessitated the establishment of restaurants (Moth, 2013). Thus far there has been a 23% increase in franchising businesses operating within the province in the past year alone.

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Due to the dynamic and often unpredictable working environment in most restaurants, employees and restaurant owners are exposed to an array of experiences. As a result no two days can be similar and no two restaurants can share similar experiences. The restaurant industry continues to provide employment, investment and learning opportunities to a greater part of the South African population regardless of the number of challenges this industry is usually plagued with.

2.1.5 Restaurant industry and its challenges

In a study conducted by Sharma and Kulshreshtha (2014) in which they aimed to explore the challenges and opportunities experienced by entrepreneurs functioning in emerging economies, it was evident that entrepreneurs were typically prone to incidences of psychological stress. Due to the nature of their establishments, entrepreneurs cannot operate their establishments in the same way that conventional establishments are managed. Most entrepreneurial ventures operate during unconventional and strenuous working hours especially since their income is linked to the efforts they contribute to their operations (Sharma & Kulshreshtha, 2014). Although this was an international study, the findings suggested that most of the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC economies) entail; limited access to financial systems, poor infrastructure and limited exposure to education systems. This limited exposure to resources resulted in individuals not being considered for employment, resulting in the increase of unemployment rates.

If entrepreneurial ventures, regardless of the industry focus, are prone to an array of challenges, it can only be expected that entrepreneurs whose operations are based within an unpredictable industry such as the restaurant industry may be exposed to a lot more challenges. An inherent feature of the restaurant industry is the long unconventional hours that staff spends serving fluctuating numbers of consumers on a daily basis. Due to the dichotomous nature of the restaurant industry; the fluctuating profit margins and the pressure or expectation to deliver services of unfailing good quality, individuals functioning in this industry are often prone to incidences of psychological stress (Lo & Lamm, 2005). Since the restaurant industry's operations typify the unconventional hours which increase staffs' vulnerability to criminal activities, physical and mental demands, it is common these individuals will be exposed to challenges that may impede their ability to function effectively.

According to a case study conducted by Lo and Lamm (2005), within which they explored the challenges within the restaurant industry, it was evident that most individuals functioning in this industry felt that their minimal remuneration does not offer any consolation for the daily

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stressors they are exposed to. The restaurant owners' asserted that their staffs' remuneration is determined by their education level and since most of them have low educational skills, they are paid accordingly. This marked another common challenge within the restaurant industry, as the entry employment level within this industry does not require specialised skills, thereby making it impossible for staff to motivate for higher scales of remuneration.

Regardless of the geographical locale that a restaurant is situated within, whether international or national, there are common challenges that are experienced by all restaurant owners as well as those influenced solely by the location of restaurant, such as rent payments, the crime rate within a certain area and the distribution of clientele within an area. Challenges that affect all restaurant owners regardless of their location consist of the financial constraints of establishing an entrepreneurial venture, the hiring and retaining of competent staff members, competition and the challenge of having reliable suppliers. However, these challenges can only be extensively understood by considering each restaurant owner's unique experiences and their respective interactions with the contexts they function within.

The nature of the challenges that restaurant owners can expect from their establishments can also be determined by the type of restaurant they chose to establish. The two types of restaurants; franchise restaurants and, for purposes of this study, the lavish (formal dining) restaurants predestine restaurant owners to different challenges (Mezzona, 2013). There are varying levels of longevity attributed to independent restaurant establishments as compared to restaurant franchises (Wickford, n.d). The main advantage that franchises have over independently owned restaurants is that franchises benefit from the continuous advertising they receive from their associate franchises (Sul, 2002), whilst independent restaurants rely solely on their own marketing as a means to attract and retain its clientele.

The Network for Business Sustainability of South Africa (2013) highlights the ability for many entrepreneurs to ensure their establishment's sustainability as a major challenge, especially when they function within non-franchise restaurants.

According to an international article conveying the challenges experienced by restaurant owners based in New Zealand, it is evident that financial constraints are the greatest and most severe of all challenges faced by restaurant owners since this challenge has the propensity to dissolve the entire establishment (Restaurant Association of New Zealand, 2013). According to the article, wherein findings from a snapshot survey were also published, most restaurant owners identified labour costs as their most challenging issue. Without

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sustainable labour costs, restaurant owners cannot adequately price their products; they cannot remunerate their staff and they cannot ensure that their restaurants are always in operation (Gijima, n.d). Therefore, restaurant owners functioning within dire financial constraints are often forced to reduce their labour costs, even though the industry is labour intensive, in order to improve the business's profit margins.

The reduction in labour costs leads to another challenge for restaurant owners; the inability to retain exceptional staff members at the face of cost-cutting constraints. This usually results in many restaurants being occupied by staff members with menial training, who are willing to work at reduced remuneration rates, but are often expected to function at the same level as their experienced counterparts. Thus, there is a limited supply of well-trained staff members in the restaurant industry as most of them start as novices and progress into the hotel industry or make attempts at establishing their own entrepreneurial ventures. The limited sustainability of skilled staff members leads to an increase in restaurant owners' training costs (Restaurant Association of New Zealand, 2013). This was further affirmed in an article by Gijima detailing the challenges faced by many restaurant owners in South Africa. According to Gijima (n.d) the lack of staff members with the right technical skills to keep up with the ever-changing technology and other concepts of modernisation is an ever-present challenge for restaurant owners.

The main challenges faced by restaurant owners within the South Africa context were summarised as follows by Gijima (n.d):

- Cost management
- Management and retention of key skills and resource
- Balancing the use of technology with being able to provide a personal touch
- Profitable growth in a world of fierce competition.

There were additional challenges identified within an interview conducted by Nicolette Chinomona within which Noble Magutshwa, a seven-year veteran within the restaurant business and the current manager of Senza, in Petervale shared his experiences within the restaurant industry. According to the transcript, which was published within The Public News Hub, it is crucial that a restaurant identifies its niche market and its unique selling point (Chinomona, 2013).

Due to the competitiveness evident in the restaurant industry, the customer's selection of a restaurant is not only determined by the type of food served, but it is a combination of multiple factors, such as the experience, service offered and the restaurant's marketing

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strategy. The restaurant industry is an extremely competitive environment with numerous restaurants competing for a share of the consumer market, with franchises (convenient restaurants) occupying the bulk of the market. As affirmed by Naidoo (2013) restaurants account for 40% of the total consumer food service sales in South Africa and according to Shereen Tuff, a senior research analyst at Euromonitor International Yum Brands continues to dominate fast food in South Africa with its Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) brand. Restaurant owners are expected to function within this highly competitive environment which is often influenced by the fluctuating food prices and the supplies as well as services rendered from suppliers. The increase in food prices makes it a challenge for restaurant owners to continue satisfying their clientele's needs on a reduced budget once their clientele has grown accustomed to their serving portions, for instance. In an article by Davies (2013) the issue of locating reputable and reliable suppliers is highlighted. In order for an establishment to thrive, there needs to be an understanding between both parties with regards to the quality of goods expected and the timely delivery of the goods before their expiration. The significance of this issue was affirmed by the decline in sales at a KFC franchise in China after a 2012 report that stated that some of the franchise's chicken suppliers were guilty of utilising excessive amounts of antibiotics. Thus, unreliable suppliers cannot only be costly for the restaurant's reputation, but they can also be financially costly for the restaurant owner (Davies, 2013).

Due to the operations characteristic to the restaurant industry, additional challenges include the unreliable suppliers, broad customer needs, adherence requirements for health inspections, unconventional operating hours and vulnerability to crime (Simpson, 2009). These challenges may lead to an onset of psychological stress to restaurant owners. Hurley (n.d) asserts that the issue of burnout is very common especially within the restaurant industry and is usually the highest when compared to other industries.

The researcher alludes to the following as some of the reasons that make this industry a psychologically stressful environment:

- Overwhelming increase in pressure and job demands
- Having little or no control over own work
- A stressful, hostile or unpleasant work environment
- Long working hours resulting in a lack of sleep or rest
- The eminent monotony and repetitiveness of the functions
- The need to constantly please every customer, regardless of their demeanor
- Job descriptions or expectations that is not clearly defined

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- Losing a sense of balance between work and home life
- Stressful interactions with customers and suppliers
- Lower rate of pay in comparison to the hours spent at work.

In an article by Kokemuller (n.d) entitled “The Disadvantages of owning a Restaurant”, the author mentions more challenges that may befall restaurant owners such as the restaurant owner’s ability to ensure that the establishment achieves its profit margins whilst not overpricing its clientele for its meals. Furthermore, the issue of personnel management is crucial for both the standardization of the establishment’s service delivery and for controlling the high staff turnover, which often equates to the increased training costs of new staff. This frequent need to train new staff slows down production line of the restaurant (Kokemuller, n.d). Brink, Cant and Ligthelm, (2003) estimated that the rate of entrepreneurial failure in South Africa ranges between 70% - 80%. Not only does this estimation suggest that there is a need for entrepreneurs to be equipped with business management skills, but it also suggests that risk assessments of this industry need to be incepted in order to ensure that entrepreneurs are forewarned of the operational challenges and are resultantly educated on how to overcome these challenges (Marshal & Oliver, 2005). The prevalence of unforeseen and unexpected challenges not only has the tenacity to influence the onset of psychological stress amongst restaurant owners, but they may also lead to the failure of entrepreneurial ventures if not readdressed timeously.

2.1.6 Psychological Stress in the Restaurant Industry

Due to the challenges mentioned in the above sections it is evident that the restaurant industry is prone to a number of psychological stressors that may be experienced by the restaurant owners since they bear primary responsibility for the establishment’s functioning. Successful entrepreneurship is a result of a balanced relationship between internal factors such as the entrepreneur’s management style, their characteristics or the business strategy utilised, and external factors such as the economic climate wherein the entrepreneur functions or the availability of governmental support (Rao, Venkatachalm & Joshi, 2013). It is the imbalance between these two factors that increases entrepreneurs’ vulnerability to onsets of psychological stress. The recurring incidence of psychological stress brought on by the continued exposure to stressful triggers, such as those found in the restaurant industry, may lead to physiological as well as psychological impairments if no means of alleviating the perceived stress are employed. Lo and Lamm (2005) define psychological stress as occupational stress, which results in the reduction of the quality of deliverables produced due to perceived negative stress experienced within the context that the individual functions

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within. The experience of psychological stress leads to an increase in workplace accidents, staff absenteeism, staff turnover and poor performance (Lo & Lamm, 2005). Considering that the restaurant industry necessitates constant interaction with fellow colleagues, the possibility of a psychological stress spill over is probable (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). This emotional contagion, which emanates from an alteration of an individual's emotional state as influenced by their experience or interpretation of another individual's expression of either positive or negative emotions (Pugh, 2001), may result in staff and staffs' families being affected. This emotional contagion will ultimately affect the overall productivity of the restaurant resulting in a significant decline in the restaurant's economic contribution.

The restaurant industry's operations, popularity and its profits are highly dependent on the constant positive evaluation received from customers. Characteristics of service related industries such as the restaurant industry require staff to always portray positive emotional expressions, regardless of their experience of psychological stress. It is believed that staffs' positive affect will reinforce their clients' positive experiences within the restaurant (Pugh, 2001). The restaurant industry is known for its unconventional operations, which may predispose restaurant owners to excessive and recurrent incidences of psychological stress. Cognitive distortion occurs when individuals are exposed to excessive incidences of psychological stress and as a result they tend to discount positive events by focusing solely on the negative events. It is this fixation on negative events that often leads to the development of negative affect, which hinder an individual's ability to function adequately within a context. According to Meyers (2009), individuals may also lose their long-term perspective by focusing primarily on the immediate catastrophes or they may exaggerate the minor challenges they are exposed to and perceive them as major pitfalls.

The restaurant industry's daily operations are typified by unpredictable activity (Charlebois, n.d). It is an environment where a plethora of personalities work together in close proximity and on a continuous basis. It is within this high pressured environment that most restaurant owners become susceptible to an onset of what Lazarus et al., (1985) consider as psychological stress. According to these authors psychological stress is a negative relational reaction to external stimuli and the relationship between the stimuli and an individual's abilities to overcome the stimuli's influence. The extent to which an individual experiences the external stimuli as negative influences the onset of psychological stress, particularly if the individual lacks internal coping mechanisms such as resilience to overcome the negative experience.

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The manner in which individuals experience external stimuli is dependent on their individual interpretation of the specific stimuli and the context within which they function (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Considering that the Interpretive Phenomenology paradigm highlights the importance of capturing individuals' experiences as they are perceived by the individuals who function in a certain environment (Chapman & Smith, 2002), i.e. restaurant industry, this places a greater importance on their first hand experiences than on secondary data reliance. Two restaurant owners may experience an external stimulus differently from each other. It is this difference that influences what these entrepreneurs may interpret as the major stressors within their varying contexts. According to an explorative study conducted by Njiro, et al., (2010) entrepreneurs who function within South African townships experience differing challenges as opposed to their counterparts who have establishments in urban areas. These challenges may range from the limited access to funding, the lack of resources and the limited educational background. In a research study undertaken by Enz (2004) restaurant owners within the United States of America cited issues with unreliable staff members as a grave threat to their establishment's success. The continued exposure to these types of stressors is likely to have a detrimental effect on the restaurant owner's mental health and the sustainability of their establishment.

Tennant (2001) asserts that the continued exposure to work-related stressful environments may contribute to onsets of depressive episodes amongst entrepreneurs.

The difference between a skilled individual who fails at performing a task they are skilled in and an individual who lacks the skill to perform the same task adequately, determines the onset of work-related stress. According to Cox (1993), the former scenario characterises a typical element found in stressful incidences whereby a skilled individual is conscious of their inability to adequately execute a specific task. This inability will inevitably lead to an extended amount of time spent on one task, thereby increasing the duration of time spent at work. In their study Otsuka and Tatemaru (2010) found that, "increased working hours were associated with higher levels of negative emotions and lower concentration/activity levels" (p. 69).

A study conducted by Simon (1997) found that the meanings and importance attached to the various roles performed by individuals may result in a negative affect should they be unable to fully satisfy these roles. Due to the importance individuals attribute to their roles, they may feel compelled to continue functioning within the specific role, despite its detriment to their mental health (Simon, 1997).The nature of psychological stress is context specific and it

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functions in a cyclic manner wherein the individual's negative reaction to the stressor hinders their ability to function effectively, resulting in a continued cycle of stress. However, through the use of stress management programmes, efficient coping mechanisms or by simply altering the negative perceptions the individual has of the stressor, the cycle may be stopped.

There is an array of coping mechanisms or avoidant strategies that may be utilised in order to cope with stressful environments that may result in psychological harm if not addressed (Lazarus & De Longis, 1983). In a study conducted by Gunnarsson and Josephson (2011), where 265 entrepreneurs were surveyed in order to measure the impact entrepreneurship had on their health; it was found that 56% of entrepreneurs reported that a good social life reduced the stress levels brought on by their entrepreneurial ventures. Sixty three percent of the entrepreneurs affirmed that physical exercise deters rapid progressions of stress levels.

The importance of an entrepreneur finding a balance between their working life and their social life was further reinforced within a qualitative study conducted by Volery and Pullich (2009). The explorative nature of this study allowed the authors to discover the varying means that their sampled entrepreneurs utilised in order to reduce the onset of psychological stress. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the entrepreneurs' an opportunity to describe their individual experiences without being restricted by the constraints often evident in quantitative studies (Whitley, 2002). The use of qualitative methods allowed for the in-depth exploration and subsequent understanding of the respondent's alternative responses to the psychological stress they experience within their establishments.

The findings showed that the entrepreneurs all had their own ways of dealing with the incidence of psychological stress ranging from spending most of their free time with their families, regularly scheduling family getaways, indulging in healthy balanced meals and partaking in some form of physical training. The use of qualitative methods allows for the in-depth understanding of the meanings individuals attach to the events, contexts or situations that may result within their environments. This allows individuals an opportunity to give accounts for their varying realities and their own experiences (Maxwell, 2008).

Through qualitative research methods an in-depth exploration of the context, the individuals' interactions within the context (behaviour), their relationships with the context and how these individuals interpret their experiences within the context is made possible (Denzin, 2009). Therefore, this gives a platform for varying truths to emerge as opposed to one generalizable truth.

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It is due to the in-depth nature of the data acquired from qualitative studies through interviews and document analysis (Dana, 2005), that this proposed study will also utilise qualitative means to collect its data as opposed to quantitative means, which may limit the depth of the data required for this specific inquiry.

2.1.7. Coping with Psychological Stress

It is the restaurant owners' responsibility to ensure the uninterrupted running of the restaurant regardless of the external stressors or the internal stressors they contend with. According to most stress theories the individual's inability to adapt or cope with stressful environments has adverse effects on their ability to function effectively. Nixon (as cited in Maymand, Shakhsian and Hosseiny, 2012) asserts to this relationship between stress and performance in his description of the stress response curve.

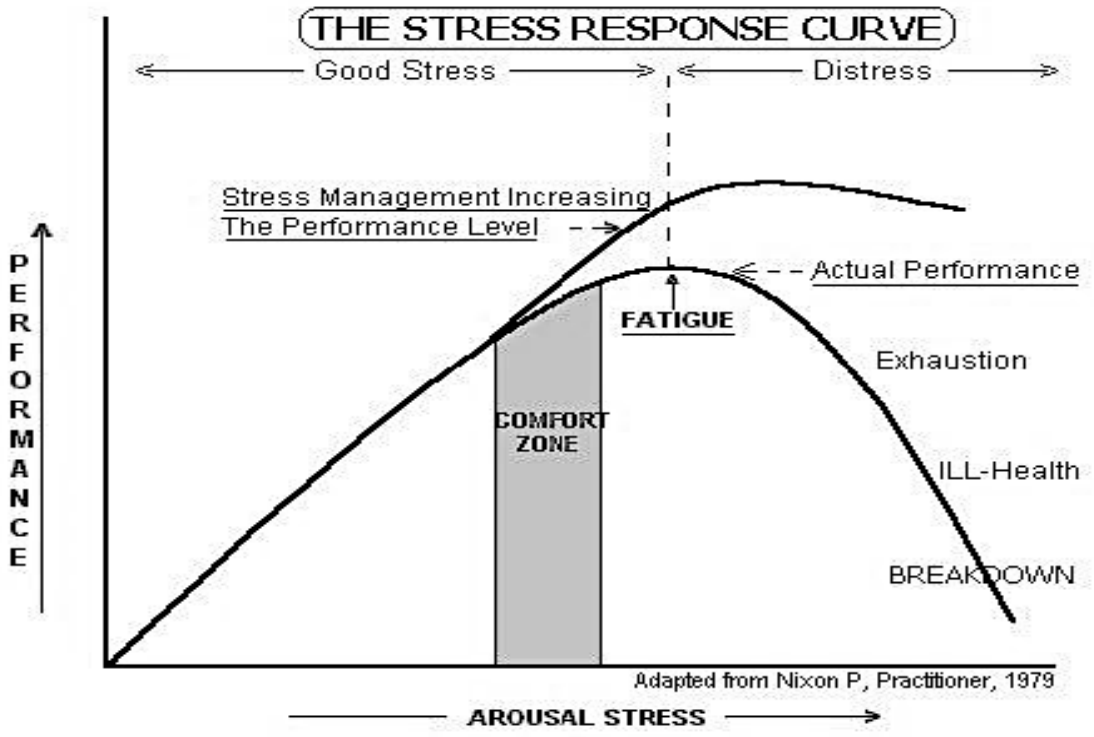

Figure 2: Nixon. P's (1979) Stress Response Curve

As depicted in the above illustration (*How does Stress Affect Performance*, n.d) the level of stress experienced increases resulting an increase in performance levels. The type of stress experienced at this level is termed Eustress; the productive-type of stress that spurs an individual to perform at their ultimatum best. However, as the levels of stress gradually increase, the individual's performance plateaus whilst in the comfort zone, before it plummets (Distress) beyond this zone. There is an evident relationship between the amount of stress an individual is exposed to and that individual's ability to perform whilst exposed to stressful

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conditions. However, the rate at which an individual's performance deteriorates or the rate at which an individual remains in Eustress before experiencing Distress is highly subjective and is dependent on each individual's perception of stress (Lazarus & De Longis, 1983). For purposes of this explorative study, the focus shall be on the negative effects of stress, namely Distress and the impact it has on the restaurant owner's ability to perform within their restaurants.

According to Maymand, Shakhsian and Hosseiny (2012) the key determinants that influence individuals' interpretation of their experiences of stress as uncontrollable or unmanageable entail the frequency at which they are exposed to stressors, the extent to which they are exposed to stressors and the unavailability of effective coping strategies to diffuse the stressors. Iles (n.d) an executive chef from Sierra Nevada Brewery asserts that it is through thorough organisation and preparation that restaurant owners can develop the ability to minimize and negate physical and mental stress experienced within their restaurants. This highlights the existence of physical and psychological stressors within the restaurant industry that need to be averted in order for the restaurant to realize its success and for the restaurant owners to maintain a healthy state of mind. In order for this to be realized restaurant owners need to ensure that effective structures and systems are established within their restaurants in order to minimize the incidence of psychological stress.

In their classical work Carver, Scheier and Weintraub (1989) identified a few coping strategies towards the alleviation of psychological stress. According to the authors, *restraint* is usually overlooked as a coping strategy, but due to its avoidance strategies and its propensity to delay the individual's reaction to the stressor, it can be viewed as a coping strategy. Restraint coping is both an active and an inactive coping strategy in that the individual's behavior is aimed at alleviating the effects of the stressor (active) although through indirect means (inactive). The use of *emotional support structures* is also identified as a type of coping strategy that restaurant owners can utilise. This approach allows the individual an opportunity to identify their stressors and through the communication platform created with the support structure identified, the individual is empowered especially if interactions are with those who share similar stressors or experiences Carver, et al. (1989). With the understanding that psychological stress is a consequence of an unfavourable person-environment relationship, according to Lazarus (1993), this suggests that the individual's interaction with their environment and the manner in which the individual interprets this interaction needs to be altered in order to effect a change in the individual's perception as well as experience of psychological stress. There are two approaches that

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Lazarus (1993) mentions; *the problem-focused coping approach,* which necessitates that the problem is confronted, and *the emotion-focused coping approach,* which requires the individual to reassess the manner in which they have interpreted or experienced the stressor. There are numerous coping strategies or mechanisms that individuals may choose to employ in response to the respective contexts that they function within.

Folkman and Lazarus (1985) mention numerous types of stress alleviating strategies or defense mechanisms commonly deployed by individuals who have experienced stressed. Coping mechanisms are defined as cognitive and/or behavioral attempts utilised by individuals in order to reduce their experience of negative stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). As described by the authors coping mechanisms may be elicited in any of the following forms:

- **Defensiveness**- An unconscious manner of dealing with the stress, such as reaction formation or regression.
- **Adaptability-** Efforts are made to tolerate the stress. For example, altruism.
- **Avoidance**- The individual may distance themselves from the stress by either denying its existence, dissociating from the stress or by pretending the stress does not exist (fantasy).
- **Attack-** The individual may either confront the stress or directly transfer their reaction to the stress onto other individuals. For example, projection.
- **Behavioral change**- The individual may change their actions in order to minimize their experience of stress. For example, attempts to undo what caused the stress.
- **Cognitive change**- The individual may alter the way in which they think about the stressful situation in order to reduce their experience of stress. For example, rationalization or positive thinking.
- **Physical change**- The individual may resort to physical forms of catharsis such as self-harm or exercise in order to reduce the stress.

The study will also explore the coping mechanisms used by the restaurant owners. These coping mechanisms along with the challenges experienced by restaurant owners within the Pretoria area were detailed in an informative pamphlet, which was made available to the respondents towards the conclusion of the study.

2.1.8 Psychological background

There are numerous theories within the psychology discipline that purport to define and describe the nature of stress, how it is experienced by individuals and how its manifestation affects their performance. According to Lazarus' Transactional Model of stress, stress is

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described as an individual's reaction to their perceived limited resources to meet external demands (Lazarus, 1993). As discussed in Chapter 1, the Person-Environment Fit Theory defines stress as an internalised negative perception to an externally stressful situation (Cox, 1993). As guided by the Person-Environment Fit Theory, Dewe et al. (2012) further define stress as the individual's negative reaction to their environment. According to this theory it is through the person's interaction within and with their environment that their behavioral and affective reactions to stress can be best understood. The Job Demands–Control–Support Model of Work Design purports that excessive job demands or pressures (both physical and psychosocial) can have an impact on stress levels (Dewe et al. 2012).

Within this explorative study the focus shall be on the relationship between the identified challenges as experienced by restaurant owners and the impact that these challenges have on their experiences of psychological stress. As guided by Nixon's stress response curve, it is assumed that the increase of stressors experienced or the continual exposure to stressors may have adverse effects on the restaurant owners.

For purposes of this study these adverse effects will embody what Lazarus (1993) describes as psychological stress. The figure below suggests that an increase in the restaurant owners' exposure to stressors may lead to an increase in their experience of psychological stress and that this experience may be a direct consequence of their continual exposure to multiple stressors within their environment, such as family conflicts, staff issues, crime issues and other restaurant related stressors. It is the volatile and sporadic nature of a typical restaurant that is characterized by fast-paced service delivery and the pressure to remain in positive affect that exposes restaurant owners to the susceptibility of developing psychological stress.

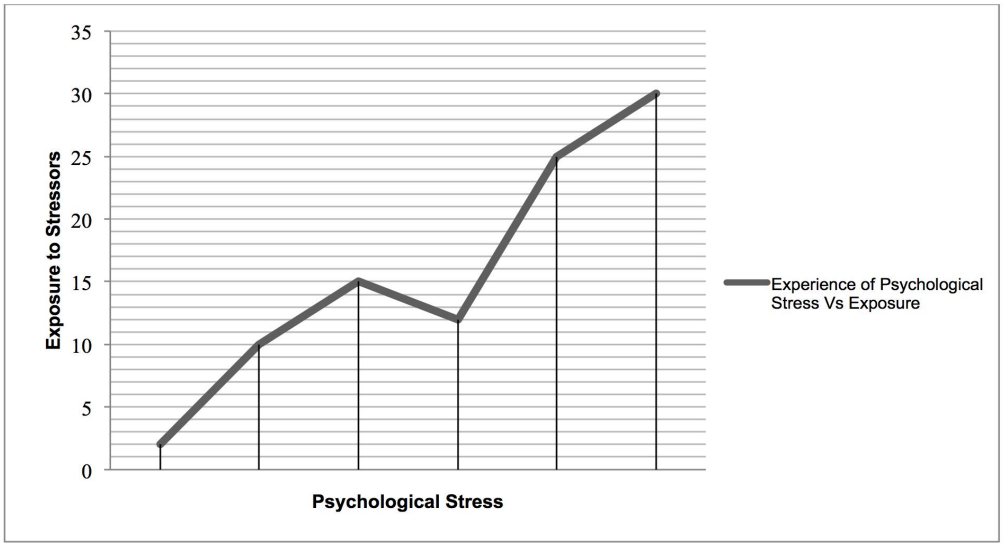

Figure 3: Experience of Psychological stress VS the Exposure to Stressors

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The nature of psychological stress is context specific and it functions in a cyclic manner wherein the individual's negative reaction to the stressor hinders their ability to function effectively, resulting in a continued cycle of stress. However, through the use of stress management programmes, efficient coping mechanisms or by simply altering the negative perceptions the individual has of the stressor, the cycle may be stopped.

2.2 Chapter summary

This second chapter offered a description of entrepreneurship and the characteristics that typically influence the success of most entrepreneurial ventures. Stemming from the description of entrepreneurship, this chapter also offered an understanding of the restaurant industry and the unique challenges experienced by restaurant owners. This chapter also looked at the various means of alleviating psychological stress that have been utilized by other restaurant owners. It is from the analysis of all the literature consulted that the specific direction of this research project was chosen.

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CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an outline of the research process and methods that were employed within this research study. The chapter begins by giving an overview of the study's benefits, the aim of the study and the objectives of the study. The manner in which the research findings will be disseminated will be discussed followed by an overview of the theoretical frameworks that formed a foundation for this study research study. This chapter also comprises of a description of the research methodology, the research question, the research design, the sampling procedures utilised, the data collection and the data analysis process used within the study. In conclusion, the study's validity and reliability issues as well as the ethical considerations that were complied with within this study will be discussed.

3.1 Benefits, Aim and Objectives of Study

3.1.1 Benefits of the study

Through the dissemination of informative pamphlets containing the contact details of some support/aid groups, such as the South African Restaurant Association (SARA), restaurant owners will be made aware of the various support structures they can approach should they require support. These pamphlets were made available during the final stages of the research study. According to the Knowledge Spill over theory of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship not only entails a creation of a business, but it is also an avenue for acquired knowledge and experience to be shared amongst peers (Acs & Audretsch, 2010).

A summary of the research study's findings were documented in informative pamphlets. The pamphlets contained the main challenges experienced by the sampled restaurant owners as influenced by their various restaurants and the coping mechanisms employed they employ. According to Gunnarsson and Josephson (2011), the sharing of challenges amongst restaurant owners may influence the development of networks between fellow restaurant owners as well as support/aid agencies. This process will aid in the reduction of incidences of psychological stress though the restaurant owners' realization that they are not experiencing their challenges in isolation. As asserted by Tranchet and Rienstra (2009), when entrepreneurs share their challenges with their peers, this makes networking possibilities more possible and this process also shapes the development of new truths, exposing entrepreneurs to various other means of dealing with challenges. The concept of entrepreneurship education or action-based entrepreneurial education (Rasmussen &

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Sorheim, 2006) helps promote an entrepreneurial and innovative culture by exposing entrepreneurs to diverse viewpoints that can alter their mindsets and provide opportunities towards the improvement of entrepreneurs' skills (Tranchet & Rienstra, 2009).

The findings from this study will form worthwhile contributions towards the development of additional entrepreneurial theories or programmes aimed towards stabilizing this form of business and combating the onset of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners.

3.1.2 Aim of the study

This research study explored how restaurant owners experienced and interpreted the challenges they are exposed to within their industry. This study was guided by the notion that it is through the exploration of the various sources of psychological stress that are experienced by the respective restaurant owners within their own contexts and by exploring the different coping mechanisms that are used that an in-depth understanding of this industry's complexities may be learnt. As guided by the study's epistemology, restaurant owners were allowed the autonomy to describe their different experiences as influenced by their varying restaurants. According to Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008), qualitative methods such as IPA offer an insight into the individual's life experiences and how their environment affects their behaviour and their perceptions of their environment.

3.1.3 Objectives of the study

The study's use of a qualitative approach, allowed for the data to be collected through the use of in-depth interviews with restaurant owners within the Pretoria region. Six (6) restaurants formed part of the purposively selected sample. Three (3) interviews were scheduled and conducted with owners of franchise restaurants and another three (3) interviews were conducted with owners of independently owned restaurants. The revised categorisation of the sample is highlighted within the sampling section of this chapter and the findings section in chapter 4.

The findings from all these interviews will then be discussed in chapter 5 within the discussion chapter.

The objectives of this research study were:

- To schedule semi-structured interviews with restaurant owners within the Pretoria area
- To explore the sources of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners within the Gauteng province, specifically Pretoria

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- To explore the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in order to alleviate their individual experiences of psychological stress
- To explore the prevalence of stress management within the restaurant industry and restaurant owners' awareness of any support/aid groups
- To compile an informative pamphlet, which will consist of a summary of the challenges experienced by the restaurant owners, the coping mechanisms utilised by the sample and a list of support/aid groups that can be contacted by the restaurant owners should they need support

3.2 Dissemination of Findings

The findings contributed to the compilation of an informative pamphlet that will be circulated to all restaurant owners, who participated in the study, once the dissertation has been marked. The purpose of the informative pamphlet was to share the challenges experienced by restaurant owners, who formed part of the sample and the types of coping mechanisms each restaurant owner found most useful as influenced by their different context. Although the experiences of the sampled restaurant owners' cannot be generalised to other restaurant owners, where there are similar interpretations of psychological stress, the pamphlet may also serve as an informative tool that may be useful to other restaurant owners. Considering that the pamphlet also contains a list of support/aid agencies such as the South African Restaurant Association (SARA, that restaurant owners can liaise with for any needed support related to the restaurant industry, this may influence the fluidity of network opportunities between the entities and the reduction in psychological stress (Gunnarsson & Josephson, 2011). The summary of the findings in the pamphlet will be most accessible to other individuals who may be interested in gaining an awareness and an understanding the restaurant industry from the restaurant owners' perspectives. Although the theoretical foundation s of Interpretive Phenomenology do not support the notion that experiences shared within one context (restaurant) can be generalised across contexts (restaurants), this is not the ain of the pamphlet. According to Griffiths (2009) results from qualitative studies can be used for pure awareness raising concerns and as asserted by McIntyre (1998), information sharing serves as a tool to expand the current knowledge base pertaining to a topical issue According to the Knowledge Spill over Theory of Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship not only entails a creation of a business, but it is also an avenue for acquired knowledge and experience to be shared amongst peers (Acs & Audretsch, 2010).

The findings from this study will form worthwhile contributions towards the development of additional entrepreneurial theories or programmes aimed at stabilizing this form of business

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and combating the onset of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners. The findings will also be documented herein in order to meet the requirements towards the completion of this qualification.

In order to embark on a process of knowledge inquiry, it is crucial to note that all forms of knowledge are based within certain philosophical frameworks that abide by their respective philosophical assumptions. It is these philosophical assumptions that shape how the knowledge inquiry process is undertaken and how the truth or knowledge is formed and understood within a specific framework. Thus, this chapter describes the philosophical frameworks that govern the knowledge inquiry process as well as the research design or strategies that this study used as influenced by the philosophical frameworks.

3.3 Theoretical or Paradigmatic point of departure

3.3.1 Ontology

A study's ontological standpoint aims at explaining how knowledge is created and experienced within a specific context (Richards, 2003). This proposed study will assume an Interpretivists approach, which purports that knowledge can only be understood as it is experienced by the actors within a specific social context. Thus, social reality is a product of an individual's discursive interpretation of a phenomenon (Maxwell, 2008). From an interpretivist framework, individuals' realities are fundamentally experiential and, consequently, do not occur in isolation (Guba & Lincoln as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001) assert that the interpretivist's ontology affirms that the truth is socially constructed and that experiences as well as phenomena can only be extensively understood from individuals' or actors' perspectives. Furthermore, these perspectives cannot be understood in isolation as they are the product of the individuals' belief or value systems, which means that although the interpretations may be context-bound, they are not expected to remain constant through time. Thus, an assumption of this ontology suggests that a limitless exploration would be appropriate as it will lead to the discovery of the sources of psychological stress as experienced and described by each restaurant owner within their diverse working environments, taking into consideration the fact that dissimilar contexts may elicit dissimilar sources of psychological stress as well as the coping mechanisms utilised.

3.3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology encompasses various theories that define how relationships between knowledge and the knowledge-seeker are formulated (Andrade, 2009). In this instance, the

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epistemological theory that is postulated to offer a realisation of the study's objectives is grounded within a philosophy identical to the study's ontology, namely, interpretive phenomenology. The general argument supported by this philosophy asserts that knowledge only exists as it is created and experienced by individuals within a specific context. Interpretive phenomenology concerns itself with the social cognitions formed by individuals who function within a particular context (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The meanings attached to events and experiences are best understood through individuals' interpretations and their interaction within their contexts. It is through the individuals' voices or perspectives (Larkin, et al., 2006), that individuals' experiences and views of the world can be best understood.

According to Smith and Osborn (2008) interpretive phenomenology places the individual's description of their personal world at the fore. The fundamentals of this epistemology assert that by understanding the individual's definition, description and interpretation of a phenomenon, an in-depth understanding of the motives behind their actions can be extensively ascertained (Bevir & Rhodes, 2002). Contrary to many structural theories that usurp that the individual is influenced by their environment, Interpretive Phenomenologists do not overlook the individual's agency in their knowledge creation process.

Therefore, the individual is seen as an active agent that has an influence on the environment they function in and the meanings attributed to experiences are just as significant as the experiences themselves. Biggerstaff and Thompson (2008) contend that whilst discourse analysis focuses on the individual's use of language in order to gain an understanding of their worldview, interpretive phenomenology focuses on how individuals ascribe meanings to their interactions and experiences within certain contexts. Todorova (2011) asserts that contexts, interpretations and experiences are three important aspects that add depth to an understanding of a phenomenon through individuals' perspectives. A phenomenon does not occur in isolation, it is a product of interactions between individuals as well as their environments. Moreover, a phenomenon cannot be wholly understood without considering individuals' interpretations of the phenomenon and their environment. Smith and Osborn (2007) considers interpretive phenomenology a means of allowing individuals an opportunity to better understand their world, whilst also allowing the researcher an opportunity to understand the individuals whilst they are in the process of understanding their world. The role of the researcher is not overlooked within this epistemology (Smith & Osborn, 2007) since it influences the manner in which interpretations are formulated.

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Larkin, et al., (2006) state that the researcher has two key roles within this epistemology; the researcher has an aim to understand individuals' perspectives through descriptive means by answering the 'what is it like' question. The researcher's second role addresses the 'what does it mean for the individuals' question, which concerns itself more with individuals' interpretations of their worldview.

In order to further the objectives of this proposed study, the researcher will conduct the data collection process within each of the restaurant owner's various contexts, to further an understanding of the motives behind their behaviours and the environmental influencers that may impact on their responses. In a qualitative study conducted by Wagstaff, Jeong, Nolan, Wilson, Tweedlie, Phillips, Senu, and Holland (2014), Interpretive Phenomenology allowed for the contextualized and idiographic understanding of individuals' perceptions of a phenomenon. In this study each restaurant owner will be given a platform to describe their individual experiences of what they consider to be psychological stress as influenced by their respective restaurants. The phenomenon being studied is the restaurant owners' experience and interpretation of psychological stress within the restaurant industry. Restaurant owners, as active agents, will also be afforded an opportunity to share what they feel contributes to the prevalence of psychological stress within their respective contexts. Furthermore, the various coping mechanisms utilised by each restaurant owner will also be explored. This exploration process with inform an understanding of each restaurant owner's characteristics, motives, management style, environmental interaction styles, perceptions of psychological stress and coping mechanisms utilised. This will result in the development and formulation of various "truths" from the restaurant owners' perspectives rather than a sole scientifically conclusive "truth" as is typical in quantitative studies (Walle, 1997).

3.3.3 Conceptual Framework

Edwards and Cooper (1990) describe stress as a negative reaction caused by an individual's inability to manage the relationship between their internal systems of control, such as their resilience, their ability to distress in highly stressful environments, and the demands of their external environment, such as the demands the restaurant industry. In their research publication Beheshtifar and Nazarian (2013) define the type of stress experienced within individuals' workplaces as occupational stress. Occupational stress is a subjective reaction to an individual's negative interpretation of their circumstances. Therefore, it is the result of a discrepancy between an individual's capabilities to meet the environmental demands whilst ensuring that no stress spill-over effect (Grzywacz & Marks, 1999) and no recurring cycles of stress persist (Cox, 1993).

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The continued exposure to stressful triggers not only reduces an individual's quality of life, but it hinders their cognitive-perceptual functioning (Beheshtifar &Nazarian (2013) and reduces their sensitivity to stress management interventions. The Person-Environment Fit Theory defines stress as an internalised negative perception to an externally stressful situation (Cox, 1993). Therefore, this suggests that the manner in which an individual reacts to a stressful situation determines their ability to overcome stressful situations. According to Edwards and Cooper (1990), an individual's inability to avert their experiences of continual exposure to stressful incidences, may not only lead to behavioural impediments, but also physiological and psychological challenges that may increase an individual's chances of mortality, if untreated. The Person-Environment Fit Theory makes use of the stimulus-response approach, which purports that a stressful incident can be averted if a new stimulus is introduced; which will result in there being a new response to the initial stressful trigger. **Figure 1** illustrates the conceptual framework that forms the foundation upon which the remedial exploration of each entrepreneur's perceived challenges or stressors will be explored.

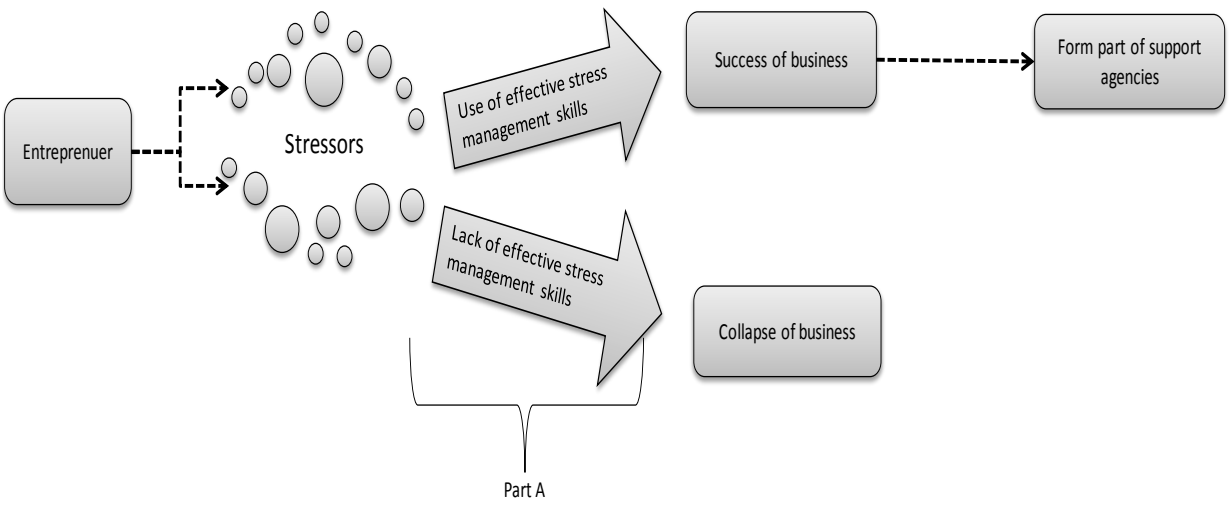

Figure 4: Psychological Stress and this study's aim

It is from the entrepreneurs' identification of their individual stressors, and their understanding of the effects of these stressors on the sustainability of their establishments, that this may necessitate their need for seeking stress management interventions. Part A emphasises the introduction of various stress management interventions/strategies in order to ensure that entrepreneurial ventures in the restaurant industry are sustained. The knowledge acquired from these interventions will enrich the growth and stability of their varying establishments. It is through this process of gaining an awareness of the challenges their peers are also exposed to that entrepreneurs may feel the need to liaise with support/aid agencies for furthered networking purposes.

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3.4 Research Methodology

3.4.1 Research Question

An exploration of the impacts of psychological stress and the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in the Gauteng Province.

To effect the exploration of the impacts of psychological stress and the coping mechanisms used by restaurant owners, a qualitative research methodology was utilised to ensure the realisations of the study's aim and objectives. In order to unearth an understanding of the impacts of psychological stress experienced by restaurant owners, this qualitative study needed to first explore the varying sources of psychological stress emanating from the restaurant industry as experienced and understood by the restaurant owners functioning in the Gauteng province, specifically in Pretoria. It was crucial that the restaurant industry and the incidence of psychological stress be understood from the restaurant owners' perspectives, their interpretations and their interactions within their different restaurants. It was understood that each restaurant owner's descriptions of psychological stress and their experiences of psychological stress would be dependent on myriads of influencers, such as their past experiences, their current experiences, their individual interpretations of psychological stress and spill over effects from the restaurant owners' engagements within other social systems (Grzywacz & Marks, 1999). Therefore, this exploration located the meanings behind certain events or phenomena, such as psychological stress within their experiences and interactions within their restaurants (Wagstaff, *et al.,* 2014). Once the exploration of how the concept of psychological stress was described and experienced by the restaurant owners, the researcher's overall interpretation framework as guided by the respective restaurant owners' interpretations, helped form an understanding of this industry. It is from the restaurant owners' views (perspectives) of their worlds and their experiences within their worlds (restaurants) that interpretations aimed at understanding the restaurant industry can be drawn.

Subsequent to the exploration of the impacts of psychological stress, the study also sought to explore the various coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners, as influenced by their varying contexts and their own personal experiences. Thus, the research study aimed at exploring the coping mechanisms used by the restaurant owners as influenced by their own social cognitions (Biggerstaff & Thompson (2008).It was crucial to understand that the restaurant owners' experiences will vary as influenced by the different types of restaurants they functioned within as well as their individual characteristics, which in turn could have an influence on the types of coping mechanisms utilised.

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The study's epistemological approach highlights the focus on a phenomenological and interpretative approach. The explorative nature of the study guided the analysis of the restaurant industry through the restaurant owners' interpretations of their worldview and their interactions within their contexts. In essence, the restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress will be understood from their respective accounts and the researcher's frameworks of meaning formation. According to Smith and Osborn (2007) the researcher's role is an active one, which relies on a principle the authors call double hermeneutics wherein the researcher's conceptions help form an understanding of the restaurant owners' interpretations of their world. IPA's framework reinforces the importance of the researcher's role in interpreting the restaurant owners' emotional state of being, their use of language, and their non-verbal communication cues as well as their state of mind. Although there is usually a connection or synergy between individuals' affect and what they ultimately communicate, where this is not possible, it is the researcher's role to offer an interpretation to the perceived disconnection (Smith & Osborn, 2007). As compared to quantitative research designs, this specific qualitative research design enlists a higher level of subjectivity as the analysis will be shaped by the researcher's interpretative frameworks (Touroni & Coyle (2002). Therefore, the IPA's focus on the personal perspective, allows for this exploration to be realised (Blore, 2012).

3.4.2 Research design

The study's ontology and epistemology necessitated the use of a qualitative research methodology, wherein multiple truths will be realised from the restaurant owners' different perspectives and interactions within their restaurants. A qualitative research methodology has numerous advantages, paramount amongst which is the flexibility of its data collection process. This research methodology not only allows respondents an opportunity to volunteer their perceptions as well as their interpretations of a particular phenomenon, but it also allows for closer interactions with the researcher within a context that the phenomenon naturally occurs (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Therefore, qualitative research methodology utilises a naturalistic and an interpretive approach to data collection which is influenced by numerous factors. According to Tewksbury (2009) factors that influence the interactions of the actors or the sample are the context within which they function, their individual cultures or the culture in their contexts and language used within their varying contexts. These factors cannot be overlooked as they are crucial contributors to understanding a particular phenomenon. Qualitative research methods centralise and place value on complete understandings of the phenomenon being studied. Thus, the actors and their fundamental views become the core focus of the study, since their understanding, experiences as well as their functioning within

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social milieus is very crucial to the overall understanding of a phenomenon (Tewksbury, 2009). It is this emphasis on a naturalistic method of knowledge enquiry that makes qualitative research methods most beneficial when conducting explorative research studies, such as this one.

According to Maxwell (2008), there are five key components that qualitative research methodology helps establish within a research study:

1) Understanding the meaning

A qualitative research methodology allows for the exploration of various meanings attributed to events, phenomena, experiences and interactions that the actors have been in contact with. In order to understand the actors, in this instance the restaurant owners, the researcher needs to explore the various accounts given for each restaurant owner's decision making process and their experiences within the restaurant industry. Qualitative research does not concern itself with merely identifying the occurrence of certain behaviours or the frequencies of these behaviours, but it is interested in exploring the motives influencing the occurrence of behaviours and how the actors make sense of or understand these behaviours from their varying perspectives. Therefore, the restaurant owners are part of the reality within which they live, they are part of the truth or knowledge that the researcher seeks to explore, they are not reactants to the environment, rather they are active agents that can also influence their environments.

2) Understanding the particular context

Qualitative research understands that in order to understand individuals, they have to be understood within their varying contexts. It is these contexts that shape the meanings individuals attribute to their behaviours and to their interactions with others.

3) Identifying unanticipated phenomena

Due to the naturalistic approach brought on by qualitative research it becomes easy for the researcher to identify the development of any unexpected phenomena whilst busy with the data collection process. Thus, theory generation and development during the knowledge enquiry process is a commonality within qualitative research.

4) Understanding the processes by which phenomena and behaviour take place

A qualitative research design allows a researcher an opportunity to uncover the underlining processes that lead to certain phenomena and behaviour coming into being. Therefore, not only will the phenomena and behaviour be understood, so will the processes that brought them about.

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5) Developing causal explanations

According to Maxwell (2008), qualitative research designs can also aid in the development of causal relationships, contrary to what traditional and restrictive philosophies usurp. This standpoint entails the conceptualisation of causality in terms of the processes and mechanisms that necessitate the development of phenomena rather than the relational causality between variables.

From the above five key elements that purport the use of qualitative research designs, it is evident that not only is qualitative research valuable in providing in-depth explorations of phenomena, but it is also crucial for the development of theories, such as grounded theories.

In order to achieve the explorative principle necessitated by qualitative research methods, the proposed study shall make use of the interpretive phenomenology approach. Interpretive phenomenology will ensure an in-depth understanding of the restaurant owners' realities by exploring their individual interpretations of phenomena within their varying contexts. It is these personal interpretations that give way to divergent truths that are necessary towards understanding a particular phenomenon (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This is further reiterated by Lester (1999) wherein the author emphasises the importance of the subjective researcher's duty to uncover the subjects' personal experiences and the motives that influence their actions.

Qualitative research methods allow for the exploration of human interactions with their environments, with each other and with a certain phenomenon. It goes beyond the experimental approach used in quantitative research methods, by attributing great significance to the underlining motives behind each individual's decision making. Thus, the concept of multiple realities or truths is supported and celebrated.

3.4.3 Sampling

It is due to qualitative research's far removed approach from experimental methods of data inquiry and sampling that it is often observed with much criticism. According to Morse (1991), the lack of clear guidelines guiding the sampling process results in immense confusion amongst researchers. It is suggested that the sampling methods utilised within qualitative research be clearly defined and adequately described (Coyne, 1997). The sampling methods applicable to qualitative research studies allow for the in depth exploration of human behaviour or phenomena, which then informs a better understanding of what was explored (Polkinghorne, 2005) unlike quantitative research sampling methods which necessitate the

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ability to generalise a study's findings. Thus, concepts such as random sampling and generalisability, which are essential to quantitative research designs, are not crucial in qualitative research designs.

As guided by this research study's epistemology, it was crucial that the sample's homogeneity be maintained (Osborn & Smith, 2007) and since concepts of random sampling never apply in qualitative studies, purposive sampling methods were employed. According to Patton (1990) all types of sampling utilised in qualitative research designs form part of purposeful sampling, since purposive sampling typically entails the selection of individuals who have guaranteed access to the knowledge sought within a particular study or are known to fit the study's sample criteria, for example a study on nursing practices would select nurses as part of its sample rather than the cleaning staff. Thus, qualitative research designs intentionally select their sample based on the needs of the study or as defined by the rarity of the topic being studied. This study main focus is on restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress and its impacts within their various contexts, thus the study's streamlined focus restricted and defined the sample (restaurant owners). Considering that most restaurants function in a competitive environment that is characteristically busy (Parsa, Self, Njite & King, 2005), this study made use of the snowballing sampling method in order to maintain the homogeneity of the sample and to ensure the ready availability of respondents (Smith & Osborn, 2007) as also suggested by the use of convenience sampling (Kitto, Chesters & Grbich, 2008).

The snowballing sampling method relies on the initially contacted respondents' recommending additional individuals to form part of the sample due to the shared similar characteristics, such as being restaurant owners (Kuper, Lingard, Levinson, 2008). The snow balling sampling method also referred to as the chain referral sampling method (Sadler, Lee & Lim, 2010), due to manner in which respondents are sampled, is also used when a researcher seeks to identify hidden or hard to access respondents such as prostitutes, repeat criminal offenders, unemployed HIV positive biracial individuals, etc. (Sadler, et al., 2010). Thus, as affirmed by Atkinson and Flint (2001), the snow balling method is the most time effective and cost effective way to ensure that the individuals sampled meet the study's sampling criteria effortlessly. In practice, the snow balling method entails the researcher contacting one individual who meets the study's sampling criteria and requests that after their participation within the study, that they refer the researcher to another individual who fits the criteria and is known by the first respondent. Thus, the second respondent will provide the contact details of the third and the third will provide contact details of the fourth respondent,

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this continues until the full sample size is reached. This strategy can be viewed as a means of overcoming problems associated with sampling concealed populations or those that are typically hard to reach due to their busy schedules, such as restaurant owners. It is an expected characteristic for most restaurant owners to either be very busy or seldom found within their establishments. Therefore, this sampling method sought to cater for this characteristic by ensuring that potential restaurant owners were briefed in advance by their peers in so doing this increased their willingness to participate. According to Shaghaghi, Bhopal and Sheikh (2011) this manner of non-probability sampling offers a convenient means of locating subjects that are typically hard to locate.

According to Patton (1990), since qualitative inquiry focuses on in-depth analyses of human behaviour or phenomena, a reliance on larger sample sizes is not necessary as even single cases can be very insightful, such as case studies. Due to the fact that determinants of adequate sample sizes for non-probabilistic sampling are non-existent, the researcher relies on the concept of data saturation (Marshall, 1996). As affirmed by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006), data saturation is the point at which no new data, themes or observations are noted within the data collection process as a result the researcher can conclude the data collection process. Although the idea of data saturation is helpful at the conceptual level, it does not provide a guide for estimating sample sizes, prior to data collection process. Therefore, it is crucial for the researcher to consider the theoretical guidelines set out within qualitative research studies about when data saturation typically occurs in the data collection process and revise this during their data collection process. The researcher became aware of the development of repeated themes throughout the later phase of the data collection process, hence the decision upheld with regards to the sample size.

For purposes of this study, the initial sample size consisted of six (6) respondents, all being restaurant owners who function within the Pretoria area. Since the aim was to gain an understanding of a phenomenon and not to form generalisations across a population, a smaller sample size was considered adequate. Smith and Osborn (2008) suggested that a sample size of three (3) individuals be utilised for researchers who are first time users of interpretive phenomenology. However, Mason (2010) supports the use of either 5 to 25 respondents or a total of 6 respondents. In their critique of qualitative research methods, Guest, *et al* (2006) also suggested the use of 6 respondents within interpretive phenomenology studies and it is this suggestion that initially propelled this study's sample size.

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The initial idea was for the total number (6) of restaurant owners to be split into two equal groups. The first group consisting of restaurant owners of formal dining restaurants, called lavish (classy) restaurants in this study, whilst the second group would consist of restaurant owners of convenient franchise restaurants. Therefore, there would have been an exploration of the challenges experienced by restaurant owners of non-franchise restaurants and those of franchise restaurants. The sample excluded owners of more informal restaurants, which are typically situated in townships and it did not draw a distinction between restaurant owners' gender as this did not form part of the study's objectives. However, for purposes of this study, the initial contact was made with one formal dining restaurant (Heat Grill) and one franchise restaurant (Wimpy). It became evident through the interview planning phase and the snowballing method that the unavailability of restaurant owners would be a permeating challenge throughout the data collection process. Therefore, although the restaurants targeted for potential interviews formed part of the sampling criteria desired for this study, due to the busy schedules, unavailability of most restaurant owners and the fact that most restaurant owners were not based within their restaurants, the sampling procedure had to be revisited. Although the sampling was still purposive, it comprised of both the snowballing method as well as the convenience sampling method (Kitto, et.al, 2008), which involves the inclusion of easily accessible individuals who meet the study's sampling criteria. Using a list containing some snowballed restaurants and with knowledge of the sampling criteria required for this explorative study, the researcher independently visited most of the restaurants in order to secure interviews with restaurant owners. Therefore, most interviews were completed in formal dining restaurants that also had franchising rights, as can be seen in Table 1. No further compromises to the sample's integrity were made.

The restaurant owners were briefed on the scope and the aim of the study, following which the tentative interview times of the interested parties were noted and an Informed Consent form (**Appendix A**) was emailed to them. The emails were followed up with telephonic calls to confirm receipt of the consent form and to reconfirm the interview times or in some instances to arrange alternative interview times as determined by the restaurant owners' availability. In order to accelerate the data collection process, the researcher visited all the restaurants that formed part of the potential sample of this study in order to personalise the data collection process and personally communicate the importance of their participation.

The table below comprises of all the contacted restaurants within the Pretoria area and those that partook in the study.

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Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Restaurants emailed, telephoned and personally visited	Type of restaurant	Total interviews completed
1. Spur	Casual Franchise	
2. Wimpy	Casual Franchise	
3. Steers	Casual Franchise	
4. Mugg n Bean	Formal Franchise	1 (M)
5. Ocean Basket	Formal Franchise	
6. Dros	Formal Franchise	1 (M)
7. Adega	Formal Franchise	
8. Cappuccinos	Formal Franchise	
9. Crawdaddy's	Formal Franchise	1(O)
10. Cape Town Fish Market	Formal Franchise	1 (O)
11. Heat Grill	Non-Franchise	
12. BLK Lounge	Non-Franchise	1 (O)
13. Moo Moo	Non-Franchise	1 (O)

The above table shows the clear delineation between franchise and non-franchise restaurants. It further operationalises the types of franchise restaurants that formed part of the study's sampling pool; casual franchises and formal franchises. For operational purposes of this study, franchises were differentiated from non-franchises by their emphasis on take away meals, the types of food they served and the absence of formal dining features, such as waitrons and hostesses.

Therefore, it is from these differentiating features that characteristics of non-franchise restaurants could be conveniently highlighted, such as the presence of a host or hostesses, the presence of formal dining fixtures, the formal ambience and the type of food served.

The franchise restaurants were further differentiated between those that catered for both formal dining (formal franchise), such as the Cape Town Fish Market and those that are typically considered fast food restaurants; these were classified as casual franchises in this study. According to an international article published by Torres-Vitela, Gomez-Aldapa, Cerna-Cortes, Villarruel-Lopez, Rangel-Vargas and Castro-Rosas (2013) there are different types of restaurants based on the menu utilised, the pricing, the type of food served, the availability of crockery and the presence of waiters/waitresses. An article published by the Frontline Institute of Hotel Management Studies (2008) affirmed this classification.

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Quick service restaurants are considered fast food restaurants as they emphasise more on speed of service than on the quality of the food. Amongst the other types of restaurants mentioned in the article, the institute mentions the second type of restaurant that formed part of this study; the upscale restaurant which focuses on the fine dining experience. The last type of restaurant that is applicable to this study is the family style restaurants, which is a combination of the fast-food restaurant and the upscale restaurant (Frontline Institute of Hotel Management Studies, 2008). For purposes of this study, the researcher only focused on the three types of restaurants; fast-food restaurants (casual franchises), family style restaurants (formal franchises) and fine dining restaurants (non-franchise restaurant) as in the above tabulation (Table 1).

From the tabulation (on the previous page), the researcher could only complete four (4) interviews with restaurant owners instead of the initially proposed six (6). Semi-structured interviews were conducted in Cape Town Fish Market, BLK Lounge, Moo Moo and Crawdaddy's. There were an additional two interviews conducted with restaurant managers, due to the unavailability of restaurant owners in some restaurants, but due to the focus of this study these will not form part of the data analysis; although they did assist the researcher understand the expanse of the challenges experienced by individuals functioning within the restaurant industry.

Cape Town Fish Market: The restaurant owner was available on 4 (four) weekdays during the 7 (seven) day week, but left all managerial logistics to his daughter to oversee. Although an interview was secured with him, it was rather rushed, as his schedule was evidently busy due to the daily delivery of seafood that needed to be quality controlled before it was accounted for by the restaurant owner or the restaurant's management team. The Cape Town Fish Market is a franchise restaurant that was established in 1997 following Douw Krugmann's purchase of a fish retail store in Cape Town. It has since developed into a number of franchises throughout South Africa and other countries. The researcher conducted one interview at the Pretoria-Silver Oaks branch.

BLK Lounge: The restaurant owner of BLK Lounge was interviewed. The BLK Lounge is a newly established restaurant within the Pretoria East area in Mooikloof that became operational within May 2014. This restaurant is not part of any franchise, at the time of the data collection process, but the owner expressed his hopes of turning the establishment into a franchise. Considering that this was a fairly new establishment as compared to the other sampled restaurants, the researcher was interested in exploring the challenges that this

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restaurant owner had faced during the establishment of the restaurant in relation to those faced by the other restaurant owners, with special consideration that the varying contexts will influence the challenges experienced.

Moo Moo: This interview was amongst the last two interviews to be conducted by the researcher. This restaurant specialises in fine dining cuisine and is situated in Brooklyn, Pretoria. There are not any known franchises of this restaurant. Although there was not an agreed upon interview time, the parties did agree on a set day. The interview was conducted in the restaurant's smoking section due to the busy nature of operations on a Saturday morning; the owner had to still oversee some functions whilst being interviewed.

Crawdaddy's: The interview was conducted in one of the restaurant's franchises situated in the Pretoria East, Waterglen area. This franchise has been in operation for numerous years and it still attracts a sizeable number of clientele. The restaurant forms part of the formal franchise category as it not only caters for the formal dining option, but it also allows customers to purchase take away meals and has a wide selection of foods, some of which may be considered fast-food meals. According to the restaurant owner, he considers it a "family friendly restaurant, which also appeases the romantics". The interview was conducted outside in a secluded table.

It was imperative that the researcher ensured that all aspects of the proposed sampling criteria were catered for. As a result, only restaurant owners were interviewed and the three types of restaurants were catered for within the interviewing process. It was from this exploration that experiences of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners could be understood in light of the influence their varying restaurants had on their respective experiences.

The findings chapter (Chapter 4) will cover the analysis process in detail by including the analysis of the researcher's observation records, the researcher-restaurant interactions before the interviews or appointments for interviews were finalized, the actual interview data and the reflexive notes captured by the researcher following the completed interviews.

3.4.4 Data collection procedure

The data was collected by way of semi-structured interviews (**Appendix A**) with restaurant owners within the Pretoria area. Although it was initially proposed that the sample consist of six restaurant owners, however due to the continuous unavailability of restaurant owners and

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the busy nature of this industry, which restricted some restaurant owners from setting time aside for interviews, only four interviews could be completed. According to Smith and Osborn (2008) a sample size of three individuals is still methodologically sound in IPA explorative research studies, especially for first time users of interpretive phenomenology. The researcher made numerous attempts at ensuring that all six interviews were conducted, but due to the time lag between setting up each appointment, sending reminders to the potential respondents and actually completing the interview, the researcher opted to limit the sample to four restaurant owners. What further prompted the researcher to this decision was the evident data saturation (Francis, Johnston, Robertson, Glidewell, Entwistle, Eccles & Grimshaw, 2010), which was prevalent in the early stages of the fourth interview (Moo Moo). For a more in-depth understanding of the restaurant industry, the researcher also conducted an additional two interviews, but with restaurant managers. Due to the research study's research question, these will not be included in this study.

Interviews in qualitative research designs comprise of unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews and structured interviews. The structured interviews usually contain close-ended questions that need to be answered as per the structure afforded within the interview guide. Thus, most qualitative researchers consider the data emanating from a structured interview guide as more quantitative than qualitative (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Semi-structured interviews are guided by a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the actual interview, whereas unstructured interviews flow much like a conversation between the two parties and are usually corroborated with additional data collection methods such as observations and note-taking. According to Patton (1990) researcher influences on the nature of the data may be reduced by the use of a standardised interview guide throughout all interviews. The semi-structured nature of the interview guide used within the study offered the researcher an element of methodological flexibility, whereby additional probes were administered following a main idea. Therefore, in order to ensure data reliability, an identical semi-structured interview guide was utilised throughout each of the four (4) interviews. Considering the importance that the interpretive phenomenology places on the subjectivity of the data collection process, the researcher's role was not mechanical, but more receptive.

The IPA framework necessitated that the researcher analysed how the restaurant owners perceived and made sense of phenomena, such as psychological stress as influenced by their differing contexts. In order for this exploration to be possible, qualitative research methods enforce that flexible means of collecting data be utilised (Smith & Osborn, 2007)

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and that the research play an active role in the data collection process. For purposes of this study, a semi-structured interview guide (**Appendix B**) was developed from which semi-structured interviews were conducted within the restaurants owners' respective restaurants.

According to Smith and Osborn (2007) this form of interviewing allows for the in-depth exploration of the restaurant owners' experiences and it also permitted the researcher an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the respondents (Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interviews followed a conversational framework than a stringent interview process. The latter dictates the direction and tone of the interview in an unnatural way, whereas the former offers more leniency and the structure is more flexible. Therefore, the interview guide was only consulted on a minimal scale. Semi structured in-depth interviews allowed the researcher an opportunity to make use of naturally occurring prompts and probes that were not prescribed within the interview guide, but generated a more casual conversational style to the interviews. Whitley (2002) asserts that open-ended questions allow individuals a platform to generate their perceptions of the phenomenon being studied. Thus, it becomes easier to monitor respondents' understanding of the concepts used within the study (Taylor & Benger, 2004), as opposed to quantitative studies, which tend to quantify data and human experiences (Tewksbury, 2009).

Considering the nature of the restaurant industry, it would have proven quite cumbersome to ensure that all restaurant owners were collectively available for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Furthermore, since interviews are methodologically most appropriate when using the interpretive phenomenology approach (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) the data was collected using this method. Contrary to FGDs, interviews emphasise the importance of an individual's perspectives over a group's perspective. The interviewing process allows for the collection of rich and detailed data as opposed to the rigid categorical manner in which standardised questionnaires are completed. Although the latter may prove to be time efficient, they tend to limit the descriptive nature of the phenomenon as quoted by respondents (Willig, 2001).

Through the use of semi-structured interviews, restaurant owners were able to offer their own accounts of the challenges they have experienced and continue to experience within their restaurants. In order to ascribe to the naturalistic philosophy of this research study, the interviews were conducted on each restaurant owner's premises at a time of their convenience. This allowed them the flexibility to still perform their roles whilst being interviewed and it also helped the restaurant owners acquaint the researcher with some practical examples of the challenges they are exposed to. Considering the busy nature of the

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restaurant industry the interviews were scheduled, but not limited, to last **20 minutes** as determined by the course of each interview. Along with the interviews, the researcher also made use of observation notes and debriefing notes, which will be captured separately for each interview in order to account for reflexivity within the study.

Whilst quantitative research studies assert that objectivity is key to a scientifically valid research study, qualitative research believes that there is a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the sample that forms part of the study. Thus, absolute objectivity is not possible and is not celebrated within qualitative research designs.

According to Northway (2000), researchers are just as influenced by the data collection process as the data collection process is influenced by the researcher's presence. By being reflexive, the researcher should acknowledge this relationship and make it explicit within the findings in order to eliminate suspected bias. The researcher made note of their influence throughout the research process, by recording their experiences from each interview, their values ("world views") and any perceptions that they may have brought into the study.

According to Reiners (2012) the researcher is also on a quest to understand a phenomenon as it is interpreted by the respondents through their subjective perceptions. Thus, by engaging with the restaurant owners, the researcher gained a greater understanding of the dynamics within the restaurant industry and it is through this understanding that increasingly rewarding reflections ensued between the two. These reflections and researcher notes (observation and debriefing notes) will form part of the qualitative data analysis process, which will be jointly presented within the findings chapter and the discussion chapter (Chapter 5).

3.4.5 Data Analysis

According to Ring, Ritchie, Mandava and Jepson (2011) qualitative data analysis involves the use of inductive reasoning processes in order to interpret and structure descriptive findings. The IPA framework highlights the importance of the researcher's ability to make interpretations from the respondents' responses in order to further the analysis process. The worldview of IPA is understood through the researcher's glasses looking into the respondents' experiences within their contexts as per their submissions. Therefore, it was critical that the researcher was attentive not only to the behavioural reactions, but the non-verbal reactions and other observations in order to be fully enveloped into the restaurants owners' viewpoint.

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As guided by the study's epistemology, the qualitative data underwent an Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA). IPA is a qualitative data analysis method that allows for the exploration of respondents' self-reflections in response to the social phenomenon that is being studied. In so doing this allows the researcher an opportunity to form an understanding of the respondents' world through the respondents' reflections (Larkin, et al., 2006). Therefore, it is from the respondents' experiences, understanding and perceptions that an understanding of the respondents can be mastered (Blore, 2012). This type of analysis allows for the understanding of the restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress as presupposed by their restaurants (Smith & Osborn, 2008). It is through their subjective interpretations that their world as well their actions can be best understood.

Although there is a common misconception that IPA is merely a descriptive methodology that offers no further depth, according to Larkin, et al., (2006), IPA involves a highly intensive and detailed analysis of respondents' experiences, which are recorded verbatim.

These recordings are then analysed in order to decipher any emerging patterns that can be arranged into major themes. The first aim of IPA is to create a platform wherein the respondents' worldviews can be understood according to their perspectives. Thus, IPA focuses on the respondents' experiences and relationships to a specific phenomenon (Sandberg, 2005). The second aim of IPA is to develop an interpretative analysis, which positions the descriptions from respondents within a wider social, cultural or even theoretical context (Dowling, 2007; Larkin et al., 2006). Thus, allowing the researcher to reach conclusions about the phenomenon observed, as those fundamental only to that specific context within which they were explored (Larkin, et al., 2006).

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, verbatim, by the researcher. Respondents were informed that transcripts from their respective interviews would be made available should they need to confirm the study's authenticity and if they needed to ascertain that ethical considerations were adhered to, as promised before the interviews commenced. The six (6) phased IPA process has been illustrated in the figure below (**Figure 2**).

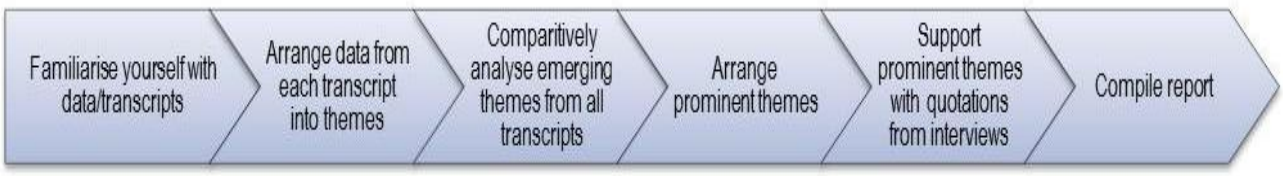

Figure 5: IPA Process

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The researcher transcribed the audio-recorded interviews and perused the transcripts in detail whilst identifying the main themes that emanated from all 4 (four) transcripts. Following which the researcher, went through each transcript in order to decipher and capture each restaurant owner's individual perspectives (**idiographic analysis**) towards psychological stress as determined by their restaurant. Following the idiographic analysis a **collective analysis** wherein all the main themes from the transcripts was analysed. The latter process allowed for the comparative analysis of each restaurant owner's experiences in order to highlight the main themes that emerged across all restaurant owners and the different themes. The prominent themes were then arranged and supporting verbatim responses were also recorded. All the data was arranged and prepared for the presentation of the next chapter (Chapter 4).

3.4.6 Issues of Validity and Reliability

Although issues of reliability and validity within qualitative research studies can predominantly be understood as they are in quantitative research studies, the two concepts are utilised in a rather different way. Reliability within quantitative research focuses on the replicability of results or of the observations should the measure be re-administered at a different time. Although the concept of reliability within qualitative studies is rare, the use of a semi-structured interview guide will ascertain the study's reliability as the data acquired from each restaurant owner will form part of identical themes. Since the concept of reliability within qualitative studies aims at ensuring the dependability of the measure being used and the trustworthiness of the data (Golafshani, 2003) the data emanating from the interviews shall represent each restaurant owner's experience of their perceived challenges. Thus, the results will represent the respondents' truths.

Validity refers to the ability of the research tool to measure or observe exactly what it is supposed to. It seeks to answer the following questions; *how true or trustworthy are the results and do they answer the research objectives?* However, reliability within qualitative studies seeks to ascertain the trustworthiness of the study, which can only be assessed through the validity of the findings (Golafshani, 2003). Thus, when considering the reliability of a qualitative research study, it is necessary to consider its validity, which is the quality of data emanating from the study. In response to the main criticism raised against IPA's flexibility and in order to achieve a level of validity within the proposed study; the researcher's field notes (Griffiths, 2009) that have been acquired throughout the data collection process and the transcribed data will form a corroborative foundation during data analysis (Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry, 2011). The researcher's observations (Larkin, et al., 2006) were also recorded.

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Contrary to the role of the researcher in quantitative studies, the researcher's subjectivity and reflexivity will form a necessary part of the data analysis process in this study. Thus, the researcher is also recognised as an active participant who is responsible for drawing connections between the respondent's interpretations and their various contexts (Conroy, 2003).

3.4.7 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to the ethical guidelines for psychological research as stipulated and approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria. Prior to the researcher's personal visits, the potential respondents were informed of the study's purpose. Following which they were issued a consent form approved by the University of Pretoria and further briefed on the study's purpose and the reason for their inclusion in the study's sample prior to their agreement to schedule time for the interviews **(informed consent)**. The respondents were notified that should they wish not to partake in the study **(withdrawal permitted)** either before or during the course of their interviews, they would be omitted without any dire consequences arising from their decision **(voluntary participation)**.

The respondents were assured that their responses and identity would be kept strictly confidential **(confidentiality)** in order to ensure this, it was suggested that pseudonyms could be utilised. However, all four (4) respondents were comfortable using their real names solely for interview purposes. None of the respondents were coerced or deceived into partaking in the study **(deception)**. Upon completion of each interview, the respondents were asked if they would like to receive an informative pamphlet, as an **incentive**, containing a summary of the challenges experienced by their peers within their industry and the stress alleviating strategies they used. Only two respondents (BLK Lounge and Crawdaddy's) said they would not mind receiving the pamphlet.

3.4.8 Focus of Research study

This explorative research study will focus on restaurant owners functioning in restaurants based within the Gauteng area, with a specific focus on Pretoria. Concepts that will be explored within this study range from the characteristics of entrepreneurs functioning within the restaurant industry, the exploration of these restaurant owners perceive and interpret their experiences of psychological stress as influenced by their respective restaurant will also be explored. By using qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews, the restaurant owners will be afforded ample terrain to share their experiences without being primed by the research tools. Therefore, the questions within the interview guide will be open-ended and

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will act more as a guide than a set script structuring the respondents' responses. With the understanding that the responses will be a basis upon which the restaurant industry will be understood, the Interpretive Phenomenology epistemology will be utilised throughout the data analysis process and the subsequent report writing.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave an overview of the study's benefits, its aim and the objectives of the study. The data dissemination process was also described, followed by a discussion of the theoretical frameworks that offered a foundation for this study. This chapter also described the study's research methodology, the data collection process, the data analysis process as well as how the data will be presented once transcribed. This chapter further provided a basis for the choice of research methods utilised within the study. In order to ensure that the authenticity of the data collection process was maintained, issues pertaining to data validity and data reliability were discussed.

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CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings from the interviews conducted within the restaurant industry as guided by the explorative study's research questions. The chapter consists of numerous sections. The first section shall outline the data collection process utilised in this study, the second section will provide a brief description of the restaurants that formed part of the sample, the third section will cover the response rate, the fourth section will offer a description of the IPA process before presenting the actual findings.

4.1 Findings

The idea to interview restaurant owners of franchise restaurants (convenient restaurants) and non-franchise restaurants, described as lavish and formal dining restaurants in this study, was still upheld in the data collection process. The sample excluded owners of more informal restaurants, which are typically situated in townships, and it did not draw a distinction between restaurant owners' genders, as this did not form part of the study's objectives. In order to adhere to the snowballing sampling method, initial contact was made with a lavish formal dining restaurant (Heat Grill) and one franchise restaurant (Wimpy) via email. Due to the perceived challenge of getting restaurant owners to agree to interview times and to subsequently avail themselves at the agreed upon interview times, the snowballing sampling method was supplemented with the use of convenient sampling. The use of this sampling method allowed the researcher, who had full knowledge of the sampling criteria required, to contact multiple restaurants simultaneously without delaying the data collection process when the chain referrals did not lead to any available restaurant owners. In order for individuals to form part of the sample they had to meet the following criteria; individuals had to be restaurant owners, their establishment had to be situated within the Gauteng Province, they had to own either a franchise restaurant or a non-franchise restaurant and the establishments had to be based within metropolitan areas as a result this excluded restaurant owners functioning in informal areas such as townships.

The main challenges noted during this process were the restaurant owners' busy schedules, which resulted in many unsuccessful postponements, the restaurant owners' unavailability within their restaurants and the fact that some restaurant owners were not based within their restaurants resulted in them requesting, not successfully, to be interviewed telephonically.

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Email requests for interviews wherein the informed consent form was attached were sent to one lavish formal dining restaurant and one convenient restaurant to mark the inception of the data collection process. Telephonic calls to confirm receipt of emails and to reiterate the purpose of the study were made, but none of these attempts led to any scheduled appointments or completed interviews. The researcher opted to personally visit each restaurant with the hope of humanizing the requests for participation. This was a technique utilised in all restaurants. It also allowed the researcher an opportunity to observe and experience the various restaurants' atmosphere before any interviews were scheduled. Therefore, thirteen restaurants were contacted and personally visited out of which four interviews were successfully completed.

4.1.1 Description of Respondents

This section comprises a description of the types of restaurants that exist within the restaurant industry, the reason this delineation was imposed within the sample, a brief description of the respondents and the observation records that were recorded within the researcher's personal visits.

In order to further the aims of the study, the researcher differentiated between the types of restaurants that the restaurant owners functioned within, as it was believed that these differences could also influence restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress. According to Mazzone (2013), there are two main types of restaurants; quick serve restaurants (franchise restaurants), which typically serve fast food, and casual restaurants (formal dining restaurants), which cater for more formal meals. The main difference between the two is that quick serve restaurants are typically franchise restaurants such Steers, McDonalds, Burger King, etc. wherein consumers are required to pay for their meals before enjoying them. A further characteristic of quick serve restaurants is that the purchased meals can either be consumed on the premises or at consumers' homes as take-away meals, some restaurants even offer a delivery feature as an option for their consumers.

Casual restaurants, as termed by Mazzone (2013), prescribe that consumers are served their meals while seated in a formal dining setting and that their purchases be paid for after their meals have been consumed. Another feature that distinguishes quick serve restaurants from their counterparts is that casual restaurants, which will be considered formal dining restaurants for purposes of this study, typically offer waitressing services and gourmet meals as opposed to fast food, which is colloquially referred to as junk food (Frontline Institute of Hotel Management Studies, 2008).

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The choice to conduct interviews with restaurant owners from different types of restaurants was influenced by the notion that various contexts have different influences on an individual's experiences of a phenomenon. Therefore, this allowed the researcher an opportunity to explore the various challenges and stressors restaurant owners are predisposed to as influenced by their diverse contexts; different types of restaurants.

As stated in Chapter 3, that although the researcher aimed at exploring the challenges experienced by restaurant owners in the restaurant industry in general, the researcher also aimed at exploring the possible influence brought on by restaurant owners functioning in different types of restaurants. For purposes of this study, the researcher identified two main types of restaurants, the non-franchise restaurants and the franchise restaurants.

The non-franchise restaurants were typically those that catered for the formal dining experience and are referred to as the lavish (classy) restaurants within this study.

Franchise restaurants offer quick and convenient meals, typically fast foods (junk food) and the ambience is far more relaxed. It was also evident that there was further delineation within franchise restaurants. There are franchise restaurants that offer a sit-down environment (formal franchise restaurant) such as Ocean Basket, and there are those that are characterized as take away restaurants or casual franchises, such as Wimpy or McDonalds.

The tabulation on the next page (**Table 2**) contains all the restaurants that were contacted and those that formed part of the sample wherein interviews were completed. Thirteen restaurants were contacted; three **casual franchise restaurants** (for example, Wimpy), seven **formal franchise restaurants** (for example, Ocean Basket) and three **non-franchise restaurants** (for example, BLK Lounge).

Therefore, the franchise restaurants could be differentiated on the basis of their being formal (family dining setting) or casual (typical franchise take away setting) whilst non-franchise restaurants only had one category; formal dining.

Therefore, two interviews were conducted with restaurant owners who function within formal franchise restaurants, whilst two interviews were conducted with restaurant owners of non-franchise restaurants. No interviews were conducted with restaurant owners from casual franchise restaurants.

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Table 2: Description of restaurants

Restaurants emailed, telephoned and personally visited	Type of restaurant	Total interviews completed
1. Spur	Casual Franchise	
2. Wimpy	Casual Franchise	
3. Steers	Casual Franchise	
4. Mugg n Bean	Formal Franchise	
5. Ocean Basket	Formal Franchise	
6. Dros	Formal Franchise	
7. Adega	Formal Franchise	
8. Cappuccinos	Formal Franchise	
9. Crawdaddy's	**Formal Franchise**	**1 (O)**
10. Cape Town Fish Market	**Formal Franchise**	**1 (O)**
11. Heat Grill	Non-Franchise	
12. BLK Lounge	**Non-Franchise**	**1 (O)**
13. Moo Moo	**Non-Franchise**	**1 (O)**

4.1.1.1 Crawdaddy's

A) Initial contact

An email requesting the participation of this restaurant's owner was sent. The researcher made telephonic attempts to confirm receipt of the email to no avail. The researcher continued sending emails and supported these emailed requests with consecutive personal visits, until the restaurant owner scheduled time for the interview. The restaurant owner initially requested that the interview be conducted telephonically, but the purpose of using interviews was explained and was subsequently understood by the restaurant owner.

B) Observation records

The restaurant seemed to be a very busy establishment at the time of the visit. This was a formal dining restaurant and not a fast-food restaurant. The staff were friendly, well-trained and very professional. The restaurant owner is young, but very insightful. He did not object to the interview being audio recorded using the researcher's smartphone. This franchise restaurant has a formal setup (formal franchise restaurant) and its food was of the gourmet variety and not the typical fast food meals even though they had the odd burger on the menu. This restaurant caters for an array of customers' food needs. The owner is the only owner of the restaurant and he bears all risks of the restaurant.

C) Outcome of interaction

Although no interview was conducted when the researcher first visited the restaurant upon the researcher's first visit, after numerous attempts and several personal visits, the researcher finally conducted an interview.

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4.1.1.2 Cape Town Fish Market

A) Initial contact

An email requesting the participation of this restaurant's owner was sent, but no telephone calls were made, instead the researcher opted to visit the restaurant in an attempt to speed up the data collection process. The interview was scheduled with the restaurant owner, even though he had delegated most of the upkeep and management of the restaurant to his daughter.

B) Observation records

The restaurant owner fulfilled the quality control function for all deliveries made to the restaurant. According to the restaurant owner, the restaurant received fresh seafood stock on a daily basis and due to this the restaurant owner had to be excused on three occasions during the interview in order to attend to delivery queries. This restaurant formed part of the formal franchise restaurants. Although the interview was rather rushed, one was completed. The restaurant owner had extensive experience working in the restaurant industry and he co-owns the establishment with his daughter, who also caters to the managerial aspects of the restaurant. Therefore, this was a family owned restaurant.

C) Outcome of interaction

An interview was conducted.

4.1.1.3 BLK Lounge

A) Initial contact

Following the closure of the Adega franchise, a new restaurant was opened. BLK Lounge was a non-franchise restaurant that catered for a more casual dining experience. Once the researcher received a flyer advertising the official opening of the restaurant, the researcher sent an email requesting the restaurant owner's participation in the study. The restaurant owner agreed to partake in the study and an interview was scheduled after the restaurant's official launch.

B) Observation records

The restaurant occupied the same space as Adega and made use of the same layout that was previously utilised by the Adega restaurant that had closed down. The restaurant is owned by two siblings, but the researcher interviewed the older brother. The restaurant had a staff complement of five waiters and a barman. According to the restaurant owner the restaurant was operational every day, including weekends. This non-franchise restaurant

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was still new when the interview was conducted and the siblings were in the process of employing new staff. Although both siblings co-own the restaurant, the older brother oversees all business related aspects of the restaurant whilst the sister quality controls all meals served to customers. This is also a family owned restaurant.

C) Outcome of interaction

An interview was conducted with the restaurant owner.

4.1.1.4 Moo Moo

A) Initial contact

The researcher contacted the restaurant after locating its contact details from the dining out database. A telephone call was made to confirm receipt of the email to request to speak to the restaurant's owner. The researcher made three personal visits to this restaurant in order to communicate the importance of the restaurant owner's participation in the study and to explain the purpose of the study.

B) Observation records

It was only on the third visit that the researcher found the restaurant owner and requested that he partake in the study. The restaurant is not a franchise restaurant and is considered a formal dining restaurant. This restaurant had numerous waiters, waitresses and two managers who frequently inquired about their customers' satisfaction with their meals. This is a non-franchise restaurant that has one restaurant owner who shares his managerial responsibilities with two of his managers. The owner had other entrepreneurial projects that he was involved in apart from the restaurant.

C) Outcome of interaction

An interview was conducted with the restaurant owner. The interviews were audio recorded and subsequently transcribed by the researcher. The observation records were documented during personal visits to the restaurants and following the interviews conducted. The observation records also served as debriefing notes that allowed the researcher to reflect on each completed interview and on their role within the interaction.

Upon completion of the interviews, the respondents were notified that transcripts could be made available to them, should they need to ascertain the authenticity of the data collection process.

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4.1.2 Response Rate

It was initially envisaged that the total sample would consist of six restaurant owners. However, only four interviews could be completed. Two interviews were not conducted due to the restaurant owners' unavailability. Therefore, the analysis that follows herein will be based on only the four completed interviews as the observations recorded by the researcher were described in the preceding section.

4.2 Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA)

As guided by the study's epistemology, the qualitative data underwent an Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA). This type of analysis allows for the understanding of a phenomenon as it is perceived and experienced by individuals' within their varying contexts (Smith & Osborn, 2007). It is through the individuals' subjective interpretations of a phenomenon that their world as well their actions can be better understood. IPA utilizes an analytical strategy that ensures that data is analyzed using phenomenological and interpretative approaches.

IPA's stance emphasizes the importance of meaning-construction from the individuals' perspectives of their various contexts and the phenomenon being observed within those contexts. It is crucial that the researcher understands the experiences shared by the respondents, as they are best situated to understand their contexts (Larkin, Eatough & Osborn, 2011). The researcher did not assume a position of superiority, but rather observed and recorded, with the respondents' consent, all the experiences shared by the respondents. Therefore, it was through an analysis of the researcher's interactions with the restaurant owners including the observations, the restaurant owners' shared experiences within their respective contexts that a better understanding of the restaurant industry and its constituents (restaurant owners) could be achieved. IPA aimed at understanding how a given experience (phenomenology), such as running restaurant operations whilst managing the arising challenges was experienced by the restaurant owners (shared experiences) and how these restaurant owners made sense of the experiences (interpretation). It was through the researcher's interpretation of the restaurant owners' description of their worlds that the phenomenon could be understood. According to Osborn and Smith (2007) the result of this analysis emanates from an interaction between the restaurant owners' stories and the researcher's frameworks of meaning construction.

The researcher transcribed and analysed all transcripts emanating from the four audio-recorded interviews; this resulted in fifteen to twenty-five pages of data. As guided by Osborn and Smith (2007), the first step in the analysis (idiographic analysis) encompassed the

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researcher reading through each transcript repeatedly whilst making interpretive notes about the interview, the respondent's responses and the researcher's interpretation of what certain non-verbal cues may mean for the respondent. These researcher notes were used to develop or draw out main themes from the data. After each transcript underwent this process, the emerging themes from all four interviews were highlighted in order to produce superordinate themes (collective analysis). This method is further supported by

Larkin, Eatough and Osborn (2011), wherein they affirm that the initial data analysis stage involves the reading of the transcripts repeatedly. The researcher also made use of the audio recordings in order to gauge the mood, atmosphere and the type of interactions with the restaurant owners whilst conducting the interviews. The researcher also focused on the language used, words used, the context and the actual content before extracting the main themes across all interviews.

The six-phased IPA process has been illustrated again in the figure below (**Figure 2**) with descriptions of each phase included below the figure.

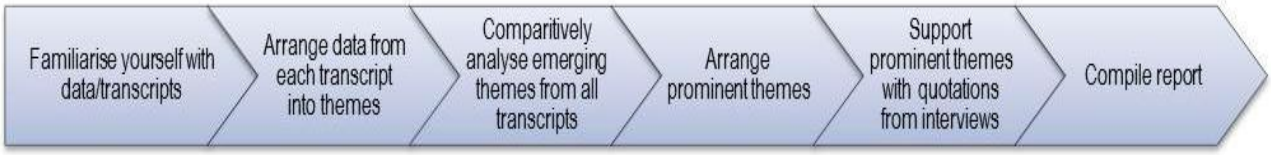

Figure 6: IPA Process

- The audio recorded interviews were transcribed and the transcripts as well as the audio recordings were scrutinised repeatedly.

- Themes that emanated from each interview were captured and interpretive notes were recorded.

- All the themes from the four interviews were arranged in order to decipher which are the dominant themes across all four interviews.

- The dominant themes were arranged.

- All themes were supported with verbatim responses from the restaurant owners before the compilation of the forthcoming section.

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4.3 Interview Findings

This section outlines the findings of this study from the four interviews completed from the restaurants that willingly participated within this study. The findings will cover an analysis of the researcher's observation records from the sampled restaurants, the actual interview data and the reflexive notes captured after the interviews.

It was evident from the observations and personal visits conducted by the researcher that the restaurant industry is characterised by unexpected challenges on a daily basis. Due to the fact that the aim of all restaurants, as service delivery agents, is to ensure the constant satisfaction of its diverse clientele in order for it to make profits, this industry and its constituents is susceptible to incidents of psychological stress. Regardless of the staffs' affect or state of mind, their roles as service delivery agents mandated that they prioritise customers' needs over their own wellbeing. Therefore, exasperating feelings of decreased appreciation and lowered morale amongst staff, this was observed in one restaurant where a customer seeking assistance from a staff member was ignored and it was only after the customer expressed their dissatisfaction that the staff member resultantly attended to the customer. The fact that the staff members realise that their remuneration was dependent on customers' positive evaluation, regardless of the challenges they experience within the restaurant, created a notably stressful atmosphere, especially when staff were not sufficiently tipped.

The main challenge that was evident throughout the observations and the personal visits was the absence of most restaurant owners. Most restaurants were run by restaurant managers rather than restaurant owners. From the researcher's perspective, and one that was prevalent from interactions with various restaurants' staff, restaurant owners seldom owned a single restaurant; they had numerous entrepreneurial projects or restaurants. It was evident that the absence of restaurant owners indirectly resulted in restaurant managers occupying both roles and in some instances three roles; the owner, the manager and the serving staff. Not only can the absence of an authority figure such as the restaurant owner demotivate the staff, but it can also blur the reporting lines between the owner and the manager causing confusion amongst staff due to the dual leadership style. The deference of owners' operational functions to managers may be a response aimed at circumventing the gap created by the owner's absence due to their limited time. From all thirteen restaurants that the researcher contacted and visited, the main issue that resulted in a number of interviews not being conducted was the restaurant owners' unavailability.

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The IPA approach was used to perform an idiographic analysis of the interviews, to identify the main themes and to conduct a collective analysis.

The first interview was conducted at the Cape Town Fish Market restaurant. As guided by the IPA principles, the researcher first analysed the interview's transcript individually. This idiographic approach allowed the researcher an opportunity to be immersed in the restaurant owner's world in order to gather an understanding and to imagine the restaurant owner's experiences as influenced by their context. This approach was employed for each interview alongside with the incorporation of the researcher's analysis of each restaurant owner's nonverbal cues. The inclusion of an analysis of non-verbal cues enriched the researcher's understanding of how they experience psychological stress and its impact on them (Osborn & Smith, 2007).

The theory that formed a basis for the interpretation of data as well as the overall understanding of restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress was the stress response curve developed by Nixon in 1979. As guided by Nixon's stress response curve, it is assumed that an increase in the number of stressors experienced within an environment or the continual exposure to these stressors may have adverse effects on an individual's ability to function effectively (Nixon as cited in Maymand, et al., 2012). Therefore, an increase in the number of stressors restaurant owners' are exposed to or a continued exposure to stressors experienced within their restaurant environment may increase their susceptibility to onsets of psychological stress which may hamper their ability to function effectively.

The negative impact psychological stress has on individuals ability to effectively function within their environment was made explicit within a study conducted by Maymand, et al. (2012). It was evident that the existence of minor stress within an environment would increase individual's attentiveness and their motivation to function and that it is the increased levels of stress that have a debilitating impact on the individual's ability to function. This is the phenomenon Nixon described as Eustress and Distress. Eustress is the experience of minor stress that motivates, excites and spurs the individual into action, whereas Distress describes the individual's experience of negative stress, which often leads to their failure to perform effectively (Nixon as cited in Maymand, et al., 2012). The level of psychological stress experienced by restaurant owners has an influence on the various stress alleviation mechanisms utilized. Nixon's theory also suggests that the continued exposure to stressful incidences may increase an individual's susceptibility to psychological stress and that the continued functioning in an environment characterized by continued stressful triggers, may

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lead to incidences of psychological stress. Therefore, the quality of performance realized within a certain setting is determined by the levels of stress experienced within that setting. Chimanlal and Jayshree (2015) attribute individuals varying experiences of psychological stress to each individual's unique characteristics. Thus, this study will explore all of the restaurant owners' respective experiences of psychological stress and their coping mechanisms as defined by their contexts and their experiences. It is within the stress response curve theory that the analysis below shall be understood.

4.3.1 Idiographic analysis

All interviews were guided by the attached interview guide (**Appendix B**), which has been enclosed herein with the responses received from each restaurant owner. It is crucial to note that the interview guide was only utilized as a guide and that the structure of the interviews may not necessarily follow the outline of the interview guide. By not strictly adhering to the outline of the interview guide this allowed the data collection process to proceed conversationally rather than it being a rigid exchange between both parties. This section shall consist of the actual responses from respondents as per the interview guide, following which each interview shall be analyzed using the idiographic interpretive analysis method before they are collective (thematic) analyzed in the next section.

4.3.1.1 Cape Town Fish market

1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?

P1: *"For me it was an opportunity to do something different. I now had the option to hoose how to direct my own career path* (Cape Town Fish Market)

1.1. Why the restaurant industry specifically?

P1*: "…well…I like working long hours. Eh… I also like working with people"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

The owner of the Cape Town Fish Market stated that he decided to become an entrepreneur as he thought of it as an opportunity to venture into something different. Being an entrepreneur allowed the restaurant owner a platform to dictate his own career path as opposed to it being determined by others. A follow up question was posed to the restaurant owner pertaining to his choice to work in the restaurant industry and he asserted that it was his liking for working long hours and the fact that he enjoys working with people that drew him to this industry.

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2. What traits would you say an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess?

P1: *"You first of all need to be a good listener, have empathy and know how to communicate with your customers, staff and suppliers. You need to be adaptable, have autonomy and have good decision making skills"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

According to the restaurant owner it is pivotal for an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry to be a good listener, empathetic and be able to communicate effectively with everyone he or she interacts with, regardless of the recipient's position in relation to his. He also mentioned that it is crucial for an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry to be adaptable, autonomous and be able to make sound decisions. It is evident that an entrepreneur needs to have exceptional relational and management skills.

3. When you established your restaurant did you seek any partners? And was it a successful venture?

P1: *"Yes. It was … Uhm a successful partnership and still is…* (Cape Town Fish Market)

The restaurant owner stated that he did seek the aid of partners when he was in the process of establishing his restaurant and according to him it was a successful venture.

4. How many partners do you have? Are you still in partnership with them? Did you seek any investors? Was it a successful venture? Do you still have investors?

P1: "*I have two partners. Also had investors that I approached when I started out, but they have been paid off already. So this is officially mine and my partners' restaurant…"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

When the restaurant owner considered owning his own restaurant he sought investors as well as two partners who all contributed to the financial liquidity of the establishment. This suggests that the restaurant owner could not financially secure the restaurant, hence his request for financial support. According to the restaurant owner it was a successful partnership and still remains successful. The restaurant owner points out that he sought investors when he started, but once he had sufficient finances he paid the investors what they had lent him. According to him the restaurant now belongs to him and his partners.

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5. Are there any stressors that you are faced with and what are they? How often do you experience these stressors?

P1: *"Yes. Uh… we have a number of challenges, especially being a restaurant that deals with seafood, we are constantly under scrutiny. Our food must be fresh or we are out of business. Eh…Keeping up with the trends…how else can you make seafood interesting to the customer, you know? Eh…having enough capital to keep up with the economy. The issue of hiring qualified people is also a challenge"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

According to the restaurant owner there were stressors that he was faced with within his restaurant. The restaurant owner stated that he was exposed to numerous stressors. The restaurant owner stated that his challenges stem from the type of food (sea food) that is predominantly served in his restaurant as it lends him and his restaurant to constant scrutiny. He stated that since he serves seafood, it is mandatory that it is always fresh or the failure to ensure that may result in his restaurant being closed down by authorities.

The restaurant owner also shared his challenge with finding new ways to market his establishment's food. The restaurant owner felt that he needed to keep abreast of all the latest marketing trends in order to ensure that his restaurant's food is efficiently marketed. He articulated his not knowing of new means to make seafood alluring to his customers. The restaurant owner also mentioned the additional operational challenges that he has experienced, such as the need for additional capital to buffer the negative effects of the economy on his operations and his inability to find qualified staff to hire.

5.1. In your opinion would you say all entrepreneurs, regardless of industry, experience the same challenges/stressors?

P1: *"We absolutely have different challenges…"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

The restaurant owner was of the opinion that entrepreneurs, regardless of the type of industry they function within, experience different challenges.

5.2. In your opinion, would you say that the challenges you have shared are specific only to your establishment or they can also be ascribed to other restaurant owners?

P1: *I doubt mine are the same as that restaurant over there, but maybe they are…I cannot speak for other restaurants. I don't know…but these are my challenges. Perhaps they have more or less the same challenges…but I think the challenges we face as restaurant owners are different from those faced by other entrepreneurs. That's obvious is it not, since if I own a pencil shop and you own a restaurant, we will have different challenges…* (Cape Town Fish Market)

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The restaurant owner reiterated his initial assertion that entrepreneurs in different industries will have different challenges; he further illustrated his point by using an example of an entrepreneur owning a pencil shop and one owning a restaurant. With regards to restaurant owners sharing similar challenges, the restaurant owner stated that he thought that the challenges experienced would be different across all restaurants. However, he also gave allowance for the slight possibility that there may be some similarities in the challenges experienced by restaurant owners.

6. Would you describe these challenges as impediments to the daily functioning of your establishment? Are there any other areas of your life that these stressors have an adverse effect on?

P1: *"Yes..Yes of course…without enough…* (incoherent) *… staff (loud noise in the background) I can't run this place because…I must…* (incoherent)" (Cape Town Fish Market)

In order to determine the impact of the challenges experienced by the restaurant owner, he was asked if the challenges experienced had a negative effect on his ability to adequately function in his restaurant. The restaurant owner stated that the challenges pertaining to the limited staff complement within his restaurant negatively affected his ability to effectively run his restaurant. According to the restaurant owner without adequate staff he cannot run his restaurant. This is understandably is a major stress factor as it affects his livelihood.

The following question did not form part of the interview guide and its inclusion in all four interviews was prompted by the researcher's need to explore how the concept of psychological stress was understood by respective restaurant owners as influenced by their backgrounds. All restaurant owners provided different meanings to the term, but in essence they all described a similar phenomenon.

7. What do you understand from the term "Psychological stress"?

P1: *"I think it means what…" people feel when under emotional and mental pressure* (Cape Town Fish Market).

According to the respondent he views emotional and mental pressure as synonymous to psychological stress.

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8. Would you say that you have experienced something similar to what you have just described as a result of where you work?

P1: *"Yes, I have experienced it. Its common especially when you consider the type of industry we are working in. Issues to do with financial stability and for me the lack of flexibility that I have considering that I cannot one day decide to sell steak burgers. I chose this type of restaurant because it often times offers less stress having one type of food that you…" serve, but then again, it can be limiting* (Cape Town Fish Market)

The respondents were also asked if they had experienced this phenomenon while working in their various restaurants. The purpose of this prompt was to gather an understanding of the frequency to which this type of stress is experienced as the researcher felt that the previous questions were not answered adequately. Based on the restaurant owner's response it is evident that the restaurant industry is associated with incidences of psychological stress brought on by the challenges he has experienced and shared. The restaurant owner stated that the frequency to which he experienced psychological stress or symptoms close to what he would consider to be psychological stress was common.

9. How have you overcome (*coping mechanisms*) these stressors/challenges? Would you say that your coping mechanisms are effective?

P1: *"I try set aside time to relax. You can imagine how hard that is considering that I am always needed around here and hardly ever have the time to relax, but that's what works for me. I typically need time away from the stressful area and come back when im refreshed."* (Cape Town Fish Market, restaurant owner).

The restaurant owner stated that he set time away from the restaurant for him to relax in order to ensure that the challenges do not overwhelm him and according to him this method proved to be effective in that it allowed him to cope within the stress-inducing environment through his relaxed state of mind.

10. Are you aware of any support/aid groups that you can approach for support? Have you heard of the SARA?

P1: *"Yes, I have heard of SARA. Don't they provide legal advice or provide industry related marketing opportunities? It would do us entrepreneurs in this industry a great deal of help if we were linked to them"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

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The respondent mentioned that he has heard of SARA and according to him the entity provides legal advice and industry-related marketing opportunities to restaurants. The restaurant owner stated that if SARA was in collaboration or if restaurants had established networks with SARA, it would help them immensely. The restaurant owner acknowledges that restaurants need to have networks established.

11. So you think networks would help? What sort of support systems do you think should be established in order to assist restaurant owners with their challenges?

P1: *"Yes, I support that. They could probably help us develop our training schedule for new employees so that everyone is on the same level and maybe by having the training come with certificates that could empower the staff. They could also help with operations, marketing and our other human resources issues."* (Cape Town Fish Market)

The restaurant owner was in support of the idea that restaurants and support/aid agencies should establish networks. Considering the challenges that he has experienced within his restaurant he stated that partnerships with support/aid agencies may assist him with the development of his restaurant's training manual for new employees, marketing issues as well as human resources matters. The idea of having the training attendants accredited following the training suggests that he is of the notion that an empowered staff is more likely to function efficiently.

Herein follows the *holistic interpretive analysis* of this particular interview with the Cape Town Fish Market restaurant owner. It was evident from the restaurant owner's account that although he was not aware of the term "psychological stress", he had experienced moments of excessive work-related stress. He described psychological stress as a feeling that is similar to mental or emotional pressure. The restaurant owner shared that he had commonly experienced what he considered to be psychological stress from working in his restaurant. In a plight to explore and gain an understanding of what the causes of what the restaurant owner described as psychological stress, he was asked to share what may have caused his experiences of what he considered to be psychological stress the restaurant owner had the following to say:

P1: "…*we are constantly under scrutiny. Our food must be fresh or we are out of business. Eh… keeping up with the trends"* (Cape Town Fish market)

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It is evident from the above response that the restaurant owner feels pressured to ensure that his restaurant's food standards are always above average. This is communicated extensively where the restaurant owner suggests that his failure to meet the standards prescribed for seafood restaurants may result in his restaurant being shut down. Although the restaurant owner giggled and responded in a jocular tone, the severity of this fear and challenge is communicated explicitly in his hesitance before speaking about the restaurant's need to keep up with the current trends. Considering that literature and the research studies referred to herein assert that the main reason individuals consider entrepreneurship as opposed to conventional employment is due to the need for financial security, this restaurant owner's response suggests that the quest for financial security is not easily realized in entrepreneurial ventures. It may also be this realization that makes the restaurant owner's experience of psychological stress more severe.

The issue of financial security seems to be an operational challenge that hinders this restaurant and ultimately increases the restaurant owner's vulnerability to incidences of psychological stress. In order for the restaurant to increase its clientele, raise its profit margins, it requires revised marketing strategies and a constant supply of capital in order to ensure that the marketing strategies are constantly updated. However, what was interesting was that the restaurant owner shares his ownership rights to the restaurant with two unnamed partners. Thus, one would assume that in such a case the financial responsibilities and risks would be equally shared amongst the partners, but that did not seem to be the case from the restaurant owner's account. Gauging from the restaurant owner's despair when he shared his challenges and how he experiences them that he was the only "hands on" restaurant owner.

P1: *"Yes. It was a successful partnership and still is. I have two partners. Also had investors that I approached when I started out, but they have been paid off already. So this is officially mine and my partners' restaurant…"* (Cape Town Fish Market, restaurant owner)

It is evident from the above statement that owning a restaurant requires the restaurant owner to remain persistent throughout the challenges they may encounter; challenges such as the need for an adequate supply of capital. In order for the restaurant owner to realize his dream, he had to seek financial investments and form partnerships.

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The restaurant owner also shared his challenges with the limited means that he can utilize to market his food as well as the economically reactive stance his restaurant functions within:

P1: "…*how else can you make seafood interesting to the customer, you know? Eh… having enough capital to keep up with the economy."* (Cape Town Fish market)

From the above response and from an observation of the restaurant owner's demeanor it may seem that he did not anticipate the numerous challenges that he is experiencing in his restaurant. His statement *"…how else …can" you make seafood interesting* (Cape Town Fish market) suggests that he may not be aware of any new ways that he can employ towards effectively marketing his seafood restaurant. Considering the restaurant owner's demeanor when he gave his account, it seemed as though we was at odds as what else he could do. Considering that the majority of meals served within this restaurant are seafood-related food items, the restaurant owner may have chosen the simplicity of the seafood menu and not considered how laborious it would be to creatively market seafood.

The restaurant owner also mentioned how as the restaurant owner he has to oversee all the deliveries of the seafood and make sure that the deliveries meet the health standards prescribed for seafood restaurants. Considering the highly allergen properties in seafood, this function is not only a quality assurance procedure, but a human rights matter. The importance of his role as the quality assurance officer for all the daily deliveries made was noted within the interview when he had to be excused three times to attend to his function.

When asked if he felt that the challenges he has experienced within his restaurant had a negative impact on his ability to effectively operate his restaurant, the restaurant owner agreed vehemently, *"Yes… Yes of course…* " (Cape Town Fish Market). Not only does this communicate his acknowledgement of his challenges affecting his restaurant's operations, but this also communicates the intensity of the challenge through his repeated quick response. The restaurant owner further shared that without adequate staff he would be incapable of effectively operating his restaurant, "*without…staffenough (loud noise in the background)…" I can't run this place* (Cape Town Fish Market). This highlights the significance of this challenge as it affects a large part of the restaurant owner's business, especially since this industry relies on their consumers being served by qualified and readily available staff.

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Themes from this restaurant owner's interview that communicate the causes of his psychological stress:

- Marketing (Inflexibility)
- Food hygiene and health inspections
- Capital
- Staff issues

The restaurant owner was then asked how his experiences of psychological stress impacts on his functioning in his restaurant and how his restaurant influences his experience of psychological stress. The restaurant owner asserted that he has experienced psychological stress as a result of the operations within his restaurant and the type of food that his restaurant serves. Therefore, this affirms that the type of restaurant that a restaurant owner functions within and the type of food served in that restaurant can also influence the restaurant owner's experience of psychological stress.

P1: *"Yes, I have experienced it. It's common especially when you consider the type of industry we are working in. Issues to do with financial stability and for me the lack of flexibility that I have considering that I cannot one day decide to sell steak burgers. I chose this type of restaurant because it often times offers less stress having one type of food that you serve, but then again, it can be limiting…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

It is interesting to note that the restaurant owner considers working in the restaurant industry as key influence on the development of psychological stress. According to the restaurant owner, he has experienced what he considered to be psychological stress and according to him the challenges that he has experienced have had an impact on his experience of psychological stress. The restaurant owner also asserted that apart from the financial instability, he finds the type of food he serves in his restaurant limiting to his ability to diversify. He stated that although he had chosen the simplicity obtained from serving one type of food, he is also limited by the food he serves.

P1: "*"Yes, I have experienced it. It's common especially when you consider the type of industry we are working in…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

It is also evident that the restaurant owner's inability to effectively market his restaurant is of grave concern to him due to his revisiting of this factor more than once. Not only do restaurant owners experience psychological stress as predestined by the nature of the

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restaurant industry, but they also contend with an array of challenges brought on by their varying contexts. It is evident from this restaurant owner's account that was he had previously thought would be less stressful (focusing on the sale of one type of food) has proven to be one of his challenges.

P1: "…*I chose this type of restaurant because it often times offers less stress having one type of food that you serve, but then again, it can be limiting…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

This highlights the experience that the restaurant owner may have felt restricted and stuck with his choice to own a seafood restaurant.

When asked how the restaurant owner copes with his experiences of psychological stress, he shared the following;

P1: "*I try set aside time to relax. You can imagine how hard that is considering that I am always needed around here and hardly ever have the time to relax, but that's what works for me. I typically need time away from the stressful area and come back when I'm refreshed."* (Cape Town Fish Market).

From the restaurant owner's account it is clear that the stressors he experiences within his restaurant necessitate his constant presence and as a result limit his recreational time. It is also evident from this restaurant owner's account that the stressors he experiences from his restaurant are ongoing and continuous. Whilst he may schedule time away, he still needs to return to the same context and deal with more stressors.

P1: "…*I typically need time away from the stressful area and come back when I'm refreshed…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

Therefore, it is this continuous exposure to stressful triggers that increases restaurant owners' susceptibility to psychological stress. From this restaurant owner's account of his experiences, it does not seem that he was exposed to many stress alleviating strategies (coping mechanisms), neither has he made use of the services provided by some support/aid agencies. Although he stated that he had heard of SARA, he had not made efforts to contact them, but it seems that he did realize the importance of support/aid agencies as he stated that;

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P1: " *It would do us entrepreneurs in this industry a great deal of help if we were linked to them"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

The restaurant owner seemed keen to form networks with support/aid agencies and when he was informed that a pamphlet containing contact details of some of the support/aid agencies identified throughout the literature review process of this study he expressed his interest in receiving the pamphlet.

4.3.1.2 BLK Lounge

As compared to the other restaurants that the researcher contacted in order to secure interview times, it was not as challenging to acquire an interview date from this restaurant owner. This restaurant is owned by two siblings, an older brother and his sister. As per the observations and interactions with the staff, the siblings' family owns several franchises, but this is the siblings' first attempt at running their own establishment independently. At the time of the interview, this non-franchise restaurant was new in Pretoria and the brother was the restaurant owner interviewed by the researcher since it was his responsibility to oversee all business related aspects of the restaurant whilst his sister managed quality assurance processes for all meals served to customers.

Below follows the interview conducted with BLK Lounge's restaurant owner. Although the researcher made attempts to ensure that all questions in the interview guide were adhered to, the flow of the interaction between the restaurant owner and the researcher influenced the scope of the interview.

1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur?

P2: "*I think what was more important for me was independence. An opportunity to make my own decisions…as an owner I am able to set my own targets and standards especially since this isn't a franchise. Doing what I love makes for a more fulfilling career."* (BLK Lounge)

According to the respondent it was his love for independence that drew him into entrepreneurship. He further emphasised that by being an owner of a restaurant he was able to make his own decisions, set his own targets and determine his own standards. It is evident from his response that the restaurant owner felt that he would not be able to practice such independence if his restaurant was part of a franchise. It also seemed that his love for entrepreneurship further motivated him to further his career choice.

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1.1. Why the restaurant industry specifically?

As a follow up question, the restaurant owner was asked what influenced his choice to function in the restaurant industry instead of any other industry and according to him his previous working experience as a waiter compelled him to work in this industry. Therefore, his background made it easy for him to consider a career in the restaurant industry.

P2: "I have worked as a waiter before in many restaurants. So my background made it easy for me and my sister to open our own restaurant. Plus, the market availability of restaurant business opportunities was very enticing. Restaurants are being sold daily and there is always a market for food." (BLK Lounge)

The restaurant owner further stated that it was the ease at which a restaurant can be purchased and the fact that restaurants cater to a stable consumer need (food) that influenced his choice to work in the restaurant industry.

2. What traits would you say an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess?

P2: "I think what is important is that you know how to go beyond your ideas and bring them into being. You must be able to communicate effectively with your staff. Things will get challenging and you must be able to go through the hurdles and still have a restaurant that feeds people, employs staff and gives your family a legacy" (BLK Lounge)

The restaurant owner affirmed the importance of a restaurant owner being able to ensure the realisation of their ideas as a trait that is a necessity amongst restaurant owners. He also acknowledged the importance of a restaurant owner's ability to communicate effectively with personnel as well as the importance of endurance. According to the restaurant owner the restaurant industry does have its challenges, but it is crucial that a restaurant owner possesses the ability to overcome any challenge in order to ensure the sustainability of his restuarant.

3. Did you seek any partners? And was it a successful venture? How many partners do you have? Are you still in partnership with them?

P2: *"No, we did not use any partners or investors. Well, I own this restaurant with my sister, so I suppose she is my partner. We don't have any other partners, it's within the family. We do plan on making this a franchise soon, but for now there are no investors"* (BLK Lounge)

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The restaurant is co-owned by two siblings, who may be considered equal partners as stated by the interviewed restaurant owner. Apart from the siblings they do not have any other partners or investors. According to the restaurant owner's response they did not make use of any partners or investors when establishing their restaurant. It was evident that this restaurant was a family owned establishment. However, the restaurant owner did state that there were plans to make the restaurant a franchise and that pending this decision, there were no investors. The restaurant owner's last statement suggested that should they consider the franchising route, they may also look into the possibility of acquiring investors.

4. Are there any stressors that you are faced with? What are they?

P2: *"I'm not sure if you are aware but there have been several restaurants opened in this space were are occupying here and most of them have had to shut down in a short space of time. Now, here we come trying to also make our restaurant work (laughs). We need to lure as many clients to our restaurant and hope that we won't be seen as a fleeting dream just like the others. We also have challenges with staff. Most of them are from the previous restaurant that used to be here and expect to get paid along the same amount they used to get paid, since we are starting out that is a challenge for us. Most of them have experience, which we need, but cannot afford to put aside so much for labour right now.* (BLK Lounge)

When asked about the challenges he has experienced in his restaurant, the restaurant owner mentioned that he felt the subliminal pressure not to fail just like the numerous restaurants that were previously established where his restaurant was situated. He also mentioned that the failed restaurants had shut down over a short period of time, suggesting that the challenges experienced by the previous owners' could not be withstood over an extended period. Due to the negative perception created by the failed restaurants, he stated that in order to avoid his restaurant being seen as another potential failure, he had to devise means to attract many customers to his restaurant. The negative perception created by the previous restaurants' failures seemed to have cast a shadow of doubt on his restaurant's success and this negative perception may also be a stressful factor for the restaurant owner.

Furthermore, the restaurant owner shared the challenge he has experienced pertaining to the staff he had carried over from the previous restaurants that had failed. According to him, his new staff had requested to be paid the same amount of remuneration that they were privy to whilst working for their previous employers. He expressed that this was a challenge because it added undue pressure on his new restaurant's finances. Although he recognised the

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working experience possessed by his staff and its positive impact on his restaurant's operations, he expressed that he could not afford their requested remuneration.

5. In your opinion, would you say that these challenges are specific only to your establishment or can they also be generally ascribed to the majority of restaurant owners?

P2: *"No, I don't think we can say all restaurants have the same challenges. I also don't think all entrepreneurs regardless of the sector they work in will have the same challenges too. The issues or challenges usually arise at the beginning stages, once you have started your establishment; it's all about maintenance maintenance maintenance."* (BLK Lounge)

As a follow up question to the previous one (question 4), the restaurant owner was asked if he thought the challenges that he was exposed to in his restaurant were specific only to his restaurant or if they could be generalised across other restaurants. According to him restaurant owners cannot share similar challenges regardless of them working in the same industry and entrepreneurs, regardless of the industry they function within, cannot share similar challenges amongst each other. Therefore, according to the restaurant owner, each restaurant has its own set of unique challenges and each entrepreneur experiences incomparable challenges brought on by the context that they function within. The restaurant owner also stated that he was prone to experiencing most of his challenges during the beginning stages of restaurant entrepreneurship; when he first established his restaurant. However, once the restaurant was operational he stated that all that would be required from the restaurant owner is continuous maintenance in order to ensure that the same challenges do not arise again.

The following question did not form part of the interview guide and its inclusion in all four interviews was prompted by the researcher's need to explore how the concept of psychological stress was understood by the respective restaurant owners as influenced by their backgrounds. All restaurant owners provided different meanings to the term, but in essence they all seemed to describe a similar phenomenon.

6. What is your understanding of the term; psychology stress?

P2: *"Is it not mental fatigue or physical stress that affects you mentally?* (BLK Lounge)

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The restaurant owner described the term as a form of mental fatigue or physical stress that affects the individual mentally. The purpose of asking the respondents this question was to explore their understanding of the concept in order to gauge their ability to identify its causes within their contexts and if they could understand the impact of psychological stress on their functioning.

7. Have you experienced this phenomenon in your restaurant and would you say it had an impact on your ability to function?

P2: *"Yes, we have experienced some element of stress. Starting a business is never easy and it takes a lot of time just enough for you to make sure that this is really what you want. What may have caused it for us would be our unrealistic expectations, wanting things to be perfect, but then realising that that wasn't possible. You start doubting your plans, but decide to persevere and see it through."* (BLK Lounge)

Based on his understanding of the term, the restaurant owner affirmed that he had experienced onsets of psychological stress as influenced by his context (restaurant). He explained how the experience of psychological stress stemmed from the pressures of establishing the restaurant. He further identified the unrealistic expectations he had as a trigger to his experience of psychological stress. Although he also described how his self-doubt was also a trigger to stress, he mentioned that he decided to persevere through the stress. Although the restaurant owner did not elaborate more on the second part of the question, his explanation about his expectations not being adequately achieved showed that it had an impact on the restaurant owner's confidence, hence the incidences of self-doubt.

8. How have you overcome (*coping mechanisms*) these stressors/challenges? Would you say that your coping mechanisms are effective?

P2: *"I eat healthy, frequent the gym often and try stay positive when we go through stressful moments.* (BLK Lounge)

The restaurant owner minimises the impact of psychological stress as experienced in his restaurant by following a healthy diet and by visiting the gym. He also added that positive thinking helped him overcome stressful incidences.

9. Are you aware of any support/aid groups that you can approach for support? Have you heard of the SARA? If yes, what would you say their main function is? Would the establishment of support systems directly dealing with restaurant owners be beneficial?

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P2: "*Yes, it would be helpful if we were linked to these support systems. SARA? That…That sounds familiar, but let me not agree to something without the utmost certainty…no I haven't heard of them, but the name isn't new to me…"* (BLK Lounge)

The restaurant owner stated that although he had heard of the name "SARA" and that it sounded familiar, he was not certain. However, upon hearing that such entities provide support to entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry, he stated that it would be beneficial if restaurant owners were made aware of such entities. He could not share what function such entities fulfilled.

Herein follows the *holistic interpretive analysis* of this particular interview with the BLK Lounge restaurant owner. The interview was conducted within the restaurant's premises by the kitchen. When asked what propelled restaurant owner into entrepreneurship and specifically into the restaurant industry, he had the following to share:

P2: "*I think what was more important for me was independence. An opportunity to make my own decisions…as an owner I am able to set my own targets and standards especially since this isn't a franchise. Doing what I love makes for a more fulfilling career*." (BLK Lounge)

From an analysis of the restaurant owner's body language and the manner in which he spoke, it communicated a sense of pride that he had in himself being the owner of the restaurant and being able to make decisions pertaining to the establishment. This was also evident in the words he utilised to describe his experience *"my own decisions, my own targets"* and the repeated use of *"my own".* It is evident that the restaurant owner held his ownership of the restaurant to the highest degree. It can be interpreted that the restaurant is seen as an extension of himself and possibly his esteem as well. According to the restaurant owner the main reason that drew him into entrepreneurship was his need for independence or his pursuit for independence. This speaks to his need to be known and recognised as an owner of an entity. Considering that the restaurant owner's family owned several restaurant franchises he may have seized this opportunity to develop his own identity separate from his family by owning his own restaurant. Whilst most entrepreneurs in the literature consulted have cited the love for working in their own establishments, the happiness brought on by overcoming challenges, the issue pertaining to one's love of their career choice seems to be a lesser priority for this restaurant owner.

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From the restaurant owner's shared experiences it would seem that his love for the chosen career path emanated from the freedom he enjoys through the independence afforded from owning his own restaurant. This is further expressed by his continuous use of the word "*My*" when speaking about what influenced his choice into entrepreneurship. In order to ascertain this, the researcher asked the restaurant owner what influenced his choice to function in the restaurant industry as opposed to other industries and below was his response:

P2: *"I have worked as a waiter before in many restaurants. So my background made it easy for me and my sister to open our own restaurant. Plus, the market availability of restaurant business opportunities was very enticing. Restaurants are being sold daily and there is always a market for food."* (BLK Lounge)

Researcher: *"I hear you, would you say you enjoy or have a love for working in this industry?"*

P2: *"Ya I do. Who doesn't love working in such a vibey place. Like I said my background made this industry second nature. It was all my parents did. It is all we know…well…obviously we…maybeknowI otshoulderthingssay itoo,is but this in our blood.* (BLK Lounge)

From the above it is evident that his background experience working in the restaurant industry as a waiter and also his family's background within the restaurant industry made it a convenient career choice for him to consider. Therefore, there was a natural progression from seeing his parents own restaurants and his functioning in the restaurant industry that led to his career choice. The restaurant owner also mentioned the ease at which restaurants are being *"sold daily"* as another reason that propelled him into this industry. Although he mentioned that he has a love for working in the restaurant industry, it was evident that his family background played a greater influence.

Considering that the restaurant owner asserted to the ease at which anyone can purchase a restaurant:

P2: "… *Restaurants are being…" sold daily and there is always a market for food* (BLK Lounge)

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This suggested that it was easy for him to purchase the restaurant and that since restaurants satisfy a basic human need for nourishment (food); which remains unchanged regardless of other external factors such as the economic climate; this need ensures that restaurants remain relevant. The restaurant owner's response also suggests that he may not have had financial challenges securing the restaurant's purchase.

It is also evident that the allure of the entertainment aspect of this industry also influenced his choice to function within it as compared to other entrepreneurial ventures:

P2: "*Ya I do. Who …doesn't" love working in such a vibey place* (BLK Lounge)

From the restaurant owner's account, his choice to work in this industry was greatly influenced by the following facets:

- Love for independence
- Love for owning a restaurant
- Family background
- Past working experience in restaurant industry
- Ease to which restaurants can be purchased
- The entertainment aspect of this industry

In order to fulfill the aim of this study, the researcher requested the restaurant owner to share any challenges he may have experienced within his restaurant. There was a slight pause before the restaurant owner's response:

P2: *"I'm not sure if you are aware but there have been several restaurants opened in this space we are occupying here and most of them have had to shut down in a short space of time. Now, here we come trying to also make our restaurants work (laughs). We need to lure as many clients to our restaurant and hope that we won't be seen as a fleeting dream just like the others. We also have challenges with staff. Most of them are from the previous restaurant that used to be here and expect to get paid along the same amount they used to get paid, since we are starting out that is a challenge for us. Most of them have experience, which we need, but cannot afford to put aside so much for labour right now.* (BLK Lounge)

Prior to this restaurant's establishment, there were three restaurants that were located on the premises BLK Lounge currently occupies. All of these restaurants were foreclosed within a year of their respective establishments, due to financial constraints. Therefore, the restaurant

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owner felt that there may be some speculation surrounding the sustainability of his restaurant since the previous restaurants failed. The restaurant owner was clearly not oblivious to this challenge, but according to his assertion this challenge can be averted by convincing potential customers that his restaurant is not a temporary business. This suggested that he viewed customer loyalty and consistency as key features that influenced the restaurants' sustainability. The restaurant owner also expressed his challenge with his staff members requesting steep remuneration without considering that the restaurant had just been launched. The restaurant owner's disappointment stemmed from the fact that most of the staff was previously unemployed due to the closure of the previous restaurant, but due to his compassion he opted to employ them. However, it seems he felt his kindness was not reciprocated by the staff when they started demanding higher remuneration.

P2: *"…We also have challenge s with staff. Most of them are from the previous restaurant that used to be here and expect to get paid along the same amount they used to get paid, since we…"are starting out that is a challenge for us* (BLK Lounge)

In order to understand how this restaurant owner, after identifying his challenges, chose to deal with these stressful triggers, the researcher asked the restaurant owner to share his preferred coping mechanisms.

P2: *"I eat healthy, frequent the gym often and try stay positive when we go through stressful moments."* (BLK Lounge)

It is evident that a restaurant owner's age plays a significant role in the means utilised to curb the onset of psychological stress. In comparison, the older and much mature owner of Cape Town Fish Market stated that he preferred scheduling time way to relax as a means of coping with stress, whereas this younger and more youthful owner preferred more active means of coping with stress. According to the stress response curve theory which was developed by Nixon, the age variable was not considered as a factor that determines an individual's experiences stress. According to the theory, any means utilised to combat or avert stressful triggers are welcome. Therefore, it speaks more to preference than it does to age. The restaurant owner's reference to keeping a positive mind frame suggests that he is aware of the negative effects psychological stress has on an individual's psychological wellbeing and their ability to function adequately. This was further reiterated in the restaurant owner's understanding and definition of psychological stress, P2:*"Is it not mental fatigue or physical stress that affects you mentally?"* (BLK Lounge).

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According to the restaurant owner's description, psychological stress is mental fatigue or physical stress that affects one's functioning cognitively (mentally). Therefore, from his definition and understanding of the concept psychological stress has a negative impact on an individual's ability to function mentally and it may also have adverse effects on an individual's physical health. Not only does this highlight the presence of psychological stress triggers in the restaurant industry, it also suggests that the restaurant owner is aware of the existence of stressful triggers in his restaurant and has experienced psychological stress. However, due to his use of the coping mechanisms that he has identified the onset of psychological stress has not affected him intensely.

The main challenges experienced by this restaurant owner, as per his personal account, comprise of the following:

- Sustaining their restaurant whilst previous restaurant in the same locale have failed
- Staff remuneration

4.3.1.3 Crawdaddy's

The researcher visited this restaurant twice, before a successful interview could be completed. This franchise restaurant has a formal setup, which allows for both a fine-dining experience and a family friendly environment. Unlike fast food restaurants, which have been operationally defined as casual-franchise restaurants within this study, the customers have a wide selection of food items to choose from and the formal dining setup is emphasized through the use of formal dining protocol (furniture, crockery, the ambience, waiters, etc.).

The researcher first sat by the entrance whilst awaiting the owner, before being moved to the outside non-smoking section, which was empty where the restaurant owner continued smoking. Considering the already casual rapport between the researcher and the restaurant owner, this interview was very conversational, but the researcher made attempts to ensure that the main questions in the interview guide were addressed.

Below are the restaurant owner's responses as guided by the interview guide. They will be followed by the overall Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA) of the interview, which will offer a consolidated interpretation of the interview.

1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur? Why the restaurant industry specifically?

P3: *"You know Tumi, I actually wanted to be a chef, but culinary schools were too expensive at the time. I wanted to…I had hoped to study in Cape Town, but I just could*

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not bring myself to leave Pretoria. My family, extended family…relatives, everyone is here. So I thought (sparks a cigarette) what is closer to my dream…owning a restaurant. (Crawdaddy's).

According to the restaurant owner he initially had hoped at studying towards being a chef, but due to financial constraints, he chose to rather own his own restaurant. The decision to own his own restaurant allowed him to still remain in the culinary realm since the common feature between both pursuits is their focus on food. Therefore, owning a restaurant was parallel to his initial dream of being a chef. Apart from the tuition fees being too expensive he also mentioned that the move to a different province deterred him from following his dream. It was evident that the restaurant owners close relationship with his family was also a key influence his choice to remain in Pretoria and ultimately consider owning his own restaurant. Owning his own restaurant allowed him the stability of being in a province he is familiar with where he is also close to his family and it permitted him an opportunity to function in a similar industry.

2. What traits would you say an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess?

P3: *"It is not a secret that running a restaurant is stressful. You are running a business. You must cater to every one's needs and complaints. You must deal with your staff. You must deal with the economy. You must pay taxes and rental fees. All of this just on your shoulders, so when you love what you do, it will be easier to overlook all these things. Love, but also know how to manage a business. Love does not mean you have business acumen."* (Crawdaddy's)

Before the restaurant owner described the traits an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess, he explained how stressful the restaurant industry is and the fact that this stress is brought on by being an owner of the business. He further explained that the restaurant owner is responsible for catering to every customer's needs and complaints, whilst managing a number of other issues pertaining to the staff, the economy, taxes and rental fees. In summation, he expressed that all of these challenges are all to the sole responsibility of the restaurant owner. From this shared experience, it may be supposed that an entrepreneur should be able to effectively manage a number of challenges simultaneous, he or she should be adaptable to unexpected occurrences and he or she should have client relations skills. The restaurant owner mentioned that in order for a restaurant owner to deal with all the challenges he mentioned, the owner should have a love for their job and business knowledge.

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3. When did you establish your restaurant?

P3 *"It was around…two thousand and…it was…(Incoherent). It happened to so fast, luckily I did not have to take pennies out of my pocket. That's what we have banks for…* (Crawdaddy's).

Although it was not clear when the restaurant owner bought or established his restaurant, it can be assumed that it was between 2001-2009 since he began his sentence with *"two thousand…". and* According to the restaurant owner the restaurant's procurement process did not take long and he expressed how fortunate he was as he did not have to use his own capital to fund the process. The restaurant owner stated that he relied on the assistance of a financial institution (bank).

4. Did you seek any investors? Was it a successful venture? Do you still have investors? The restaurant owner was not asked this question as he had already mentioned, in the previous question, that he sought financial aid from a bank.

5. Are there any stressors or challenges that you are faced with and what are they?

P3: *"Challenges…let me see... (sparks another cigarette) It's time really. I am always busy. I need to oversee everything (he peaks through the window whilst signalling with his thumb)… and the fact that this place …well further up is now a hot spot for smash and grabs (breaking into car windows in an attempt to grab any valuables from unsuspecting drivers), I don't foresee my customers staying late as they usually did…The other issue Tumi, is training. You know you can't keep training the same person over and over. You get frustrated. Customers do not always understand, not that they should, but they wouldn't understand why they are being served by a trainee who makes mistakes when they can be served by a well-trained waiter. Unfortunately, the training staff needs a place to practice doesn't it? It is only frustrating when you are always apologising for one trainee who doesn't grasp simple things. "*(Crawdaddy's)

According to the restaurant owner time is a challenge, as from his experiences, he does not have sufficient time to oversee all facets of his restaurant's operations. He stated that he was always busy. Whilst he shared his challenge with the researcher, he signalled to his team inside the restaurant with his thumb. The restaurant owner also shared his challenge with the increase in criminal incidences near his restaurant. He stated that since the South Africa Police Service (SAPS) has declared the area not far from his restaurant a Hotspot area; an area susceptible to criminal activity such as Smash and Grabs, in this instance, he felt that his customers would no longer stay in his restaurant until late.

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The term "Smash and grab" refers to a type of criminal activity that has a common occurrence in South Africa, but also has isolated prevalence in the United Kingdom (UK), where it is referred to as a Smash and Grab raid (BBC News, 2015). This criminal activity relies on the element of surprise (smash) and criminal's speed (grab) whilst the victim, usually a driver, is unsuspecting. This type of thievery entails the criminal gaining quick and sudden access into a driver's vehicle with the hope of grabbing any valuables that may be on the driver's seats. This typically occurs whilst the driver is at an intersection, within long traffic queues or in dark isolated roads with minimum visibility; basically where the driver has limited movement, visibility and attention of their surroundings. According to the free dictionary Smash and Grab is a form of petty thievery where the thief has limited time to steal and a result uses sudden force to catch the individual off guard by breaking through their vehicle's window/s in attempt to grab any valuable items strewn inside the vehicle (http://www.thefreedictionary.com/smash-and-grab).

The restaurant owner also shared his other challenge, which arose from his staff's need for training. He explained his frustrations concerning the constant need to train and re-train the same individuals due to their inability to adequately grasp what they were previously trained on. His frustrations were further exacerbated by his customers' complaints about being served by under-skilled trainees. In his defence he stated that the trainees needed a place to practice and it was unfortunate for his customers that this place was also where customers expected stellar service. His further frustration stemmed from the need for him to constantly apologise for his trainee staffs' frequent mistakes, especially over their inability to remember simple tasks.

6. How often do you experience these stressors?

P3: *"Well, the crime issue is a recent challenge and the other issue typically rears its head when I have new staff or I have complaints. I can't give you a fixed period, you know?"*(Crawdaddy's)

From the restaurant owner's experience the challenges he mentioned did not have a set pattern that he had noticed or could attest to, meaning they may be circumstantial. He mentioned that due to the recent upsurge of criminal activities in the area within which he functions, his challenge with criminal activity was a recent occurrence. However, he stated that he frequently experiences challenges with the training uptake once he has recruited new staff that needs training. Furthermore, he stated that he only becomes aware of the training challenges when there are complaints received from customers.

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7. In your opinion would you say all entrepreneurs, regardless of industry, experience the same challenges/stressors?

P3: *"Yes and no. If we work in the same area, then sure, but if we are in different areas (pause) I don't see how they could have criminal issues like we do here"* (Crawdaddy's).

The restaurant owner felt that if restaurant owners worked in the same location they would in turn share similar challenges as opposed to those who worked in diverse locations. He made explicit emphasis to the criminal activity his restaurant was susceptible to as a basis for his answer.

8. Are there any other areas of your life that these stressors have an adverse effect on?

P3: *"Yes, as I mentioned that I don't see my customers staying late anymore, obviously that affects revenue. It affects my business. Yes, even the training issue, it takes time away from skilled staff and myself"* (Crawdaddy's).

From the restaurant owner's experience the challenges he mentioned only affected his establishment, as he did not mention any other areas of his life, such as family relations, that are affected. Therefore, the challenges negatively impacted on his restaurant's ability to make a profit whilst the recurrent need for training hampered his and skilled staffs' ability to focus solely on their tasks without having to deviate from their tasks to assist trainees.

9. Out of interest's sake, have you heard of a term called psychological stress? What do you think it is?

P3: *"I have not heard of that term before, but it obviously… I mean judging from the two words be a type of stress that affects one psychologically. I mean…I'm not sure if I am right, but that's how I would …or at least what I understand from it?* (Crawdaddy's).

For consistency's sake, the researcher asked the restaurant owner what he understood from the term, psychological stress. All restaurant owners were asked this question, as already explained in preceding interview analyses. The restaurant owner stated that he had not heard of the term and that his understanding that it was a type of stress that affects an individual psychologically was based on the respective definitions afforded to the two words that make up the complete word.

10. Have you …say…experienced what you have just described?

P3: *"Ya, sure. This type of environment is not hassle-free hey. There is always a hustle and bustle every day. It's good for business, but you can't sat it doesn't affect you. You just never ready for what comes up…"* (Crawdaddy's).

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The restaurant owner was then asked if he had experienced what he described as psychological stress and he stated that due to the busy and unpredictable nature of the restaurant industry, it is possible for restaurant owners to be exposed to psychological stressors; ultimately negatively impacting on their ability to run their restaurants.

11. How have you overcome (*coping mechanisms*) these stressors/challenges? Would you say that your coping mechanisms are effective?

P3: *"I go out. Take days off (laughs)"* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner stated that in order to overcome the challenges/stressors experienced within his restaurant, he goes out or takes some days off work in order to recuperate.

12. Are you aware of any support/aid agencies that you can approach for support, such as SARA?

P3: *"As I mentioned I have only used a bank…so no I don't know of SARA. What is it?... (Incoherent) …Oh ok, yes, I suppose they would and if they were well known, you know? So people know where to go for assistance…"* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner stated that he only made use of the financial institution (bank) that he approached for financial aid, but he did not know of SARA or any other support/aid agencies. The researcher explained what SARA's functions were and the restaurant owner stated that he would appreciate associations with such support/aid agencies especially if they were visible and known of.

Herein follows the *holistic interpretive analysis* of this particular interview with the Crawdaddy's restaurant owner. Although the restaurant owner had a friendly disposition, he seemed distracted throughout the interview. As a result, he had to be excused to attend to a query raised by one of his staff members. In order to reestablish the conversational rapport between the researcher and the restaurant owner, the researcher asked the restaurant owner to share what he thinks makes his restaurant stand out from competitors.

Researcher: *"I know we have spoken many times over the phone and you have seen me dining here as well, but if I were to ask you to share what feature or features make your restaurant stand out, what would you say they are?"*

P3: "*Definitely the food. Have you seen our menu, well since you say you have dined here, you should know."* (Crawdaddy's)

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Researcher: *"True, but let's…"pretend that I haven't been here before…"*

P3: "*Ok, the food, the atmosphere, the quality of our food, the great service. Our waiters are amongst the best, even if I say so myself. They are trained to put the customer first and to be courteous at all times"* (Crawdaddy's)

It is apparent from the restaurant owner's response that this restaurant prides itself on the quality of food and service delivery it offers. The restaurant owner clearly understood the importance of aligning the restaurant's services with its customers' demands or needs. The training offered to his staff and the staffs' interaction with customers are all centered around making the dining experience enjoyable for the customers and in so doing his restaurant's reputation can be upheld.

The restaurant owner was also asked when he established (bought) his restaurant and although the response was not clear, due to his response, "*two thousand…", and* it can be assumed that it was between 2001-2009. The restaurant owner causally stated that he received financial aid from a financial institution (bank) and not from his family.

When asked what influenced his decision to function in the restaurant industry, the restaurant owner shared his dream of initially wanting to be a Chef, but once he realized how expensive his tuition fees were, he resorted to owning a franchise restaurant. According to the restaurant owner, he could afford purchasing the franchise through the aid of a financial institution that loaned him capital to pursue his second dream.

P3: *"You know Tumi, I actually wanted to be a chef, but culinary schools were too expensive at the time. I wanted to…I had hoped to study in Cape Town, but I just could not bring myself to leave Pretoria. My family, extended family…everyone is here. So I thought (sparks a cigarette) what is closer to my dream…owning a restaurant. Luckily I did not have to take pennies out of my pocket. That's what we have banks for.* (Crawdaddy's)

From the above response it is evident that the issue of finance was not the only reason he opted to purchase a restaurant, the restaurant owner also did not want to leave Pretoria. It is evident that the restaurant owner has strong ties with most of his family. The restaurant owner's choice to purchase a restaurant, although it was a compromise, may also be interpreted as him settling for a restaurant rather than him pursuing his primary dream.

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The ease at which he could also acquire the financial aid also reinforces this interpretation. In order to understand the restaurant owner's feelings towards his restaurant and the attachment he has to his restaurant, the researcher asked the restaurant owner to describe the traits that a successful restaurant owner should possess.

P3: *"It is not a secret that running a restaurant is stressful. You are running a business. You must cater to every one's needs and complaints. You must deal with your staff. You must deal with the economy. You must pay taxes and rental fees. All of this just on your shoulders, so when you love what you do, it will be easier to overlook all these things. Love, but also know how to manage a business. Love does not mean you have business acumen."* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner not only expressed his love and his passion for the restaurant industry, but he also listed a number of issues that may be stressors he has experienced. The shorter sentences not only convey the restaurant owner's prompt identification of his challenges, but also the emotive effect they have on him; frustration. This is further highlighted by the restaurant owner's statement, "*All of this just on your shoulders…"* (Crawdaddy's). Therefore, this suggests that although he may love what he does, he has experienced moments when he has felt overwhelmed since it was his duty to deal with each challenge or stressor on his own. In light of the above stressors, the researcher asked the restaurant owner to share more of the challenges he had experienced in his restaurant.

P3: *"Challenges…let me see... (sparks another cigarette) It's time really. I am always busy. I need to oversee everything (he peaks through the window whilst signalling with his thumb)… and the fact that this place …well further up is now a hot spot for smash and grabs, I don't foresee my customers staying late as they usually did…The other issue Tumi, is training. You know you can't keep training the same person over and over. You get frustrated. Customers do not always understand, not that they should but they wouldn't understand why they are being served by a trainee who makes mistakes when they can be served by a well-trained waiter. Unfortunately, the training staff needs a place to practice doesn't it? It is only frustrating when you are always apologising for one trainee who doesn't grasp simple things."* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner described the challenges he had experienced related to his restaurant's operations, whilst also having to ensure that his customers' needs and complaints are addressed. He also described his frustrations with staffs' inability to grasp the

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training offered, challenges brought on by the economy and the financial commitment to pay the rental costs as well as the company taxes. When comparing how the restaurant owner had described his restaurant, when the interview commenced, wherein he stated that the quality of service his restaurant staff offered distinguished the restaurant from its competitors, it is with this perspective in mind that it is easy to understand his training challenges. Considering that the restaurant owner spent a lengthy period sharing his experience with staff that needed constant re-training, this may be interpreted as this restaurant's main challenge, especially since it affects the restaurant's reputation and service delivery.

Amongst these challenges, the restaurant owner identified the influx of criminal activities as a dire concern for his establishment. He specifically mentioned the rise in smash-and-grab incidences or smash-and-grab raids, as they are referred to internationally, within the Pretoria East area. He mentioned the need for him to ensure that he has substantial capital for security improvement measures in order to ascertain his customers' and establishment's safety.

The main challenges identified within this restaurant:

- Crime (Smash and Grab hotspot)
- Re-training of staff
- Capital
- Sole responsibility

The restaurant owner was asked to describe what he understood from the term 'Psychological Stress' and this is what he shared with the researcher:

P3: *"I have not heard of that term before, but it obviously… I mean judging from the two words be a type of stress that affects one psychologically. I mean…I'm not sure if I am right, but that's how I would or at least what I understand from it?* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner was then asked if he had experienced what he described and understood to be psychological stress.

P3: *"Yup I have. This type of environment is not hassle-free hey. There is always a hustle and bustle every day. It's good for business, but you can't sat it doesn't affect you. You just never ready for what comes up…"* (Crawdaddy's).

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The restaurant owner stated that due to the busy and unpredictable nature of the restaurant industry, it is possible for restaurant owners to be exposed to psychological stressors; ultimately negatively impacting their ability to effectively manage their restaurants. It was evident that the restaurant owner understood the impact of psychological stress on his ability to manage his restaurant. He was then requested to share any coping mechanisms that he made use of in response to the experienced psychological stress.

P3: *"I go out. Take days off (laughs)"* (Crawdaddy's)

The restaurant owner stated that in order to alleviate his experiences of psychological stress and its impact he preferred recreational outings or taking days off away from the restaurant. Although these were the directly acknowledged strategies utilised by the restaurant owner to alleviate onsets of psychological stress, his smoking may also be a strategy utilised to alleviate the onset of psychological stress, but since smoking is a behavioural response to the chemical need for nicotine, he may not actively perceive it as a coping strategy. The second theory that was referred to in order to further contextualise stress management aspects shared by respondents was the Person-Fit theory (Cox, 1993). According to this theory when individuals are not adequately matched to an environment that they function within or if the environment that they function within leads the individuals to experience onsets of negative physical symptoms, such as mental strain or behavioural changes then that environment is not a conducive person-fit environment.

In order to soothe the negative impact of the stress brought on by their environment most individual adopt coping mechanisms; some are actively pursued whilst such as exercising whilst others like smoking become an habitual response. The restaurant owner's smoking may also be an unconscious response to his stressful interactions with his environment.

The restaurant owner had limited knowledge of support/aid agencies. He was only aware of the financial institution that he approached for financial aid and not of any other support/aid agencies, such as SARA. However, he did show an understanding of the significant role support/aid agencies, such as SARA, play within the restaurant industry. His response also suggested that he thought support/aid agencies were not visible and is they were more visible it may increase restaurant owners' awareness of their services.

P3: *"I suppose they would and if they were well known, you know? So people know where to go for assistance…"*(Crawdaddy's)

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4.3.1.4 Moo Moo

This non-franchise restaurant is owned by one restaurant owner who shares his managerial responsibilities with two of his managers. The interview was transcribed below as guided by the interview guide.

1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur? Why the restaurant industry specifically?

P4: "*My friends approached me with an idea of owning a restaurant. I actually have other ventures that I am busy with, which is why we couldn't find time to meet. I am a business man, I'm business oriented. I look at the market and ask what is booming now, what is making money and what can I be part of that won't cripple me much, but will make me a profit. Restaurants have a constant demand …people need to eat and I need to make money from that need. So there's a demand and I supply…"*

P4: *"The thrill does it for me. I like taking risks and coming out greater. Having more than what I bargained I would get. You know what I mean…"* (Moo Moo)

The restaurant owner's friends influenced him to purchase the restaurant. According to the restaurant owner this restaurant formed one of many entrepreneurial ventures he was part of. He attributed his choice to function in the restaurant industry to his business acumen and his knowledge of how to identify the most profitable entrepreneurial ventures. According to the restaurant owner, a further reason that propelled him into functioning n the restaurant industry was the fact that restaurants have a constant demand, which he capitalises from. It was also evident that the restaurant owner was business minded as he further stated that he enjoyed taking risks, especially if they reaped profitable returns.

2. What traits would you say an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess?

P4: "*I can't really say what an entrepreneur should possess or what they should not because we are all different, but what I know is* not *everyone can run a profitable restaurant, it's up to you as a restaurateur to ensure that you stand out*…" (Moo Moo).

According to the restaurant owner it was pivotal for any restaurant owner to be unique and "… *stand out*". He stated that he could not list the specific traits that a restaurant owner should possess as it was his contention that every individual was different. He also mentioned that not every restaurant owner can run a profitable restaurant. This hinted at the intricacy and dynamism of the skills a restaurant owner should possess.

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3. Did you seek any partners?

P4: *"No, just me. My first first deal…yes. But this…* (*Shaking head*)*"* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner did not seek any investors or partners when he purchased this restaurant. However, he did mention that he did solicit the help of investors who became his partners when he was a novice in entrepreneurial ventures.

4. Are there any stressors that you are faced with? What are they? In your opinion would you say all entrepreneurs, regardless of industry, experience the same challenges/stressors? In your opinion, would you say that these challenges are specific only to your establishment or can they also be generally ascribed to the majority of restaurant owners? How often do you experience these stressors?

P4: *" My challenge are these new laws, my customers who smoke always complain about being cocooned in a small place without any ventilation whilst non-smokers have the privilege of being outside. The thing is, smokers cannot be near non-smokers or be seen by minors smoking as this is criminal …so I abide by the legislation and separate them, but now smokers feel that their rights are being infringed upon, like 'so must we be bottled in here cos we smoke'. You know? My suppliers are not a problem; perhaps my hectic schedule is a challenge for my managers? I don't know, you should ask them since they deal with most of the restaurant's operations" (*Moo Moo)

The restaurant owner expressed his challenge with the new smoking legislation, which prohibits smokers from being located outside in a publically visible area of the restaurant, and it mandates that they be situated inside the restaurant's smoking area. According to the restaurant owner he had received numerous complaints from his smoking customers complaining about their designated small space that also lacked ventilation whilst in contrast, non-smokers were privy to an outdoor space that was ventilated. The smoking customers further asserted that they felt as though their rights were not being considered.

The restaurant owner also stated that he did not have any challenges with his suppliers, but he mentioned that his schedule may be a challenge for his staff as *"they deal with most of the restaurant's operations".*

5. The restaurant owner described psychological stress as,

P4: "…*would it not explain what burnout and stress are, but on a psychological level. So it's when you mentally are stressed…No?...Well that's my layman's understanding of it"* (Moo Moo).

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According to the restaurant owner his understanding of psychological stress is similar to burnout and stress with the only discriminant factor being that psychological stress affects one on a psychological level. In order to further reiterate his understanding he stated that psychological stress is when an individual is stressed mentally.

6. Would you describe these challenges as impediments to the daily functioning of your establishment?

P4: *"No, not really. I have managers who run everything…like I said ask them".* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner stated that he did not consider the stressors he identified as impediments to his daily functioning and he suggested that the researcher interview his managers as they are responsible for running the operations of the restaurant.

7. How have you overcome (*coping mechanisms*) these stressors/challenges? Would you say that your coping mechanisms are effective?

P4: *"Well… I don't pressurise myself into thinking that there won't be any challenges. Maybe a holiday, but I know there will be challenges or stressors like you call them, but I suppose being realistic helps me and like I said going away…that also helps. But nothing beats the old method of dealing with the issue head on and if it can't be solved, then move on and find another solution or hope that a better solution drops on your lap"* (Moo Moo)

From the restaurant owner's experience he did not seem to internalise the stressful triggers. He stated that he did not pressurise himself in to assuming that there won't be any challenges in the running of his restaurant. However, after thinking about what was asked, he later acknowledged that stressors are existent, but that he preferred confronting the challenges upfront and thereafter he stated that he looks for plausible solutions to the identified challenge/stress. He further stated that he goes on holiday should be need to overcome any challenges.

8. Are you aware of any support/aid groups that you can approach for support?

P4: *"No"* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner indicated that he was not aware of any support/aid agencies.

9. Have you heard of the SARA? If yes, what would you say their main function is?

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P4: *"Nope"* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner indicated that he had not heard of SARA and did not know what their functions are.

10. Would the establishment of support systems directly dealing with restaurant owners be beneficial?

P4: *"Ya, I suppose so. If they are there why not?"* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner indicated that the establishment of support systems aimed at assisting restaurant owners would be of some assistance, if they existed.

11. Would you approach such support systems?

P4: *"I don't know hey, let's see what they do first…"(incoherent mumbling before asking if the interview is finished)* (Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner indicated that if he had knowledge of what role support/aid agencies fulfilled he would be in a better position to approach them for assistance.

Herein follows the *holistic interpretive analysis* of this particular interview with Moo Moo restaurant owner. Considering that the restaurant owner also had other entrepreneurial ventures that he had vested financial interests in, he was difficult to locate. The interview was conducted on the premises and although there were no interruptions during the interview, the restaurant owner was very abrupt. The restaurant owner's responses were concise and he would frequently glance at his cellphone throughout the interview. Although this resulted in a hurried interview, the researcher made attempts to get the restaurant owner to open up.

The restaurant owner was asked to share what influenced his choice to be an entrepreneur and, specifically, an entrepreneur in the restaurant industry.

P4: "*My friends approached me with an idea of owning a restaurant. I actually have other ventures that I am busy with, which is why we couldn't find time to meet. I am a business man, I'm business oriented. I look at the market and ask what is booming now, what is making money and what can I be part of that won't cripple me much, but will make me a profit. Restaurants have a constant demand …people need to eat and I need to make money from that need. So there's a demand and I supply…"* (Moo Moo)

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In comparison with the reasons shared by other restaurant owners, this restaurant owner was influenced by the possibility of generating profits from a constant human need, i.e. food;

P4: "…*people need to eat and I need to make money from that need. So there's a demand and I supply…"*(Moo Moo).

The restaurant owner was also driven by his business acumen, which resulted in him owning numerous entrepreneurial ventures. The fact that the restaurant owner had other entrepreneurial projects that he was working on further corroborated the notion that he was profit- driven in his pursuit to own a restaurant. It is evident from the restaurant owner's response that he was knowledgeable in business sciences/management as well as economics as a field of study. His response was calculated, frank and it also seemed to personify his approach to business. It can be interpreted from his response that he was passionate about business sciences, but not necessarily as passionate about the food industry (restaurant industry).

Although the restaurant owner's choice to function within the restaurant industry was already evident in his previous response, this was further affirmed when the restaurant owner stated that his choice to function in the restaurant industry was risk-driven.

P4: *"The thrill does it for me. I like taking risks and coming out greater. Having more than what I bargained I would get. You know what I mean…"* (Moo Moo).

It can be interpreted from the restaurant owner's response that the allure of the restaurant industry's unpredictable nature appealed to him. Running a restaurant, from the restaurant owner's perspective, was seen as a challenge that could only be successfully executed by those with exceptional business experience. Although he did not explicitly describe himself as such an entrepreneur, he seemed to identify with those characteristics.

P4: "…*Not everyone can run a profitable restaurant, it's up to you as a restaurateur to ensure that you stand out*…" (Moo Moo).

It is evident that traits such as confidence, resilience, and determination contribute to the success of entrepreneurial ventures, but notwithstanding the importance of the entrepreneur's knowledge of the market that they function within.

The restaurant owner was asked to share his experiences with the challenges he was exposed to within his industry.

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P4: *" My challenge are these new laws, my customers who smoke always complain about being cocooned in a small place without any ventilation whilst non-smokers have the privilege of being outside. The thing is, smokers cannot be near non-smokers or be seen by minors smoking as this is criminal …so I abide by the legislation and separate them, but now smokers feel that their rights are being infringed upon, like 'so must we be bottled in here cos we smoke'. You know? My suppliers are not a problem; perhaps my hectic schedule is a challenge for my managers? I don't know, you should ask them since they deal with most of the restaurant's operations."* (Moo Moo)

According to the restaurant owner's experiences, he did not experience many challenges except one resulting from the new legislation mandating that smokers should have demarcated spaces within closed buildings. It was evident that this issue was both a challenge for the restaurant as well as the restaurant owner's smoking customers, who had expressed that they felt that their rights were being infringed upon whilst those of non-smokers were regarded as superior. This was a challenge for the restaurant in that the smoking customers complained about the manner in which they were treated. Therefore, this may reduce the number of smoking customers or it may predispose the restaurant to complaints from aggrieved customers who may resultantly tarnish the restaurant's reputation ultimately affecting the restaurant's profit margins.

The restaurant owner also considered his inflexible schedule as a probable challenge that may affect the restaurant's managers, especially since as most of the responsibilities were delegated to them. This not only alluded to the restaurant owner's detachment from the operations within the restaurant, it also highlighted what was interpreted as a major challenge within the restaurant; the absence of a figure of authority. This may be a challenge when critical operations are put on hold due to the inability of the managers to make executive decisions on behalf of the restaurant owner.

When the restaurant owner was asked to describe what he understood about the term, 'psychological stress', he described it as the following:

P4: "…*would it not explain what burnout and stress are, but on a psychological level. So it's when you mentally are stressed…No?...Well that's my layman's understanding of it"* (Moo Moo).

From his response it is evident that from his understanding he thought psychological stress was synonymous or linked to burnout and stress, but that it affected one psychologically.

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According to the restaurant owner's interpretation of the term, when one is mentally stressed, they have psychological stress.

The restaurant owner was then asked how he copes with his experiences of psychological stress.

P4: *"Well… I don't pressurise myself into thinking that there won't be any challenges. Maybe a holiday, but I know there will be challenges or stressors like you call them, but I suppose being realistic helps me and like I said going away…that also helps. But nothing beats the old method of dealing with the issue head on and if it can't be solved, then move on and find another solution or hope that a better solution drops on your lap"* (Moo Moo)

The restaurant owner showed an understanding of the relationship that exists between burnout and stress. He also showed an understanding of the impact of psychological stress as he explained how this negative affect can affect one psychologically. The restaurant owner seemed to utilise a pragmatic approach when dealing with stressful situations. According to the restaurant owner's account of his stress alleviation strategies, he preferred being realistic. He accepted reality for what it was and dealt with challenges directly without dwelling on those he could not resolve. The restaurant owner has a very impartial manner of managing his restaurant, his staff and his experiences of psychological stress.

Themes from this restaurant owner's interview that summarized the challenges experienced:

- Customer (smokers) complaints about restaurant's layout
- Restaurant owner's constant absence

It is evident from the individual analyses of the interviews conducted that each restaurant owner experienced their restaurant differently, which resulted in their experiences of psychological stress varying greatly. Although some challenges such as financial security and the ability to sustain the restaurant's operations could be generalized to all restaurants, there were some challenges that were unique to some restaurants (such as crime hotspots, etc.). It was also evident that the only defining challenge that differentiated non-franchise restaurants from franchise restaurants was the payments towards the franchise license. The type of food served within a restaurant also influenced the restaurant owners' experience of psychological stress within their restaurants; those with limited food items had less challenges standardizing the quality of food served, but they were limited by the avenues

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they could utilize to market their restaurant. In order to form a holistic overview of the main challenges experienced by the interviewed restaurant owners, a collective analysis was also undertaken.

As guided by the six-phased IPA process in section 4.2 of this chapter, the researcher read through the transcripts repeatedly and familiarised herself with the data: (Phase 1) Each transcript was re-read and the emerging themes (idiographic analysis) from respective transcripts were identified (Phase 2) followed by a holistic interpretive analysis which offered an in depth interpretive overview of each interview.

4.3.2 Collective (thematic) analysis

As guided by the IPA six-phased process, this section collectivised the themes that arose from all the interviews allowing the researcher to highlight the prominent themes. The collective themes were then comparatively analysed (Phases 3 and 4). In order to satisfy the study's objectives, each prominent theme was then supported by verbatim quotations from the interviews (Phase 5). Osborn and Smith (2007) suggest that the researcher corroborate the idiographic analysis with a collective analysis wherein the latter entails that the main themes arising from all interviews are highlighted, but with careful emphasis on not losing each individual's voice (Larkin *et al,* 2006). Therefore, each restaurant owner's unique challenges and experiences were extensively explored in the previous section. This section will sew the golden thread highlighting the main themes that emerged from all four interviews. The table below shows the dominant themes that arose from all interviews with the restaurant owners.

Table 3 Dominant themes

DOMINANT THEMES
1. Entrepreneurship
2. Characteristics of restaurant owners
3. Ownership
4. Challenges
5. Experience of psychological stress
6. Coping mechanisms
7. Support systems
8. Collaboration between restaurant owners and support agencies

1. Choice of enterprise type (Entrepreneurship)

The interviews explored the varying factors that influenced the restaurant owners' choices to function within the restaurant industry. Although each restaurant owner was influenced by

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different factors, such as past work experiences within the restaurant industry, restaurant owners exposure to family members functioning within the restaurant industry, restaurant owners seeking independence and some restaurant owners responding to the thrill of establishing a new entrepreneurial venture, what came across as the main theme was the influence restaurant owners received from their social systems; friends and/or family.

P3: *"You know Tumi, I actually wanted to be a chef, but culinary schools were too expensive at the time. I wanted to…I had hoped to study in Cape Town, but I just could not bring myself to leave Pretoria. My family, extended family…relatives, everyone is here. So I thought (sparks a cigarette) what is closer to my dream…owning a restaurant.* (Crawdaddy's).

P4: "*My friends approached me with an idea of owning a restaurant* (Moo Moo).

Amongst these factors, it was evident that although some restaurant owners had love for the restaurant industry, this was not the driving factor for some restaurant owners.

P1: *"For me it was an opportunity to do something different. I now had the option to choose how to direct my own career path"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P2: *"I think what was more important for me was independence. An opportunity to make my own decisions…as an owner I am able to set my own targets and standards especially since this isn't a franchise. Doing what I love makes for a more fulfilling career*." (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"You know Tumi, I actually wanted to be a chef, but culinary schools were too expensive at the time. I wanted to…I had hoped to study in Cape Town, but I just could not bring myself to leave Pretoria. My family, extended family… everyone is here. So I thought (sparks a cigarette) what is closer to my dream…owning a restaurant. Luckily I did not have to take pennies out of my pocket. That's what we have banks for.* (Crawdaddy's)

P2: "*My friends approached me with an idea of owning a restaurant. I actually have other ventures that I am busy with, which is why we couldn't find time to meet. I am a business man, im business oriented. I look at the market and ask what is booming now, what is making money and what can I be part of that wont cripple me much, but will make me a profit. Restaurants have a constant demand …people need to eat and I need to make money from that need. So there's a demand and I supply…"* (Moo Moo)

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Most of the restaurant owners had experience functioning within the restaurant industry; excluding the owner of Moo Moo who only had business-related experience within the restaurant industry. Therefore, it may be expected that restaurant owners with practical experience within the industry may have an added advantage over those who do not have practical experience of all the operations that characterise the restaurant. However, this does not exempt restaurant owners from having an understanding of the business models that are critical to the successful running of a restaurant. It was evident throughout all the interviews that all restaurant owners, whether driven by passion or a keen understanding of the business world, sought financial independence. It is evident that functioning in the restaurant industry fulfilled diverse purposes amongst the restaurant owners. There was a need for one restaurant owner to feel as though he had not completely given up on his dream of being a Chef and being a restaurant owner fulfilled this dream. Another restaurant owner stated that it was his love for working long hours as well as his love for people that influenced his choice to work in the restaurant industry as opposed to other industries.

P1: *"I like working long hours. Eh… I also like working with people"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

Whilst the love for human interaction was a contributor, some restaurant owners felt that in addition to their past experiences working in the industry, the market availability also influenced their wanting to own restaurants.

P2: *"…Plus, the market availability of restaurant business opportunities was very enticing. Restaurants are being sold daily and there is always a market for food."* (BLK Lounge)

The above statement was supported by another restaurant owner who attributed the success of his restaurant to his business acumen and his resilience to challenges experienced within the restaurant industry.

P4: I am a business man, I'm business oriented. I look at the market and ask what is booming now, what is making money and what can I be part of that won't cripple me much, but will make me a profit. Restaurants have a constant demand…" (Moo Moo)

2. Traits of restaurant owners

As asserted to in chapter 2, it was crucial for the researcher to explore the traits that the restaurant owners felt characterise a typical restaurant owner. Considering the unconventional nature of the restaurant industry, most restaurant owners stated that traits

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such as resilience, flexibility, the ability to effectively manage multiple managerial roles whilst ensuring that all restaurant operations are functioning efficiently, were crucial.

P3: *"It is not a secret that running a restaurant is stressful. You are running a business. You must cater to every one's needs and complaints. You must deal with your staff. You must deal with the economy. You must pay taxes and rental fees. All of this just on your shoulders, so when you love what you do, it will be easier to overlook all these things. Love, but also know how to manage a business. Love does not mean you have business acumen."* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"The thrill does it for me. I like taking risks and coming out greater. Having more than what I bargained I would get. You know what I mean…Not everyone can run a profitable restaurant, it's up to you as a restaurateur to ensure that you stand out. When you have good, reliable suppliers your food is guaranteed to keep people coming. You must keep the standards the same so people do not complain over the same thing twice"* (Moo Moo)

One restaurant owner mentioned the importance of a restaurant owner possessing exceptional interpersonal skills and sound communication skills. Considering that the restaurant industry is a service-related industry, the manner in which the restaurant owner communicates with customers or his staff may affect the staffs' morale as well as the restaurant's reputation.

P1: *"You first of all need to be a good listener, have empathy and know how to communicate with your customers, staff and suppliers. You need to be adaptable, have autonomy and have good decision making skills"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P2: *"I think what is important is that you know how to go beyond your ideas and bring them into being. You must be able to communicate effectively with your staff. Things will get challenging and you must be able to go through the hurdles and still have a restaurant that feeds people, employs staff and gives your family a legacy"* (BLK Lounge)

Although both restaurant owners agreed that communication skills were crucial traits that a restaurant owner should possess, one restaurant owner stated that it was imperative for a restaurant owner to have foresight and a practical mind-set. According to this restaurant owner working in the restaurant industry necessitated that a restaurant owner be able to transform his vision and ideas into realisation "*…know how to go beyond your ideas and bring …"them into being* (BLK Lounge).

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3. Partners/ Investors

The restaurant owners were asked if they relied on any partners or investors for financial aid in order to ensure the timely establishment of their respective restaurants. Most restaurant owners stated that they had the sole responsibility to ensure the sustainability of their restaurants. Only two restaurant owners expressed their frustration and described moments when they felt overwhelmed. Therefore, all restaurants regardless of the type of restaurant it was (formal franchise or non-franchise), experienced challenges that equally threatened the longevity and sustainability of their restaurants. The main challenge that all restaurant owners alluded to was a dependency on the economy, regardless of their quest to achieve financial independence by being entrepreneurs.

P2: "*No, we did not use any partners or investors. Well, I own this restaurant with my sister, so I suppose she is my partner. We don't have any other partners, its within the family…but for now there are no investors"* (BLK Lounge)

P4: *"No, its just me* (Moo Moo)

The main reason influencing restaurant owners to approach investors or seek partners is the large amount of capital required during the initial phases and during the business sustainability phases. Only one restaurant owner stated that he had partners who offered financial assistance, whilst another restaurant owner was not certain if the financial institution that he received a loan from could be considered an investor or a partner.

P1: *"Yes. It was a successful partnership and still is. I have two partners. Also had investors that I approached when I started out, but they have been paid off already. So this is officially mine and my partners' restaurant…"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P3: *"No, im on my own…well I did get a loan from FNB if that counts for anything. I suppose we can consider them my investors in this economy of ours (laughs)"* (Crawdaddy's)

4. Challenges

The main objective of this study was to explore the challenges as experienced by restaurant owners during their daily operations in their respective restaurants. It was evident that most of the challenges experienced by the restaurant owners were influenced by their respective contexts and their interactions within these contexts (restaurants). It was also prevalent that each restaurant owner interpreted and experienced stressors differently. Therefore, what was

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not a stressor (limited marketing strategies) for one owner (Moo Moo) was a detrimental stressor for another restaurant owner (Cape Town Fish Market). Although each restaurant owner had varying challenges, it was evident that the main challenge experienced by all restaurant owners entailed the sustainability of their restaurants due to economic demands and legislative demands. This suggested that within their independence, restaurant owners were still vulnerable.

P1: *"Yes. Uh… we have a number of challenges, especially being a restaurant that deals with seafood, we are constantly under scrutiny. Our food must be fresh or we are out of business. Eh…Keeping up with the trends…how else can you make seafood interesting to the customer, you know? Eh…having enough capital to keep up with the economy. The issue of hiring qualified people is also a challenge"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

P2: *"I'm not sure if you are aware but there have been several restaurants opened in this space were are occupying here and most of them have had to shut down in a short space of time. Now, here we come trying to also make our restaurants work (laughs). We need to lure as many clients to our restaurant and hope that we won't be seen as a fleeting dream just like the others. We also have challenges with staff. Most of them are from the previous restaurant that used to be here and expect to get paid along the same amount they used to get paid, since we are starting out that is a challenge for us. Most of them have experience, which we need, but cannot afford to put aside so much for labour right now."* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"Challenges…let me see... (sparks another cigarette) It's time really. I am always busy. I need to oversee everything (he peaks through the window whilst signalling with his thumb)… and the fact that this place …well further up is now a hot spot for smash and grabs, I don't foresee my customers staying late as they usually did."* (Crawdaddy's)

P3: *"HMM (smokes) The other issue Tumi, is training. You know you can't keep training the same person over and over. You get frustrated. Customers do not always understand, not that they should but they wouldn't understand why they are being served by a trainee who makes mistakes when they can be served by a well-trained waiter. Unfortunately, the training staff needs a place to practice doesn't it? It is only frustrating when you are always apologising for one trainee who doesn't grasp simple things."* (Crawdaddy's)

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P4: *"My challenge are these new laws, my customers who smoke always complain about being cocooned in a small place without any ventilation whilst non-smokers have the privilege of being outside. The thing is, smokers cannot be near non-smokers or be seen by minors smoking as this is criminal …so I abide by the legislation and separate them, but now smokers feel that their rights are being infringed upon, like 'so must we be bottled in here cos we smoke'. You know? My suppliers are not a problem, perhaps my hectic schedule is a challenge for my managers? I don't know, you should ask them since they deal with most of the restaurant's operations (*Moo Moo)

Therefore, it is evident there are a myriad of challenges that restaurant owners are exposed to within their varying contexts. Issues of crime, staff training, staff remuneration, customer complaints, marketing strategies, random health inspections, legislative control are just some of the challenges shared by the restaurant owners from their experiences.

When asked if they felt that these challenges were generalizable to all restaurants and also to other entrepreneurial ventures, the restaurant owners stated that, P1:*"I cannot speak for other restaurants, I don't know, but these are my challenges. Perhaps they have more or less the same challenges…but I think the challenges we face as restaurant owners are different from those faced by other entrepreneurs. That's obvious is it not, since if I own a pencil shop and you own a restaurant, we will have different challenges…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

P2: *"No, I don't think we can say all restaurants have the same challenges. I also don't think all entrepreneurs regardless of the sector they work in will have the same challenges too. The issues or challenges usually arise at the beginning stages, once you have started you establishment, it's all about maintenance maintenance maintenance."* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"I don't think one can actually generalise the challenges experienced by different restaurants. Things like this ear being a hotspot area for criminal activities like smash and grabs would not necessarily affect a restaurant let's say in a quieter place or a place where there wasn't any crime going on…"* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"Not necessarily. I think as entrepreneurs we may face similar start up challenges, but there are many challenges that I face here that I cannot expect another restaurant owner to face, if you get what I mean?"* (Moo Moo)

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It is evident that due to the unique challenges experienced by restaurant owners, as influenced by their interactions within their restaurants, these cannot be generalised to other restaurant owners and their establishments. It is very crucial to note that although each restaurant owner had a challenge specific to their own context, some challenges such as financial constraints and the need for start-up costs are still challenges that are commonly shared amongst most entrepreneurs within this industry.

5. Understanding of Psychological stress (burnout) and its causes

The basis of this theme was to uncover what the various restaurant owners understood from the term "psychological stress/ burnout." The researcher also sought to find out what the restaurant owners attributed as the causes of this condition. Although the restaurant owners provided different definitions for the same phenomenon, each definition provided a basis for the researcher to further understand the conceptualisation framework of each restaurant owner.

P1: *"I think it means what people feel when under emotional and mental pressure…"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

P2: *"Is it not mental fatigue or physical stress that affects you mentally?* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"I have not heard of that term before, but it obviously… I mean judging from the two words be a type of stress that affects one psychologically. I mean…I'm not sure if I am right, but that's how I would or at least what I understand from it?* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"Psychological stress…would it not explain what burnout and stress are, but on a psychological level. So it's when you mentally are stressed…No? ..Well that's my layman's understanding of it* (Moo Moo)

From the restaurant owners' descriptions of psychological stress it is can be interpreted that they did have a general idea of what this condition or concept entails. It was also evident that the term psychological stress was not a commonly used term within their contexts as most restaurant owners were most familiar with the concept of burnout as opposed to psychological stress. After their descriptions of psychological stress, which also formed a basis for the restaurant owners to link these descriptions of psychological stress to any experience in their respective pasts that fell within the description, restaurant owners were asked if they had experienced this phenomenon in their restaurants. Most restaurant owners

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stated that they had experienced challenges within their restaurants that have made it necessary for them to employ stress coping mechanisms in order to ensure that they functioned adequately within their restaurants.

The researcher then asked the restaurant owners what they thought could be the causes of the psychological stress/burnout that they have experienced and below are their responses:

P1: *"Yes, I have experienced it. Its common especially when you consider the type of industry we are working in. Issues to do with financial stability and for me the lack of flexibility that I have considering that I cannot one day decide to sell steak burgers. I chose this type of restaurant because it often times offers less stress having one type of food that you serve, but then again, it can be limiting…"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P2: *"Yes, we have experienced some element of stress. Starting a business is never easy and it takes a lot of time just enough for you to make sure that this is really what you want. What may have caused it for us would be our unrealistic expectations, wanting things to be perfect, but then realising that that wasn't possible. You start doubting your plans, but decide to persevere and see it through."* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"Look Tumi. I would be lying if I said that there weren't any stressors in this business (gets up to check on this waiters). The constant re-training of staff and the financial implications of beefing up security in this restaurant because once you in a place where crime is rife, you have to make means to keep your staff and your customers safe. My time has to be split between helping staff keep our customers happy, making sure deliveries are made on time, making sure that we have the correct deliveries and also running the place."* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"Keeping everyone happy. Since I am rarely here I have to rely on my managers to run this place as though I was here. Any business is a risk…any business… and with the way the economy has been going lately, you may be up one day and down the next day. You never know. The uncertainty can also be a challenge, this can also drive you* (Moo Moo)

These were the main stressors identified and experienced by the restaurant owners within their restaurants:

- Financial stability/Economic dependency
- Lack of flexibility

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- Staff remuneration
- Training staff
- Crime
- Legislative control
- Sole owner (overwhelmed restaurant owner)

6. Coping mechanisms

The purpose of this item was to explore the various coping mechanisms each restaurant owner employed as a means to cope with their respective stressors. The respondents were also asked if they felt that their means of coping with the stressors were effective and if they felt that these mechanisms could be easily sustained.

P1: *"I try set aside time to relax. You can imagine how hard that is considering that I am always needed around here and hardly ever have the time to relax, but that's what works for me. I typically need time away from the stressful area and come back when im refreshed."* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P2: *"I eat healthy, frequent the gym often and try stay positive when we go through stressful moments.* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"I go out. Take days off (laughs)"* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"Well… I don't pressurise myself into thinking that there won't be any challenges. Maybe a holiday, but I know there will be challenges or stressors like you call them, but I suppose being realistic helps me and like I said going away…that also helps. But nothing beats the old method of dealing with the issue head on and if it can't be solved, then move on and find another solution or hope that a better solution drops on your lap"* (Moo Moo)

When they were asked how effective these coping mechanisms were according to their experiences and how sustainable these coping mechanisms were, most of the respondents stated that their coping mechanisms were effective. However, none could vouch for their coping mechanisms being sustainable. Restaurant owners indicated that they were open to learning new stress alleviating strategies. It is evident from the above that the restaurant owners are not exposed to extensive means of combating their experience of psychological stress. However, one restaurant owner felt that his coping mechanism was effective for him.

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P4: *"Well, I'm still standing so let's say I'm coping" (looks at his phone)* (Moo Moo)

7. Support/aid systems

From an analysis of the findings from the previous item, it is evident that the restaurant owners could benefit greatly from an increased exposure to support/aid agencies for additional support. All restaurant owners were in support of restaurants collaborating with support/aid agencies due to the crucial need for restaurant owners to be abreast of any new developments within their industry. The restaurant owners were also asked if they were aware of any existing support/aid agencies. Although not all restaurant owners knew of any support/aid agencies, such as the Restaurant Association of South Africa (SARA), some had an idea of the type of assistance restaurant owners could receive from such a support/aid agency.

P1: *"Yes, I have heard of SARA. Don't they provide legal advice or provide industry related marketing opportunities? It would do us entrepreneurs in this industry a great deal of help if we were linked to them"* (Cape Town Fish Market)

P2: *"Yes, it would be helpful if we were linked to these support systems. SARA? That…That sounds familiar, but let me not agree to something without the utmost certainty…no I haven't heard of them, but the name isn't new to me…"* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"Yes, if you consider FNB one. I have not heard of SARA. Not that I would know, but perhaps they can help start-up entrepreneurs in this industry. Advice… mentorship… industry advice"* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"For sure, I have heard of SARA. My managers are usually the ones with deal with the daily running of this place so they are my buffer. My friends who are also in the restaurant industry have also been my support system"* (Moo Moo)

8. Collaboration between restaurant owners and support agencies

Restaurant owners were asked if the establishment of collaborations or networks between support/aid agencies and restaurant owners would be beneficial and all of them agreed. The researcher also asked the restaurant owners to share the type of assistance they would most like to receive from support/aid agencies.

P1: *"Yes, I support that. They could probably help us develop our training schedule for new employees so that everyone is on the same level and maybe by having the training come with certificates that could empower the staff. They could also help with operations, marketing and our other human resources issues."* (Cape Town Fish Market)

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P3: *"I suppose they would and if they were well known, you know? So people know where to go for assistance. You don't want to find yourself dreaming of owning a restaurant only to be stuck with one that you can't sell, or one that needs to be closed due to your bad choices. It will really help if there was a middle man or if they were everywhere entrepreneurs went for assistance. Like the banks, or something."* (Crawdaddy's)

This qualitative study explored how restaurant owners experienced and interpreted the challenges faced within their industry as well as within their varying contexts. It was believed that by exploring the sources of psychological stress as experienced by each restaurant owner within their own contexts, and by exploring the different coping mechanisms utilised by each restaurant owner, an in-depth understanding of this industry's complexities may be learnt.

The objectives of the study were:

- To explore the sources of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners within the Gauteng province, specifically within Pretoria.
- To explore the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in order to alleviate their experiences of psychological stress.
- To explore the prevalence of stress management within the restaurant industry and restaurant owners' awareness of any support/aid agencies.

In summation of all the challenges faced by the restaurant owners, it is evident that regardless of the types of restaurants the restaurant owners functioned within, they all experienced challenges that had the propensity to negatively impact on their restaurants' operations. Although the stressors were not identical, this diversity was attributed to the varying contexts each entrepreneur functioned within.

4.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter described the data collection process that was undertaken in this explorative study. A description of the restaurants contacted within the data collection process, the response rate and a description of the respondents that partook in the study was outlined in the chapter. The IPA process and the interview findings were discussed before the idiographic and collective analysis was described. The next chapter shall comprise a discussion of the findings in conjunction with the literature consulted within the study in order to form an understanding of the restaurant industry.

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CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion

According to the IPA standpoint all the material gathered from the interviews is perceived as the restaurant owners' physical manifestation of their worldview or their psychological stance with regards to the phenomenon they were required to describe. The interviews allowed the researcher access into the restaurant owners' worlds, thereby permitting the researcher an opportunity to understand their experiences through each respective restaurant owner's interpretation of their reality. This chapter shall give an in-depth discussion of the results from the research and also in relation to the literature reviewed throughout the chapters preceding this one.

As guided by the main themes that emanated from the data analysis process, the following themes shall form a basis for the discussion to follow within this chapter. There were eight dominant themes identified, these being; **Choice of enterprise type (Entrepreneurship), Traits of an entrepreneur, Partners/ Investors, Challenges, Understanding of Psychological stress and its causes, coping mechanisms, Support systems, Collaboration between restaurant owners and support agencies.** In conjunction with the above, a summation of the observations made throughout the researcher's interaction with all thirteen restaurants will also be discussed in order to highlight what was perceived, from the observation, as additional challenges experienced by restaurant owners.

In this chapter, the results presented in Chapter 4 will be discussed in relation to the literature as well as theory reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, the research questions and the objectives of the study. In addition, the contributions and limitations of this study will be discussed.

5.1.1 Choice of enterprise type (Entrepreneurship & Restaurant industry)

As asserted by Beauregard (2007) there are a number of factors that motivate individuals towards entrepreneurship as well as the type of entrepreneurial venture they end up pursing. These factors range from personal convictions, personal aspirations, family background and the influence one's family has on their decision. This is evident in the findings as the restaurant owners shared numerous factors that contributed to their pursuit of entrepreneurship instead of the conventional employment relationship. Some restaurant owners affirmed that it was their pursuit of independence that made entrepreneurship a

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lucrative choice for them. There was also a restaurant owner that shared that his family background influenced his choice to function in the restaurant industry as a restaurant owner, whilst another restaurant owner stated that it was his peers' influence that compelled him into working in the restaurant industry.

According to the literature consulted, the main reason why most entrepreneurs have a preference for entrepreneurship as compared to conventional employment is due to the autonomy attained from owning and managing their own establishment. Acs and Audretsch (2010) consider entrepreneurship to be a widely recognized engine of economic and social development throughout the world. Thus, entrepreneurship is a dynamic process where incremental wealth and economic independence is an envisaged goal for the entrepreneur whilst also being responsible for the location of adequate resources as well as human skills to effectively run their establishment (Hisrich, Peters & Shepherd, 2005).

Although there was an understanding of why certain individuals follow the entrepreneurial route as opposed to being employed within conventional business sectors, this study aimed to ascertain what influenced these entrepreneurs choice to function within the restaurant industry as compared to other industries that entrepreneurs can freely function within. Literature suggests that the restaurant industry is the most preferred entrepreneurial venture commonly considered by aspiring entrepreneurs (Li, 2011), due to its relatively simplistic business model. As asserted by Spencer (2011), this simplistic business model focuses primarily on the provision of food and beverages to a restaurant's clientele. In conjunction with its simplistic business model, this industry also allows for the creation of employment opportunities, as well as opportunities for continued employment within hospitality sectors such as hotels and resorts. The restaurant owners were asked what influenced their choice to function within the restaurant industry and upon an analysis of their responses; it was evident that most of their reasons were influenced by their passion for the industry. In support with what was alluded to by Spencer (2011), most of them either had a waitressing background or a business background, which influenced the passion to own their own restaurants. Thus, due to the simplistic business model of the restaurant industry, most of them were able to secure employment and due to their passion for this industry, most of them were able to pursue continued employment within the industry.

The respondents also pointed out to a need for financial independence and their need to venture into a different and unique industry, as some of their influencing factors for working in the restaurant industry. Notwithstanding the extrinsic needs shared by the restaurant owners,

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such as financial gain, there were also some restaurant owners who shared intrinsic reasons that influenced their choice to work in the restaurant industry. One respondent stated that he had a preference for working long business hours and that his love for interacting with people also influenced his interest in the restaurant industry as opposed to other industries. There was also a restaurant owner who chose to work in the restaurant industry as a way to ensure that his dream, which was initially for him to become a chef, was realised in that he could still function in the food and beverages industry. This particular restaurant owner also shared how his family had the biggest influence on his choice not to further his dream of becoming a chef as he would have had to relocate and he did not want to be far from his family.

It is evident that the findings from the research study corresponded with some of the reasons mentioned in the consulted literature in support of the common reasons influencing individuals to work in the restaurant industry. The findings from the study, further suggested additional reasons that were not mentioned in the literature, such as individuals choosing to work in restaurants due to their love for unique environments, their preferences for longer working hours and their choice to remain in close proximity to their family. Thus, these findings allude to the fact that some choices may be influenced by internal influencers such as individuals' personal traits and not by external influencers such as the economy.

5.1.2 Traits of an entrepreneur

According to Stephenson (2013) there are a specific set of characteristics that are common across all entrepreneurs, which evidently lead to the success of their entrepreneurial ventures. Although it is common for most potential entrepreneurs to have a drive towards fulfilling their entrepreneurial ambitions, it is crucial that this drive be sustained throughout the entire entrepreneurial process and not be prevalent only in the beginning stages of the venture. From the study's findings, it is evident how crucial this ability to sustain an entrepreneur's drive throughout the lifespan of the restaurant is. The researcher visited a particular restaurant and managed to schedule an interview with the restaurant owner, who was eager to share his experiences. However, days before the scheduled interview, the restaurant was shut down and most of the staff members cited managerial issues as the reason for the restaurant's closure. It was evident from this experience that it is crucial for an entrepreneur to possess unwavering passion that will ensure that any challenges that may threaten the restaurant's operations can be averted or overcome. Although most challenges are unpredictable and their effect on the restaurant operations cannot always be planned for, a restaurant owner also needs to be remain goal-oriented in order to ensure that their restaurant is sustainable.

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Stephenson (2013) adds that it is often easier to remain confident and positive through hardships if the entrepreneur has a genuine love for their chosen type of entrepreneurial venture, as this makes overcoming any challenge a possibility rather than a burden, which lends itself to immense psychological stress. It is rather unfortunate that an interview with the restaurant owner in question could not be scheduled, as it would have been interesting to explore the challenges experienced within the restaurant. However, the researcher conducted an interview with the restaurant owner of the newly established restaurant.

Although it is pivotal for an entrepreneur to like what they do, it is also imperative that they possess a level of seriousness and direction that will form a foundation for the entrepreneurial venture's success. This also highlights the level of self-belief the entrepreneur has in their vision and makes it easier for investors as well as staff members to trust in the future of the establishment. This was also highlighted within the interviews with the respondents; a sense of direction and the restaurant owner's ability to operationalise their visions, were key traits that were also of grave importance.

Stephenson (2013) also emphasises the importance of self-promotion as a method of ensuring that clientele is aware of an entrepreneur's services, products and unique additives offered by the establishment. Rao, Venkatachalm and Joshi (2013) further corroborate this by affirming that a successful entrepreneurial venture is not only characterised by its provision of high quality products and services, but also by the continued delivery on these aspects and on the sound reasoning, resilience, dedication and passion of the entrepreneur. The researchers further explained that not only are successful entrepreneurs' characteristics inborn, such as the ones already described, but that there are also some characteristics that are learned based on each entrepreneur's exposure to a particular environment. Therefore, entrepreneurs' experiences and their interpreted meanings from these experiences also help create knowledge bases that give each entrepreneur a unique and competitive edge over one another. This was notable within an interview conducted with the owner of Moo Moo. This restaurant owner possessed a keen understanding of economics and his business acumen was incomparable to the other restaurant owners. It was also evident that his business management background influenced the manner in which he responded to challenges experienced in his restaurant and how he managed his restaurant. Although there was no indication from the interview that the restaurant owner had a love and a passion for the restaurant industry, it was evident that he had a love for entrepreneurial ventures. This inevitably assured the success of this venture (restaurant).

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The respondents agreed that it is necessary for an entrepreneur in the restaurant industry to possess good interpersonal skills, sound communication skills and creativity. Further to the traits identified by the respondents, two respondents stated that it is crucial for an entrepreneur to have adequate experience or knowledge about the entrepreneurial venture they plan to establish, i.e. the restaurant. Having previous entrepreneurial experience and the relevant business sector knowledge gives most entrepreneurs a competitive edge (Rao, *et al.,* 2013) over those who have no prior knowledge or experience. Thus, it is expected that an entrepreneur who has had previous exposure to the entrepreneurial environment or one that has the relevant business sector knowledge would be better equipped for any unforeseen challenges.

Although all of the respondents agreed that communication skills formed a crucial part of the traits that an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess, one respondent mentioned the importance of an entrepreneur having foresight and a practical mind-set. None of the respondents mentioned resilience as a trait necessary for entrepreneurs in the restaurant industry, but it was implied when one respondent mentioned the entrepreneur's ability to continuously overcome challenges and to have ready solutions for every challenge. These are some of the unique psychological traits mentioned by Di-Masi (n. d.).

In a study conducted by Indarti and Langenberg (2005) it was evident that demographic characteristics, such the entrepreneur's age, gender and educational background contributed to the success of the entrepreneur. The typical profile of a successful entrepreneur has been found to be that of a male older than 25 years of age, with a business-related or technical degree. In their findings, Rao, *et al*., (2013) also noted that the entrepreneur's gender, age, immigration status and educational background serve as proxies for life experiences that may have offered the entrepreneur's unique avenues for networking purposes not attainable by entrepreneurs who were not exposed to such experiences. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000) an entrepreneur's educational background and their experiences underlie the concept of human capital. This was also affirmed by Makura (2008) who described childhood deprivation and an individual's membership to a historically disadvantaged group, as understood within the South African context, as being two of the most recognisable characteristics prevalent in most entrepreneurs' accounts for their success. The amount of knowledge and expertise gained from these two facets cannot be generalised across all entrepreneurs, as each individual's experiences and understanding of concepts are different. From all the respondents who were interviewed, none of them were female and each of them had varying backgrounds that evidently influenced their interest in the restaurant industry. It was a random occurrence that there were no female restaurant

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owners in all restaurants that interviews were conducted within, excluding the one owned by a brother and sister. Three of the restaurants were owned by white Africans and only one of them was owned by a black African. Whilst most (three) of these respondents had experience within the restaurant industry, one respondent had a strong business management background as he owned several entrepreneurial ventures apart from the restaurant. Thus, each entrepreneur offered their unique interpretation of their experiences in their respective restaurants as influenced by their education backgrounds and their personal experiences. It is then these interpretations of their challenges that outline the manner in which they will run their entrepreneurial venture. Therefore, it is crucial to consider each restaurant owner's unique backgrounds as key determinants for the way in which they manage their entities.

5.1.3 Partners/Investors

According to an international article conveying some of the challenges experienced by restaurant owners based in New Zealand, it is evident that amongst all the other challenges experienced by entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry (restaurant owners), financial constraints account for the greatest challenge since this challenge has the propensity to dissolve the entire establishment (Restaurant Association of New Zealand, 2013). This was further affirmed by Gijima (n.d), who identified the following as some of the main challenges faced by restaurant owners in South Africa:

- Cost management
- Management and retention of key skills and resources
- Balancing the use of technology with being able to provide a personal touch
- Profitable growth in a world of fierce competition.

It is evident from the above challenges that without a stable cash flow, none of the challenges can be adequately addressed, excluding the first challenge which speaks explicitly to a need for a stable flow of capital within the establishment. In order to combat an establishment's inability to financially sustain itself during unforeseen circumstances, most restaurant owners enlist the support of investors or partners to ease the financial burden. The exchange between investors or partners and the restaurant owners is typically guided by the amount of capital that is being invested into the establishment and the terms governing the exchange may also dictate the roles fulfilled by the investors or partners in the establishment. Partners, usually have much more administrative control over how the establishment is managed as compared to investors, who are typically silent contributors who are more interested in the establishment's profit margins.

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According to the findings of the study, one restaurant was run by siblings who considered each other equal partners. Thus, this necessitated that their functions as well as their responsibilities be jointly shared. One respondent stated that his restaurant was still in "*a successful partnership*" (Cape Town Fish Market) with two partners. The respondent also added that they had investors who were approached in the beginning stages of the entrepreneurial venture, but they had been paid off. Although one respondent (Crawdaddy's) did not make use of investors or partners to fund his establishment, he mentioned that he did request a loan from a financial institution. There was only one restaurant owner, who is the sole owner, who indicated that they did not seek any financial aid from investors or partners.

Since half of the respondents indicated that they sought financial aid and the other half shared their experience of not needing additional financial assistance, it is evident that a restaurant owner's background plays a significant role in terms of financial security. One of the restaurant owners shared that they did not need financial aid, this may be due to their being a serial entrepreneur who has accessible funds from his other entrepreneurial ventures. The other respondent, who had not approached any external systems to secure financial support, indicated that since he co-owned the restaurant with his sibling, they shared the financial responsibility.

The type of restaurant owned by the respective restaurant owners could also be another factor contributing to the varying challenges experienced by the restaurant owners. The two restaurant owners who shared that they did not seek financial aid from investors or partners both owned what has been categorised as non-franchise restaurants for purposes of this study. The other two restaurant owners who sought financial aid owned formal franchises. It was interesting to note that the formal franchises sought financial aid as it is typically assumed that franchise restaurants automatically receive free marketing from their sister franchises due to the association drawn between them, for example, Dros franchises use the same marketing material across all sister franchises. Therefore, this further suggested that establishing formal franchise restaurants posed its own challenges in comparison to the establishment of non-franchise restaurants, whose owners expressed their not needing financial support.

5.1.4 Challenges experienced by restaurant owners

From the literature consulted and from the researcher's interactions with the respondents, it was evident that the restaurant industry cannot be classified as having an environment that is systematic or one that is predictable. The restaurant is a dynamic industry and its operations

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make this industry and its incumbents susceptible to numerous challenges that most industries do not have to contend with. Some of the challenges experienced by most restaurants and restaurant owners entail having to contend with unreliable suppliers, having to satisfy broad customer needs, having to comply with random health inspections, having to contend with unconventional operating hours which increase the restaurant's vulnerability to crime (Simpson, 2009). These challenges, if not effectively managed, may lead to susceptibilities to onsets of psychological stress amongst restaurant owners. Hurley (n.d) asserts that the issue of burnout is very common particularly within the restaurant industry and it is typically the highest in the restaurant industry as compared to other industries. In order to gain an understanding of the restaurant owners' experiences of psychological stress within their respective restaurants, the researcher asked each restaurant owner to share their experiences with the challenges they experience within their restaurants. It is with this understanding of the challenges the restaurant owners are exposed to that an in-depth understanding of the restaurant industry and those who function within it can be better attained.

Each restaurant owner used their own interpretation of their worldview and their own experiences to make sense and to understand their respective worlds as best as they saw fit. Although there are some challenges that are common amongst the restaurant owners, each restaurant owner experienced the challenges differently as influenced by their individual background and their environments. Therefore, one restaurant owner could have not internalized the effects of a particular challenge whilst another restaurant owner could have experienced an identical challenge differently and internalized its effects. The purpose of documenting the challenges experienced by the restaurant owners in a pamphlet was not to unify their challenges in order for readers to generalize the challenges across all restaurants, but the intended purpose was to share the challenges experienced by restaurant owners in order to advance an awareness of the intricacies involved in the running of a restaurant. It was evident throughout the literature review that there was limited knowledge of the restaurant industry and its unconventional operations which led it to the equally unconventional challenges. Being a contributor towards the country's employment rate and the country's economy, it is pivotal that this industry also be afforded the same respect as conventional industries.

These challenges below were identified as some of the reasons that make the restaurant industry a psychologically stressful environment to function within (Hurley, nd):

- Overwhelming increase in pressure and job demands
- Having little or no control over own work

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- A stressful, hostile or unpleasant work environment
- Long working hours resulting in a lack of sleep or rest
- The eminent monotony and repetitiveness of the functions
- The need to constantly please every customer, regardless of their demeanor
- Job descriptions or expectations that are not clearly defined
- Losing a sense of balance between work and home life
- Stressful interactions with customers and suppliers
- Lower rate of pay in comparison to the hours spent at work

The prevalence of unforeseen and unexpected challenges not only has the tenacity to incite the onset of psychological stress amongst restaurant owners, but this may also lead to the ultimate failure of the entrepreneurial venture if these challenges are not timeously managed or addressed. The main objective of this study was to uncover from the interviews with the respondents, the challenges they experience by exploring what they perceived to be psychological stressors as influenced by their varying restaurants.

Understandably these challenges were be influenced by the contexts within which the restaurant owners function within and how the restaurant owners interpreted their identified challenges.

It was evident from the findings that most of the challenges identified by the restaurant owners were not only influenced by the varying contexts that they functioned within, but they were also influenced by the owners' knowledge of the restaurant industry. Most of the respondents had extensive experience within the restaurant industry; either through their past experiences from working as waiters in the industry or due their family background which was rooted in the restaurant industry. Two respondents shared their past experiences having managed past restaurants. It was this experience that, according to the restaurant owners, that best equipped them to deal with some of the unforeseen challenges they were exposed to. Their past experience made it easier for them deal with staff absenteeism challenges and those related to dealing with health inspectors.

A) Busy Schedule

One restaurant owner mentioned that he felt that his busy schedule was a challenge for him. He shared how this challenge had a negative impact of him in that he was constantly busy and had limited time to pursue his personal interests. In order to ensure that the researcher understood the extent of his busy schedule the restaurant owner stated that needed to oversee every aspect of the restaurant's operations.

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B) Food suppliers

None of the restaurant owners expressed any challenges related to their food suppliers. According to the owner of the Cape Town Fish Market, he had through his years of working in the restaurant industry established close networks, which he made continuous use of when the need arose. This affirms the fact that it is beneficial, if not crucial, for restaurant owners to be part of an industry-related network, especially one that involves support/aid agencies.

C) Legislation

In a presentation entitled "*Trends and Challenges in the Restaurant Industry",* Iles (n.d) recognises the influx in operational costs as a challenge faced by numerous restaurant owners. These costs range from utility costs, legislative costs, insurance costs and increases in health care costs. A restaurant owner shared his challenge brought on by the latest legislation that mandated that smokers be situated in their own secluded location away from public visibility. According to the restaurant owner this legislation had a negative impact on the restaurant's operations and his smoking customers' dining experience. Although he had abided by the legislation, he shared a common perception shared by his customers who felt that they were being "*cocooned in a small place without any ventilation whilst non-smokers have the privilege of being outside…"(Moo Moo).* This suggested that the customers who smoke felt as though their rights were not treated with the same priority as the non-smoking customers.

D) Financial security

Each respondent had varying challenges, although it was evident that the main challenge experienced by all of them entailed the issue of ensuring that their establishments were financially sustainable. Although most entrepreneurs who chose to function in the restaurant industry are typically motivated by the possibility of gaining financial independence, it was evident from the findings that the issue of ensuring their financial stability was an eminent challenge. It was evident that most restaurant owners have had to invest a sizeable amount of capital throughout the establishment phase of their restaurants and throughout the maintenance phase of the restaurant's daily operations regardless of the negative impact of the economy. Financial security proved to be a constant challenge experienced by all respondents even though some did not seek financial aid from partners or investors; they still had to ensure their restaurant's financial sustainability. According to one respondent, it was challenging locating the capital to establish his restaurant, but he also mentioned that it remained a challenge ensuring that the restaurant stayed afloat during the unpredictable economic climate within this country.

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The main challenge that threatened the financial stability of most respondents' restaurants was brought on by cost of labour, including the training costs. This alludes to the fact that although restaurant owners have more control over their financial gains, they are still vulnerable to the greater economic climate.

E) Quality of meals

It was evident that the type of restaurant that the respondents functioned within had an influence on their perceived challenges. The seafood restaurant had challenges with the constant scrutiny and the pressure for their seafood to always be fresh or they could face being shut down by health inspectors. According to one respondent, seafood deliveries to the restaurant are made daily and these require extensive quality control before they are accepted by the restaurant. The respondent affirmed that having strict quality control measures, knowledge of seafood quality indexes and having knowledge of the restaurant industry can help overcome such challenges and enable an individual to spot unreliable suppliers.

One respondent stated that although their restaurant dealt with a plethora of different type of food, they too had challenges standardising the quality of their meals. The respondent mentioned that due to the influx of clients the restaurant services, this necessitates that some foods are pre-cooked to ensure that clients do not wait long for their meals. He mentioned that they have since started using pre-cooked pizza dough to save time on the actual kneading and baking of pizza dough. Although the restaurant had managed to secure a solution to their problem (influx of clients), it has been at the expense of the quality of their food.

F) Crime

The fact that there had been an increase in criminal activities a few kilometres from the restaurant, posed a threat to the restaurant's sustainability. The restaurant owner stated that due to incidences of "*smash and grabs*" in the area, he feared that his customers would not visit his restaurant as frequently as they used to. This was the only restaurant owner that shared his challenge pertaining to the training of his staff. The same restaurant owner shared his frustration with having to retrain the same individuals as this not only wasted operational time, but it meant that he would have to deviate from his priorities in order to focus on the training aspects. Being a service driven environment, it is crucial for the restaurant to ensure that the quality of service delivery offered is of a high standard in order to ensure that the establishment can maintain its current clientele and attract new clientele.

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Although the other respondents did not mention any challenges with safety and security within their interviews, this challenge remains one that has an impact on any restaurant's operations and its reputation. A restaurant is seen by many customers as a place for them to spend their recreational time with their friends and often times, their family. No individual would frequent a restaurant that does not guarantee their safety and one that has a reputation for being a crime hotspot.

G) Human resources

Restaurant owners also shared the challenges they had experienced in relation to their staff. Considering that restaurants do not function within the conventional eight or nine working hours and the typical working period comprising of only weekdays, it is inevitable that this industry will be prone to its unique set of industry-specific challenges. Not only do restaurants have to contend with similar challenges as those experienced by conventional industries, such as adapting to the economic climate, they also have to compete with challenges specific only to their industry, such as adhering to health regulations and adapting to influxes to food prices. It was also evident from this study that although there may be a commonality amongst some challenges experienced by conventional industries and the restaurant industry such as staff absenteeism, the magnitude to which this challenge affects each industry varies greatly. For instance, in a conventional industry issues of absenteeism do not have a grave impact as they do in the restaurant industry.

There is a constant need amongst all restaurant owners to effectively manage their staff's morale, especially since the human resources is considered the most valuable and expensive strategic asset especially within the restaurant industry (Kasavana, 2012). Kasavana (2012), further states that the estimated total costs associated with employee absenteeism, also known as time theft, in the restaurant industry, accounts for 36% of a restaurant's payroll expenditure. According to a report published by Circadian Technologies (2005), almost one in ten employees is absent when he or she should be at work, often resulting in direct and indirect costs associated with that absenteeism. Restaurant owners need to employ strategies and software aimed at monitoring and reducing employee absenteeism.

There are three different types of absenteeism, as identified by Circadian Technologies (2005), all of which have dire effects on the smooth running of a restaurant.

Scheduled absences consist of time taken away from work by the employee during the holiday season, the time taken away from work for personal time and this also includes the

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employees' annual leave. Excess costs arise when this time is taken away from the restaurant, but is not reported or it is taken when it has not been earned or when it has not yet accrued. However, when effectively managed, this type of absenteeism is easy to plan for as the restaurant owner can easily reallocate resources to fill the absence.

Unscheduled absences include sick days, family responsibility leave, funeral attendance, family emergencies, injury at work absences, etc. This type of absenteeism becomes costly when it is also taken by the employees, but is not reported or when it is taken by employees often without any authentic reasons presented to the owner. Two-thirds of this type of absenteeism is associated with non-sickness absenteeism (personal reasons, feeling of entitlement, family issues). Thus, making this type of absence the most commonly abused by employees and one of the most challenging for restaurant owners to plan for.

Partial shift absences include late arrivals to work, early departures or employees taking longer breaks or lunches than permitted. This type of absence has a direct impact on the restaurant's operations as it reduces or delays production and often results in customers not being adequately serviced. Absenteeism, regardless of the different type, results in a disruption in business process, such as the allocation of tables to each waiter and the reduced profits attainable from a reduced number of employees. This not only affects the restaurant's operations, but it affects the synergy amongst the staff especially when the staff present at work is constantly overburdened with additional functions.

According to an article by Jenkins (n.d.) finding the appropriate staff-fit with a restaurant owner's restaurant is a challenging process. The number of accessible staff that a restaurant has assures that the number of tables in that specific restaurant can be readily attended to. The efficiency to which these tables are attended to has a direct effect on the positive experience experienced by the clientele. The customers' positive experience has an impact on the restaurant's sales per day and accumulatively, this has an overall impact on the restaurant's profit margins and reputation. Therefore, the restaurant owner needs to ensure that they have employed a substantial amount of staff, staff that requires minimum training and staff that has the right work ethic for the restaurant. Since the industry is profit driven, the restaurant owner should be able to find a balance between the restaurant's needs and the staff's needs. Much like any working relationship, conflict is bound to result. However, this may be heightened by the strenuous working conditions prevalent in the restaurant industry.

The restaurant industry requires that restaurant owners and their staff work within close proximities with each other throughout the week and in most cases during the weekend as

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well as throughout most holidays. It is within these long working periods coupled with the incidence of burnout that conflict may arise. Most of the restaurant owners shared their challenges arising from their staffing issues with only one restaurant owner who stated that his constant absence from the establishment may have a negative effect on his managers' productivity. This particular restaurant owner stated that he could not share his experience with challenges brought on by the environment since he delegated most of the running to his managers. The other restaurant owners shared their varying challenges with regards to their staff. One restaurant owner stated that his challenge arose from his staff requesting a higher remuneration package that the restaurant could afford, whilst another restaurant owner shared his frustrations with having to constantly retrain his staff.

This labour intensive industry tends to spend more revenue on attracting customers as opposed to its labour costs; quite simply because without the customer the restaurant cannot sustain itself. What caused a dilemma for the respondents, as stated within their interviews, was the fact that when staff was initially recruited, as in the case of the newly opened restaurant (BLK Lounge), they understood the change in their remuneration packages in comparison to what they were previously paid by their former employer. However, according to the restaurant owner, staff soon demanded that their remuneration be revised without considering the financial performance of the restaurant. For staff to make informed suggestions when requesting for a review of their remuneration package they need to be informed of the restaurant' financial situation. A level of transparency needs to be employed as part of the restaurants retention strategy and as a way to foster trust between the parties.

H) Marketing

Two of the respondents stated that they had challenges with marketing their establishments. One respondent stated that he had limited marketing strategies to his disposal, since his establishment only focused on one type of food. The other respondent stated that due to the number of failed restaurants that have been established in the same location his restaurant was based, there was scepticism regarding the success of his restaurant. In response to this the restaurant owner has opted to let the restaurant operate within weekdays and weekends in order to generate an interest in his restaurant and to generate more profits.

When respondents were asked if they felt that their shared challenges could be inferred to all restaurants and to other entrepreneurial ventures, most of them stated that their respective challenges can only describe their respective restaurants and not any other establishment or entrepreneurial venture. Therefore, the challenges differ across industries and the challenges

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faced by each restaurant owner are unique only to their own restaurant and cannot be generalised to other restaurants. Thus, interventions aimed at the restaurant industry need to be tailor-made for each type of restaurant.

5.1.5 Understanding of Psychological Stress and its causes

The aim of IPA is to understand individuals' experiences of a phenomenon from their perspectives and through their experiences, which is why the researcher allowed the restaurant owners an opportunity to describe what they understood or interpreted from the term "psychological stress". Furthermore, in order to understand how the restaurant owners experienced their respective interpretations of psychological stress they were asked to share any challenges that they had experienced within their respective restaurants that had the propensity of triggering onsets of psychological stress. As evident from the challenges described by the restaurant owners the restaurant industry exposes its incumbents to various psychological stressors. The bulk of the psychological stress is experienced by restaurant owners due to their multidimensional roles and responsibilities, which transcend the norm of what is typically expected within conventional industries.

The restaurant industry's daily operations are typified by constant and unpredictable activity. It is an environment where a plethora of personalities are compelled to work together in close proximity and on a continuous basis. It is within this high pressured environment that most restaurant owners become susceptible to onsets of what Lazarus et al., (1985) describe as psychological stress. According to these authors psychological stress is a negative relational reaction to external stimuli. The term also describes the relationship between the external stimuli and an individual's ability to overcome the stimuli's influence. The extent to which an individual experiences the external stimuli and the continual exposure to such stimuli has negative influences which may spur the onset of psychological stress. This becomes an eventuality when the individual lacks internal coping mechanisms such as the resilience to overcome the negative experience or any external coping mechanisms, such as venting or exercising.

The respondents were first asked to describe from their respective points of view what they understood from the term "psychological stress" and as a follow up question, the respondents were asked to share what they perceived to be the causes of "psychological stress" within their respective restaurants. The respondents shared varying definitions of the phenomenon as influenced by their understanding of the term and their respective experiences. However, there was a notable commonality amongst all their interpretations in that they all described

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this phenomenon as a negative psychological reaction brought on by either stress or burnout. All of the respondents agreed that this type of stress would prove detrimental to their establishment's operations if it were not adequately managed. It was also evident from the restaurant owner's shared experiences that most of them had experienced incidences of the phenomenon.

The keywords that emanated from their understanding of the term were as follows, "*emotional and mental pressure…", "It's stress, when you can't get anything done", "…a type of stress that affects one psychologically…", "…would it not explain what burnout and stress are, but on a psychological level. So it's when you mentally are stressed...".* Thus, according to the respondents, psychological stress was understood to be a debilitating type of stress that affects an individual emotionally, mentally (psychologically) or physically, making it a challenge for the individual to function effectively. Although many individuals within the restaurant industry may be prone to experiences of psychological stress, due to the magnitude of responsibility assumed by restaurant owners its onset may be most severe amongst them. This was expressed by a restaurant owner whose state of being overwhelmed was evident when he shared his experience of having to focus on menial tasks as well as the most significant tasks whilst also managing staff and ensuring that the restaurant remained sustainable. Restaurant owners have to contend with these challenges on a daily basis. Unlike their staff, who can randomly resign in pursuit of alternative employment, restaurant owners are bound either financially or emotionally to their restaurant. Thus, without the necessary support through support/aid agencies, the cycle of psychological stress within the restaurant industry is bound to be a norm and since the success of the restaurant indirectly relies on the wellbeing of the restaurant owner, the psychological wellbeing of restaurant owners needs prioritisation.

Psychological stress and the types of restaurants

It is crucial to note that the manner in which individuals experience external stimuli as either stressful or not stressful is dependent on their interpretation of the stimuli and the context within which they function. Considering that the Interpretive Phenomenology paradigm highlights the importance of capturing individuals' experiences as they are perceived by the individuals who function in a certain environment, i.e. restaurant industry, this places a greater importance on their first hand experiences than a reliance on secondary data. Two restaurant owners may experience an external stimulus differently from each other. It is this difference that influences what these entrepreneurs may interpret as their major stressors within their varying contexts. According to an explorative study conducted by Njiro, et al.,

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(2010) entrepreneurs who function within South African townships experience different challenges as compared to their counterparts who have establishments in urban areas. These challenges may range from the limited access to funding, the lack of resources and the limited educational background. In a research study undertaken by Enz (2004) restaurant owners within the United States cited issues with reliable staff members as a grave threat to their establishment's success. Therefore, the context within which a restaurant owner functions should be considered as it influences their experiences and it allows for a deeper understanding of their experiences.

From the four restaurants where the interviews were conducted; two interviews were conducted with restaurant owners who owned formal franchise restaurants and an additional two interviews were conducted with restaurant owners of non-franchise restaurants. Formal franchise restaurants, such as Ocean Basket are franchises restaurants that provide a formal family dining experience whilst non-franchise restaurants such as BLK Lounge are not franchises and their dining setting is also formal. Both these restaurants did not cater for the typical food served in fast food restaurants. When the challenges experienced by restaurant owners from the formal franchise restaurants were compared to those of restaurant owners working in the non-franchise restaurants it was evident that formal franchise restaurants had more challenges related to their human resources. Only one restaurant owner of the non-franchise restaurants shared his challenge with his staff. Further differences between the restaurants showed that the location of the restaurant also predisposed the establishment to additional challenges, such as the incidences of criminal activity shared by one respondent. Another evident contributor to the restaurant owners' stressors was the type of food served within their restaurants.

The restaurant owners who had more flexibility within the menus did not express any challenges influenced by the type of food served in their establishments. The type of food served in a restaurant also influenced the type of regulations that a restaurant owner would have to abide by. One respondent, who functions in a seafood restaurant, stated that he frequently had challenges with suppliers delivering the seafood late or not meeting the restaurant's quality specifications. Another respondent shared a challenge brought on by the negative perception created by the restaurants that had previously failed in the current location that his restaurant was occupying. It is evident that the sources of psychological stress are brought on by various stressors, some being the external environment (economy, crime and regulations), internal factors (negative perceptions) and the restaurant owners' background (experience and educational background). According to an international article

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by Ford (2014) amongst the challenges faced by franchise restaurants in Africa, the most recent challenge is the escalating food prices that have affected a number of establishments and as a result they are often the reason leading to the closure of a number of restaurants.

From the interviews, it was evident that all of the respondents had a plethora of challenges that predispose them to onsets of psychological stress. Therefore, on the basis of the respondents' understanding that these challenges could prove detrimental to their establishments and their mental health if not adequately managed, the researcher asked the respondents to share any coping mechanisms that they made use of.

5.1.6 Coping mechanisms employed

The purpose of this item was to allow an opportunity to explore the various coping mechanisms utilised by the respondents, in light of the stressors they are exposed to within their various restaurants. These coping mechanisms were explored in consideration of the respondents' perspectives, their different contexts and each respondent's varying experiences within the restaurant industry. As a follow up question, the respondents were asked if they felt that their means of coping with their respective stressors were effective and if they felt that these coping mechanisms were sustainable.

According to Iles (n.d), an executive chef from Sierra Nevada Brewery, restaurant owners should possess the ability to minimize any physical and mental stress through the use of various skills such as efficient organisation and thorough preparation. The respondents shared various coping mechanisms that they employed within their respective contexts, these ranged from setting time aside to relax, eating healthy, frequenting the gym, going out with friends, keeping a positive outlook and being pragmatic about the challenges. One respondent stated that it was impossible for him to leave the restaurant in order to tend to his recreational needs. This suggested that there may be a trend amongst restaurant owners to overlook their personal needs, which may indirectly lead to them developing other cathartic behaviors, such as smoking to ease the effect of their stressors. As asserted to within the literature consulted in this study, it is crucial for an entrepreneur to schedule time away from stressful incidents to relax and partake in activities (Volery & Pullich, 2009) that have a positive effect on their state of mind (Su & Zhang, 2014). Whilst some research articles affirmed that the support received from the restaurant owner's family may also reduce the impact of psychological stress (Beauregard, 2007), the restaurant owner's ability to fulfill their own recreational needs is also pivotal. Cohen, Tyrell and Smith (1991) reinforce the importance of proactively dealing with psychological stressors. According to the findings from

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a study conducted by the researchers it was evident that the continued exposure to psychological stressors has a dire effect on an individual's immune system as it increases its vulnerability to respiratory infections such as influenza. Thus, this reinforces the link between an individual's mental health and their physical wellbeing.

When the respondents were asked to share if they felt that their coping mechanism were effective and sustainable, most of them felt that they were. However, they all stated that should there be any coping mechanisms that were proven to be more effective than theirs they would be interested in adopting them. It was evident that only a few of the restaurant owners had any knowledge of what support/aid agencies are and the function they perform. Although most had heard of RASA they were not certain of its function even though they could postulate as to what they may be.

The challenges and coping mechanisms utilized by these restaurant owners will be documented within a pamphlet, which will be made available towards the end of the research study to all interested restaurant personnel and to those who partook in the study. The purpose of this pamphlet is to inform other restaurant owners of the challenges experienced and coping mechanisms utilised by their peers with the hope that such an informative platform will form a foundation for discourses pertaining to this industry and its intricacies. The Knowledge Spill over theory of entrepreneurship asserts that entrepreneurship does not only entail the creation of a business, but it is also an avenue within which acquired knowledge and experience can be shared amongst peers (Acs & Audretsch, 2010).

5.1.7 Support/Aid agencies

In an international study conducted by Edralin and Castillo (2001) within which they explored the importance of restaurants forming linkages with external support systems, it was evident from their findings that there was indeed a great benefit to be enjoyed by restaurants through the formation of such partnerships. Due to the restaurant industry's low barriers of entry which ensure that almost any potential entrepreneur can establish a restaurant with relative ease; this exposes the industry to bounds of competiveness. It is from this competitive nature, which is characteristic amongst most restaurants that restaurant owners are exposed to immense pressures to keep their establishment unique and profitable. The researchers identified the following as some of the external support systems/available to restaurant owners' aid; government agencies, industry associations and trade unions. Considering the functional role performed by support/aid agencies, as they are referred to within this study, financial institutions can also form part of the support system. The overall purpose of

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support/aid agencies is to expose restaurant owners to programmes and systems aimed at professionalising the industry (Edralin & Castillo, 2001) by offering industry-specific support to the restaurant owners.

One support/aid agency, which was alluded to within this study, was the Restaurant Association of South African (RASA). RASA is an organisation that advocates for the rights and privileges of restaurant owners in South Africa. Prior to this organisation's establishment, the restaurant industry and specifically the restaurant owners were thwarted by innumerable challenges that often resulted in many establishments closing down prematurely. Due to the increased establishment of such support/aid agencies and the resultant access to these agencies, more restaurant owners have been able to successfully reap the rewards from such partnerships. Amongst the plethora of benefits offered by RASA to the restaurant industry, the organisation also assists restaurant owner's gain an understanding of the compliance issues that are pertinent to the restaurant industry. Furthermore, the organisation assists restaurant owners with marketing initiatives as well as training programmes tailored specifically for staff functioning in the industry.

It was evident that most of the challenges explored within this study could be addressed through linkages with such support/aid agencies. Although most of the respondents expressed familiarity with RASA's name, they shared that they had not engaged nor had they thorough knowledge of the support/aid agency's functions. It was further affirmed that support/aid agencies, according to one of the respondents, also constituted the financial institutions, such as banks.

P1: *"Yes, I have heard of RASA. Don't they provide legal advice or provide industry related marketing opportunities?..."* (Cape Town Fish Market).

P2: *"RASA? That…That sounds familiar, but let me not agree to something without the utmost certainty…no I haven't heard of them, but the name isn't new to me…"* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"As I mentioned I have only used a bank…so no I don't know of RASA. What is it?... (Incoherent) …Oh ok, yes…*(Crawdaddy's)

All of the respondents were in support of forming linkages with support/aid agencies as they showed an understanding of the importance for entrepreneur within the restaurant industry to be abreast with developments related to this industry.

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5.1.8 Collaboration between restaurant owners and support/aid agencies

It is evident from the literature consulted that not only is the link between restaurant owners and industry specific support/aid agencies crucial, but the respondents agreed that it would also be beneficial. For purposes of this study, support/aid agencies comprise any entity that offers any form of support necessary in the restaurant industry. These agencies may entail, banking institutions, bargaining councils that offer industry-specific labour law support, marketing companies and catering associations that offer training workshops for staff functioning in the restaurant industry. There was a unanimous agreement amongst the respondents that linkages between restaurants and support/aid agencies need to be prioritised. It was also expressed by one respondent that their lack of knowledge about support/aid agencies, in general, may be due to the agencies' limited visibility.

P1: *"…It would do us entrepreneurs in this industry a great deal of help if we were linked to them"* (Cape Town Fish Market).

P2: *"Yes, it would be helpful if we were linked to these support systems. RASA?..."* (BLK Lounge)

P3: *"…Oh ok, yes, I suppose they would [help] and if they were well known, you know? So people know where to go for assistance…"* (Crawdaddy's)

P4: *"Ya, I suppose so. If they are there why not?"* (Moo Moo).

In accordance to the study's third objective, which was to explore the prevalence of stress management within the restaurant industry and restaurant owners' awareness of any support/aid agencies, it was evident from the findings that the restaurant owners could benefit from additional stress management techniques as well as the establishment of partnerships with support/aid agencies. The restaurant industry, as guided by the findings, is prone to a number of stressors that can contribute to work-related ill health and adverse effects on the restaurant owners' psychological well-being (Lo & Lamm, 2005), which can ultimately result in significant economic losses to the restaurant. Considering that the respondents were all in support of the establishment of collaborations with support/aid agencies, this also made it evident that none of them had interacted with any support/aid agencies, with exception to a financial institution. Thus, this further supported the need for collaborations between restaurants and support/aid agencies.

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5.2 Summary of observations

When considering the reliability of a qualitative research study, it is necessary to also consider its validity. The qualitative study's validity refers to the quality of data emanating from the actual study. In order to achieve a level of validity within this study the researcher's field notes (Griffiths, 2009), observations (Larkin, et al., 2006) and the transcribed data formed a corroborative foundation during data analysis (Pringle *et. al,* 2011). Apart from the need to ensure elements of rigor in the study, the incorporation of the researcher's observations also helped capture the interactions that could not be thoroughly captured in the interviews and prior to the interview process. All of these interactions provide deeper insight into the restaurant industry and the individuals who function within this industry. Thus, this process allowed the researcher an opportunity to be fully enveloped in the restaurants owners' viewpoints and worldview by also being an active participant observer (Kawulich, 2005).

According to Kawulich (2005), observations within qualitative research studies aim at ascertaining the occurrence of certain behaviours, which may have been omitted from direct interactions with the sample, such as through interviews. Observations also give the researcher access to the respondents' interaction with their context. Thus, allowing the researcher an opportunity to corroborate any information collected through the interview process with the observations made; allowing for the holistic understanding of the phenomenon being researched (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002). The inclusion of observation notes as well as debriefing notes, which were captured separately after each interview, allowed the researcher to be reflexive within the study by giving an account of the researcher's role within the data collection process and by observing the manifestation of the phenomenon in its context. The purpose of reflexivity is to increase the rigor in a qualitative study by ensuring that the study and its findings can be considered to be valid (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). The observation notes and debriefing notes also allowed the researcher a platform to better understand the respondents, the phenomenon and the respondents' contexts before proceeding with the interviews.

Below, a summation of observations recorded throughout the researcher's interactions with all 13 restaurants will be discussed. It was evident throughout the interview scheduling process that restaurant owners were challenging to locate. Although only four (4) interviews were successfully completed, observations were recorded from all 13 restaurants.

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5.2.1 Spur

The researcher experienced difficulty engaging with personnel from this restaurant. The first request for an interview was sent in December 2013 and it was only after several attempts that the researcher received an email from the restaurant in January 2014. According to the latest response received from the restaurant, the restaurant was in the process of finalising its recruitment processes in search for a new manager, hence the delay. However, there was still no date finalised for the interview sought in December 2013. The researcher's role in this process was reactive in that the researcher only received feedback on emails sent only after initiating the process. In order to counter this, the researcher then opted to proactively follow up on the emails personally. The purpose of the personal visits was to personalise the researcher's request for restaurant owners to participate in the study. The personal visit also allowed the researcher an opportunity to clarify any content related to the study's material, to secure interview dates with the restaurant owners, to spur a sense of urgency and to trigger a quid pro quo relationship as the researcher would buy a meal from each restaurant in the hopes that this would in turn urge the restaurant owners to agree to partake in the study.

There were a number of critical issues noted from the researcher's observations, such as the fact that the restaurant was busier on Saturdays during peak times (18:00-22:00) and the number of tables that shared waiters/waitresses indicated that there was a staff shortage issue. This was also affirmed by the manager's efforts to also attend to the waiting tables. Although, an interview was not completed, it was evident from these observations that the restaurant had challenges with either their staff allocation, especially on busy days or the restaurant did not have an adequate staff complement. It was also evident that the manager's responsibilities would be overlooked in order to tend to the immediate customers' needs. Although the observations took place over one full day, the pressure experienced by the manager and the waiting staff was apparent. The restaurant owner could not be located due to other commitments.

5.2.2 Mugg n Bean

It was again a challenge securing an interview with the restaurant owner. According to the operations manager the restaurant owner was constantly away attending to other establishments and had left this restaurant under the operations manager's control. Thus, it was evident and later confirmed that the operations manager had insurmountable knowledge about the establishment and its operations. The operations manager, who had previous experience running a restaurant in India, had extensive industry experience.

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Through his numerous employment opportunities within the restaurant industry, from being a waiter and later promoted to being a manager, who eventually opened his own restaurant in India, he not only has gained an expanse amount of experience in the restaurant industry, he also offered an international outlook of this industry.

However, due to the study's focus an interview with him could not be conducted. The restaurant is situated in a mall and has readily access to numerous customers. Its location also assures the restaurant's safety since the mall has camera surveillance. The researcher visited this restaurant in the morning, which could have explained the relaxed ambience around the restaurant. The restaurant had 6 waiters eagerly waiting to welcome and seat customers.

5.2.3 Ocean Basket

There were difficulties attaining any form of communication from this establishment, as the emails were not responded to and the telephone calls were not returned. The researcher, as per the study's methodology, visited the establishment in order to gain an understanding of the restaurant's operations.

As alluded to within interactions with the other restaurants, the restaurant owner was also not available. Following failed attempts to reschedule interview times, the researcher, considering the deadlines on the study, approached other restaurants for interviews. This restaurant was not busy.

The researcher noted that this restaurant made use of a lot more advertisements for food specials as compared to the other restaurants. Thus, suggesting that there is a limited number of customers that visit this restaurant.

5.2.4 Dros

Although several email and telephonic attempts were made in order to have an interview date put aside, this was not possible. Before the researcher considered visiting the restaurant, the researcher utilised the assistance of a key informant, who worked in the restaurant in order to ensure that the researcher's personal visit corresponded with the restaurant owner's schedule. However, this was also not fruitful. This restaurant had a sizeable number of waiters and was reasonably busy on the day the researcher conducted the personal visit; Friday. There was already a pattern developing, as the restaurants were notably busy on Fridays and during the weekend. This restaurant also seemed to attract an

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assortment of customers, perhaps due to the expanse variety of food in their menus. This restaurant also used techniques to lure customers' interests such as having sports playing on their television screens, while there was audible music also playing in the background.

5.2.5 Wimpy

Email requests for an interview with the restaurant owner were not responded to. The restaurant also had issues with their telephone, which made telephonic inquiry a challenge for the researcher. Considering all of these challenges, the researcher opted for a personal visit to the establishment.

The restaurant was reasonably busy and filled with families, in contrast to the other previously visited restaurants. However, the restaurant owner could not be located and although the manager volunteered to participate, due to the nature of the study, the researcher approached other restaurants.

5.2.6 Steers

This franchise restaurant is known for its take-away meals, which mainly consist of burgers. There were no notable dining tables in the restaurant and the purchased food was also obtained over-the counter. It was only when the customer indicated that they would be eating at the franchise restaurant that they received a plastic tray.

Unfortunately, there were no responses to the researcher's emails and telephone enquiries. Upon the researcher's visit of the restaurant, the restaurant owner and the manager were unavailable. Therefore, the researcher decided to exclude this restaurant from the sample and focus on other restaurants.

5.2.7 Adega

This restaurant was, at the time of the study, situated less than 2kms away from the researcher's place of residence. Due to the close proximity of the restaurant to the researcher's place of residence, the researcher visited this restaurant on more than one occasion in order to schedule an interview date and time.

Although the researcher had met with the restaurant owner on numerous occasions, the interview could not take place due to the restaurant's unexpected closure. According to the staff, the restaurant owner had financial constraints and could not sustain the establishment's operations. Therefore, amongst some of the challenges encountered by restaurant owners, financial security was a major challenge to contend with.

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5.2.8 Heat Grill

According to the restaurant's representative, who attended to the researcher's call, they had not received any emails requesting their participation in a study. Therefore, the researcher initiated a meeting to discuss the material initially attached within the email and to schedule a convenient time for an interview. The restaurant's representative suggested that the researcher liaise with the restaurant's manager as the restaurant owner may not be able to assist due to his busy schedule. Two personal visits were scheduled; one to introduce the study and schedule an opportune time for the interview and a second visit within which the interview would have taken place. However, on the second visit, the restaurant owner could not be interviewed due to the busy operations of the day.

Due to the large size of the restaurant and evidently limited staff present at the time of the potential interview, the restaurant owner spent most of his time welcoming staff and ensuring that their meals were t their respective satisfaction. The restaurant owner was also seen addressing staff absenteeism issues. From what the researcher could gather from the restaurant owner's discussion the levels of staff absenteeism was becoming a growing concern for the restaurant. It was suggested that an alternative time be rescheduled for the interview, but that did not materialise and due to time constraints for this study, the researcher targeted other restaurants.

5.2.9 BLK Lounge

Following the closure of the Adega franchise restaurant, a new restaurant was launched. The researcher sent an email requesting the participation of this restaurant's owner. The restaurant owner agreed to partake within the study and an interview was scheduled after the restaurant's official launch.

The restaurant occupied the same space as Adega, the previous restaurant, and also made use of the same layout as well as some of the same staff. This restaurant was owned by two siblings and had an increased staff complement as compared to Adega. According to the restaurant owner the restaurant was operational every day, including weekends. The restaurant owner was responsive and the interview was completed within 40 minutes. There were no visible challenges that could have easily been observed by the researcher.

5.2.10 Cappuccinos

Emails requesting the restaurant's participation in the study were circulated in February 2014 with no response noted from the establishment by the end of the month. Although, upon the

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researcher's follow up call, a Cappuccinos representative stated that a convenient date and time for the interview would be communicated with the researcher in due course. However, there was no such arrangement finalized by the time the researcher opted to visit the restaurant at the beginning of March 2014.

On the day of the visit, the restaurant was very busy with all waiters attending to a number of tables simultaneously. Although the researcher left contact details for either the restaurant owner or the manager to make use of, the researcher was never contacted for an interview.

5.2.11 Crawdaddy's

Attempts to schedule an interview with this restaurant were also futile. The researcher visited the establishment and requested to speak to either the manager, with the hopes that he or she may escalate the discussion to the restaurant owner.

The researcher, having failed in securing an interview in their first attempt made a random stop at the restaurant on Saturday afternoon and secured an interview. The interview was conducted outside whilst the restaurant owner smoked in the non-smoking area. The restaurant was busy as there were a number of supplies being delivered. The waiting staff was friendly and very professional.

5.2.12 Cape Town Fish Market

Correspondence seeking the restaurants participation within the study was sent and an interview with the restaurant owner was arranged. According to the restaurant owner, he had delegated all managerial control of the establishment to his daughter, whilst he oversaw to the basic quality control tasks, such as ensuring that the right goods are delivered to the restaurant on a daily basis. On the day of the visit, the restaurant was not excessively busy and the restaurant owner was free to interact with the researcher. The restaurant owner was very responsive to all the researcher's questions. The interview was more of a causal conversation and this allowed the restaurant owner an opportunity to speak about his establishment without being guarded.

5.2.13 Moo Moo

Correspondence seeking the restaurants participation within the study was sent and although an interview with the restaurant owner had not been formalised and agreed to, the researcher paid the restaurant a random visit and found the restaurant owner, who was in a rush. The interview was conducted outside on the restaurant's balcony setting.

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Considering that a set time was not agreed to, the restaurant owner came across as very brief and impatient with the questions. The restaurant was busy, but the researcher managed to gather enough data.

From all the observations conducted within the 13-targeted restaurants, it is apparent that the restaurant industry is a busy industry. It is an industry that relies on often quite. According to Kawulich (2005), participant observations are a very useful tool in qualitative studies as they offer a researcher an opportunity to observe behaviours and reactions to a phenomenon that cannot otherwise be captured through verbal exchanges. The researcher is aware of the atmosphere wherein the actors interact within and the researcher is also aware of their nonverbal cues. Thus, allowing the researcher an opportunity to gather more than just the data attained from the interviews. The purpose of observations is to corroborate the already thick description which may have been obtained from interviews (Kawulich, 2005).

The researcher's observations not only suggested that the restaurants observed were typically busy establishment, but also that locating the restaurant's owners was a challenging factor. Most of the restaurants were managed by managers who only liaised with the restaurant owners when there were critical matters to attend to.

It is also crucial to note that the type of restaurant that the restaurant owners worked within had an impact on the type of stressors or challenges they were exposed to. The type of food that the restaurant also served prompted new challenges for the restaurants. Restaurants that served one type of food, such as the Cape Town Fish Market and Ocean Basket, spent more on their marketing costs with the aim of increasing their customer volumes and profit margins. Unlike other restaurants, these restaurants could only advertise one type of food. This lack of variety is one of the challenges noted from the observations and the interviews. Therefore, all restaurant establishments have challenges and these challenges, although most are alike, some are uniquely determined by the restaurant's contexts.

5.3 Limitations of study

There were a number of challenges, which formed limitations to the study, such as the study's sample size, the restaurant owners' unavailability and the respondents' commitment to appointments.

- It was initially agreed that the sample size will comprise of 6 (six) completed interviews. However, due to the continued unavailability of the restaurant owners, the sample size had

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to be reduced in order to also ensure that the study's deadlines were abided by. Considering that the aim of this study was not to generalise the results to other respondents, but to merely explore the incident of psychological stress amongst restaurant owners, a small sample size was permissible. According to Marshall (1996), a usable sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question. This may range from single figures to larger figures, dependent on when data saturation occurs. It is ultimately data saturation that determines when the sample size within qualitative studies is adequate. Once there are no new categories, themes or explanations emerging from the data, the researcher considered this occurrence as an indicator of the appropriate sample size for the study. The 4 (four) interviews provided enough data for the researcher to analyse before extensive data saturation could be observed.

- It was evident throughout most of the interviews that the restaurant owners' availability for the interviews was a challenge. Most restaurant owners were either busy working on other restaurant establishments, had relinquished full control of the restaurant to their managers or they were seldom based within the restaurant and could only be contacted electronically. It was even suggested, in one restaurant, that the interview guide be emailed in the form of a questionnaire for the restaurant owner to complete.

- Following the emailed correspondence, there were still a majority of restaurants that did not respond to the researcher's emails. Therefore, the researcher developed a number of strategies aimed at ensuring that some interviews could be completed. The researcher followed up the emailed correspondence with telephone calls and personal visits. Within the personal visits, the researcher would order a meal in order to offer an exchange for a completed interview. Although these efforts were not successful in some restaurants, they allowed the researcher to complete 4 (four) interviews.

- Some restaurant owners were opposed to having their restaurant's names forming part of the final analysis, as they felt that the challenges alluded to may create a negative impression of the establishment. In such instances, the researcher did not include the restaurant's physical addresses or exact locations.

- The sample was based solely on restaurant owners within the Pretoria city. Thus, other cities were excluded from the sample due to time constraints and the ease of available restaurants within the Pretoria area.

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- Due to the limited literature focusing on the challenges faced by restaurant owners within this industry, a research start point could not be determined. However, this emphasized the need for such studies and the circulation of the results to not only academics, but to the incumbents within the restaurant industry. The restaurant industry has limited focus on the entrepreneurial dynamics and intricacies that influence how a restaurant is managed, but instead there is a focus on the sales generated from restaurant establishments. This study aims at highlighting the significant importance of this industry to a country's economic growth and to an expansion of employment sectors.

5.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the findings of this study were discussed in detail and related to the literature consulted. The themes that arose from the data analysis were also discussed as well as the researcher's observations of all contacted restaurants. The chapter also highlighted the study's limitations and ways in which the researcher made attempts to reduce the extent of the limitations. The next chapter will outline and discuss the conclusion, recommendations and reflections of this study.

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CHAPTER 6
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Recommendations

It is evident from the study's findings that the restaurant industry cannot be compared to conventional establishments nor can it be compared to other entrepreneurial ventures. Restaurants and their incumbents function in a dynamic environment that is not governed by any predetermined operations. Due to this dynamism, activities in the restaurant industry cannot be easily anticipated in comparison to those in conventional establishments. Not only does the restaurant industry contend with most of the challenges prevalent in conventional establishments, it also has to adapt to its unique set of challenges that are influenced by its operations, such as the unconventional working hours, the health regulations and the increased vulnerability to crime. Due to the nature of the restaurant industry, restaurant owners' responsibilities are not only limited to the operational requirements of the establishment, but they also need to contend with challenges brought on by human resources as well as ensuring that their customers' needs are attended to. Restaurant owners are compelled to have to fulfil multiple roles in their establishments.

It is the multiple roles that restaurant owners need to perform on a continuous basis and the complexities that arise within the restaurant industry that predispose restaurant owners to psychological stress. This is especially exasperated by the absence of any means aimed at addressing the challenges and the absence of any support systems. The constant imbalance between the restaurant's needs, the staff's needs, the customers' needs, the restaurant owner's vision and the restaurant owner's personal needs contribute to the incidence of psychological stress amongst restaurant owners. As described in the literature consulted and the findings, the continuous exposure to psychological stress has a detrimental effect on an individual's ability to function efficiently and noting that restaurants offer the most employment opportunities in the labour market, support systems need aimed at curbing the incidence of psychological stress need to be strengthened. The recommendations below were guided by the challenges experienced by the restaurant owners' within their respective restaurants.

As influenced by their varying contexts, their diverse backgrounds, their different perceptions of what constitutes a challenge based on their interpretations, the respondents indicated that they experienced the following challenges:

- Busy schedules

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- The type of food served by a restaurant
- Restaurant owner's constant absence
- Legislation
- Financial security
- Criminal activity
- Human Resource issues (staff issues)
- Marketing strategies

From an analysis of the experiences shared by the respondents, it is recommended that support-driven interventions aimed at the restaurant industry need to be customised to the specific needs identified within a particular restaurant. It is evident from the findings that similar types of restaurants (franchise restaurants) did not have identical challenges regardless of the similarity of the restaurant type. It was also evident that regardless of the number of years' experience each restaurant owner had, they were still prone to experience challenges. Although it was apparent that all restaurant owners had experienced divergent challenges and that they had interpreted their respective experiences of their challenges differently, there was a commonality noted amongst some of the challenges. For instance, all restaurant owners had challenges related to human resource aspects, but the extent of these challenges was experienced differently by the restaurant owners. One restaurant owner was very pragmatic in his approach to his human resource challenges, whilst another restaurant owner expressed great dismay over the same challenge.

6.2 Psychological impact of stressors

Before the challenges and the recommendations are discussed, it is pivotal that an understanding of the psychological impact brought on by stressors experienced by restaurant owners is addressed. In a study conducted by Beheshtifar and Nazarian (2013), occupational stress was defined as a subjective experience involving an employee's interpretation of their circumstances. This highlights the notion that psychological stress can also emanate from an individual's workplace. Furthermore, the subjective nature of the stressful experience cannot be deemed the same across all restaurant owners' experiences. Each restaurant owner will experience their perceived challenge differently. The impact of the psychological stress experienced can also not be generalised across all restaurant owners, but what can be understood from the findings is that the negative impact does exist across all restaurant owners.

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The impacts of occupational stress can be categorised into two groups; individual impacts and organisational impacts (Beheshtifar & Nazarian, 2013). The individual impacts are described by the researchers as the negative affect brought on by the experienced stressors (Emotional health), a decrease in the individual's positive body image or the uptake of unhealthy behaviours such as excessive alcohol intake or smoking (Physiological health) and the decreased ability in the individual's cognitive functioning (Psychological health). Therefore, individual impacts of occupational stress/ psychological stress affect the individual on a three-tiered scale. Organisational impacts of occupational stress/psychological stress have a negative effect on the context within which the stressed individual functions, such as the restaurant. These impacts are demarcated into two clusters; organisational symptoms and organisational costs. Organisational symptoms are the symptoms that indicate the presence of psychological stress, such as excessive absenteeism, psychological spill-over and the decreased productivity, whilst the organisational costs are the results brought on by the incidence of psychological stress, for example the lowered profit margins and the unfortunate foreclosure of a restaurant.

According to Nixon (as cited in Maymand, et.al, 2012) the relationship between stress and an individual's performance can be best understood through his depiction of the stress response curve. This is the depiction used in this study to best understand the effects of psychological stress on restaurant owners. The stress response curve suggests that an individual is likely to perform optimally in an environment where the stress levels are perceived to be manageable. This is due to the motivation triggered by what the individual perceives to be an adequate and satisfactory supply of good stress (Eustress). However, the increase of stressful triggers in an environment or the continuous exposure to stressful triggers has an adverse effect on the individual's performance. As per Nixon's depiction, the increase of stressful exposure leads to what he terms as Distress; the bad stress.

According to Nixon this increased level of stress has a detrimental effect on the individual's ability to function. Therefore, in order to ensure that performance is optimally managed, the levels of stress within a specific context need to be equilibrated or adequate support systems need to be implemented. Another theory consulted within the study is the Person-Environment Fit Theory. This theory defines stress as an internalised negative perception in response to an externally stressful situation (Cox, 1993). According to this theory the person's interaction within and with their environment determines whether they have positive or negative reactions to stress. The theory further usurps that a mis-fit between the person and the environment occurs when the person cannot cope with the stress experienced within

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an environment or cannot function adequately within the stressful environment. A perfect fit exists when the person does not experience any triggers related to psychological stress.

The theories consulted in this study affirmed the evident relationship between stress and an individual's performance. It was crucial for this study to explore the challenges/stressors experienced by restaurant owners in order understand the impact of the challenges/stressors on the restaurant owners' psychological wellbeing. Beheshtifar and Nazarian (2013) identified various influencers of psychological stress and these were similar to those experienced as well as shared by the restaurant owners. The researchers found that job demand was a contributor to psychological stressor since it exposes the individual to demands that they may not be able to achieve, such as working on a difficult task or work overload. The climate within which the individual functions was also considered as another contributor to psychological stress since most individual's function optimally in positive environments. The types of interpersonal relationships the individual has with either their colleagues or their superiors can also influence their experience of psychological stress. An individual's inability to find a balance between their work and their personal time was also identified as a stressor as well as issues related to their remuneration (Beheshtifar & Nazarian, 2013). The sections following will give an overview of the challenges experienced by the restaurant owners followed by the recommendations.

6.3 Challenges/stressors

6.3.1 The type of food served by a restaurant

Although this challenge was not characteristic across all restaurant owners', it was a crucial challenge as expressed by one respondent who owned a seafood restaurant. According to the respondent's experience the type of food served in his restaurant contributed greatly to his experience psychological stress. The restaurant owner shared two ways in which the type of food served in his restaurant contributed to his experience of psychological stress. Firstly, the type of food served in his restaurant limited the ways in which he could market his restaurant. The respondent stated that due to the limited means at his disposal to creatively advertise seafood he has had to contend with this continuous challenge. Secondly, the respondent alluded to the health inspections quality specifications that his restaurant needed to abide by as an additional stress trigger; primarily because their failure to abide by the specifications could lead to the restaurant closing down. The possible loss of a stable income due to overlooked quality control measures was an evident stressful trigger for the restaurant owner. An article by Ritter, Nash and Small (n.d) affirms the existence of challenges brought on by having to advertise or market seafood. The authors suggest various means such as

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promotional advertising where bargains or free food may be offered as part of the restaurant's promotional season. It is also recommended that restaurant owners' conduct a customer needs assessment amongst their customers in order to determine their customer needs. Thus, this will better position the restaurant's service delivery in line with the identified needs.

6.3.2 Marketing strategies

Although the above challenge related to advertising issues brought on by the type of food served in one particular restaurant, in this section the marketing challenges were experienced by more than one restaurant owner. Two respondents stated that they had challenges with their marketing strategies. One respondent stated that he had limited marketing strategies to his disposal, since his establishment only focused on one type of food. The other respondent stated that due to the number of failed restaurants that were located in the same location his restaurant was now based, there was a great deal of scepticism regarding the success of his restaurant. In response to this identified challenge, the restaurant owner had opted for his restaurant to operate within weekdays and also during weekends in order to generate an interest in his restaurant and as a result to generate more profits.

Other respondents stated that ensuring that their marketing strategies were current, whilst making sure that they were also cost-effective, was a challenge. Training programmes aimed at enhancing restaurant owners' ability to market their services may prove to be an advantageous part of the restaurant owners' skills development. There seemed to be a difference between how restaurant owners of franchise restaurants and those of non-franchise restaurants experienced this challenge. It seemed a lot less challenging for franchises to develop their marketing strategies or promotional material, since all sister franchises (Dros franchises) were standardised and reliant on the franchise owner for any marketing material. This was contrary to the challenges experienced by non-franchise restaurants, which relied more on their investors for capital injections aimed at funding their own marketing strategies. Thus, their marketing strategies required extensive exploration, with translated to hefty capital investments. It is further recommended that restaurants liaise with support/aid agencies that provide marketing expertise within the restaurant industry. This process may even fuel a skills transfer process wherein restaurant owners can be better equipped to develop their own marketing strategies in future.

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6.3.3 Busy Schedule

A restaurant owner mentioned that he felt his busy schedule was a challenge for him. He shared how this challenge had a negative impact of him as his busy schedule resulted in him having limited time to pursue his personal interests. In order to ensure that the researcher understood the extent of his busy schedule the restaurant owner was asked to explain what activities typically contributed to his busy schedule. According to the restaurant owner he explained that he had to oversee every aspect of the restaurant's operations, such as the supplier deliveries, the final meal served to a customer, approve leave requests, and ensure that customers' are happy with their meals as well as the service received. Although the restaurant owner had managers as observed from the researcher's personal visits, it was evident that he did not delegate much of his responsibilities to them. It is recommended that restaurant owners invest in talent management and/or succession planning in order to ensure that the daily burdens of the restaurant's operations are equally distributed amongst the restaurant's management team. Thus, allowing the restaurant owner sufficient time to dedicate to his personal needs whilst, in the process, empowering his staff. Another restaurant owner mentioned that he felt that his constant absence from his restaurant due to his focus on his other entrepreneurial ventures may be a challenge for his staff. Both restaurant owners highlighted the importance of a restaurant owner's mental and physical availability within his establishment.

6.3.4 Legislation

In a presentation entitled "*Trends and Challenges in the Restaurant Industry",* Iles (n.d) recognised the influx in operational costs as a challenge experienced by numerous restaurant owners. These operational costs range from utility costs, legislative costs, insurance costs and increases in health care costs. A restaurant owner shared his challenge brought on by the latest legislation that mandated that smokers be situated in their own secluded location away from public visibility and non-smokers. According to the restaurant owner this legislation had a negative impact on his restaurant's operations and his smoking customers' dining experience. Although he had abided by the legislation, he shared a perception shared by his customers who felt that they were being "*cocooned in a small place without any ventilation whilst non-smokers have the privilege of being outside…"(Moo Moo).* This suggested that the customers who smoke felt as though their rights were not treated with the same priority as the non-smoking customers. Considering that this challenge is brought on by legislation requirements, the restaurant owner has limited recourse. However, it is recommended that the restaurant owner empathise with all his customers' needs and, in

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this instance, investing in a larger smoking area with increased ventilation may appease his customers' complaints.

6.3.5 Financial security

It was evident that the main challenge experienced by all restaurant owners pertained to the issue of financially sustainability. Although most entrepreneurs who chose to function in the restaurant industry are predominately motivated by the possibility of gaining financial independence, it was evident from the findings that this possibility is short-lived. Most restaurant owners expressed challenges brought by the inability to meet the financial requirements brought on by the daily operations, such as advertising costs and safety requirements due to the incline of criminal activities. According to Fatoki and Chindoga (2011) the lack of financial support is a major contributor to the low rate of entrepreneurial participation, in general, and the foreclosure of numerous restaurants in South Africa. The authors found that the large scale entrepreneurial failures in South Africa are attributed to the inadequate capital support or the restaurant owners limited knowledge of any support/aid agencies, such as government financial support programmes.

Restaurant owners shared that throughout the establishment phase of their restaurants and throughout the maintenance phase of their restaurant's daily operations they have had to invest a sizeable amount of capital regardless of the negative impact of the economy. Financial security proved to be a common and constant challenge experienced by all respondents even though some expressed that they did not seek financial aid from partners or investors; it was evident that they still had the financial burden to ensure their restaurant's financial sustainability. According to one respondent, it was challenging locating the capital to establish his restaurant, but he also mentioned that it remained a challenge ensuring that the restaurant stayed afloat during the unpredictable economic climate within this country. The main challenge that threatened the financial stability of most respondents' restaurants was brought on by the increasing costs of labour, including the training costs. This alludes to the fact that although restaurant owners have more control over their financial gains, they are still vulnerable to the greater economic climate.

It is recommended that potential restaurant owners and those already functioning in the industry associate themselves with support/aid agencies in order to remain constantly aware of potential avenues that can be approached for additional financial support. It is evident that a restaurant owner cannot rely solely on their love and passion for the industry, the restaurant owner also needs to be knowledgeable and insightful.

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6.3.6 Crime

South Africa is characterised by a high crime rate ranking fifth in the world as a country with the highest murder rates. Not only does the prevalence of crime threaten an individual's physical and psychological wellbeing, it also affects many entrepreneurs' establishments. The increase of crime within an area necessitates the increased expenditure on security features and in numerous unfortunate incidences it results in an increase in replacement or repair costs. According to a 2013/2014 factsheet depicting the South African Police Service Crime Statistics (2014) business robberies had increased by 13.7% (18 615 reported incidents). Whilst there had been a decrease in street robbery incidences, there was a notable increase in what the South African Police Service term "Trio robberies", these being; carjacking, house robberies and business robberies. Business robberies are now 461% higher now than they were in the 2004/2005 fiscal year. According to the fact sheet there was an additional 2, 238 armed attacks aimed at businesses in the 2013/2014 financial year as compared to the previous year. Therefore, there are 202 business are burgled each day. The fear of crime has a negative impact on entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial success and the psychological wellbeing of the restaurant owner. According to a study conducted by Olawale and Garwe (2010) the variables related to finance, crime and economic markets are highly ranked by new entrepreneurs as their growth inhibitors.

Crime was a common challenge that affects all restaurant owners. However, it was more explicitly expressed by one restaurant owner who mentioned the incline of criminal activities near his restaurant's location. The restaurant's unconventional hours and their ease of access expose it to the possibility of being burgled. The restaurant owner stated that due to incidences of "*smash and grabs*" in the area, he feared that his customers would not visit his restaurant as frequently as they used to. Although the other respondents did not mention any challenges with their safety and security within their interviews, this challenge remains one that has an impact on any restaurant's operations and its reputation. A restaurant is seen by many customers as a place to visit when in need of some recreation. It is a place visited by close associates, friends and family and due to this exposure to possible crime; it is the restaurant owner's responsibility to ensure that their restaurant is reasonably safe. No individual would frequent a restaurant that did not guarantee their safety or one that had a reputation for being a crime hotspot. Since incidences of crime affect the restaurant's sales, reputation, expenditures and sustainability it is recommended that the restaurant owners conduct risk assessments on a periodic period in order to ensure that the safety of their establishment and to sustain their establishment's sustainability.

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6.3.7 Human resources

All respondents mentioned that most of their challenges stemmed from their human resource issues. A restaurant owner shared his frustration with having to retrain the same individuals and that this resulted in wasted operational time, as he would deviate from his priorities in order to focus on the training aspects. Being a service driven environment, it is crucial for the restaurant to ensure that the quality of service delivery offered is of a high standard in order to ensure that the establishment can maintain its current clientele and attract new clientele. Other restaurant owners shared their frustrations with their staff seeking higher remuneration than their experience or the restaurant's profit's permitted.

Enz (2004) alludes to the management of human resources as a challenge frequently experienced by a majority of restaurant owners within the restaurant industry. Challenges such as the ability to retain quality staff and train staff whilst effectively contending with incompliant staff can be major influencers of psychological stress. Considering that restaurants do not function within the conventional eight or nine working hours and the typical working period comprising of only weekdays, it is inevitable that this industry will be prone to its unique set of industry-specific challenges. It was also evident from this study that although there may be a commonality amongst some challenges experienced by conventional industries and the restaurant industry such as staff absenteeism, the magnitude to which this challenge affects each industry varies greatly. For instance, in a conventional industry issues of absenteeism do not have a grave impact as they do in the restaurant industry. There is a constant need amongst all restaurant owners to effectively manage their staff's morale, especially since human resources are the most valuable and expensive strategic asset within the restaurant industry (Kasavana, 2012). Kasavana (2012), further states that the estimated total costs associated with employee absenteeism, also known as time theft, in the restaurant industry, accounts for 36% of a restaurant's payroll expenditure.

According to a report published by Circadian Technologies (2005), almost one in ten employees is absent when he or she should be at work, often resulting in direct and indirect costs associated with that absenteeism. Restaurant owners need to employ strategies and software aimed at monitoring and reducing employee absenteeism. There are three types of absenteeism as identified by Circadian Technologies (2005), all of which have dire effects on the smooth running of a restaurant.

Scheduled absences consist of time taken away from work by the employee during the holiday season, the time taken away from work for personal time and this also includes the employees' annual leave. Excess costs arise when this time is taken away from the

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restaurant, but is not reported or it is taken when it has not been earned or when it has not yet accrued. However, when effectively managed, this type of absenteeism is easy to plan for as the restaurant owner can easily reallocate resources to fill the absence.

Unscheduled absences include sick days, family responsibility leave, funeral attendance, family emergencies, injury at work absences, etc. This type of absenteeism becomes costly when it is also taken by the employees, but is not reported or when it is taken by employees without any authentic reasons presented to the restaurant owner. Two-thirds of this type of absenteeism is associated with non-sickness absenteeism (personal reasons, feeling of entitlement, family issues). Thus, making this type of absence the most commonly abused by employees and one of the most challenging for restaurant owners to plan for.

Partial shift absences include late arrivals to work, early departures or employees taking longer breaks or lunches than permitted. This type of absence has a direct impact on the restaurant's operations as it reduces or delays service delivery and often results in customers' needs not being adequately attended to. Absenteeism, regardless of the different type, results in a disruption in business processes, such as the misallocation of tables to each waiter and the reduced profits attainable from a reduced number of employees. This not only affects the restaurant's operations, but it affects the synergy amongst the staff especially when the staff present at work is constantly overburdened with additional functions.

According to an article by Jenkins (n.d) finding the appropriate staff-fit with a restaurant owner's restaurant is a challenging process. The number of accessible staff that a restaurant has assures that the number of tables in that specific restaurant can be readily attended to. The efficiency to which these tables are attended to has a direct effect on the positive experience experienced by customers. The customers' positive experience has an impact on the restaurant's sales per day and accumulatively, this has an overall impact on the restaurant's profit margins and reputation. Therefore, the restaurant owner needs to ensure that they have employed a substantial amount of staff and that the employed staff requires minimum training as well as ensuring that staff has the right work ethic for the restaurant. Since the industry is profit driven, the restaurant owner should be able to find a balance between the restaurant's needs and the staff's needs.

The restaurant industry requires that restaurant owners and their staff work within close proximities with each other throughout the week and in most cases during the weekend as well as throughout most holidays. It is within these long working periods coupled with the

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incidence of burnout that conflict may arise. Most of the restaurant owners shared their challenges arising from their staffing issues with only one restaurant owner who stated that his constant absence from the establishment may have a negative effect on his managers' productivity. This particular restaurant owner stated that he could not share his experience with challenges brought on by the environment since he delegated most of the running to his managers.

The other restaurant owners shared their varying challenges with regards to their staff. One restaurant owner stated that his challenge arose from his staff requesting a higher remuneration package that the restaurant could afford, whilst another restaurant owner shared his frustrations with having to constantly retrain his staff. This labour intensive industry tends to spend more revenue on attracting customers as opposed to its labour costs; quite simply because without the customer the restaurant cannot sustain itself. What caused a dilemma for one of the restaurant owner's was the fact that when staff was initially recruited in the newly opened restaurant (BLK Lounge), they were content with their reduced remuneration packages in comparison to what they had previously earned with their former employers.

However, according to the restaurant owner, staff soon demanded that their remuneration be revised without any consideration of the restaurant's financial performance. For staff to make informed suggestions when requesting for a salary review they need to be informed of the restaurant' financial situation. A level of transparency needs to be employed as part of the restaurants retention strategy and as a way to foster trust between the parties. It is also recommended that a flexible management style be considered. It is recommended that automated workforce management systems be utilised for automatic scheduling of leave applications, reporting, analysing and controlling time worked as well as how the allocated time was utilised. This means of effectively scheduling and managing staff can be accomplished through the use of computer-based applications rather than having the leave applications dealt with manually.

6.3.8 Psychological stress

Occupational stress is the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these demands (Beheshtifar & Nazarian, 2013). The continued exposure to psychological stress triggers without any form of stress management intervention may lead to onsets of psychopathology or physical conditions such as heart attacks, migraines, blood pressure, etc. It is evident that an individual who has

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incidences of psychological stress as brought on by their work environment is likely to have greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, increased drinking and smoking, increased negative psychological symptoms and reduced aspirations and self-esteem (Jayashree, 2010). Various studies have showed that workers suffering from psychological stress exhibit decreased concentration levels, higher number accidents, decreased morale and increased interpersonal conflict with their colleagues and/or employers (Cranwell & Alyssa, 2005).

Although all the respondents gave different accounts to their experience of psychological stress as influenced by their varying contexts, it was evident that they all experienced elements of negative affect that can be attributed to psychological stress. According to the literature consulted within the study, psychological stress has the ability to hinder an individual's ability to effectively function either psychologically or physically.

Thus, individuals exposed to onsets of psychological stress need to consider being part of a stress management programme that is applicable to the environment that they function within. Effects of psychological stress may be so extensive that they result in employees or restaurant owners deserting their roles and their restaurants. In a newspaper article printed in a well-known South African newspaper, the pervasive nature of psychological stress within the restaurant industry resulted in a renowned Chef deserting his role and subsequently being reported as missing (Henry, 2013).

An article by Hurley (n.d) noted that the hospitality industry; the restaurant industry and the hotel industry, is characterised by frequent onsets of burnout (psychological stress) experienced by individuals who function within these contexts. Due to this industry's emphasis on impeccable professionalism and hospitability despite the highly stressful requirements of the job and the unpredictable nature of the operations, it is no wonder most of its incumbents report high incidences of psychological stress (burnout).

Attempts at stress management should ensure that the following has been taken into consideration prior to its establishment:

- Existence of avenues that promote open communication amongst employees
- Adequate staffing
- Permitting restaurant staff to have control over their work-related tasks
- Give recognition and rewards for special accomplishments
- Encourage a positive, happy and friendly work environment

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- Restaurant owners need to be extensively trained on human management issues.
- Utilise stress reduction methods, such as meditation, progressive muscle relaxation or guided imagery
- Recognize the psychological stress triggers and try avoiding the triggers
- Participating in cathartic exercises or experiences (therapy)

According to a Karpovich (n.d), who facilitates a preventive programme for stress and burnout, he asserts that it is most critical for individuals to educate themselves on the effects of stress on their wellbeing. The programme director alludes to the fact that once individuals learn about the adverse effects of burnout, they are more welcoming to changing stress-inducing behaviours or they can also become active participants in developing new stress alleviating strategies that are applicable to their contexts. Thus, restaurant owners are recommended to encourage discourses amongst staff and to the introduce onsite educational interventions on psychological stress, in order to allow staff to learn and share their experiences.

6.4 Support/aid agencies

As part of the focal point of this study, respondents were asked to indicate if they had any knowledge of the various support/aid agencies prominent within the restaurant industry and directly aimed at assisting restaurant owners. The purpose of support/aid agencies is to guide and support potential restaurant owners and current restaurant owners during the inception phase of their restaurants and during the everyday running of their restaurants. Therefore, there is an array of entities that can be considered as support/aid agencies, ranging from government entities to private owned entities such as the Restaurant Association of South Africa (RASA). Some respondents stated that although they had not engaged with any support/aid agencies, they were familiar with Restaurant Association of South Africa (RASA). Although most of the respondents had not made use of their services, they showed an understanding of the type of functions RASA performed and inevitably what type of support they could receive from them. A restaurant owner mentioned that he considered a bank a type of support/aid agency as he had approached one for financial aid when he was establishing his restaurant.

According to the literature consulted, there are varying types of support/aid agencies, each offering support applicable to the any entrepreneurial stage that restaurant owners may need assistance with. The table below comprises of a list of support/aid agencies and a narrative on the type of support they offer to entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry.

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Table 4: Support offered by Support/aid agencies

Support/Aid agency	Type of support
The RASA training Academy	A training facility offered by RASA wherein training courses are administered from which attendants can earn recognisable qualifications in food service management. Through its links with various other entities, restaurant owners can be exposed to marketing and financial aid agencies.
The National Empowerment Fund	The National Empowerment Fund offers funding and investment opportunities to historically disadvantaged individuals, communities and businesses.
The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	The DTI offers funding opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs not discriminant to a particular industry of chosen specification.
The Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA)	SEFA is also a funding agency.
The Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)	SEDA aims to grow and support small enterprises through government-funded agencies.
Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC)	CIPC offers company registration services to established entities.
Department of Labour (DOL)	Educates employers on labour legislation and assists them with the registration of Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).
The POS Sector	A reputable blog for restaurants and bars that offers new and interesting ways that restaurants and bars can promote their business.
The National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS)	This entity ensures that strict health and safety regulations are maintained and that the well-being of staff and customers is taken into consideration.
Entrepreneur Magazine's	This free magazine's content is most applicable to entrepreneurs who need assistance or guidance regarding the development of business plans, revamping and developing marketing strategies and any other business start-up issues.

www.entrepreneurmag.co.za

The purpose of exploring the respondents' knowledge of support/aid agencies not only provided a platform for the researcher to gauge their awareness of their existence, but it also opened up channels for the respondents to consider engaging with them. Through their

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engagements with support/aid agencies, respondents may develop innovative means and critical networks that may alleviate their experiences of psychological stress. It is also critical to mention that support/aid agencies need to be more visible in order for more restaurant owners to realise their importance and for them to seek guidance. This may in turn reduce the number of restaurant's that close down due to limited guidance. When respondents were asked if they felt that their shared challenges could be inferred to all restaurants and to other entrepreneurial ventures, most of them stated that their respective challenges can only describe their respective restaurants and not any other establishment or entrepreneurial venture. Therefore, the challenges differ across industries and the challenges faced by each restaurant owner are unique only to their own restaurant and cannot be generalised to other restaurants. Thus, interventions aimed at supporting the restaurant industry need to be tailor-made for each type of restaurant.

6.5 Future Research

6.5.1 Sample

For purposes of continued research, it is recommended that a larger sample be utilised. The sample should allow for a comparative analysis between male and female restaurant owners in relation to their experiences of psychological stress. This will allow for the ability to rule out or consider the role gender plays on one's susceptibility to psychological stress. From the findings, it is evident that the restaurant industry is dominated by more males than females and that where females were found in abundance was in the service line of the restaurants as waitresses.

6.5.2 Data collection methods

Furthermore, in addition to face-to-face interviews conducted in the study, it is recommended that respondents be permitted to complete online surveys. Considering the great difficulty in locating restaurant owners for the interviews, which resulted in immense time wasted during the data collection phase, alternative means of completing data collection tools may be beneficial. Thus, having a triangulation of data collection methods, will not only increase the sample size, but it will ensure that the targeted sample is adequately accounted for as per the proposed sample size.

6.6 Conclusion

This qualitative research study explored how restaurant owners experienced and interpreted the challenges they faced within their varying contexts. It was believed that by exploring the sources of psychological stress as experienced by each restaurant owner within their own

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contexts, and by exploring the different coping mechanisms utilised by each restaurant owner, an in-depth understanding of this industry's complexities may be learnt. Restaurant owners were afforded the autonomy to describe their different experiences as influenced by the context offered by their establishments and as per their experiences. Considering that this study was explorative and it required an in-depth understanding of the challenges within the industry, it was crucial that the restaurant owners' experiences as well as their perspectives be given priority within the inquiry.

The findings of this study detailed the resultant impacts of psychological stress on restaurant owners within the Gauteng province, specifically within the Pretoria region. It is with the understanding of the challenges experienced by each of the restaurant owners that the sources of psychological stress were easily identified and the impacts of the perceived psychological stress were explored. Following the data analysis process, it was also evident that although all interviewed restaurant owners experienced challenges within their respective restaurants, that none of these challenges were uniform throughout all restaurants. Therefore, none of the challenges, and eventual sources of psychological stress, can be generalized across all entrepreneurial ventures and also across all restaurants. Each restaurant owner's experience was unique as influenced by a myriad of factors, such as the environment that their restaurant functions within, the individual's work experience, the individual's personality traits and each individual's coping strategies.

It was also evident from the findings that the restaurant owners continued exposure to their identified challenges and the unavailability of effective coping mechanisms did have an influence on the incidence of psychological stress amongst the respondents. Therefore, as affirmed from the literature consulted within the study, the challenges experienced by restaurant owners as well as their continuous exposure to these challenges influenced the development of psychological stress. It is then this onset of psychological stress that negatively affected the overall management of their restaurants. Although the respondents made attempts at employing coping mechanisms to avert their experiences of psychological stress, none of the respondents could attest to the long-term success of their coping mechanisms. Thus, all respondents were open to adopting new coping mechanisms as contained within the pamphlet mentioned during the data collection process.

6.6.1 Research Questions

In order to address the impacts of psychological stress on restaurant owners, the primary research question that this study sought to answer was; *What are the sources of*

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psychological stress as uniquely experienced by entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry? This question allowed for the exploration of the various challenges experienced by each of the restaurant owners within their respective environments. Thus, it was through this exploration of the challenges experienced that the sources of psychological stress were explored. It was through this research question that a broader and deeper understanding of the restaurant industry and its intricacies was made possible.

The literature consulted within the study suggested that the restaurant industry is characterised by a number of challenges that are unique to its operations, such as the restaurant industry's susceptibility to competition, the non-conventional working hours, the difficulty in acquiring funding, the inconstant longevity of establishments, the exposure to criminal activities and the high staff turnover. According to Enz (2004), issues of high staff turnover mark the apex of the challenges experienced by most restaurant owners. When a restaurant has a high staff turnover, this typically necessitates frequent retraining of staff members, which results in funds being constantly depleted before returns on investments can be realised. Simpson (2009), attested to additional challenges that typically burden restaurant owners, such as dealing with unreliable suppliers, being able to attend to a broad spectrum of customer needs and adhering to health specifications as instructed by health inspections.

It is due to these challenges that it was expected that restaurant owners would be susceptible to experiences of psychological stress. Not only did the findings affirm that restaurant owners are constantly exposed to stressors within their respective environments, but they also confirmed that the persistent exposure to these stressors did have a detrimental impact on their ability to effectively manage their restaurants.

The findings also affirmed that restaurant owners are not only negatively affected by operational challenges, but they are also affected by economic challenges, managerial challenges and challenges related to marketing. Parsa, Self, Njite, and King (2005) categorised the three main issues that form part of the major challenges and often the reasons for many failed restaurant establishments; these are *economic issues, marketing issues and managerial style issues.* Meyers (2009) states that although it is often easy to improve on the quality of food served or the quality of service rendered to customers, there is not much that a restaurant owner and/or manager can do with regards to the fluctuating economic climate. Therefore, there are some stressors that may be brought on by external factors that are out of the restaurant owners' locus of control and it is usually these stressors that become psychological burdens to the restaurant owners.

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Otsuka and Tatemaru (2010) affirm that the extent and prevalence of stressors that an individual is exposed to within their environment may have dire consequences on their psychological and physical ability to function effectively. The continued exposure to such psychologically stressful environments perpetuates the incidence of psychological stress. Psychological stress is considered a negative reaction experienced by individuals who find great difficulty in managing the demands imposed on them by external incidents. Psychological stress is further manifested when the individual fails to adopt effective coping mechanisms that target the exact stressors within their respective environments. Thus, the restaurant owners inability to cope was manifested in severe emotional, mental and physical deterioration, which further impacted on their ability to manage their restaurants; ultimately resulting in the untimely foreclosure of such establishments (Cohen, Tyrell & Smith, 1993).

In order to expand on the primary research question, the following secondary research questions were also explored within the study:

- *What factors influenced individuals' interests in entrepreneurship?*

The purpose of this research question was to explore the various factors that influenced each of the respondents' interest in entrepreneurship and in particular, their interest in the restaurant industry. From the study's findings, it was evident that the primary influencer for the respondents' choice to function within the restaurant industry was their passion for the industry. This passion was fuelled by the vast amounts of experience they had each acquired from their respective engagements with restaurants. Due to the restaurant industry's simple business model, entry into the restaurant industry is not as challenging as compared to entry into conventional business sectors due to the frequent number of restaurants and franchises up for purchase. Whilst the restaurant caters to individuals' recreational needs it also allows restaurant owners an opportunity to interact with their customers. Thus, the love for social interaction and the need for financial independence were also some of the key issues that influenced some of the respondents into working in this industry. It was also evident that the love for entrepreneurial thriving was also an influencer.

- *What identifiable characteristics do restaurant owners possess that are specific to their industry?*

Not only was the purpose of this study to understand the restaurant industry, but also the individuals who function within the industry. It is with the understanding that the context that one functions within shapes and constructs that individual's outlook on the world, their interactions with the world and their interpretations of the world. Thus, by understanding both the context and the individual who functions within that very same context, a more in-depth

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understanding of a phenomenon can be explored. The purpose of this research question was to explore, from the respondents' perceptions, the various characteristics that can be associated with entrepreneurs who opt to function within the restaurant industry. This question allowed the restaurant owners opportunities to reflect on their own set of characteristics and identify which of them best equipped them for the restaurant industry. The responses helped shape a character profile of the typical restaurant owner who functions within the restaurant industry. According to the respondents, the typical restaurant owner is resilient, flexible, equipped with interpersonal and communication skills, has exceptional planning skills with expeditious decision making capabilities and has a sound knowledge of business. The Theory of Entrepreneurial Discovery identifies three internal attributes that are characteristic amongst successful entrepreneurs; innovation, speculation and arbitrage. According to the theory, an entrepreneur should coordinate the simultaneous buying and selling of commodities from diverse markets (*Arbitrage*), using a precise sense of decision making (*Speculation*) in order to ensure that new or improved products are profitable (*Innovation*).

Although no demographics attributed to the successful running of a restaurant were mentioned by the respondents, it was evident from the researcher's observation notes that all of the restaurants were owned, predominantly, by males who could have been categorised as young adults. However, one restaurant was run by an older male entrepreneur alongside his daughter, whilst another was owned by a brother and sister duo. Also in line with the literature consulted, it was evident that the fact that one of the respondents was from a historically disadvantaged group, an African male, formed a demographical characteristic that influenced their success within this industry as well as his other entrepreneurial ventures. The study by Indarti and Langenberg (2005) asserted that demographic characteristics, such the entrepreneur's age, gender and educational background contributed to the success of the entrepreneur and that the typical profile of a successful entrepreneur was that of a male older than 25 years of age, with a business-related or technical degree. This was also affirmed by Makura (2008) who also described childhood deprivation and an individual's membership to a historically disadvantaged group, as understood within the South African context, as being two of the most recognisable characteristics prevalent in most entrepreneurs' accounts for their success.

- *What challenges do restaurant owners experience?*

This research question allowed the respondents an opportunity to share what they perceived to be their challenges as influenced by their respective environments. It is through these challenges that their sources of psychological stress were entrenched. In order to ensure that

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the researcher understood the concept of "psychological stress" from each respondent's varying perspective, the respondents were all requested to operationalise the concept according to their own understanding. Thus, in each interview, different meanings were attributed to "psychological stress", but the commonality throughout all the interviews was the respondents' understanding that psychological stress may hamper an individual's ability to function effectively.

It was also understood from the findings that the different contexts that each respondent functioned within would consequently influence their perception of their challenges and also how these challenges were interpreted. Furthermore, it was also evident from the findings that the respondents' perceptions of their challenges, as either serious or minor, influenced their choice of coping mechanisms utilised. Thus, a respondent with long service experience working in the restaurant industry either had more readily available coping mechanisms or did not utilise as many coping mechanisms as compared to one who had just embarked on their entrepreneurial venture. The type of restaurant that the respondents' functioned within, the type of food that the restaurant served and the location of the restaurant, these are some of the factors that influenced the types of challenges the respondents were exposed to. However, the main challenge that echoed throughout all interviews was the respondents' perceived threats to the sustainability of their restaurants within the instable economic climate.

The responses from this research question in conjunction with the next research question helped develop the content of the pamphlet the researcher developed at the end of the data analysis process. This pamphlet comprises of the respondents perceived challenges,
as influenced by their varying perspectives as well as the contexts within which they function, and the coping mechanisms they utilised. The pamphlet also comprises a list of support/aid groups that offer establishment and operational support to entrepreneurs in the restaurant industry along with additional coping mechanisms. Thus, allowing the spread of knowledge amongst their peers in the restaurant industry.

- *What coping mechanisms do restaurant owners utilise in order to alleviate their individual experiences of psychological stress?*

The study also explored the various types of coping mechanisms utilised by the restaurant owners to deal with their identified challenges. The respondents shared their respective coping mechanisms and they also stated that they were open to additional means of coping with psychological stress since their coping mechanisms may not be suitable or feasible for all circumstances within their unpredictable environments.

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- *What supportive mechanisms are in place for restaurant owners?*

Lastly, this research question was factored into the interview guide in order to allow for an exploration of the respondents knowledge of the existence of any support/aid agencies that may offer support to entrepreneurs within the restaurant industry. Considering the challenges experienced by the respondents, it was evident that all respondents could have benefited and could still benefit from the support offered by organisations such as RASA. Although half of the respondents had heard of the name (RASA), they were still unaware of the actual services they provide. However, all of the respondents highlighted the importance of being in close association with such organisations.

This study also highlighted the gravest issue noted within the first chapter of this report; that the restaurant industry is seldom recognised for its contribution to the country's employment rate and its economy. It is from this recognition that the existence of numerous support/aid agencies would have been actively advertised to ensure that all restaurant owners are aware of their existence. The fact that there was limited academic literature focusing on this industry and its intricacies, further exacerbated this notion. Most of the literature reviewed emanated from international sources and those that were from South Africa were not from academically distinguished sources. Considering the contextually limited literature that was reviewed, it is evident that little research was conducted on the psychological stressors and their impacts on the restaurant owners. Thus, this finding emphasized the notion that this industry is overlooked. The restaurant industry is the most prominently recognisable entrepreneurial venture as it caters to all consumers' recreational needs, but it is still the most undermined industry. If the structural and operational needs of the restaurant industry are so easily ignored, how much more will the individuals functioning in this industry be overlooked. The study's results contributed to the development of a pamphlet which will be handed back to the respondents in order r to make them aware of the various support/aid agencies that they can liaise with. Thus, it is hoped that this intervention will be of some assistance to the restaurant owners.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This final chapter encompassed the study's recommendations, an outline of the psychological impact of stressors on restaurant owners, a description of the study's research questions and the study's conclusion. The following chapter shall consist of the list of sources consulted within the entire research process.

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APPENDIX A

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An exploration of the impacts of psychological stress and the coping mechanisms utilized by restaurant owners in the Gauteng Province

1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur? Why the restaurant industry specifically?
2. What traits would you say an entrepreneur within the restaurant industry should possess?
3. When did you establish your restaurant?
4. Did you seek any partners? And was it a successful venture? How many partners do you have? Are you still in partnership with them?
5. Did you seek any investors? Was it a successful venture? Do you still have investors?
6. Are there any stressors that you are faced with? What are they? In your opinion would you say all entrepreneurs, regardless of industry, experience the same challenges/stressors? In your opinion, would you say that these challenges are specific only to your establishment or can they also be generally ascribed to the majority of restaurant owners? How often do you experience these stressors?
7. Would you describe these challenges as impediments to the daily functioning of your establishment? Are there any other areas of your life that these stressors have an adverse effect on?
8. How have you overcome (*coping mechanisms*) these stressors/challenges? Would you say that your coping mechanisms are effective?
9. Are you aware of any support/aid groups that you can approach for support?
10. Have you heard of the SARA? If yes, what would you say their main function is?
11. Would the establishment of support systems directly dealing with restaurant owners be beneficial? What sort of support systems do you think should be established in order to assist restaurant owners with their challenges?
12. Would you approach such support systems? What would ensure the successful collaboration between restaurant owners and support agencies

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APPENDIX B

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RESEARCH STUDY:

An exploration of the impacts of psychological stress and the coping mechanisms utilised by restaurant owners in the Gauteng Province.

There are two parts to this informed consent form:

- **An information sheet (to provide information about the study)**
- **A consent form (to sign if you choose to participate)**

You will receive a copy of the information sheet.

Part 1: Information sheet

The purpose of the study

As part of the completion of her Master's degree, the researcher, Ms. Boitumelo Rakau, who is affiliated with the University of Pretoria is conducting a research study aimed at investigating restaurant owner's responses to the challenges they face within their industry. The researcher, supervised by Ms. Clare Schur (at the time of data collection), will also be exploring the different types of coping mechanisms restaurant owners use in order to overcome what they perceive to be work-related stress.

The benefits of the study

The findings of this study will contribute towards the development of an informative pamphlet, which will not only highlight the stressors experienced by restaurant owners within the Gauteng province, but it will also offer channels for broader networking frameworks for restaurant owners.

Furthermore, the findings will form worthwhile contributions towards the development of additional entrepreneurial theories, programmes or other interventions aimed at stabilizing this form of business and combating the onset of psychological stress as experienced by restaurant owners.

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Participation

If you agree to partake in the research study; you will be agreeing to participate in an in-depth interview at any venue of your convenience. Your participation in this study is **voluntary**, which means that you may withdraw at any time without having to offer an explanation or suffer any consequences.

Procedure

Please note that for the purposes of accurate transcription, the interviews will be audio recorded. However, for **confidentiality** purposes the contents discussed in the interview will be kept strictly between the researcher, the supervisor and yourself. In order to ascertain that your identity is kept **anonymous,** we will make use of pseudonyms (fake names) when making reference to you.

If you wish to remain informed on the results of the study, you may contact the principal researcher for further information (contact details provided below).

Dissemination of results

The information gathered during the course of the research process will only be used for the purposes of the research study and will thereafter be stored in a safe location at the University of Pretoria for 15 years for archiving purposes.

Should you have any questions with regards to this study, please feel free to ask the researcher for clarity at any point during the interview.

Any further questions regarding the research study may be directed to the principal investigator:

Boitumelo Rakau
082 715 2309
tumirakau@yahoo.co.uk

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