

Chapter 8: Conclusion and recommendations

“The most valuable findings from a study that focuses on the effectiveness of an entrepreneurial training programme, are to provide a ‘profile’ or set of expectations for other entrepreneurship programmes as well as presenting a benchmark against which programme performance can be measured.”

- Henry *et al.* (2003: 198)

8.1 Introduction

While research in the area of entrepreneurship education and training is growing, one aspect into which little research has been conducted is that of assessing the effectiveness of educational and training initiatives. It was noted that this was surprising, given the fact that the development and running of courses and programmes is potentially expensive in terms of time and money, for both participants and sponsors. Indeed, many training initiatives do not actually appear to address the real needs of entrepreneurs. Therefore a framework for future entrepreneurship training programmes is provided and discussed.

In the previous chapter the research findings of the study were discussed. This chapter provides an overview of the literature study, while the research objectives and hypotheses are revisited and interpreted. The hypotheses are furthermore accepted or rejected based on the statistical techniques executed in Chapter 7. The WEP targets that were set by the main sponsors in Chapter 5 are revisited to indicate whether those targets were met. The contribution to the science and limitations of the study are mentioned, together with the recommendations and a path for further research into this field. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusion to the study.

8.2 Overview of the literature study

The literature review was covered from Chapters 2 to 5. The following is a short overview of the literature:

This study began with a discussion on the role and importance of entrepreneurship and new business creation to both the economy and society in general. There is strong evidence to show that entrepreneurship is not only important, but also critical to the development and growth of a healthy economy. This study also revealed that entrepreneurship education and training is crucial for the development and creation of entrepreneurs. While there has been much debate in the literature (Chapter 2) as to whether entrepreneurship can be taught, most commentators believe that at least some elements associated with the subject can be developed and enhanced via training programmes.

Two entrepreneurship training models were identified and discussed in Chapter 3, the first being the Entrepreneurial Performance Education Model (E/P model), which includes the constructs: entrepreneurial performance; motivation; entrepreneurial skills; and business skills. The second model, the Entrepreneurial Education Model (E/E model), includes the constructs: entrepreneurial education for start-ups; facilitators' skills, knowledge and motivation; approaches used by the facilitator(s); business plan utilisation; entrepreneurial success themes and knowledge; and business skills and knowledge. The two models were compared and integrated, which generated the Education for Improved Entrepreneurial Performance Model (E for E/P model). An improved entrepreneurship training model resulted from the E for E/P model and is presented in Table 8.1. All the improved and added constructs are highlighted in blue.

Table 8.1: The improved entrepreneurship training model

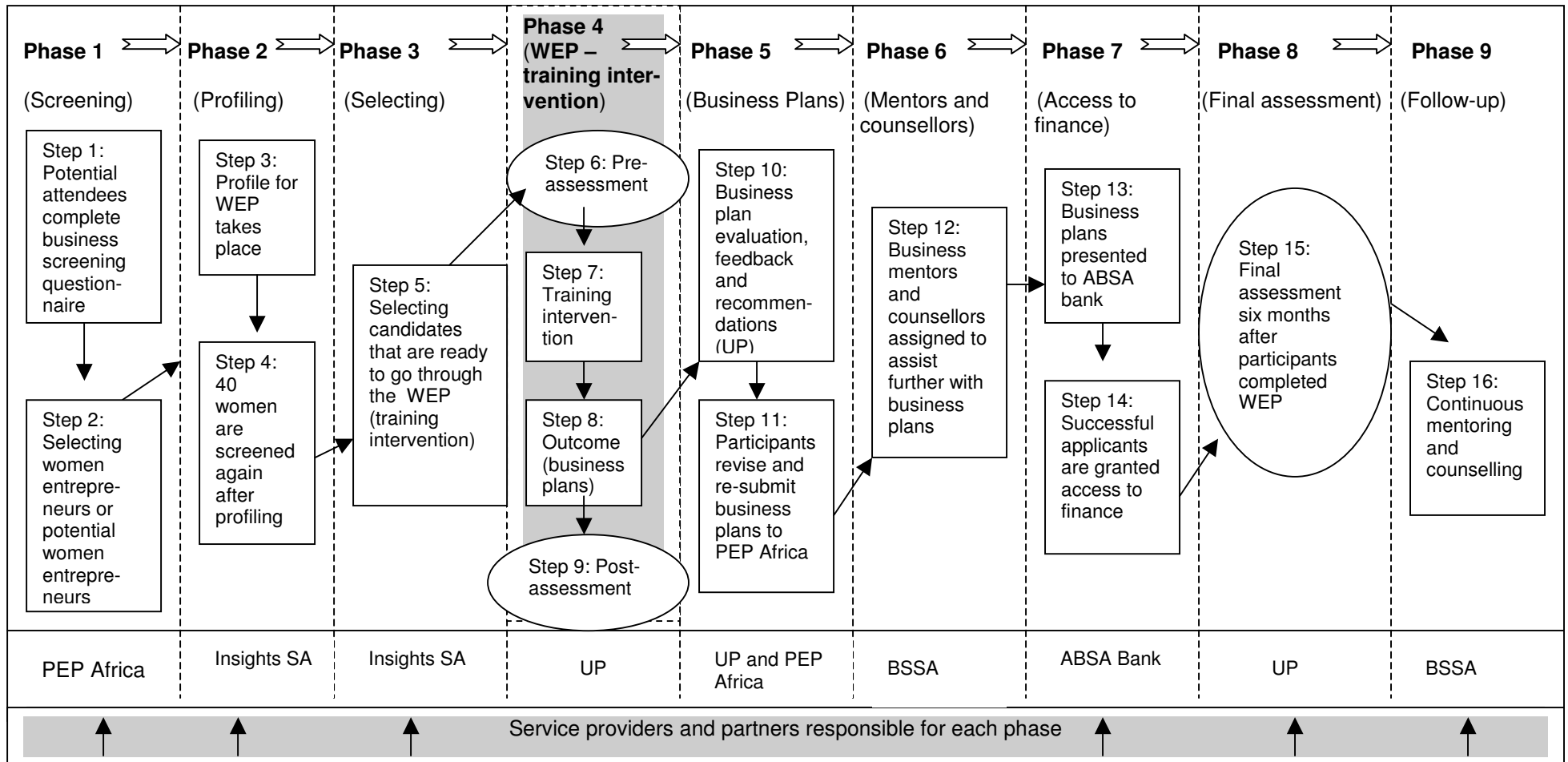
Entrepreneurial Performance (E/P)	Performance Motivation (M)	Entrepreneurial Skills (E/S) and entrepreneurial success themes	Business Skills (B/S)	Facilitator and programme context (F)	Approaches to learning (A)	Business Plan utilisation (B/P)
Establishment of own business	Motivation	Risk propensity	General management skills	Previous experience of facilitator and participants	Involvement of participant	Elements
Growth in net value of business	Mentorship	Creativity and Innovation	Marketing skills	Outcomes of the programme	Learning approaches used	Preparation
Recruitment of employees	Role models	Opportunity identification	Legal skills	Needs analysis of participants		Presentation
Increasing productivity levels		Role model analysis (success factor)	Operational skills			Evaluation
Increasing profitability		Networking	Human resource management skills			
		Leadership	Communication skills			
		Motivation	Financial management			
		Attitude of participant	Cash flow management			
		Social skills				
		Start-up skills				

Source: Own compilation as adapted from Antonites (2000: 21)

A content analysis was done on various entrepreneurship programmes in South Africa and internationally to investigate the main areas of training that trainers and facilitators need to focus on. Despite an increase in the amount of research conducted in the area of entrepreneurship education and training, there is little consensus as to how best to design and develop appropriate courses and programmes. Indeed, great diversity exists with regard to determining the learning outcomes, content, structure, delivery mode and target audience of entrepreneurship training programmes. Given the lack of uniformity in this area, as highlighted in Chapter 3, a framework for the development of future entrepreneurship training programmes is provided (Figure 8.1).

This study furthermore focused exclusively on women entrepreneurs. The background and literature on women entrepreneurs were provided in Chapter 4. This chapter highlighted the challenges that women entrepreneurs face, support structures available to them, factors motivating them to start businesses, and finally compared them with male entrepreneurs. The literature revealed the need for an entrepreneurship training programme that focuses specifically on the training needs of women. The WEP focuses on areas that are normally neglected in other entrepreneurship programmes and includes topics such as networking and support, the use of role models, confidence-building, and post-care training in the form of mentors and counsellors. It places more emphasis on the marketing and financial aspects of a business, as these aspects are seen as the two most important topics to be included in an entrepreneurship training programme. Figure 8.1 illustrates the framework of the WEP, as presented in Chapter 5, and highlights all the phases and steps that the participants go through. The WEP objectives, outcomes and possible contributions to women entrepreneurs were mentioned. The WEP sponsors and partners were identified; the targets set by the main sponsors (PEP Africa of the IFC) will be revisited in section 8.5. The final section of the literature study measured the improved entrepreneurial training model against the content of the WEP (refer Table 5.7). This measurement showed that the content of the WEP incorporated all the training areas as set out in Table 8.1.

Figure 8.1: The WEP: A framework for entrepreneurship training



Source: Own compilation

The main aim of the study was to measure the effectiveness of the WEP, and this was done on several measurement levels, as introduced by Kirkpatrick (1967: 98). These measurement levels were: reaction measures, learning measures, behaviour measures and post-training success measures. The WEP was further measured by making use of the key performance measures as introduced by Kalleberg and Leicht (1991: 148), which were: primary performance measures, proxy performance measures, subjective measures and entrepreneurial performance measures.

The additional measure of employing a control group, against which the participants of the WEP were measured, allows the effects and benefits of the WEP to be examined in a completely different situation, hence widening the debate surrounding the rationale for interventions of this nature.

The literature review assisted the researcher in particular to structure the measuring instruments (research questionnaires) and the questions and statements in respect of the WEP.

8.3 Research objectives revisited

The primary and secondary objectives of the study are revisited and presented below.

8.3.1 Primary objective revisited

The primary objective of the study was to measure the effectiveness of the WEP, as a training intervention, on potential, start-up and established women entrepreneurs in South Africa.

The primary objective of the research was achieved, as the effectiveness of the WEP was measured on various levels as indicated in Tables 8.2 and 8.3.

Table 8.2: Measurement levels used to determine the effectiveness of the WEP on the experimental group

Type of measurement level	Findings
Reaction measures (respondents' satisfaction)	104 (98.12 %) respondents were satisfied with the WEP and indicated that they would recommend the programme to a friend or colleague.
Learning measures (gained entrepreneurial and business skills)	Factor analysis confirmed four skills transfer factors , namely entrepreneurial characteristics, entrepreneurial orientation, business knowledge and entrepreneurial and business skills . The p-value for all four factors (0.0035 ^{***} , 0.0318 ^{***} , <0.0001 ^{***} and <0.0001 ^{***} , respectively) confirmed statistically significant differences between the before and after measurement (Table 7.26).
Behaviour measures (behavioural change/improvement and ability to apply skills in practice)	Factor analysis confirmed three business improvement factors , namely business systems and strategies, financial indicators and change orientation . The Wilcoxon statistic for all three factors was $p < 0.0001^{***}$, respectively (Table 7.31). The respondents applied and improved various skills in their businesses, of which improving the management and operations of their businesses and improving motivation and confidence were the most frequently mentioned areas.
Post-training success measures (business performance indicators)	The Wilcoxon statistic for all three business improvement factors was $p < 0.0001^{***}$, respectively (Table 7.31). The p-values for the following business performance indicators were (Tables 7.33 and 7.34): annual sales/turnover (<0.0001 ^{***}); value of capital assets (<0.0001 ^{***}); number of employees (<0.0001 ^{***}); number of customers per month (0.0201 ^{***}); success of the businesses (0.0068 ^{***}); profitability of the businesses (0.0005 ^{***}); satisfaction of the customers (0.2028); and break-even point (<0.0001 ^{***}).

P * Statistically significant difference**

Table 8.3 illustrates how the key performance measures were used to determine the effectiveness of the WEP in this study (Refer Annexures A, B and C).

Table 8.3: Key performance measures used to determine the effectiveness of the WEP on the experimental group

Key performance measures	Findings
Primary performance measures (business performance indicators)	Refer post-training success measures (Table 8.2)
Proxy performance measures (selection criteria of respondents)	<p>Determinant 1 – Already established (37.07 %), start-up (50.00 %) or potential (12.93 %) women entrepreneurs</p> <p>Determinant 2 – Women entrepreneurs with high-growth or potential high-growth ventures (screening stage – Chapter 5)</p> <p>Determinant 3 – Women whose training needs matched the training content of the WEP (pilot test and Chapter 4 – needs analysis)</p>
Subjective measures (behavioural change)	Change orientation factor ($p < 0.0001^{***}$). There was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' behaviour before and after the WEP.
Entrepreneurial performance measures (start a business or multiple businesses)	Five (33.33 %) potential women entrepreneurs started a business and 36 (33.96 %) start-up and already established women entrepreneurs started multiple businesses.

P * Statistically significant difference**

From Tables 8.2 and 8.3 it is evident that the WEP, as a training intervention, was effective when measured according to the above measurement levels.

8.3.2 Secondary objectives revisited

The secondary objectives of the study were to:

- Determine whether the training content of the WEP has an effect on women starting their own businesses;
- Determine whether the training content of the WEP has an effect on women entrepreneurs growing their businesses;
- Determine which entrepreneurial, as well as business, skills and knowledge the experimental group learned and gained after they completed the WEP;
- Compare the experimental and control groups approximately six months after the intervention has taken place;
- Determine whether there are significant differences regarding skills transfer between women who already have businesses and those who recently started businesses and those who are potential business owners;
- Determine whether the WEP satisfied the training needs of the experimental group;
- Determine whether the WEP met the expectations of the experimental group;
- Determine whether there are significant differences regarding business performance between women entrepreneurs in different provinces in South Africa.

The first three secondary objectives were met (as indicated in Tables 8.2 and 8.3):

- The training content of the WEP had an effect on women starting their own businesses (refer Table 8.3, entrepreneurial performance measures);
- The training content of the WEP had an effect on women entrepreneurs growing their businesses (refer Table 8.2, post-training success measures);
- The entrepreneurial, as well as business, skills and knowledge that the experimental group learned and gained after they completed the WEP were identified in Table 8.2 (learning measures) and Tables 7.26 – 7.30 in Chapter 7.

The other secondary objectives were met as follows:

- The experimental group was compared with the control group before the former attended the WEP and again after the six-month period. The personal and business demographics, expectations, perceptions, and opinions of respondents were measured before the WEP and the results showed that the experimental

and control groups had the same characteristics as far as possible. The only differences could be seen in terms of education and number of employees and customers. Although the experimental group were representative of more provinces than the control group, the majority of the respondents (both groups) came from the Gauteng province. The **four skills transfer factors: entrepreneurial characteristics, entrepreneurial orientation, business knowledge and entrepreneurial and business skills** were compared before the WEP, and the only statistically significant difference between the groups was the **entrepreneurial characteristics factor**. This again showed that the respondents' skills and knowledge levels were almost similar before the WEP.

The respondents were then compared after the WEP and statistically significant differences between the groups would now prove that the WEP had an effect on the experimental group. The following was revealed after six months: five (33.33 %) out of the possible 15 respondents from the experimental group actually started their own businesses. Out of the start-up and already established women entrepreneurs 36 respondents (33.96 %) from the experimental group started another business after the WEP. After six months, all of the start-up and already established respondents in the experimental group owned the same business that they had before the WEP, whereas two respondents (4 %) from the control group did not own a business any more after six months.

The three business improvement factors: business systems and strategies, financial indicators and change orientation showed statistically significant differences between the two groups after the experimental group attended the WEP. The two groups were also compared regarding their business performance indicators after six months, and there were statistically significant differences between the two groups regarding the following variables: annual sales/turnover, success of the business, number of employees and number of customers.

- Furthermore, the potential, start-up and already established women entrepreneurs were compared to determine whether there were statistically significant differences regarding skills transfer between these groups. It was revealed that there are no statistical differences regarding the **four skills transfer**

factors between the potential, start-up and already established women entrepreneurs.

- Generally, the majority of the experimental group were satisfied with the WEP in terms of general satisfaction with the content of the WEP; preparing a business plan; presenting the business plan to peers, facilitator and financial institutions; general satisfaction with the facilitators; the facilitators' attitudes and enthusiasm; the facilitators' practical business experience; and the facilitators' ability to encourage interaction and participation.
- The experimental groups were asked what their expectations had been before they attended the WEP, and whether those expectations had been met directly after the WEP, as well as six months after they attended the WEP. The following expectations were given:
 - How to start your own business;
 - How to grow your own business;
 - How to compile a business plan;
 - How to be more creative;
 - How to develop new products/services within your business;
 - Networking with other women entrepreneurs;
 - Financial and cash-flow planning;
 - Marketing your products/services/business;
 - Growth in net value of your business;
 - Recruitment of employees;
 - Increasing productivity levels; and
 - Increasing profitability.

It was remarkable to find that the majority of the experimental group (80 – 100 %, for the various variables) indicated that their expectations were met directly after the WEP and six months after they attended the programme.

- The experimental group was categorised into smaller groups regarding the provinces where they operated their businesses. The various provinces were compared regarding their business performance indicators, and the value of

capital assets was the only statistically significant difference between the provinces. The respondents from the Limpopo province improved the most (52.94 %) regarding increasing the value of their capital assets.

From the above it is clear that the primary and secondary objectives of the study as outlined within the scope of Chapter 1 were met.

8.4 Hypotheses revisited

Null hypothesis (H1o): The WEP, as a training intervention, is not effective in assisting start-up and established women entrepreneurs to grow their own businesses.

Alternative hypothesis (H1a): The WEP, as a training intervention, is effective in assisting start-up and established women entrepreneurs to grow their own businesses.

On the basis of the empirical results, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The Wilcoxon matched-pairs test illustrated in Table 7.31 that the **three business improvement factors** showed statistically significant differences before and after the WEP, where the p-value for each factor, respectively, was $p < 0.0001$.

These factors were labelled as:

Factor 1: Business systems and strategies

Factor 2: Financial indicators

Factor 3: Change orientation

In Tables 7.33 and 7.34 in Chapter 7, the Chi-square and Wilcoxon matched-pairs tests indicated that seven out of the possible eight business performance indicators that were measured improved after the WEP (refer Table 8.2 for p-values). These indicators are directly associated with business growth, and Table 7.37 indicated the degree of improvement of the business performance indicators. The start-up and already established women entrepreneurs were compared regarding their business performance indicators, and only the break-even point variable showed a statistically significant difference between these two groups (refer Tables 7.40 and 7.41). This

finding indicated that the WEP was effective in assisting both the start-up and the established women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses.

The descriptive statistics highlighted furthermore that 95 respondents (96.94 %) stated that the WEP had assisted them to grow their businesses, when measured six months after the training intervention (refer Table 7.12 for other growth expectations that were met). Finally, 96 respondents (97.96 %) indicated that the WEP had some or other effect on their businesses (refer section 7.7.1 for effects/reasons provided by respondents). After the completion of the WEP, the experimental group were asked whether the WEP content would be useful to them in starting and/or growing their own businesses, and 105 respondents (99.06 %) indicated that it would be useful to them.

H2o: The WEP, as a training intervention, is not effective in assisting women entrepreneurs to start their own businesses.

H2a: The WEP, as a training intervention, is effective in assisting women entrepreneurs to start their own businesses.

Based on the empirical results, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The descriptive statistics showed that five (33.33 %) potential women entrepreneurs started businesses and 36 (33.96 %) start-up and already established women entrepreneurs started multiple businesses due to the WEP.

H3o: There were no significant differences regarding business performance between the experimental and control groups six months after the experimental group completed the WEP.

H3a: There were significant differences regarding business performance between the experimental and control groups six months after the experimental group completed the WEP.

Based on the statistical techniques executed on the various factors and variables, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The Chi-square

test (Table 7.38) and Mann Whitney U test (Table 7.39) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups regarding the following variables: value of capital assets ($p < 0.0240$); success of the businesses ($p < 0.0229$); number of employees ($p < 0.0024$); and number of customers ($p < 0.0424$). However when the before and after measurement for each group was done individually, the control group (Tables 7.35 and 7.36) only showed significant differences regarding two variables: annual sales/turnover; and value of capital assets, whereas the experimental group showed significant differences for seven variables. Table 7.37 highlighted the degree of improvement for both groups, where the experimental group showed improvement for all the variables, except the satisfaction of their customers. The control group showed improvement for the following variables: profitability; break-even point; number of employees; and number of customers. Deterioration was shown in their satisfaction of their customers, whereas the experimental group showed no deterioration in any variables.

The independent t -test (Mann Whitney U test) brought to light that all **three business improvement factors** ($p < 0.0001$ for all factors) showed statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

H4o: The experimental group has not gained entrepreneurial, as well as business, skills and knowledge after the completion of the WEP.

H4a: The experimental group has gained entrepreneurial, as well as business, skills and knowledge after the completion of the WEP.

Based on the descriptive statistics as well as the empirical results, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The p -value for all **four skills transfer factors** were: 0.0035, 0.0318, < 0.0001 and < 0.0001 , respectively. This confirmed statistically significant differences between the before and after measurement. The individual variables within each skills transfer factor were furthermore tested and are presented in Tables 7.26 – 7.30. It is noteworthy that the **business knowledge**; and **entrepreneurial and business skills factors** indicated that all the individual variables included in these factors showed a p -value of

<0.0001. The descriptive statistics also indicated that the experimental group gained skills and knowledge after the WEP; these are presented in section 7.7.1.

H5o: There are no significant differences regarding skills transfer between potential, start-up and already established women entrepreneurs.

H5a: There are significant differences regarding skills transfer between potential, start-up and already established women entrepreneurs.

Based on the empirical results the null hypothesis is accepted. The Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA indicated that there are no statistically significant differences regarding the **four skills transfer factors** between the potential, start-up and already established women entrepreneurs. Table 7.32 showed values greater than 0.05 for **all four skills transfer factors**. These results indicate that the WEP is effective regarding the skills transfer factors for all types of women entrepreneurs, and no discrimination between the groups could be detected.

H6o: The WEP did not satisfy the training needs of the experimental group.

H6a: The WEP satisfied the training needs of the experimental group.

The appropriate Chi-square test was executed on the relevant variables and no statistically significant difference could be found. However, on the basis of the descriptive statistics the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. As can be seen from Table 7.11, the majority of the experimental group were satisfied with the WEP in terms of general satisfaction with the content of the WEP (98.12 %); preparing a business plan (99.06 %); presenting the business plan to peers, facilitator and financial institutions (97.14 %); general satisfaction with the facilitators (98.12 %); the facilitators' attitudes and enthusiasm (99.06 %); the facilitators' practical business experience (98.12 %); and the facilitators' ability to encourage interaction and participation (100.00 %).

H7o: The WEP did not meet the expectations of the experimental group.

H7a: The WEP met the expectations of the experimental group.

The appropriate Chi-square test was executed on the relevant variables and no statistically significant difference could be found. However, on the basis of the descriptive statistics the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Table 7.12 indicated that the majority of the experimental group (80 – 100 % for the various variables) indicated that their expectations were met, both directly after the WEP and six months after they attended the programme.

H8o: There are no significant differences regarding business performance between women entrepreneurs in different provinces in South Africa.

H8a: There are significant differences regarding business performance between women entrepreneurs in different provinces in South Africa.

Based on the empirical results the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The Chi-Square and Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA tests indicated that the value of capital assets was the only business performance indicator that showed a statistically significant difference between the various provinces in this study. Although there is only one statistically significant difference, one has to reject the null hypothesis to prevent the Type I error occurring.

8.5 WEP targets revisited

The objectives and hypotheses of the study have now been revisited, therefore it is necessary to revisit the WEP targets as determined by the sponsors of the programme and as set out in Chapter 5 and Table 8.4.

Table 8.4: The WEP targets revisited

Indicator	Targets set before the WEP	Targets revisited six months after the WEP
Number of enterprises screened and profiled	240	240
Number trained	120	116
Number qualified	90	70

Table 8.4 continued. University of Pretoria etd – Botha, M (2006)

Indicator	Targets set before the WEP	Targets revisited six months after the WEP
Number financed	36	13
Increase in turnover	5% (average)	46.74 % of respondents improved
Increase in jobs	5% (average)	63.74 % of respondents improved

Source: Dlamini and Motsepe, 2004: 13

As can be seen from Table 8.4, the following targets were met:

- 240 women were screened and went through the profiling phase before the WEP.
- 120 women were selected to attend the WEP; 116 respondents showed up for the scheduled training. The facilitator did not have any control over the four women who did not show up.
- The Chi-square tests indicated that 46.74 % of the respondents increased their turnover after six months. This was determined by measuring the turnover interval where the respondents placed themselves before and after the WEP. The average exceeded 5 %, as one interval to the next improved interval (based on the midpoint) was far more than 5 %.
- The Wilcoxon matched-pairs test indicated that 63.74 % of the respondents increased the number of employees working in their businesses. The average of 5 % was again exceeded, as only 13.19 % of the respondents employed the same number of employees after the WEP.

The following two targets were not fully met:

- Only 70 respondents (60.34 %) obtained a successfully completed certificate from the University of Pretoria, as to do so they had to receive 50 % or more for the business plans that they submitted. However, 90 % of the respondents in the experimental group had business plans after the training intervention.
- After the six month period, 13 respondents (13.27 %) of the experimental group received financial assistance with the business plans that they prepared for the WEP. Thirty-five respondents (35.71 %) had not applied for finance at the time when measured, whereas 10 respondents (9.8 %) stated that they did not apply as they did not need financial assistance.

8.6 Contribution to the science

The WEP, as a training intervention, addressed the following deficiencies, as found in the literature, regarding entrepreneurship education and training:

- The WEP focused on training the entrepreneur and not the traditional manager.
- South African entrepreneurs' most severe barrier, a lack of education and training (Orford, *et al.*, 2003: 17) was addressed by providing a training programme.
- The WEP focused on women, as they are seen as under-represented as entrepreneurs in many countries, including South Africa (Carter, 2000: 328).
- Various support and networking organisations were introduced to women entrepreneurs.
- The intervention was effective in training potential business owners as well as start-up and established entrepreneurs and can therefore be seen as a training programme for any type of entrepreneur, regardless of the stage of business life cycle in which they find themselves.
- The WEP was based on a needs analysis done on women entrepreneurs and therefore addressed the training needs of the target market directly.
- The use of a control group strengthened the findings of this study and is necessary to measure the true effectiveness of a training intervention (Friedrich, 2003: 4).
- A framework for measuring the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training programmes was provided, as this is seen as a limitation for many training interventions (Henry, *et al.* (2003: 23).
- This study will offer entrepreneurship educators and trainers a platform for future development in the field of entrepreneurship education and training.
- Based on the effectiveness of the WEP, the most valuable output from this study has been the development of a framework for entrepreneurship training. Such a framework for entrepreneurship training programmes would be of benefit to designers, providers and funders of entrepreneurship programmes. For example, first-time programme providers could implement this framework in the absence of their own. In addition, experienced programme providers could compare the WEP framework with their own and make amendments accordingly. This is a contribution to the field, due to the fact that this study statistically proved that the

WEP is effective in training entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this study could be used to point out to potential funders and sponsors the benefits and values of providing funding for such a training intervention.

- The WEP framework that was suggested is comprehensive, incorporating pre, during and post programme elements, with built-in programme evaluation. The inclusion of the profiling phase, as indicated in Chapter 5, will significantly improve the quality of application received by the programme providers, and will give the programme delegates an indication of how they can expect to benefit from the programme. One of the most novel aspects of the framework developed from this research is the much-needed post-programme follow-up support. While this is excluded from most programmes due to budget constraints, such follow-up support need not be expensive.

8.7 Limitations of the study

Although the study aimed at measuring various levels of effectiveness of the training intervention, it was only a starting point and it is therefore acknowledged that further research is required. Cooper and Schindler (2001: 616) emphasise that all research studies have their limitations and the sincere investigator recognises that researchers need aid in judging the study's validity. Given the experimental nature of the research, the reader should be aware of the following limitations of the study, namely:

- The novel nature of the field of entrepreneurship and likewise the content of training models in context.
- For future research the sample size should be increased to fully explain the population's characteristics and to limit the chance of a sampling error occurring. The sample size for each province must also be increased to get a full representation from all the provinces in South Africa. Judgement sampling has a weakness in that it gives no assurance that this sample is representative of every woman entrepreneur in South Africa.
- The respondents were aware that research was being conducted and thus the usefulness of the research design might be reduced. The main interference was that some delegates did not finish the WEP due to illness, work-related

circumstances or a lack of transport and could not complete the programme. The researcher struggled to get hold of the experimental group respondents after six months, for many did not want to respond to the questionnaire if their businesses were not performing well. Many respondents did not have the same contact details as given to the researcher six months ago when they underwent the WEP.

- The six-month period after the training intervention took place is too short to fully measure the impact of the WEP on the delegates' businesses. It was not practically possible to widen the timeframe of the study due to budget and time constraints.
- One could make the criticism that the changes and improvements that occurred within the respondents' attitudes and behaviours, as well as the growth of their businesses, were not due to the WEP only. It can be suggested that these occurrences could have been influenced by other external factors such as a favourable economic situation or the entrepreneur's personal life.

8.8 Recommendations and further research

Measuring the effectiveness of a training intervention on women entrepreneurs has a very clear importance and further research in respect of training programmes and women entrepreneurs is still required. This study has contributed results and research approaches that could stimulate further research on these important issues. The following opportunities and recommendations were identified during the course of this study, namely:

- More studies of effectiveness with the use of control groups and included longitudinal designs are needed so that findings from research such as this can have greater external validity.
- The ideal situation would be to measure the experimental group again after 18 months and again after three years to really determine the impact that the WEP had on the experimental group's businesses. A longitudinal study in which the same respondents are measured four or five times would make a valuable contribution to the field of entrepreneurship training interventions.
- Furthermore, it is suggested that effectiveness studies that make use of longitudinal designs should incorporate a co-variance model within the study.

The purpose of such a model is to keep all external factors, such as the economy, inflation, and seasonality, constant in order for the researcher to determine that the changes in respondents' businesses were due to the training programme and not due to other factors.

- In addition, issues such as the impact on effectiveness of different pedagogical methods used to deliver entrepreneurship programmes, as well as the particular entrepreneurial experience of the trainers/facilitators involved, also need to be considered.
- The control group could receive the training intervention and be measured in the same manner as the experimental group. The results found in this study could then be compared with the results found in the control group study.
- The WEP framework, as introduced in this study, could be used as a basis for other entrepreneurship training programmes to train both genders at the same time to see whether the programme is effective on male entrepreneurs as well. A comparative study between men and women entrepreneurs could then be done to measure their skills transfer factors and business performance indications after such an intervention.
- Women entrepreneurs from a specific industry could attend the WEP to determine whether industry-specific entrepreneurs have different training needs. The content of the WEP should be adapted, if required, to meet the specific target groups' needs.
- Finally, based on fact that the WEP was statistically proven to be effective, developers of entrepreneurial training programmes should include the following concepts in their programmes (refer Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1):
 - Entrepreneurial performance;
 - Entrepreneurial motivation;
 - Entrepreneurial skills (focusing on the use of role models, social skills and change orientation);
 - Business skills;
 - Needs analysis of participants;
 - Facilitators' experience and participation;
 - Approaches to learning;
 - Business plan utilisation; and

- Using business mentors and counsellors.

8.9 Summary and conclusion

The literature review introduced various important elements within the field of entrepreneurship and specifically in the context of education and training programmes. During this chapter the framework for other entrepreneurship training programmes was provided and the objectives revisited, which showed that the objectives of the study were met. Furthermore, the hypotheses and WEP targets were revisited and explained.

The findings from the empirical part of this study have helped to highlight the benefits derived by the WEP delegates as well as the new skills and knowledge gained. This study has shown that entrepreneurship programmes can help create new businesses, grow existing ones and generate new jobs. More specifically, such programmes can assist potential entrepreneurs by providing useful new business contacts and by teaching them a range of skills and knowledge relevant to setting up a business.

This study has also demonstrated that delegates will gain new skills and knowledge relevant to running a business; increase their confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities, improve their employability, turnover, profit and so on. Therefore it can be noted that the WEP, as a training intervention, is effective in training potential, start-up and established women entrepreneurs in South Africa. The effectiveness of the WEP was measured and proved at all the levels as introduced by Kirkpatrick (1967: 98) and Kalleberg and Leicht (1991: 148). Hopefully the identification of the WEP framework and measurement of levels of effectiveness in this study, as well as the recommendations suggested, will contribute towards the development of effective entrepreneurship training programmes.