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Friendship & Authenticity at Work in Professional and Managerial Women in South African Organisations

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DECLARATION

"I declare that this research project is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university"

Signature Tzigomo.

Date 21/08/2020

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This study aims to establish a relationship between friendship and authenticity at work by assessing the extent to which workplace friendships are associated with authenticity at work among women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. This will be investigated by assessing the extent to which women perceive that they have the opportunity to make friends and the prevalence of friendships in the workplace. The study will go on to explore whether friendship opportunity and prevalence in the workplace is associated with authenticity at work. This study is important because it investigates alternative ways of addressing diversity and the inclusion of women in organisations. This is particularly necessary in the South African context because of the history of apartheid which has made the discussion of transformation in the workplace pertinent. Transformation in the workplace has been taking place in the post-Apartheid era, mainly through legislation and policies that have been implemented to deal with segregation, discrimination and a lack of diversity in the workplace. These laws and policies have assisted women, members of ethnic and racial minority status groups and members of marginalized groups to become part of the labor workforce.

1.2 Definitions

Friendship in the workplace is an important aspect of the informal structure of any organisation (Nielsen, Jex & Adams, 2000). It is a form of informal relationship in the workplace (Sias & Gallagher, 2009; Morrison, 2005; Kratzer, Leenders & Van Engelen, 2005). The opportunity for friendship in the workplace has to do with employees' perceptions about whether or not the organisation that they work for allows them or affords them the chance to talk to other employees and form informal relationships (Nielsen et al., 2000). Friendship prevalence is the actual existence of friendships and whether employees pursue the opportunities that they are afforded by their organisations to form friendships (Nielsen et al., 2000). The current study seeks to examine whether the opportunity and prevalence of friendships in the workplace, is related to the authenticity at work of women. Authenticity at work is defined as a state of congruence between the experience, awareness and behaviour of an employee (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). Furthermore, authenticity at work is a subjective feeling which is determined by the employees'

ability to successfully communicate and act in accordance with their genuine internal experiences within the workplace (Roberts, Cha, Hewlin & Settles, 2009). These definitions will be further elaborated on in chapter two.

1.3 Rationale

The current study theorizes that friendships could either push women to disassociate themselves from their authentic experiences at work, or they could help them feel more comfortable to express themselves and be their authentic selves based on the emotional and social support they may be getting from these friends. The association between friendship and authenticity at work is relevant because it assists in investigating alternative ways of addressing the diversity and inclusion of women in organisations. Diversity is defined as the variety of categories that can be utilized to differentiate groups from one another (Giovannini, 2004). These categories include gender, race, ethnicity, age, language, culture and education (Giovannini, 2004). Although diversity and inclusion are often discussed together, they are different, and the mistake that organisations often make is to assume that these two concepts are one and the same. Inclusion is a state of being valued, supported and respected despite categories that differentiate you from others (Giovannini, 2004). Inclusion is based on the working environment that the organisation nurtures, the organisational culture and the interpersonal relationships that support diversity in all functions (Giovannini, 2004). Diversity without inclusion is worth less than when diversity is combined with inclusion (Bourke & Dillon, 2018).

The inclusion of women, which is the foundation of the current study, is relevant in South Africa because gender and racial disparities still exist in South African organisations even though transformation is supposedly taking place. These gender disparities are illustrated by the 18th Annual Report of the Commission for Employment Equity which shows that there are more professionally qualified men who are employed in the private sector (60.3%) than professionally qualified women in this sector (39.7%). It also shows that for senior and top management these numbers are also disproportionate. This is evidenced by the 67.7% of people at the senior management level in the private sector who are men, as compared to only 32.3% who are women (Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, 2017-2018). Furthermore, 78.4% of people employed at the top management level are men compared to only 21.6% of women (Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, 2017-2018).

These statistics demonstrate an underrepresentation of women in South African workplaces which may lead women not to embrace who they are because the numbers show more responsibility and career prospects for men in the workplace. These gender disparities may hinder women from being their authentic selves at work. This is because gender disparities may be a reflection of inequalities that are still prevalent in the workplace. These inequalities could increase discrimination, stereotypes and glass ceilings, thereby challenging inclusivity (Styodana, 2015). Therefore, although organisations are more diverse, and women are more represented in some aspects, they are still excluded from circles of influence in the organisation (Mor Barak, 2015), and this may impact their authenticity at work. It is therefore important to understand the concept of authenticity because of the transformation that is taking place in South African organisations which is making the workplace more diverse. Although organisations, not only in South Africa but globally, are making an effort to make their organisations more diverse, they are not taking time to make this diverse workforce feel valued for their unique differences (Mor Barak, 2015). The statistics mentioned earlier, from the 18th Annual Report of the Commission for Employment Equity, also demonstrate that women are the minority in organisations in the private sector. Having a minority status can lead to marginalization at work, it can be a barrier to workplace diversity as it can lead to "internalized oppression, which decreases self-confidence and self-efficacy, thwarts aspirations, and compromises achievement" (Fassinger, 2008, p. 262). This minority status which is a barrier to workplace diversity can in turn be a challenge for inclusivity in the workplace.

Based on the definition of inclusion given above, friendship at work is an important aspect of achieving inclusivity, because it is part of the informal processes that helps individuals feel that they belong and that they can be their unique selves (Mor Barak, 2015). Allowing employees to display their unique characteristics is true inclusivity (Mor Barak, 2015). Mor Barak (2015) states that there are two stages of inclusion. The first one is a reactive stage which focuses on recruiting and selecting more diverse employees. Organisations in South Africa have focused mainly on this stage as it is part of the law and legislation such as the Employment Equity Act that they have to adhere to. The second stage is a more active phase which focuses on inclusion through fostering a sense of belonging (Mor Barak, 2015). This is where informal relationships, such as friendships and experiences such as authenticity, fit in. However, not many organisations have successfully implemented this stage yet. Inclusive workplaces are likely to encourage workers to be authentic at work rather than to merely conform to the norms set by the organisation (Mor Barak, 2015).

Shore et al. (2011) state that uniqueness and belonging need to be fulfilled for an individual to feel included at work. Uniqueness is the authenticity of the individual and belonging can be achieved through informal relationships such as friendship at work. It is important to feel included at work because South Africa is a very diverse country and people spend a large portion of their day at work. It is therefore important for people to not feel like they have to leave a part of themselves at home when they come to work, and authenticity and friendship helps them be themselves and feel accepted for who they are.

Lastly, studies have been conducted on authenticity at work and friendship at work separately (e.g., Metin, Taris, Peeters, Van Beek & Van den Bosch, 2016; Van den Bosh & Taris, 2014; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013; Menard & Brunet, 2011; Sias, Heath, Perry, Silva & Fix, 2004; Nielsen et al., 2000; Andrew & Montague, 1998; Lincoln & Miller, 1979). As far as it could be established, none of these studies have explored the association between these variables in the South African context. Therefore, there is a gap in the South African literature which this study could potentially help to close. The results of this study could potentially help organisations in the South African private sector to come up with interventions that create a more inclusive workplace where people are able to be their unique selves. These interventions could also assist in mitigating the negative consequences that are associated with inauthenticity and lack of friendship opportunities or prevalence. These negative consequences include depression, anxiety, decreased morale and motivation, absenteeism and high turnover rates, loneliness, decreased levels of productivity and job dissatisfaction (Amjad, Sabri, Ilyas & Hameed, 2015; Wesarat, Sharif & Majd, 2014; Reynolds, 2007; Berman, West, Ritchter.Jr, 2002). By assessing the relationship between authenticity at work and friendship at work, this study can contribute to an understanding of how women are able to be their unique selves in the workplace.

1.4 Summary

In summary, the current study seeks to assess the association between friendship and authenticity at work among professional and managerial women in the South African private sector. The study aims to understand the role that friendship and authenticity amongst women in the workplace play, and whether these two constructs are related. This study is important in that it investigates alternative ways of addressing the diversity and inclusion of women in South African organisations. In the context of a deeply fragmented social world, globally and in the particular

manifestations of gender and racial disparities in post-Apartheid South Africa, it is imperative for us to deepen our understanding of relationships between people at work and wider society. This report will achieve this by giving an in-depth discussion of the literature on friendship and authenticity at work using Social Identity Theory to understand how these constructs could be related. The report will go on to give an outline of the research questions that will be investigated and the methodology that was followed in collecting data and securing a sample for the study. Thereafter, this thesis will present the results that were found by the researcher from the mixed methodology and go on to critically discuss what these results mean, their implications and limitations. Lastly a conclusion that summarizes the study and its findings will be given.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a theoretical context for a connection between friendship and authenticity at work and describes the literature that exists on friendship and authenticity at work. Social identity theory will be used to contextualize the constructs and their relations. This theory will account for the manner in which individuals categorize and define themselves and how they get meaning from identification and from their environments. The literature presented will focus on defining friendship and how friendship opportunity and prevalence could be associated with state authenticity at work. Most literature that exists on these constructs is western, however, the study will attempt to apply this literature to the South African context.

2.1 Identity theories

2.1.1. Social identity theory

Social identity theory is a social psychology theory that was formulated by Tajfel and Turner in 1985 (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). This theory explains group processes, relations within groups as well as relations with other groups (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). Based on the social identity theory, the social category which an individual identifies with and feels that they belong to (in-group), defines who they are in different contexts (Hogg et al., 1995). Identity refers to the human capacity of knowing who one is, and knowing who one is also involves knowing who the others are (in-group versus out-group) (Jenkins, 2008). Individuals do not exist in isolation, they interact with other people across different environments. Therefore, identity is a multidimensional construct of classifying oneself and others in the world (Jenkins, 2008; Ashmore, Deaux & McKaughlin-Volpe, 2004).

The social identity theory states that the self is differentiated into multiple identities that reside in particular norms and roles (Hogg & Terry, 1995). We live in a complex world, where people belong to different social dimensions including gender, ethnicity, religion and education. Each of these social dimensions provides a rationale for multiple identities as individuals can belong to one category and yet share a common in-group membership in another social dimension (Brewer, Gonsalkorale & van Dommelen, 2012). From a social identity theory perspective, these multiple identities are the personal, relational and social identities (Hornsey, 2008; Brewer & Gardner,

1996; Hogg et al., 1995). The personal identity is the self-image of the individual as well as their unique value and belief system (Hornsey, 2008). The relational identity is the role based identity of the individual, for example their role as a subordinate or as a parent, which is important because interpersonal relationships inform the way in which individuals define themselves (Hornsey, 2008; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). The social identity is the group identity that the individual has through belonging to certain social groups that are of value and emotional significance to them (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Relational identity is beyond the scope of this study, whilst social and personal identities are the main focus. The social identity theory comprises of social identification as well as social categorization (Hornsey, 2008; Hogg et al., 1995).

2.1.2 Social Identification

Social identification is defined as the categorization of oneself as being part of a group and their perception of oneness with the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In the context of the current study, this group can be a group of friends. Social identification emanates from categorizing individuals, the difference that exists between one group and another, and the importance of the group that the individual is not part of, which is known as the out-group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Social identification is one of the identification processes that leads to behaviour that is congruent with the identity of the individual (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Congruence is the foundation of state authenticity at work and will be elaborated upon at a later stage.

Friendship in the workplace is a form of social identification. This is a new contribution that this research makes, that in the workplace individuals may have the opportunity to make friends with the people that they work with and yet they cognitively segment the people around them and become friends with the people who are more aligned with their personal identity. The individual evaluates the group prototype which is best suited to their identity in that particular context. A prototype is a cognitive representation of the defining attributes of a group, for example their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Hogg et al., 1995). Hogg and Terry (2000) state that this process of aligning one's behaviour with an in-group prototype results in cohesion, positive attitudes, cooperation, emotion and empathy as well as collective behaviours. Yuval-Davis (2006) also stated that belonging can be a form of social identification as well as self-identification. Group identification provides an individual with a sense of belonging that fosters psychological security for them to be themselves, and this may encourage inclusivity. "Social

identification and group membership provides individuals with a certain level of comfort that leads to positive outcomes" (Feitosa, Salas & Salazar, 2012, p. 528). This comfort may help the individual to be authentic, and this may lead to positive outcomes such as self-confidence, physical and psychological wellbeing (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018).

2.1.3 Self-categorization

Self-categorization is a process of categorizing the self and others into the relevant in-group and out-group (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Self-categorization theory argues that the identity of an individual is not stable across different contexts, but depends on the context in which the individual is functioning (Knoll et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). This relates to state authenticity which is the degree to which individuals feel they can be themselves in different contexts (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne & Ilardi, 1997). Based on the multiple identities that become salient in different social contexts, an individual may perceive themselves as authentic in some roles, yet in others they may perceive themselves as inauthentic. Salient means that one identity is more dominant or becomes more active than the other, not that the other does not exist (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Identity operates at different levels of inclusiveness rather than as intergroup and interpersonal dynamics that are at opposite ends of the spectrum (Hornsey, 2008). Hence when one aspect of the identity of the individual is salient, the other is still present, just less so, thus showing that interaction (Hornsey, 2008).

Self-categorization theory states that when social identity becomes salient, individuals may begin to see themselves more as group prototypes than as individuals (Hogg et al., 1995). According to Hornsey (2008) this may lead to the depersonalization of the individual. Hogg and Terry (2000) and Hogg et al. (1995) counter this argument by stating that depersonalization does not dehumanize or lead to the deindividuation of the individual, rather it refers to change in context and in the level of identity. This would mean that friendships do not dissolve the identity of the individual, and friendship or social identity does not hinder the individual from being authentic just because they are in a group context.

The social identity and categorization theories originate from western research where clear distinctions exist between majority and minority status groups (Adams et al., 2018). Both empirical and theoretical developments have been focused on western studies (Smith & Silva, 2011; Verkuyten, 2005). Adams et al. (2016) conducted a study to investigate ethnic identity across

Caucasians (Whites) in Western society (USA) and several multi-ethnic groups in the sub-Saharan African countries, and how this relates to their psychological wellbeing. The study discovered that amongst South Africans, ethnicity was more salient than amongst Americans (Adams et al., 2016). This study suggested the ethnic identities of western groups are less active because they have less ethnic strain (Adams et al., 2016). It may be difficult to apply western research to the South African context because of the different cultural and ethnic norms that exist. In South Africa, there is a diverse range of cultural groups such as Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, and Afrikaans. However, in the west the most dominant ethnicity is that of European descent with a majority first language English speakers.

A study conducted by Adams et al. (2018), examined "The relationship between identity and in-group or out-group orientation across Black-Zulu, Coloured (mixed racial ancestry), Indian and White-Afrikaans emerging adults from South African universities" (Adams et al., 2018, p. 1). The results of this study indicated that "Personal identity for Black-Zulu, Indian and White-Afrikaans emerging adults were important for intergroup relations, and that Black-Zulu, Coloured, and Indian emerging adults distinguish themselves less from others, whereas white –Afrikaans emerging adults are less open to others" (Adams et al., 2018, p.7). This indicates that the complexities of culture and identity in South Africa cause complexities in the personal and social identities of individuals. This also makes group boundaries more fluid and flexible than in a western context (Adams et al., 2018). This is a counter intuitive finding given the history of divisions in South African society, as it may mean that social identity processes may be different for ethnic groups within the South African context.

In summary, the current study uses social identity theory to conceptualize the argument that individuals have multiple identities, namely their personal (unique), relational (role relationships) and social (group identity) identities. The current study has mainly focused on the personal and social identities. When individuals form friendships in the workplace, their personal identity is likely to be similar in some way to the personal identity of others. Once the individual forms a friendship with another individual, a social identity is formed and becomes salient whenever they are together. Depending on the context that the individual is in, one aspect of the identity becomes more salient than the others. Through the process of social identification, the individual belongs to a group and their group membership, which is an indication of the salience of their social

identity, leads to a certain level of comfort which encourages inclusivity and is likely to lead to authenticity. High levels of authenticity are experienced when there is congruence between the multiple identities in different contexts. Incongruence between these identities is likely to be an indication of inauthenticity.

2.2 Friendship

2.2.1 What is Friendship?

Recent literature defines friendship as reciprocal social relations between or amongst individuals, which primarily lead to happiness and a sense of self-worth (Leibowitz, 2018). The current study defines friendship as companionship which manifests because of the choice made by the individuals involved (Thomas, 1987). There is mutual trust between the individuals involved, and none of the parties have authority over the other (Thomas, 1987). Sapadin (1988) states that friendship is a voluntary relationship meant for enjoyment, fulfilment and satisfaction. Various factors contribute to identity, including friendships (Weeks, Donovan & Heaphy, 1999).

2.2.2 Friendship and Social Capital

Friendship is an important social capital resource that is used to construct identity (Reynolds, 2007). Social capital is goodwill that is available to individuals and groups through social relations (Kwon & Adler, 2014). This notion is important in helping us understand how people choose and maintain their friendships (Reynolds, 2007). According to Bourdieu's theory of social fields, there are different forms of social capital, mainly: economic, cultural, and social capital which is imperative in defining the possibilities and positions of people in each social field (Siisiainen, 2003). A social field is a system of social relationships that functions according to its own rules (Moi, 1991). These rules are norms and values that are instilled through interactions and are known as habitus (Moi, 1991). Bourdieu stated that social capital has two elements (Siisiainen, 2003). "Firstly it is a resource which is connected to group membership and social networks and secondly, the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent depends on the size of the network of connections that they can effectively mobilize" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249).

The values of social capital and those of friendship, namely trust, reciprocity and emotional support, are closely matched (Morrow, 2011; Reynolds, 2007). Bourdieu also states that social capital is a quality produced as an output of a relationship rather than just commonality of a group

(Bourdieu, 1986). There are two types of social capital, namely bonding social capital and bridging social capital, which can both be used to understand friendship relationships (Kwon & Adler, 2014; Reynolds, 2007). Bonding social capital establishes friendships amongst homogeneous groups and bridging social capital establishes friendships amongst individuals with different ethnicities or race (Reynolds, 2007). Friendships within the workplace can take both forms. The difference, however, between friendship as social capital and friendship prevalence and opportunity in the workplace is that social capital's main focus is on the benefits that one can derive from their social relations (Kwon & Adler, 2014) rather than a mutual companionship. Siisianen (2003) states that social capital is based on using the social relations that develop within groups and social networks to improve one's social position in the different social fields. Although this can be an aspect of friendships at work, this is not its primary goal. The current study focuses on companionship, the benefits of friendships and the prevalence and opportunity of friendships.

2.2.3 Friendship at Work

Friendship exists in various life spheres, including the workplace. The main difference between friendship in other spheres and friendship in the workplace is that the primary foundation of workplace friendship is the shared interest in organisational values that individuals have (Berman, West & Richter, 2002). Within the workplace there are formal ties that are required and dictated by the organisation, for example the relationship between a manager and his/her subordinate (Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 1998). Non-mandated ties, such as informal ties, are also prevalent and encouraged in some organisations, for example a group of women and men from different departments (Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 1998). These informal relationships improve communication among employees and give rise to friendships in the workplace (Amjad et al., 2015; Liu, Kwan, Lu & Mao, 2013; Lopes Morrison, 2005). With the exception of a few studies (Andrew & Monague, 1998; Amjad et al., 2015; Berman & Richter, 2002; Liu et al., 2013; Mao, 2006; Markiewicz et al., 2000) little research attention has focused on friendship at work. None of these studies were conducted in South Africa. However, Lopes Morrison (2005) used a diverse sample which may be similar in some ways to South Africa. When we look closely at South Africa, however, it is possible that the historical racial division could still influence the opportunities for and prevalence of friendship in the workplace, as well as who people choose as friends at work.

Friendships at work involves a network of personal relationships which require the opportunity to make friends, which in turn could be related to the prevalence of friends in the workplace (Nielsen et al., 2000). It involves more than merely acting in a friendly way towards other employees or simply being acquaintances, but also includes trust, shared interests and values as well (Berman et al., 2002). Ibarra (1995) states that friendship is important for the psychosocial functioning of employees. "Psychosocial functions are aspects of a relationship that enhance an individual's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role, they include serving as a role model, acceptance, and friendship" (Ibarra, 1995, p. 675).

Workplace friendship functions independently of work ties and include informal activities with colleagues such as lunch, dinner, drinks, and visiting each other (Liu et al., 2013; Ibarra, 1995). It also includes interacting informally at the workplace during work hours. Friendship in the workplace may be fleeting if it does not also exist outside of the workplace and independently of the ties at work (Berman et al., 2002). Informal relations that exist solely within the workplace are usually termed friendly relations or acquaintances rather than friends and they may be less enduring than relationships that also exist outside of work (Berman et al., 2002). If the friendship at work is solely based on work related issues, when these factors cease, the friendship is likely to end as well (Berman et al., 2002).

Although workplace friendships function inside and outside of work, they need to have boundaries. Andrew and Montague (1998) stated that because workplace friendships function in the public (at work) and private (at home) spheres, the boundaries tend to get blurred. They went on to state that theirs is a friendship between two women who work together and the blurring of the boundaries of their friendship has become part of their everyday lives (Andrew & Montague, 1998). This is because an important part of friendship is confiding in each other. However, as colleagues they may have different professional experiences, different ways of doing things and often see things differently. This may lead to disagreements which may cause feelings of hurt and betrayal, which may then affect the friendship (Andrew & Montague, 1998). A study conducted by Pedersen and Lewis (2012) investigated friendship within the work-life debate and explored how individuals manage friendships in a time when work takes up so much of their time and work-life boundaries tend to be blurred. As part of a larger study, a qualitative approach was used to assess the dynamics of friendship from a work-life perspective (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). The findings suggested that

boundaries are usually blurred when individuals become friends with their colleagues and this demonstrated how multifaceted workplace friendship can be (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). The participants described that they were close to their colleagues, however, their level of closeness depended on their position in the hierarchy and how well they were matched personally (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). These findings also suggest that for friendships to endure, people may need to choose friends with whom they have shared interests, phase of life, values, mutual commitment and trust (Berman et al., 2002). These friendships amongst people who are similar, are known as homophilous friendships.

2.2.4 Homophily

Ibarra (1995) stated that the process of forming informal networks with people who are similar to oneself is called homophily. Friendships can be an example of such informal networks. Homophily is the extent to which individuals who interact with each other are similar (Herminia & Ibarra, 1997; Ibarra, 1995). According to Ibarra (1995) this may be in terms of age, race and gender. However, other authors such as McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook (2001) have argued that these similarities are not only limited to the sociodemographic makeup of the individual, but also include their behavioural and intrapersonal characteristics such as behavioural similarity as well as similar attitudes, abilities, interests, beliefs and aspirations. In accordance with McPherson et al. (2001), Sias and Gallagher (2009) stated that friendship is motivated by personal and contextual factors. Personal factors include similarities based on demographic factors, however, these are not usually enough to spark a friendship (Sias & Gallagher, 2009). It is usually perceived similarity of interests, attitudes and values that develops friendships (Sias & Gallagher, 2009). Contextual factors include proximity, for example people who work in the same office, similar work-related problems, and organisational socializing (Sias & Gallagher, 2009). In the context of the current study, homophily is defined as a principle that connects people based on similar sociodemographic, behavioural, and interpersonal characteristics (McPherson et al., 2001). Ibarra (1995) and Thomas (1990) made an empirical finding that homophily is likely to strengthen the bonds of the friendship between people of the same gender and race. They also discovered that the relationship between people of the same race is likely to be stronger than the relationship between individuals of different races and genders (Ibarra, 1995; Thomas, 1990).

Although it may be easier for people to form informal relations such as friendships with people who are similar to themselves, there could be some disadvantages to this in the workplace. These disadvantages could include less access to certain organisational information, narrower networks of informal contacts and less information about how to grow in the organisation, especially for minority group members (Ibarra, 1995). These aspects could impact career success (Ibarra, 1995). Although homophilous friendships have some disadvantages, they tend to provide more social support than heterophilous friendships (South, Bonjean, Markham & Corder, 1982). A Canadian study conducted by organisational researchers on interpersonal networks and the quality of work friendships that women and men subscribe to, assessed the potential impact of gender socialization as well as the way individuals interact in friendships with people of a similar sex compared to those of an opposite sex in the workplace (Markiewicz, Devine & Kausilas, 2000). This quantitative study consisted of select participants from lawyers, managers and workers in information technology. It found that people tend to become friends with people of the same sex, and that these friendships between people of the same sex seem to be stronger than those between people of different sexes in the workplace. Interpersonal relationships between people who are similar have been associated with better communication, trust and reciprocity (Ibarra, 1995). This may be an indication that the individual is more comfortable being themselves and may be an indication of authenticity.

2.2.5 Friendship Opportunity and Prevalence

Friendship opportunity is the degree to which the organisation allows its employees to converse with other employees and establish informal relationships amongst each other (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995; Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Riordan and Griffeth from Georgia State University, stated that social principles suggest that frequent interaction and proximity in a work setting is likely to lead to friendship or the opportunity for one (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995). Friendship opportunity may be necessary for friendships to form within the workplace (Lopes Morrison, 2005). Lopes Morrison developed a theoretical model for friendship at work and hypothesized that when friendships are prevalent in the workplace, it is as a result of the opportunities that are provided in the workplace (Lopes Morrison, 2005). She also stated that logically, if there are more opportunities to make friendships in the workplace, then the prevalence of friendship in this workplace is likely to increase (Lopes Morrison, 2005). Lopes Morrison conducted two studies. In

the first study she used a sample of employees at a hospital in New Zealand and the second study used a diverse sample from organisations in New Zealand and worldwide (Lopes Morrison, 2005). The results suggested that friendship opportunity and friendship prevalence at work significantly affects several variables in the work environment, such as employees' work experiences, the functioning of the organisation and several work outputs such as satisfaction with one's job, commitment to the organisation and lower turnover rates (Lopes Morrison, 2005).

Friendship at work can be influenced by organisational level. A study conducted by Mao (2007) on 45 companies in Taiwan, compared the perceptions of friendship between higher and lower organisational level employees in the workplace. They discovered that individuals who are employed at higher levels in the organisation tend to have less friends at work (Mao, 2007). This is because friendship in the workplace is likely to exist among people who work together in a similar context and organisational level (Mao, 2007; Boyd & Taylor, 1998). The reason for this may be because of power dynamics, which may make it difficult for subordinates and managers to become friends. It may also be because of role conflict that may arise if people from different organisational levels are friends. Boyd and Taylor (1998) further state that in the workplace, friendship emanates from the role positions that people have in the organisation. In addition to this, Ibarra and Andrews (1993) and Triandis (1959) stated that hierarchy has more influence on the perceptions of workers in the workplace than individual attributes. However, it can also be argued that the reason why friendship in the workplace can be influenced by organisational level may be attributed to the fact that, individuals tend to become friends with the people they are in close proximity with (Lopes Morrison, 2005). People who work at the same organisational level are likely to interact more in the workplace than with those at different levels whom they have less contact with.

2.2.6 Absence of friendship

The lack of social relationships such as friendships has also been found to be one of the things that is wrong with organisations (Berman et al., 2002). A lack of friendship prevalence and friendship opportunity in the workplace has been associated with negative outcomes such as anxiety, and in some extreme cases, sociopathic behaviour (Hummel, 1994). This usually happens when bureaucratic organisations try to compensate for informal relations through rewards and recognition, but this usually leaves employees feeling empty and dependent on material things

which end up causing them depression, anxiety and neuroticism (Hummel, 1994). Human capital has, however, become important in modern organisations, and in an attempt to prevent the workforce from feeling alienated, depressed and neurotic, most organisations in the world have begun to encourage opportunities to form friendships in the workplace so as to make these negative outcomes less likely (Berman et al., 2002). Organisations can enhance or encourage opportunities for friendship in the workplace through teamwork, which develops close working relationships among employees who may begin to share personal information and life experiences amongst each other (Berman et al., 2002). Managers promote an organisational climate of openness which can assist in building trust among employees, therefore encouraging them to be their authentic selves (Coxen, Van der Vaart & Stander, 2016).

2.2.7 Friendship and women

Friendship acts as a source of community and group consciousness for marginalized groups in society (Parker & Song, 2006; Reynolds, 2007). An example of such marginalized groups is women who are generally still the minority in many workplaces, such as private sector organisations in South Africa (Commission for Employment Equity Annual Report, 2017-2018). Same –gender, -ethnic or –race friendships act as a protective net for women where they can get support in the face of gender discrimination, racial discrimination, and social exclusion (Reynolds, 2007). Same gender friendships tend to have a higher degree of intimacy whereby individuals begin to call each other 'best friends', 'close friends' or 'sisters' (Reynolds, 2007). The exchanges in these friendships are more reciprocal and the friendship bonds more solid than in cross-gender friendships (Reynolds, 2007). Western-based studies have shown that the way men and women experience friendships at work is different. Morrison (2008) conducted a study on individuals from the tertiary education and healthcare sectors in New Zealand, USA and Australia. This study investigated the perceived benefits of friendships in the workplace, the gender differences associated with this and the relationship between friendship factors and organisational outcomes (Morrison, 2008). Results showed that friendships at work differ for men and women. Women were more likely than men to advocate for the benefits of friendship at work because they value the social and emotional support that they bring about (Morrison, 2008; Markiewicz et al., 2000). Men, on the other hand, tend to focus mainly on the perceived functional benefits that friendships in the workplace bring about, such as career success or help with completing job tasks (Morrison,

2008; Markiewicz et al., 2000). In the same way, women tend to be more satisfied with friendships with other women than with friendships with men, because women are perceived to be more intimate in friendships, they are willing to share and be open (Markiewicz et al., 2000).

A study conducted by Wright and Scanlon (1991) in Minnesota explored the gender differences between same sex and cross-sex friendships a work, and how these differences were related to their gender role orientation and the perceived gender role orientation of their friend. The results of the study showed that friendships between women were significantly more rewarding than friendships between men or between men and women (Wright & Scanlon, 1991). Sapadin (1988) also conducted a study that investigated same sex and cross-sex friendships of professional men and women. The results indicated that men and women view the characteristics of an ideal friendship in a similar way, however, how they experienced friendship was different (Wright & Scalon, 1991). Same sex friendships between women were found to have more nurturance and enjoyment (Wright & Scanlon, 1991). Hogg and Terry (2000) state that relational demography theorists argue that demographic homogeneity, which is homogeneity of characteristics such as gender, age and race, strengthen social identification as well as in-group prototypes. They further stated that demographic diversity in the group may weaken the impact that demographics have on group membership (Hogg & Terry, 2000). In the context of South Africa, this may mean that because of multiculturalism in the workplace, demographics may no longer have a large impact on friendship choices.

As discussed in the literature above, women primarily value friendships in the workplace because they genuinely value the social and intrinsic outcomes of these friendships (Morrison, 2008). These intrinsic rewards are linked to the identity of the individual because they represent that which the individual values (Andrew & Montague, 1998). Several authors have discovered that friendships play a particularly salient role in the reflection and maintenance of identity (Andrew & Montague, 1998; Milardo, 1986; O' Connor, 1992). Several studies have also made linkages between friendship in the workplace and happiness, stating that employees who have meaningful friendships are more likely to be happier than those who are alone (Wesarat, Sharif & Majd, 2014; Wright, 2005; Snow, 2013). Paul (2000) and Paul and Pevalin (2005) have argued that friendships provide individuals with a sense of identity, and give individuals the opportunity to freely express their personalities. This sense of identity can be interpreted as the social identity of the individual

which becomes salient when they are with their friends in the workplace, and freely expressing one's personality is being authentic. When social identity is congruent with the individual's other identities, high levels of authenticity are likely to be achieved.

2.3 Authenticity

2.3.2 Authenticity: definition and challenges

Authenticity is an experience determined by the degree to which an individual acts in congruence with who they truly are (Harter, 2002). It involves knowing oneself, being consistent with who one is and fulfilling who one truly is (Sedikides, Lenton, Slabu & Thomaes, 2018; Vess, 2019). Moreover, authenticity is a subjective experience which requires an alignment between what the individual is experiencing within themselves and how they express it on the outside (Roberts et al., 2009; Roberts, 2005; Harter, 2002). What the individual is experiencing within themselves, includes their values, thoughts and feelings (Roberts et al., 2009). How they express it externally involves their verbal and non-verbal disclosures, as well as how they dress or how their home and/or office is decorated (Roberts et al., 2009).

Authenticity is a much contested area of research, as some scholars state that authenticity does not exist (Brown, 2015; Baumeister, 2019). For example, Markus and Nurius (1986) argued that focusing on authenticity is not helpful because it limits the ability to analyze the potential that individuals have, which could be crucial in identifying and describing them. Butler (2004) and Goffman (1990) also argued that there is no 'true self' and the self is a character that is acted by the individual. Rivera, Christy, Kim, Vess, Hicks and Schlegel (2019) also dismissed the notion of the 'true self', proposing a theory that suggests that authenticity is a fictitious ideal that can be used to guide the actions of the individual. In agreement with this stance, Baumeister (2019) states that people have different conceptions of self, and distinguishes these conceptions as being false selves and true selves. For the selves that they identify with as being 'true', choosing one true self from a number of 'true selves' would be tricky because self-conceptions have many inaccuracies and distortions (Baumeister, 2019). Baumeister (2019) goes on to propose that desired reputation is what is important and not the true self. He states that people experience the feeling of authenticity when they succeed at achieving their desired reputation (Baumeister, 2019).

Although the scholars mentioned above have disputed the notion of the true self and argued that it is impossible, the current study states that there is a difference between a 'true self' and an 'authentic identity'. 'True self' as discussed above, suggests that there is one identity which is unified, non-contradictory, and makes up the individual's entire being (Erikson, 1995). The current study in no way stipulates that there is one way of being a woman. This study takes the viewpoint that authenticity is not a stable trait with temporary congruence which emerges and diffuses, but is a state in which the different identities of the individual are congruent (Ryan & Ryan, 2019; Kira, Balkin & San, 2012; Roberts et al., 2009; Ryan, La Guardia & Rawsthorne, 2005). Authentic identity means that an individual is their unique self, based on the context they are in (Sedikides et al., 2018). Hence one can be authentic in one social context such as at home, and yet be inauthentic in another social context, such as at work. Whether it is their personal, relational or social identity which is salient, there will still be congruence between these identities. In the South African context there might also be multiple ways of being a woman due to different gender constructs, racial diversity and multiculturalism, as well as the multiples roles that women play, for example, a mother and a manager. Furthermore, authenticity has psychological and behavioural aspects, it is less about a single true self and more about individuals being consciously aware of their values and beliefs in whatever role they are enacting (Ryan et al., 2005). In terms of behaviour, the authentic individual has to act in line with their thoughts, attitudes and beliefs (Ryan & Ryan, 2019; Kira et al., 2012; Harter, 2005). This relates to how Knoll et al. (2015) define congruence, as consistency between feeling and expression.

There have been debates on whether authenticity is a state or a trait. Trait authenticity is a stable characteristic that is unlikely to change across time and different situations (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis & Joseph, 2008). Although some scholars have proposed that authenticity is a trait (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Ito & Kodama, 2005; Goldman & Kernis, 2002), the current study, in accordance with Ryan and Ryan (2019), Sedikides et al. (2017), and Lopez and Rice (2006), proposes that there are variations within the individual which are related to expression rather than simply presence or absence. State authenticity is focused on different circumstances and establishes the ability of the individual to express their thoughts, values, feelings and preferences across different contexts (Roberts et al., 2009). The current study focuses on state authenticity because the workplace is a specific context, and this study is assessing the identity of the individual

in the context of the workplace (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Van den Bosch and Taris (2013) state that state authenticity would be a good indicator of a fully functioning individual.

2.3.3 State Authenticity

State authenticity is the "sense or feeling that one is currently in alignment with one's true or genuine self; that one is being their real self" (Sedikides et al., 2017, p. 3). Individuals tend to differ in the degree to which they perceive their behaviour and thoughts to be an expression of who they are in different contexts (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne & Ilardi, 1997). State authenticity also differs depending on the context that the individual will be in (Ryan & Ryan, 2019). For example, an individual may be authentic at home, but may not necessarily be authentic at work (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). In such instances, when the individual is at home, they can be themselves, whether it is being sociable with the people they live with and with their neighbors, they can voice their opinions and their beliefs freely. However, when they are at work they might feel as if they cannot talk to everyone because the culture of the organisation may not necessarily allow for people to interact informally and they might also feel they cannot voice their opinions and beliefs because they are afraid of being judged.

This links to the concept of multiple identities which are interconnected but salient in different roles and contexts. Based on this, the current study draws possible connections between state authenticity and friendship. This study has already argued that friendship is part of the social identity of the individual, therefore, if friendship is non-existent or contradictory to the other identities of the individual, this may affect the individual's perceptions of authenticity. The presence of friendship and its alignment with the other identities in the workplace could facilitate the authenticity of the individual in the workplace.

In addition to this, the key to state authenticity is determined by a fit between the person and their environment (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). In the context of women at work in South Africa, this would mean that the organisation, which determines the environment in which these women are working, plays a role in their perceptions of authenticity. Schmader and Sedikides (2018) refer to person-environment fit as social fit, and define this as the degree to which the individual's identity is accepted in the environment in which they are functioning. Social fit relates to inclusion in the South African workplace, and talks to how

organisations need to do more in accepting the different identities of employees. This could ultimately assist in enhancing people's authenticity in the South African workplace.

Furthermore, people need the support of their friends to feel authentic when their attitudes, opinions and identities are stigmatized and devalued in social settings (Ryan & Ryan, 2019). In the context of a male dominated workplace, the identities of women as well as their values can be devalued, especially if they are not willing to conform to the norms of male domination and patriarchy (Roberts et al., 2009). The current study suggests that these women would then need the support of friends to help them be their authentic selves and to counter the stereotypes that are associated with their gender. Such friendships are likely to increase feelings of authenticity (Roberts et al., 2009). Roberts et al. (2009) and Peterson (2005) stated that the experience of authenticity is socially constructed because an individual's claims about their identity are either accepted or denied by other people who they interact with. When the values, beliefs, ideas and attitudes are accepted and recognized by others, the individual attains a sense of affirmation and is more certain of who they are and what their purpose is in the social world (Robertson et al., 2009). The current study argues that this sense of affirmation may partly come from friendship. This claim is supported by Lenton, Bruder, Slabu and Sedikides (2013) as well as Schmader and Sedikides (2018), who stated that people report greater feelings of authenticity when they are with their friends and higher levels of inauthenticity when they are surrounded by people who are judgmental.

In addition to this, Schmader and Sedikides (2018) state that interpersonal relationships are an important component of feeling authentic. When people are exposed to or are in the presence of people who are similar to them, they feel accepted and they feel that their personal identity is secure, thus they are likely to feel more authentic (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018; Purdie-Vaughns, Steel, Davies, Ditlmann & Crosby, 2008). This may be an indication of a link between authenticity and homophily. Furthermore, when individuals are in situations or environments in which they feel that they do not belong, they are likely to conform to other people's values, ideas and expectations so that they can fit in, thus leading them to feel inauthentic (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018; Erikson, 1995).

2.3.4 Authenticity at work

Authenticity in the workplace is experienced when the employee is able to successfully communicate and act in accordance with their genuine internal experiences within the workplace (Roberts et al., 2009; Liedtka, 2008). The current study is adopting the definition of authenticity at work as "a subjectively experienced phenomena that can be measured in terms of a bipolar continuum, with one side being fully authentic, and the other side being fully inauthentic" (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013, p. 2). This suggests that a continuum exists in which people range from being authentic to being inauthentic, and the more or less true they are to themselves, the more they are authentic or inauthentic. Authenticity at work depends on the subjective experience of a match between an individual's identity and the nature, purpose and practice of their work (Chinelao, Ferreira, Valenini & Bosch, 2015; Kira, Balkin & San, 2012). This relates to the notion of fit between the person and their environment established by Schmader and Sedikides (2018). The fit between the person and their environment can also be interpreted as congruence between the personal identity and the social identity of the individual. When we talk of the work environment, the social identity of the individual that becomes more salient. When employees perceive themselves to be authentic in the workplace, they feel that they have the opportunity to be themselves whilst at work. They also feel that the work they are doing coincides with their thoughts, values and attitudes, and they act in line with this (Kira et al., 2012; Wood et al., 2008; Harter, 2005).

A three factor structure created from the general authenticity scale developed by Wood et al. (2008) helps make up the construct of state authenticity and understand the continuum from authenticity to inauthenticity (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). These three factors are authentic living, external influence and self-alienation. Authentic living is the extent to which the individual is true to who they are in most situations and whether there is a match between their values and beliefs and how they behave (Knoll et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). External influence is the degree to which the individual accepts or allows other people's values and beliefs to override their own so as to meet other people's expectations (Knoll et al., 2015; Van den Bosch, 2013). Lastly, self-alienation is a subjective experience of the individual, in this case the employee who may not have a solid understanding of who they are and feel disconnected from their core self (Knoll et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). Consistency between these three factors would suggest that the

employee is has higher levels of authenticity, whilst incongruence suggests higher levels of inauthenticity (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013).

Furthermore, Schmid (2005) argued that external influence has an impact on the other two factors (self-alienation and authentic living). This is because self-alienation and authentic living are affected by the social environment and external influence is part of the social environment (Schmid, 2005). Accepting influence from other people within their environment is likely to affect how people perceive themselves; they may start to feel like they do not know themselves (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). External influence may also impact the individual's experience of authentic living as they may start to feel like there is a mismatch between their values and beliefs and how they are currently behaving (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). However, Lenton, Slabu and Sedikides (2016) argued that external influence is not an integral part of state authenticity but one of trait authenticity. They argued that this is because choosing to accept the influence of others in a particular context or situation is different from it being a trait of always accepting the influence of other people over your own (Lenton et al., 2016). The study carried out by Van den Bosch and Taris (2013) found that authenticity at work is a result of the congruence between the employee and their work environment and therefore included external influence, as did the current study. The notion of fit, which was discussed earlier, is determined by the congruence between the identity of the individual and the environment in which they work (Su, Murdock & Rounds, 2015; Roberts et al., 2009).

Associations have been found between authenticity at work with positive psychological constructs such as wellbeing, happiness, personal growth and purpose in life (Chinelato et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013; Kira, Balkin & San, 2012; Toor & Ofori, 2009). Positive relations have also been found between authenticity at work and work outputs such as work engagement, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and low turnover (Chinelato et al., 2015; Toor & Ofori, 2009; Wood et al., 2008). Authenticity has also been found to be negatively correlated with negative emotions, stress, depression and anxiety (Chinelato et al., 2015).

2.3.5 Inauthenticity

As suggested earlier, some scholars may argue that authenticity and inauthenticity are at opposite ends of the same continuum (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). Inauthenticity, as defined by Harter (2002), is the absence of a perception of authenticity whereby the individual acts fake, hides their thoughts and feelings, and says what other people want to hear rather than what they actually think. When an individual is being inauthentic, they live up to other people's expectations rather than their own (Chinelato et al., 2015; Harter, 2002). Although it can be argued that work requires us to sometimes live up to the expectations of others, for example our boss, this study is assessing the extent to which this happens and whether the individual will still be comfortable being themselves at work. Some authors have stated that suppressing personal values, ideas and beliefs that are different from other people's values, ideas and beliefs limits the ability to learn in group settings as well as creativity and innovation whilst completing their job tasks (Roberts et al., 2009; Miliken, Morrison & Hewlin, 2003; Morrison & Miliken, 2000). Feelings of inauthenticity can also arise when people are not fulfilling the commitments they have made to themselves, are hiding from themselves and as a result are becoming self-estranged (Erikson, 1995).

As stated earlier, the three factors of the Authenticity at Work Scale are included in the authenticity continuum. Inauthenticity is represented by self-alienation on the Authenticity at Work measure. High scores of self-alienation indicate that the individual perceives themselves as inauthentic as they will be feeling and acting in a manner that is incompatible with their core self (Chinelato et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). Baumeister (2019) and Vess (2019) state that the concept of the 'true self' partly emanates from the experience of the false self. This false self is referred to as inauthenticity in the context of this study. According to Baumeister (2019), the false self includes pretending to be something that one is not, acting differently just to please one's family or one's employer and performing actions that are not aligned with one's values and attitudes. This relates to the work done by Patricia Hewlin (2003) on facades of conformity. She proposed that when there is a mismatch between the values of the individual and those of the organisation, employees may present a false representation to appear as if they are embracing these values (Hewlin, 2003). Furthermore, Hewlin (2003) proposed that minority status could be an antecedent to conformity. This is because minorities usually have demographic characteristics that are different from more than fifty percent of the people within their workplace, as well as values,

attitudes and beliefs that may differ from most of the people within their environment (Hewlin, 2003). Because they are different, they may feel the need to conform so as to avoid being perceived in a negative way, and say things that are socially acceptable based on the norms of the group so as to fit in (Hewlin, 2003). In the context of the current study, these facades of conformity can be interpreted as inauthenticity as they are a form of concealing who one truly is (Hewlin, 2003). In the South African workplace, women are still the minority in senior and top management positions and this minority status could potentially lead to inauthenticity. Inauthenticity may also cause workers to experience psychological and emotional distress (Roberts et al., 2009; Hewlin, 2003). When workers feel the need to conform to the expectations of their environment, they may end up experiencing identity conflict as they act as one person at home and when they get to work they are forced to switch to being somebody different, and these feelings of dissonance may cause stress (Roberts et al., 2009; Settles, 2006; Hewlin, 2003; Smith & Nkomo, 2000).

2.3.6 Bringing it all together

In summary, the literature discussed above has made connections between friendship and authenticity at work. The current study has used the social identity and self-categorization theories to conceptualize these concepts. Through this model it can be seen that individuals have multiple identities (personal and social identities) which are salient in different contexts. Congruence between these identities enables the individual to feel more authentic. Friendship, which is part of the social identity of the individual in the workplace, plays a role in the perceptions of authenticity of the individual because informal relationships help the individual feel more accepted and they feel like there can be more of themselves. This would then in turn assist with the fit between the identity of the individual and their environment which is determined by the congruence of the multiple identities.

Research Questions

This study aims to establish a relationship between friendship and authenticity at work by assessing the extent to which workplace friendships are associated with authenticity at work among women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. As stated earlier, this study uses a mixed method research approach to establish a connection between friendship and authenticity at work. The quantitative component which analyzes data from an online survey uses hypotheses to address the main question of the study. Friendship is being assessed through friendship opportunity and prevalence in the workplace as well as homophily. Authenticity at work is being assessed using the three factors of authentic living, external influence and self-alienation. The secondary questions also use the same data to understand whether there were any other factors.

The qualitative component is used to better understand and contextualize the connections established from the quantitative hypotheses. Although the quantitative component can tell us that a connection may exist, the qualitative component helps us to better understand how these connections were formed by women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector and gain a better understanding of their perceptions. This is done by having face to face in-depth interviews with these women and they can tell us more about some of the things that could not be answered by a closed ended answer from a Likert type scale.

Main Research question and hypotheses

RQ1: Is there an association between friendship and authenticity at work?

This was operationalized through the following hypotheses:

H1: There is negative association between friendship opportunity and self- alienation.

H2: There is a negative association between friendship prevalence and self-alienation.

H3: There is a positive association between friendship opportunity and authentic living.

H4: There is a positive association between friendship prevalence and authentic living.

H5: There is a negative association between friendship opportunity and external influence.

H6: There is a negative association between friendship prevalence and external influence.

Secondary Research questions

The secondary questions assessed whether there were any other factors that may have affected the association between friendship and authenticity at work. These secondary questions are as follows:

RQ2: To what extent do women create homophilious relationships in the workplace?

RQ3: Are homophilous relationships associated with friendship and authenticity at work?

RQ4: Are there any ethnic differences that exist with regards to friendship opportunity, prevalence and authenticity at work?

RQ5: Are there any organisational role differences that exist with regards to friendship and authenticity at work?

RQ6: Are there any organisational tenure differences that exist with regards to authenticity at work?

RQ7: How do professional and managerial women conceptualize friendship a work?

RQ8: What benefits and disadvantages do professional and managerial women associate with friendship in the workplace?

RQ9: Do women in professional and managerial roles associate friendship at work with authenticity at work?

RQ10: What perceptions do professional and managerial women have about their friendships at work in relation to their level and tenure in the organisation?

Research question one, the hypotheses and secondary research questions two to six were answered using the quantitative research methods. Furthermore, secondary research questions two and three as well as seven to ten were answered using the qualitative research methods whilst focusing on the perceptions of women in professional and managerial roles.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section describes the research design, sample and sampling techniques utilized in conducting the study, the procedure undertaken, instruments used, the statistical and qualitative analyses administered and the ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

A mixed methods (triangulation), non-experimental, cross sectional and correlational design was used to assess the association between friendship and authenticity at work among a sample of professional and managerial women in the South African private sector. The current study had a quantitative aspect because it utilized standardized numeric data from the survey which was carried out, which consisted of the workplace friendship (Nielsen et al., 2000) and authenticity at work scales (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). The study also consisted of a qualitative component because it used in-depth interviews to inform the results. Qualitative research is an approach of data collection that relies more on data which is linguistic than numerical (Bryman & Bell 2014). According to Kielmann (2014) it is more subjective, personal and humanistic. A combination of these two approaches helped establish the external and construct validity through triangulation (Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Jick, 1979). The qualitative data helped elaborate on friendship and authenticity at work and the quantitative data provided preliminary tests of the association between the two constructs. This mixed method design gave more insight and rigor to the study (Edmondson & McManus, 2007; Jick, 1979).

This research was also non-experimental because there was no random assignment, meaning the sample was not split into experimental and control groups. However, contrast groups were used to compare women in managerial and professional roles, and tenure in the organisation. This was done to establish whether there were any similarities or differences between how the women in the two roles make friends within the workplace and how this impacts their perceptions of authenticity. It was also done to investigate whether tenure plays a part in informing these patterns. That being said, the independent variable was not manipulated or changed in any way. Data was also collected at one point in time making this study cross sectional (Leedy & Ormond, 2005). Lastly, the current study was fundamentally correlational and investigated the association between

the variables so as to understand what one variable told us about the other (Leedy & Ormond, 2005).

3.2 Sample and Sampling

The sample consisted of 132 women who work in the private sector in South African organisations. This sector was chosen so as to narrow down the sample and because it has a high percentage of professional and managerial women. The study defined professional as an individual who was in an occupation that applied skills based on technical knowledge, was part of a professional body, followed a code of conduct specified by a professional body, and had advanced education and or training. This included individual contributors from entry level to management roles (Roberts, 2005). A managerial role referred to the leadership roles that were occupied by managers (Charan, Drotter & Noel, 2010). This study included managers who had at least one person reporting to them. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to over 50 and these participants were of different ethnicities, home languages and organisational levels and roles, which allowed the researcher to critically examine whether differences in patterns of friendships and authenticity at work existed across the sample.

Non-probability purposive sampling was employed to secure the intended sample. Non-probability sampling is a non-random sampling strategy, meaning the researcher obtained individuals who were willing to make themselves available to take part in the study for both the quantitative and qualitative components (Laher & Botha, 2012). Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling also otherwise known as judgmental sampling (Kothari, 2004). This type of sampling explains how the researcher deliberately chose to use particular participants for this study. This was due to their qualities and the alignment of these qualities with the proposed study (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). As the researcher was specifically looking for female participants who were in managerial and professional roles in the South African private sector, purposive sampling was applicable to this study.

This sampling strategy was also non-probability convenience sampling because the sample was selected based on access, availability and willingness to respond, which was strictly on a volunteer basis. The researcher sought permission from organisations in the private sector and for those which granted permission, it was still the choice of the female employees who met the criteria to decide whether they wanted to participate or not. The researcher also used an online survey which

was easily accessible on social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and WhatsApp. Through these social media platforms, the researcher also requested that those who volunteered or those who did not meet the criteria also share the survey with other potential candidates who they thought would have liked to complete the survey for the quantitative component. This was a snowball sampling strategy which uses a series of networks to get hold of people who are suitable for the preferred sample (Tansey, 2007).

The final sample was made up of 132 women in the South African private sector who occupied professional and managerial roles. A sample of 7 who volunteered from the 132, were interviewed for the qualitative component. Some participants failed to answer some of the demographic questions thus resulting in a percentage of missing values in the data set. This, however, did not affect the analyses, but missing values have been indicated in the sample demographic characteristic tables below.

Table 1

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Role

Role	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Professional & Managerial	69	46.2
Professional Only	61	52.3
Managerial Only	2	1.5
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 2

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Management Position

Position	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Senior	33	46.5
Middle	21	29.6
Junior	17	23.9
Total	**71**	**100**

Table 3

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	18	13.6
25-34	54	40.9
35-40	30	22.7
41-50	18	13.6
50+	12	9.1
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 4

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Ethnicity

Race	Frequency	Percentage
Missing	2	1.5
Black	53	40.2
White	49	37.1
Indian	16	12.1
Coloured	11	8.3
African	1	0.8
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 5

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Home Language

Home Language	Frequency	Percentage
Missing	3	2.3
English	76	57.6
IsiZulu	16	12.1
Sepedi	6	4.5
IsiXhosa	3	2.3
Sesotho	3	2.3
Setswana	3	2.3
Ndebele	1	0.8
SiSwati	2	1.5
Xitsonga	2	1.5
Afrikaans	9	6.8
Shona	6	4.5
Tshivenda	2	1.5
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 6

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Missing	1	0.8
Higher Certificate (Grade 12)	6	4.5
National Diploma	12	9.1
Bachelor's Degree	31	23.5
Postgraduate Degree	82	62.1
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 7

Sample Demographic Characteristic: Tenure

Tenure	Frequency	Percentage
<1 year	24	18.2
1-2 years	24	18.2
3-5 years	10	7.6
6-10 years	12	9.1
11-15 years	36	27.3
16+ years	26	19.7
Total	**132**	**100**

61 of the women were professional only (46.2%), 2 were managerial only (1.5%) and 69 were both professional and managerial (52.3%). From the women who said they were managers, a large portion were senior managers (25%), followed by middle managers (15.9%) and junior managers (12.9%). Most of the women were between the ages of 25 and 40 (63.6%). There were only a few women who were above 50 years old (9.1%). In terms of ethnicity; a large portion of the sample comprised of Black women (40.2%), followed by White women (37.1%), Indian (12.1%), and a minority of Coloured women (8.3%). With regards to home language, many of the women spoke English (57.6%). In terms of educational qualification, most of the women had postgraduate degrees (62.1%), followed by those with Bachelor's degrees (23.5%), National diplomas (9.1%) and Higher Certificate (Grade 12) (4.5%). Lastly, looking at tenure, some participants indicated that they had worked for the organisation for 11-15 years (27.3%), and followed by those who have been with the organisation for 16+ years (19.7%), less than 1 year (18.2%), 1 to 2 years (18.2%), 6 to 10 years (9.1%) and 3 to 5 years (7.6%).

3.3 Procedure

The researcher approached organisations in the private sector for access to potential participants at their organisations. The researcher phoned 20 different organizations and sent out emails to their HR department heads briefly explaining what the research was about and that the researcher would send the official access request letter if they were interested. Four organisations showed interest and an access request letter for permission to circulate the questionnaire to the women in managerial and professional roles (Appendix A) was sent to the Human Resource Manager in the organisation. Six organisations could not assist as they stated that they did not allow their employees to participate in external research and the other ten did not respond.

After permission was granted from the four willing organisations, the organisations then sent out an email to the potential participants who met the criteria and attached the participation and informed consent sheet (Appendix B). Due to the shortage of organisations willing to participate, the researcher also distributed the survey link (https://forms.gle/5rCW87ZHJE5MKfhw6) and the participant information sheet on LinkedIn and Facebook. The participant information and informed consent forms contained information regarding the purpose and aims of the study, as well as information regarding both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study. The participants were also made aware that there were no repercussions for those who decided not to participate in the study, no incentive would be provided for those who did and that the study was completely voluntary. The participation information sheets included the survey link that directed the participants to an online platform that contained the questions on friendships and authenticity in the workplace. There was also a tick box at the beginning of the survey which was required for the participant to indicate consent. It took about 15 minutes to complete the survey and after eight weeks, the researcher stopped waiting for responses on the survey. Thereafter, coding and analysis of the data collected took place using Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 25 respectively.

At the end of the survey, participants were asked whether they were interested in taking part in an in-depth interview and if they were, they were required to provide their contact details. Only seven interviews were conducted for the purposes of this study and the researcher interviewed the first seven people to indicate that they wanted to volunteer. The researcher then contacted those who volunteered to be interviewed and made arrangements to conduct the interviews at a place that was convenient for them. The interviews were semi-structured (Appendix C). These interviews took

approximately 40 to 60 minutes each and they were audio recorded. The researcher started off with an introduction, where they thanked the participant for her time, for participating in the online survey, explained what the interview would cover and the ethical considerations including anonymity and confidentiality that would be followed.

Participants were also provided with a copy of the participant information sheet (Appendix D) and asked to sign the interview consent (Appendix E) and consent for recording form (Appendix F). After the participants signed, the recording device was then switched on and the interview began. During the interview, the researcher used the questions in the interview schedule (Appendix C) as well as probing questions so that they got more in-depth answers from the participants rather than simply yes or no. The supervisors of the researcher attended the first four interviews to make sure that they were being conducted well and that the researcher was engaging the interviewee and getting the required information. At the end of the interview, the researcher checked if the participant had any questions and thanked them for their participation. Feedback was given to the organisations and participants when requested.

3.4 Instruments

The following instruments were used to measure the constructs of the current study. These instruments were the demographic questionnaire, workplace friendship scale, intra-inter-group friendships scale, authenticity at work scale, and interview guide.

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix G)

This is a self-developed questionnaire that is made up of 9 questions pertaining to demographic characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity, tenure in organisation, organisational role, home language, and educational qualification).

Workplace friendship scale (Appendix H)

The workplace friendship scale by Nielsen, Jex and Adams (2000) measures two aspects of friendship namely: friendship prevalence and friendship opportunity. It is a 12-item scale which consists of six items from each of the two sub-scales. The original authors reported internal reliabilities of 0.84 for friendship opportunity and 0.89 for friendship prevalence. Other studies have reported similar reliabilities, for example, Tse, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2008) used the six items of the friendship prevalence measure and reported an internal reliability of 0.80. The

internal reliability found for the current study after the data was collected was excellent. The Cronbach alphas were 0.84 and 0.83 for friendship opportunity and prevalence respectively. The last item of the friendship prevalence scale had to be deleted to improve the reliability of the scale from 0.58 to 0.83. The item was "I do not feel that anyone I work with is a true friend." This item may not correlate with the other items because in the South African context the term 'true friend' may be very subjective for different people. An example of an item that represents friendship opportunity is "I have the opportunity to develop close friendships at my workplace" (Nielsen, Jex & Adams, 2000). An example of an item that represents friendship prevalence is "I have formed strong friendships at work" (Nielsen et al., 2000). Responses are on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. No items were reverse scored.

Intra- and inter-group friendship scale (Appendix I)

The intra- and inter-group friendship scale is a self- developed scale based on the intra- and inter-group contact scale developed by Brewer, Gonsalkorale and Van Dommelen (2012). The original authors of this scale developed it to examine the complexity of social identity by measuring the strength of ethnic identification. Their study assessed social identity complexity and how it correlated among ethnic majority and minority groups (Brewer et al., 2012). The measure was said to be an indirect indicator of how individuals manage their social identities with their in-groups (Brewer et al., 2012). This relates to the current study because it investigates a homogeneous group (women) of different ethnicities. The aim of the scale for the current study was to find out whether participants tend to associate with people who are similar to them in terms of race, age, organisational level, gender and organisational function (homophilous friendships), and whether this relates to their work environment. This self-developed scale based on Brewer et al. (2012) is a 5-item scale which rates the identification of group membership. The items were adapted by including 'at work' in the questions and focusing the questions towards race (as used in South Africa), ethnicity, gender, organisational level as well as function and department. Responses were on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) None to (7) All. An example of an item that represents identification is 'How many of your friends at work are women?' The reliability of this scale was 0.44 which is very low and may suggest that this is not a reliable scale. However once item 3 was removed ("How many of your friends at work are not of the same ethnic background as you"), the reliability of the scale improved to 0.55. This remains low and the reason for this may be because

context differs for different organisations, each question was assessing a different aspect of homophily, and the low internal consistency may reflect genuine differences between these aspects. It may also have been because participants may have confused ethnicity with race. The authors of this scale did not report on its reliability and treated each item individually as well as grouping common items (Brewer et al., 2012). Based on this, the current study will not be treating this scale as a coherent scale but rather as separate items measuring different and possibly unrelated aspects of intra- and inter-group friendship.

Authenticity at Work (IAM WORK) scale (Appendix J)

The Authenticity at Work (IAM WORK) scale was developed by Van den Bosch and Taris (2014). It was adapted from a general Authenticity scale developed by Wood et al., (2008). All items were rewritten by Van den Bosch and Taris so that they referred to authenticity in the workplace context. "For example, the item 'I am true to myself in most situations' became 'I am true to myself at work in most situations'" (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014, p.6). The current study uses the short version of this scale which has 12 items as opposed to the longer version which has 24 items. The scale measures state authenticity at work in three different dimensions, namely: self-alienation, authentic living, and external influence (these concepts were defined in the literature review). Responses were on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "Does not describe me at all" to (7) "Describes me very well" for all the sub-scales. An example of an item that represents authentic living is "I am true to myself at work in most situations" (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). An example of an item that represents self-alienation is "At work, I feel out of touch with the 'real me'" (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). An example of an item that represents external influence is 'I am strongly influenced in the workplace by the opinions of others' (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Van den Bosch and Taris (2014) reported internal consistencies of 0.81, 0.83 and 0.67 for authentic living, self-alienation and external influence respectively. The current study found internal consistencies of 0.71, 0.92 and 0.84 for authentic living, self-alienation and external influence respectively. It has been suggested that alpha values greater than 0.5 are acceptable and ideally they should be greater than 0.7 (Vaske, Beaman & Sponarski, 2017; Mohamad, Sulaiman, Sern & Salleh, 2015; Jenkinson, Wright & Coulter, 1994). This shows that the subscales had good and acceptable reliabilities for both the study by van den Bosch and Taris (2014) as well as the current study. Although Van den Bosch and Taris (2014) did not look at the overall reliability of

the scale, the current study did. The researcher firstly reverse scored the self-alienation and external influence items so that they could be in a similar direction with authentic living and an overall internal consistency of 0.83 for was reported. This was very good and showed that the overall scale was reliable for the current study.

Interview Guide

The study utilized semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C), which were made up of a set of open ended questions with probes to discuss issues on friendships and authenticity in the workplace and the association between the two. Examples of a questions are "Please could you tell me about your friendships at work?", "Does the organisation encourage friendships or did you just take it upon yourself?" An example of a probe that was used was "What drew you to the people you consider friends?" and "In what ways are you similar to them?" Some of the advantages of semi-structured interviews are that they are useful in supplementing other methods as a means for triangulation in mixed methods research (Longhurst, 2003). They are also conversational and they use an informal tone, allowing participants to respond in an open way rather than give yes or no answers (Longhurst, 2003). Trustworthiness validates qualitative research and differentiates it from a mere report (Williams & Morrow, 2009). In order to establish trustworthiness of the qualitative data collection instrument, the researcher kept a field diary which was used to reflect on the data collected and the data collection process and explore the implications of their role in producing the data. This is called self-reflexive journaling, and is used by the researcher to create a balance between what the participant means, and the researcher's own interpretation (Williams & Morrow, 2009). Furthermore, "an adequate trail should be left to enable the auditor to determine if the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources" (Babbie & Mouton, 2004, p.278). In the current study, the researcher maintained an audit trail by describing the methodology in detail so that future studies can also follow the logic of the current study as a foundation.

3.5 Data Analysis

For the quantitative phase of the current study, descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized. The data collected from the online survey was coded into Microsoft Excel and then imported into IBM Statistics 25 for statistical analysis. The current study conducted reliability tests and normality checks for the different subscales. Due to the fact that Likert type scales were used, the current study assumed that the data were interval (Crawford, 2006). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the spread of the data and frequencies to describe the sample (Hopkins, 2008). Frequencies and percentages were also utilized to assess the extent to which women create homophilic friendships at work (intra- inter-friendship group scale). A series of tests were conducted to check whether parametric or non-parametric tests should be run for the current study.

Skewness coefficients, Kurtosis coefficients, the Shapiro-Wilks test and histograms were used to assess whether the data were normally distributed as this had a bearing on which statistical technique was used (parametric or non-parametric) (Stangor, 2014). Some issues with normality were found with self-alienation, authentic living and friendship opportunity hence the non-parametric correlations (Spearman's correlations) and Kruskall Wallis test were used. The current study did not use simple regressions because the strength of the correlations was weak and there was no linearity between the variables, as shown by the scatterplots (Appendix L). Correlations were used because these types of analyses focus on the association between variables and can specify to what extent the variables are associated with each other (Crawford, 2006). Correlations specify the measure of the relationship between two variables, ranging from -1 which is a perfect negative relationship, to +1 which represents a perfect positive correlation. The Kruskall Wallis test was also used to assess whether there were any ethnic differences for friendship and authenticity at work.

The qualitative component of the study utilized thematic content analysis to analyse the data from the in-depth interviews. Once the interviews had been conducted and audiotaped, the data were transcribed into a Word document. Thematic content analysis was then used to reveal and assess recurring themes found in the data obtained from the interviews (Alhojailan, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The six steps of conducting a thematic analysis as prescribed by Braun and Clark (2006) were followed. These six steps included familiarizing the researcher with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining and naming

themes and lastly, producing the report (Braun & Clark, 2006). Focusing on the information provided by the participants of the current study regarding their friendships and authenticity at work, several themes were distinguishable. The coding was done manually, by reading the transcripts repeatedly and grouping the answers that were related into categories, and similar categories were distinguished into themes and sub-themes. Different colour highlights were used to distinguish each theme and sub-theme (Appendix N). Nine themes emerged, namely, sharing of personal information and trust, social support, conflict, objectivity, authentic living, phase of life, shared values, shared interests and seniority. There were also five sub-themes which emerged from some of themes, namely, companionship, emotional support, instrumental support, authentic self-expression and psychological safety. This thematic analysis was used as a means to build on the results of the quantitative aspect and attempts to explain any connections between friendships and authenticity at work among professional and managerial women in the South African private sector.

3.6 Ethics

It was the responsibility of the researcher to meet the ethical considerations in the current study. The researcher initially sought permission to conduct the study by applying for ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee (MORG/19/011 IH). The permission was granted (Appendix M). The researcher was responsible for ensuring that the principle of informed consent was adhered to. The researcher briefed the potential participants about the study and gave them a full and concise explanation of the study and how it would take place.

The researcher also supplied all the participants with participant information sheets (Appendix B and D) which informed them of their rights and the procedure of the study before participating. These rights included the fact that the participants had to be well informed of the aim of the study and that if they had any questions they could contact the researcher or the supervisors of the researcher whose contact details were made available. The participants also had the right to choose whether or not they wanted to participate in the study and were reassured that there would be no repercussions if they chose to participate or not to participate. Thus, participation was voluntary.

The researcher also assured the participants that their privacy would be respected for both components of the study. As a way of honoring the privacy of the participants, the researcher

ensured that the participants remained anonymous in their responses to the questionnaires. This meant that no names or other identifying information was required when answering the questionnaire. However, those who volunteered to be interviewed lost their anonymity in the questionnaire as their contact details were required. The organisations which participated were also assured that they would remain anonymous. Furthermore, the researcher preserved the right of confidentiality of the participants by ensuring that only the researcher and the supervisors had access to the raw data and the data were stored electronically in a password-protected computer. The researcher also made sure that no names and other identifying characteristics would be mentioned in the report.

The ethical considerations explained above were mainly for the quantitative component of the study. For those participants who indicated that they were willing to further participate in an interview, informed consent was obtained again before the interview. The researcher explained the aim of the study again for clarity and consent forms for conducting and recording the interview were given to the participants to sign before the interview commenced. These consent forms informed the participant that the interviews were to be transcribed and used for analysis and quotations would be extracted, therefore signing the form was consenting to this. The interviews were face to face hence this aspect of the data collection could not ensure anonymity. However, confidentiality was ensured by keeping the collected data on a password-protected computer and ensuring that only the researcher and the supervisors had access to the raw data. Once the study was completed, the audio recordings were destroyed. During the reporting phase, the researcher also allocated pseudonyms to each participant so that the participants were anonymous and the researcher remained objective. Feedback was also provided to the participants upon request.

The participants were also told that if they experienced any trauma after the data collection process, they could attend free counselling sessions (the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand and Life Johannesburg) where they could go and talk to a counsellor, considering that questions about identity could have sparked sensitivities in the participants. However, no such incidences were experienced

3.7 Summary

In summary the current study used a mixed methods (triangulation) design which consisted of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. This ensured the study would be more valid, reliable, and generalizable. The study was also non-experimental, cross-sectional and correlational. The sample was made up of 132 women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. Furthermore, the study utilised non-probability purposive sampling and snowballing. Instruments such as the workplace friendship scale, intra- and inter-group friendship scale, authenticity at work scale and an interview guide were used to collect data. Descriptive statistics, correlations, chi-squares and Kruskal Wallis tests were conducted, to answer the quantitative research questions and a thematic analysis was conducted for the qualitative component. Ethical procedures such as anonymity and confidentiality were also adhered to ensure the safety of the participants.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter focuses on both quantitative and qualitative analyses that were utilized in examining the hypotheses and research questions of the current study. The quantitative results were produced by IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25 and divided into descriptive and inferential statistics. Tables were used to illustrate the main findings of the quantitative analyses. The qualitative results were separated into themes that emerged during the thematic content analysis. The main themes that emerged were: sharing of personal information and trust, social support, conflict, objectivity, authentic living, phase of life, shared values, shared interests and seniority.

4.1 Quantitative Results

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics

The current study first tested certain assumptions to determine whether parametric tests or non-parametric tests should be used to analyze the data. The other assumption was that the scale of measurement of the dependent variable should at least be interval (Huck et al., 2012). This assumption was met as all the subscales were interval variables.

Skewness coefficients, kurtosis coefficients, Shapiro- Wilks tests and histograms were also used to test the normality of each variable. Skewness coefficients between -1 and +1 indicate that the data is normally distributed (Huck et al., 2012). Some formulas for kurtosis state that a normal distribution is indicated by coefficients between -3 and +3, however, this study uses the formula that values of both skewness and kurtosis should be between -1 and +1 to indicate normality (Huck et al., 2012). The skewness and kurtosis coefficients for the current study indicated that the data were not all normally distributed (Table 9). According to the skewness and kurtosis coefficients; friendship opportunity, authentic living and self-alienation were not normally distributed (skewed), whilst friendship prevalence and external influence were normally distributed. The skewness for self-alienation showed that the variable was skewed yet the kurtosis showed a normal distribution, hence other normality tests had to be taken into account to make a definitive decision.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for the Main Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Shapiro Wilks	Skewness	Kurtosis
Friendship Opportunity	25.43	4.46	.001	-1.45	2.39
Friendship Prevalence	17.15	4.87	.003	-0.29	-0.46
Authentic living	24.15	3.40	.001	-1.31	2.63
Self-alienation	9.67	6.07	.000	1.29	1.06
External Influence	14.09	5.91	.010	0.22	-0.77
Friendship Total	42.58	8.34	.001	-0.53	-0.42
Authenticity Total	64.21	11.21	.012	-0.49	-0.19

A test for normality known as the Shapiro-Wilks test was used to compare the scores in the sample with corresponding normally distributed scores which have the same mean and standard deviation (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). A non-significant result from the Shapiro-Wilks test indicates normal distribution because the null hypothesis for this test is that the sample is normally distributed. P-values greater than 0.05 indicated that the variable was normally distributed whilst p-values less than 0.05 indicated the variable was not normally distributed (Table 9). According to these results, none of the variables were normally distributed. Peat and Barton (2008) argue that although the Shapiro-Wilks is a powerful statistical test, it does not give us any information on why a variable is not normally distributed hence skewness and kurtosis coefficients are more important.

Histograms were also used to conduct a visual inspection of the spread of data of the variables (See Appendix K). The histograms show frequencies of scores and the shape of the data must be bell shaped to illustrate normal distribution (Peat & Barton, 2008). In the current study, the histograms illustrated a normal distribution for friendship prevalence and external influence; whilst friendship opportunity, authentic living and self-alienation were not normally distributed. Based on the histogram for friendship opportunity which was skewed to the left, we can also see that a lot of the women felt that they had the opportunity to make friends at work. However, although

some took these opportunities and actually formed these friendships, as illustrated by the bell-shaped histogram for friendship prevalence, not all the women actually went on to form friendships. The histogram for authentic living which was skewed to the left, illustrates that most women felt like they could be their authentic selves at work. Furthermore, most of the women felt less self-alienated at work, as illustrated by the histogram for self-alienation which was skewed to the right, which corresponds with the high scores of authentic living. However, what was interesting was that when it came to external influence, the histogram was bell-shaped, this may indicate that most women accepted to be externally influenced to some degree in the workplace. An interesting finding however, was that although some of the subscales were not normally distributed (friendship opportunity, authentic living and self-alienation), the totals of the entire scales for friendship and authenticity at work were normally distributed. This was proven by the skewness and kurtosis (Table 9) and the histograms (Appendix k). [Self-alienation and external influence were reverse scored for the total authenticity score].

Based on the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, Shapiro- Wilks test and the histograms we can conclude that the friendship opportunity, authentic living and self-alienation were not normally distributed. Hence non-parametric tests were conducted to answer the research questions. However, where applicable, where both variables being assessed were normally distributed, for example, the total friendship and authenticity scores as well as friendship prevalence and external influence, parametric tests were run.

4.1.2 Inferential Statistics

4.1.3 RQ1: Is there an association between friendship and authenticity at work?

Spearman's correlations were run to assess the association between friendship at work (opportunity and prevalence) with authenticity at work (authentic living, self-alienation and external influence). The correlation coefficients were then used to interpret the nature of the relationships between the variables. High positive scores of authentic living and high negative scores of self-alienation and accepting external influence indicated higher levels of authenticity. For the authenticity at work total, the self-alienation and external influence subscales were reverse scored so as to make the scoring work in the same direction. However, these were not reverse scored for analyses focusing on subscales. The following hypotheses were assessed: (a) whether there is negative association between friendship opportunity and self- alienation (hypothesis 1),

(b) whether there is a negative association between friendship prevalence and self-alienation (hypothesis 2), (c) whether there is a positive association between friendship opportunity and authentic living (hypothesis 3), (d) whether there is a positive association between friendship prevalence and authentic living (hypothesis 4), (e) whether there is a negative association between friendship opportunity and external influence (hypothesis 5), and (f) whether there is a negative association between friendship prevalence and external influence (hypothesis 6).

The findings showed a weak, positive correlation between friendship opportunity and authentic living, which was statistically significant (r_S = .33, p < .01), as well as friendship prevalence and authentic living, which was also statistically significant (r_S = .28, p < .01). There was a weak, negative correlation between friendship opportunity and self-alienation, which was statistically significant (r_S = -.39, p < .01), as well as friendship prevalence and self-alienation, which was also statistically significant (r_S = -.31, p < .01). No significant relationship was found between friendship opportunity and external influence. Therefore, hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 were accepted, whilst hypotheses 5 was rejected. Results for the Spearman's correlations are reported in Table 10 below.

Table 10

Spearman's Correlation for Friendship opportunity, Friendship prevalence, Authentic living, Self-alienation and External influence

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Friendship opportunity	—				
2. Friendship prevalence	—	—			
3. Authentic living	.33**	.28**	—		
4. Self-alienation	-.39**	-.31**	—	—	
5. External influence	.16	—	—	—	—

Since friendship prevalence, external influence, friendship total and authenticity total were normally distributed, Pearson correlations were run for the association between these variables. Findings showed a weak, positive correlation between friendship total and authenticity total, which was statistically significant (r = .17, p < .05). This shows an association between friendship and authenticity at work, answering the main question. No significant relationship was found between

friendship prevalence and external influence, therefore hypothesis 6 was rejected. Results for the Pearson correlations are reported in Table 11 below.

Table 11

Pearson Correlation for Friendship opportunity total, Authenticity total, Friendship prevalence, and External influence

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Friendship opportunity total	—			
2. Authenticity total	.17**	—		
3. Friendship prevalence	—	—	—	
4. External influence	—	—	-.16	—

RQ2: To what extent do women create homophilous relationships in the workplace?

A large portion of the women indicated that most of their friendships were with people of the same gender (31.8%). This was followed by those who indicated that many of their friendships were also with people of the same gender as them (21.2%). In terms of friendships that are homophilous with regards to race, a large portion of the women indicated that most of their friendships at work were with people of the same race (26.5%). This was followed by women who said that many of their friends were the same race as them (15.9%). In terms of ethnicity a large portion of the women indicated that only some of their friends were the same ethnicity as them (22.9%) and this was followed by those who said that very few of their friends were the same ethnicity as them (19.1%).

A large portion of the women stated that only some of their friends were at the same organisational level as them (32.6%), followed by those who stated that most of their friends were at the same organisational level as them (18.9%). A large portion of the women expressed that very few (22.0%) and some (22.0%) of their friends worked in the same organisational function, business unit or department as them. Results for the frequencies for homophily are reported in Tables 12 to 16 below. The means of the homophily items, showed that most of the women had friendships that were homophilous based on gender (4.87) and race (4.21). It was however surprising that organisational level had the lowest mean (3.63) (Table 17). These results illustrated that to some extent, women do create homophilous relationships in the workplace, and these homophilous relationships were mostly based on gender and race. This was shown by a large portion of the

responses expressing that the participants chose most or many of their friends based on similar gender and similar race.

Table 12

Frequencies for Homophily (Gender)

Scoring	Frequency	Percentage
None	1	0.8
Very few	14	10.6
Some	17	12.9
Half	13	9.8
Many	28	21.2
Most	42	31.8
All	17	12.9
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 13

Frequencies for Homophily (Race)

Scoring	Frequency	Percentage
None	14	10.6
Very few	18	13.6
Some	21	15.9
Half	11	8.3
Many	21	15.9
Most	35	26.5
All	12	9.1
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 14

Frequencies for Homophily (Ethnicity)

Scoring	Frequency	Percentage
None	13	9.9
Very few	25	19.1
Some	30	22.9
Half	13	9.8
Many	24	18.2
Most	15	11.4
All	11	8.3
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 15

Frequencies for Homophily (Organisational Level)

Scoring	Frequency	Percentage
None	16	12.1
Very few	19	14.4
Some	43	32.6
Half	7	5.3
Many	18	13.6
Most	25	18.9
All	4	3.0
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 16

Frequencies for Homophily (Organisational function, unit or department)

Scoring	Frequency	Percentage
None	20	15.2
Very few	29	22.0
Some	29	22.0
Half	6	4.5
Many	8	6.1
Most	24	18.2
All	16	12.1
Total	**132**	**100**

Table 17

Means for Homophily

	Gender	Race	Ethnicity	Organisational level	Organisational Unit
Mean	4.87	4.21	3.76	3.63	3.67
Std. Deviation	1.59	1.92	1.80	1.75	2.07

RQ3: Are homophilous relationships associated with friendships and authenticity at work?

To determine whether there was an association between homophily based on gender, race, ethnicity, organisational level and organisational unit with friendship at work and authenticity at work, a Chi-square test of independence was used. For friendship, the researcher used the median of the overall friendship scores to create two categories, which were low levels of friendship (less than the median) and high levels of friendship (greater than the median). Whilst three categories were created for homophily, these were low homophily, mid homophily and high homophily. These categories were created by ranking the overall friendship scores and calculating percentile groups from those ranks. Significant interaction was found between levels of friendship and racially homophilous friendships (χ^2 (2) = 18.46, p > .001). The effect size (Cramer's V) was, .37 thus showing a strong association (Cohen, 1988). As can be seen in Table 19, 19.7% of the women

were in the low friendship group and had low homophily, compared to only 4.5% of the women in the high friendship group. A large portion of the women, 26.5%, were in the high friendship group and they had average levels of homophily compared to only13.6% of women in the low friendship group. 19.7% were in the high friendship group and they had high levels of homophily compared to only 15.9% of women with low friendships. Furthermore, a significant association was found between levels of friendship and homophilous friendships that were based on ethnicity (χ^2 (2) = 10.41, p = .005). The effect size (Cramer's V) was, .28 thus showing a moderate association (Cohen, 1988). As can be seen in table 20, 19.8% of the women were in the low friendship group and had low homophily, compared to only 9.2% of the women in the high friendship group. A large portion of the women, 22.1%, were in the high friendship group and they had average levels of homophily compared to only 10.7% of women in the low friendship group. 19.8% were in the high friendship group and they had high levels of homophily compared to only 18.3% of women with low friendships. No statistically significant association was found between level of friendship with homophily (gender, organisational level and organisational unit) and level of authenticity with homophily (gender, race, ethnicity, organisational level and organisational unit). The results suggest that homophilous relationships based on race and ethnicity are related to friendship at work, however homophilous relationships are not related to authenticity at work. Results for the Chi-square tests of independence are reported in tables 18 to 27 below.

Table 18
Friendship and homophily by gender

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	20.5% (N=132)	8.3% (N=132)	20.5% (N= 132)
High friendship	13.6% (N= 132)	12.9% (N= 132)	24.2% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 3.48, p < .176
Cramer's V = .16

Table 19
Friendship and homophily by race

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	19.7% (N=132)	13.6% (N=132)	15.9% (N= 132)
High friendship	4.5% (N= 132)	26.5% (N= 132)	19.7% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 18.46, $p > .001$
Cramer's V = .37

Table 20
Friendship and homophily by ethnicity

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	19.8% (N=132)	10.7% (N=132)	18.3% (N= 132)
High friendship	9.2% (N= 132)	22.1% (N= 132)	19.8% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 10.41, $p = .005$
Cramer's V = .28

Table 21
Friendship and homophily by organisational level

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	18.9% (N=132)	15.2% (N=132)	15.2% (N= 132)
High friendship	7.6% (N= 132)	22.7% (N= 132)	20.5% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 9.44, $p < .009$
Cramer's V = .267

Table 22
Friendship and homophily by organisational unit

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	8.3% (N=132)	25.8% (N=132)	15.2% (N= 132)
High friendship	6.8% (N= 132)	22.7% (N= 132)	21.2% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 1.75, p = .416
Cramer's V = .115

Table 23
Authenticity and homophily by gender

Authenticity	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low Authenticity	19.7% (N=132)	8.3% (N=132)	22.0% (N= 132)
High Authenticity	14.4% (N= 132)	12.9% (N= 132)	22.7% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 2.39, p < .302
Cramer's V = .135

Table 24
Authenticity and homophily by race

Authenticity	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low Authenticity	14.4% (N=132)	18.9% (N=132)	16.7% (N = 132)
High Authenticity	9.8% (N= 132)	21.2% (N= 132)	18.9% (N =132)

χ^2 (2) = 1.49, p < .476
Cramer's V = .106

Table 25
Authenticity and homophily by ethnicity

Authenticity	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low Authenticity	15.3% (N=132)	15.3% (N=132)	19.1% (N= 132)
High Authenticity	13.7% (N= 132)	17.6% (N= 132)	19.1% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 0.31, p < .858
Cramer's V = .048

Table 26
Authenticity and homophily by organisational level

Authenticity	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low Authenticity	15.9% (N=132)	20.5% (N=132)	13.6% (N= 132)
High Authenticity	10.6% (N= 132)	17.4% (N= 132)	22.0% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 4.29, p < .117
Cramer's V = .180

Table 27
Authenticity and homophily by organisational unit

Friendship Group	Low Homophily (N and % of total)	Mid Homophily (N and % of total)	High Homophily (N and % of total)
Low friendship	7.6% (N=132)	22.7% (N=132)	19.7% (N= 132)
High friendship	7.6% (N= 132)	25.8% (N= 132)	16.7% (N=132)

χ^2 (2) = 0.583, p = .747
Cramer's V = .066

RQ4: Are there any ethnic differences that exist with regards to friendship opportunity, prevalence and authenticity at work?

The Kruskal-Wallis tests was run to find out if any differences existed between women of different ethnic groups, professional roles and tenure. This was done for both friendship and authenticity at work sub-scales. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference for friendship opportunity at work among the different ethnic groups, (H = 11.221, p = .011), with a mean rank friendship opportunity score of (78.64) for White women, (58.31) for Black women, (56.38) for Indian women and (49.00) for Coloured women. A statistically significant difference was also discovered for friendship prevalence at work among the different races, (H = 16.249, p = .001), with a mean rank friendship prevalence score of 81.08 for White women, (63.75) for Indian women, (54.44) for Black women and (46.05) for Coloured women. Lastly, the Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a statistically significant difference for external influence at work among the different races, (H = 9.149, p = .027), with a mean rank external influence score of (77.41) for White women, (62.63) for Indian women, (57.77) for Coloured women and (55.75) for Black women. No significant differences among the different races were found for authentic living and self-alienation. These results indicate that ethnic differences exist with regards to friendship at work, however for authenticity at work the only differences were for external influence. Results for the Kruskal-Wallis test for ethnic differences are reported in Tables 28 and 29 below.

Table 28

Results of Kruskal Wallis H Test

Dependent Variable	H	Asymp. Sig.
Friendship Opportunity	11.221	.011
Friendship Prevalence	16.249	.001
Authentic Living	4.806	.187
Self-Alienation	2.786	.426
External-Influence	9.149	.027

Table 29
Ranks Table for Ethnic groups

	Race	N	Mean Rank
Friendship Opportunity	**Black**	53	58.31
	White	49	78.64
	Coloured	11	49.00
	Indian	16	56.38
Friendship Prevalence	**Black**	53	54.44
	White	49	81.08
	Coloured	11	46.05
	Indian	16	63.75
Authentic Living	**Black**	53	57.47
	White	49	73.17
	Coloured	11	69.23
	Indian	16	62.00
Self-Alienation	**Black**	53	70.27
	White	49	60.12
	Coloured	11	55.77
	Indian	16	68.81
External-Influence	**Black**	53	55.75
	White	49	77.41
	Coloured	11	57.77
	Indian	16	62.63

RQ5*: Are there any organisational role differences that exist with regards to friendship and authenticity at work?*

Women in professional only, professional and managerial and managerial only roles were compared with regards to friendship and authenticity at work. The findings showed that there were no significant differences between women in professional only, professional and managerial and managerial only roles when it came to friendship and authenticity at work sub-scales. Therefore, no organisational role differences were found to exist with regards to friendship and authenticity at work. Results for the professional role differences are reported in Tables 30 and 31 below.

Table 30

Results of Kruskal Wallis H Test

Dependent Variable	H	Asymp. Sig.
Friendship Opportunity	1.716	.424
Friendship Prevalence	1.535	.464
Authentic Living	3.599	.165
Self-Alienation	0.185	.912
External-Influence	0.271	.873

Table 31
Ranks Table for Professional roles

	Role	N	Mean Rank
Friendship Opportunity	**Professional Only**	61	61.88
	Professional& Managerial	69	70.32
	Managerial Only	2	75.75
Friendship Prevalence	**Professional Only**	61	62.07
	Professional& Managerial	69	70.25
	Managerial Only	2	72.25
Authentic Living	**Professional Only**	61	60.49
	Professional& Managerial	69	70.99
	Managerial Only	2	94.75
Self-Alienation	**Professional Only**	61	67.83
	Professional& Managerial	69	65.52
	Managerial Only	2	59.75
External-Influence	**Professional Only**	61	65.40
	Professional& Managerial	69	67.77
	Managerial Only	2	56.25

RQ6: Are there any organisational tenure differences that exist with regards to friendship and authenticity at work?

Women with different organisational tenures, ranging from less than a year to over 16 years were compared with regards to friendship and authenticity at work sub-scales. The findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference in authentic living at work for women with different tenures, (H = 14.426, *p* =.019), with a mean rank authentic-living score of (97.42) for women who have worked at their organisation for 16+ years, (75.70) for those who have worked at their organisation for 11-15 years, (70.96) for those with 6-10 years, (70.06) for those with 3-5 years, (64.28) for those with 1-2 years and (64.85) for those who have been at their organisation for less than 1 year. No significant differences among the different tenures were found for friendship opportunity, friendship prevalence, self-alienation and external influence. These results indicate

that organisational tenure differences exist with regards to authentic living at work but not friendship at work or external influence and self-alienation. Results for the organisational tenure differences are reported in Tables 32 and 33 below.

Table 32

Results of Kruskal Wallis H Test

Dependent Variable	H	Asymp. Sig.
Friendship Opportunity	3.068	.686
Friendship Prevalence	2.879	.719
Authentic Living	14.426	.013
Self-Alienation	4.949	.422
External-Influence	2.465	.782

Table 33

Ranks Table for Tenure in organisation

	Tenure	N	Mean Rank
Authentic Living	**<1 year**	24	48.33
	1-2 years	24	64.85
	3-5 years	36	64.28
	6-10 years	26	70.06
	11-15 years	10	75.70
	16+ years	12	97.42
Self-Alienation	**<1 year**	24	72.13
	1-2 years	24	68.90
	3-5 years	36	69.10
	6-10 years	26	66.58
	11-15 years	10	64.30
	16+ years	12	44.33
External-Influence	**<1 year**	24	65.88
	1-2 years	24	65.69
	3-5 years	36	64.06
	6-10 years	26	61.90
	11-15 years	10	80.30
	16+ years	12	75.17

In summary the current study used non-parametric tests to assess the association between friendship and authenticity at work. This was because most of the variables were not normally distributed. Some associations were found between some aspects of friendship and authenticity at work based on the correlations run. In addition, hypotheses assessing this association were also investigated. A negative association was found between friendship opportunity and self-alienation, as well as between friendship prevalence and self-alienation. A positive association was found

between friendship opportunity and authentic living as well as friendship prevalence and authentic living. Therefore hypotheses one, two, three and four were accepted. However, hypotheses five and six were rejected as no significant association was found between friendship opportunity and external influence whilst a positive association was found between friendship prevalence and external influence. Furthermore, secondary questions assessed whether there were any other factors that affected friendship and authenticity at work. The current study discovered that women create homophilous relationships to a greater extent in the workplace. None of these homophilous relationships were significantly related to authenticity at work, however, there were some significant associations between racially and ethnically homophilous relationships with friendship at work. Ethnic differences were also found to exist with regards to friendship at work as well as external influence at work. No significant organisational role differences were found with regards to both friendship and authenticity at work. Lastly, organisational tenure differences were found with regards to authentic living at work. As discussed in the methodology chapter, the current study is a mixed method research study hence the following section will be discussing the qualitative component which explains these results with more depth and context.

4.2 Qualitative Findings

Data was collected from the in-depth face to face interviews, transcribed and coded and produced an understanding about the participants' opportunities of friendship at work, the prevalence of these friendships, the nature and composition of their friendships at work, their authentic living, self-alienation and external influence in relation to these friendships. This section will focus on the key themes that emerged from the thematic content analysis of the data that were transcribed with regards to the research questions and hypotheses.

Table 34: *Biographical Data of Participants*

Pseudonym	**Age range**	**Ethnicity**	**Tenure in organisation**	**Organisational role**	**Educational level**	**Management level**
Participant 1	18-24 years	Coloured	1-2 years	Professional Only	Postgraduate degree	N/A
Participant 2	35-40 years	White	16+years	Managerial & Professional	Postgraduate Degree	Senior
Participant 3	24-34 years	White	3-5 years	Managerial & Professional	Postgraduate Degree	Senior
Participant 4	18-24 years	Black	>1 year	Professional Only	Postgraduate Degree	N/A
Participant 5	25-34 years	Black	1-2years	Professional Only	Bachelor's degree	N/A
Participant 6	25-34 years	Black	3-5years	Professional Only	Postgraduate degree	N/A
Participant 7	18-24 years	Black	>1 year	Professional Only	Postgraduate degree	N/A

RQ7*:* How do professional and managerial women conceptualize friendship a work?

The key themes that emerged from the analysis were, sharing information and trust.

4.2.1 Sharing of personal information and trust

Most of the participants expressed that what distinguishes colleagues who are friendly with from their friends at work is the personal information that they share with their friends and trust that is between themselves and their friends. The relationships between the participants and their colleagues who they are friendly with is civil and they have conversations at work, however, they are not in-depth. They do not confide in their friendly colleagues if they are having financial problems or problems at home. One of the women who was in a managerial role, expressed that she knows personal information about her friendly colleagues because she is their boss and it is her responsibility to be a confidant for her employees who are also her friendly colleagues. However, she expressed that she does not in turn also share her personal information with them. What was interesting was that one of the participants stated that she has friends at work, however she does not trust her friends at work because she feels that by telling them her personal problems she will be giving them information that could be used as ammunition to destroy her or get her fired. Another participant also expressed that what distinguishes her friendly colleagues from her friends at work was loyalty. She said that with her friendly colleagues, if she did something wrong they are likely to report her and she might get a warning but with her friends at work, they cover for each other. However, she later on said that she is open to her friends at work, however, she would not tell them if she was addicted to drugs, was in debt and if she had a disease. She expressed that she would not tell her friends at work personal information that could be perceived as negatively impacting her job. The themes therefore that emerged were that of personal information and trust. These were more consistent for most of the participants. The following extracts provide an illustration of sharing of personal information and trust:

I think it's the level of information that we share. So a friendly colleague I might say you know hi, how are you, how was your weekend. You know sort of surface things I might know a bit about, do they have kids and things like that. But the ones who I consider friends I think are the people who I'll talk to if there's something tough going on at home for instance, or if I'm very

annoyed with colleague or boss it's someone I'll go and talk to in the knowledge that they are going to keep it between the two of us. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

I think a friend is somebody that you can sort of communicate personal information with and a colleague well you have to limit yourself with the information that you give to them about yourself and most of the time, the way you interact with them, the intention is to be professional as well. Yeah

Interviewer: *Can you maybe give us an example of the sorts of personal things that you might share with your friends at work?*

Interviewee: *uhm, family problems, financial problems, yeah. And like I feel like a friend is somebody that you trust with information, yeah mostly.* ***(Professional Participant 5)***

I think it's the things I feel free to talk about with the person. So with a friend, like a genuine friend I would think what I can open up about. So even when I'm having challenges at work I feel like I can trust the friend whereas with a friendly colleague I feel like there's some boundaries to what we can talk about. Also with a real friend I think I can talk about my family, my friends, activities outside work. Whereas with a friendly colleague its chit chat, 'what did you do for the weekend' and then it ends there. ***(Professional Participant 6)***

So a colleague is someone I'm civil with so we can get the job done so we can have conversations so there is that filter as to what I share with them. So I don't necessarily update a colleague on my daily life but I would update a friend. So a friend is someone where I feel more comfortable going to that person to share my struggles, my frustrations, not just my joy but my frustrations as well because I trust that that person will be able to advise me accordingly and I trust that the person would listen and then with a colleague you don't know where the information is going. So I think the biggest factor there is trust, do I trust you enough to share my inner beings or is it just a high and bye, ah we get along because we work together. So that's how I would differentiate them, do I trust you and the level of trust. ***(Professional Participant 7)***

One of the participants expressed that for them a friend at work would have to be someone who they also see outside of work.

So for me, a friend at work is someone I have outside of work as well. So they are like a friend in my life and the fact that they happen to work with me is an added benefit. So for me I define it

people I see outside of work, people I actively communicate with outside of work, people I have a relationship that is not just about work so it's about other things. Whereas, friendly colleagues/just colleagues are people who I have good relationships with, we work well together, we have good rapport, I know what's happening with them and they know what's happening with me but it doesn't leave the workplace. ***(Managerial Participant 3)***

However, this was not consistent for all the participants as two other participants expressed that they have friends at work who they only see at work. However, participant 5 expressed that the reason she does not see her other friend outside of work is because this other friend is in actual fact her manager and she felt she would be crossing boundaries. This will be discussed later in another theme that emerged. Participant 5 also said that although she has friends at work who she does not see outside the workplace, if she was to leave the organisation, it would be the longstanding friendships with friends that she sees outside of work that she would still be friends with.

Interviewer: *Do you see these friends outside of work or just at work?*
Interviewee: *One only at work and then the other one, obviously my manager only at work and then my other colleague she knows where I stay. She knows my family and friends. Yeah.*
(Professional Participant 5)

Some of the people who I consider friends here I do see outside of work, some I don't. I think it also just depends on the relationship and how long we've known each other and you know, do they also have kids because then it's easier to meet up outside because the kids can play together, that sort of thing. But for me I think it's that bond of how much do I trust them with the real things sort of going on in my life as opposed to just the surface, did you have a good weekend? What are you doing for heritage day? Yeah those kind of things. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

Interviewer: *It's interesting that you mentioned that you have friends that you are also not social with. Can you elaborate a little bit on that and what that means for you?*
Interviewee: *Yeah, I mean I've got one colleague as in we used to work in the same department and now she's moved into a different area so we'll go out and have lunch every couple of months to just talk about what's going on and she has some stories but apart from going to visit her once when she was on maternity leave I don't think we've ever seen each other outside of work. But I*

would still consider her a friend and she's someone I would ask for advice or talk to about a difficult situation I was facing at work so yeah I do think I still have those people who I can be open and honest with, without necessarily having a relationship outside of the office.

(Managerial Participant2)

RQ8: What benefits and disadvantages do professional and managerial women associate with friendship in the workplace?

The key themes that emerged from the analysis were, social support, conflict and objectivity. The sub-themes were, companionship, emotional support and instrumental support.

4.2.2 Social Support

The participants were asked what their reasons were for having friends, and some of the benefits of friendship that emerged were those of friendship at work as a source of emotional support, instrumental support and companionship. Though the responses differed, what was consistent was that all the participants perceived friendship as a source social support. This means that these friends were people they could rely on; be it emotionally when they are going through a hard time either in the workplace or at home; or instrumentally, this is for information in the workplace or information on how to do their jobs and lastly for companionship, just to have people that they could talk to since they spent so much of their time at work. The following extracts provide an illustration of social support in any of these forms:

4.2.2a Companionship

Participants 1, 3 and 7 expressed that for them their primary reasons for having friends at work were more for companionship. They expressed that they spend so much of their time at work, about 8 to 9 hours of their day and for them it is very important to have those connections with people. Participant 1 said that when she was still new at the organisation she was working for, she did not have any friends and that made her feel lonely because she would sit alone at lunch, but things changed when she started meeting more people and chatting to them and making friends.

No I wouldn't say that. It actually helps because the first days I used to feel very lonely coz you don't really get to talk about other things besides work during the day its just work work so the first days I actually used to just stay at my desk and eat at my desk. Then I started being more social, meeting more people, chatting. ***(Professional Participant 1)***

"*I think the support that you get from having a friend at work is huge. Just having someone who has your back and who you can rely on and for me I think one of the most important things that is often overlooked is that you spend 8+ hours, you say 8 hours but it's more it's like 9 or 10 hours a day at work on average, and if you don't enjoy your life, like if I'm not having fun and waking up excited to work then I've got a problem. And the biggest thing that excites me other than the type of work that we do is the people I do the work with. So if I genuinely am excited to come to work, I'm working on cool projects with people who I enjoy their company, then it makes my 10 hours at work in a day infinitely better than if I don't have any relationship or any warmth or connection with people that I work with. So for me it makes my working life happier. I feel I have so much more support, just from the people around me"* ***(Managerial Participant 3)***

"Someone to complain to I think that's the first one, you've got someone to vent to and you know they understand because they are going through the exact same thing at the exact same time. So you have that person to vent to, you've got that person to talk to and just ultimately, work can get boring sometimes because it can get quite repetitive, you know that I've got that friend at work, they'll cheer you up, they bring in their personality and then you think wow at least today is gonna be a bit better, I know today is gonna be a bit more fun because I'm not doing this alone. Yeah it makes the energy feel different it just feels more inviting and happier" ***(Professional Participant 7)***.

4.2.2b Emotional Support

Participants 2 and 6 mentioned that they have friends in the work place as a source of emotional support. When they are going through something or they are angry and they need to vent, they go to their friends and this helps them not lash out at other employees in the workplace.

I need to have a strong support network of people around me that's just how I operate and so if there's something that I gotta be 8hrs a day, 5 days a week it's important for me to have people here who I can have in that role otherwise I think I tend to, when I start getting stressed either internalize too much and implode or suddenly explode on someone very unexpectedly so it's good to have decompression points, people who you can just go and vent to when you need to. I think a lot of it for me is around the emotional support and knowing that there are people I can go to when I'm really upset or really angry and just decompress for a bit and then go back to work and carry on with things. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

Interviewer: *Is there an example that stands out recently where you used that person as a support, how does it work? Just to get a sense of the mechanics of your friendships.*

Interviewee: *One example, I mean I've been through quite a tough time in the last 18 months or so, I got divorced; I lost both my parents in a space of 6 months. And so I needed a lot of people to lean on them because I was trying to sort of hold my family together and get us through all of this. And it was hard being at work for 8 hours a day and worrying about the kids and so the HR manager who I had initially told about this because she just needed to know what's going on and why my hours are suddenly becoming so erratic. And she's turned out to be a fantastic source of support for me so, she checks in with me regularly, how's it going? How's it going with the kids? If something comes up she will make a plan to work around the fact that I can't come in for a meeting and something like that. And then just also letting me talk about how it feels from my side and things I'm going through from that perspective.* ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

"I *think it's on those rough days you know, having someone to talk to. You know there are times, I mean with these two people that I keep mentioning, you're having a tough day and you can just be like ugh man can we just talk for five minutes, can we have coffee or I need a hug this is really a tough day. So it's really people to, who can share and relate to the experiences at work I think"* ***(Professional Participant 6)***

4.2.2c Instrumental Support

Participants 4 and 5 expressed that their reasons for having friends at work was more instrumental, as a source of information and just having people you can rely on to help you navigate the workspace and gain knowledge. Participant 5 also said that in her workplace knowledge is transmitted through knowing people so your friends would be an advantage for you and the only way you can gain knowledge and stay in the loop.

"*I think that when you have friendships they just help you navigate better. They tell you, because they have more experiences, how best to help something. It's like free advice. Some people don't share stuff with you, when you have friends they can be like, hey just be careful with this person they work this type of way and it will lead you into trouble. So it just helps to navigate through, that's what I found"* ***(Professional Participant 4)***.

I think your friends would give you a heads up on something. So most of the time you wont know there's a problem until someone sits you down and tell you there's problem and once its there it's an issue. Your friends will be like, this is what I noticed, this what's happening, I sort of heard this, I don't know what they meant but I'm sure you have an idea, it involves you. So you sort of get a heads up and fix something quickly before it drags on. So I think that It boosts your performance like that. ***(Professional Participant 4)***

First of all, to gain knowledge, because like the way that knowledge is transferred around here, you literally have to know somebody who is experienced, you can't just read something off of the textbook or material and think you know it, like knowledge here is literally transferred through mentorship. You need somebody who understands, like sort of how you learn stuff, your learning method and then somebody whose gonna be able to sort of channel that knowledge in the right way. And there's sort of, the training approach that we have here is that you have to have autonomy, you have to go out there and find information and then consult and go like okay am I thinking about this in the right way or not. That's how people learn around here. ***(Professional Participant 5)***

4.2.3 Conflict

One of the themes that emerged as a disadvantage of friendship at work was conflict. Some of the participants expressed that sometimes when friends who also work together, have a disagreement, this may also cause conflict and drama when it comes to doing their work.

I would say the disadvantage of having friends at work would be drama, because you know friends fight, they have disagreements and because work is a space where you're gonna see this person like every day and not everyone is able to address conflict the same. Like I'm someone, I forgive quickly, but I do have friends that take time. So that brings discomfort of oh I'm gonna see this person again, how do I address them, how do I engage with them. So I feel that can be very disruptive as well to the workplace because you feel the tension, you feel the conflict, and it can be uncomfortable. ***(Professional Participant 7)***

I think it can also be a source of conflict as well, because you know like any type of friendship or relationship if somebody feels betrayed, things can happen, you know you can be a source of conflict in the workplace it can be manifested in doing projects and management teams or team

building strategies. And you can even see with some of the senior managers, if somebody doesn't like somebody because of something that happened in the past. ***(Professional Participant 5)***

I think sometimes your personal stuff, if you have like a personal friendship and you've got stuff in that friendship that's not working out you can bring that to work and I think that can be detrimental to the organisation, the work that you do and how you work together and ultimately the for the culture if you guys are working with other people in the team and they can see that there is conflict. ***(Managerial Participant 3)***

4.2.4 Objectivity

Objectivity was another disadvantage that was identified. Some of the participants, especially those in managerial positions said that having friends in the workplace caused them to have a loss of objectivity which could have impacted their work. The participants expressed that because of their friendships, objectivity does not come as naturally as it should, it takes a lot of work because you know the person personally and also do not want that to impact the friendship.

*I think sometimes you can lose your objectivity, because I guess I can say when *Ruth is wrong and *Ruth can say when I was wrong but ultimately she's one of my best friends, I'm not gonna, like I have her best interests at heart all the time and sometimes I think I could lose my objectivity because I love her and she loves me and we're not that objective anymore.*

(Managerial Participant 3)

Interviewer: *do you have an example where you maybe felt like you lost objectivity because of the friendship?*

Interviewee: *Yeah, so when I was handing over to *A there was another lady called *B and her and *A had never really got along and I was always very objective, very fair and always got them to sort out their stuff, I never really got in the middle of it because they are grown ups and they'll sort it out. Then during the handover period *B came to me and said 'I'm not looking forward to *A being my leader because of all of these things and I have a fundamental problem with him because of all these things' and I of course listened to her, but there was something in the back of my head that was like 'no he's really nice you don't understand'. I never said that to her because I would never want her to think that I wasn't taking her seriously but like I had to think about how I was going to give *A this feedback because he heard it from her a lot of times*

*but he didn't believe her and now I had to think about how I was gonna objectively give *A this feedback and when he goes 'you know what *B is like' and not go 'yah' and be like no you need to listen. And I found that whole situation hard and I had to constantly check myself and be like '*A this is feedback from *B, she might irritate you but you have to hear it and you have to take it and I have to tell you this. But it was hard because in my head I was like' don't be so sensitive'.* ***(Managerial Participant 3)***

Also, I think you also think about what happens when you have conflict within the workplace with someone you consider a friend. Say you are working on a project together and you have conflicting ideas or conflicting opinions and it's purely work related and purely objective but because you've got that friendship you don't want to cross that line so maybe thinking if I fight too hard I might lose my friend in this. So what happened is we were working on something together and this specific friend, he was quite a dominant male friend in this group we were working in and I was trying to facilitate this process. So it made it very awkward for me to then go back to this person and say hey by the way I don't think in this meeting you handled yourself pretty well. Fortunately, I wasn't put in a position where I had to do it, someone else from the group went to complain to senior management before I had to be put in that position to do it. So I think that could have turned out to be a very awkward situation. ***(Professional Participant 6)***

I think disadvantages is again sometimes, I mean I am senior management in the organisation, sometimes I do have to do more of a disciplinarian role and that can be difficult when you have to go to someone who is a friend and say look you are not towing the line on this particular policy. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

I think having friends you have to keep reminding them of stuff, because if it's someone who is not your friend you can just put it on email and blast them. So having friends you can't just take the extreme route, if you're gonna have to keep reminding someone every month you have to keep reminding someone every month. And you have to pick for yourself that is this friendship valuable or not and if it's not, throw someone under the bus, but then again people always avoid throwing each other under the bus because we are all here and it's a small space, I mean you see someone everyday so I think it's a disadvantage in that sometimes you don't get your work on time. ***(Managerial Participant 4)***

RQ9: Do women in professional and managerial roles associate friendship at work with authenticity at work?

The key theme that emerged from the analysis was, authentic living and sub-themes of authentic self-expression and psychological safety.

4.2.5 Authentic living

After discussing the reasons why the participants had friends in the workplace, the participants were asked whether these friendships helped or hindered them from being themselves at work. This question was meant to establish a link between friendship at work and authenticity at work. The theme of authentic living emerged as most of the women felt like their friendships did play a role in enabling them to be themselves in the workplace. However, one the participants said that her friendships hindered her from being herself at work because she felt like they make her appear vulnerable and this may lead to her being taken advantage of. She also expressed that because she considered her manager her friend, she could not be herself because of the boundaries that she felt were in place. The sub-themes that emerged under authentic living were authentic self-expression and psychological safety.

4.2.5a Authentic self-expression

Some of the participants said that their friendships in the workplace helped them express themselves more freely. One of the participants stated that there was a difference between how they expressed themselves when they were with their team and how they expressed themselves when they were with their friends. When asked about their team they said:

"*let's say that something comes up and then people comment on it, maybe because I feel a bit new, I don't know if what I'm saying is the right thing. But sometimes I do comment and then yeah it's okay but again it just goes back to the person how they would react so you would rather be on the safe side in case you offend someone or say something that's like off"* ***(Professional Participant 1)***.

However, when asked about her friends, and if she could be herself with them she responded

"*I would say 100%, when I am talking to them I don't have to think that I am being politically correct or I am not saying anything that's off, but then it feels like a social space when like I am with these friends*" ***(Professional Participant 1).***

Similarly, another participant also said:

"*I think my true self, I snap a lot, I have a short temper, but I can't with my colleagues, at least with my friends, I can snap. With friendship there's a saving grace period if you snap they can be like okay no, she's having a bad day, it's not a big issue, its fine you'll do better tomorrow. When it's a colleague they'll be like you can't speak to me like that, that's against policy. I'm going to report to you, then you get a warning. So you can't really fully express how you feel, so if someone keeps doing something that is really annoying you just have to say politely 'I really don't like this, let's do better', you can't have a whole rant or tantrum.* ***(Professional Participant 4)***.

4.2.5b Psychological Safety

Other participants felt that their friendships in the workplace have the space to be themselves, a sort of safety net where they felt comfortable to be themselves.

"*I think the thing with friends at work is that you don't feel judged. You can literally walk in and have a bad day, the other day I phoned Ruth* and I was like 'I'm gonna murder everyone', she's like 'are you having a bad day', I was like 'yes', 'do you wanna talk about it', I was like 'no' and I could be myself, I was literally furious with something, she let me be furious, she listened to me, she let me rant and rave on the phone for like 30 minutes and then I felt better and I didn't feel judged. She was totally there for me even though I was literally furious, she was there she listened, there was no judgement. And I think having that no judgement support space is hugely valuable. I feel like I've got someone who has my back all the time no matter what and that's very important for me"* ***(Managerial Participant 3).***

"*Friends help me be more of myself in terms of you know, that you can get comfortable, you don't have to keep putting up this façade all the time because I think at work a lot of people pull up a face because you don't really want people who are not meant to know you, to know you. So I would say that friends are helpful because they allow me to relax and I do know that there are*

those safe spaces when I just need to offload and there are those safe places when I want to share what's on my chest I know that it stays between us but I also know what their intentions are, they wouldn't use it against me" ***(Managerial Participant 7).***

After establishing that the participants felt that their friendships in the workplace helped them to be themselves at work we looked at the composition of these friendships. These women did not choose friends based on demographics such as gender or race but they did choose to be friends with people they had something in common with. These commonalities were mainly a similar phase of life, shared values and shared interests.

RQ 2&3: To what extent do professional and managerial women create homophilous relationships in the workplace and how do these relationships relate to their authenticity at work?

The key themes that emerged from the analysis were, phase of life, shared values and shared interests.

4.2.6 Phase of life

One of the themes that emerged were phase of life. Participants did not necessarily choose friends based on age but on the phase in which they were in in their lives. Participant 1 was in her early 20s, she just started working and does not have any children. She found it difficult to be friends with the people in her team because they were much older than her and had children who were her age. She felt like she could not relate as their conversations would be mainly based on their children. Participant 2 was in her 40s and although she had friends who did not have kids, she was much closer to those who had kids because they could meet up outside of work and their kids could play together whilst they talked. Participant 7 stated that all her friends at work were young adults just like her and they are all trying to figure out how to be adults.

"So *if I notice my manager and this other guy who heads what we call releases, so they talk about their children and going to school, and it's like my daughter this this this. So I can see that they are actually friends. But then I don't have anything in common in that regard that I don't have children who are in their 20s so there's only so much that I can say. Yeah so it's that kind of thing. So if I say you are my friend, we do the same kind of things, we go to the same places maybe or like watching the same thing"* ***(Professional Participant 1)***

"*some of the people who I consider friends here I do see outside of work, some I don't, I think it also depends on the relationship and how long we've known each other and you know, do they also have kids because then it's easier to meet up outside because the kids can play together, that sort of thing..... yeah, so kids the same age. Yeah, kids are always a big thing, we've got reasonably young company with lots of people with reasonably young kids, so it's swapping the stories about my pre-teen did this, my teenager did that, how do you cope with that. So our children I think are a big common point as well* ***(Managerial Participant 2)***.

It's also a thing where there's such a big age gap between the interns and the more senior staff, I don't resonate with them on a lot of topics because a lot of them are parents, they are married. I can't talk about my kids, I don't have kids, I can't talk about school fees is so expensive, my kid did this, my kid did that, so in that regard we've got such different life experiences, I wouldn't be able to comment on what they talk about. But with the interns because most of us are fresh out of varsity and we're just learning how to be adults, how to navigate ourselves as adults, we've got more in common, we've got more we can talk about. ***(Professional Participant 7).***

4.2.7 Shared Values

It also emerged that the friends that the participants had made in the workplace were also mainly based on shared values. These women were mostly concerned with having friends that had the same value system as they did. Participant 3's values were kindness and honesty and her friends had similar values. Participant 3 also valued helping and mentoring people, and she looked for those similar values and for friends who would also be interested in mentoring younger women in the organisation. Participant 4 had values of being loyal, ethical and moral and also associated her friends with those values.

"*so I think Ruth* and I have a very similar value set, things like always being kind so no matter what I do, I don't want to look back and think, sho, I was such an asshole, I want to say I know I did right by the person and by myself so I believe in kindness and trying. I will go above and beyond and so will Ruth*, to try and do the best by ourselves, by our business. And that's also how we formed the values of this business, things like lego like because we collaborate, we're kind, we care about other people, we believe in excellence so a lot of our business values are from our common values as friends and as people. And I also think I have a similar value set to A* and C*, I definitely see a lot of, like C* is the most honest person I know and he tries to be*

kind, but sometimes he'll just tell it like it is and sometimes that hurts people's feelings but I don't doubt that it doesn't come from a good place. So I think that honesty and that transparency is a value set that all of us share" ***(Managerial Participant 3)***.

I think within the company also I look also for people who will be good mentors to our younger female staff, because I've been leading a female mentorship forum in the company for a number of years and we need to widen that and have people giving input to that. So I also look for people who are passionate about developing and mentoring of men and women but then try and encourage them to take on those informal mentorship roles. So I've had quite some good friendships coming out of that because we have ***(Managerial Participant 2)***.

I think we have similar morals if I could say. Their ethical, we have the same activities that we enjoy at work. But I just think it was mostly just finding I think when it comes to work you expect what you've been hearing that people are out for themselves, people are selfish, people will throw you under the bus. So I think it's refreshing to keep meeting people like you. Okay cool it doesn't have to involve directors. So it's nice when you are like-minded people, it's not a train smash for us to fix it together, we're not breaking any rules, it's not nay violation. So I think we all have that common thing. ***(Professional Participant 4)***

4.2.8 Shared interests

Shared interests emerged as one of the themes that participants formed their friendships at work based on. Having similar interests whether in reading or activities was how connections tended to form between the participants and their colleagues, and as they spent more time together, they then formed strong friendships.

Some of them had similar reading tastes so we can sit and talk about books for ages and swap ideas on what are good things to read. One of my younger colleagues we like the same computer games so we can just sit and talk about computer games for ages ***(Managerial Participant 2)***.

Okay, Uhm, mainly it's people that I feel have the same interests as me, have the same sort of vision in a way, people that I feel that I can relate to on a personal level as well ***(Professional Participant 5)***.

Everyone is friendly with each other but in terms of who you're friends with I see a lot of, the friendships that have formulated and the friendships that I'm also still creating it's more based on who you talk to the most and then while you're talking to someone you'll be like oh wait we've got the same interest in this and it goes from there, before you trust the person and sharing a lot more. ***(Professional Participant 7)***.

To a large extent, women do create homophilous relationships in the workplace. One of the participants said that *"I think there is a tendency still to gravitate towards people who are similar to you. I think you sort of gravitate to that because it's easier so you know you've got the same upbringing, you've got the same sort of cultural background and it's easy to relate. But I think that a lot of the more valuable friendships have been with people who are different. So I think a lot depends on emotionally where I am and whether I have got the emotional energy to invest in building those relationships"* ***(Managerial Participant 2)***. However, homophily was not based on sociodemographic characteristics but more on shared interests, shared values and phase of life.

RQ10: What perceptions do professional and managerial women have about their friendships at work in relation to their level and tenure in the organisation?

The participants were asked whether there were other factors that affected their friendships and authenticity in the workplace. The themes that emerged were those of seniority, professional boundaries and tenure in the organisation.

4.2.9 Seniority

Seniority was identified as one of the factors that affected friendship in the workplace among women. Two of the participants who were interviewed were in managerial roles. One of these women actually owned a business and found it hard to have friends who were not at her level of seniority. She felt that it would not be fair to be friends with her employees whilst leaving the others. The other woman who was in a managerial role expressed that she had friends who were in professional roles, however, as she got more senior in the organisation there was a gap and this made it harder to become friends with people who were not at her level of seniority. One of the women who was in a professional role, identified her manager as a friend in the workplace. However, she expressed that she never interacted with her outside of the workplace because she

did not want to cross that boundary of her also being her manager. Two other participants who were in professional roles expressed that being friends with their managers came with perceived benefits. This theme, as illustrated by the extractions below, shows that organisational level does affect friendship at work.

I think seniority is a factor, I think I find it harder to make new friends at the younger levels as I've become more senior because there is a perceived gap that, either they are worried that they can't talk to me or sometimes it's just time, my diary is so busy that I don't always have time to spend with people as I would like to ***(Managerial Participant 2)***.

"*I think for me probably the highest thing that is the counter band to that is knowing distance because I think sometimes it makes it hard to be objective. I think sometimes it makes it hard because I actually am people's bosses so I actually have to remember to, I actually have to force myself to pull back. In my old organisation I was also people's boss I had to pull back. So I think it's the counter balance of that; that I actually have to remember that sometimes it's not always appropriate to be friends with people at work especially if they are reporting to you"* ***(Managerial Participant 3)***.

"*Uhm, I think I don't wanna be too familiar with her, like okay, I wanna be her friend but not too familiar because then uhm, it's easy sort of to cross that boundary, like I feel I still need to have an idea of the fact that I'm a subordinate and she's… you know. And I feel like that might affect the way that I sort of see her, perceive her, you know and I just wanna preserve that part about how I actually see her"* ***(Professional Participant 5).***

Two other participants who are at a professional level expressed that they actually benefit a lot from being friends with people who are at a different organisational level as they are. In this case, being friends with people in managerial positions.

I think personally for me, the director that I report to directly, it helps me because I think people are scared of my director so for someone to just mess with me per se its very difficult. Like when I got here, like a month in, there's this employee, she kept trying to throw me under the bus, and then I told my manager, she would send emails implying that I didn't send her stuff when I did, she would say I didn't do part of my work now it's delaying her work yet that work was done and there's proof that the work was done and stuff like that. And then I told my manager what

happened and said I should go to the director and tell her what she's doing and then she got a warning. A physical warning, that listen, we can see that you were trying to throw Anne under the bus, second time you are out. So I would say having a director I report to gives me benefits because people are afraid of the director and I'm not, so they don't easily just like mess with me if I could say.* ***(Professional Participant 4)***.

"*I actually find I open up to her [manager] a lot more. I do find what I draw from it is a lot of wisdom because of her experiences not just because of her age but because she's managed teams before which I haven't done so I find that even at work in the work environment, you know when I share some of the challenges that I'm going through that, I get a lot of good advice from her because of that"* ***(Professional Participant 6)***

4.2.9a Professional boundaries

Seniority was associated with professional boundaries. This was especially from the perspective of the women in managerial roles. These women felt like they had to put a lot of professional boundaries on themselves and their friends for them to be able to do their job well. For example:

Where it gets into boundaries is I have to be very careful if people start talking about their colleagues because then I have to start drawing a line and say yes I'm your friend but I am also a senior executive here, so be careful you don't tell me something that I'm forced to act on or come and tell me as a colleague so that I can act on it. So I think that's probably the hardest thing is if they, they think someone's, okay, if someone is not pulling their weight it's not a big issue, if they think someone is being dishonest it then becomes a big issue because I say if you told me this as a friend but I can't separate it from the professional in me knowing. So I do try to discourage discussing other colleagues with me in that space, they can come and talk to me as a colleague about that. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

And then the other thing, I think for me is that because I am now in this risk position, I do know a lot of confidential information, the one boundary I've set for myself is that I don't drink at work functions ever. Because it's just too easy to let things slip that shouldn't be allowed to slip so that's just a decision I made a long time ago. With the guys I see socially, they know not to lead into that territory so it's fine I can have a glass of wine and not worry about it but I've just also become very aware that it can be very easy after you've had just one drink to let things slip that

you shouldn't. So that's for me been a personal boundary that I've set. ***(Managerial Participant 2)***

Ruth and I discuss everything, I don't think there's anything that's like off, our family stuff, marriage stuff, kids stuff, I mean nothing, problems, work problems nothing is off the table with us at all. It's very similar to *A and *C, we knew a lot about each other, our personal struggles and the things that we were going through in our lives. Whereas with my friendly colleagues it's very much like work struggle and what's happening at work, what's your projects, and sometimes I care about their personal stuff but I almost don't reciprocate so it'll be like I'm so upset because I've had a big fight with my brother and we haven't spoken for three weeks and I'll just listen and understand and support but I won't use that as my outlet, whereas with *Ruth and I it's very reciprocal, with the team I feel like I'm more of a support to them and I know what's happening but I don't necessarily share anything openly, I keep that boundary in place.* *(Managerial Participant 3)***

*I'm really friendly with all the girls and *Wendy and *Gail were at my wedding but it's a boundary, I try put boundaries into those friendships. So it's sort of on purpose so that when I have to say 'this is kak [shit] you can do better' it's, I'm not talking to you as a friend, I'm talking to you as a boss this is kak [shit] you need to do better, go do it better, don't bring me kak [shit] work again, they know where it comes from so I think it is on purpose that I keep to people at my level"* ***(Managerial Participant 3)***

4.2.9b Tenure in organisation

Tenure in the organisation affected authenticity in the workplace and this was also tied to seniority in the organisation. Women who had more senior positions and had been at the organisation longer felt like they could be themselves more than those who had just started out or had not been in the organisation for long. Those who had not been in the organisation for long found it harder to make friends because they felt like there were already established networks that were hard to infiltrate. This is illustrated by the following:

"*Yes, I think because, I've been here long enough that most people have seen who I really am and have been very happy to accept me as I really am and so I can continue being like that. I suppose like yeah I tend to, if I find things getting tense I'll crack a joke about it and somebody*

would find that very inappropriate, but that's just how I deal with tense situations and make everyone laugh and then pick up the conversation and I think knowing that people say okay that's okay, that's how she deals with these things means you can then carry on, not everything has to be so super formal all the time" ***(Managerial Participant 2).***

The participant also said that:

"*a lot of us who grew up in the company together have much more solid bond because we have been working together for 20 years so even if you aren't really friends with them you just, over that time you do build up something just because of things we've been through and seen the company be through so I think that definitely plays into it and I think that sometimes makes it harder for people coming in at senior levels who are new because they don't have this sort of history and it must make it harder for them to break into, because it becomes like a little clique. And I guess I feel that because when I joined the senior management team when I was the new kid on the block, you could see that there was a whole sort of shared history and inside jokes and things that it took a while to get used to and yeah after a while now I'm just part of the whole thing so it's become more"* ***(Managerial Participant 2)***.

Similarly, when other participants were asked whether tenure plays any role in making friends in the organisation, they responded saying:

"*I think it does hey, because I found, I think if we had had this conversation about a year ago, I wouldn't have defined both these people as friends they would have been friendly colleagues. But I find that because I have worked with them for quite a while now and quite closely on a number of projects where we literally, you know the one lady like I said sits right next to me. With the other lady for about 9 months we were moved to a different building and we were sitting in an open plan and were next to each other, and because of that we were spending a lot of time together, friendship developed. So it definitely didn't happen overnight"* ***(Professional Participant 6).***

"*I guess tenure would also be a factor, I feel closer to the interns than I feel to permanent staff or more senior staff"* ***(Professional Participant 7).***

Interviewer: *You did mention that you've only been here for 2 years and you consider that a short time, do you think that maybe plays a role in the extent to which you can be yourself or the friendships that you can make in the workplace?*

Interviewee: *Yes, definitely, most people who work here have been here since after high school so they've, here it's like a, it's hard to, everybody sort of has his/her own network already and it takes years for you to sort of build that type of network with reliable relationships as well. That's why I talked about work organisations. People group themselves, you know.* ***(Professional Participant 5)***

In summary, professional and managerial women in the South African private sector conceptualize friendship at work as informal relationships which are underpinned by trust with people they can share their personal information with, which they do not share with others who are merely colleagues they are friendly with. Benefits such as social support which is divided into companionship, emotional and instrumental support were associated with friendship at work, whilst disadvantages such as conflict and objectivity were brought up. Authentic living, which was divided into authentic self-expression and psychological safety, showed that women in professional and managerial women do associate friendship at work with authenticity at work. This was made explicit by the participants, who expressed that having friendships helped them be more comfortable in expressing themselves and made them feel like they could be themselves at work. Contradictory to the quantitative results, this section found that professional and managerial women do create homophilous relationships in the workplace, not based on demographic characteristics such as gender, race and ethnicity but based on similar phases of life, shared values and shared interests. When it came to the organisational level, seniority, which also included professional boundaries, affected friendships in the workplace. Participants in senior positions felt that as they got more senior in the organisations and became people's bosses it made it more difficult for them to make friends with their subordinates. In scenarios where there were friendships across organisational levels, there had to be strong professional boundaries in place. Lastly, organisational tenure was identified as one of the factors that affected authenticity at work. Participants expressed that the more years they had spent working for the organisation, the more they could be themselves and this was also associated with seniority.

In conclusion to this chapter, the questions and hypotheses that were found to be true in the quantitative analyses will be discussed in the following chapter. This is to narrow down the study and align the accepted hypothesis to the themes that emerged in the qualitative analyses. The themes from the qualitative analyses will be used to build up and contextualize the results.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the current research study was to establish a relationship between friendship and authenticity at work by assessing the extent to which workplace friendships were associated with authenticity at work among women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. This study is relevant because it investigates alternative ways of addressing diversity and the inclusion of women in organisations.

More specifically, it was of interest to investigate (a) whether there was a negative association between friendship opportunity and self-alienation, (b) whether there was a negative association between friendship prevalence and self-alienation, (c) whether there was a positive association between friendship opportunity and authentic living, (d) whether there was a positive association between friendship prevalence and authentic living, (e) whether there was a negative association between friendship opportunity and external influence. Furthermore, it was also of interest to assess (f) the extent to which professional and managerial women create homophilous relationships in the workplace and how these relationships relate to authenticity at work, (g) whether ethnic differences existed when it came to friendship and authenticity at work, (h) whether there were any organisational role and tenure differences that existed with regards to friendship and authenticity at work.

Lastly, the current study focused on the perceptions of women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. Only the results of the main research question, the hypotheses and the findings that overlapped between the quantitative and qualitative research questions are discussed in this chapter. This chapter will discuss the overall results of the quantitative and qualitative segments and link these results to previously conducted studies that are assessing similar variables. In addition, the practical implications of the results and the limitations of the current study will also be discussed in this section.

5.2 Overall levels of friendship and authenticity at work

Generally most in the sample women had the opportunity to make friends in the workplace, however, not all these women took these opportunities and went on to develop friendships at work. This may be due to homophily, ethnicity, organisational role and tenure, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Most women felt that they could be their authentic selves in the workplace and also felt less self-alienated. This may be related to the friendship opportunities which they had. Although the majority of the sample felt that they were authentic, the sample was varied with regards to accepting external influence. This showed that most of the women accepted external influence to some degree and as will be explained in this chapter, this may not necessarily be an indication of inauthenticity.

5.3 Friendship and Authenticity at work

A significant, positive and weak relationship was found between overall friendship at work (friendship opportunity and friendship prevalence) and overall authenticity at work (authentic living, self-alienation and external influence) ($r = .17$, $p < .05$). The findings addressed the main question of the current research study and suggested that an association between friendship and authenticity at work existed. This association suggested that high levels in friendship at work were associated with high levels in authenticity at work. Therefore, when women in professional and managerial roles had the opportunities of making friends at work and they pursued these opportunities to form friendships, they were more likely to experience higher levels of authenticity at work. A study conducted by Theran (2010) can be drawn upon to further explain the results that were obtained. Theran (2010) examined authenticity in relationships as a predictor of quality of friendship and psychological wellbeing in an ethnically diverse sample of adolescent girls. She found that authenticity significantly predicted friendship quality both with authority figures and with peers, and those with higher authenticity reported more intimate relationships with their friends (Theran, 2010). Although this was not the direction the current study had hypothesized, the study cited above does show association between friendship and authenticity. Hence it could also be that women who are authentic have more friendship opportunities and prevalence in the workplace.

Furthermore, authenticity is relational and not simply individualistic (Schmid, 2005). A study conducted by Kim, Lin and Pyo Kim (2019) examined how person-organisation fit and friendship

with coworkers combine to affect people's self-verification. Self-verification was defined as individuals' inherent motive to confirm their conceptions of themselves through social reality (Kim et al., 2019). The study found that person-organisation fit and self-verification perceptions were positively related when friendship from coworkers was high, and non-significant when friendship from coworkers was low (Kim et al., 2019). In addition, it was established in the literature review that state authenticity is determined by a fit between the individual and their environment (Schmader & Sedikides, 2018; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Therefore, the study conducted by Kim et al. (2019) can be used to show that even when individuals know who they are, they still require support from their environment which confirms that who they are is accepted. Friendships in the workplace assist with this and this further confirms that link between friendship and authenticity in the workplace. The positive association between friendship and authenticity at work found in the current study is evidence that organisations determine the environment in which women work and plays a role in their opportunities of friendship and their perceptions of authenticity. This further demonstrates that it is the responsibility of organisations to do more towards accepting the different identities of employees which could ultimately assist in enhancing people's authenticity in the South African workplace.

A study conducted by Smith and Geddes (2018) investigated whether authenticity was a characteristic that was truly valued in the workplace and what it means to be authentic in the workplace. They also looked at what helped or hindered authenticity in the workplace and one of the findings was that support from managers and peers in the workplace significantly helped individuals to express themselves authentically. Peer relationships depict a certain level of friendship as well as informality and are also associated with instrumental and emotional support (Sias & Cahill, 1998). This further demonstrates the association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace.

In addition, a sub-theme of psychological safety emerged from the qualitative analysis. The participants felt that their friends provided a safe space in which they could feel comfortable to be themselves. They felt that their friends at work provided a safe space in which they did not feel judged, they did not have to pretend (i.e., be inauthentic) and they could be upset or happy or have a tantrum without feeling as if they were constrained by the environment they were in. Psychological safety is the belief that one is able to be themselves without fear of negative

consequences towards their character, behavior or self-image (Kahn, 1990). Based on this definition and the definition of authenticity provided in the literature review, psychological safety may foster authenticity. A study conducted by Carmeli, Brueller and Dutton (2009) found a significant, positive association between psychological safety and high-quality interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Psychological safety is an aspect of authenticity (Grandey & Goodwin, 2012) and its positive association with interpersonal relationships in the workplace may suggest an association between friendships at work and authenticity at work. This is because, as suggested in the literature review, friendship at work is a form of interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Sias & Gallagher, 2009; Morrison, 2005; Kratzer et al., 2005).

a) Friendship opportunity, friendship prevalence and self-alienation

Friendship opportunity had a significant, negative and weak relationship with self-alienation (R_s = -.39, $p < .01$). This finding addressed the first hypothesis that suggested that there was a negative association between friendship opportunity and self-alienation. This association suggested that high levels of friendship opportunity were associated with low levels of self-alienation. Therefore, when women in professional and managerial roles had more opportunities to make friends at work, they were less likely to feel self-alienated. Friendship prevalence had a significant, negative and weak relationship with self-alienation (R_s = -.31, $p < .01$). This finding addressed the second hypothesis that suggested that there was a negative association between friendship prevalence and self-alienation. This association suggested that high levels of friendship prevalence were associated with low levels of self-alienation. Therefore, when women in professional and managerial roles had friendships at work, they were less likely to feel self-alienated. No studies have been found that specifically look at this association and this may be due to a lack of studies that have used the tripartite model of state authenticity or the lack of studies that look at an association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace. Studies however, that have looked at positive relationships in the workplace may be able to assist us in further establishing this association. Studies have established that relationships among employees in the workplace are significant in shaping the way individuals think, act and feel (Carmeli & Gittell, 2008; Ragis & Dutton, 2007). In the literature review, self-alienation was defined as a subjective experience of the individual, in this case the employee who may not have a solid understanding of who they are and feel disconnected from their core self (Knoll et al., 2015; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). If

work relationships have a positive impact on how employees feel then it is possible that friendships have a significantly positive impact on how individuals feel in the workplace thus minimizing self-alienation.

b) Friendship opportunity, friendship prevalence and authentic living

Friendship opportunity had a significant, positive and weak relationship with authentic living (R_s = .33, p <.01). This finding addressed the third hypothesis that suggested that there was a positive association between friendship opportunity and authentic living. This association suggested that high levels of friendship opportunity were associated with high levels of authentic living. Therefore, when women in professional and managerial roles had more opportunities to make friends at work, they were more likely to feel and act authentically. Friendship prevalence had a significant, positive and weak relationship with authentic living (R_s = .28, p < .01). This finding addressed the fourth hypothesis that suggested that there was a positive association between friendship prevalence and authentic living. This association suggested that high levels of friendship prevalence were associated with high levels of authentic living. Therefore, when women in professional and managerial roles had friends in the workplace, they were more likely to feel and act authentically. No studies were found that have specifically assessed the association between friendship opportunity, prevalence and authentic living. However, some connections can be made as authentic living is "the degree to which individuals are true to themselves in most situations and live in accordance with their own values and beliefs" (Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014, p. 3). This indicates that it is the primary representative of authenticity in the tripartite model. Therefore, the relationships discussed above between authenticity and friendship also apply here. More studies would need to be done to explore the direct relationship between friendship opportunity and authentic living, as well as, friendship prevalence and authentic living.

Furthermore, literature suggests that the level of authentic living is affected by the social environment of the individual (Metin, Taris, Peeters, Van Beek, Van den Bosch, 2016; Van den Bosch & Taris, 2014; Wood et al., 2008). Friendship opportunity and prevalence is part of this social environment thus reiterating the positive association found between friendship opportunity and prevalence with authentic living. In addition, the participants from the in-depth interviews were asked whether their friendships in the workplace helped or hindered them from being themselves at work. The theme of authentic living emerged as most of the participants stated that

their friendships helped them be themselves in the workplace. They felt that they could express themselves freely, they did not have to think about being politically correct, and they felt as if they could be true to themselves and make mistakes without getting reported or getting into trouble. Their comments reinforced that authenticity is not only about how one behaves but also about how they communicate authentically. This also gave evidence that friendships give individuals the opportunity to freely express their personalities as argued by Paul (2000) and Paul and Pevalin (2005).

c) Friendship opportunity, friendship prevalence and external influence

The current study found no significant associations between friendship opportunity and prevalence with external influence. The reason for this result may have been because external influences such as trait authenticity and external influence as state authenticity are different, as explained in the literature review. Two studies conducted by Lenton et al. (2016) in the United Kingdom (UK) investigated components and situational correlates of state authenticity to clarify its meaning and improve its understanding. Both studies showed that to live authentically did not necessarily require the individual to reject external influence (Lenton et al., 2016). This differed between trait and state authenticity, and this was because accepting external influence as a trait is different from accepting external influence in a particular situation. Lenton et al., (2016) stated that accepting external influence in a particular situation should not be regarded as being inauthentic. They stated that when accepting external influence in a particular situation, the individual may be doing this by choice, therefore choosing to accept external influence did not mean that one was not acting in accordance with their values and beliefs (Lenton et al., 2016). The studies they conducted were used to argue that external influence is not an integral part of state authenticity. This unclear distinction between accepting external influence as a trait and as a state and whether it is a positive or negative thing could explain why a non-significant association was found. Participants may have interpreted accepting external influence differently.

5.4 Homophily, Friendship and Authenticity at work

The current study discovered that women created homophilous relationships in the workplace to a greater extent. The quantitative results showed that these homophilous relationships were primarily based on gender and race. This may have been because the current study only asked the participants about demographic characteristics and not psychological or value characteristics in

the quantitative component. Whilst in the qualitative analysis, participants had the opportunity to express what kind of homophilous relationships they have. Previous studies however, have shown that homophily based on race and gender is likely to strengthen the bonds of friendship (Ibarra, 1995; Thomas, 1990). A study conducted by Markiewicz et al. (2000) found that people tend to become friends with people of the same sex and these same sex friendships tend to be stronger than those between different sexes in the workplace. The results of the current study also indicated that women in the sample had friendships beyond their business units and organisational level. This may be an indication that friendship in the workplace among women is less concerned with getting information in the workplace or career success (instrumental support) but more about social support.

The current study also assessed the association of homophily (gender, race, ethnicity, organisational level and organisational unit) with friendship and authenticity at work. The findings showed that there was a significant association between racially and ethnically homophilous relationships with friendship at work. This indicated that women in professional and managerial roles tend to make friends in the workplace based on race and ethnicity. A study conducted by Kao and Joyner (2004) examined if and how friendship activities differed among interracial, interethnic, and intra-ethnic friendships of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian youths. They found that strong friendships were more likely to be from the same ethnic groups and they were also more likely to report more shared activities than interracial friendships (Kao & Joyner, 2004). A study conducted by Gibbons and Olk (2003) found that friendship formed between individuals with similar ethnicities.

This finding was inconsistent with the findings of a study conducted by Kokkonen, Esaiasson and Gilijam (2015). The study they conducted assessed how workplace diversity affected how native born populations formed interethnic friendship relations (Kokkonen et al., 2015). They argued that diverse workplaces restricted individuals' opportunities to act towards homophily and therefore had strong potential for integration (Kokkonen et al., 2015). They found that individuals who worked at diverse workplaces were more likely than individuals who worked at homogenous workplaces to form interethnic friendships (Kokkonen et al., 2015). One would therefore have assumed that because the South African workforce is so diverse, the results from the current study would have highlighted results similar to those found by Kokkonen, Esaisson and Gilijam (2015).

However, it was interesting that the qualitative results contradicted this. Most of the participants reported that they did not really consider demographic characteristic such as gender, race and ethnicity when forming friendships in the workplace. Friendships formed naturally, based on shared interests, shared values and similar phases of life. This finding also showed that friendship in the workplace is a form of social identification which was a theoretical contribution that this study made in the literature review, using the social identity theory. This is because when women had opportunities to make friendships in the workplace, they chose those who were aligned with their personal identity, which included their values, interests and phase of life.

The study found no significant association between homophily and authenticity at work. This could be because although women choose friends who were similar to them in the workplace based on gender, race, ethnicity, organisational level and organisational unit; it may not necessarily be these friends that help them feel authentic in the workplace. This may also be an indication that informal relationships that are based solely on demographic characteristics among women, are less likely to promote authenticity at work. Themes of shared values, shared interests and common phases of life emerged from the qualitative analysis. It may very well be these intrapersonal characteristics of homophily that were not included in the quantitative analysis, which are associated with authenticity in the workplace.

This disparity between the qualitative and quantitative results could have been as a result of participants not wanting to admit that they chose friends who were similar to them based on demographic characteristics especially in South Africa where such issues are frowned upon and bring up such intense emotions. Another potential explanation for this disparity is interpreting it from a social identity theory perspective. In this instance, context could have contributed to the disparity because the identity of an individual is not stable across different contexts, but depends on the context in which the individual is functioning (Knoll et al., 2015). Therefore the women who participated in the interviews' identity and choice of friends could have been influenced by their context which could have been different from the context of the quantitative sample as a whole. Lastly, this discrepancy also supports the argument that was made in the literature review that homophily is not only based on demographic characteristics but on interpersonal and behavioural characteristics as well (Sias & Gallagher, 2009; McPherson et al., 2001).

5.5 Ethnicity, Friendship and Authenticity at work

There were some discrepancies between the quantitative and qualitative results of this section. The quantitative component of the current study found a significant difference across the ethnic groups for friendship opportunity and friendship prevalence. This meant that women in professional and managerial roles of different ethnicities had different opportunities for friendships and different prevalence of friendships. The ranks from the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that not only were there different opportunities and prevalence of friendships, but specifically, White women had more opportunities to make friends at work and they had more friendships in the workplace compared to the other ethnic groups. Coloured, Black and Indian women had lower rankings when it came to friendship opportunities and friendship prevalence at work. These groups are recognized as marginalized groups in South Africa. This may be due to cultural and historical factors as well as discrimination (Fong & Isajiw, 2000). Sias and Gallagher (2009) stated that not every employee has access to informal friendships in the workplace. Moreover, in most cases ethnic and racially marginalized groups do not have access to the same social support systems (this includes friendships in the current context) that socially empowered groups do (Kwesinga & Bell, 2004; Ibarra, 1995). Based on this finding it seems that employees are still choosing friends based on demographic characteristics such as ethnicity, and these ethnic differences when it comes to friendship in the workplace indicate that there is still underrepresentation when it comes to ethnicity in the South African private sector. This is an indication that organisations need to do more when it comes to diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Conversely, participants from the qualitative analysis said that they did not choose their friends based on demographic characteristics such as ethnicity. This was an interesting contradiction because although the participants of the qualitative analysis said they did not consider demographic characteristics when choosing friends, friendship opportunities and prevalence of friendships in the quantitative analysis differed based on ethnicity. This takes us back to the rationale of the current study, which stated that the current study's importance was investigating alternative ways of addressing diversity and inclusion of women in organisations. One of the categories that defines a diverse workforce is ethnicity. The results may be an indication of ethnic disparities in the South African private sector and the privileges and status that are attached to these ethnic groups which may also indicate a larger problem in terms of inclusion in the workplace.

5.6 Organisational role, Friendship and Authenticity at work

The current study found no significant difference between organisational role (professional only, professional and managerial, and managerial only) with friendship and authenticity at work. These results indicated that friendship opportunities, friendship prevalence and authenticity levels in the workplace did not differ based on the role that the participants had in the organisation. This result may have been because there were more women in professional only roles and professional and managerial roles than in managerial only roles. These results may also be explained by the fact that most studies that look at interpersonal relationships in the workplace look at organisational level differences and not necessarily professional and managerial role differences as well as the ambiguity of organisational roles. For example, a study conducted by Mao and Hsieh (2012) examined the friendship expectations of employees across organisational levels. They found that higher-level employees had lower expectations of expressive friendship at work, which provided personal emotional satisfaction (Mao & Hsieh, 2012). This may be an indication that there are organisational level differences when it comes to friendship at work, however, there might be a gap in the literature when it comes to friendship pattern differences of professionals and managers.

This however was contradictory to the results from the qualitative analysis, which revealed that organisational role did play a role in differentiating friendship opportunity, prevalence and authenticity in the workplace. Women in managerial roles found it hard to make friends in the workplace with people who were not at the same senior level as they were. For one of the participants it was because she felt it would be unfair to be friends with some of her subordinates whilst she was not friends with the others. She also expressed that not being friends with her subordinates would place professional boundaries in place such that when the work is not done well, they would understand that she is talking to them as their boss and she would want the work fixed. Another participant expressed that her role as a manager and seniority in the organisation made it difficult to form friendships because there would be a gap between her and new people coming in at lower levels in the organisation. This gap could have been because the subordinates were worried that they could not be friends with their manager or she did not have time to build those relationships with people at younger levels because of her busy schedule. A previous study conducted by Unsworth, Kragt and Johnston-Billings (2016) examined how employees who had been promoted into a leadership role, dealt with being both a leader and a friend of their

subordinates. They found that one of the strategies they used was establishing a divide which was essentially placing boundaries so that they could still be friends with their subordinates whilst still being able to be their leader (Unsworth et al., 2016).

Some women in professional roles had no problem being friends with people at managerial roles and actually received perceived benefits from these friendships. One of the participants felt as if she had a sense of protection that came from being friends with her manager and her director, whereby people would not 'mess with her' in the workplace. Another participant expressed that she gained a lot of wisdom from her manager and benefited from her in that way. Participants also expressed that organisational roles also played a part in how authentic they could be at work. Women in senior roles felt that they could be themselves at work because one of the women was a part owner and the business was hers hence she felt she could be herself. Those in professional roles felt like they could not fully be themselves at work sometimes because most of them were still new and were still finding their footing. One of the women in a managerial role expressed that before she was promoted to senior management she also found it difficult to be herself at work.

5.7 Organisational tenure, Friendship and Authenticity at work

The current study found a significant difference for authenticity at work based on organisational tenure. These results indicated that women in professional and managerial roles experienced higher levels of authentic living, the more years they had been working for their organisation. This was similar to the results that emerged from the qualitative analysis as participants who had been working for the organisation for a longer time felt more comfortable being themselves than those who had been with the organisation for a shorter time. One of the participants said that she felt she could be herself because she had been working for her organisation for years and people in the organisation had seen who she really was and were happy to accept her.

The quantitative analysis found no significant difference for friendship at work based on organisational tenure. This was however contradictory to the results of qualitative results. Participants from the in-depth interviews expressed that organisational tenure did cause a difference when it came to friendship in the workplace. One of the participants said that working with someone for a longer time helped friendship to develop. Another participant said that she was an intern at her organisation and felt closer to the interns than to the more permanent and senior

staff because she hadn't worked there for as long as they had. Another participant expressed that she found it harder to make friends in the workplace because most of the people she worked with had been working there for a long time and there were already established networks which she found difficult to infiltrate. No previous studies were found that have assessed this and it may be useful for future studies to assess the role of organisational tenure when it comes to friendship and authenticity.

5.8 Limitations

The first limitation of the current study was limited generalizability. Generalizability is an important aspect in evaluating the quality of a study (Polit & Beck, 2010). It is the ability of the researcher to draw broad conclusions from the study based on the sample utilized, so that the findings of the study can be applied to other similar research and situations (Polit & Beck, 2010). This study had limited generalizability because only women in professional and managerial positions in the private sector were participants in the study. This means that it would be difficult to apply the findings to the public sector or to men or to other women who are not managers or professionals by qualification. Professional and managerial women in the private sector do not truly represent the South African workforce, therefore we cannot sufficiently conclude that there is an association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace in South Africa. Moreover, due to time constraints and most organisations not allowing their employees to participate in external research, the study also failed to include data on other sectors in the South African workforce and the sample size was not large enough to be generalized to all South African workplaces. With that said, it was probably a fair representation of most women in professional and managerial roles in the private sector.

The second limitation of the current study was the use of self-reported responses which may have led to misinterpretation. This is known as response bias which refers to systematic patterns of responding to the items on a test that may introduce systematic errors into measurements. This term is used for responses made in questionnaires or surveys that may be affected by social desirability. This may be because the participants may have wanted to fake bad responses because maybe they would have wanted to cover up that they choose their friends based on race and gender since these are heated topics in South Africa. They might also have not wanted to admit that they did not feel authentic. Response bias threatens the internal validity of the study which is the degree

of certainty on whether the hypothesized cause is responsible for the hypothesized effect. In the case of this study it was whether friendship at work was associated with authenticity at work.

The third notable limitation of the current study was that of causality which could not be established because of the weak relationships between the variables. Causality is defined as the degree an establishment can be made that one variable predicts the other (Leedy & Ormond, 2005). This was also a non-experimental research study hence no variables could be manipulated and only associations could be made.

5.9 Implications and Recommendations

The current study has highlighted the importance of being authentic at work and the importance of having friendships in the workplace and opportunities to make friends. Private sector organisations may utilize this association to assist in the era of inclusivity of diverse workforces. Better relationships and encouragement of uniqueness may assist organisations in creating organisational cultures that are flexible and accepting thus helping employees be more innovative and more productive. Friendship and authenticity at work may also assist organisations to create more flexible organisational cultures that blend professional and personal characteristics of their employees. This will also assist in creating a more psychologically rewarding environment for workers which may most likely increase their productivity and performance. Furthermore, the current study assists organisations in understanding the association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace, understanding the importance of creating opportunities for employees to make friends and how this is related to their authenticity in the workplace. The differences for friendship at work when it comes to ethnicity that were highlighted by the current study, also helps organisations to see that marginalized groups are still excluded even though they are now part of the workforce.

The study has also brought attention to the gap that exists in the South African literature when it comes to friendship and authenticity in the workplace. Most studies have focused greatly on informal networks in the organisation but they barely scratch the surface on how informal relationships lead to friendships and the benefits that these friendships may have on the identity of the individual and not just their work outcomes. This study has also brought to light the complexity of authenticity, and more research would need to be conducted in South Africa and developing of

instruments that address these complexities before we rush to make any implementations. A lack of work when it comes to organisational tenure when it comes to friendship and authenticity has also been exposed. Furthermore, the current study has also made a theoretical contribution of friendship in the workplace as a form of social identification. This would need to be evaluated by future studies to ensure that this is an adequate contribution and interpretation of the social identification and the social identity theory. More studies would have to investigate the interconnection between friendship and identity and social identification.

Future research conducted in South Africa on friendship and authenticity at work must also consider looking at males and making comparisons between the different genders gender and also exploring other sectors to make more generalizable results. Future research may also consider increasing the sample size so that it can also look at differences between minorities and majorities as well as using longitudinal studies to establish causality. In addition, future research should also investigate the role of work outcomes such as productivity, turnover, organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to establish a relationship between friendship and authenticity at work by assessing the extent to which workplace friendships are associated with authenticity at work among women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector. This was investigated by assessing the extent to which women perceived that they had the opportunity to make friends and the prevalence of friendships in the workplace. The study also explored whether friendship opportunity and prevalence in the workplace was associated with authenticity at work. Based on previous research it was assumed that informal relationships such as friendships in the workplace would be associated with authenticity at work. The results of the current study found this to be true as a significant positive association was found between friendship and authenticity at work. In addition, significant relationships were also found between friendship opportunity and prevalence with authentic living and self-alienation.

Furthermore, the current study also found that women in the South African private sector form homophilous relationships primarily based on gender and race, as well as intrapersonal characteristics such as shared values, interests and phases of life. Friendships in the workplace were mainly associated with social and emotional support which helped women feel safe to be themselves and express themselves freely in the workplace. Homophilous relationships were significantly associated with friendship in the workplace but not with authenticity at work. This showed that although women tend to form friendships with people who are similar to them, it was not necessarily these homophilous friendships that helped them feel authentic at work. Future studies would have to differentiate between types of homophily to make a more conclusive argument. Ethnic differences were also found to exist with regards to friendship opportunity and prevalence at work. This was an indication that even in a diverse workforce, demographic characteristics are still dominating informal relationships in the workplace and marginalized groups are still immensely affected.

It can therefore be concluded that workplace friendship can be used by women in professional and managerial roles in the South African private sector to enhance their authenticity in the workplace. However, work relationships based solely on demographic characteristics among women are less likely to promote authenticity at work. This may suggest that work organisations need to develop and implement strategies for building inclusive organisations beyond the traditional socio-

demographic features of society. Authenticity at work may embolden professional workers and managers to solve business challenges in unique ways. This study is relevant to assist organisations to create more innovative workplaces with organisational cultures that allow employees to bring a combination of their professional and personal selves to work.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter requesting access

Psychology

School of Human & community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Good Day

Request for permission to conduct research.

My name is Tatenda Zigomo and I am conducting a research study as a requirement for obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research focuses on the association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace in female professionals and managers. I would like to request permission to conduct my study at your organisation.

Participation in this research will involve female employees at professional and/or managerial levels completing online questionnaires. In addition I am hoping that about 6 or 7 employees will further volunteer to take part in in-depth interviews. The questionnaire will take approximately **15 to 20 minutes** to complete. The interviews will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes and will be recorded to ensure verbatim transcriptions. Participation is completely voluntary and there will not be any advantages or disadvantages in participating or not. Participation in the survey does not mean one also has to participate in the interview as these two are separate components. Participants will be able to withdraw from the study until such a time as they submit the completed questionnaires and the interviews are transcribed.

Anonymity is guaranteed for the survey component of the study as participants will not be required to provide any identifying information. The survey link will be emailed to potential participants and IP addresses will be deleted. However, for the interviews, anonymity of the participants cannot be ensured,

however when reporting the results, pseudonyms will be utilized for anonymity. Confidentiality will be maintained by restricting access to the completed questionnaires and interview recordings to my supervisors and myself in a password protected computer. Findings will be analysed at a group level so that no individual responses can be traced. The name of your organisation will not be mentioned in the report.

Completion and submission of the questionnaire, as well as a tick box at the beginning of the survey will be regarded as their consent to participate in this study. For those who volunteer for the interviews, the participants will also be given interview and recording consent forms to findings of the research to the organisation upon request. Participants will be informed of this and can get a summary of the findings from the organisation.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. For further questions on the research, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor, details provided below. If you are willing to grant permission for your organisation to participate, I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the best way to move forward.

Yours sincerely

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Email:1252353@students.wits.ac.za	Email: Fiona.Donald@wits.ac.za	Email: ruwayne@authenticorganisations.com
077 4253 9366	011 717 4507	082 3334 1206

For any information regarding the ethics of this study you may contact Shaun Schoeman from the University's Ethics Committee (HREC) Shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za (011 717 1408)

Appendix B: Participant information sheet and informed consent (survey)

Psychology

School of Human & community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Good Day

My name is Tatenda Zigomo and I am conducting a research study as a requirement for obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research focuses on the association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace in female professionals and managers. I would like to invite you to participate in this study if you are a female employee at a professional and/or managerial level.

Participation in this research will involve you completing an online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately **15 to 20 minutes** to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no advantages or disadvantages in participating or not. You will be able to withdraw from the study until such a time as you submit the completed questionnaire.

Anonymity is guaranteed as you will not be required to provide any identifying information. The survey link will be emailed to potential participants and IP addresses will be deleted. Confidentiality will also be maintained by restricting access to the completed questionnaires to my supervisors and myself. Findings will be analysed at a group level so that no individual responses can be traced. However, should anything raised in the questionnaire trigger you emotionally; you may contact the Emthonjeni centre on **(011) 717 4513** to speak to a professional counsellor. However, because Emthonjeni is a University resource and may therefore not have capacity or may be inconveniently located for you; I would also recommend Lifeline Johannesburg **(011) 738 1331**.

If you choose to participate in this study please complete the online survey. At the beginning of the survey you will be asked if you understand this participation information sheet and agree to take part voluntarily. Ticking this box and submitting will be regarded as an indication of your consent to participate in this study. You will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as you submit the completed questionnaires. Feedback will be given in the form of a summary of the overall findings of the research upon request.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. Please contact either myself or my supervisor should you have any further questions or concerns.

Kind Regards

Tatenda Zigomo	Supervisor: Prof Fiona Donald	Supervisor: Dr Ruwayne Kock
---	---	---
Email: 1252353@students.wits.ac.za	Email: Fiona.Donald@wits.ac.za	Email: ruwayne@authenticorganisations.com
07742539366	011 717 4507	082 3334 1206

For any information regarding the ethics of this study you may contact Shaun Schoeman from the University's Ethics Committee (HREC): Shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za (011 717 1408)

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview schedule

Introductory Blurb: Thank you for completing the survey and agreeing to do the interview. (Just to reiterate what you agreed to in the consent forms, the things discussed in this interview will be confidential and only my supervisors and I will have access to the raw data, when writing the report I will use pseudonyms such that you and the organisation will remain anonymous. I will also be recording this interview as I will be using verbatim quotes. This interview will cover a series of questions on your friendships in the workplace as well as how you are managing yourself and your social identity (i.e. social groups or categories that you belong to) in that context. Everything you say in this interview will be recorded but it will be kept confidential as only myself and my supervisors will have access to the recording which will be kept in a secure place. So please feel free to talk openly. (Will also check how much time they have available).

Questions on Friendship at work

1. Please tell us about your friendships at work?

Probes: Who do you interact with informally at work? Who do you have lunch with or sit with during you tea break? Who do you have personal conversations with?

1.1 Which (if any) of these people would you consider to be your friends at work, as opposed to merely friendly colleagues?

1.2 For you, what distinguishes friends at work from friendly colleagues?

Probes: Who do you see outside of work?

If you were having a party and you were inviting close friends only would you invite your friends from work?

1.3 If you stopped working at your current job, would your friends from work still be your friends?

2. **If Participant has friends at work:**

2.1 How did you become friends with the people you have told me about?

Probes: Did the organisation you work for play a role in forming these friendships in the workplace?

2.2 Does the organisation encourage friendships or did you just take it upon yourself? I.e. does your organisation in any way encourage people to interact in the workplace in an informal setting? This may be through team lunches or team building exercises.

2.3 What are your reasons for having friends at work?

Probes: What drew you to the people you consider to be friends? In what ways are you similar to them?

2.4 How are you different from your friends at work?

Probes: Are all your friends male?

Are all your friends female? Is it a mixture of both? Are all your friends from the same ethnic groups? Do you and your friends have the same values/personality/attitudes? Are you at the same organisational level as your friends? If this is so was it by coincidence or was it deliberate?

2.5 What do you consider as some of the advantages and disadvantages of having friends at work?

2.6 Where would you place the boundaries of these friendships

Probes: What do you discuss with your work friends? What do you not discuss with your work friends?

3. How do your friendships in the workplace help/hinder you to be yourself at work?

Probes: Do you get emotional and/or social support from you friends at work and does this in any way contribute to who you are (identity) and how you behave at work?

4. How do your friendly colleagues help/hinder you to be yourself at work?

Probes: Do you get emotional and/or social support from your friendly colleagues at work and does this in any way contribute to who you are (identity) and how you behave at work?

5. If participant has no friends at work:

5.1 How do you feel about not having friends at work?

Probes: What does this mean for you?

Do you feel lonely or do you feel liberated? And why is this so?

Do you work better and have better work experience because you do not have any friends at work or do you feel isolated with no one to rely on or talk to?

5.2 Is your not having friends at work a personal choice or is it anything to do with the people and/or organisation?

5.3 How does you lack of friendships in the workplace help/hinder you to be yourself at work?

5.4 Does your organisation encourage friendships in the workplace? If yes or no, please explain in what way this is so.

Probes: Does your organisation encourage friendships in the workplace? If yes or no, please explain in what way this is so.

5.5 What do you consider as some of the advantages and disadvantages of not having friends at work?

Questions on Authenticity and Identity

6. How do you describe yourself in general?

   Probes: *(From a personal [uniqueness], relational [role relationships e.g. parent, child, sibling] and social perspective [identification with social groups or categories]).*
7. How do you describe yourself at work?

   Probes: *(From a personal [uniqueness], relational [role relationships e.g. subordinate-manager] and social perspective [identification with social groups or categories]).*
8. Can you be yourself at work and why? Please elaborate.

Probes: Is the person you are at home, the same person you are at work? If not what changes? If there is a difference, what is the extent of difference between the person at home and at work? Is the difference a large one or is it slight?

Can you be yourself with your work friends and why? Can you be yourself with your friendly colleagues and why? (Does your behaviour change between the two?)

9. Do you feel like you know who you are at work? And to what extent is this person nurtured by the context in which you are in? For example your work environment.
10. Are there times that you cannot be yourself at work and why?
11. What other factors affect your friendships and authenticity at work?

Probes: organisational level, tenure at the organisation, age, gender, language.

Appendix D: Participant information sheet for Interview

Psychology

School of Human & community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

Good Day

My name is Tatenda Zigomo and I am conducting a research study as a requirement for obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research focuses on the association between friendship and authenticity in the workplace in female professionals and managers. I would like to invite you to participate in this study if you are a female employee at a professional and/or managerial level.

This letter serves as a formal invitation to participate in the qualitative component of this study. Participation in this study will involve a face to face interview of approximately 60 to 90 minutes. These interviews will be recorded using a recording device. This information will be acquired solely for the purposes of transcribing during the analysis stage. Only my supervisors and I will have access to the raw data and the data will be stored in a password protected computer. You may only answer the questions which you feel most comfortable answering and you may withdraw any information from the study up to the point of the conclusion of the interview without any consequences. There are no benefits or disadvantages associated with participating in the study. Demographic variables will be collected to help describe the sample; however no identifying information will be discussed in the write up of the study. Participants will be given pseudonyms to ensure this, for example, participant A or B. Therefore, anonymity which applies only to the reporting of the results and confidentiality of all participants and responses will be kept.

Should you have any further questions about the project before the interview process or requests regarding the results of the study, please contact me or my supervisors, details have been provided below.

Kind Regards

Tatenda Zigomo	Supervisor: Prof Fiona Donald	Supervisor: Dr Ruwayne Kock
---	---	---
Email: 1252353@students.wits.ac.za	Email: Fiona.Donald@wits.ac.za	Email: ruwayne@authenticorganisations.com
07742539366	011 717 4507	082 3334 1206

For any information regarding the ethics of this study you may contact Shaun Schoeman from the University's Ethics Committee (HREC)

Shaun.schoeman@wits.ac.za

011 717 1408

Appendix E: Interview Consent Form

Psychology

School of Human & community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I _____ (insert name here), consent to be interviewed by Tatenda Zigomo for the study: Friendship and Authenticity at work in professional and managerial women in South African organisations.

- I understand that my participation is voluntary,
- I am able to refuse response to any questions that I am uncomfortable with, and
- I am able to withdraw from the study anytime up to the point of the completion of the interview.
- I understand that my identity, as well as any information disclosed will remain confidential.
- I understand that the write-up of my responses will make use of a pseudonym, for example, Participant A or B.
- I am aware that there are no benefits or disadvantages associated with participating in the study. I recognise that the results of this study will be reported in a research report required for the completion of a Masters degree in Organisational Psychology.
- I understand that direct quotations may be used from this interview. Finally, I understand that this research may be presented at any local/international conferences and/or published in a journal or book.

Researcher's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F: Recording Consent Form

Psychology

School of Human & community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050

Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I _____ (insert name here), consent to be interviewed by Tatenda Zigomo for the study: Friendship and Authenticity at work in professional and managerial women in South African organisations.

- I understand that this recording will be confidential where only Miss Tatenda Zigomo, Prof Fiona Donald and Dr Ruwayne Kock will have access to the data collected.
- I understand that the write up of my responses will make use of a pseudonym, for example, Participant A or B, and no identifying characteristics will be discussed.
- I understand that the transcripts and recordings of my interview will be stored in a password protected computer.
- I understand that raw recordings will be destroyed when the study is complete.

Researcher's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Participant's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix G: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the questions below by choosing the option that best applies to you, or filling in the information requested. Please note that the following demographic questions are for statistical purposes only and are in no way meant to be offensive.

I have understood the participant information sheet and agree to take part voluntarily ☐

1. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non- binary

2. What is your age?

- ☐ 18- 24 years
- ☐ 25- 34 years
- ☐ 35- 40 years
- ☐ 40- 50 years
- ☐ 50+

3. Which race best describes you?

- ☐ Black
- ☐ White
- ☐ Coloured
- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Other

Other (please specify)

_____

4. What ethnicity best describes you?

_____

5. What is your home language?

- Afrikaans
- English
- IsiNdebele
- IsiXhosa
- IsiZulu
- Sepedi
- Sesotho
- Setswana
- SiSwati
- Tshivenda
- Xitsonga
- Other

Other (please specify) _____

6. What is your educational qualification?

- Higher Certificate
- National Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Postgraduate Degree
- Other (please specify) _____

7. How many years have you been working for the organisation?

- <1 year
- 1- 2 years
- 3- 5 years
- 6- 10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16+

8. Do you fulfil a professional role in this organisation? (I.e. apply skills based on technical knowledge, part of a professional body, follow a code of conduct specified by a professional body, and have advanced education and or training. This includes individual contributor from entry level to management roles).
   - Yes
   - No

9. Are you a manager in this organisation? (I.e. have at least one person reporting to you)
   - Yes
   - No
10. If you are a manager, are you in a junior, middle, or senior management position?
   - Junior
   - Middle
   - Senior

Appendix H: Workplace Friendship Scale

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

		Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Neutral	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
1	I have the opportunity to get to know my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am able to work with my co-workers to collectively solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
3	In my organisation, I have the chance to talk informally and visit with others.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Communication among employees is encouraged by my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I have the opportunity to develop close friendships at my workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Informal talk is tolerated by my organisation as long as the work is completed.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I have formed strong friendships at work	1	2	3	4	5
8	I socialize with co-workers outside of the workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I can confide in the people at work.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I feel I can trust many co-workers a great deal.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Being able to see my co-workers is one reason I look forward to my job.	1	2	3	4	5

12	I do not feel that anyone I work with is a true friend.	1	2	3	4	5

.

Appendix I: Intra- and Inter-group friendships at work scale

Please indicate (as honestly as possible) the degree to which you agree with the following items regarding the people you are friends with at work.

		None	Very few	Some	Half	Many	Most	All
1	How many of your friends at work are women?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	How many of your friends at work are the same race as you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	How many of your friends at work are not of the same ethnic background as you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	How many of your friends at work are at a similar organisational level as you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	How many of your friends at work are in the same function, business unit or department as you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix J: Authenticity at work scale (IAM WORK)

Please indicate (as honestly as possible) the degree to which you are able to be your true self at work

		Does not describe me at all	Mostly does not describe me	Somewhat does not describe me	Neutral	Somewhat describes me	Mostly describes me	Describes me very well
1	I am true to myself at work in most situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	At work, I always stand by what I believe in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I behave in accordance with my values and beliefs in the workplace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I find it easier to get on with people in the workplace when I'm being myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	At work, I feel alienated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6	I do not feel who I truly am at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	At work, I feel out of touch with the 'real me'	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	In my working environment I feel "cut off" from who I really am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	At work, I feel the need to do what others expect me to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I am strongly influenced in the workplace by the opinions of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Other people influence me greatly at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	At work, I behave in a manner that	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	people expect me to behave.							

Appendix K: Histograms

Figure 1: Histogram for friendship opportunity

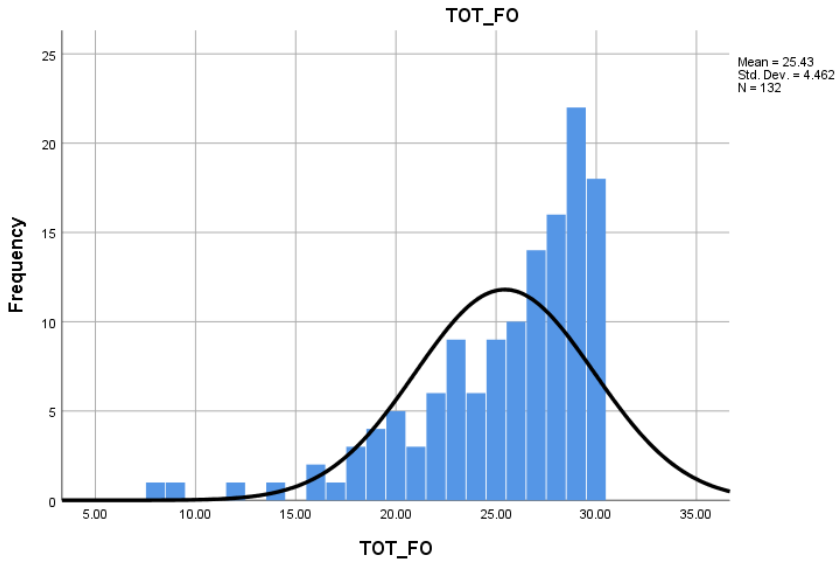


Figure 2: Histogram for friendship prevalence

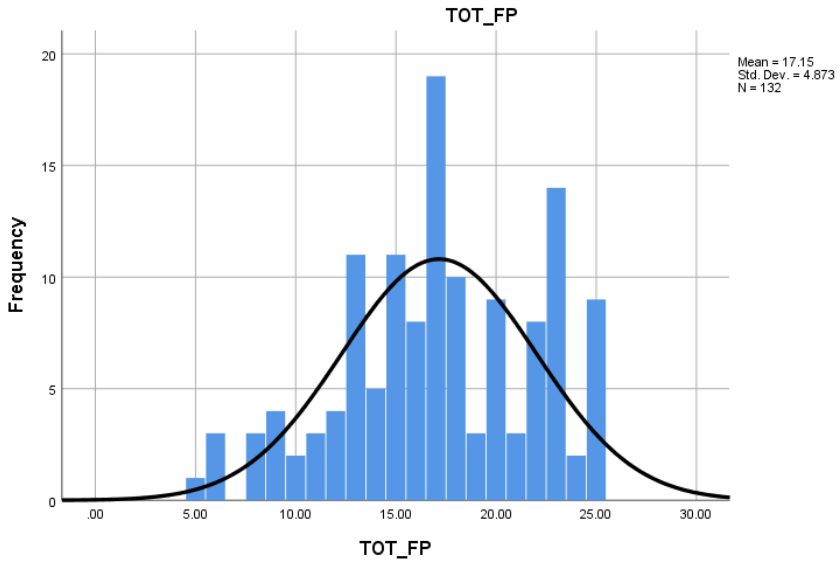


Figure 3: Histogram for authentic living

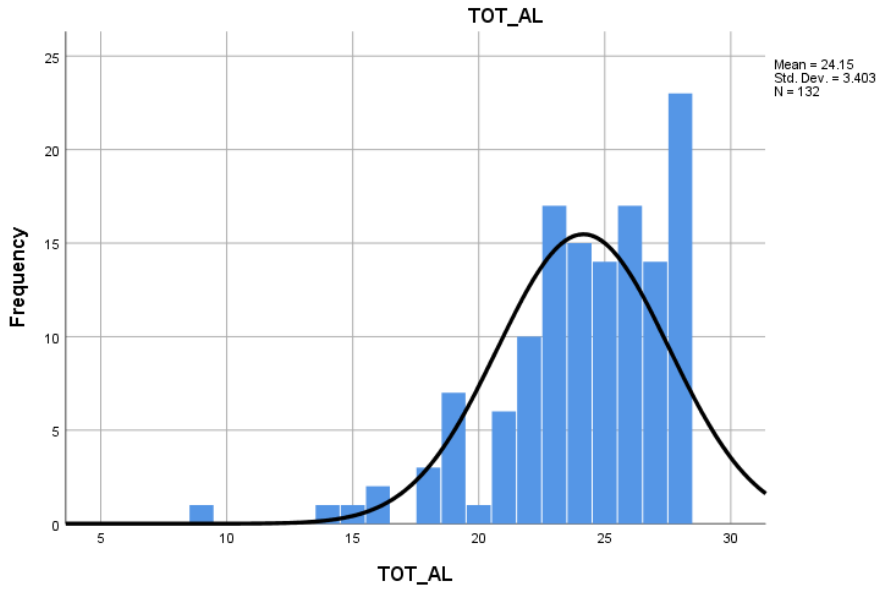


Figure 4: Histogram for self-alienation

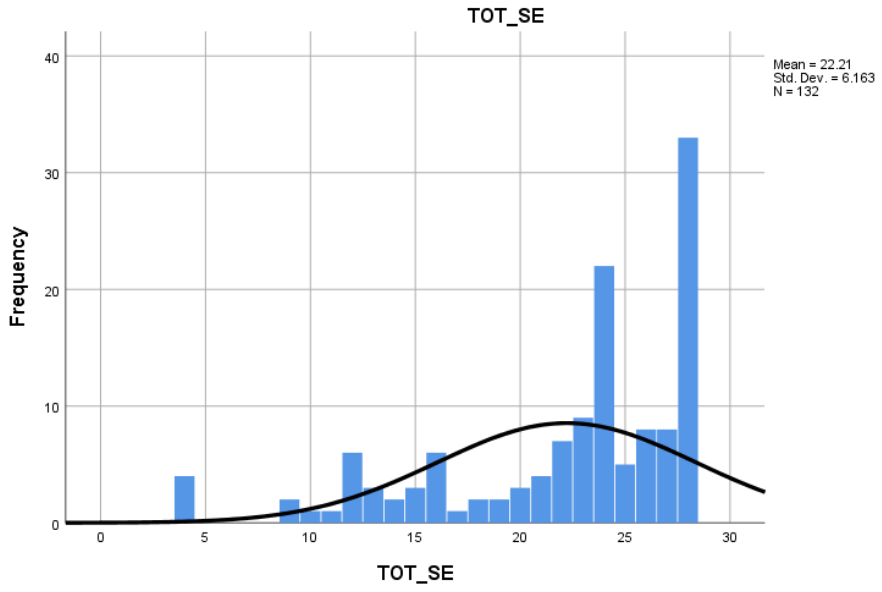


Figure 5: Histogram for external influence

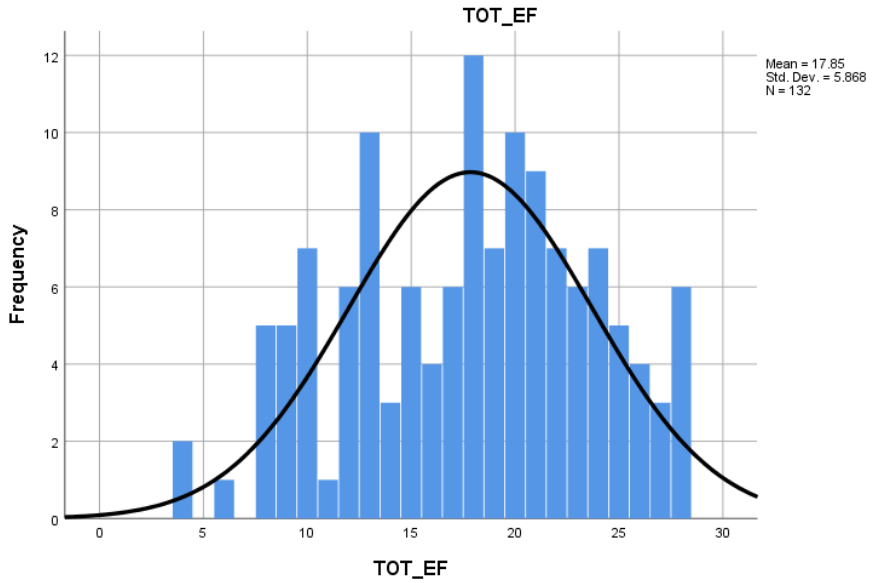


Figure 6: Histogram for Friendship at work (opportunity and prevalence)

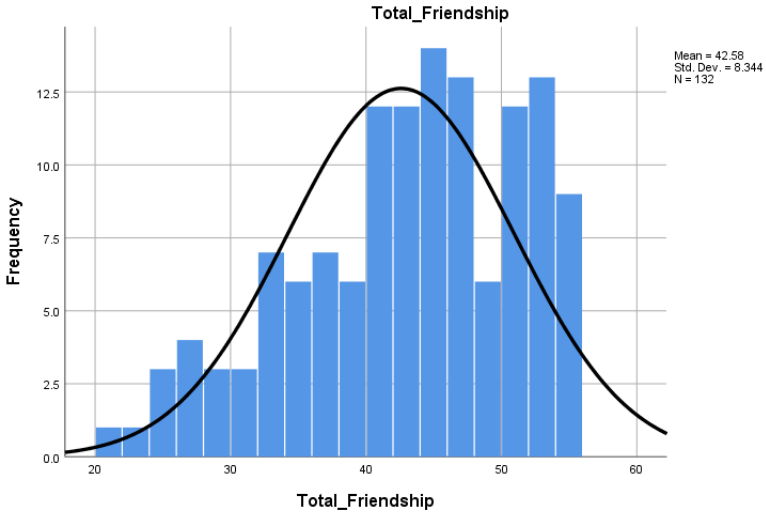
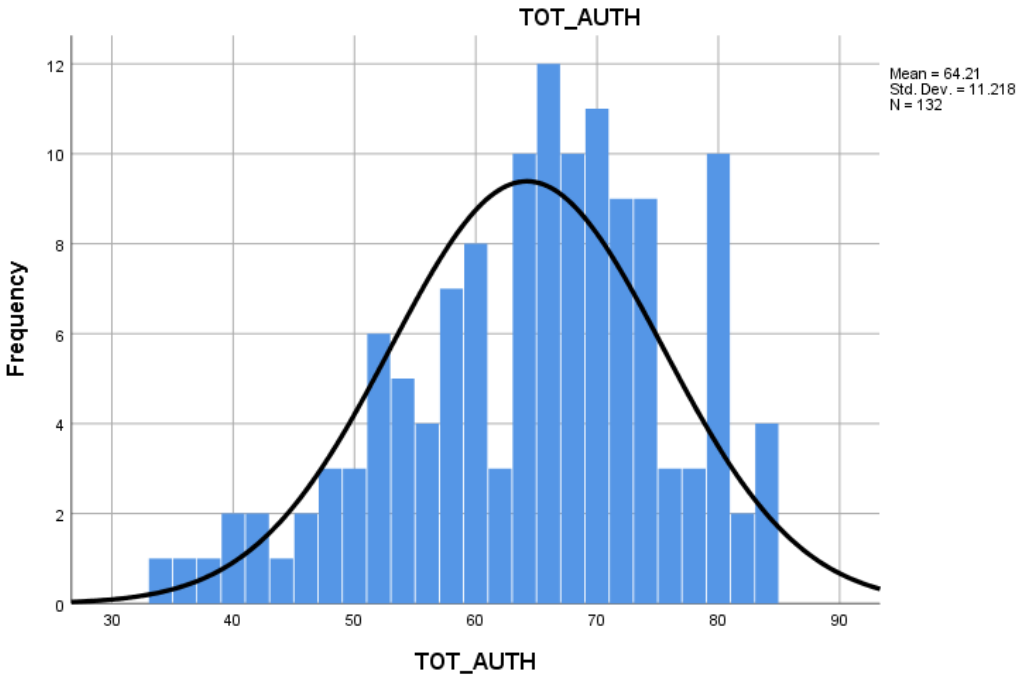
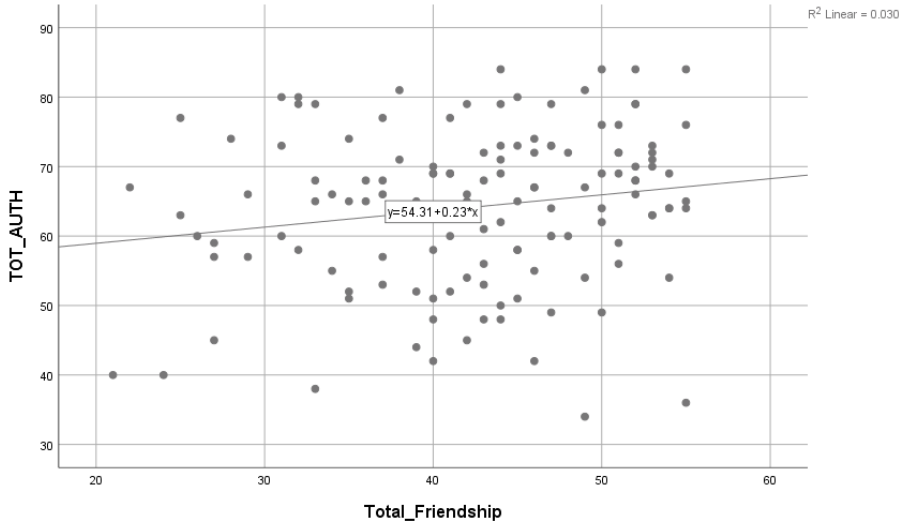
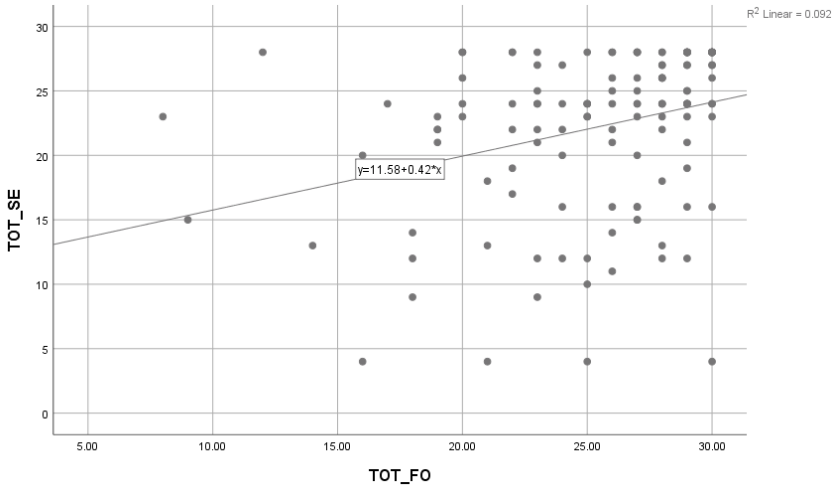


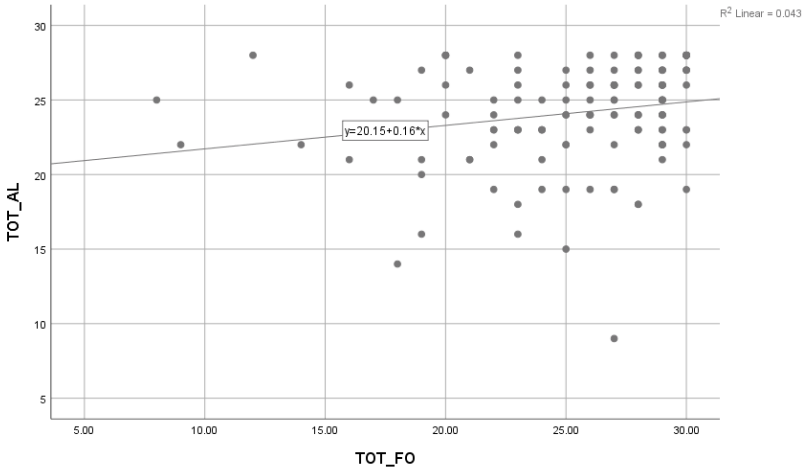
Figure7: Histogram for Authenticity at work (authentic living, self-alienation and external influence)

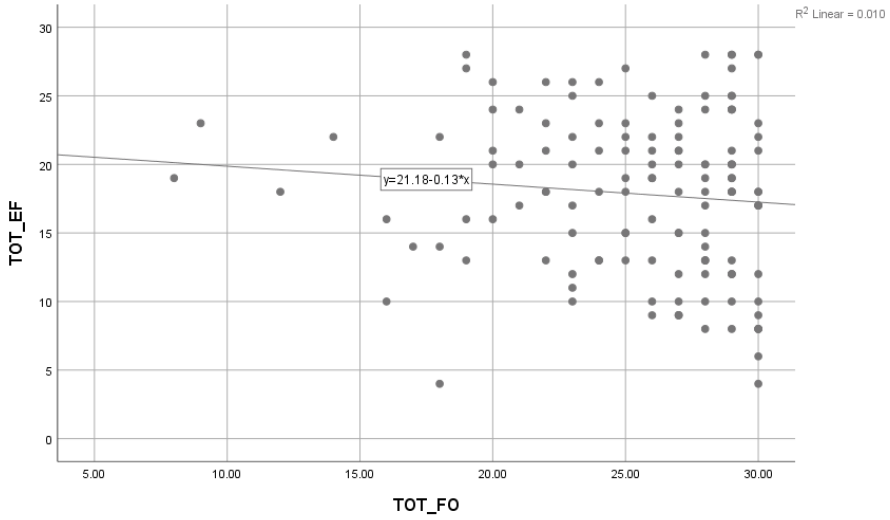


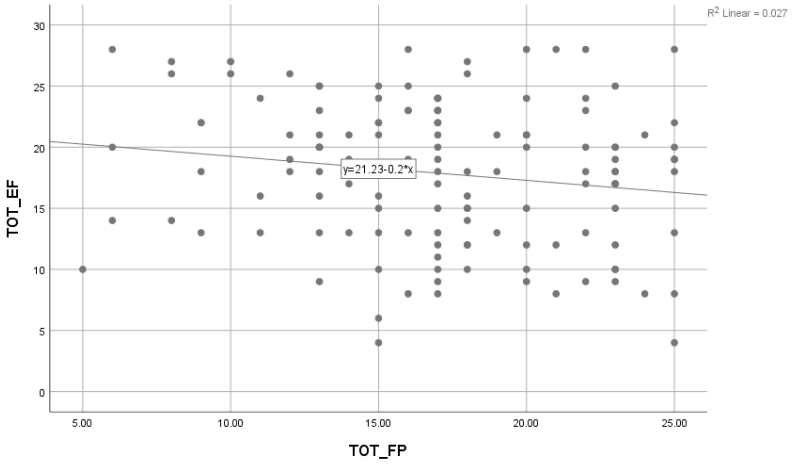
Appendix L: Scatterplots

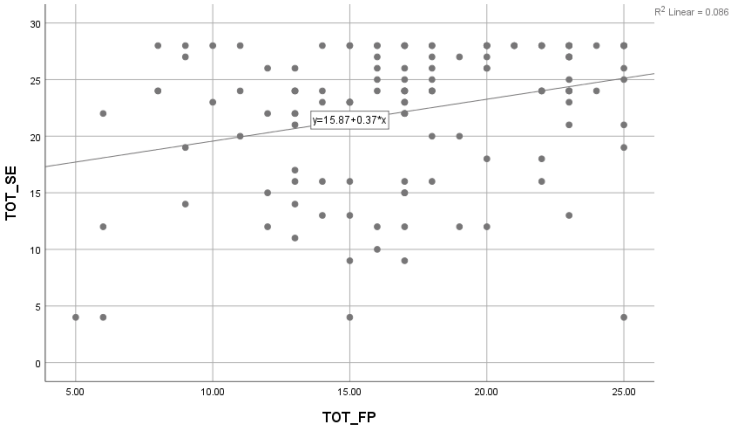


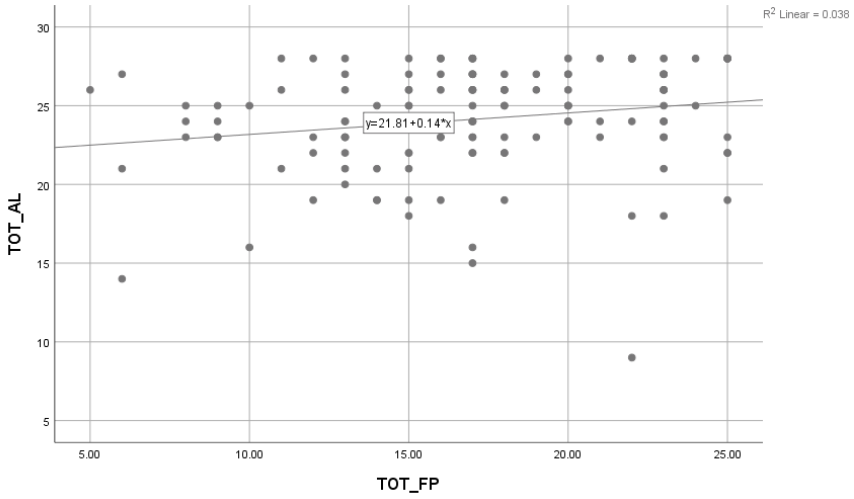





R² Linear = 0.010
y=21.18-0.13*x
TOT_EF
TOT_FO
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
25.00
30.00


R² Linear = 0.027
y=21.23-0.2*x
TOT_EF
TOT_FP
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
25.00


R² Linear = 0.086
y=15.87+0.37*x
TOT_SE
TOT_FP
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
25.00


R² Linear = 0.038
y=21.81+0.14*x
TOT_AL
TOT_FP
30
25
20
15
10
5
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
25.00

Appendix M: Ethical clearance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MORG/19/011 IH**
PROJECT TITLE:	Friendship & authenticity at work in professional and managerial women in South African Organisations
INVESTIGATORS	Zigomo Tatenda
DEPARTMENT	Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	01/07/19
DECISION OF COMMITTEE*	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 01 July 2019

CHAIRPERSON
(Dr Colleen Bernstein)

cc Supervisor: Prof. Fiona Donald & Dr Ruwayne Kock
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

I/we fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure, as approved, I/we undertake to submit a revised protocol to the Committee.

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2021

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix N: Qualitative Analysis Audit Trail

Interview 3

Interviewers: Tatenda Zigomo and Dr Ruwayne Kock

Time: 15:00

Date: 23 September 2019

Duration: 65 minutes

Interviewer: Maybe you can just start by telling us about your friendships at work

Interviewee: I've been with the company for nearly 20 years so there are a lot of people I have worked with for a long time so I definitely do have some strong friendships that I formed here over the years. A lot of them have actually stood up pretty well even when those people have moved to other offices around the world, we're a global organisation so I've got one friend now in Bermuda one in Bahrain. So there definitely are a lot of people who I would consider friends, who I would happily socialize with, who I talk to about things that are going on in my personal life. At the same time I think I found as I have gotten more senior in the organisation it's a little bit harder to develop friendships with people who haven't been working with me for a long time. I think people come in and they see senior people as little more intimidating, don't really know if they can confide in us, or they might not feel it's appropriate so I think the long standing friendships are really good and really valuable but I think it's harder to make new friendships with new people coming in now. Uhm, I think also the nature of my position as risk officer, people do quite often have to come and talk to me about fairly confidential issues. So there's also a balance there of saying that I need to know whether you are talking to me as a friend or as a colleague and what context do I need to be managing this in, and then also just maintaining that confidentiality so that you are not accidentally sharing something with someone that I've been told. So I think confidentiality and trust is something which I have to focus quite hard on. Uhm nut if I look around most of my school friends have immigrated so most of the friendships I've formed since entering the working place are people I've worked with. So either current or former colleagues.

Interviewer: Okay, so like for you what distinguishes a friend at work or like a friendly colleague

Interviewee: I think it's the level of information that we share. So a friendly colleagues I might say you know hi, how are you, how was your weekend. You know sort of surface things I might know a bit about, do they have kids and things like that. But the ones who I consider friends I think are the people who I'll talk to if there's something tough going on at home for instance, or if I'm very annoyed with colleague or boss it's someone I'll go and talk to in the knowledge that they are going to keep it between the two of us. Some of the people who I consider friends here I do see outside of work, some I don't. I think it also just depends on the relationship and how long we've known each other and you know, do they also have kids because then it's easier to meet up outside because the kids can play together, that sort of thing. But for me I think it's that bond of how much do I trust them with the real things sort of going on in my life as opposed to just the surface, did you have a good weekend? What are you doing for heritage day? Yeah those kind of things

Interviewer: So would you say you have both friends and friendly colleagues in the context of this workplace?

Interviewee: Yes, definitely

Interviewer: It's interesting that you mentioned that you have friends that you are also not social with. Can you elaborate a little bit on that and what that means for you?

Interviewee: Yeah, I mean I've got one colleague as in we used to work in the same department and now she's moved into a different area so we'll go out and have lunch every couple of months to just talk about what's going on and she has some stories but apart from going to visit her once when she was on maternity leave I don't think we've ever seen each other outside of work. But I would still consider her a friend and she's someone I would ask for advice or talk to about a difficult situation I was facing at work so yeah I do think I still have those people who I can be open and honest with, without necessarily having a relationship outside of the office.

Interviewer: So if you stop your current job, which of your friends would you still be friends with outside of this workplace

Interviewee: I think it would probably be those long standing ones who I've known for many many years because then they would be that continued contact outside of the workplace. So someone like this other colleague who I just mentioned, If we didn't have the context of working in the same office I think we would lose touch fairly quickly. Whereas some of the other colleagues

who I've worked with for years and as I said have now gone to other offices, we still, you know, we stay in touch, we talk at least once a month, if they are in the country we meet up, uhm so yeah I think it would be more those longstanding ones where we have more in common that just being in the same workplace.

Interviewer: So maybe you can tell us about how did you become friends with the people that you are friends with at work?

Interviewee: look, some of them it sort of goes back to we sort of entered the workplace at the same time after university so were the newbees coming in, the block bottom of the ladder trying to find our way so we ended up spending a lot of time together because we were working on the same projects and then I guess we've kind of grown up together and seen each other getting married, having kids and so on. So those relationships have just kind of grown with the organisation. Others I guess it's been more situational that we've been working together, so I changed roles in the company about 8years ago, the successor who I recruited, well was involved in the recruitment of, has also become a very good friend. Now that started off because we had to work quite closely with the handover, so I had to show him all the processes and everything and introduce him to the business and I just think we found other things in common, common religion, common reading tastes, kids of similar ages and we ended up spending a lot of time together and then our families started meeting each other and so now we see each other more outside work as well. Sometimes it's also just been more, uhm, if someone had a major crisis and then came and talked to me for a long time, that also creates a different kind of bond, uhm, so we can also end up forming a relationship that lasts outside of work there.

Interviewer: So does the organisation encourage friendships or was this something that you took upon yourself?

Interviewee: That's an interesting question. I think the company certainly encourages colleagues getting to know one another more than just in the workplace so if I look at for example we have the year-end function once a year where the whole company goes away and we usually make it an overnight function partly because then when people have had a bit of a party in the evening they don't have to drive somewhere, so we don't want them driving in that condition. But also get a chance we put then into different groups you get to know people you don't ordinarily work with. We also have quite a few functions like maybe once a month they'll be a breakfast in the deli or a

happy hour or something like that. So we try to create lots of opportunities for all the staff to come together because we are quite a small company and it does give us more of chance to get to know one another. So, I think they promote an environment where you can get to know your colleagues better whether it's to actively encourage outside of work friendship I think that's a personal thing that you have to decide, do you want your colleagues to be friends or not and some people will have strong views on that. As to say I'm kind of like, this is the only place I get to see people on a regular basis so this is where my friends are. We've even had a couple of office romances coming out of it. So yeah sometimes the company does encourage socializing with your office colleagues and then if friendships form out of that they that's great. I think they don't want to get involved if it starts getting messy so if people have a falling out or something like that then they can say this is your business you must deal with it. But I think the friendlier we are with our colleagues the easier the work environment is. So we all just get on with what we need to do with minimal drama.

Interviewer: So what are your reasons for having friends at work?

Interviewee: I need to have a strong support network of people around me that's just how I operate and so if there's something that I gotta be 8hrs a day 5 days a week it's important for me to have people here who I can have in that role otherwise I think I tend to, when I start getting stressed either internalize too much and implode or suddenly explode on someone very unexpectedly so it's good to have decompression points, people who you can just go and vent to when you need to. I think also just, although I'm an introvert, I'm a fairly social person, I like know what's going on with people's lives, I like talking to people, I listen as well when people come talk to me so I like those genuine relationships. It also makes it easier that if you gotta talk to someone about something that is trickier, if you've got a solid foundation for a relationship. Whereas if you don't really know what someone thinks of you or how you feel about them I think it's quite difficult to have some of those harder conversations. So I think I put a conscious effort into it because I want to be able to have open conversations with my colleagues which again is partly a function of my position I think, that I need to know what's going on so I need to have open relationships there. But also think that's, I mean a lot of my personal career growth came from people who were senior to me who became friends with me and I think there is also an opportunity to give some of the younger people in the office, some of those opportunities to benefit from someone whose been in the workplace a bit longer and yeah, it's nice getting to know different people from different

backgrounds and know a bit more about people who are not the same as me. But yeah, I think coming back to the initial question, I think a lot of it for me is around the emotional support and knowing that there are people I can go to when I'm really upset or really angry and just decompress for a bit and then go back to work and carry on with things.

Interviewer: Is there an example that stands out recently where you used that person as a support, how does it work, just to get a sense of the mechanics of your friendships

Interviewee: One example, I mean I've been through quite a tough time in the last 18months or so, I got divorced; I lost both my parents in a space of 6 months. And so I needed a lot of people to lean on them because I was trying to sort of hold my family together and get us through all of this. And it was hard being at work for 8 hours a day and worrying about the kids and so thee HR manager who I had initially told about this because she just need to know what's going on and why my hours are suddenly becoming so erratic. And she's turned out to be a fantastic source of support for me so, she checks in with me regularly, how's it going? How's it going with the kids? If something comes up she will make a plan to work around the fact that I can't come in for a meeting and something like that. And then just also letting me talk about how it feels from my side and things I'm going through from that perspective. So that was, I mean when I said friendships coming out of sort of crises, that would be the example of that for me. So I would have called her a friendly colleague before that but we've gotten so much closer because she's been such a strong source of support for me through this that now I think we have a fairly strong friendship that would survive if one of us would leave the company. I think it's one of the reasons I would ever be very reluctant to leave the company as I have so many good people here.

Interviewer: So the people that you consider your friends, in what ways are you similar to them, you did mention that some of them you have kids the same age, are there any other things?

Interviewee: Yeah so kids the same age, some of them had similar reading tastes so we can sit and talk about books for ages and swap ideas on what are good things to read. One of my younger colleagues, we like the same computer games so we can sit and talk about computer games for ages. Yeah, kids is always a big thing, we've got reasonably young company with lots of people with reasonably young kids so it's swapping the stories about my pre-teen did this, my teenager did that, how do you cope with that. So our children I think are a big common point as well. Part of it also professional, we're a company that employs a lot of actuaries and so I think that a lot of

us have been through those studies and the studying while working, it does form a bond as well because it's quite a tough process to go through. I experiences some of unexpected ones, like soe of our directors even, I've worked with then on the board for a number of years and now we go out and have a coffee and swap stories because we've been working together for so long we know about what's going on in each other's lives. So there all we had in common initially was that we were sitting in the same boardroom and it's just developed overtime. I think within the company also I look also for people who will be good mentors to our younger female staff, because I've been leading a female mentorship forum in the company for a number of years and we need to widen that and have people giving input to that. So I also look for people who are passionate about developing and mentoring of men and women but then try and encourage them to take on those informal mentorship roles. So I've had quite some good friendships coming out of that because we have. The chair of the social ethics committee and I started spending more and more time together because we both feel strongly about this, yeah the need for mentorship for younger women in the workplace and so our friendship was based pretty much entirely on that and it's grown and now she's having kids and now we have more things in common.