

## **Abstract**

Entrepreneurial activity is a vital part of any economy whether developed or developing. In South Africa the primary focus of the government has been on the development of previously disadvantaged communities and designing programs to encourage the participation of women in entrepreneurship. This study sought to profile South African female entrepreneurs as well as investigate their risk taking propensity in relation to other constructs. T-tests as well as ANOVAs were conducted on data obtained from 122 female entrepreneurs across South Africa. The results indicated that the female entrepreneurs in the current study were typically white, English speaking, married with children, were well educated and possessed previous working experience mainly in managerial positions. The results also indicated a significant difference in risk taking propensity according to age with entrepreneurs who are 35 years and younger having a higher risk taking propensity than those who are 36 years and older. However, no significant differences were found in risk taking according to entrepreneurial motivations, gender role orientation, level of education and previous experience. The practical implications of the study are discussed together with the limitations.