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Learning Transfer among Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the South African Manufacturing Sector

Nditsheni J. Raliphada

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law & Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

27th October 2023

Abstract

South Africa has one of the highest levels of unemployment in the world, and youth entrepreneurship is viewed as one of the interventions that can help with job creation and reduce unemployment. This study aimed to understand how learning transfer occurs among Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector. The study followed the Glaserian classical grounded theory methodology. Data was collected through direct interviews (3) and from pre-recorded interviews (27) accessed online. Data was analysed until the theory emerged, observing the principles of constant comparison, theoretical sampling and saturation. The study found that GYEs core concern is “staying afloat” linked to the survival and sustainability of their business enterprises. “Relating” emerged as the core category; learning transfer among GYE occurs primarily through relationships. This study proposes Relational Learning Transfer Theory to account for how GYEs acquire and transfer learning, navigate their environments, respond to their primary concern of staying afloat, and strategise to outsmart the competition. Relational Learning Transfer Theory is a processual theory that recognises internal factors, such as the self, and external factors, such as support structures and the environment.

The study also proposes a relational learning transfer matrix and model as contributions to learning transfer. Methodologically, a new coding approach was developed and used in the study as a contribution to grounded theory and qualitative research. The method codes data for actions, conditions, attitudes and consequences (ACAC).

The study’s findings provide guidance to GY entrepreneurs to build and enhance their relationships with stakeholders to sustain their enterprises. Academics and practitioners can utilise the theory, matrix, and model to enhance the entrepreneurship curriculum. Policymakers should utilise the findings in this study to direct their policies and strategies to create a conducive environment for entrepreneurial endeavour amongst South African youth.

Keywords: Learning, learning transfer, generation Y, entrepreneur, manufacturing sector, grounded theory, South Africa

Declaration

I **Nditsheni J Raliphada** declare that this thesis is my own research work, except as indicated in the references and acknowledgement. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. It has not been submitted in part or full to any other degree or University.

Nditsheni Jennifer Raliphada

Signed: 

27th October 2023

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother Anna Mulatwa Raliphada and my late father Simon Mavhungu Raliphada, who believed in and inspired me. I have made it. It is also dedicated to my daughter Murendeni, who always encouraged and supported me in my studies. I cannot thank you enough.

List of abbreviations and acronyms

BIS	Black Industrialist Scheme
CGGT	Classic Glaserian Grounded Theory
DSBD	Department of Small Business Development
EO	Entrepreneurial Orientation
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GT	Grounded Theory
GY	Generation Y
GYE	Generation Y Entrepreneurs
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
IPAP	Industrial Policy Action Plan
MCEP	Manufacturing Competition Enhancement programme
MIP	Manufacturing Information Programme
NDP	National Development Plan
RLT	Relational Learning Transfer
SEMSP	Small Enterprise Manufacturing Support Programme
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
ST	Systems Thinking

TEA	Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity
DTIC	The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
TREP	Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme
YEDS	Youth Enterprise Development Strategy

Definition of terms

Terms	Definitions
Classic Glaserian Grounded Theory	CGGT is a process of conceptual abstraction aimed at theory development that seeks to explain how participants behave and address their main concerns (Konecki, 2018).
Entrepreneur	An individual who discovers new opportunities harnesses resources and introduces change for profitable ends in an unpredictable market (Australian School of Entrepreneurship (Mahadea & Youngless, 2013)
Entrepreneurship	The process by which individuals pursue opportunities without regard to resources they currently control to exploit future goods and services (Barringer & Ireland 2016, p 28).
Generation Y	A generation of people born in the period from the early 1980s to the late 1990s (Rahman & Gan, 2020).
Grounded Theory	Grounded theory is a methodology set out to discover or construct a theory from qualitative or quantitative data collection techniques and systematic and comparative analysis of data (Chun Tie, Birks, & Francis, 2019).

Terms	Definitions
Learning	Learning is defined functionally as a change in behaviour that results from experience or mechanistically as a change in the organism that results from experience (De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes, & Moors, 2013).
Learning Transfer	The ability to improve the predictive function of a target domain or task by using information gained from other domains and tasks or the ability to apply what one has learned from one environment to a similar or a different environment (Peirelinck et al., 2022).
Manufacturing Sector	A composite of manufacturing firms and individuals who have internal production lines or outsource the production process (Bosiu, Nsomba, & Vilakazi, 2020).
South Africa	South Africa is a country situated on the southern tip of the African continent. It is formally classified as a semi-industrialised, upper-middle-income country (Bhorat, Steenkamp, Rooney, Kachingwe, & Lees, 2018)

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Chapter One: The Thesis in Context

1.0 Introduction

South Africa is a developing country with an emerging economy (Oladipo, 2016). When the country gained freedom in 1994, there were expectations that this would create equal opportunities for children of all races and genders at the school and workplace levels. There were also high levels of optimism and expectations that job opportunities would be plentiful and the economy would boom (Butler, 2017; Devarajan & Fengler, 2013).

South African society faces challenges such as resource scarcity, economic growth that does not translate into job creation, and high unemployment (Schöer, Rankin, & Roberts, 2014). The country has been experiencing increased poverty, increased inequality, and low economic growth for some years, which has not translated into employment creation (Mahadea & Kaseeram, 2018). The country's challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which became a global challenge starting in 2020.

The global economy faced significant headwinds and struggled to attain a higher growth trajectory after the 2007-2009 recession, with global unemployment levels increasing at alarming rates. The effects of the 2007-2009 global recession are still felt in Africa, which has a growing youth population, even though it occurred over ten years ago (Tabengwa, Okatch, & Modisaatsone, 2017). South Africa is experiencing one of the highest unemployment levels at 33.9% in the second quarter of 2022, according to the quarterly labour force survey issued by the Department of Statistics South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2022b).

The Gross domestic product declined by 0.7% during the second quarter of 2022. The manufacturing industry is significantly affected by load shedding. Flooding in the KwaZulu Natal province, where most factories are situated, resulted in the manufacturing industry

output going down by 5.9% and deepened the challenges of job creation and economic growth (Statistics South Africa, 2022a). The economic disruptions from the July 2021 unrest in the KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng provinces harmed the country's manufacturing sector and economic growth. Some factors contributing to economic growth not translating into job creation include a decline in research and development spending, underrepresentation, exclusion of micro and small businesses, an unfavourable business environment, high trading costs, and a low skill base (Li & Rama, 2015).

The Generation Y cohort represents a large proportion of the country's population that can contribute economically. The reality on the ground is that a significant number of the Generation Y cohorts are not economically active, given the 46.5% unemployment among the youth in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2022b). The country faces challenges requiring new perspectives to ensure inclusive economic growth (Hughes & Schachtebeck, 2017). The country also needs interventions to ensure the participation of young people in the economy, who represent the majority of the population within the country.

The challenge for the country is how it assists the Generation Y cohort become economically active. It is essential to establish how the few actively participating economically have managed to become economically active participants so that similar strategies can be utilised to help the rest of the young people participate actively in the economy. This study attempts to understand how learning transfers occur among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector. Data were collected from interviews in which Generation Y entrepreneurs shared their experiences navigating the South African manufacturing sector. The findings should help introduce a multiplier effect to the number of economically active participants in the Generation Y cohort and possibly influence the Generation Z cohort.

It is important to note that youth constitute 51.6% of the working-age population in South Africa, and any interventions in the country should place them at the centre (Statistics South Africa, 2022c). The country has developed the National Development Plan (NDP) as a long-term strategy to reduce poverty and inequality and stimulate sustainable

development and economic growth (National Planning Commission, 2012). The NDP has four broad objectives that need to be achieved by 2030. These broad objectives were further divided into six pillars: mobilisation of all South Africans, active engagement of citizens in development, expansion of the economy and making growth inclusive, building key capabilities (human, physical, and institutional), building a capable and developmental state, and fostering strong leadership throughout society.

The NDP acknowledges that the challenges the country is experiencing cannot be resolved overnight but require a small chunk of a sector-specific approach (Bernstein, 2014). The Industrial Plan of Action (IPAP), which focuses on promoting investment and competitiveness in leading sectors and manufacturing industries, is located and spearheaded by the Department of Trade Industry and Competition (National Planning Commission, 2012).

Entrepreneurship is viewed as a strategy that can assist in reducing unemployment. Creating employment opportunities may result in improved job creation and economic growth (South African Government, 2013). Entrepreneurship in the manufacturing sector is even more relevant, as it provides more employment opportunities and is labour-intensive (McMillan & Woodruff, 2002). The promotion of entrepreneurship as a job-creation strategy requires various interventions.

Collaborative efforts from different role players and research on how learning transfer occurs for entrepreneurs can provide an avenue for strengthening entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs face various challenges, including a lack of capital and intermediate goods, as well as difficulties faced by small- and medium-sized businesses. (Hughes & Schachtebeck, 2017). The stated challenges that South Africa must contend with affect entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector in that they provide a context for the entrepreneur's operations.

The manufacturing sector is seen as one of the sectors that may provide a better opportunity for job creation and youth employment (Rooney & Bhorat, 2016). This sector has, over time, been dominated by the predominantly white community, males in

particular. This sector incurs a high production cost. White males have better access to capital and financial institutions and own the means of production, whereas Africans are the labour pool (Butler, 2017).

The government is trying to change this, and Africans are beginning to enter/join the manufacturing sector as entrepreneurs (Chigunta, 2017). There has been moderately high growth in employment opportunities for skilled and professional workers, from 16.3% of employment share in 2001 to 20.7% in 2014. Compared with semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the manufacturing industry, the employment share of semi-skilled workers has decreased from 67% to 61.3% during the same period. (Rooney & Bhorat, 2016; Statistics South Africa, 2017b).

It is also critical to recognise that the country operates in a complex economic and political environment, which influences citizens and how they conduct business, learn, and conduct themselves. The nature of the South African environment and its uniqueness are fundamental for this study, as the learning transfer phenomenon occurs and is influenced by its context. There is a need for the country to understand how Generation Y entrepreneurs transfer learning, as this may result in improving the success of entrepreneurs within the industry.

The knowledge acquired in this study may be valuable to other entrepreneurs and scholars. Understanding how learning transfer occurs for Generation Y entrepreneurs may help enhance academic programs to support and prepare entrepreneurs to operate in a complex environment like South Africa. The government, education sectors such as universities, and entrepreneurs must understand how current entrepreneurs transfer learning in the workplace so that conditions for learning transfer, policies can be improved, learning models and frameworks can be developed or improved, and substantive input can be made into existing theories. Learning transfer is relevant for achieving sustainable development through performance improvement and improved productivity (Mitra, Sharma, & Véganzonès-Varoudakis, 2014; Tang & Popp, 2016). The learning transfer is not automatic. This requires planned and dedicated investment.

1.1 Purpose of the study

This study used a grounded theory methodology to elucidate how Generation Y entrepreneurs transfer learning in the South African manufacturing sector within a complex environment. This study aimed to develop a theory on how Generation Y entrepreneurs (GYE) experience learning situations and how they share and transfer that learning. Understanding how learning transfer occurs can benefit youth, policymakers, industry players, and the community of entrepreneurs. This study proposes a theory on how learning transfer occurs within the manufacturing sector from GYE's perspective. The purpose is to recommend how the learning transfer process can be enhanced to propel the learning transfer of entrepreneurial skills, know-how, and expertise required to improve manufacturing output.

Systems Thinking (ST) is critical in understanding the world's complexity as nations become interconnected and globalisation grows (Arnold & Wade, 2015). Figure 1.1 locates the phenomenon under study within the broader social context and how some of the factors, such as social environment, community values and global competition, from a Systems Thinking perspective affect the learning transfer of the GYE.

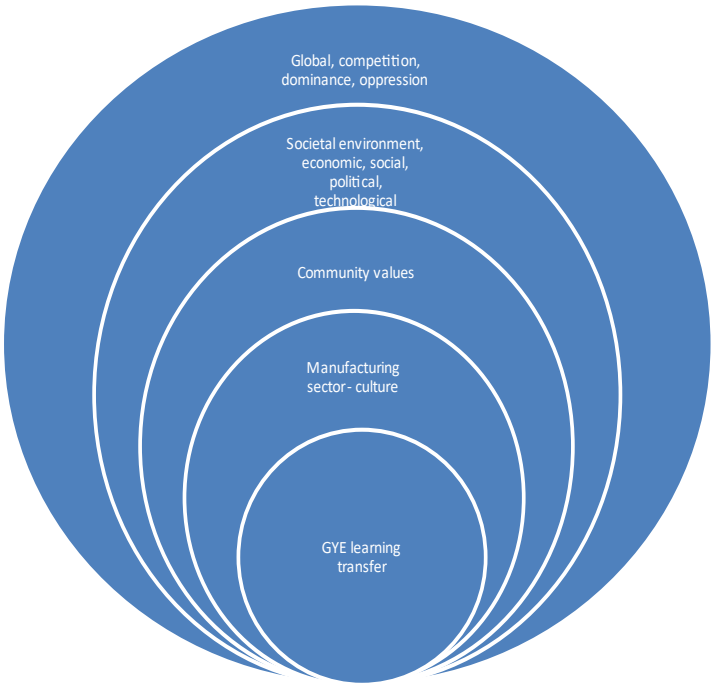

FIGURE 1. 1 LEARNING TRANSFER WITHIN A COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT AND SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Systems Thinking is defined as a way of thinking, a discipline for seeing a set of interrelated elements that interact to achieve wholes, and a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than snapshots to achieve a purpose (Renger, Atkinson, Renger, Renger, & Hart, 2019). Squires, Wade, Dominick, and Gelosh (2011) refer to Systems Thinking as the ability to incorporate multiple perspectives, work within a space where the boundary or scope of the problem or system may be fuzzy, understand diverse operational contexts of the system, identify inter- and intra-relationships and dependencies, and understand complex system behaviour.

Dominici (2012) indicated that reductionist models are unsuitable for fully understanding complex phenomena. Systems thinking assists in telling a compelling story about a phenomenon, and linear thinking is unsuitable as it focuses on cause and effect rather

than complex relationships and interrelationships (Rusoja et al., 2018). The attributes of Systems thinking are that they are transformative, identify patterns amid chaos, and are attentive to interactions and communication patterns (Rusoja et al., 2018). For the reasons stated above, developing a theory on how learning transfer occurs among GYE in the manufacturing sector will be approached from a Systems thinking perspective.

Learning transfer in this study explored how individual entrepreneurs practise or apply the entrepreneur dimensions or behaviours in the enterprises they manage or upon which they have influential decision-making powers. The GYE research participants outlined their sources of learning as part of the research, including both formal and informal learning (mentorship, classroom setting, workplace-to-workplace, peer-to-peer, and many other sources of learning) and how these sources of learning influence their practices (Garrick, 2012).

Learning transfer, the focus of this study, occurs within a social context (Boström et al., 2018). The current study focuses on learning transfer in the manufacturing sector with a particular focus on petroleum, chemical products, rubber plastics, basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery, food and beverages, textiles, clothing, leather, footwear, furniture and other manufacturing sub-sectors or industries.

The manufacturing sector is also located within a community and society whose values will, to a certain extent, influence the learning transfer phenomenon. The manufacturing sector has integrated sustainability's social, economic, and environmental dimensions into its business (Sutherland et al., 2016). The manufacturing sector is responsible for providing regularly utilised goods, making it an essential sector for learning (Sutherland et al., 2016).

South African society is part of a global community, which impacts how learning is transferred, especially with the advent of technology that provides knowledge-sharing opportunities (Jaber, 2016; Leberman & McDonald, 2016). The current study will also be limited to Generation Y participants and no other generational groups. Entrepreneurship

is another critical factor in this study because the learning transfer phenomenon occurs among entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector.

1.2 Context of the study

This study focuses on the South African Manufacturing Sector. South Africa (SA) is characterised as an emerging economy (Bhorat, Naidoo, & Yu, 2014). SA is the second largest economy on the African continent and has been overtaken by Nigeria (Kharas, 2017). It was independent of the apartheid regime of 1994. Democratic governments must transform the economy and ensure inclusive growth. Among the challenges the country faces is high unemployment, at 33.9%, with youth unemployment in the second quarter of 2022 at 46.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2022b). South Africa continues to play a leadership role on the continent concerning social and economic trends (Butler, 2017).

1.2.1 Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation, and entrepreneurs

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report for 2016-2017 states that South Africans have a low perception of their ability to start businesses, which is in the region of 37.9% (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2017). SA's established business rate is 2.3%, compared to a global average of 8% (Herrington, Kew, & Mwanga, 2017). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) South Africa 2018 report indicates that early-stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA) in SA is currently low, at 11%. The National Youth Policy emphasised the importance of establishing a comprehensive entrepreneurial support strategy to assist youth in starting and managing their enterprises (Government, 2015).

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring Report (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2017) states that the percentage of the 18-24 year old's in South Africa involved in early-stage entrepreneurial activity is considerably lower than the average for Africa, as well as lower than the average for efficiency-driven economies, which is 13%. Entrepreneurial activity in the 25-34-year age cohort (the age category where TEA usually peaks) is also less than half the African average as well as considerably lower than the average for

efficiency-driven economies (18%), given South Africa's high unemployment figures this is a cause for concern (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2017; Mahadea & Kaseeram, 2018). The above information provides a context for entrepreneurship in SA.

Rwigema (2004) defines entrepreneurship as conceptualising, organising, launching, and nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially high-growth successful business venture or organisation, mostly in complex and unstable environments. Traditionally, entrepreneurship has been viewed as a vehicle for economic growth, success, and prosperity, overlooking sustainability and social responsibility issues.

A distinction was made between entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial orientation (EO). Entrepreneurial orientation is the way to act entrepreneurially within an established organisation or enterprise; it refers to entrepreneurial processes such as practices and decision-making styles used by entrepreneurs in their interactions, which are further broken down into five dimensions or sets of behaviours: autonomy, proactiveness, risk-taking, innovativeness, and competitive aggressiveness (Cho & Lee, 2018; Fan et al., 2021; Hernández-Linares & López-Fernández, 2018).

This study does not focus on entrepreneurship from how it explores the type of business to be entered, but from a strategy content perspective, the firm domain and product market relationship, and resource deployments. The study examines manufacturing and sub-sector entrepreneurs, indicating that they have passed the so-called "what business shall we enter? or new entry stage. There are various perspectives and theories on whether entrepreneurship falls within the purview of individual, small business, or corporate entrepreneurship in large existing firms (Drucker, 2014).

This study focuses on individuals operating in an enterprise that has existed for a minimum period of three and half years and has the authority to make or influence decisions and manage the business.

A distinction is made between entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. According to Mahadea and Kaseeram (2018), entrepreneurs establish and manage a business for profit and growth and create wealth. Individuals who bring resources together and initiate

a venture that survives over time are called entrepreneurs. They are driven by the desire to create and innovate, sometimes combined with a profit motive (Agrawal, 2017; Gill, 2017).

Kirzner highlighted that there are different types of entrepreneurs, which should not be assumed to be similar. The Schumpeterian entrepreneur is about innovating new products that did not exist before (Block, Fisch, & Van Praag, 2017). Kirznerian entrepreneurs take advantage of opportunities created by market gaps or errors, which operate in the context of existing products. In contrast, Schumpeterian entrepreneurs focus on innovating new products (Lyalkov, Carmona, Congregado, Millán, & Millán, 2020).

This study included both Schumpeterian and Kirznerian, who are also referred to as social entrepreneurs (Lyalkov et al., 2020). According to Herrington, Kew, Kew, and Monitor (2010) and Isenberg (2014), growing entrepreneurs require time, effort, and resources, as well as experimentation and learning, until suitable unique configurations evolve, which will inform the learning transfer theory.

Isenberg (2011) and Lex, Gielnik, Spitzmuller, Jacob, and Frese (2022) also stated that it is not an easy process to copy other people's models, as there are dynamics in each person's ecosystem, such as a change in environment and complexity, and thus the importance of understanding learning transfer in the South African manufacturing sector. Balaji (2014) and Haltiwanger (2022) found that entrepreneurs create jobs and opportunities compared to large established businesses. Therefore, there is a need to understand them and explore ways to support them.

Isenberg (2011) identified the challenge with the current perspective on entrepreneurship as how policymakers count the number of ventures they have helped or the amount of money they have invested and claim progress based on this. Drucker (2014) clarified that entrepreneurship is not a science or art but a practice; thus, knowledge in practice is defined by the end, as demonstrated in EO. There is a link between his observation and

the purpose of this study, which is geared at understanding how learning transfer occurs in the manufacturing workplace in practice.

There are assertions that we know how to educate entrepreneurs, how to fund them, open market opportunities, and develop policies and regulatory frameworks that support entrepreneurship (Eckleberry-Hunt & Tucciarone, 2011; Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy Jr, 2009; Meier & Crocker, 2010; Snihur, Thomas, Garud, & Phillips, 2022). This study helps scholars understand how the entrepreneur transfers learning from various sources of learning, like formal and informal events, to the workplace. The current study uses grounded theory and the experiences shared by the participants to outline their sources of learning; thus, the study is not limited to one source of learning.

According to the South African Government (2013), it has been observed that young people are acquiring the skills and experience necessary to drive the economy forward. In their strategy, the Department of Trade and Industry states that the "government intends to foster youth economic participation by deliberately enhancing youth entrepreneurship, accelerating the growth of youth owned and managed enterprises capable of contributing to the gross domestic product, growth rate and increasing youth self-employment and innovation" (Youth Enterprise Development Strategy 2013-2023, p. 4).

Various factors may contribute to these high unemployment levels, including population growth among youth exceeding the number of jobs created and lack of support structures in the economy (Goga & Avenyo, 2022). The New Growth Path and the Youth Enterprise Development Strategy are two tools considered by the government to help turn the tide. (South African Government, 2013).

The Generation Y (GY) group needs the requisite skills or experience that can contribute to driving the economy forward (Melaphi, 2015). Generation Y entrepreneurship or their participation remained the country's challenge for more than 23 years after SA became a democratic country. There is no vibrant culture of youth entrepreneurship in the country (Statistics South Africa, 2017a) or specific community sectors, such as in Africa, which

may be attributed to the legacy of apartheid, where entrepreneurship was not encouraged. Thus, the youth never had exposure to entrepreneurs in their families or communities, and there were increased levels of corruption that took resources away from programs that would support entrepreneurship (Butler, 2017). The GY, which is much of the population (20 million of the 54 million South Africans), is growing in post-apartheid South Africa, where entrepreneurship is encouraged.

South African GY is affected by high unemployment; this group refers to people born between 1980 and 2000. Generation Y also belongs to the digital age, where technology is central to learning and communication (Simpson & Dodigovic, 2014). The advent of technology has redefined the workplace concept, as this category of employees does not have to be physically in the office to perform their duties.

Understanding how entrepreneurs transfer learning in complex environments characterised by low economic growth, digital age, scarce resources, varying economic backgrounds, and ethnic and racial demographics will provide a wealth of knowledge for scholars on how to support Generation Y in becoming successful entrepreneurs (Ivancevic & Ratkovic, 2016; Wootton & Grundy, 2018). The level of diversity and the need to compete for scarce resources should be seen as both a challenge and an opportunity to share knowledge across demographic boundaries (Aruna & Anitha, 2015).

South Africa, Through the Department of Trade Industry and Competition (DTIC), has developed the Youth Enterprise Development Strategy (YEDS), and its vision is “a South Africa which has a dynamic youth entrepreneurship culture and developed youth-owned enterprises, operating in all sectors of the economy, which contribute to economic growth, poverty reduction, and employment creation as well as assist in bringing about economic transformation and equitable society” (Youth Enterprise Development Strategy 2013-2023, p-32).

Some of the strategy objectives include increasing the number of youth-owned and youth-managed enterprises. There is more emphasis on the number of enterprises, which is a quantitative aspect, and little to no emphasis on the quality of these enterprises and

entrepreneurs, which is the subject of this study - what happens in these enterprises once they have been established? The theory is essential, but practice is a different world, and information from practice is required to enhance the theory.

1.2.2 Manufacturing Sector in South Africa

Manufacturing is the cornerstone of most economies; in SA, it is currently the fourth largest contributor to GDP at 13% and has the potential to contribute substantially to job creation provided there is policy support; it currently accounts for 11% of the workforce, down from 14% in 2008 (Statistics South Africa, 2022c). Manufacturing has strong multiplier effects on value addition and job creation, with the potential to create a million job opportunities in the next decade should there be deliberate efforts to understand how learning transfer occurs within the sector (Rodrik, 2016a; Timmer, de Vries, & De Vries, 2015).

The manufacturing sector holds great promise for the future as technology, such as additive manufacturing technology, continues to permeate processes, systems, and products (Chen, He, Yang, Niu, & Ren, 2017).

Dhingra and Morrow (2018) highlight the benefits of diversified manufacturing in terms of its contribution to GDP and job creation. South African strategies towards developing a diversified manufacturing sector include localisation, diversified exports, strategic trade policy, tackling import fronting, developing a competitive and stable currency, an aggressive export-driven manufacturing outlook, and a stronger push towards regional integration (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017).

A much more focused and coherent strategy is required to understand the dynamics of the sector with a long-term view of increasing its competitiveness and developing more coordinated interventions. The manufacturing sector plays a critical role in job creation. However, there is a need to bring about changes in the structural characteristics of the SA economy, especially in the manufacturing sector, in terms of ownership, participation, and inclusive growth (Bhorat, Lilenstein, Oosthuizen, & Thornton, 2020; Goga & Avenyo, 2022). Thus, creating a supportive environment and investing in this sector is necessary.

Programmes, such as Black Industrialists and Public Procurement, have addressed some of the challenges in the sector. Understanding how the participants in these programmes have sustained themselves and the lessons learned can only help strengthen the manufacturing sector (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017). There is a correlation between the decline in the manufacturing sector and job loss, as manufacturing has a higher multiplier effect than other sectors (Hassan & Nassar, 2018; Williams, Cunningham, & De Beer, 2014).

Rodrik (2016b) identified some of the features that make manufacturing instrumental to the economic growth process, such as its ability to absorb labour, including unskilled labour, even when the rest of the economy is technologically stagnant, the fact that it is tradeable, and it is a technologically dynamic sector.

China dominates the global manufacturing market (China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, 2017). SA's manufacturing sector performance has deteriorated over the years and requires a boost; SA can learn from China’s performance. South Africa‘s manufacturing sector production increased by 6.4% compared to 2020 (Statistics South Africa, 2022a). The sectors listed below contributed the most to this increase:

- Motor vehicles, parts, accessories, and other transport equipment (34.1% and contributing 2.6 percentage points)
- Basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products, and machinery (9.9% and contributing 1.9 percentage points)
- Food and beverages (6.1% and contrubuting1.5 percentage points)
- Wood, wood products, paper, publishing, and printing (9.9% and contributing 1.0 percentage points)

Although SA cannot compete with countries like China, there are ways in which the country can help accelerate Generation Y Entrepreneurship (GYE) in the manufacturing sector. In their paper commissioned for the World Bank, discussing the competitive effects of China on the South African manufacturing sector, Edwards and Jenkins (2014) indicate that although the impact of the Chinese manufacturing sector brought some

negative results in terms of job losses, China should not only be viewed as an adversary but opportunities for complementarity should also be explored. The question posed by various critics is what skills a country can teach GYE to increase its entrepreneurial appetite. In summary, what approach can a country implement to build entrepreneurship ethos at the grassroots level?

The Department of Trade and Industry annual Incentive Report 2016/17 highlights programs initiated by the government to assist entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017). The DTI introduced three programmes to help accelerate manufacturing: the Manufacturing Improvement Programme (MIP), which started in 2013 and was expected to end in September 2018; the Manufacturing Competition Enhancement Programme (MCEP), suspended since the money allocated was committed.

The third programme was the Black Industrialist Scheme (BIS) in February 2016 (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017). BIS aims to promote industrialisation, sustainable economic growth, and transformation through the support of black-owned entities in the manufacturing sector. This intervention will assist in accelerating the country's manufacturing process. However, understanding how these new entrepreneurs transfer learning in the sector will help strengthen intervention processes.

Manufacturing is a broad sector with several subsectors and industries. The current study was based on entrepreneurs who operate in the following sub-sectors: petroleum, chemical products, rubber, plastics, basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery, food and beverages, textiles, clothing, leather, footwear, furniture and other manufacturing.

The sub-sectors were chosen because they are growth multipliers, employment multipliers, labour intensive, and have high export earnings, although they incur high productivity costs (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017). They were also chosen because SA has vast deposits of natural resources, such as metals (iron and steel) and

agricultural products, which can still be explored as part of agro-processing and provide future growth opportunities (Department of Trade and Industry, 2017).

In this study, the researcher struggled to secure interviews with participants from basic iron and steel, non-ferrous metal products, metal products and machinery, and petroleum and chemical products, which were the original target for the study and expanded the subsectors to include textiles, clothing, leather, footwear, food and beverages, and other manufacturing.

Various government policies, frameworks, and strategies, such as the national development plan, new growth path, national industrial policy framework, and industrial policy action plan (IPAP), affect the manufacturing sector. The government has also introduced an economic reconstruction and recovery plan and the localisation initiative after the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

The metal subsector is a well-developed industry ranked 3rd in all SA manufacturing (Statistics South Africa, 2022c). It comprises iron ore, steel, basic non-ferrous metals, and metal products. Some of the current dominant players in this industry are Arcellor Mittal and Billiton. SA is the largest producer of platinum, and GYE should take advantage of these opportunities. The machinery and capital equipment subsector exports increased from R10 billion in 2005 to R46 billion in 2014 (Fessehaie, Roberts, & Takala-Greenish, 2015).

Noting the improved relationships in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and the large mineral deposits in these countries, the SA capital equipment and machinery sector has opportunities to grow the sector and enter SADC markets. Understanding the transfer of learning in this sector can improve productivity and performance. The agro-processing subsector had larger growth opportunities. SA producers and processors have advantages over SADC peers through access to finance, transport, storage infrastructure, skills, and technology that enable high-end production. South Africa has seen new investments in processing through support provided by the

Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), although a learning period has delayed growth output (Fessehaie et al., 2015).

South Africa continues to explore other avenues to strengthen the manufacturing sector and inclusive participation through the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) initiatives. The Department has a Small Enterprise Manufacturing Support Programme (SEMSP) to build a manufacturing sector that will reduce the country's reliability on import products and emphasise domestic products together with products in the African Union market (Government, 2022a).

The programme is geared towards contributing to the localisation strategy by supporting manufacturing enterprises, growing manufacturing targets, increasing the relative contribution of manufacturing to GDP, changing the structure of manufacturing to high-tech, increasing labour productivity, and driving import replacement by encouraging the production of locally manufactured goods and export thereof. For the country to achieve these aims, an understanding of learning transfer among the GYE who form part of the entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector is required.

The scope of the SEMSP includes the following:

- Furniture manufacturing- furniture manufacturers include coffin makers.
- Basic iron, metal, and steel manufacturing- manufacturers of iron and steel products.
- Food and beverage manufacturing: agro-processors of primary agricultural products, including beverages sourced from small-scale farmers.
- Petroleum and chemical manufacturing: Manufacturers of sanitisers, disinfectants, recycling, paints, oils, hair, skin, and related products.
- Clothing, leather, and textiles the makers of shoes, linen, and garments, including pattern makers, designers, tanneries, and fabric manufacturers.
- Electrical machinery manufacturing: manufactures transformers and electric generators. Electric motors, high-voltage engineering, and power electronics; and

- Green technology/digital technology makers for PV panels, clean coal technology, and 3D printing (Government, 2022b)

In addition to the manufacturing support programme, the Department of Small Business Development has the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (TREP), which is a dedicated programme to transform and integrate opportunities in townships and rural areas into productive business ventures (Government, 2022b). They focus on creating platforms that provide a business support infrastructure and a regulatory environment enabling entrepreneurs to thrive.

The programme targets enterprises owned by entrepreneurs based in townships or rural areas. This intervention was designed to overcome the legacy of economic exclusion by creating a conducive environment for entrepreneurial activity and providing dedicated business support to enterprises in rural and township areas, including access to funding. The TREP provides support services such as credit guarantees, skills training, business incubation, pitch for funding, and access to funding, such as working capital (Government, 2022b).

1.2.3 Generation Y

Every generation has distinct features and behavioural patterns that differ from previous generations (Jaško & Marinković, 2016). A generation is a group identified by age, period, and cohort (Smith & Nichols, 2015). According to Wootton and Grundy (2018), Generation Y (GY) refers to people born between 1980 and 2000. Huyler, Ding, Norelus, and Pierre (2015) highlight dramatic shifts in the workplace due to the entry of GY, and organisations need to review processes and procedures to integrate this generation.

The South African youth aged 15-34 represent 20.1 million, which translates to 36.2% of people in SA (Statistics South Africa, 2017a). Generation Y, which consists of people born between 1980 and 2000, forms part of this population (with ages ranging from 22 to 41 years old), is a heterogeneous group and can be disaggregated by race, gender, social class, and geographical location that provides an opportunity to enrich the study on learning transfer as it is representative of the rainbow nation. According to Park and Park

(2017), variables such as unique societal, historical, and cultural factors may play a role in how GY transfers learning, and how these factors may play a role when transferring learning in the workplace will be explored in this study.

GY gradually infiltrates and dominates the workplace. However, many organisations worldwide still need more understanding and knowledge of how they operate to meet their needs (Jonck, Van der Walt, & Sobayeni, 2017). The oldest Generation Y in the workplace is 41 years old, and assuming they started working at 23, the oldest GY has been in the workplace for 17 years.

There is a generation gap between the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in how the workplace should operate (Jonck et al., 2017). According to Smith and Nichols (2015), there are different perceptions among Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y in what constitutes a conducive workplace environment, and there are differences in values, perceptions, and communication among the three generations.

The Baby Boomers and Generation X have positional authority and financial capital to make long-term strategies and binding decisions for the country through statutory instruments such as acts, regulations, policies, and strategies. However, the success of these decisions can only be realised if there is an understanding of Generation Y, who is responsible for execution and business continuity (Graf, 2017; King & Bryant, 2017; Stewart, Oliver, Cravens, & Oishi, 2017).

Generation Y challenges current business norms; they redefine how an organisation develops, engages, and responds to technological advancement (Huyler et al., 2015). Recent global trends have demonstrated that Generation Y is not a patient generation and tends to outbursts (Jonck et al., 2017). The workplace must understand how GYE transfers learning to be proactive and to inform learning transfer strategies.

According to Piktialis and Greenes (2008), there is a relationship between learning transfer and the era in which people are born, which translates to how different generations behave in the workplace. For example, GY has virtual offices, whereas Baby Boomers have physical offices. Piktialis and Greenes (2008) identified four generations

and their respective learning styles in their report. The four generations are categorised as follows:

Mature or veterans (born in 1925-1945) prefer command and control leadership and sacrifice to get the job done.

Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) - are competitive and believe in their ability to change things.

Gen Xers (born 1965-1979) - their highest priority is for active learning in the workplace, incidental learning; they are more visual than verbal and work less talk.

Gen Yers (born 1980-1995) - learn by inductive discovery and exploration, value group, and team learning.

The study proposes that more effort needs to be made to understand younger workers like GY rather than older generations approaching retirement. There is a need to solicit input from GYE on how learning transfer occurs in the workplace so that, where possible, barriers can be removed or minimised. Knowledge of these factors can help improve performance, enhance productivity in the workplace, and reduce turnover. Most importantly, it may enhance job satisfaction for Generation Y and lead to sustainable ventures by entrepreneurs.

This study will assist the South African community in the public and private sectors in understanding the learning transfer preferences for GYE and in creating a conducive workplace environment for GYE. This generation demands involvement in decisions that affect their lives (Weber, 2017), and this study provides a window for engagement in the manufacturing sector when creating policies that govern entrepreneurship within the manufacturing sector. Generation Y has been exposed to technology that Baby Boomers and Gen X have not. This implies that they play a role in helping the workplace transform to understand the technological advances required (Acar, 2014).

According to Aruna and Anitha (2015) and Krahn and Galambos (2014), the GY attitude towards work is different from Generation X and the Baby Boomers' attitude who worked from "9 to 5." This generation was exposed to technology at a tender age and can also be called the "microwave generation." Knowledge of how GYE transfers learning in the manufacturing sector is a subject that is valuable for all economies, especially in the current global environment with protectionism as the new culture and where productivity gaps can be explained by factors other than country endowments (Lafuente, Acs, Sanders, & Szerb, 2020). Research needs to be conducted to deepen the understanding of how Generation Y entrepreneurs transfer learning in the workplace. The lessons learned from this study will also help assist future generations, such as Generation Z.

The GY in South Africa is also a considerable part of the workforce; thus, there is a need to research the factors that affect their ability to transfer learning in the workplace (Statistics South Africa, 2017b). The results of this study will help South Africa and other countries on the African continent to understand GY and prepare the workplace, especially the manufacturing sector, for full maximisation and productivity by this generation. Scholars/academics must prepare and present entrepreneurs capable of facing the complexities of a challenging environment such as South Africa (Adelino, Ma, & Robinson, 2017).

1.2.4 Learning transfer

Learning transfer theory dates back to the 20th century in the work of Vygotsky and Thorndike. New knowledge has been added over the years to help improve the literature on learning transfer. Rounsaville (2012) found that learning transfer involves changing individual and social organisations. Learning transfer occurs when an individual within a community of practices participates in the social exchange of information to achieve specific goals. In this study, learning transfer occurred within the manufacturing community and by entrepreneurs (Leberman & McDonald, 2016).

This study was based on research participants' sources of learning and how they, in turn, transfer that learning in the workplace; sources of learning include a classroom setting,

mentorship, peer learning, or any other source of learning (Garrick, 2012). Learning transfer theory can add knowledge to economic theory and the workplace, as there is a partial understanding of what occurs in the “black box” of the firm, which refers to day-to-day practices (McDowell, Peake, Coder, & Harris, 2018).

There is a general agreement that learning transfer involves maintaining knowledge and skills (Ammar et al., 2014; Green, Kattner, Siegel, Kersten, & Schrater, 2015; Jaber, 2016). Learning transfer is viewed as learners' practical and continuing application to their job performance or other individual, organisational, and community responsibilities of knowledge and skills gained in learning activities (Jaber, 2016).

The transfer of learning occurs when learning in one context enhances performance in another context (Green et al., 2015). The transfer of training is an effective and continuing application by trainees to their jobs of the knowledge and skills gained in the training both on and off the job (Pan & Yang, 2010). The three definitions above indicate that learning transfer, transfer of training, and transfer of learning refer to similar phenomena (Ammar et al., 2014; Green et al., 2015; Jaber, 2016).

While Carmichael (2016) highlighted the importance of the change process the learner goes through to reach outcomes during their journey of learning transfer, Schnoll (2017) emphasised the importance of the situation and social context in which learning transfer occurs. The perspectives of Carmichael (2016) and Schnoll (2017) provide areas for enhancing the learning transfer knowledge base. Thomä (2017) and Lai, Portolese, and Jacobson (2017) propose that more work is required to explain instances of learning transfer in work and everyday settings, such as in the manufacturing sector where GYE makes daily decisions.

The country's unemployment level is a persistent challenge (Posel, Oyenubi, & Kollamparambil, 2021; Schöer et al., 2014). From GYE ’s viewpoint on issues such as learning and growing in the industry, understanding learning transfer in the manufacturing sector may lead to a theory that may subsequently help increase the number and quality of professionals in the manufacturing sector.

1.3 Research problem

Generation Y entrepreneurs manoeuvre the complexities presented by the manufacturing sector in South Africa. The current complexities are happening at a time when the quarterly labour force survey (QLFS) for the first quarter of 2022 reported an unemployment rate of 42% for those aged between 25-34 years and the official national rate of 34,5% compared to 26% when this study commenced. There is a decrease in The manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 24% in 1980 to 14% in 2021 (Statistics South Africa, 2022c).

Youth entrepreneurship is central to job creation, as it responds quickly to local demands; youth can adapt to new technological innovations and are highly energetic (Hughes & Schachtebeck, 2017; Senou & Soro, 2022). The manufacturing sector has the potential to contribute towards solutions that improve job opportunities for youth, especially in an emerging economy like South Africa. According to Adelino et al. (2017), academic researchers, politicians, and policymakers need to understand the mechanics of job creation, especially after the financial crisis and the economic recession of 2007-2009.

Knowledge of how GY entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector transfer their learning in the workplace provides the potential to develop or augment learning transfer theories. Hughes and Schachtebeck (2017) and (Buitek, Meldakhanova, & Kaliyeva, 2022) highlight that human capital leads to future economic growth, and the unobserved characteristics tied to the entrepreneur are some of the factors that can lead to a breakthrough in accelerating entrepreneurship in GYE. Knowledge of the learning transfer phenomenon in the manufacturing sector provides an opportunity for South Africa to understand how:

- To prepare its youth for the future as entrepreneurs –adding to learning transfer theories
- To help contribute towards the reduction of the high rate of unemployment among youth
- To help create more entrepreneurs that improve manufacturing productivity

- Investing in youth as future capital may lead to a sustainable growth trajectory in the manufacturing sector.

Youth entrepreneurs are experiencing challenges in establishing and maintaining business ventures. The government might assist in the creation of a conducive environment and the development of strategies to deal with these challenges, as youth entrepreneurs can play a significant role in job creation and reducing the unemployment rate in the country (Buitek et al., 2022; Geza, Ngidi, Slotow, & Mabhaudhi, 2022).

1.4 Research question

There are various perspectives on approaching research questions in a manner that makes a theory notable. Alvesson and Sandberg (2013b) mention gap spotting and problematisation as ways to consider when developing research questions. This study follows the CGT methodology, which is specific in minimising engagement with the literature before embarking on the data collection process and thus cannot utilise gap spotting as a basis for developing research questions (Glaser & Strauss, 2009).

Alvesson and Sandberg (2013a) further discussed research question generation through problematisation. They proposed that researchers should challenge the assumptions underlying existing theories; this also makes this perspective unsuitable for CGT. Grounded theory studies generally focus on social processes or actions: they ask about what happens and how people interact. Glaser and Strauss (1967) asked what was happening here.

Research questions are broad statements that define the scope of the study, the overall area of study and the problem area. The aim is to produce a theory inherent in the process of the substantive area, and the answer is only established after the data analysis and interpretation process (Chun Tie et al., 2019). Research objectives are specific, measurable outcomes that the research intends to achieve. Research questions were preferred as this was a grounded theory study, which should base its outcome on data analysis. The research questions in this study were influenced by interactions with current

challenges in the country and the need to understand the phenomenon to provide pragmatic solutions for current and future realities.

Main research question

How does learning transfer occur among Generation Y South African manufacturing sector entrepreneurs?

To understand the problem, one must decode the main question “how”, which is done by answering the sub-question “what” is happening in the phenomenon.

Sub questions:

a) What are the factors influencing the transfer of learning among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector, and what are their experiences?

b) What are the sources of learning (formal or informal), who are the key participants in the learning transfer process, and what are their roles?

c) How do current learning transfer theories fail to explain knowledge and learning transfer among GY entrepreneurs in the SA manufacturing sector?

d) What are the theoretical implications of this study for future learning transfer theories?

During the analysis and interpretation process, one establishes answers to the question of “why” the phenomenon is occurring. The success in answering the research questions helped contribute to learning transfer theories, with a perspective from a different age group like GYE and different contextual experiences in South Africa.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study proposes a substantive theory as its scholarly contribution. A theory is defined as a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that shows how and why a phenomenon occurs (Birks & Mills, 2015; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2014;

Corley & Gioia, 2011; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Glaser, 2017; Hussein, Hirst, Salyers, & Osuji, 2014). The study explored why and how learning transfer occurs among GYEs in the manufacturing sector. The study makes empirical and methodological contributions, which is done using the grounded theory methodology.

The substantive theory, Relational Learning Transfer Theory, is of value to both academics and practitioners, as it adds to the knowledge base. The Relational Learning Transfer Theory emphasises the importance of building relationships through which learning is transferred among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. Through relationships, GYE acquires knowledge and shares and implements its learnings to ensure the survival of its enterprises.

Corley and Gioia (2011) identify two dimensions for determining theoretical contributions: originality and utility. Each of the identified dimensions has two subcategories (see Figure 1.2). Corley and Gioia (2011) defined originality as the ability of the theory to provide original insight; this, they suggested, can be done by advancing understanding incrementally or in a way that provides some form of revelation. They referred to utility as the usefulness of the theory, which can be demonstrated through practical and scientific usefulness.

The study of learning transfer by GYE in the manufacturing industry falls within quadrant two and contributes to both incremental and scientific usefulness dimensions as a substantive theory (Andriani & Christoforou, 2016; Corley & Gioia, 2011). This study developed the Relational Learning Transfer Theory to add to existing theories on learning transfer; it also developed the ACAC coding model, which supplements grounded theory analysis. It has also developed the relational learning transfer model and matrix.

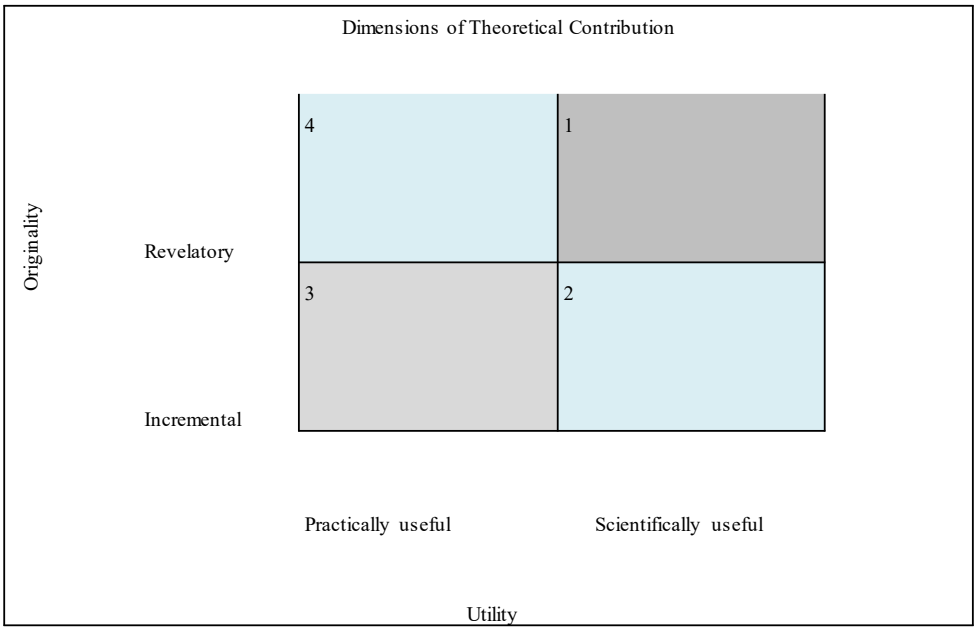

FIGURE 1.2 DIMENSIONS OF THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS (SOURCE-CORLEY & GIOIA (2011), ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW, 36,1,12-32)

Entrepreneurial research requires grounded operational theories based on the grounded action approach and the development of grounded explanatory theories. Operational theories define the "how" part of things on the ground. Relational Learning Transfer Theory provides a sound basis for the development of operational theory. Entrepreneurs' research is considered necessary for governments, as it helps them improve policies that may improve the quality of the entrepreneurs and increase participation in the economy (Nguyen, 2020).

Nguyen (2020) states that there are limited studies on GY entrepreneurship and learning from an academic perspective and proposes that more research should be conducted in developing countries, as the current research is concentrated in developed countries. The limited number of studies on GY entrepreneurs and learning in developing countries may lead to a gap in empirical knowledge. South Africa is classified as a developing country,

and as Nguyen suggests, the current study may help respond to the gap in empirical knowledge, as it adds to the developing economy perspective.

Learning transfer is a subject that will always require further exploration, as the context in which we live constantly changes (Lai et al., 2017; Thomä, 2017). Traditional theories cannot fully account for how the transfer of learning occurs in the workplace with changing variables and when the environment becomes more complex. This study is relevant in a country with a majority of youth unemployment and where countries with solid manufacturing patterns help sustain their economies and employ their youth (De Vries, Timmer, & de Vries, 2015; Rodrik, 2016a). Although studies on learning transfer might have been conducted in other contexts before this study, the South African context in this era provides rich data to help understand the phenomenon and add to the knowledge base and learning transfer literature.

This study contributes to the fact that its findings can be used to prepare the industry to understand learning transfer processes. It meets the prescience contribution requirement as it is geared to influence the future by developing Relational Learning Transfer Theory. Prescience defines what is already known and influences the envisaged future through research (Corley & Gioia, 2011).

This study has consequences for both pure and applied research, both conceptual and tangible. This study contributes to the theory of learning transfer in the manufacturing sector and provides a relational learning transfer model that can be used in academic programs. Knowing how Generation Y Entrepreneurs (GYE) transfer learning in the workplace enhances the opportunity to maximise their potential, improve productivity and performance, and reduce the risk of high turnover.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The current study is located within management research and is not economic research. The study will not include start-up businesses but will include enterprises that have existed for a minimum period of three and a half years. How entrepreneurs source start-

up funds is not the focus area of this study. This study also excluded individuals with entrepreneurial intent, which is the motive or intent to engage in new business ventures (Pihie & Akmaliah, 2009).

The study does not follow the Straussian Grounded Theory (GT) or Constructivism GT by Charmaz but follows Classic GT (Glaser & Holton, 2007). Generalisability was not the goal of the present study. This study focuses on how learning transfer occurs among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector, focusing on agro-processing (food and beverages), metals, machinery and capital equipment, textiles, clothing, leather and footwear, and other manufacturing subsectors.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This chapter focused on the research study overview, its purpose, and its context, including research concepts, research problem, research questions, and its significance.

The thesis structure followed the principles of Classic Glaserian Grounded theory (CGGT), whereby the literature review chapter follows the presentation of the findings (Glaser & Holton, 2007). Chapter Two focuses on the research design, methodology, and justification for why the Classic Glaserian Grounded theory was suitable for this study. Chapter Three focuses on the presentation of research findings, concepts, categories, and core categories developed from the data analysis process, emergent theory, themes, theoretical assertions, and propositions. Chapter Four focuses on the literature review and conceptual framework. Chapter Five discusses the research findings, locating the space for the proposed Relational Learning Transfer Theory within the current and existing theories. Chapter Six focuses on the contributions of this research study and its limitations and proposes suggestions for future studies.

Chapter Two: Research Design and Methodology

2.0 Introduction

The study focused on understanding how learning transfer occurs among Generation Y Entrepreneurs (GYE) in the South African manufacturing sector. This chapter provides an overview of Grounded theory principles, emphasising classic grounded theory as the method chosen for this study and how this was implemented in this study.

2.1 Research Paradigm

Learning transfer is a social process or phenomenon that occurs in a social context. This phenomenon can be better understood through naturalist inquiry that acknowledges the multiple realities of a phenomenon (Glaser, 2007). The Grounded Theory (GT) method is the most suitable method for studying the learning transfer phenomenon, as it is relativistic, acknowledging that everyone is unique and that there is no one objective reality.

Grounded theory, as conceptualised by Glaser and Strauss (1967), fits the postpositivist paradigm. Over time, scholars of grounded theory noted other paradigms through which grounded theory can be perceived. There is a consensus that grounded theory is a qualitative approach; however, there are differences among scholars in terms of its ontological and epistemological roots (Coşkun, 2020; Hussein et al., 2014; Markey, Tilki, & Taylor, 2014; Weed, 2017). Strauss' grounded theory post positivism paradigm postulates that GT is rooted in ontological critical realism and epistemological objectivism, whereas Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory has its ontological roots in relativism.

Ontological critical realism argues that reality exists independent of the human mind and comprises three domains; "Real"- made up of natural and social objects, mechanisms and structures; "actual", which includes events that occur when mechanisms are activated; and "empirical"- referring to perceptions and experiences (Hoddy, 2019; Lee, 2016; Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015). They further argue that although reality exists

independently of the human mind, it cannot be fully explored or accessed but can only be accessed in fragments or partially.

GT can be approached from relativist ontology; this perspective is based on the belief that reality is a finite subjective experience and nothing exists outside one's thoughts (Denzin, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Hussein et al., 2014; Levers, 2013; MacLeod, Burm, & Mann, 2022; Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). The argument for realists is that there is no universal truth and that there are multiple truths despite similar external stimuli. The approach of this study is that the nature of reality is a combination of ontological critical realism and ontological relativism; it is neither alone, as human beings are continuously in a process of transformation.

The postpositivist paradigm also argued that GT is epistemologically objective. Objectivism is rooted in the belief that truth resides within the object and cannot be influenced by human experiences (Coşkun, 2020; Markey et al., 2014). The assumptions are that the contextual factors can be removed and that observation is impartial. The purpose of science from an objectivist perspective is to reveal universal laws of truth, predicting and explaining truth. According to Krauss (2005), people create meaning from their experiences; meaning lies in cognition, not external elements. GT states that knowledge is idiosyncratic and purposefully constructed.

This study sought to develop a theory on how learning transfer occurs among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African Manufacturing Sector. Generation Y is a cohort that has never operated in the manufacturing industry, given that they are new entrants in the market and that baby boomers previously dominated the industry. Grounded theory offered the best inquiry methodology, as the study intended to understand and develop a theory without any preconceived ideas based on GYE experience rather than testing hypotheses.

The study adopted GT, which is viewed as a general qualitative method (Glaser, 1999). According to Yilmaz (2013), qualitative research assumes that reality is dynamic and socially constructed through a value-laden, descriptive, holistic, flexible, and context-

sensitive framework, indicating a constructivist epistemology. It further assumes that social phenomena are complex and interwoven and should not be reduced to isolated variables, as in quantitative research. The emphasis of qualitative research is that it is an inductive, interpretive, emergent, and naturalistic approach to studying people and phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

According to Nathaniel (2011), Classic Grounded Theory is more associated with pragmatist philosophy than Straussian GT, which is associated with symbolic interactionism. It should be noted that Glaser discouraged focus on one philosophical position underpinning GT; his view was that aligning with any preconceived particular view might result in limiting or reducing the broad potential that GT might have (Glaser & Holton, 2005b). Initially, Glaser and Strauss never wrote about GT as a methodological package but only provided various strategies; they did not dwell on the discussions on GT methodology but only focused on the method (Amsteus, 2014). The current study was not underpinned by a particular philosophy but by various philosophies.

Grounded theory was initially defined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as the discovery of theory from data in a systematic manner. Grounded theory was further defined as a methodology used to develop a theory emanating from data by identifying concepts used by social actors in real-life situations (Birks, Hoare, & Mills, 2019; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). GT focuses on generating theory grounded on data in the field, the participants' views, and how the participants interact with their surroundings; thus, GT requires the researcher to develop an empathic relationship with the participants (Yilmaz, 2013).

2.2 Research design

The research design provides a plan or strategy that can be used to answer the research question. GT was best suited for this study, as it is concerned with processes, context, interpretation, and understanding through inductive reasoning (Birks et al., 2019; Lazenbatt & Elliott, 2005). Fram (2013) defines GT methodology as studying social reality and how one thinks about it. To understand learning transfer among GYE, the

manufacturing sector must be examined to check its influence on people's actions and interactions and how the participants ascribe meaning to those experiences. The examination of context will not only be limited to the manufacturing sector, but also to the events in the country, as the manufacturing sector is part of a broader system.

Various debates exist about which GT approach is the most suitable (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Corbin, 2021; Glaser & Holton, 2007). This study followed the classic Glaserian grounded theory (CGGT) and not the Straussian or constructivist GT of Charmaz.

The CGGT methodology was chosen for the following reasons.

- It captures social processes and behavioural patterns in social interactions; learning transfer is a social process.
- It allows for open-ended questions that are exploratory and generative; it allows one to review questions during the process of constant comparison.
- It is an effective way to discover participants' main concerns and how they handle their circumstances. GT is suitable for discovering or constructing new theories through gathering and analysing rich data.
- The literature review is not conducted before data analysis, which ensures that theory emerges from data and is not predetermined; theory is only consulted later.
- It is flexible and encourages researchers to develop methods that best respond to the research questions (conceptualisation potential) and guide how to achieve that best (Rieger, 2019).
- Openness to deal with data (systematic approach to data analysis) also provides more opportunities to discover something new aligned with this study's objectives (Urquhart, 2016). This study aimed to develop a theory on how GY entrepreneurs transfer learning, and GT provided the best methodology to develop that theory.

Birks and Mills (2015) indicated no right or wrong approaches to using the GT method. Glaser and Holton (2007) pointed out that although CGGT is highly structured, it is also a flexible methodology. Therefore, this study commenced with coding after three

interviews and not after the first interview, introducing a different perspective on when it is best suited to start coding. This was done to ascertain patterns of behaviour from the initial interviews, generate a variety of codes, and develop theoretical propositions that account for behaviour patterns.

The researcher needed to check for the fitness of the research question, workability of the research methods, and relevance to the study area when modifying the research methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This flexibility encouraged the use of CGGT as it further provided the opportunity to direct, manage, and streamline data collection and analysis within the boundaries of the methodology.

Grounded theory follows these principles, strategies, and procedures (Deering & Williams, 2020).

- Purposive and theoretical sampling strategies
- Concurrent data collection and analysis
- Initial coding and categorisation of data
- Memo writing
- Constant comparative analysis
- Theoretical sensitivity
- Theoretical integration and theory development

It should be noted that the strategies and procedures identified above are not linear but iterative and recursive.

There are critiques on classical GT, and they include:

- Charmaz (2008) criticises classical GT for overlooking social reality relevant to the process of logic discovery and only concentrates on categories developed from data. This study considered the context of the learning transfer process and did not only focus on the categories.
- Boeije (2002) claims that literature does not provide a step-by-step guide to constant comparison and that different types of constant comparison can be

distinguished, thus opening it up for interpretation and creativity by researchers. CGGT guides constant comparisons, such as incident-to-incident comparison, as provided by Glaser, section 2.6.is an example.

- Strauss and Corbin (1994) criticise Glaser's emphasis on theoretical sensitivity, which overlooks that not all researchers are experienced and thus need a coding framework. This study developed the ACAC coding framework based on the flexibility of CGGT.
- Bohm (2004) states that GT is complex, putting more demands on the researcher and their creativity. This study aimed to discover a theory that requires focus, and CGGT provides that conducive environment.

According to Charmaz (2014), GT offers a flexible and practical approach to interpreting complex social phenomena, thus rendering it suitable for studying the learning-transfer phenomenon. Hussein et al. (2014) highlighted that the strength of GT is its ability to foster creativity, intuitive appeal, conceptualization potential, systematic approach to data analysis, and the potential for researchers to collect rich data.

2.3 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis in qualitative research studies may refer to cases, units, or social life processes. In this study, the unit of analysis was the social phenomenon or process of learning transfer. This social phenomenon was studied in the South African Manufacturing Sector, focusing on GYE. The unit of analysis was utilised to develop the conceptual framework for this study and to determine the data collection techniques (Khan, 2014).

2.4 Research population and sampling strategy

The study aimed to establish how learning transfer occurs among GYE in the manufacturing sector; the research question helped determine who was best placed to participate in the study. The study was undertaken within the population of Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector. The study implemented two

sampling techniques as dictated by CGGT: purposive and theoretical (Butler, Copnell, & Hall, 2018).

Purposive sampling is the identification of the population and settings before gathering data. According to Andrade (2021), purposive sampling is based on appropriateness and good information. Glaser (1978b) defined purposive sampling, which also refers to selective sampling as a reasonable but well-thought-out plan of the locale to collect data based on the initial dimensions of the study. Purposive sampling responds to the sampling location; in this case, it asked where we can find GYE in transferring learning in the manufacturing sector.

Purposeful sampling was used to select and study a small number of people with a wealth of detailed information and an in-depth understanding of the learning transfer phenomenon in the manufacturing industry (Robinson, 2014a).

2.4.1 Criteria for selection

South African entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector born between 1980 and 2000 were the target population for this study. The population was heterogeneous. GYE from all racial groups in South Africa were eligible to participate. Both males and females had equal opportunities to participate. Participants had to own the business or manage an enterprise for over three and half years.

2.4.2 Participants profile

Manufacturing sub-sectors	**Industry products**	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**
Petroleum and chemical manufacturing-	manufacturers of sanitisers, disinfectants, recycling, paints, oils, hair and skin products, and related products	1	6	7
Food and beverages manufacturing-	agro-processors of primary agricultural products, including beverages sourced from small-scale farmers	2	3	5

Manufacturing sub-sectors	Industry products	Males	Females	Total
Clothing, leather, and textiles-	the makers of shoes, linen, and garments, including pattern makers, designers, tannery, and fabric manufacturers, among others	5	4	9
Basic iron, metal, and steel manufacturing	manufacturers of iron and steel products.	1	0	1
Other subsectors		3	5	7
Total		**12**	**18**	**30**

2.4.3 Execution, Limitations and Challenges

During the project planning stages, the study plan had targeted interviews with six participants who would have represented four racial categories (African, Coloured, White, and Asian); however, this was reduced to three participants who participated as part of the initial interviews of purposive sampling. Grounded theory advocates that one purposively chooses the first participant, then theoretical sampling determines the other participants (Glaser, 2017). This study deviated from this principle to ensure maximum variation from the sample by conducting three interviews prior to commencing with data analysis. This was done to enrich the analysis process, gathering various perspectives from the participants and making the study as inclusive as possible (Birks et al., 2019).

Initial strategy 1- As part of the recruitment strategy, institutions were identified and approached to assist with the provision of the GYE population, and they included the Department of Trade Industry and Competition (DTIC), the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (IDC) and Power FM Radio station (Appendix A- letter to institutions requesting interviews). These institutions were requested to provide databases from which participants who met the inclusion criteria would be selected.

The Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition is a national department of the country responsible for developing policies, regulations, frameworks, and strategies that guide trade and industry in South Africa. The manufacturing sector is one of the industries affected by this department's policy instruments. The department implements various funding programs geared toward supporting upcoming industrialists.

The industrial development corporation is a public entity whose activities centre around the National Development Plan, National Growth Path, and Industrial Policy Action Plan. The entity identifies sector opportunities and partners with stakeholders for development, promotes regional development, funds the growth of black industrialists, and boosts local production. Power FM radio stations also formed part of the targeted institutions' approach, as they had a program that focused on youth entrepreneurs who fit the selection criteria.

The initial strategy involved identifying and requesting institutions with programmes that dealt with the targeted group to assist with referrals. This strategy did not yield the intended results; the identified institutions provided myriad responses. The IDC declined to participate, stating the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI). The Radio Station provided the names. However, there was little cooperation from the people they proposed, as they postponed appointments. The DTIC agreed to participate but never provided the names of any company or individuals for eight months. According to Timonen, Foley, and Conlon (2018), there are various challenges that one can experience during the data collection process for GT methodology, and the above is an example of these challenges.

Reviewed strategy: Considering the challenges experienced in accessing participants through the three identified institutions, a strategy review was conducted to identify participants. The participants were recruited through referrals from other interviewees and also from internet searches. The revised strategy involved identifying respondents/participants through an internet search. The search criteria included searching for websites for councils such as the South African Capital Equipment Export Council (SACEEC), the Agro-Processing Support Scheme (APSS), the Masisizane Fund (Old Mutual), Mining Equipment Manufactures of South Africa (MEMSA), and institutions that focus on youth entrepreneurs, including the Department of Small Business Development Isivande women’s fund beneficiaries.

Identifying companies online included visiting their websites to obtain contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers. The researcher would phone the companies,

request the Human Resources Department, explain to the Human Resources representative about the study being undertaken, and further explain the criteria of participants required by the study. An inquiry would then be made to determine whether the institution has an Owner or a Managing Director who meets the criteria. Should no-one meet the criteria, the engagements would be discontinued.

Formal requests and ethical clearance certificates were shared when the Human Resources Department confirmed that some met these criteria. Appendix B reflects emails sent to the participants requesting they participate in this study. Appendix C is a copy of the ethical clearance from the university's ethics committee. The participants also referred to other GYE peers so they could be approached to participate in this study.

Securing appointments with identified participants was challenging due to unavailability, as they consistently postponed appointments due to competing schedule demands. The data collection strategy had to be enhanced to include utilising interviews already in existence, which were accessed from the Internet. Data from the pre-recorded interviews formed a part of the theoretical sampling process.

The first three interviews were based on purposive sampling, and data analysis commenced. After that, the study followed the theoretical sampling process, which involved simultaneous data collection and analysis per the GT methodology (Glaser & Holton, 2007). Theoretical sampling involves a process wherein continued sampling occurs concurrently with data analysis. Theoretical sampling involves the researcher identifying participants who further enrich the analytical process (Urquhart, 2016). Further sampling was influenced by the categorisation process or emerging theory. Additional pre-recorded interviews were accessed as part of the theoretical sampling.

The subsequent data collection was informed by gaps, unanswered questions, and emerging ideas (Glaser, 2007). Theoretical sampling aims to develop and verify categories and establish relationships within categories (Fram, 2013).

There are various debates in research regarding determining what should be considered an appropriate sample for a study (Boddy, 2016; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Trotter II,

2012). The sample size is influenced by several factors, including whether the study is longitudinal, the study design, the data collection method, the nature of the topic, and the scope of the study (Hennink & Kaiser, 2021; Morse & Clark, 2019). In CGGT, the sample size is determined by saturation (Glaser, 2017). In this study, the final sample size was determined by saturation, reached after three interviews and 27 pre-recorded interviews were analysed.

2.5 Data collection process

Data analysis in GT co-occurred with the data collection. However, for presentation, they might appear sequential. Data collection in CGGT accommodates a broad range of methods following the notion that all is data, it can be done through various methods, and this includes interviews, observations, documents and records, focus groups, social media monitoring, online tracking and other methods (Berthelsen, Grimshaw-Aagaard, & Hansen, 2018; Glaser, 2017; Noble & Mitchell, 2016).

Strauss and Corbin (1997) recommend a funnel approach when collecting data that involves moving from broad to specific. They also recommended that the interview be piloted to prevent confusion during the interview process. However, in this study, no pilot interviews were conducted as the interview questions were customised as the research progressed in line with the concurrent data collection and analysis process.

Research instrument

Data collection was performed using two methods: primary data collection and secondary data collection. Primary data collection refers to a process whereby the researcher collects data to answer a specific research question, and secondary data collection refers to a process whereby the researcher utilises data that already exists and was not primarily collected to address the current study question (Glaser, 1963). The primary data involved the researcher's interviews, and secondary data (more details are provided in section 2.5.2) comprised the pre-recorded interviews. The pre-recorded interviews were accessed or retrieved through the Internet from various media sources and platforms,

such as YouTube. These pre-recordings were not initially used in this study. However, using secondary data as a data-collection method has been acknowledged (Glaser, 1963).

2.5.1 Primary data collection instrument - Interviews

Interviewing is one of the primary methodologies used in GT, although one can utilise various methods, such as document analysis. There should be structure when preparing the interviews, and this can be strengthened by using open-ended questions and follow-ups through probing where necessary. Open-ended questions were utilised as a starting point for conversations to encourage participants to share their experiences freely (Liamputtong, 2013). Open-ended interviews were utilised as they elicit rich data, although some authors propose that GT should utilise semi-structured interviews (Bearman, 2019). Open-ended interviews were used to allow follow-up questions and probing to emerge during the interviews (Robinson, 2014a).

An interview guide was developed (Appendix D– interview guide initial and Appendix E interview guide revised and enhanced) to assist in the interviewing process; the use of the interview guide assisted in ensuring focus on the subject at hand, thus increasing the depth level of eliciting data (Bearman, 2019). An interview guide was used to assist the probing process.

The utilisation of the research instrument in GT is influenced by various factors such as ethics of involvement and ethics of detachment, the researcher's role in interaction and the subjectivity, objectivity and complexity inherent in the relationship between the interviewer and participant (O'Connor, Carpenter, & Coughlan, 2018). In this study, theoretical sensitivity was observed to align with CGGT (Glaser, 2017). Data were gathered without prior knowledge of the substantive area to avoid contamination of the analysis process.

Through memoing, ideas, processes, and analytical insights were recorded as they emerged from data collection. The relationships between the categories were based on

the data collected. Questions about what, when, why, and how were constantly asked throughout the process to help one gain more insight into the data.

The views of the participants' lives, actions, intentions, and feelings were captured and documented through notes and memos. This was utilised to gain in-depth insight into the data and to help answer the questions of what is happening in the data, when, why, and how. The data were utilised to discover the relationships between categories. Although the primary data collection method was interviews, observations during interviews were documented as part of the note-taking. The notes from observations were incorporated as part of the analysis process and formed part of the codes developed, forming part of the categories and substantive theory (Roulston, 2016).

As part of the initial strategy, the study asked the participants to write personal accounts of their journeys to strengthen the data collection process. Reflective diaries constituted the initial plan as part of the research instruments. The participants said they were too busy to sit and write these accounts and intended to do that later in their lives or careers when the dust settled in their business ventures.

Cognisance was made that it is more valuable to utilise more than one data collection method, such as observation, in addition to interviews, as it may elicit more data to study lived experiences only and social processes (Glaser, 2017). Observations made during the face-to-face interviews were noted as part of the data collection and formed part of the data analysis process.

The initial strategy involved conducting all interviews face-to-face. However, this method expanded after the advent of the covid 19 pandemic to include telephone, zoom meetings, and Skype methods to avoid infection. The planned Skype and Zoom meetings did not materialise due to cancellations, and the other two interviews were conducted telephonically. The interviewees were provided with participant information sheets and consent forms to agree on the terms and conditions of participation (Appendix F, participant information sheet interviews; Appendix G, participant information sheet reflective diaries; and Appendix H, consent form).

2.5.2 Secondary data collection- pre-recorded interviews

The use of secondary data collection methods in CGGT is recognised (Andrews, Higgins, Andrews, & Lalor, 2012; Hasan, 2021; Johnston, 2017; Whiteside, Mills, & McCalman, 2012). Secondary data existed and were not generated explicitly for this study (Andrews et al., 2012). Secondary data can be utilised for different reasons, including circumstances where it is difficult to access a sample when dealing with small populations, sensitive information, or rare phenomena (Johnston, 2017). Advancements in technology have increased opportunities for secondary data collection and the amount of data in the public domain. In this study, it was used because primary data was barely forthcoming.

The secondary data collection method involved listening to and watching interviews that had already been recorded with entrepreneurs who met the study criteria. Those recordings were accessed from different media houses, such as SABC and ENCA television stations and Power FM radio stations. The interviews focused on the experiences of the entrepreneurs in the manufacturing industry. The researcher watched or listened to the interviews and transcribed them.

Using various data-gathering methods is supported by Glaser's views, which state that all of them are data. As data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously, more interviews were accessed as part of the concept and category saturation process (Andrews et al., 2012). More interviewees were still approached to participate until the end of the analysis process. However, most of them indicated they were too busy to participate and gave verbal consent to their interviews in the public domain to be utilised in this study.

There are concerns, ethical issues raised, and risks associated with using secondary data, as identified by Andrews et al. (2012), including issues of copyright, informed consent, confidentiality, and data anonymity. They recommend that pseudonyms be utilised to hide the identity of the affected parties; this study utilised pseudonyms to protect the identity of the data sources. Johnston (2017) highlighted one of the limitations of

secondary data as not knowing how thorough the data collection process was, which was not applicable in this study as one could listen to the pre-recorded interviews.

2.6 Data analysis

Grounded theory analysis is highly dependent on the knowledge and abilities of the researcher. However, technological advances such as Atlas ti. can assist with coding. This study used manual analysis instead of Atlas ti as initially planned, as the analysis is richer and more meaningful when performed manually at a granular level.

Analysis of GT begins with the process of coding, concepts, and category development and culminates in theory development (Sigauke & Swansi, 2020). As per the study's initial planned strategy, data analysis was expected to resume once the researcher interviewed six participants identified using purposive sampling. There were delays in securing all six interviews, and a decision was made to proceed with the data analysis after concluding three interviews.

Coding refers to deciphering or interpreting data by naming, describing, and explaining concepts in detail (Chun Tie et al., 2019). The output of the coding process includes a list of concepts, coding notes, and explanatory texts. When analysing data, asking questions about the phenomenon being studied is critical. Different levels of coding begin with open coding (line-by-line data analysis), selective coding (based on categories shaping the emerging theory), and theoretical coding (based on plausible relationships among categories) (Kelle, 2010; Saldaña, 2015). The coding process helps to identify gaps that may require the researcher to revisit the participants to gather more information and clarify specific issues where required.

Data analysis in GT involves open, selective, and theoretical coding. Saldaña (2021) classified coding into initial and secondary coding cycles. To help maintain independence and objectivity and minimise subjectivity in the data analysis process, there was a plan to utilise coding families, as proposed by Glaser, but the plan was abandoned to allow the

process to unfold naturally, allowing theory to emerge from data (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009). The coding phase was iterative and nonlinear.

2.6.1 Open coding

Glaser (2017) identified rules that should guide open coding, whereby novice researchers are encouraged to translate nouns into verbs when developing concepts during open coding, which helps identify the processes that unfold during data analysis. Glaser further proposed that rules governing open coding should include

- What is the study about?
- What category does this line incident or a group thereof indicate?
- What is happening in the data?

Glaser and Holton (2007) have cautioned against asking too many questions as they may interrupt emergence and distract the researcher from what is happening. Their concern was that Strauss and Corbin's questions appeared intrusive and reductionist. Glaser (1978b) and Strauss and Corbin (1997) agree that this is a phase in which data is fractured, broken into parts, and compared for differences and similarities.

The coding process commenced with browsing through the transcribed material to understand what the interviews were all about. Every interview passage was studied to determine what was said and what was happening. This was followed by a process whereby data was fractured, including line-per-line examination of data and naming of identified incidents, events, or actions (Saldaña, 2021). Table 2.2 was created using a Word document to capture sentences or paragraphs; words and sentences that captured attention were highlighted or bolded as the transcripts were reread.

Line-per-line analysis was performed, identifying words or a group of words and assigning them a label, and direct quotes, which are referred to as in-vivo codes, were used. In certain instances, gerunds labelled what transpired in the data (Glaser, 1992; Saldaña, 2021). At times, there would be confusion in some sentences, and one would not know what to code for, only to proceed with the rest of the data and return to analysing those

sentences at a later stage (Glaser & Holton, 2004a; Holton, Thulesius, Kerstin Petersson, & Bengt Fridlund, 2010).

There were various reasons why words or sentences were labelled; the reasons always varied. Sometimes, it would be because what the participant said was surprising, and sometimes, it would be because the participants said what was important. Coding was done for shared sentiments; sometimes, coding was influenced by the words used repeatedly, and they sounded familiar. Sometimes, sentences or words appeared relevant in terms of the study objectives.

Coding the data in various ways assisted the coding process in this study to a great extent. Data coding using various approaches helps with openness to data, minimises the possibility of premature and biased data conclusions, and forces in-depth examination of the data as one looks at it from all angles (Glaser & Holton, 2004b). Previous transcripts would sometimes be revisited if a pattern was noticed in subsequent interviews. Microanalysis helped produce a dense theory and forced one to guard against themes and ideas that were not emergent from the data. In summary, the coding process was performed in line with the principles of Glaser (1992), Holton et al. (2010), and Saldaña (2021).

Trochim (2006) and Saldaña (2021) suggest that the choice of coding method is determined by the type of research question, whether ontological or epistemological. Table 2.1 (coding and type of research) provides the distinction between ontological and epistemological coding methods. These suggestions are not cast in stone, as reality shows there are overlaps in coding methods; one moves in between, as led by the data. This confirms Glaser's assertion that GT cannot be confined to a single philosophical stance.

The research question in this study was how learning transfer occurred among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector, which is an epistemological research question, as shown in Table 2.1, as it is geared at studying the learning transfer phenomenon. As reflected in the table, the coding process utilised both methods in the first cycle, as

reflected under epistemological and ontological research questions, such as using in vivo, descriptive, narrative, and other codes.

Memos were written throughout the coding process to keep track of analytical insights.

TABLE 2. 1 CODING AND TYPE OF RESEARCH (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Type of research question	**Meaning**	**Examples**	**Coding methods first cycle**
Ontological research question	Related to studying "the nature of participant's realities", capturing realities	what is the nature of? what are the lived experiences? what is it like being?	• Attribute • emotion • in vivo • narrative • process • values • themes
Epistemological research question	Related to knowing and understanding the phenomenon of interest - learning transfer	how does? what does it mean to be? what factors influence	• descriptive • evaluation • magnitude • narrative • process • theming

Data fracturing was conducted for each interview. The following questions had to be asked about the emerging phenomenon: Glaser, Strauss and Corbin seem to agree on questions that are, when, where, why, who, how, and the consequences of the phenomenon and agree that providing answers to these questions will enhance the explanatory power of the concepts.

To simplify this phase further, Glaser developed the concept indicator model. LaRossa (2005) referred to indicators as words, phrases, or sentences in the materials analysed

and further referred to the concept as a label or name attached to indicators. Researchers are required to compare the indicator constantly. This level of coding involves the fracturing of data by identifying the concepts.

Holton et al. (2010) identified feelings of uncertainty and inadequacy experienced by novice researchers during the open coding process as part of the challenges of the CGGT methodology. The codes that were developed did not have anything tying them together. As a result of the inadequacy felt or experienced during the early stages of the coding process, a methodology or process was developed to help organise the thought process for coding, which was named the ACAC model.

The ACAC model refers to the actions, conditions, attitudes (attributes), and consequences. The ACAC model was developed specifically for this study, and it is not a GT coding process that has been previously utilised. The ACAC coding model appeared best suited to unpack the process unfolding in the data during the open coding process.

Actions: This study is about a process that involves doing something, doing as a verb. A learning transfer is an action. One must analyse their actions to understand how learning transfer occurs among GYEs. What are they doing daily? The question was asked consistently what action occurred in this sentence or passage of data.

Conditions: Every action and learning transfer event is influenced by the prevailing circumstances, environment or context. The next question asked during the analysis was where and when these actions occurred. Codes were allocated accordingly.

Attitude- A person's attitude and attributes determine whether learning transfer occurs. The next question was how these actions were undertaken and what attitude they portrayed or represented. Data were analysed and coded to examine this aspect.

Consequence: For every action, there is a reaction that may be referred to as a consequence. The questions asked from the data were why this is happening, why this action is being taken, under what circumstances (conditions), and what the attitude is. The ACAC coding model (Figure 2.1) was followed at that moment, with action as the

trigger. The ACAC model provides a structure for understanding data and helps one work with data. Novice researchers are advised to use this model in the coding process. This process will also help GT researchers avoid premature interpretation of the data.

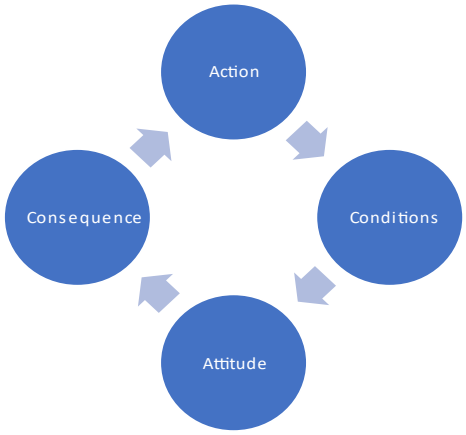

FIGURE 2. 1 ACAC MODEL (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

The ACAC process added columns in the coding table, including coding for actions, conditions, attributes, and consequences (see Table 2.4).

Coding proceeded as shown in Table 2.2; the process involved transcribed material being fractured into sentences or paragraphs and in-vivo coded using bolding or highlighting words, phrases, sentences, or gerunds.

TABLE 2. 2 DATA CODING A- INITIAL CODING (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Verbatim quote	Verb / highlight / in-vivo	Observation / process
And then I have been doing some work with incubation, entering some competitions so that I can get the support that I need to grow the business. Because yes I had to learn these skills as a whole.	And then I have been **doing some work with incubation** **entering some competitions** so that I can **get the suppor**t that I need to **grow the business**. Because yes **I had to learn these skills as a whole**.	Support structure/source of learning Resources mobilisation Growing business/expansion Multi-skilling Learning- resourceful Self-reliance

Coding B (Table 2.3) involved adding a column on ACAC (action, conditions, attitudes/attributes, and consequences) to understand the phenomenon occurring in the data. This involved analysing the sentences and paragraphs to unpack the actions that the GYE were embarking on, to analyse the attitude that their actions demonstrated, to identify the conditions wherein they were making the actions, and to analyse the consequences of their actions. The codes were presented as concepts.

TABLE 2. 3 DATA CODING B- INTRODUCTION OF ACAC (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Verbatim	Verb / bolding / in vivo	Observation / process	Action / attitude / Consequence / condition
Luckily, I found out from the innovation hub that I do not need to use SABS; I can use any science-registered lab.	Seeking and finding alternatives	The importance of network	Action- investigating Action- networking Action- exploring Attitude- determined

Verbatim	Verb / bolding / in vivo	Observation / process	Action / attitude / Consequence / condition
			Attitude- adventurous Attitude- humility
So that was one major hurdle.	So that was one **major hurdle.**	Acknowledgement of challenges Identification of challenge	Condition-challenging environment/major hurdles Attitude-resolute Attitude-determined
If I wanted to create, like buy something, I always created an extra source of income.	If I wanted to **create**, like buy something, I always **created** an extra source of income.	Creative – creating	Action- creating Action- decision making
I also received support from the Innovation Hub, although not in cash, but is supporting the development of the research for my idea	I also **received support** from the Innovation Hub, although not in cash, but **is supporting development of the research for my idea**	Support structure Partnerships Mentoring Learning source	Action – Partnering establishing partnerships attitude – humble consequence – mentoring condition-supportive learning environment/incubation consequence- idea generation

Coding C involved capturing the summarised version of all actions, conditions, attitudes, and consequences per the transcribed material for each participant/retrieved data. The

codes that conveyed similar messages were assigned concepts. Table 2.4 summarises the ACAC that was developed.

TABLE 2. 4 DATA CODING C-ACAC SUMMARISED (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Action / Attitude / Consequence / Condition	**Action**	**Attitude/attributes**	**Condition**	**Consequence/**
I wasted too much money when I was starting my business that I should not have used" action- acknowledging the value of learning consequence- reviewing/ reassessing attitude- candid attitude- sincere attitude- realistic attitude- critical	Action- reflecting "I **realised after learning about the lean start-up methodology** I wasted too much money when I was starting my business that I should not have used" action- acknowledging	attitude- candid attitude- sincere attitude- realistic attitude- critical		consequence- reviewing/ reassessing
Action- engaging funders" I **approached** the IDC **looking for a loan."** Action- identifying funding sources	Action- engaging funders" I **approached** the IDC **looking for a loan."**	Attitude- proactive	Condition- funding environment	consequence- funding source decision

Action / Attitude / Consequence / Condition	**Action**	**Attitude/attributes**	**Condition**	**Consequence/**
Attitude- proactive Condition- funding environment consequence- funding source decision	Action- identifying funding sources			
Action- learning Conditions- legislated operating environment attitude – proactive "I had to **learn how to get** a manufacturing licence." consequence- understanding	Action- learning	Attitude – proactive "I had to **learn how to get** a manufacturing licence."	Conditions- legislated operating environment	consequence- understanding

In summary, Coding A involved transcribed material being divided or fractured into sentences or paragraphs and in-vivo coding using bolding or highlighting words, phrases, sentences, or gerunds. Coding B involved adding a column on actions and consequences to understand the phenomenon occurring in the data. Coding C involved capturing the summarised version of all actions, conditions, attitudes, and consequences per the transcribed material for each participant/retrieved data.

2.6.2 Categorisation

Category-building is based on grouping codes from data, distinguishing GT from other qualitative research methods, such as content analysis. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), category building is based on two principles: data should not be forced, and the researcher should employ theoretical sensitivity. The development of categories involved organising the fractured codes into concepts and coherent explanatory categories. In line with GT methodology, literature on learning transfer was not consulted at this stage to ensure that prior literature does not force or influence categories.

Category development in GT can be done in two ways. The first involves grouping similar concepts under an abstract heading. In contrast, the second refers to concepts that do not belong to any identified groupings (Chametzky, 2016). The latter concepts were analysed further to see how they could fit into the emerging phenomenon and their relationships with the categories. This additional analysis was done by revisiting the data and accessing additional recorded interviews.

The distinct feature of a category is that it has properties, and Glaser further defined property as a “type of concept that has conceptual characteristics of a category” (Glaser, 2017). There are also suggestions that categories are variables; in other texts, categories and variables are used interchangeably. It is important to note that “variable” is associated with quantitative studies and should not be confused with categories, which are groupings of codes in qualitative data analysis.

Glaser (1978b) suggested that, as part of the analysis process, the researcher considers analysing data through stages or phases. Data were analysed for processes that unfolded as well as for interactions. GT studies problems within a context and social reality and is constructed in an ever-changing reality; thus, time consideration is critical. Category development proceeded until saturation was reached**.** Saturating data refers to a phenomenon in which new participants continue to be brought on board until the dataset is complete and no new data is identified (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009).

The researcher can return to the participants for the second and third time to elicit data to expand the depth or address the gaps in the emerging analysis. However, caution should be exercised to avoid saturating participants (Breckenridge & Jones, 2009). In this study, participants were not revisited several times. Data collection involved, in certain instances, listening to more than one or multiple interview encounters per GYE with various interviewing stations or events that would add more clarity on issues raised in other interviews and related to the saturation of concepts. Interviews with additional participants can be conducted to increase the scope, adequacy, and appropriateness of data; this was not done in the current study because of the unavailability of participants who cancelled appointments due to other competing demands.

To enhance the category development process, the density and complexity of categories were expanded by describing their properties (attributes of categories), exploring variations in the data, and reconceptualising categories and their relationships as necessary. This process was repeated until categorical saturation was achieved (Andrews et al., 2012). Identifying and specifying the interrelationships among the categories led to substantive theory development. Relationships among categories were constantly examined to help develop substantive theories.

Categorisation was done by looking at the relationship between codes and concepts; if they appear to form part of the same theme or have an underlying meaning, they would be put together (Glaser, 2017). At this stage, sequencing and the frequency of codes were not utilised to develop categories. All the codes were written down, and repeated codes were only reflected once without reflecting the number of times the code had appeared; the note was made that the code seems to appear from data frequently captured in the memos.

Sorting was performed at the initial category development stage without necessarily considering the research question. Codes that appeared related were grouped together and then assigned a name/category. During this process, efforts were made to be as open-minded, creative, and unbiased as possible.

The identified categories can be linked to processes, for example, acquiring knowledge as a category. Some codes that captured similar processes were retained during the category development process. However, others were retained alone as categories, such as outsourcing, as this was an important observation from the data.

Codes and concepts were arranged in circles, with the categories reflected in rectangles, as shown in Figure 2.2. Fifteen (15) categories that focused on actions, conditions, and consequences and captured the attitude part of the ACAC coding process were identified. The sequential approach was initially used to establish relationships between categories.

Arrows were then used to indicate the links between the categories, thereby noting that the relationships between the categories are multifaceted. Two core categories may emerge; however, priority should be given to developing a theory. Glaser (1992) guides choosing the core category by asking, “What is going on here?”. A central or core category is identified, which integrates all other categories. In this study, a near-core category and a central theoretical category were identified, and pursuance was given to the latter.

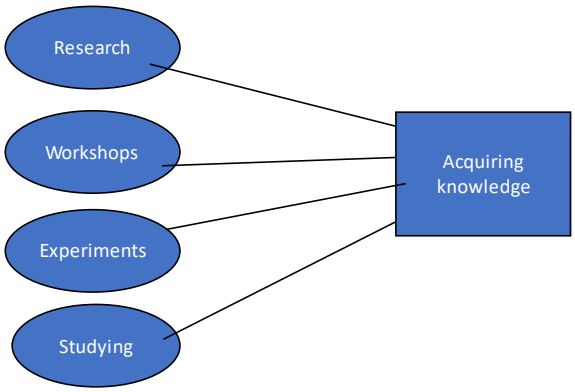

FIGURE 2. 2 CONCEPTS TO CATEGORIES (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

The core category had a relationship with all other categories; it was the category with the highest number of arrows going towards it (Glaser, 2017). The unfolding process

resembles some aspects of complexity theory, as the arrows demonstrate that the process is not linear but complex.

Figure 2.3 illustrates that although strategising has direct and indirect links with other categories, the categories with direct arrows linking them to strategising included:

- Environmental assessment
- Acquiring knowledge
- Self-assessment
- Envisioning
- Decision making

The relationship between the core and other categories is twofold in that they mutually influence each other.

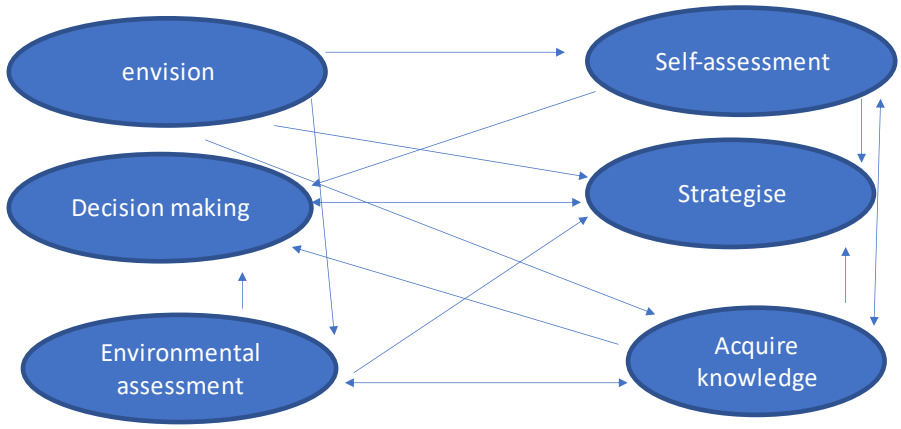

FIGURE 2. 3 RELATIONSHIPS AMONG CATEGORIES (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

The GYE's main concern of staying afloat was mapped against the identified categories to determine whether the latter addressed the GYE's primary concern. Two significant areas were observed, namely product development and sales. GYE was concerned about

ensuring the continuous manufacturing of products so they could be continuously sold to stay afloat. This raised the question of at which point the learning transfer starts, whether prior to production or at the point of sale.

What were their concerns?

- staying afloat
- access to markets
- sustainability
- sale of products

The research questions about sources of learning for GYE and how they implement their learning (what are the different vehicles and pathways that GYE use) guided reduction and merging the categories into four main categories, which were strategising, self-assessment, acquiring knowledge, and environmental assessment, which lead to the identification of the core category.

2.6.3 Memo writing

Memo writing commenced from the beginning of the study as part of the mapping process that records all activities from conceptualisation, analytic questions, and the decision-making process. Memos provide transparency in the emergence process and share insights into the theory's development (Nathaniel, 2019). Memoing helped distance oneself from the data, thus increasing the legitimacy and credibility of the process.

The evolving thinking processes during the study were recorded. Memos tracked identifying the evolution of the theory in the study (Themelis, Sime, & Thornberg, 2022). Memo writing was direct, immediate, and written in simple language (Denzin, 2010). GT theorists are required to think flexibly, critically, and abstractly.

Examples of memos are presented in Appendix I. Memos were generated and utilised throughout the coding, concept, category, and theory development processes.

2.6.4 Constant comparison analysis

Constant Comparison Analysis (CCA) involves contrasting data against itself, evolving original data, and theoretical and conceptual claims, leading to relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations, and applications (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). There are three types of constant comparative analyses, as highlighted by classical GT, Glaser and Strauss (1967):

- Incident to incident
- Concepts of incidents in new data
- Concept to concept

Birks and Mills (2015) proposed that comparative analysis can be done in various ways, including comparing incident to incident, incident to codes, codes to codes, codes to category, and category to category, sharing a similar view to Glaser and Strauss. Empirical indicators from data such as actions and events described in interviewees' words or pre-coded interviews were compared. CCA was implemented throughout the data analysis process.

Openness to discovery, which is the defining process of GT as both inductive and abductive GT, was maintained throughout data analysis. Incidences were compared, and codes and concepts were compared to categories in search of relationships between them (Elliott & Jordan, 2010).

Contradictory statements within and between interviews were identified, for example:

Having the passion to fight for equality and opportunities. The passion to fight for what's yours, for yourself, to make it in this world as a black child, given our backgrounds and past injustices that deprived us economically, that's how it has translated to me. We are just fighting, that's what I think it means to me. It's a struggle and a fight we should ultimately win (Iris)

“I don’t think I've ever had problems being black. I've lived in Cape Town and had my business get supported by all races. Other entrepreneurs would complain about a lot of things due to the demographics, but it has never been an issue for me. I never really had issues even though we operated in the same space. The right products don’t know colour. (Iris)

“Black entrepreneurship got that negative connotation, unfortunately (association with poor service delivery). I think people should be patient with black entrepreneurs. I mean these sorts of things still happen with white-owned companies too. (Iris)

Comparisons were also performed across various participants during the category-development stage. Contradicting observations were made from the data, with some interviewees stating the importance of coming from a family background where people owned businesses before as an important baseline, whereas other participants had a different perspective and considered family background as less relevant.

The comparison of interviews also occurred at the category-development stage. One had to constantly revert to previous data to check incidents for similar or contradictory perspectives that had been shared before. While revisiting the data, the researcher drew a ship with its sails raised and wondered whether the racial barriers that some participants expressed could be seen as rough winds that blow a ship off course.

A reflection was made on the sacrifices made by the entrepreneurs when they started their businesses, such as loss of income. The researcher tried to compare the feeling of loss that the sailor goes through when they leave port and head offshore, not knowing when they will be able to walk on dry land again. They probably experience some feeling of loss.

A comparison was made of the summary of all the interviews. The enthusiasm in all the GYEs was noted as they were committed to pursuing their course, fearless, and determined to continue amid various challenges. Another observation from these interviews was that some GYEs were business managers, whereas others were more innovative in product development.

In some instances, the CCA involved analysing more than one interview conducted by the same person with different media houses, which added to the richness of the data. Glaser and Holton (2007) indicate that CCA includes substantive and theoretical coding.

2.6.5 Emergence

identified the emergence of theory from data as one of the most critical aspects differentiating GT from other research methods.

The guide was revised in line with the analysis performed during category development and renamed the Data Analysis Guide Theory emergence. One of the questions added was about the survival kit, which was prompted by what one participant said: "*in this industry, one needs to have a survival kit*." This comment led the researcher to revisit all the data to check how survival in the industry was dealt with.

GT literature posits emergence as a core factor in GT because everything unfolds like peeling an onion; at every step, one makes discoveries about data and the self as a researcher (Glaser, 1978b, 2017). One was learning to discover and acknowledge one's vulnerabilities to research anxiety and the viability of research choices during the study. It became more justified and convincing that classic GT was the right approach, as the emphasis was on enriching the methodology based on data and not necessarily adhering to steps outlined in previous studies.

This theory was formed by proposing plausible relationships between concepts (Glaser, 2017). Additional data codes further explained tentative theories, theoretical assertions, and propositions. Emergent theory was tested through theoretical sampling (Glaser, 2017).

2.6.6 Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling is when a researcher deliberately identifies participants who would further enrich the analytical process (Urquhart, 2022) and provide more clarity regarding this phenomenon. As such, they were not part of the initial purposive sample, but the categorisation process informed their selection.

Theoretical sampling of secondary data was performed by moving back and forth within the transcript and accessing more pre-recorded interviews (Andrews et al., 2012). Theoretical sampling occurred when data were simultaneously collected, coded, and analysed. The researcher decided what data to collect next and where to find it to develop the theory as it emerged (Glaser, 1978a).

Glaser (1978b) recommended data collection strategies related to theoretical sampling, including staying open by changing interviewing styles, sites, or participants' data and asking key participants to provide more information on the category that seems central to the emerging theory. Theoretical sampling continued concurrently with data analysis until the category was saturated.

Using secondary data, one could move back and forth between the transcripts and theoretically sample emerging ideas and concepts. One also had the opportunity to sample additional pre-recorded interviews to inform about emerging categories and their properties. One also accessed additional interviews with the same interviewee to obtain more clarity and additional information, which would have been done through probing had one chosen to revisit previous participants. Theoretical sampling also included returning to existing data to identify incidents that supported or refuted the emerging theory for this study.

There is disagreement on the appropriate time for the researcher to introduce theoretical sampling within the data analysis process (Glaser & Holton, 2007). Caution should be exercised because if theoretical sampling is performed too early in the process, it might limit emerging categories and stifle openness, leading the study to be directional and forcing rather than adhering to or being grounded in emergence (Glaser, 1978b). Premature theoretical sampling may also lead to premature closure.

Theoretical sampling was performed until saturation was achieved. All data was included in the analysis to ensure completeness and reduce the chance of overlooking important information. Theoretical sampling in this study commenced only after the analysis of the three interviews (primary data) that had been conducted. Birks et al. (2019) stated that

theoretical sampling should start early in GT following the data collected from a small sample identified based on purposive sampling. Revisiting interviews and listening to more interviews with similar or more GYE formed part of the theoretical sampling for this study until theoretical saturation was achieved.

During the interviews, GYE referred to issues such as partnering with peers to increase or improve market access and a search for interviews that had already been conducted with these peers. The researcher deliberately identified participants who were engaged in enriching the analytical process. The sources of information utilised for theoretical sampling included the following:

- Drinkbiz radio- podcast.google.com/feed
- Nedbank young professionals
- Mail and Guardian top 200
- Game changers
- Liabo Setho SABC
- Young professionals.co.za
- Hustlerscorner podcast

Further sampling focused on identifying additional incidents, events, and activities as directed by evolving theoretical constructs and the explanatory adequacy of the theoretical constructs and empirical indicators (Glaser, 1978b). This process continued until theoretical saturation was reached, and additional analysis no longer contributed to anything new about concepts.

2.6.7 Theoretical sensitivity and researcher reflections

Glaser (1978b) emphasised the importance of theoretical sensitivity. The researcher should be able to assess how their belief system would likely influence their data analysis and interpretation process and continuously manage it; this is called reflexivity. Critical in GT studies is the researcher's philosophy, as one's belief system influences one's perception of reality. According to Fassinger (2005), human beings are not independent

of their perception of reality, which influences how they approach life and their chosen areas of interest. He also suggests that people's philosophy influences how they pursue their areas of interest regarding knowledge acquisition and the questions asked, primarily influenced by their history and context.

As part of adhering to theoretical sensitivity, the researcher was open, sensitive, creative and willing to relinquish ideas poorly supported by data or emerging categories (Glaser, 1978b). Due to their previously held assumptions and theoretical framework, the researcher is often viewed as the greatest hidden threat to validity in qualitative studies. In this study, great care was taken to bracket out previously held assumptions that influenced the emerging theory; it was based on data.

The naturalistic posture contends that epistemologically, the researcher and research participant are active role players in the study of the phenomenon to the extent that the study's findings are a co-creation of the inquiry process (Glaser, 2017). The role played in this study was to conduct interviews and analyse primary and secondary data to outline the inquiry process based on data.

Researchers can choose to take a position of inclusion both in the field and in the final product of the study or to play an independent role. A researcher can assume an emic or etic perspective. The emic perspective acknowledges the participant's view as an insider in the research process, while the etic perspective acknowledges the researcher as an outsider to the phenomenon under study (Fram, 2013). A balance between the two perspectives was maintained as one remained neutral. Hussein et al. (2014) emphasise that researchers should take a reflexive position to stay engaged while interacting with data, which was achieved in this study.

2.6.8 Selective coding

Selective coding forms part of substantive coding but occurs after open or initial coding. Unlike the initial coding, where information is dissected, the categories are identified, which focuses on collecting and analysing data related to the core category and its related

categories (Holton et al., 2010). This process reduced the number of initially identified categories, focusing on the core category as the theory developed.

Saturation was reached when data from 30 GYEs were considered continuously revisited, and the data were denser as it included instances where some of the GYEs had been interviewed by more than one media house or different media platforms.

According to LaRossa (2005), theoretical stories are GT fortes. GT narratives provide a compelling story but are reasonably accurate. Storytelling may assume an idiographic or confessional style or theoretical stories that emphasise the complexity of reality and relationships. Strauss and Corbin (1998) defined selective coding as explicating a storyline. To remain on course, one should repeatedly ask which phenomenon is central. The current study also incorporated these guidelines to help keep in touch with the focus of the study. To help maintain the central proposition, one utilised the following guiding questions.

- What is the issue?
- What have I learned from the investigation?
- What is central?
- What relationship exists?

The core category should demonstrate a relationship with other categories, either systematically or schematically, which was achieved in the current study.

There was a time when it appeared the participants were *pursuing* (the theory of pursuing a dream at whatever cost), in pursuit, pursuance. The researcher considered weaving and knitting as they appeared to be weaving through internal and external factors affecting their actions. It was noted that their destiny was defined in the manufacturing sector and as entrepreneurs, but their journey was uncertain. However, there is an illusion that there is something better on the other side of the sea, and they all had vivid ideas. This was related to observations made when growing up and watching movies or series involving ships at sea. Based on one memory of what was perceived to be happening as part of the sailing analogies, the researcher reflected and had this story to tell:

"*You sail your way through - how does sailing in the sea work (destination defined, roadmap in the bag, a few instruments like navigators, the rest is unknown and dependent on the weather in the sea); the wind blows and the sailor has to observe, calculate, strategies on how to navigate the waves, experience comes in handy as it sometimes guides the sailor on what to do but at times the challenge is new and the sailor has to use the gut feel and improvise.*

The sailor can rely on the assistance of passing ships from fellow sailors. They can use the knowledge they learned prior to embarking on a journey. Sometimes, the seas are rough, the wind blows too strongly, and they must exercise patience. Sometimes, the winds are calm, and they take advantage of it to regain strength and travel a distance. Sometimes it rains, and sometimes it is hot. Sometimes, you pause to fix some loose ends that have appeared along the way. You are dealing with unchartered territory; there is too much uncertainty and too many unknowns, but you are determined to reach your destination even if it might take longer than previously planned, routes that were not anticipated (rerouting) and unconventional methods like offloading some of the baggage along the way to reduce the weight of the load.

There is a balance of internal forces (inner character and knowledge) and external forces: the environment. When winds blow heavily, you need all hands on deck - your team and the team effort. When the ship has gone through rough seas and appears to make unknown sounds, you ask passing ships for assistance, and you either collaborate or partner. When you seem to lose direction and after communicating with nearby ships, it appears you are going in the same direction you follow on their path and allow them to mentor you; they have made a trip before and appear to know which directions have fewer devastating winds and sometimes faster routes."

Based on a constant comparison of incidences in the data, this storyline helped abstract the glue that GYE embarked on to resolve GYE's main concern.

2.6.9 Theoretical coding

The theoretical code identifies how substantive codes relate to each other to conceptualise a theoretical framework (Glaser, 2013; Holton et al., 2010). According to Hernandez (2009), identifying theoretical codes can be challenging for less experienced GT implementers. Theoretical codes are critical to the development of substantive theories.

A theoretical code provides a relational model through which all substantive codes and their essences are captured, thus providing a broader picture and a new perspective. The current study identifies *relating* as the theoretical code that binds all substantive codes and provides a broader picture and new perspective (Glaser & Holton, 2004b). Hernandez (2009) cautions researchers against conjecture or pet codes overlaid on data rather than theoretical codes that emerge during the data analysis.

2.6.10 Sorting and writing

The memo sorting and writing process commences after the theoretical saturation of categories is achieved (Glaser & Holton, 2004b). Sorting started with the core category and was followed by other categories as they related to the core category. Further memos were generated during the sorting process, as the researcher paused and wrote memos during sorting, which resulted in theoretical sorting memos (Glaser, 2017). There was a thorough engagement with memos throughout the writing process to ensure the completeness of the emerging theory.

CGGT advocates the inductive discovery of systematically analysed data as a basis for the theory development process and theory generation. The theory emerged with the constant comparison method and explained this phenomenon. This study demonstrated that CCA was utilised throughout the analysis until the theory emerged. According to Glaser and Holton (2005a), theoretical coding helps identify the core category, thus helping to develop a proposition.

The proposed theory offers a coherent, contextualised explanation of a phenomenon and articulates the interrelationships among the constructs undergirding the theory.

Substantive theory was grounded in data and identified patterns across and within a phenomenon or area of social concern (Deering & Williams, 2020; Hernandez, 2009).

This theory asserts a plausible relationship between the constructs or categories. GT aims to develop a theory and not test an existing theory. Andersson (2016) distinguishes between formal and substantive theories. He refers to substantive theory as consisting of propositions attributing variables to a core category arranged around a core problem and formal theory as meant to address conceptual areas of inquiry with broad applicability and not specific to a particular context or group. The theory developed in this study can be considered a substantive theory, as it is not generalisable.

2.7 Ensuring legitimation and research evaluation

Research studies differ from other reports based on their ability to respond to the criteria set to test them. Quantitative research studies are tested based on reliability and validity and are referred to as rationalistic paradigms. Qualitative studies were evaluated based on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Daniel, 2019). Generalisability is not a criterion for evaluating substantive theories, as they are not generalisable (but should be testable); thus, it does not apply in this study (Anderson, 2017).

Dependability is equated to reliability in quantitative studies. It denotes that the process of selecting, justifying and applying the research methodology is clearly explained. There are documented methods of verifying the process, which may be called an audit trail (Daniel, 2019). The rigour of qualitative studies is centred on trustworthiness.

Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978b) and (Glaser, 2017) identified criteria for evaluating CGGT studies; initially, the criteria involved fit, work, relevance and modifiability; this was later expanded to include understanding, grab, control and general.

Fit refers to the emergence of conceptual codes and categories from data. This study's codes were derived from the data and formed the basis for the developed categories.

Work refers to the ability of grounded theory to interpret and explain behaviour in substantive areas. Relational learning transfer explains how GYE acquires learning, considers the environment within which it operates, and establishes the relationship through which it implements its learning.

Relevance refers to the ability of a theory to focus on the main concern that emerges in the substantive area. GYE's main concern is staying afloat and ensuring their enterprises remain sustainable and operational. GYE establish relationships to learn more about product development and sales. They learn from these relationships and implement them to the self, others, customers, and suppliers.

Understandable refers to the ability of the study to be understood by laypersons and professionals. Relational Learning Transfer Theory provides a straightforward account of how GYE establish relationships and how each relationship benefits the main concern of staying afloat. The theory explains the key participants in Relational Learning Transfer Theory and their roles. People with a range of educational backgrounds can easily understand this theory.

Grab - Interesting to those within the substantive area. Relational Learning Transfer Theory focuses on learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector, and this study was the first to focus on this cohort and an empirical study. Learning transfer is an area that presents substantial scope for future research.

General can be applied by diverse groups of people within the substantive area. Relational Learning Transfer Theory is transferrable.

Modifiable - theory allows for modification when new data is introduced to the substantive area

Other ways to establish the rigour of GT include:

- The basis for selecting the original sample
- categories that emerged in the initial data analysis

- Indicators that suggested major categories
- How the initial categories directed the theoretical sampling
- Establishing the relationships among the categories - how was it done
- The process of selecting the core category

This study met the criteria for rigour and trustworthiness required for grounded theory studies. The debate on how qualitative studies account for rigour is ongoing (Trainor & Graue, 2014). The qualitative studies were criticised for only accounting for rigour *post hoc* and less emphasis on the verification processes during the study. The *post hoc* evaluation was viewed as too late to self-correct mistakes that might have occurred during the study. There were also some criticisms levelled against qualitative studies that depended on external judgement to determine rigour rather than depending on the investigator's ability to apply the relevant instruments (White & Cooper, 2022).

Rigour was built into the research process through methodological coherence and alignment with the research question, appropriate purposive and theoretical sampling, sampling adequacy, data saturation, and constant comparative analysis (Johnson, Adkins, & Chauvin, 2020).

2.8 Limitations of the study (methodological)

As a methodology, CGGT has received criticism. The shortcoming is that GT occurs in a social context, and social conditions cannot be reproduced, thus limiting its reproducibility (Miller, 2015). The findings of this study are transferable and not generalisable (Daniel, 2019).

This study used primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to data collected initially for the current study, and secondary data refers to data not explicitly collected for the current study (Andrews et al., 2012). This study utilised pre-existing interviews that GYE had conducted with various media houses to answer the research question and as the art of the data collection process. The limitation of this method is that the analysis is based

on available data without posing follow-up comments, questions, or opportunities to seek clarity.

2.9 Ethical considerations

The Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) of the University of Witwatersrand approved the research study. The study complied with the ethical standards of confidentiality regarding the information gathered during the data collection. The information gathered through the interviews was shared only with supervisors when requested. The importance of non-disclosure of participant details, as they share sensitive information, was observed; this principle also applies to supervisors. Pseudonyms were used to protect the interviewees' identity and ensure anonymity and privacy.

Participation was voluntary, and participants were furnished with a participant information sheet and requested to sign consent forms before participating in the study. Informed consent forms and participant information sheets were emailed to the participants before the interview. The participant information sheet form covered issues such as the right to stop participating in the study should the interviewee choose to do so and confidentiality.

An ethical dilemma was experienced during the write-up process, which involved whether to utilise the word participant or interviewee; the data extracted from interviews that were available online had not explicitly given consent for the interviews to be analysed, even though the interviews were freely available in the public space. There was also a risk that some individuals or a cohort may have identifiable characteristics. To minimise the risk of identification, the participant profile only provided a generic outline without going into details (Hasan, 2021). In line with the principle of non-maleficence and to conceal the identities, pseudonyms were used for data from pre-recorded interviews. Some of the GYE consented to use interviews accessed from the Internet, although these consents were verbal and not written.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an account of the research methodology from theoretical and practical perspectives. CGGT provided an opportunity to explore learning transfer among GYE without preconceived ideas. In grounded theory, data collection and analysis co-occur, although, in this chapter, it might have appeared that they occurred sequentially. The data analysis process commenced with information, line-by-line and in vivo coding. This led to identifying codes or concepts, which were later condensed into subcategories and categories. The process later advanced to identify the core category and develop substantive theory.

Chapter Three: Presentation of Study Findings

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. South Africa is currently facing high youth unemployment and job creation challenges. Understanding how youth, including GYE, survive in their businesses can provide solutions to how the country can intervene to reduce high unemployment levels and improve job creation opportunities. How learning transfer occurs among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector was explored using CGGT, and a summary of the findings is presented below.

Linden and Palmieri (2021) guided the presentation of CGGT findings. This chapter outlines the data analysis process followed to arrive at the findings, present and explain the main concern, core category and related categories, assertions, and proposed theory. Below is some of the frequently used terminology.

- Codes - identify anchors that allow the key points of data to be gathered
- Concepts - refer to collections of codes of similar content that can be grouped together
- Categories - refer to a group of concepts that are similar and used to generate a theory
- Theory – an explanation of the pattern of behaviour or phenomenon

3.1 Unpacking the data analysis journey

The data analysis process commenced with open coding prior to category development. Coding involves the fracturing of data to develop codes and concepts, and the category development process involves collating codes to form a category.

The analysis of the data resulted in the mapping below Figure 3.1- conceptual mapping.

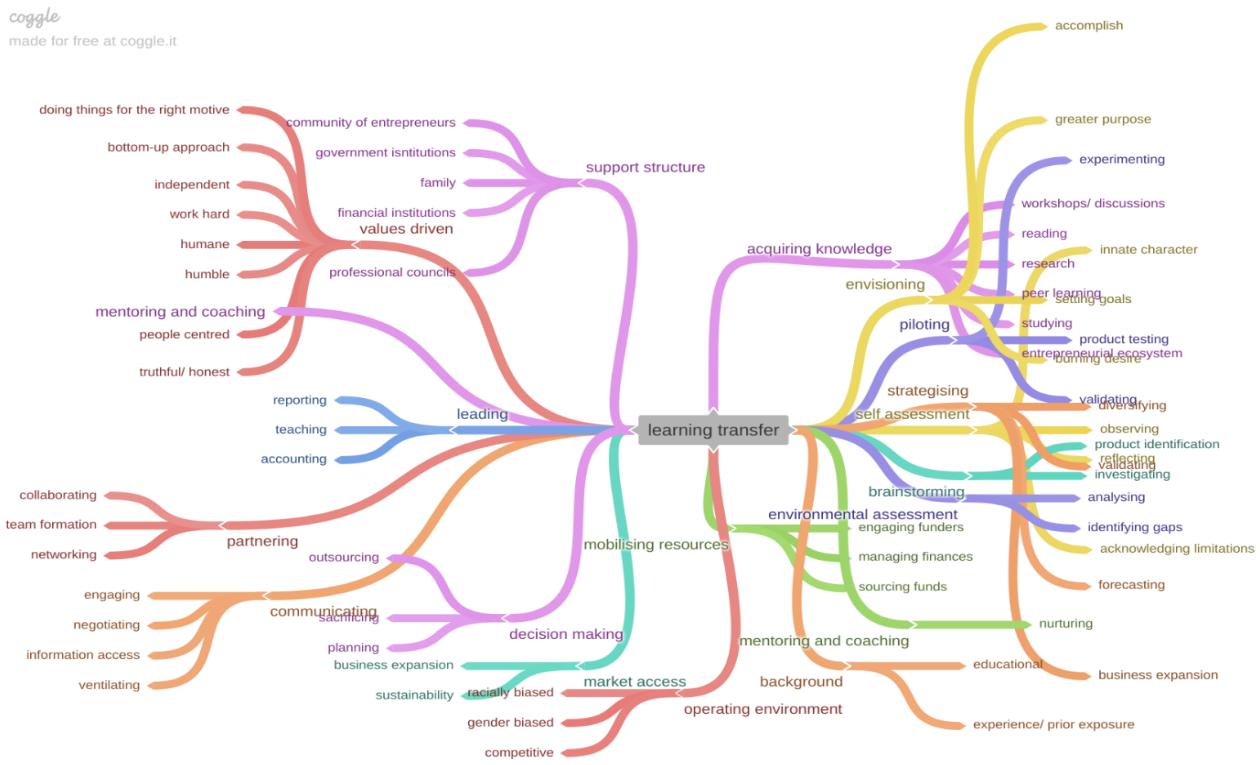

FIGURE 3. 1 CONCEPTUAL MAPPING (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

This study utilised the ACAC approach to analyse the data, which refers to action, condition, attitude, and sequence. These categories were formulated in line with the ACAC model. “A” reflected actions GYE took in their daily conduct of their work. “C” reflected the conditions under which the GYE operated daily for learning transfer. “A” reflected the attitude required by GYE for learning transfer to occur. “C” reflected the negative and positive consequences linked to the ability to take action, attitude, and conditions under which GYE conducted their business. This helped identify the main concern for GYE in this study. Below is a table of the categories and a brief outline of the various categories.

Glaser (2002) identified questions that should be asked about the emerging phenomenon: when, where, why, who, how, and the consequences of the phenomenon. Providing answers to these questions enhanced the explanatory power of the concepts. Data were continuously revisited to answer these questions. The questions involved:

- When did learning transfer occur? What are the conditions surrounding the phenomenon?
- Where and at what stage did it occur – was it in the workplace, when a person was growing up, with peers?
- Who played a role in the learning transfer process?
- Why was learning transfer happening - what triggered it?
- How was learning transfer happening - action and what attitude?
- What were the consequences?

Answering the above questions resulted in the development of categories, as illustrated in Table 3.1. The above categories were organised around four themes related to the core category:

- categories that addressed the main concerns raised by GYE
- categories that addressed the environment where learning occurred
- categories that addressed how and from where learning was acquired
- categories that addressed how learning was transferred and who were the main actors in the transfer process

TABLE 3. 1 CATEGORIES AND CONCEPTS (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Codes and Concepts (conceptual codes)	**Sub-Categories**	**Categories**	**Core category and theory**
▪ Observing ▪ Acknowledging limitations ▪ Reflecting ▪ Innate character	Self-assessment	Acquiring learning	Relating
▪ Humane ▪ Humble ▪ Work hard ▪ Independent	▪ Values and Attributes		

Codes and Concepts (conceptual codes)	Sub-Categories	Categories	Core category and theory
▪ Respect people/ people centred ▪ Bottom-up approach ▪ Truthful/honest ▪ Doing things for the right motives ▪ Determined ▪ Committed			
▪ Research ▪ Peer learning ▪ Reading ▪ Workshops/ discussions ▪ Studying ▪ Entrepreneurial ecosystems	▪ Acquiring knowledge		
▪ Product testing ▪ Validity ▪ Experimenting	▪ Piloting		
▪ Cultivating ▪ Nurturing	▪ Mentoring and coaching		
▪ Analysing ▪ Identifying gaps ▪ Gender bias ▪ Racial bias	▪ Environmental assessment	Contextualising learning environment	
▪ Market access ▪ Competition	▪ Operating environment		
▪ Engaging funders ▪ Managing finances ▪ Sourcing funds	▪ Mobilising resources		

Codes and Concepts (conceptual codes)	Sub-Categories	Categories	Core category and theory
▪ Community of entrepreneurs ▪ Government institutions ▪ Family ▪ Financial institutions ▪ Professional councils	▪ Support structure		
▪ Engaging ▪ Negotiating ▪ Information accessing ▪ Venting ▪ Communication tools-podcasts, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, internet	▪ Communicating	Strategising	
▪ Team formation ▪ Networking ▪ Collaborating	▪ Partnering		
	Outsourcing		
▪ Investigating ▪ Product identification	▪ Brainstorming		
▪ Goals setting ▪ Greater purpose ▪ Burning desire ▪ Accomplishment	▪ Envisioning		
▪ Diversifying ▪ Validating ▪ Business expansion or growth ▪ Forecasting	▪ Strategising		

Codes and Concepts (conceptual codes)	Sub-Categories	Categories	Core category and theory
▪ Nurturing ▪ Accounting ▪ Reporting ▪ Teaching	▪ Leading		
▪ Planning ▪ Sacrificing ▪	▪ Decision making		

3.2 The main concern- staying afloat

In analysing the data, incidents that GYE referred to throughout the data were identified. The Main concern was identified as staying afloat, and various factors characterised it. The main concerns were tabulated under the consequences of action or non-action, prevailing conditions, and required attitudes during the coding process. Getting the product from the manufacturing depot to the customer- what is needed; ensuring that the customer continues to choose this product- finds value in this product and sustainability; this product is competitive and becomes a product of choice.

(a) Business viability

GYEs are concerned about business viability. Viability measures a business's ability to start, grow, and survive; it factors in the target market, competition, sourcing, and overall financial potential. This is done by assessing the market size; for example, if the market is large enough to accommodate new sales, customers have discretionary income, and who are the most important retailers in the market? GYE shared concerns, highlighting that locally produced and manufactured goods struggle to survive or be viable as the markets are flooded with cheap goods from China.

(b) Business sustainability

GYE were worried about their doors remaining open and staying afloat. They do not want to see their business close but would like to remain competitive.

"Our medium to long-term plans includes opening our uniform concept stores as well as growing our capacity to manufacture internally all our products once we have created sustainable demand. Building your own business is like moulding your clay and watching it take shape. What gives me satisfaction is seeing that clay taking shape and getting comfort that I can see where I am going, although there is still a lot of work to be done". (XH).

Business expansion and increasing the footprint form part of the goals for enterprises.

(c) Market access

GYE were also concerned with market access. They want to establish markets for their products so that their businesses can survive and thrive. GYE are new to the entrepreneurial arena. The analysis sought to understand where and from whom GYE learned how to access the markets, how they acquired this knowledge, and how they implemented it in practical terms. Access to markets ensures that businesses are sustainable and grow.

The concept of market access as a barrier appeared in most interviews. GYE expressed concerns regarding accessing markets to sell their products.

"You should stop wasting people's time when you tell a person to come, I have been invited to two trade shows and I am not going there when I am struggling to sell it here down the road at a warehouse. That is why export is for people who have already succeeded in the local market and therefore are looking for new growth outside our borders You have to grow here first, then you grow and you expand". (Thina)

"So, I would always tell people to say in as much as you are producing things you must always make sure that you have a market, and you are always in touch with your market

and to have market accessibility and your market shows potential. You need to drive that market access you need to drive the market growth as your company". (Nono)

GYE need access to the markets for incremental growth and business expansion

"Look access to markets, is about access to South Africa, I think for me it is about the economy, it is procurement. If you want to transform the economy you want to transform procurement that, is it. Because what is the economy? It is the purchase of goods and services Until you transform who you buy from the economy will not transform". (Thina)

"If the product is not there you do not care. Is not where you want it, you wanna buy now. So, access to retail is access to the economy". (TN)

"*This brings me to challenge number two, access to the market. This is something that I have interestingly taken on the challenge, happily, there is finding spaces to be physical so that your consumer can find you (GN). So here I am trying to start a range, and understand the industry, but now I am having to create a marketplace for not just myself but entrepreneurs like me with big followings whose customers are great but I wanna touch and feel because that is what Africans do, we touch we feel, and we are tactile. The second challenge was distribution". (Gwen)*

(d) Product sales

GYEs were concerned about product sales. Data indicated this concern, as product sales are linked to profit, viability, sustainability, and brand reputation. It gives the business a competitive edge: its ability to stay ahead of the present and potential competition.

(e) Financial resources

GYE were concerned about financial resources when their businesses were at conceptual stages and even when they thought of business expansion or growth, which they called scaling. In the data analysis, one sought to understand how GYE resolved this concern, from where or whom they learned how to deal with it, what strategies they employed, and how they implemented them. How did they deal with finances in the ongoing day-to-day

running of the business, and how did they manage risks? Where did they learn from, and how did they implement it?

It was noted that GYEs are concerned not only about profit but also about their enterprises' impact on the lives of others and the greater good. This aligns with sustainability, which refers to doing business without negatively affecting the environment, the community, and society.

(f) Operating environment

The other concern of GYE was the operating environment that they are operating in, which presents both positive and negative aspects. The negative aspects that present barriers include the highly regulated environment, racially-biased environment, and gender-biased environment. The global environment was also a concern for GYE as they are start-ups that must compete with well-established businesses in the same industry with financial muscles for scaling. GYE must learn how to deal with these concerns; the question is how they acquire and put this knowledge into practice.

Identifying and relating these concerns to the study's objective, which is how learning transfer occurs among GYE, helped identify the core category.

Two significant areas can be observed from the data: product development and product sales, as the two points of the axis, as indicated in Figure 3.2. The question asked was whether learning transfer starts before production or whether it only occurs between the two axes, occurs only after sales, or occurs throughout the continuum.

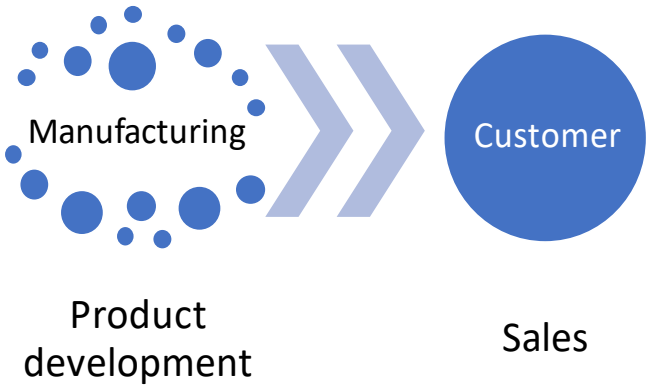

FIGURE 3. 2 THE MAIN CONCERN-STAYING AFLOAT, PRODUCTION TO SALES CONTINUUM (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

- Choosing which product to manufacture (relationship with stakeholders).
- Getting the product from the manufacturing depot to the customer what is needed (distribution/market access–relationship with retailers).
- Ensuring that the customer continuously chooses this product and finds value in it (relationship with customers/client, relationship with self/assessing, and reflecting).
- Sustainability: This product is competitive and becomes a product of choice (relationship with academic institutions, relationship with suppliers/negotiating input material prices).
- Business viability- (relationship with workplace team, relationship with sponsors/ investors).

If these were the concerns that GYE were dealing with in the day-to-day running of their enterprises, from where did they gain the knowledge to address these concerns, what were their sources of learning and how did they respond to them, what were their strategies, and how did they transfer what they have learned to address their practical concerns or challenges?

Categories were identified from code-based concepts from the data. Three categories were established that are directly linked to the concerns of GYE. Their concerns differed depending on the stage of their enterprises, and it was necessary to include all the stages because learning transfer occurs throughout the business's lifespan.

3.3 Resolving the main concern - core category and related categories

3.3.1 Core category-relating

According to Glaser (2017, p. 227), a core category is a basic social process. He defined core categories as “theoretical reflections and summarisation of the patterned, systematic uniformity flows of social life’ (Glaser, 1978b, p. 100). The core category identified the phenomena discovered in this study. In this study, relating was identified as the core category. GYE transfer learning through relationships. Basic social processes are said to be processual; they occur over time and are often demarcated in stages. Relating (relationship building) is a social process that occurs over time and can be demarcated in stages. What is the issue, and what phenomena are being addressed? How were GYE transferring what they had learned in the workplace? Who or what people or actors were involved?

To develop the core category an attempt was made to identify relationships or links between the various categories as depicted in Figure 3.3 - relationships between categories. When all this happened, the two questions were asked: How does this explain the learning transfer among GYE, and what is their main concern? The arrows indicate that the relationships among various categories are multifaceted and do not depict linear relationships. The environment depicted the conditions in which the learning transfer occurred. For learning transfer to occur, it should have been acquired from particular sources, which plays an important role in GYE to determine whether they need to learn and decide on sources to learn from. GYE must envision where they are going or their goals to map out how they will reach their objectives, resolve their main concern, and map out strategies for implementation. The GYE resolved their main concern,

implemented, and reached their goals through relationships, relating to the environment, the self, and utilising acquired knowledge.

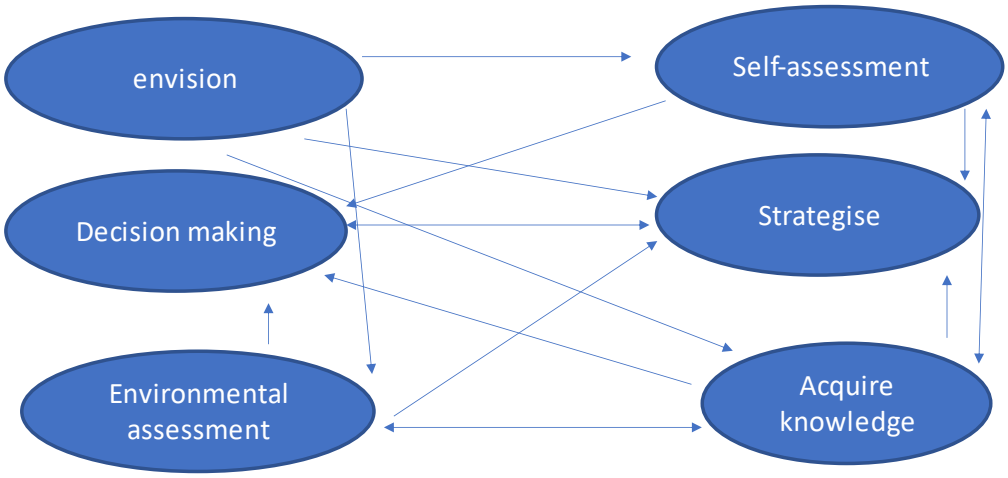

FIGURE 3. 3 RELATIONSHIPS AMONG CATEGORIES (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

The next question was what strategies GYE employed to learn and transfer to address their main concerns. Based on the developed categories, it was established that communication, support structures, self-assessment, and environmental assessment are ways GYE learn and transfer their learning. The next question was the common process unfolding among these learning and learning transfer categories. This led to the identification of strategising as the near-core category, as depicted in Figure 3.4 – identifying the near category.



FIGURE 3. 4 IDENTIFYING THE NEAR CATEGORY (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Relating (relational) is a core phenomenon that encapsulates relationship-building strategies for learning transfer in the GYE sphere of influence. Relationships are established to address concerns about business survival, access to markets, and business expansion (staying afloat). These relationships characterised the source of learning and transfer.

To assist in the theory-generating process, questions provided by (Bohm, 2004) guided the analysis, memo sorting, and writing process.

- what phenomenon was being addressed? (Learning transfer)
- Who were the people or actors involved? (Entrepreneurs, parents, siblings, lecturers, peers, friends, funding institutions, learning institutions, mentors, researchers, colleagues/teams)
- What roles did they play and how did they interact? (Teach, provide financial support, provide emotional support, guide, and soundboard)

- How were aspects of the phenomenon addressed, and what aspects were not being addressed?
- When- how long, where, how much, how strongly?
- Why- what reasons are given or may be deduced?
- For what reason, with what intention and for what purpose?
- What means, methods, tactics, and strategies are used to achieve this goal?

The above questions guided further data analysis until saturation was reached, and theoretical assertions or propositions were made for the proposed substantive theory.

The data indicated that the stakeholders involved include:

- themselves (GYE)
- partners
- peers
- family
- mentors
- regulatory structures
- customers/clients (sources of feedback)

The stakeholders play different roles such as:

- Initiate activities
- mentor
- support
- regulate

What reason and methods, tactics, and strategies were used to achieve the goal. Considering the main concern, staying afloat, Relating was identified from the data as the phenomenon/solution applied by GYE to address the problem they are most worried about. Through constant comparison, relationships between the core category and concepts from the data were continually analysed.

3.3.1.1 Self-assessment

GYE constantly assess the self when required to make decisions; this involves a process of reflection and acknowledging one's abilities.

3.3.1.1.2 Innate character

GYE, cannot explain why they preferred being entrepreneurs over working for others or corporations. They referred to their growing-up journeys, where they first noticed the inclination towards entrepreneurship, but not why they preferred that route. In most of the explanations provided by the participants, they were not able to identify when the spirit of entrepreneurship started in their lives, and most participants would identify though how they started at an early age, as they identified incidences during their primary or secondary school years when they involved themselves in businesses, starting to sell something.

"I was always that kind of person like I never believed in waste. So, it is either I save or I create an extra source of income and I take the things that I want so that was me in phase one as a child". (Nikita))

"Thing is if I talk about my background, I have always been one person who loved to do business because ever since I was a kid anything that would help me make money I would do it. Even when I was at varsity, I wanted to do business, always trying to make business". (Nono)

"Exposure, a natural inclination to entrepreneurship". (Noma)

3.3.1.1.2 Observing

Being aware of one's surroundings was found to be an essential factor possessed by GYE. They always observe what is happening around them in the environment to determine the next steps in the move. They are always conscious of the activities internally and externally, be they in the local or global sphere. "*because of how difficult the institutions you must deal with are, if you are not educated you will struggle. A lot of people in manufacturing because their family had businesses or they know somebody or*

they came from corporates. I think there are two things, you got to be resilient. I think also finance".

3.3.1.1.3 Acknowledging limitations

Knowing one's limitations is important for this cohort as it helps them decide when to seek external assistance and outsource some of the activities they cannot handle themselves, either due to time constraints or the lack of competency. GYE acknowledges their shortcomings and takes active steps to fill the identified gaps, improving their resolution to innovate and bring about solutions. This propels them to act, which is how the transfer occurs. "*We still have a long way to go. I am not denying that there is still a lot happening around with some entrepreneurs not delivering or delivering poor sub-standard service. Again, we should be patient with entrepreneurs. There is still a lot to learn. It's a journey". (Iris)*

"*Know yourself, things you are inclined to and enhance on this, make it your business".*

"It is looking for or exploring all the elements that make you who you are. I think it comes from nurturing your passion, through being an introspective person. Spend a lot of time just being alone and thinking and, trying to engage my thoughts and trying to engage sort of elements about myself that I may think I am shying away from. So, like I said I was very shy and timid and did not want to make a lot of noise, I spend a lot of time exploring why that is and unpacking it and then working through how I can overcome it. So, I think that is how you sort of unpack the pockets of who you are and then from there by unpacking it you can see or you can determine which avenues you can develop more on". (Nash)

Don't be scared to feel like a clown at the beginning- (Lulu)

3.3.1.1.4 Recognising

The GYE recognise that it is not always plain sailing, there are good and bad times. There are times characterised by uncertainty. When GYE contemplate the idea of starting a business they are excited about, they fantasise about the prosperity associated with being an entrepreneur, and little do they think of the hardships and disappointments that come

with operating in this environment. *“So as time goes on you are excited, when money starts running out the anxiety gets to you because it is like oh my God how am I gonna finish this thing and make sure that it is successful” (Nikita)*

“So, I think that is sort of how I did it, being very introspective and trying to engage the elements of myself that I tend to shy away from.” (Nash)

“So, for me as a female is that you are a female you are powerful, so many multi-facets that go for you as a woman so go for it, ground yourself, make sure you know who you are in it and then define your journey at your pace. (Gwen)

“In times of self-doubt believe in fate”

3.3.1.1.5 Reflecting

The GYE continuously reflect on the experiences and encounters that they have gone through. Reflection is an ongoing and cyclical process that helps them improve their performance and strengthen their decision-making processes. It also helps GYE develop industry knowledge and understand themselves and their environments.

Reflecting helps them improve their intervention strategies, as they know what works and does not from tried and tested methods.

“I realised after learning about the lean start-up methodology, I wasted too much money when I was starting my business that I should have not used”. (Nono)

“The reality dawns when you are on it when you realise that even if you have provided a service and delivered you cannot, may not get paid, that is where the risk comes from”. (Thina)

“The biggest mistake I made was not learning how to manage money, particularly at university, balancing or learning how to separate the two duties, especially from a financial point of view, it was a big learning curve. Learning to separate personal and business accounts.” (Luphisa)

“Learn to ask for help”. (Lomu).

“Ask for help, have people who help because you will exhaust yourself, a community of women helping each other, know your limits”. (Momo)

“Lessons learnt is don’t underestimate yourself, sometimes you can come up with brilliant ideas, something small can be a good idea (Momo)

“Learn through looking up to people, inspiration from women of different walks of life- family, friends and pioneers” (Momo)

“But there are hurdles”. (Lulu)

These subcategories reflect the importance of self-assessment for GYE in the manufacturing sector. They need to know who they are, their self-knowledge, and how to engage with themselves.

3.3.1.1.6 Values and Attributes

GYE highlighted why they conduct themselves the way they do and ascribed it to their passion for the products they manufacture. They indicated that to succeed in the industry requires patience, as things do not always happen at the pace and time that one had originally envisaged. They referred to humility as one of the required attributes, as they must acknowledge that they do not know many things about being entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector. It requires them to go and ask for guidance from existing businesses, approaching regulatory institutions, and other support structures.

“There was the vision and I had the patience. Passion is important”. (Phumu)

“For your productivity, it makes sense for you to invest your time in the things that fire you up, that people need out there. What do I jump up to do, because there lies the answer for a lot of things, for your productivity”? (Gwen)

“*Humility, willingness to learn, sheer hunger and passion*.” *(Phumu)*

“It's very important that we are patient with one another, the reason being we are new in this thing and most of us are the first generation of entrepreneurs. So, it's trial and error. We learn as we go. However, we must strive to deliver the best quality services to our clients. I am talking about performing, delivery and keeping your word”. (Iris)

“Patience, knocking from one door to the other”. (Phumu)

GYE work hard to achieve their goals; they are independent and respect all stakeholders. They further highlighted that it is important to do things for the right reasons with honesty and trustfulness. GYE are people-centred, and they indicate that they are driven by the need to see changes in their communities rather than by the profit motive.

“My business is built on the premise of "lifting as we rise" as evidenced by the social initiatives undertaken in my capacity as well as by the company”. (Iris)

GYE exhibit fearlessness as one of their attributes as they enter unknown environments.

“*For me, fearlessness is a mindset, and it is a mindset that is a huge function of experience. So, fearlessness for me is a combination of an inner drive but is also a mindset” (Gwen)*

GYE are determined people, who shared that they faced many circumstances that could have discouraged them from pursuing their course. They have experienced many barriers along the way, and remained focused and determined. This determination is important.

“It means excellence. As a black child coming from an underprivileged and marginalised background, we are doing this thing and excelling at it. We need to do it 110% because when you are black you have to do everything 110% more than our white counterparts.” (Lemon)

“When I started all, I had was reputable research and that was the one thing that kept me going along with the fortitude to follow through.” (Lumka)

“Willpower, encourage yourself.” (Momo)

“Show that you want this.” (Phumu)

3.3.1.2 Communicating

The collab came about at a time when we are rolling out our expansion strategy. We are intentional about expanding our national footprint. People have seen at an exponential rate that we are increasing our footprint from a brick-and-mortar perspective. The collab supports that very strategy. It’s a privilege to live in the same space as a big brand like CL. The collab is creating an opportunity to allow the B brand to tap into the CL market as much as they are tapping into our market. (Thabo)

3.3.1.2.1 Partnering

Partnering is an important strategy utilised by GYE to achieve their goals. GYE must learn strategies to identify partners. GYE partner to receive support, so that they can meet their business objectives, and they identify the support structures that they partner with. GYE acknowledge what they can do and outsource or partner on what they cannot do. Most of them indicated the stress they experienced when they had to be all-rounders in the initial stages of their businesses.

“So, I blend the wine with the winemaker, so I am not a winemaker myself. So, we sit down, and we take, and we blend the wine into something that I feel that my consumers or something that I like and I feels like I can sell and that is what you find in this wine company”. (Nash)

Establishing partnerships can involve more than two parties, sometimes linked to market access; for example, Thina proposes a tripartite partnership among entrepreneurs, retailers, and funders.

“Can we do a three-way partnership because you are setting up people for failure? Giving a guy R50 million of funders money, then he makes a factory sitting empty because Retailers says… what does that have to do with me because he needs to be on the shelves”.

"*If you do not have relationships, you are gone because we are not welcome in our own economy*" (Thina)

GYE are strategic when identifying stakeholders to partner with, and they have their business objectives in mind, which is a skill they learn from experience. *"Thing is corporates help universities, because when corporates, as they flourish, as we thrive in businesses some of the money, we are going to make we feed it back to the universities. They do more research that helps us in building our products and understanding the market that we are serving that's where I have learned to build strong relationships (Nono)."*

GYE acknowledge the need to form partnership even outside the country for example

"*To make something innovative you are going to have to go outside of yourself, including outside of your home country (Gwen).*

GYE also focuses on equity partners to achieve their business objectives.

3.3.1.2.2 Team formation/establishment

The GYE view their teams or staff members as internal partners who are critical in achieving business objectives. The GYE's role in the internal team includes coordinating people, leading people, identifying and forming teams, guiding others, recruiting staff, recognising the abilities of others, and managing.

"Because at the end of the day, you get to a point whereby you need money so that you can empower people to help you achieve your goal". (Nikita)

3.3.1.2.3 Networking

The GYE identified networking as one of the strategies that helped them achieve their objectives. They reported that networking gets them through the doors and links them to important stakeholders to their business.

"So much has happened since the challenge and we are really happy with the progress we have made, thanks FW. Through the challenge, we gained media backing which

helped us pick up a lot of interest from new customers. We have faith in our product and the network I have connected with". (Momo)

"*I want you to do something for me that even a 3-year-old can draw, but I want you to do for me something timeless, something we can do in multiple colours. I want you to do for me something that we can put on anything, anything and he came up with multiple logos. By the way, he was doing this for free and that is where the power of great communication, knowing how to build relationships with people and being vulnerable and being honest with people. I do not have money right now; I need you to print me a logo. I will have money and I will pay you and he just believed me and we created". (Sanna)*

3.3.1.2.4 Collaborating

GYE indicated how they collaborated with various stakeholders. They noted the importance of collaborating with well-established brands in the market. They indicated that this sort of association helps their products to be noticed in the market, and it helps open doors for them.

"B has now piqued the interest of big-name brand CL who has collaborated with the B brand in their latest campaign." (Thabo)

"Collaborating with big and well-established brands- they open doors- they help in marketing products. Association with such brands. Being associated with big brands like FW has opened doors for us, lending more credibility to our brand and considering elevating our brand visibility". (Momo)

GYE also recognised the importance of customers as collaborators. *"Make your users your collaborators. Make sure your potential users are the ones that are informing you of your solutions. Make a founder circle. When a founder goes and recruits five people who are potential users and makes them part of his core team. You bounce off ideas with them, they provide insight". (Noma)*

GYE reported that they also collaborated with academic institutions to enhance products and learn new technologies in the industry.

“Thing is corporates help universities because when corporates as they flourish as we thrive in businesses some of the money, we are going to make we feed it back to the universities. They do more research that helps us in building our products”. (Nono)

“Collaboration with social influencers helps in marketing product”. (Thabo)

GYE highlighted the importance of collaboration throughout the business's lifespan and how it helped sustain and improve business growth.

Communicating was identified as an important strategy that GYE can utilise in the day-to-day running of their businesses.

3.3.1.2.5 Reaching out

To start and sustain their business ventures, GYE referred to how they took the initiative to physically and telephonically contact institutions and individuals that they thought were pivotal in making their businesses a success. They further indicated how they have sustained this strategy of reaching out to institutions and individuals when they want to perform product enhancements.

GYE discussed how they approached Departments or Government institutions to obtain operating licences, which is a regulatory requirement to operate. They talk about the challenges they experienced in this regard, as was information; they were not privy to before they started businesses but had to learn through trial and error.

Approaching academic institutions was identified as one of the strategies utilised to collaborate and discuss ways to enhance products. There was an acknowledgement that through their continuous research, academic institutions can help in product improvement.

GYE also acknowledged that communicating with stakeholders was not always straightforward; it had hurdles.

“Because I have had a fight with people of one retailer trying to take my product out of shelve”. (Thina)

“Reach out, you call sometimes you do not get a response”. (Lulu)

3.3.1.2.6 Engaging

GYE emphasised the importance or value of engaging, especially with customers. They identified customers as one of the sources of learning and receiving feedback about their products. *“Talk to the customer to understand their perspective in order to design and improve products”. (*Lomu)

GYEs are constantly looking for feedback, which helps them gauge whether their business is on the right track and sometimes helps them determine how they are performing compared to their competitors. GYE also indicated that they view customers as collaborators and co-creators.

“*Engage continuously- I rely on feedback, they help me in my innovation. Our customers are the innovators of the brand”.* (Phumu)

3.3.1.2.7 Negotiating

The GYE negotiate as one of the strategies to acquire business deals, such as getting products on the shelf and negotiating with retailers and suppliers. They indicated that they mostly learn to negotiate through trial and error, but improve this skill with time-based experience.

“*So luckily there was an existing company that already, had two old owners that wanted to retire. I, what I did was, because their company had a lot of problems which I did not want to be part of, I formed a new company, then what I did was tell these guys that your company has got no future sell me your factory, your equipment and everything that was sell me that, then I will pay you in shares for two years then you will leave”. (Thina)*

GYE emphasised the importance of negotiating when they must engage with suppliers to ensure smooth manufacturing of their products. They indicated how they learned this through trial and error, as they never had prior exposure.

“All sorts of suppliers, which you negotiate and tie down to contracts”. (Thina)

GYE also identified the importance of negotiating with retailers to get their products on the shelf. They shared how they would agree to contracts that were less favourable to them in the initial stages of their businesses, and how over time they have improved their negotiation skills. They also highlighted how establishing relationships with retailers had helped improve business prospects.

3.3.1.2.8 Information

Access to information plays a critical role in communication. GYE need up-to-date information to know what is happening around them. The delay in information access due to poor country infrastructure affects GYE in rural areas, and they indicated that this affected their decisions on where to locate their head offices.

GYE depend on modern information access platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, the Internet, WhatsApp, and others to access and disseminate information. Most GYE shared how these platforms help in marketing their products and how they learn about other competing products in their industry through these communication platforms.

3.3.1.2.9 Venting

Venting was identified as an area that may require attention. GYE experienced many challenges, delays, and disappointments, and they need to get a way to let this out, as this may be good for their well-being. During the interviews, it was noted that there were lots of emotions experienced throughout the journey, which may affect the ability of GYE to communicate with other stakeholders.

3.3.1.2.10 Communication tools

The GYE referred to the utilisation of social media as a marketing tool. Social media avenues such as podcasts, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter help them reach their customers. It was also their preferred method, as there were minimal costs involved compared to the traditional marketing methods utilised to communicate with customers.

GYE viewed these communication tools not only as vehicles to reach out to customers, but also as a tool to attract investors.

"*Power of PR and television- received investors. The power of publicity and putting yourself out there, you get approached by retailers. SB helped to penetrate online stores" (Sanna)*

One of the methods of communication indicated by GYE is the use of Social Influencers. They get social influencers to utilise their products, which becomes their way of communicating the importance of their products to both users and investors.

The concepts and incidences above provide the properties and dimensions of the core category, and those below are the related categories.

3.3.2 Strategising

The GYE identified some strategies they utilise to navigate their way in the manufacturing sector. These strategies were informed by the knowledge (learning) they had acquired from various sources, and they responded to the environment they find themselves in at the time of implementation (transfer). Partnering, Collaborating, networking, communicating, negotiating, envisioning, strategising, outsourcing, and decision-making, which included piloting, trial and error, validating, and experimenting, formed part of the transfer process. GYE emphasised the importance of attributes as part of the strategy for navigating the manufacturing sector, including humility, patience, passion, determination, and commitment.

The GYE shared that they strategise at every step they made for their business. For example, they discussed diversification.

"I will also say that the biggest lesson is you must avoid government clients, you can have them but must not make 50% of your business because getting paid is a mission, no matter how well the job you have done. That is a risk as well, you learn that only from experience, never depend on a single client", (Thina)

Some GYE talked of how they had to respond in their businesses to the advent of covid 19 "*Changing of business model, provide credit and resize bottles for families and small groups, responding to covid". (Momo)*

GYE said that their strategies respond to business expansion/growth

"So, I blend the wine with the winemaker, so I am not a winemaker myself. So, we sit down and we take and we blend the wine into something that I feel that my consumers or something that I like and I feels like I can sell and that is what you find in BW" (Nash)

"So, find the things, tap into yourself so that you find where your productivity will be best spent "(Gwen)

3.3.2.1 Envisioning

GYE set goals for themselves to achieve, which becomes the anchor for all the activities they engage in after that. Many of the GYE said that their goals were not inspired by profit but by desires to see changes in the lives of others and make an impact. They see their vision as something greater than themselves and acknowledge that there is external intervention in their vision for their businesses.

Greater purpose- "*And we realise we want to inspire all these young women or young guys growing up that it is possible for somebody to get into this industry and excel in it". (Lomu)*

"It is the vision that I want women to feel comfortable and confident in their own skin. You know so too many coincidences to me that made me realise that there is something bigger than me happening and I Kind of have to follow through more than just as a strategist now, there is a bigger movement to create an ecosystem that creates solutions for African people. I wouldn't have started a business before GI, it is the business that God, goddess, the universe, whatever you believe in gave me because the story, the brand is intricately tied to who I am". (Gwen)

3.3.2.1.1 Burning desire

“It was always the dream, if you have a dream there is somebody that is tied up somewhere, somehow in your dream”. (Lomu)

“So, remember point number one is stillness is the move, so less of researching what is good out there but also touching base with what am I good at, what fires me up” (Gwen)

3.3.2.1.2 Accomplishment

“*I truly believe that for us to have a huge impact in the manufacturing sector we need to start investing in the production of, the manufacturing your engineering goods”*

3.3.2.1.3 Initiating

The GYE are proactive, they take initiative steps and pursue their goals.

“*I would rather approach an organisation. So being someone creative and someone that wants to take nothing and turn it into something incredible, I reached out to wine farms that me and my family order from quite a bit, and I asked a question how do I get into wine went down, and had a discussion with a winemaker”. (Nash)*

3.3.2.1.4 Planning

The GYE showed the importance of planning their activities to ensure they reached their objectives.

“Then you say ok, now you say, now I need the paper, I need the sugar, I need the machine that puts it in because now you have got the customer”. (Thina)

“Just put the necessary building blocks in place”. (Masala)

“Ground yourself, make sure you know who you are in it, and then define your journey at your pace”. (Gwen)

3.3.2.2 Outsourcing

GYE view outsourcing as one of the most effective strategies, considering that their businesses cannot afford a full suite of services at a huge cost. Outsourcing was an

alternative based on cost-benefit analysis. They recognised the expertise of others and were not keen on focusing on things they have no competency in. This creates space and time to focus on other matters such as product design and product improvement. Outsourcing depends on the ability to acknowledge self-limitations, which is a sign of maturity and the need to maximise benefits.

"So, by virtue of me going externally to find the expertise, I battled to get backing because guess what you are not manufacturing locally". (Gwen)

3.3.2.3 Mobilising resources

GYE shared their struggles to obtain funding at the venture-initiating stages and even at scaling levels. They indicated that they bootstrap themselves to get the business going. This involved using pensions from previous employers when they started the business. They indicated they did not take advantage of government funding institutions, as they wanted to be equity partners. GYE shared feelings regarding the availability of funding for scaling purposes. Some felt that banks were supportive, some felt they did not receive any support from them, and the banks were discriminatory because they were black. Some indicated that they looked at alternative fundraising methods to help with scaling.

Scaling was viewed as a major hurdle in the manufacturing process, and it is a stage that determines whether one will survive in the industry or break. GYE indicated that this is a difficult time that they are not prepared for upfront and must learn to respond to when confronted by it. GYE reported trying to engage funders (from the public and private sectors) to mobilise resources.

"I approached the IDC looking for a loan" (Nikita)

3.3.2.4 Brainstorming

GYE referred to the processes they followed when deciding the products, they would like to manufacture. They identified friends as one of the most important components of their brainstorming sessions. They ran their ideas through friends whom they indicated provided valuable feedback. They indicated that they also utilised social media platforms

to send ideas out there and check the kind of responses they would receive to determine the way forward; they referred to this as idea-sharing platforms. They hypothesise, investigate, identify, implement, and manufacture the product.

"Product Identification, so I needed something that is naturally protected from all of that and this product was the perfect one". (Thina)

"From the moment that I asked myself what I was doing beyond being a brand and marketing specialist. I worked within corporates doing branding and marketing for multinationals and then within the advertising space and I think that is where messaging of brands got to me and I started to ask myself beyond creating you know insights for big corporates how was I going to find insight that would change you know the way people see themselves". (Gwen)

3.3.2.5 Leading

GYE are leaders in their teams, as they own their business ventures. They reported that they played the role of all-rounders for long periods within their ventures.

"Wearing multiple hats, that is part and parcel of the job to learn to develop stress management, I stay grounded by learning from people around me, they help by providing a clear perspective on the issue". Solve complex problems, how do I manage time, ability to inspire others as a leader of the company, to help your team buy the vision and sell it, that ability to communicate vision". (Noma)

GYE also guides and grooms their teams, allowing them to take over some of their responsibilities.

"Two years I left my business with people, and I think they did an incredible job, it is just that this thing needed me to check on it once in a while". (Sanna)

GYE recognise that owning their businesses helped enhance their sense of accountability

“Accounting, the fact that you own it, you still have a job. You cannot sit at home and do nothing, so that is your job, your boss is your customer. So, it is the same thing it is just there is a mentality shift that needs to happen about the option of entrepreneurship”. (Thina)

GYE acknowledges that they must mitigate risks and build reliable and dependable teams, especially when a business venture is scaling.

“The biggest role of an entrepreneur is to mitigate risk at all times. Investors are interested in how you are going to mitigate risks”. (Noma)

“Managing finances, you cannot get finance if you have no pipeline of sales Because you cannot finance anything if you cannot prove that you can sell the product that you make”. (Thina)

“Building a team- is a place of learning because I have never managed people. I depend on Kim as a second in command”. (Lulu)

3.3.2.6 Sacrificing

GYE reflected on their sacrifices at the start of business ventures and when they must scale the business. Many financial sacrifices are involved, such as loss of income and a regular salary from the previous employer. The sacrifices were not only limited to financial but included time away from family and friends when one had to deal with tight deadlines. GYE indicated how family members like spouses help for example when spouses have to take care of school activities for the children and attend other family events without them. GYE may be forced to miss some important milestones in their children's growth and spend quality time with them.

“Yes, there were a lot of doubts, because at the end of the day, it was like I had to now tell my family that, listen, yes this is my profession, I used to earn so much, now I am no longer gonna be earning that. I am gonna be focusing on my business I am gonna be using my savings. Now there is that whole thing of saying now you are putting your life

on hold because you do not even know when you are gonna break through and make money". (Nikita)

"So, I mean that was where you go without an income for months. you survive from family or whatever or you survive with a fraction of what you used to earn. You have to be willing to change your whole life to be an entrepreneur" (Nono)

"I feel despondent now, especially after how 2017/18 has rolled out for me, firstly with selling most of my possessions in mid-2017 to keep the business running, and having to downsize. My team made me feel like a failure, the office was locked and the biggest contributor to all of this is losing my dearest grandmother two days before the end of 2017". (Sanna)

"As an entrepreneur when you go home your business problems follow you". (Noma)

3.3.2.7 Decision making

Decision-making is central to the lives of GYE. They are required to make decisions about things that they are not familiar with, such as organisational policies, systems and processes for the organisation, setting up teams (recruiting staff), making financial decisions for the business, deciding on products to manufacture, and deciding on institutions to approach and partner with suppliers, retailers, and marketing strategies. They must also consider risks to ensure business sustainability. They must solve problems, prioritise, and focus.

"*Decided I needed to be involved with the private sector at which point I had a relationship with a number of consulting firms and they were consulting for corporate to transform the supply chain". (Thina)*

"Importance of relationship when resolving and planning". (Lumka)

"The right kind of finance in relation to the nature of the business and the nature of the industry". (Nikita)

One of the GYE indicated that before deciding on risk analysis, he determines his next move. He had this to say about government funding agencies.

“Well, I would say that currently, I have not used them simply because of one thing. I would like to de-risk my business as far as I possibly could and focus on equity partners than loans”. (Nikita)

GYE needs to make correct decisions in the enterprises; for example, depending on the government as a customer means a delay in receipt of payments for goods delivered, and this affects cash flow, which negatively affects the sustainability of the business. GYE shared how the limit their engagements with governments as part of the de-risking strategy. Product packaging was identified as one of the important areas for GYE. Customers choose to buy products based on the size of the package and the look and feel of the product. An example was provided where the product was being packaged in large containers, and the customers were not buying because they could not afford that volume. This affected the product's sales; however, as soon as the product package size was reduced, the sales increased.

“*The business was too expensive for the market. We even tried to sell to the governments around Africa for R2.50 ($0.20) per wash but it was still too high for their budgets. A review had to be done and the business model had to change. We then decided to target middle-income homes that would afford the product. We had created the solution, but we did not understand the market”.* (Lomu)

The above represents some of the strategies that GYE utilise as they relate to stakeholders to help resolve their main concerns. Where and from whom do GYE learn the strategies to help them navigate the sector? Who teaches them how to deal with daily challenges so that they can stay afloat? What equips GYE to enter relationships that help sustain their businesses?

3.3.3 Acquiring learning

The GYE identified various sources of learning: formal, informal, and incidental. The learning should have been acquired for it to be transferred. GYE acknowledged that finding themselves in the manufacturing sector was a new experience. They identified various ways in which they learned and continuously learned how to navigate the industry.

GYE identified research, reading, mentoring, piloting, validating, trial and error, learning from industry experts, entrepreneurial ecosystems, peer learning, learning from the internet, and learning from families as some of their sources of learning. This is the knowledge that they utilise to navigate their daily encounters in their businesses and plan for the growth and expansion of their businesses so that they are sustainable and stay afloat.

3.3.3.1 Acquiring knowledge

3.3.3.1.1 Researching

The GYE reported that they have learned mainly by researching the industry and the products they are manufacturing. They indicated that the research involved desktop research, primarily using the Internet. They reported that it was essential to research as they entered unknown territories and uncertain environments.

“So have a strong dedication to that, have a strong dedication to research, because manufacturing is led a lot by research. (Nikita)”

The GYE reported that they not only do desktop research but also made efforts to reach out to people who had been in the industry longer to understand the industry, how to run a business, and to understand more about their products*, “I would say research, research, research. Just try research as much as you can while you are still working”. Ah and contact people that are in the industries which you want to get into and have to sit down coffees or go and have a bottle of wine and ask them all the questions you have. Yeh research, I Think nothing beats research, nothing beats trying to get into the industry while you are still in your job”. (Nash)*

3.3.3.1.2 Peer learning

The GYE learned from each other informally through day-to-day interactions and formally through established structures such as the Township Entrepreneurial Alliance. GYE also shared their experiences through platforms such as podcasts, including the Hustlers Corner. These structures provide them with the opportunity to share challenges and to brainstorm regarding possible solutions or interventions.

3.3.3.1.3 Validating

The GYE shared that when they conceptualised their ideas, they developed prototypes of their products to test if the product worked. This validation also extends to whether the product can be sold, in which quantities, and if it can generate income, whether the customers will like it. This validation is generally linked to the piloting process. The process does not only occur when GYE is starting ventures, but it always happens when GYE intends to add a new product to their product range. This helps them manage the risks of losses that may occur with introducing new products.

Validating ideas implies that assumptions are correct. GYE indicated that the Minimum Viable Product prototype is inexpensive and fast to implement, allowing one to put the product in the hands of users, play with it, use it, and give feedback. They search for existing platforms that can be used to test products.

"*Try to put your ideas in the groups where you have investors, etc. like WhatsApp group and observe if you find the kind of interaction that you are hoping to get. (*Noma)

Validating the business model and proving the assumption that people will pay for the product proves that an idea can pull customers and generate revenue, which is the very essence of business. Validation helps with risk management.

GYE highlighted the importance of validating ideas and products to meet market expectations. They indicated that they came across the concept of validation when they entered the entrepreneurship or manufacturing community. This is what one of the GYE had to say about validation.

“Do not always think you understand people’s problem and you have a solution, validate the problem, go out there and speak to the people. Are the people trying to do something to solve the problem now, if not they are likely not to pay for the solution you provide. Try to understand how many people are affected by the problem and how deeply- do a fact-finding mission, then investigate and invest resources in finding a solution” (Noma)

GYE shared that testing products was one of the most challenging experiences they had experienced. They did not know that the products had to be tested before they went to the market. They were unaware that they had to obtain manufacturing licences. They appreciated the support they received from government institutions, who helped them acquire the licences once they became aware of the need to have manufacturing licences.

“I had to learn how to get a manufacturing licence”. (Nono)

3.3.3.1.4 Reading

The GYE said they read a lot, not only on the subject of their products but also on entrepreneurship, the personal journeys of other entrepreneurs, and other general topics.

“I like Mthethwa Nyathi, 'Betting on a Darkie'. I think it’s a fantastic book. Phenomenal. I also like Pepe Marais "20 Habits", but the one book that changed my life has to be a book by the founder of Nike, Phil Knight titled "Shoe dog." It is such a beautifully written book with a relatable story of an entrepreneur. Another book that has shaped my perspective as an entrepreneur and on giving back is "Lift as you rise" by Bonang Mohale. It has shaped me in that you don’t have to have a lot of money to start helping other people. It changed my perspective about lifting others as one rises. Again, I think it goes back to what Bonang Mohale said, we need to be there for each other, and lift each other, up. We must be a generation that makes a difference. We are the first generation to build products. We should embrace it and support each other's careers, hustles and businesses”. (Iris)

GYE indicated that reading books helped them to know the environment around them.

“Stay curious, research and reading” (Lomu)

3.3.3.1.5 Studying

The GYE indicated minimal exposure to entrepreneurship when studying at tertiary institutions. They did not indicate that they were pursuing studies on entrepreneurship or specific to their products at the degree level. They cited that they learned how to improve in current industries through other short-term methods. The GYE, whose data were used in this study, came from various educational backgrounds, with most having a first-degree/graduate qualification.

3.3.3.1.6 Entrepreneurial Workshops

The GYE attended workshops for entrepreneurs, where they learned business concepts such as lean methodology, bootstrapping, and scaling. They learned about finance, human resources, and other leadership and management subject matter and strategies.

3.3.3.1.7 Trial and error

The GYE indicated that they learned through trial and error. They experimented with things, not laboratory experiments, but real-life experiments or implementations. They also indicated that trial and error is expensive but valuable.

“*The business was too expensive for the market. We even tried to sell to the governments around Africa for R2.50 ($0.20) per wash, but it was still too high for their budgets. A review had to be done and the business model had to change. We then decided to target middle-income homes that would afford the product. We had created the solution, but we did not understand the market”.* (Lomu)

Trial and error culminated in experience, and this helped in decision-making. The example above helped this entrepreneur in market segmentation for his products.

“Building a team is a place of learning because I have never managed people. I depend on Kim as a second in command” (Lulu)

“I have several companies that have failed, went to Poultry- Shisanyama grill failed”. (Lusa)

“Started by establishing a brand”. (Lulu)

“I was able to create demand but did not have systems in place to meet the demand. It is just something I learned which I did not know”. (Sanna)

GYE valued the lessons learned during the trial-and-error process, appreciated that journey, and discussed how those experiences strengthened their resolve. They talked about the value of failed projects and how they utilised lessons learned in failed projects to help make decisions in the current business ventures.

GYE recognised the concept of self-discovery. They indicated how they would conduct experiments on the products they intended to manufacture in their private homes before taking them to the relevant industries for validation.

3.3.3.1.8 Workplace learning/experience

Some GYE shared that they had worked in corporate environments before starting their businesses. They talked about how the lessons learned from the corporate sector helped them understand how a business should run and appreciate their value chain.

“*So that structured thinking of the corporates is what educates people”. (Nikita)*

“Beauty of working in the corporate environment- training on professionalism, communication, working with teams. Corporate provided skills such as communication, project management, time management etc”. (Thabo)

GYE shared that they grew up selling products, especially at high school, where they learned how to deal with customers and sell products. Although their experiences were on a small scale, they indicated that the entrepreneurial culture developed during those stages.

“*Grew up selling”. (Nono)*

“Thing is if I talk about my background, I have always been one person who loved to do business because ever since I was a kid anything that would help me make money I would do it. Even when I was at varsity, I wanted to do business, always trying to make business”. (Nikita)

3.3.3.1.9 Family

Many of the GYE in this study indicated that they grew up in families with parents who were entrepreneurs, and the families created an enabling environment for them to develop skills as entrepreneurs. GYE who grew up in families with no entrepreneurs, shared that their families supported their entrepreneurial ventures even when they were growing up.

“*My dad gave me a scientific approach to problem-solving, my dad put that critical thinking head on my shoulders”. (Lumka)*

“Key things learned growing up was love and humility, ability to relate to people because of humility. How supported I was, given room to play, ask questions, say no and have a voice and make decisions”. (Lulu)

“From that point on I always just loved the tune of making money. Over time my mom realised I can sell pigs and she got more and more pigs, I will be up in the early hours of the morning five o clock to go look for the pigs just for them to grow and for us to be able to sell them”. (Nono)

3.3.3.1.10 Learning platforms

The GYE shared that they learn primarily from the Internet, including Wikipedia and search engines like Google. They indicated that they made a deliberate effort to learn more about their products and the industries in which they participated.

“*I did everything myself, google, YouTube, research, content online, look for academic papers and other producers, just to verify the idea”. (Lulu)*

“Learn from entrepreneurial podcasts, it gives hope, and ideas and helps in terms of learning more”. (Momo)

3.3.3.1.11 Learn from industry experts

The GYE shared that they engaged with people who had been in the industry so that they could learn from them and get relevant assistance.

“Learn by approaching existing businesses, make efforts to visit suppliers. Reach out- you call sometimes you do not get the response” (Lulu)

“So, there are organisations try and sit on AGMs, get a hold of the president or the directors of the organisations and just see how you in the current position that you are in can get involved with the organisation and I think that, that is one way that you can learn things about the industry or the business that you want to get into without having to be in it necessarily. But also, you can learn things that are not on the internet or that you cannot read in a book. things that you would learn maybe ten years or would take you ten years to learn you can learn quickly just by interacting with people that are in the industries”. (Nash)

3.3.3.1.12 Learn from others' experiences

The GYE reported that they also learn from others’ experiences to avoid repeating the same mistakes that their predecessors have made.

“Learn from analysing other businesses that have been there, learn from others' experiences. Lessons from old brands that have failed. Assess the risk, analysis and scaling. ED did not survive because of credit sales, so credit sales is a no, no”. (Thabo)

3.3.3.1.13 Piloting

The GYE said that they learned through trial and error, including piloting with products to check if the market will positively accept the products or if they require enhancement to reach customer expectations. GYE reported that they sometimes experimented with products in their kitchens and garages. They also indicated that they would make models

of their products and circulate them in the market to check customer responses before large-scale production of the same goods or products.

3.3.3.1.14 Experimenting

"*Even when I was at varsity, I wanted to do business, always trying to make business". (Nikita)*

"If you can do it on the side, I would say explore doing it on the side first before you leave your day job". (Nash)

"Learn through experimentation". (Thabo)

3.3.3.2 Mentoring*/* coaching

The GYE shared that they did not have formal mentors when they started their businesses. They highlighted the importance of an institution called the Innovation Hub, a government institution that assists in getting mentors to help them. They indicated the various foundations that assisted them in getting mentors. GYE highlighted that they need mentors or people to coach them to succeed in the industry. GYE acknowledged their limitations and viewed mentoring and coaching as support structures that could help nurture them.

"A commercial bank, if you have got a good banker, who believes in your business, that is what will help you to survive the downturns. Spend money on the journey with the person. I see my banker every month. What is your plan, I am gonna put some products in Botswana, and I need a forex account, to try and sell to those people there because some guy came and wants a truck of products and I do not know this cross-border story. The bank will sort you out". (Thina)

Securing mentors was not always easy especially for GYE who were not associated with institutions like Innovation Hub. GYE had to approach mentors to request for assistance.

"*I have had a business mentor for the past year, and it's been really eye-opening and life-changing. You can get any type of business person. They don't have to be agripreneurs,*

per se. My business mentor is a real estate agent. He mentors other small business owners as well. We've been having a meeting every month where I just update him on what I have been doing and update him on what we spoke about previously. It has been really helpful for me because he is an accountability partner in a way, someone who can keep me accountable for my actions". (*Luphisa)*

The GYE learned from various sources how to relate with stakeholders to resolve their main concern of staying afloat, and the knowledge they have acquired must be implemented in various or different contexts within the sector.

3.3.4 Contextualising relating environment

Relating does not happen in a vacuum but in a context that may support or hinder learning transfer. Factors affecting learning transfer include enabling environments, environmental barriers, and operating environments such as competitive markets flooded by cheap import goods. It involves racial barriers that emanate from South Africa's legacy problems of apartheid, gender bias, and inaccessible markets. Such is the context within which the GYE in the South African manufacturing sector operates and is expected to navigate daily to stay afloat.

3.3.4.1 Operating environment

GYE shared that they operated in an uncertain working environment and learned to make decisions that would help their business ventures.

"When you have a good customer who is committed you survive, and you can thrive". (Thina)

GYE are affected by the competitive global environment. They consider themselves small businesses that must compete with large-scale local and global companies. GYE was concerned about cheap products from countries like China, which made their products less competitive as their local products were more expensive based on input costs. This phenomenon of cheap imports affects the viability and sustainability of the enterprises

and their opportunities to expand (scale) their businesses. Some enterprises get pushed out of the market and close.

“There is no point in telling people to start factories, but government procures imported products”. (Thina)

“So, a lot of guys who were initially part of it are now very much disillusioned because they have been blocked from the market. The existing companies are very entrenched”. (Thina)

GYE are also concerned about the racial barriers they must overcome, given that they are black and belong to a historically disadvantaged group. They reported that South Africa is a racially biased environment and that the manufacturing sector is still rife with racial biases. White South Africans have an advantage based on their backgrounds and the preferential treatment they receive. GYE of black descent shared how they must constantly prove themselves to be accepted in the industry.

“*Because as a black person, you are competing with white guys in their 60s they have paid off their factories twenty years ago. And you go and borrow R40 million for the brand, your cost for making a product is already three times more than theirs. On day one you do not compete, day one. It does not matter even if you can manage to unread the specs, it does not matter, at day one you are already producing at a higher cost than they are, they are gone*”.

There is a competitive advantage for the previously advantaged population of South Africa, which is white South Africans.

“They are all white boys’ clubs. So, you need to be able to penetrate and build relationships in, I am the only black person who sits in that room in this industry”. (Thina)

GYE referred to a hostile operating environment *“But in the mainstream economy, you are not welcome. You are an anomaly. “Everywhere you go you are the anomaly, And I*

am saying in 2020 as black people should we still be abnormal in the mainstream, we do not own the means of production". (Thina)

"*Having the passion to fight for equality and opportunities. The passion to fight for what's yours, for yourself, to make it in this world as a black child, given our backgrounds and past injustices that deprived us economically, that's how it has translated to me. We are just fighting, that's what I think it means to me. It's a struggle and a fight we should ultimately win". (Iris)*

However, racism was not seen as a universal problem:

"I don't think I've ever had problems being black. I've lived in Cape Town and had my business get supported by all races. Other entrepreneurs would complain about a lot of things due to the demographics, but it has never been an issue for me. I never really had issues even though we operated in the same space. The right products don't know colour. (Iris)

"Black entrepreneurship got that negative connotation, unfortunately (association with poor service delivery). I think people should be patient with black entrepreneurs. I mean these sorts of things still happen with white-owned companies too. (Iris)

"It is amazing how we as black people have to prove ourselves 10 times more, but anyhow I did not want to engage myself in that type of debate, so I was like I am already supplying 400 stores why are you doubting me? So, I know that as much as I want economic power, they are not going to give it to us just like that, we need to fight for it. And sometimes for me, you have to be humble to get through that door". (Phumu)

GYE shared the difficulties they experienced when dealing with large retailers who are sceptical and often reject their goods, refusing to put them on their shelves. They indicated how well-known retailers only reconsider once they see the GYE's products trending in social media.

“Brand gained traction from posting by customers (customers tell their beautiful stories). It is amazing how we as black people have to prove ourselves 10 times more, but anyhow I did not want to engage myself in that type of debate, so I was like I am already supplying more than 400 stores why are you doubting me. So I knew that as much as we want economic power, they are not going to give it to us just like this, we need to fight for it, and for me, sometimes you have to be humble to get in through that door”. (Phumu)

3.3.4.2 Gender-biased environment

GYE also highlighted their struggles as females; males still dominate the manufacturing sector.

“*Yes, but honestly it is a very tough industry to get into. You know that we struggle with even getting to that, what is that, we even struggle with having vendors that at, the local mine, it is the white male-dominated field”.* “*You should see at the site meeting, when we get there, it would only be me and my business partner and you see all these guys and they will tell you why are you guys, why are you not doing cleaning, this is not for you. Another thing is when you get to the mines, they would tell you as much as we see you have done contracts for maybe over R5 million unfortunately we do not trust women, we do not trust their capabilities so we will just give you quotations and quotations and after we see that you can quote then you will be able to get vendors”. (Lemon)*

GYE were concerned about their ability to access funds for initiating projects and scaling; they viewed this as a funding bias.

“The criteria used by these funders are also exclusionary of black entrepreneurs. For example, they'd require collateral during application which most start-ups don’t have or that one must have access to certain money. Unfortunately, at that point, you have nothing but your dreams. I think it’s a flawed criterion that excludes black people systematically.”. (Iris)

3.3.4.3 Support structure

The GYE shared that they received support from various people or institutions to help them achieve their goals, referred to as the support structure in this study. One of the GYE summed it up "*You can never make it alone, work with people".*

3.3.4.3.1 Family support

The GYE highlighted the different roles played by families in supporting them during this journey.

"Thing for me is you need a good support system, you need good grounding, because the idea, the passion, the fuzzy feelings they cannot sustain you when challenges come. When bills cannot be met, when growth, when you are growing slower than you projected, they cannot be there for you, so too. whether you are an entrepreneur you have a good grounding and good support? Because you may have the fire while you have the idea and it is fresh, but you need to make sure that it is there to start with because the real entrepreneurial journey is when the fun part stops when the logos are designed and the doors open, that was the fun part and you are sitting there and the first customer does not walk in, do you have the support structure to help you navigate and to endure and conquer that". (Nikita)

GYE explained how their families provided opportunities to explore their entrepreneurial skills when they were growing. They indicated that they received encouragement from their families when they initiated selling ventures.

"I started selling with my mother. We used to sell bunny chows ba re ke de phahlo". (Lemon)

3.3.4.3.2 Financial institution support

GYE acknowledged the role of financial institutions in ensuring that their business ventures survived.

“The bank was like do not worry about that we have got the whole department in the bank that does that. That is somebody that is working with you and understands how to help you. So, they behave like they are your partner because they are at risk to get their money back. Which means they want your business to be profitable”. (Thina)

GYE acknowledged the role that other stakeholders such as professional councils should play in achieving transformation in the country.

“For me is about those councils registered by govt. Is the government holding them accountable for being inclusive, allowing other people to come into the industry, you know what I mean allowing other people to be part of the network and the social network? and that is important because people get intimidated, I do not mind sitting in a room full of white people but there is confidence, but other people will feel intimidated and will not want to be part of it. We are not welcome in our own economy. It does not matter where you go”. (Thina)

GYE felt that some government institutions supported them but also that there were support failures.

“There is, there is the BEE Commission, but it is toothless. So, the one thing that the DTI could do is open the market for black people by going to the retailers, the owners of shopping malls”. (Thina)

“No mam we registered in 2012 but with all the hardships that we encountered we started trading in 2015 there are certificates that you have to comply with like your ISO 9001 which for you to have that you need to have machinery, you need to have artisans that are capable and can deliver huge jobs, you understand some of the barriers are, I mean we are from the rural areas lack of knowledge was problematic. We had to move to the urban areas to get a lot of information. As much as we have got our cell phones and whatnot, I mean our rural areas are not equipped with your WIFI’s and whatnot, so the network is a bit of a challenge”. (Lemon)

“Honestly it is not so liquid at the moment we had to let go of four of our employees due to the fact that we are not honestly getting a lot of support from the government and also from the mines”. (Lemon)

“I wish government institutions that are in charge of funding could fund these start-up entrepreneurs”. (Iris)

“Help from government and entities. Already secured retail contracts “at times had to cry”- government loan was appreciated. Lesson was I was looking at conventional spaces, open your universe to other options, it is neither nor”. (Lulu)

3.3.4.3.3. Peers - a community of entrepreneurs

The GYE recognised that they depended a lot on their peers for support.

“Yes, I am. Yes, I do have a community of entrepreneurs that I normally engage with. So, they are usually my pickup velle when it comes to feeling like I am getting stuck or I am getting frustrated” (Nikita).

“That I can help other young designers and entrepreneurs with the little that I have at my disposal. Being able to give back and support other designers with small resources that I have”. (Iris)

“Dumi gave me his factory”. (Competitor manufacturing company) (Sanna).

3.3.4.4 Environmental assessment

GYE operate in both a local and global environment, and they are conscious of the environment in which they operate, constantly scanning it to determine their next move and make informed decisions.

“That’s why I got to where I am right now, I see a problem and I see opportunities. Manufacturing industries are dying in South Africa”. (Nikita)

“Ok because we think that we just need to do what is popular, no, no, there is a small part, as to, do people need it. (Gwen)”

GYE said they scanned the industry to identify trends, perform comparative analysis, and acknowledge challenges. They reported assessing, analysing, and identifying gaps in the market (market research) system weaknesses, critical success factors, and identifying and acting on opportunities.

3.3.4.4.1 Assessing

"*General building is low margin and there are too many people in it, so there are lots of people making bricks, doing it there is a lot of people making aggregate cement, but if you look at a house plumbing is the one thing that is in every house and needs maintenance. So, you build a house once and the one thing you will keep on maintaining over and over is plumbing. maybe the electrical but it is rare once you put a roof you put a roof unless there is a storm or something, but plumbing has got regular work and purchases because it has always got a problem with the sink so that was why plumbing". (Thina)*

The GYE identified market access as a major factor affecting business failure.

"The biggest factors that affect business failure and one of them was market access" (Noma)

"Do not always think you understand people's problem and you have a solution, validate the problem, go out there and speak to the people. Are people trying to do something to solve the problem now, if not they are not likely to pay for the solution you provide. Try to understand how many people are affected by the problem and how deeply; fact-finding mission, then investigate and invest resources in finding a solution" (Noma)

"Identify gaps and partner with academic institutions to help perfect the product" (Lumka).

3.3.4.5 Background

The GYE in this study had a variety of backgrounds. These factors include personal experience, educational level, and family background.

Some GYE indicated they worked in corporate environments before starting their business ventures.

Personal experience/prior exposure *“I had people who came from, I am not sure where they were from, but I knew that these are going to waste my time, you entertain them and then they go, because I have gone through that whole thing 5 years ago, so I know now. So, you do not waste time on those kinds of things. So, not because you can, experience is everything. I think I would not have survived this manufacturing business If I had not done the first business in construction, because there you learn everything about human beings. They may think they are smart, but you have seen it all”. (Thina)*

“Well, I think I learned from, my first job experience is important. The difference is I had experience in dealing with retailers so I could get a product on the shelf, that makes a difference”. (Thina)

GYE in this study had a degree or equivalent as minimum qualification. They indicated the value of educational background when interacting with peers and in understanding basic business concepts.

“So, you need that experience, and you need to have some kind of technical expertise in the area that you wanna manufacture, you cannot just want to manufacture plastic products when you know nothing about plastics”. (Thina)

3.4 The resultant theory; Relational Learning Transfer Theory

It was noted during the process of memo analysis that theory development or assertions do not start after data saturation. The researcher constructed tentative theories during the analytical process, starting from initial coding and being revised as new codes came to the fore. Theory development is the core of the critical analysis process and reflects the constant review of information that legitimises emergence rather than forceful categorisation.

One tentative theory, triggered by reflection, was labelled the RIRI theory (Figure 3.5), which entails cyclical reflection, review, and implementation.

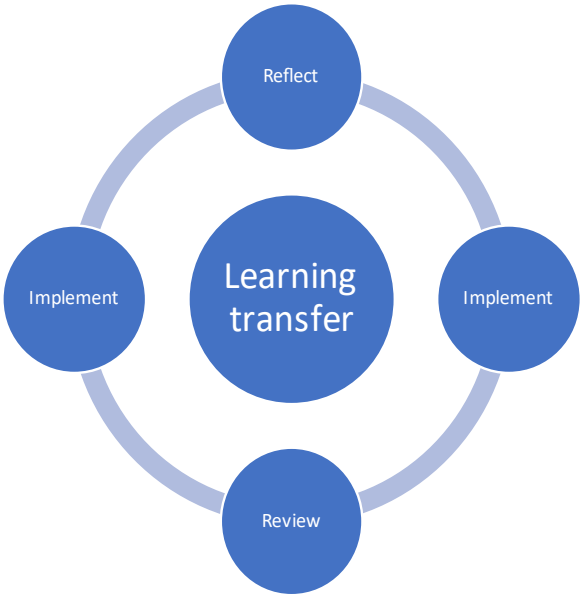

FIGURE 3. 5 RIRI THEORY- REFLECT, IMPLEMENT, REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Another tentative theory developed during analysis was the Interwoven theory, which is positioned within a networking context and entails a cyclical ongoing process of thinking, research, review, improvement, and practice (Figure 3.6).

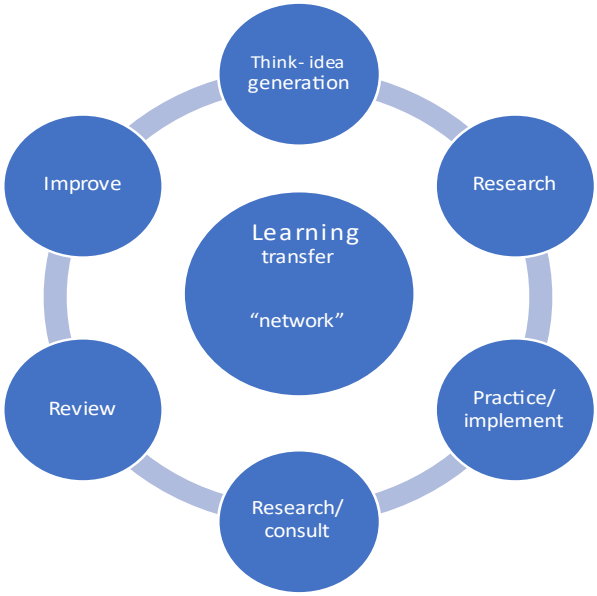

FIGURE 3. 6 INTERWOVEN THEORY (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Both these early theories were discarded because they were too simplistic and did not capture the essence of learning transfer since they were too procedural.

Analysis was done regarding the categories in the data, and these processes were further categorised in terms of the prevailing and contextual conditions. For example, those that are internal, external, and in-between are listed in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3. 2 LEARNING TRANSFER PREVAILING CONDITIONS (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

Internal	**In-between**	**External**
Innate character	Partnering	Environment
Envisioning	Strategising	Support structure
Self	Acquiring learning	

3.4.1 Relational Learning Transfer Theory

Learning the tricks of trade is fundamental for GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. Relating was identified as a core category that GYE engage in when resolving their main concern of staying afloat. It emerged that GYE transfer learning through relationships with different role players, whether it is through partnering, mentoring, communicating, strategising, self-assessment, or environmental assessment. Relating is the core category that addresses GYE's concerns, including market access. Through relationship building, GYE also addresses their main concern of staying afloat, as depicted in Figure 3.7.

Thus, the core concern of GYE is staying afloat, and the core category by which they address their core concern is relating. This relationship is the fundamental CGGT structure (Glaser, 1967).

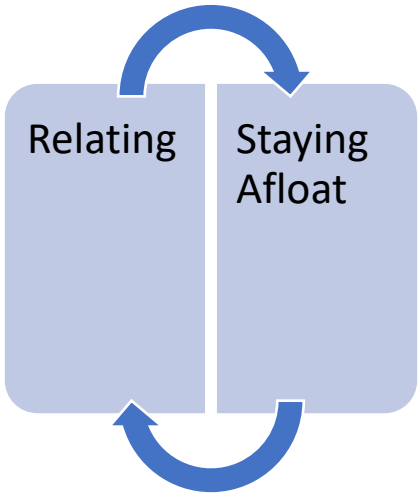

FIGURE 3. 7 RELATING AND STAYING AFLOAT (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

GYE used relationships to transfer learning in the workplace. Staying afloat requires access to the market, and relationships are the mechanism to get products and services to the customer. *Monang* boasted about how her relationship with her father and his associates in the industry helped propel her business in terms of the input supply. She further referred to how her relationship with other upcoming, historically disadvantaged

entrepreneurs helps to open access to the markets by cross-selling each other's products. *Nono* indicated how relationships with university lecturers helped idea formulation and product refinement and enhancement.

"Everything needs a bit of TLC, like a relationship everything you do needs a bit of TLC because you have the end goal of your business, but now and then you have to come into the operations of your business to remind the people that is where we are going, we are not going to do this, we are not going to do this". (Sanna)

3.4.1.1 Relational Learning Transfer Matrix

Further data analysis revealed the relationship-building matrix and relational learning transfer matrix. Relational learning transfer is underpinned by time, knowledge, processes, structures, institutions, the environment, people, and the self. These aspects are the pillars of the relational learning transfer that emerged from the data, as depicted in Figure 3.8.

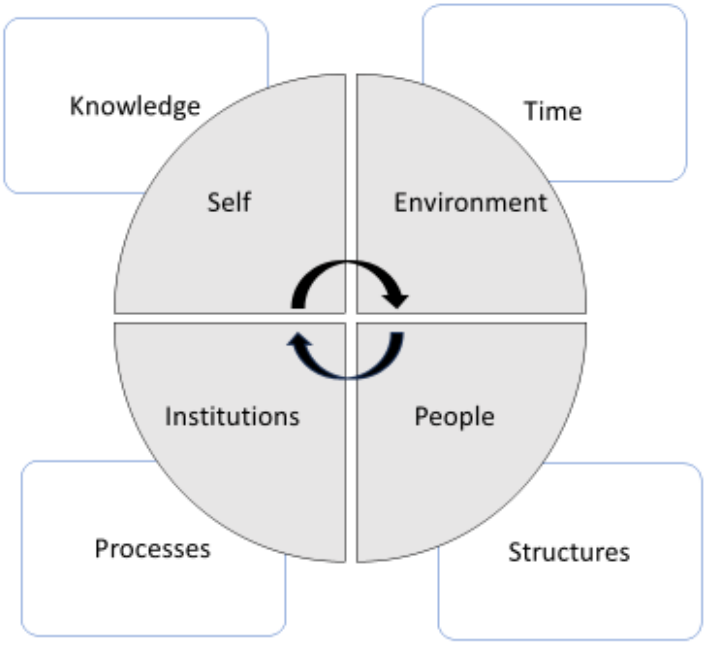

FIGURE 3. 8 RELATIONAL LEARNING TRANSFER MATRIX (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

It was noted that some codes and categories indicate that networking is happening, and elements of exchange and reflection also occur, which indicates that the phenomenon is more extensive than networking. The data analysis process, guided by CCA and memos, established that GYE concerns start from product development to product sales, and addressing them within the learning transfer process involves relating to customers and suppliers.

Relationship-building, development, and establishment emerged as vehicles for learning transfer. Based on the data from this study, one can assert that relationships provide an opportunity to share thoughts and receive feedback, actions, and reactions or provide a feedback loop. Relationships are utilised as a vehicle for transfer because they provide feedback that indicates to GYE whether their aspirations are being achieved, failing, delayed, blocked, or appreciated, resulting in sustainability.

The relationships exhibited various characteristics; in certain instances, they were mutual; in certain instances, they were reciprocal, informal, formal, incidental or deliberate, and this depended on the type of stakeholders involved. GYE reported that they were proactive and not passive in establishing relationships. They made efforts to ensure that relationships were established. GYE also reported that learning and transfer occurred throughout their lives, from what they had learned in the small-scale selling projects they embarked on while still at school.

Learning transfer occurs in uncertain, competitive, and sometimes hostile operating contexts, e.g. in gender and racially-biased environments. GYE identified various stakeholders in the learning transfer process, starting with the self, family, friends, peers, customers, suppliers, retailers, and the operating environment, such as regulatory institutions, government, and funding institutions. GYE are driven by the need to see their businesses stay afloat and by the desire to share their creations with people. Their passion and determination to create sustainable businesses drive their desire to learn more and to transfer this learning into their day-to-day business conduct.

Learning occurs through trial and error, self-discovery, piloting products, experimenting, and performing validations. GYE display humility as they are vulnerable, acknowledge that they do not know, and are willing to ask for help. Patience, determination, commitment, focus, and passion were other helpful attributes.

Relationships help GYE review and enhance their products, understand their customers better, and provide solutions that address customer problems or challenges. Relating helps GYE understand their environment better to develop comprehensive strategies that will ultimately lead to the sustainability of their business ventures. Their businesses will not remain afloat if relational learning transfer does not occur. The main actors in the learning transfer process include the following.

- Parents
- Siblings
- Lecturers
- Peers
- Friends
- funding institutions
- learning institutions
- regulatory institutions
- mentors
- researchers
- colleagues/teams

These actors play different roles: teaching, providing financial and emotional support, guiding, serving as sounding boards, and setting boundaries.

3.4.1.2 Relational Learning Transfer Model

As demonstrated by this study, relational learning transfer is a process that relates to all levels of a business venture. The learning transfer process includes the following: relating one's vision with self-knowledge, assessing gaps and formulating strategies to acquire knowledge, assessing the environment, developing strategies (partnering, outsourcing,

piloting), assessing strategies, deciding on the way forward, implementing, and reviewing. Figure 3.9 the Relational Learning Transfer Model demonstrates that relating encompasses interactions between time (future, present, past), processes (reflect, implement, review), actors and role players, including people, institutions and structures (self, environment and others) and, context (attributes, conditions, actions and consequences).

To answer the question of how, with what, with whom, when and where does relating occur?

- Relating to the Future (assess) vision-envision: GYE relate to time by envisioning the future. They engage in relationships in the future by envisioning what the future will look like and their end goal. They forecast, start with the end in mind and work back. This sets the learning transfer into motion when they aspire to reach the goal of establishing viable and sustainable enterprises.
- Relating to the current/past (assess) self-reflection: GYE relate to the self and assess past experiences against the aspired future. They identify the gaps; this helps them determine the knowledge they will require to fill them and determine when and where they can acquire the knowledge. GYE reflect on past experiences and current abilities. Attributes such as humility play a role in honestly acknowledging one's limitations.
- Relating to the Current/past (assess) environment: GYE assess the environment to determine what is achievable. GYE learn how to engage with their environments and develop relationships to help them manage or respond to the environment. GYE evaluate their competitors, other products, regulatory frameworks, enablers, and barriers in their operating environment. Learning transfer occurs within a context with historical factors, such as racial segregation, which plays a role in how relationships are governed in the country, such as the impact of BBBEE.
- Relating to the future/present (strategise): GYE relate to the future by strategising how they will address the gaps identified through self-assessment, acquire

knowledge, and overcome the challenges presented by the environment to address the main concern of staying afloat. GYE interact with various role players, such as peers and customer suppliers, to acquire learning and resolve their main concern of staying afloat. It is through this relationship that learning transfers occur. GYE learned to use strategies and relationships, such as communicating and partnering with others.

- Relating to the future/ present (decision making): GYE relate to the future and present by making decisions that assess past experiences, the operating environment, and a plethora of options/strategies at their disposal and review their past actions to determine their next steps. They use brainstorming to assess threats, barriers, uncertainties and identify opportunities. They consider the consequences of their actions to inform them of their next move.
- Relating to the past, present, and future (implement): GYE relate to the past, present, and future by establishing relationships with the self, the environment, and strategies. In and through these relationships, their main concern of staying afloat is addressed, and the process of learning transfer occurs. These relationships cut across time, people, structures, and processes, thus resulting in relational learning transfer.

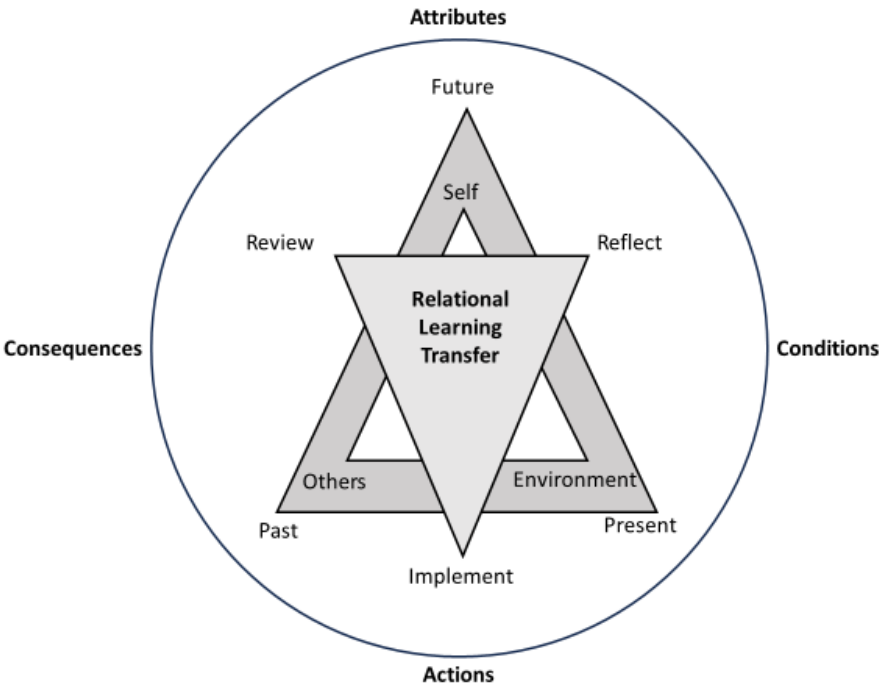

FIGURE 3. 9 RELATIONAL LEARNING TRANSFER MODEL (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

3.4.2 Theoretical themes

This study focuses on how learning transfer occurs in response to the main concern of staying afloat. The main concern for staying afloat involves product development/manufacturing and the product sales continuum.

- Getting the product from the manufacturing depot to the customer involves distribution, access to markets, and relationships with retailers.
- Ensuring that customers continuously choose their products and finds value in them, the relationship with customers and clients, and the relationship with self, assessing and reflecting are relevant.
- GYE are concerned about sustainability, that their products are competitive and become a product of choice. Relationships with academic institutions and suppliers for negotiating input material prices can help enhance this aspiration.

- GYE establish relationships with workplace teams, sponsors, and investors to ensure business viability.

Relational learning transfer begins with the end in mind. GYE begins by envisaging their future and learning how to attain it in and through relating to various role players and strategies.

3.4.2.1 Relating to the self

Reflecting on past experiences, acknowledging limitations, improving self-knowledge, improving decision-making, and finding strategies to leverage one's weaknesses or shortfalls, such as outsourcing, all require that one establish a relationship with oneself.

GYE demonstrated that they can determine the level of knowledge or learning they have acquired, the extent to which they can transfer the knowledge acquired, and when they require external assistance. GYE utilised their learning to identify remaining personal gaps and identify resources required to further their business interests to help them stay afloat. GYE embarked on studies and research to improve the knowledge gaps identified through reflection.

GYE know how to relate to themselves through self-awareness. Frank and honest relationships assist GYE in their growth as entrepreneurs. They acknowledged their limitations and developed strategies to address them.

"The issue of self, I think entrepreneurship is as much a personal journey, as it is a business journey, perhaps even more in my perspective. It excavates so much of yourself and brings it to the surface even aspects of yourself that you were not either paying attention to or that you were oblivious to and you see yourself in your greatest light, in your, you know in your darkest sense and this journey then requires you to have a huge sense of vulnerability and honesty about aspects of yourself that you need to let go off and aspects of yourself that you need to hold on to more, maybe even aspects of yourself that you need to start cultivating.

It sounds romantic when you speak about it this way, but you know sometimes it manifests just like in huge failures, sometimes it manifests through very difficult moments of pain and of making mistakes and of feeling betrayed and betraying others, and, and, and. And from that experience that's how you grow and how you move from it is by firstly acknowledging that it is a process. You do not get the full grasp of who you are in all your vastness in an instant, I do not think so right? I think you need to understand we are as life is, we keep on evolving, and we keep growing. New things or new instances are going to introduce more of ourselves to ourselves, so firstly acknowledge that yes, I grasped this aspect of myself today, but it does not mean that I am exempt from this assignment or from this project again in the future because once you accept that it means that you are constantly re-evaluating your character yourself, your relationship, the way you move in the world. And I think another way that you, I moved through it was acknowledging things as honestly as I can, and if I was wrong, I would go to the room, acknowledge it to myself, and say LL that was not ok. If you can find a way to apologise do that right, you do that and you let go without the expectation of the other person having either accept, accept it or not, that is their business. But what you do is you do right by other people as far as you can, sometimes that capacity is limited. When people do the same to you because it is a two-way street if you can try to let things go. One of the things I realised a lot about doing business is that it is a very complicated thing because it requires working with many, many people. Wherever there is a community of people, there is a complex mixing of different personalities, different backgrounds, different healed and unhealed traumas, different aspirations, and so on. From time to time there is going to be friction in that regard and the reason I think it is important to be able to let things go is that it allows you to give people the grace that they need to say, I do not know if anybody wakes up in the morning to say let me go and be a pain in the world. But it also allows you to give grace when they do not give you that grace. You know, and I think this all ties up to the emotional and mental experience of being an entrepreneur and I will even say the emotional and mental experience of being a human being that is part of a community. And I think it is absolutely important to acknowledge ourselves as human beings that are just trying to manifest our human hood through all the initiatives that we do whether it is

the business of writing books, whether it is academic, whatever it is, we are all trying to tap into the highest expression of ourselves and bring it to life". (Lulu)

"The importance of passion and patience. Believing in self. Self-encouragement, I am not in this journey alone. Focus and perseverance. Believing in the power of speaking word". (Phumu)

"Tell your story to yourself because honestly speaking before anyone believes in what you are selling you need to believe it yourself". Following your vision can make you isolated, you need to self-isolate if there is a need". (Phumu)

"The challenge of dealing with self-doubt and insecurity, fear of rejection. Whatever rejection I experienced helped me to learn to be comfortable in my space, I learn from that and make it better, so every day I become a better person. Rejection is no longer something bad but an opportunity to become greater". (Phumu)

"*Believe in your work first, before you expect someone to believe it. Take what you have, test, listen to critique and improve from there, What I have learned is you may never know what the future hold, uncertainty". (Iris)*

"Learn from different failed projects. My advice to entrepreneurs is to believe in the power of the speaking word and focus, persevere. Self-encouragement, I am not in this journey alone". (PM)

"Giving up was never an option for me; I knew that I had to get it right. Every time I was rejected, I knew I had to get back to the drawing board to improve on the concept. The vision was beyond just me/self". (Thabo)

I also believe that the pandemic allowed us to stop and self-reflect. Our team came out of the pandemic more focused and driven. (Thabo)

"*I feel despondent now, especially after how 2017/1118 has rolled out for me, firstly with selling most of my possessions in mid-2017 to keep the business running, and having to downsize. My team made me feel like a failure, the office was locked and the biggest*

contributor to all of this is losing my dearest grandmother two days before the end of 2017". (Sanna). He was an all-rounder in his business, and it was taxing for him–it took him a toll (observation).

Self-efficacy and self-confidence depend on a person's self-perception and relationship with the self. Self-knowledge is a critical part of the learning transfer process.

3.4.2.2 Relating to others

Relationships with others (includes family, peers, mentors, coaches, staff, team members and regulators). Family forms part of the learning source and support structure. GYE indicated that they were taught principles and observed behaviours in family settings, through which they assimilated cultural norms and standards. An example is given by an Eastern Cape food entrepreneur.

"At home I mean during the holidays when I am from boarding school there were, every day there were guests, the visitors' different people, we had lecturers from Unitra for instance, we had people who she helped out get IDs, who were on social grants and she would treat them the same way and honour them and treat them with respect, she would say this is how you treat people whatever status they are, whatever communities they come from, so for me I think she has been an inspiration. She has been my truth and she has allowed me to choose the career I wanted so a lot of people have their parents sort of force different careers on them and I did not have that and I think that every time I dreamt of a career my mom was supportive. She will tell her friends oh my daughter wants to do this and she was very supportive and she taught me that we need to be independent we need to work hard but also to just be humble, so she has been that and she is still that to me even today". (Sammy)

"*Have people get you into the door" (Phumu)*

Peers formed a major part of the learning source and transfer process. Through partnering and collaboration, GYE taught each other what they knew and implemented together, such as providing spaces in their shops to sell each other's products.

“Dumi gave me his factory”- a competitor manufacturing company.

Relationships with lecturing staff at the university assisted with ongoing research into product performance and improvement.

GYE talked about their friends' role; in sharing dreams and plans, friends provided feedback on whether their plans were viable and how to adjust them. They respected and appreciated their friends’ opinions and viewed them honestly.

“Check your circle, be around people who will enable you, and focus. Friends who believe in you provide advice and encouragement. People who believe in you. (Phumu)

“Shared ideas with friends- relationship with friends, sounding board, support” (Lusa)

Relationships with staff or team members are important as they are an important part of the business venture value chain. This enables work processes to occur.

“My team and I have hit the ground running after a hard lockdown. We spent the most of lockdown self-reflecting as a team and strategising. Now it’s time to unlock all the prep work. (Thabo)

GYE indicated how relationships with others helped to open closed doors. This reflects the importance of this relationship at different stages or times in the entrepreneurship journey.

“Ous Tebogo took me to the world of business. *Tumisho took me to the world of media”* (Sanna).

3.4.2.3 Relating to the environment

Relationships with the environment, competitors, challenges, barriers, threats, and opportunities were also identified.

“Relationship with institutions such as Seda which helped with attaining compliance- paid for product testing”. (Phumu)

Relationships with academic institutions that assisted with product development: collaboration/partnering. For example, the Innovation Hub provided platforms for piloting product ideas/generations. The relationship with the environment also includes how GYE relates to technology platforms that help them reach out to their customers, conduct in-depth research on products, and perform environmental scans to understand competitors. GYE take advantage of social media platforms and network with social influencers.

"*There was no marketing funds/budget at the time so social media came at the right time social media platforms helped". (Phumu)*

3.4.2.4 Relating to suppliers and customers

Relationships with suppliers and customers were reported to be a vehicle for learning transfer.

"We learnt a few lessons when we went to poor communities, they do not buy things in bulk, and this resulted in the decision of quantity (size of products) such as sachets. We *had created a solution, but we did not understand the problem. (Product refinement). The human psychology of saying there is dirt on my skin, and it needs to go somewhere led us to add wipes to products. Now for those who need it, it is the psychology of saying, I put this product on, it removes the dirt and smells on my body and then I wipe it off, for some reason people prefer that. The question I used to get most was where the dirt goes, it shows me people need to wipe" (Lumka)*

"*We listen to our customers, most of our brands are refined because of the criticism we get from our customers. Always listen to the customer and give the customer what he wants" the people are the face of the brand. A customer comes first, takes 90% of focus and supplier takes 10%.".* (Phumu)

"Engage continuously, I rely on their feedback, they help me in my innovation. Our customers are the innovators in the brand".(Phumu)

"Negative feedback from customers is a learning curve, they help us innovate" (Phumu)

“People started posting on social media that the product has worked for them, word of mouth helped. My sincerity and that of the product work. Feedback sometimes says a customer needs more education on the product, criticism is there to build you up”. (Phumu)

The relationship with the customer helps GYE to understand the customer’s perspective to redesign and improve products, which helps address the main concern of staying afloat.

3.4.2.5 Relating to retailers and distributors

Relationships with retailers and distributors help with product distribution and market access. GYE learned to negotiate deals and applied better communication strategies.

“*The biggest client is the resellers and this group or model as they can access more communities, that is what I am Identifying. You can never make it alone, work with people”. (Momo)*

“Partner with retailers themselves, the feedback they give when you pitch products, the guidance they provide. Every retailer is different, and they have their requirements. I found my answer on what to do in that rejection”. (PM)

“We started a relationship with ST, and I met a certain gentleman, at the time I was known as the king of Braam. I met a guy who was a buyer at ST, he was interested in my socks and he said ok, bring it through, and we will take it in. ST was my first contract but it was the worst contract I ever had, in terms and conditions, contracts were unfavourable, but I did it, and it had a lot of learning curves. At the end of 2015, ST was going down and it closed, I got my first learning of retail and my first learning of distribution (Sanna)

Relating with retailers helps improve opportunities for GYE to access markets that form part of their main concern, staying afloat.

Being associated with a big brand like FW has opened doors for us, lending more credibility to our brand and considerably elevating our brand visibility”. (Momo)

3.4.3 Theory assertions and propositions

GYE reported performing risk assessments to evaluate which relationships are riskier and can be mitigated. Their risk assessment is informed by facts and conditions available at the time.

"Well, I would say that currently, I have not used them simply because of one thing. I would like to de-risk my business as far as I possibly could and focus on equity partners than loans". (Nikita)

GYE partners reach their objectives of staying afloat, ensuring that their businesses are sustainable, and receiving constant feedback on product performance and enhancement. GYE reported that they tie down or conclude their partnerships through contracts where necessary.

GYE communicate to receive feedback on areas they need to improve, ensuring that their businesses continue to operate. They utilise various communication tools such as social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.) to reach out to various stakeholders and sometimes physically visited them.

GYE utilise lessons learned from interactions with various stakeholders to identify and design products, establish marketing strategies, market products, sell products, and improve their products so that they can access markets, remain viable, and be sustainable.

Learning transfer among GYE occurs through the building, establishing and utilising relationships with various role players. They learn from these relationships and transfer what they have learned through relationships with stakeholders who form part of the implementation process for the business to stay afloat, which is their main concern.

GYE reported that relationships with various stakeholders help get them to the door of certain retailers, which helps them access the markets. Relationships with stakeholders,

such as DTI, help with market access in terms of assisting entrepreneurs to reach across borders to global markets.

Emerging from the relationships identified above, a relational learning transfer model is proposed in Figure 3.9.

Components of relational learning transfer include:

- self, other, environment
- past, present, future
- reflect, implement, review

Relational learning transfer is a continuous process that involves relating vision with knowledge about the self, assessing gaps, formulating strategies to acquire knowledge, assessing the environment, developing strategies (partnering, outsourcing piloting), assessing strategies, and deciding the way forward, implementing, and reviewing. The process involves:

- future (assess) vision/envisioning
- current/past (assess) self
- current/past (assess)environment
- future/present (strategies)
- future/present (decision making)
- future/present (implement)

The following assertions can be made regarding the learning transfer that occurs through a related phenomenon.

Assertion 1: Learning transfer occurs through collaboration: it is highly unlikely or nearly impossible for one to survive, succeed, and be sustainable in the manufacturing sector or industry if one has not created a base of relationships with various role players in the value chain starting from pre-conceptual (idea generation), product development, product distribution, and product enhancement.

Assertion 2: Learning transfer occurs through relationship building and maintenance: If South Africa wants to increase the number of GYE, it should concentrate or empower young people on the value and strategies for building and maintaining relationships. Relationships help in idea generation when developing products, as one will have sponsors to invest in idea piloting and incubation, which will help open doors for distribution through retailers.

Types of relationships:

- Networking - it involves others
- Partnering - involves others
- Collaborating - involves others
- Relationship building involves others and the self, which is the most important factor of Relational Learning Transfer Theory. The relationship dimensions identified under relational transfer theory include:

How and with whom are these relationships:

- Past, present, and future are relevant in these relationships.
- Relating to self, others (support structures), and the environment; relating to customers and suppliers; and relating to retailers and distributors

These relationships are important in the learning transfer process because:

- To achieve business objectives- staying afloat, sustainability
- To feel better about self-accomplishment, confidence
- To make others better- impact

Assertion 3: Learning Transfer occurs through active self-involvement. Relationship building is a tool that is easily accessible; it is primarily based on the self, dependent on others, influenced by attitude, subject to internal and external factors, and should be intentional.

Assertion 4: Learning transfer occurs through the involvement of others, and learning transfer among GYE occurs through establishing and harnessing relationships with various role-players.

Assertion 5: Learning transfer is deliberate: Learning transfer occurs in and through deliberate relationships.

Assertation 6: Learning transfer is a holistic process: It considers internal and external factors referred to by previous theories like, for example, cognitive, socio-cultural, and behavioural theories.

Assertion 7: Relationships provide an opportunity to share thoughts and receive feedback, action, and reaction, or provide a feedback loop.

Proposition: GYE depend on relationships to acquire and transfer learning in South Africa's manufacturing sector.

Substantive theory: Relational Learning Transfer Theory. Learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector occurs in and through relationships.

This study developed the crisscross theory across time, the environment, people, and the self. A theory is a carefully thought-out explanation for observations of the natural world constructed using a scientific method, which brings together many facts and hypotheses. The hypothesis is that we can test with further scientific methods; theory confirmation is the next step.

3.4.4 Theory confirmation

Many theories are provisional; thus, language should be included that supports the tentative nature of proposals, such as "may occur" or "tend to." Social science theory has three characteristics.

- it predicts and controls (if and then logic)
- it explains how and why something happens by stating its causes

- it provides insight and guidance for improving social life
- A theory is an elegant statement that proposes a way to live or work productively.

If establishing relationships accounts for how learning transfer occurs among GYE, what types of relationships, and how they do this, this study tried to answer this question as per the explanations below.

Predict and control: Mutually beneficial relationships help create a conducive environment and provide a platform for learning transfers.

Explain: The establishment of relationships creates a vehicle through which GYE convey their aspirations, reflect on their past, assess their future strategies, implement their plans, and review their success or failure.

Insights and guidance for improving social life: Learning transfer can be enhanced by establishing mutually beneficial relationships among stakeholders, role players, and teams.

The Relational Learning Transfer Theory in this study adheres to:

- Fitness - Theory emerged from data and fit data.
- Workability - Theory can explain what is happening in the substantive or formal inquiry.
- Relevance - Theory is relevant for explaining, predicting, and interpreting reality. Based on the main concerns of the participants.
- Modifiability - Theory is flexible enough to be modified as data demands and new light about theory emerges.
- Substantive theory - Relational Learning Transfer Theory can be considered transferable. It includes all categories identified in the data.
- Formal theory - This study focused on one area that disqualifies it as a formal theory. However, this substantive theory can be further tested in other areas using quantitative or mixed methods to fit the definition of grounded formal theory.

3.5 Chapter Summary

The core category that encapsulated the phenomenon that had unfolded in the study was identified with related categories, resulting in the formulation of the Relational Learning Transfer Theory as the proposed theory that explains how learning transfer occurs among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector.

Chapter Four: Literature Review

4.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing literature on learning and learning transfer theories to help understand what is already known about the subject and locate the theoretical context in which this study is undertaken. This section also provides a conceptual framework.

4.1 Classic Grounded theory perspective on the literature review

A literature review is an essential stage for any research study, and this cannot be disputed. Although there is ongoing contention on when to do it when utilising GT, there are different perspectives on how GT studies should interact with literature (Charmaz, 2014; Dunne, 2011; Glaser, 1978a; Strauss & Corbin, 1997; Urquhart, 2016). The purpose of the literature review is to review previous studies conducted in the same field, identify gaps, and design studies that will assist in addressing the existing gaps and testing existing theories.

GT literature review was deferred to a later stage after data collection. Glaser (1998) does not support the literature review before the data collection and analysis process, arguing that prior knowledge may affect the researcher's ability to analyse data objectively. LaRossa (2005) discouraged engagement with prior studies at the beginning of the analysis to avoid or minimise contaminating the coding process. Strauss and Corbin (1997) also acknowledged that reviewing the literature before research may affect the researcher during the data analysis process.

Urquhart (2016) stance on literature review is non-committal and only partially agrees with Glaser and LaRossa in that she indicates that literature review can be deferred to the data analysis stage, provided it is experienced researchers as they have prior knowledge in the field (assuming that their study is in the field they are familiar with).

There is also a perspective that the knowledge of previous research in the same field will assist in that one will not repeat studies that have been conducted before (Clarke, 2005). As part of advocating for theoretical sensitivity, Glaser proposed that part of demonstrating this is to enter a research setting with as few predetermined ideas as possible. He encourages openness to develop new concepts (Glaser, 2017). Glaser proposed reviewing the literature only when the theory appears grounded and developed from data. The literature review provides scaffolding for novice researchers to identify social processes and phenomena.

During the study proposal process, the literature review was limited to the definition of entrepreneur, entrepreneurship, and Generation Y, as they are not the phenomenon under study but provide a contextual background. The phenomenon under study is learning transfer, and no literature review has been done to minimise contamination or preconceived ideas. Not conducting a literature review upfront can be a risk, as a similar study might have already been conducted. However, this is the risk that the researcher took with the understanding that every opportunity exploited will bring discoveries, despite how minimal they may be.

4.2 Literature review approach

The literature review conducted post-data analysis followed the funnel approach described in Figure 4.1.

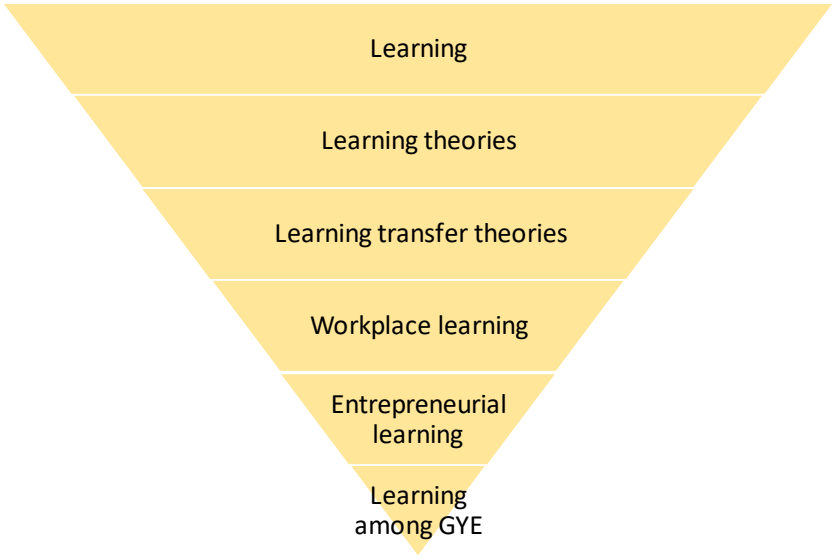

FIGURE 4. 1 LITERATURE REVIEW APPROACH (SOURCE-OWN-RALIPHADA N)

4.3 Overview of the study concepts

4.3.1 What is learning

Learning represents a change in the knowledge of a phenomenon. Learning is viewed as a social process that takes place in a social context that sets frames for what can be learned and how (Billett, 2004b; Illeris, 2007; Lave, 2019; Reed et al., 2010; Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020) Doroudi (2021) described learning as task-related, with individuals acquiring knowledge to complete a task. Hager and Hodkinson (2009) referred to learning as a relational web, a process of ongoing change that involves changes in both the learner and the environment. They further stated that three assumptions should be made about learning: learning is not a thing or substance or independent of the learner but a relational web.

- It does not involve the movement of a substance from one place to another but rather a relational web in the process of ongoing change.
- Learning is inherently part of and shaped by context

- Learning, referred to as formal learning, does not always occur in a traditional classroom setting.

Marsick and Watkins (2018) state that individuals can also learn through informal learning, which includes self-directed learning, networking, coaching, mentoring, and performance planning. Experiential learning theory provides a conceptual framework for informal learning, referring to the role played by connecting past experiences and current problems and how these connections support the transfer of learning (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2014). Marsick and Watkins (2018) and Kolb (2014) stated that informal learning is constituted by an individual's daily encounters in the workplace. The current study does not solely or specifically focus on applying knowledge, skills, or attitudes acquired in a formal training program but includes learning that is acquired informally and incidentally.

4.3.2 Learning theories

Learning theories seek to explain how individuals or groups learn (Chuang, 2021; Doroudi, 2021; Levine, 2022; Muhajirah, 2020). Theories can be further categorised as pre-behavioural, behaviourist, processual, and contemporary theories. There are various learning theories, and this literature review attempts to capture them. Below is an identification of the main learning theories.

- Behaviourism - learning is manifested by a change in behaviour induced by forming an association between stimuli and response.
- Cognitivism - learning is an internal mental phenomenon that results in the acquisition of knowledge
- Constructivism - learning is the construction of meaning from experience
- Socio-cultural theories - learning occurs through social interaction
- Social cognition - learning is an information-processing activity
- Humanism - learning is a function of motivation involving responsibility

Learning theories predominantly focus on creating the basis for instructional design, as most of them emanate from the field of psychology, which focuses on human development. Learning theories, especially seminal ones, focus more on student learning than workplace learning. Other learning theories (list not exhaustive) include Neuroscience, Brain-based learning, learning styles, multiple intelligences, the right brain/left brain, community of practice, and observational learning.

Pre-behaviourists such as (Locke, 1912) viewed the mind as a tabula rasa, a blank slate where rules for processing are formed from experience. On the other hand, Kant viewed learning as a product of innate operations and knowledge independent of external experience.

4.3.2.1 Behaviourist theories

Thorndike, Pavlov, and Skinner presented seminal studies that developed learning theories. Behaviourists like Pavlov represent some pioneers who published their work on learning theories in the late 1890s, emphasising the stimulus-response relationships (Doroudi, 2021; Yusra, Neviyarni, & Erianjoni, 2022). According to Rehman, Mahabadi, Sanvictores, and Rehman (2017), the work of Pavlov, which is classical conditioning, was first published by Twietmeyer a year before Pavlov published it.

Thorndike introduced the law of effect, arguing that behaviour is likely to improve if rewarded. From a human learning perspective, he likened this reward to an individual's feedback, which may help improve behaviour (Basri, Amin, Mirsa, Mukhlis, & Irviani, 2020; Brock, 2020).

Thorndike's work served as a basis for Skinner's operant conditioning and the introduction of the concept of reinforcement, which was classified as radical behaviourism. Watson, who published his work after Thorndike but before Skinner, highlighted that behaviour can be taught or influenced and sometimes induced, and he referred to his work as methodological behaviourism (Devaki, 2021; Doroudi, 2021). Part of the assumption of these seminal studies was that if one can predict behaviour, one can control it. This is

different from the objectives of this study, which does not seek to predict, alter, and control behaviour but seeks to understand it.

Behaviourist theories assume that for a response to happen, there must have been a stimulus to trigger the behaviour (Oommen, 2020; Ryan, Bradshaw, Deci, Sternberg, & Pickren, 2019). Learning should result in behavioural changes. Self-regulated learning occurs when one can direct thoughts, feelings, and actions towards realising a goal (Matric, 2018; Oommen, 2020). Behavioural theories suggest that learning transfer is successful when the test environment and conditions are similar to those in which initial knowledge is imparted.

The behavioural account of how learning transfer occurs does not impact the role played by the social environment. Behaviourist theories fail to account for the internal cognitive processes involved in learning; they focus not on what happens in the mind but on observable outputs (Ameri, 2020; Rumjaun & Narod, 2020). Many of these theories have focused on simulated environments and not real-life situations. Although the findings of these theories are valid, they are insufficient to explain the learning transfer process by GYE.

Behaviour can be learned, unlearned, encouraged, or discouraged (Clark, 2018a; Kenyon, 2022). Relational Learning Transfer Theory views learning as a product of internal cognitive factors and observable outputs.

4.3.2.2 Cognitivism theories

Cognitivism theories focus on how information is received, processed, stored, and retrieved from the mind (Malik, 2021; Michela, 2018; Muhajirah, 2020). Atkinson and Shiffrin identified information processing theory as one theory that explains learning (Malmberg, Raaijmakers, & Shiffrin, 2019; Tian et al., 2020). Information processing theory is concerned with how individuals view the environment, put that information in memory, and retrieve that information later on. It states that humans do not simply respond to external stimuli and process information. Humans work like computers with

three components: sensory, short-term, and long-term memory. Information processing is a cognitive process.

The information-processing model assumes that individuals attend to stimuli, recognise patterns, and encode and retrieve information as part of the maturation process (Malmberg et al., 2019). This emphasises how input from the environment is processed to create an output. The interaction between nature and nurture converges to the changes that occur. It further states that people remember things they know of and recognise the role of social influence, such as the fact that culture may influence how one remembers.

The neuroscience perspective highlighted a complex relationship between biology and the environment. Learning principles were proposed from cognitive neuroscience: learning is incremental and experience-based, learning is multisensory, learning is social, humans learn better with others compared to learning alone, learning is a lifelong process, and it is never too late to learn (Goswami, 2008; Saxe, Nelli, & Summerfield, 2021). Relational Learning Transfer Theory is similar to the cognitive neuroscience proposed principles in that learning is based on experience, social processes, and ongoing processes.

Processual theorists view the mind as a machine that processes information at different stages leading to memory, and they do not give an account of the environment or context, nor do they take into account how individuals learn and their development (Capacho, 2018; Grayot, 2020; Pockett, 2014). It involves abstract symbol manipulation and is geared toward how individuals solve tasks. It also simplifies learning into defined tasks and solutions but does not account for how one should deal with unknown encounters along the way. The Relational Learning Transfer Theory (RLTT) proposes how GYE should deal with unknown encounters in the day-to-day running of their enterprises.

Cognitive processes are not easy to study directly, as they are not observable, and processes such as memory must be inferred from behaviour (Muhajirah, 2020). No single perspective has fully explained how learning occurs. It is time for learning scholars to

appreciate that all perspectives contribute to the whole and that each has a unique contribution that cannot be replaced and should not be underestimated.

4.3.2.3 Constructivism theories

Constructivism forms part of the contemporary view, which tries to reconcile the differences between the processual and behavioural views. Constructivism is the process by which new knowledge is constructed. Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky are proponents of constructivist theories (Clark, 2018c; Mann & MacLeod, 2015). They highlighted the role of experience acquired through practice/doing and the relationship between individuals and their environments as pillars for learning transfer. They further indicated that past experiences can provide a basis for future growth.

Constructivism involves critical thinking and active participation in problem-solving whereby individuals construct their knowledge by testing ideas and approaches in new situations based on the knowledge they had acquired in the past and experiences (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Fernando & Marikar, 2017; Hein, 1991; Narayan, Rodriguez, Araujo, Shaqlaih, & Moss, 2013). As an educational philosophy, constructivism believes learners construct knowledge uniquely based on prior experiences. One characteristic of entrepreneurs is that they construct knowledge as they implement it, which is what constructivism is about. However, this theoretical perspective does not fully account for how learning and learning transfer occur among GYE.

According to Social constructivism, meaning is created within human relationships as part of social exchange rather than through an individual cognitive process (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Chuang, 2021; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). This study has established that learning transfer by GYE is impacted by historical, cultural, and contextual factors, such as the legacy of apartheid, gender bias roles, and GYE's family backgrounds. Social constructivism partially explains how learning occurs within a relationship. However, it does not explain how personal attributes play an additional role in determining an individual's ability to learn and transfer; thus, it is insufficient to explain how learning transfers among GYE; RLTT addresses this gap.

The emphasis on constructivism is on how humans create meaning from their interactions with their world and that knowledge/experience results in a perspective. These theories are based on the assumption that learners create meaning amid multiple realities (Nagowah & Nagowah, 2009). They also emphasise that learning is a choice made by the learner; thus, the learner is not a passive participant in the learning process but an active participant. GYE are constantly required to make choices and actively participate in their learning, and the assumption that learners create meaning amid multiple realities is valid.

Piaget is considered to be one of the pioneers of constructivist theories. According to this theory, knowledge is constructed through reading, listening, exploring, and experiencing one's environment. This is similar to RLTT, where GYE acquired learning through reading, experience, and exploring. Piaget found that individuals learn through schema-like assimilation and accommodation (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Rahmat, Othman, Muhammad, Anuarudin, & Arepin, 2019). Assimilation refers to a process whereby new information encountered is sorted in terms of existing structures classified as existing schemes, whereas accommodation refers to a process whereby individuals change their perspectives or lenses in response to new information (Doroudi, 2021; Imandala, Li, & Supriyadi, 2019). Equilibrium was achieved when assimilation and accommodation were stable.

There is a view that Piaget's work represented radical constructivism in that it brings to the fore the fact that men can never fully know about a subject (objective reality) but create their reality to make the world functional (subjective reality), Von Glaserfeld 2001 cited in (Doroudi, 2021). Constructivism identifies the importance of experience or prior knowledge in formulating individual perspectives but also highlights the risks that misconceptions based on experience can have on learning (Doroudi, 2021). Constructivism recognises that individuals learn through inquiry-based or discovery learning. Trial and error are one of the ways learning transfers occur among GYE.

Constructivism theories hold the same view as cognitive theories in that they view real-life learning as messy and complex but also as a collaborative process (Muhajirah, 2020).

Learning is a socially enacted process that occurs within a given context. The limitations of these theories include that people are the theory's focus and that the theory does not address learning outside the individual. Constructivism theories also fail to look at the impact of learning, and new theories that address this gap must be explored; RLTT addresses such a gap.

4.3.2.4 Socio-Cultural Theories

Zhou and Brown (2015) highlighted three pivotal learning factors that form part of Bandura's reciprocal determinism: personal factors (cognition, affect, and biology), environmental factors, and behaviour. Socialisation affects what, how, and why an individual learns. Bandura changed his theory from social learning to social cognitive theory to recognise cognition's role in encoding and performing behaviour (Devi, Khandelwal, & Das, 2017; Glăveanu, 2020).

Individuals can acquire knowledge from social interactions, experiences, media influences/exposures, and observing others, such as mentors/parents/peers, through memorisation of events and following similar patterns to respond to a situation when encountered (Wyer Jr & Srull, 2014). This study found that GYE acquired knowledge through similar processes.

People learn through observation, which may influence their adult behaviour, which Bandura refers to as a reciprocal triadic relationship (Devi et al., 2017). It was noted that the environment one grew up in and the family background influenced learning. GYE, in this study, referred to how the environments they grew up in influenced them to become entrepreneurs. For some, it played a role in the products they manufactured, while for others, it influenced their business values. To some, it influenced their decisions and prepared them to endure uncertain and turbulent environments.

Devi et al. (2017) clarify how the three factors influence learning, and they say personal factors determine whether an individual has high or low self-efficacy; behaviour influences learning through feedback or responses that individuals receive from acting, whereas environmental factors provide an opportunity to learn.

Kohlberg developed a theory of moral development based on an empirical study of male-only participants, emphasising the importance of culture and learning values (Gibbs, 2019). This theory does not account for cultural differences across groups of people or nations. The GYE in South Africa come from different cultures that ethnic or racial groups may influence; thus, they may have different values that may impact how they learn and transfer learning.

4.3.3 Transfer and learning transfer perspectives

The 1960s and the 1980s constituted a period during which there was a decline in research on transfer. The transfer was conducted under headings such as stimulus generalisation, constancy, transposition phenomena, isomorphic relations, metaphor, analytical reasoning, assimilation, and others (Schunk, 2012a; Tammina, 2019; Zhu, Lin, Jain, & Zhou, 2023). The transfer is often not recognised because it is hidden under other names (Pan & Yang, 2009). Historically, the transfer has been subsumed in the instructional arena of education, behaviourist laboratory research, and cognitive psychology-schema research (Green, 2015).

Transfer as a concept or phenomenon has been described in various schools of thought, such as Management, Education and Psychology. Transfer is complex and multifaceted, and the mistake commonly committed to explaining transfer is to look at it from a single view (Hajian, 2019; Zhuang et al., 2020). As part of the evolution of transfer research, the concept and process were initially viewed from an applied instructional arena of education, and later, transfer was explained from a behaviourist perspective as well as cognitive psychology (Dohn, Markauskaite, & Hachmann, 2020).

According to cognitive psychology, the transfer can be described as schema, a hypothetical cognitive structure through which knowledge is organised and processed based on previously learned information, implying that learning is transferred to new situations (Dohn et al., 2020). Schema transfer includes isomorphic relations, metaphoric reasoning, analogical reasoning, artificial intelligence, and computations. The transfer is

part of laying the foundation for an information processing framework that explains information acquisition, processing, and retention.

The rationalist view states that transfer and learning depend on innate abilities and the inherent structures inside the mind (McFarlane, 2006; Mutiani et al., 2022). The empirical view states that cognitive processes and transfers depend on external stimuli. The social-historical view states that transfer processes reside predominantly in human interactions' social and interpersonal worlds. Participation in the social world provides a structure for transfer. The ecological view argues that transfer occurs not only in the social world but also in the physical world.

Perkins and Salomon (2018) refer to the transfer of learning as a process through which information travels with the learner to new locations and is applied in novel, engaging, and innovative ways. Transfer of learning occurs when meanings, expectations, generalisations, concepts, or insights developed in one learning setting are employed in other settings (Weiss, Khoshgoftaar, & Wang, 2016a).

Perkins and Salomon (2018) further stated that the learner must be determined to solve new problems, approach new situations, and take risks in light of insights gained through previous experience. GYE has demonstrated its determination to approach new situations, take risks, and solve problems for its enterprises to remain sustainable.

Transfer can be based on affordances, whereby activities involve personal and group characteristics, prior learning experiences, future opportunities, and situational motivational aspects (Kordt, 2018). Affordance theory has some similarities to the proposed Relational Learning Transfer Theory. The characteristics of a learner and the nature and degree of similarity between the original learning setting and the new application context improve the chances of transfer (Merriam, 2018).

Kirwan and Birchall (2006) refer to the transfer of learning as the degree to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in training to their jobs. Yamkovenko and Holton (2010) found that learning transfer is influenced by personal characteristics, reward systems, motivation, interpersonal support for transfer, design elements for

training, and the desire to improve performance. GYE is passionate about its enterprises, and attitude plays an important part in its determination to succeed. Relational Learning Transfer Theory has common elements with the factors identified; however, design elements for training did not form part of this study.

Learning Transfer should be viewed as disembedding knowledge from one situation and transforming it to be utilised in another (Røvik, 2016). Rovik further highlights the genesis of knowledge at different levels of social development. The sociocultural view of knowledge transfer emphasises two dimensions: social and cultural; thus, knowledge is said to be richly associated with the social circumstances in which it is created.

The social genesis of knowledge increases prospects for learning and knowledge transfer. Relational learning transfer identifies the environment as an important factor in transfer, as GYE transfer learning within South Africa is affected by social and cultural dimensions. The transfer depends on how knowledge is valued and utilised in place of deployment. Individuals construct their knowledge that is socially derived and premised on experiences rather than constructing knowledge based on epistemological truth (Billett, 2013).

Learning transfer among GYE is an ongoing process and not a once-off event. The transfer should be viewed as either translational or transformational. The transfer should be broadened beyond replicative transfer based on identical elements and should emphasise preparation for future learning and the ability to learn in new situations (Røvik, 2016).

The sociocultural view of transfer highlights the importance of motivation and the learner's emotional state, environment, and learner’s expectations as relevant factors in the transfer process. From a sociocultural perspective, it can be deduced that knowledge transfer depends on the individual construction and reconstruction of knowledge in a situation influenced by the social environment in which learning takes place (Daniels, 2010).

Cognitive perspective proponents view transfer as partly based on the individual's mental process, for example, how existing knowledge is utilised to understand new knowledge in a new situation (Cormier & Hagman, 2014). Transfer of learning occurs when one uses past learning in new or similar situations. It stores, remembers, interprets, and retrieves information.

Transfer utilises analogies and metaphors (Leberman & McDonald, 2016). Cognitive psychology recognises the use of analogical reasoning to explain transfer. Transfer can be summarised as a way of thinking, perceiving, and processing information that we do in our everyday lives, sometimes consciously or unaware. The transfer is pervasive, as are its effects.

Hager and Hodkinson (2009) indicate that learning transfer lies at the heart of the debate of two schools of thought or learning theories: first, the relationship between school knowledge and the knowledge acquired in learning life, and second, the relationship between transfer and boundary crossing. They viewed learning transfer as a metaphor that brings about baggage and leads to a continued misunderstanding of the processes it stands for. The skills-learning lens assumes that what is learned is a thing or substance independent of the learner; it either gets used or lost. Relational Learning Transfer Theory demonstrates that learning transfer is a continuous process, and GYE continuously reflects, implements, and reviews learning to achieve its objectives.

Hager and Hodkinson (2009) view transfer as a metaphor rather than a literal reality. Transfer metaphor refers to the skills, abilities, and capacities involved in performance rather than the performance outcome. The participation learning lens proposes that learning transcends context; thus, it is inherently contextual, and transfer is a transitionary process whereby individuals recontextualise activities as they engage with them (Hager & Hodkinson, 2009). Concerning their environment, others, customers, suppliers, and self-GYE recontextualise their activities as they engage with them.

Learning transfer is the boundary between cultural and historical activity systems (Tomaz & David, 2021). Knowledge and skills are significantly influenced by the individual's ability

to connect past learning with current and future learning and their interpretation of different learning contexts (Schwartz, Chase, & Bransford, 2012). This view of transfer appears to capture processes as they unfold in the current data but does not indicate what is gluing this connectivity, which is found in the current study of establishing relationships.

Learning transfer in the workplace includes skills, knowledge, and understanding of particular social interactions and hierarchies; it is a complex, dynamic process where knowledge is activated and applied in response to context (Lindgren, Morphew, Kang, Planey, & Mestre, 2022). It encompasses vertical, generalisable academic and horizontal knowledge. Lobato (2012), in his actor-oriented model, highlighted the importance of individuals relating to the context in creating learning transfer. In attempting to explain transfer, dynamic systems theory states that mental models are not static and may change when individuals perceive or understand discourse about a phenomenon.

Learning transfer is an everyday occurrence at work, home, and in the community. It occurs whenever an individual's existing knowledge, abilities, and skills affect the performance or application of tasks. Learning transfer may imply that one introduces a new pattern of behaviour by implementing something new or discontinuing old habits or ways of doing things.

4.3.4 Learning transfer theories, models, and their gaps

It is important to note that most of the theories on transfer were based on training transfer rather than learning transfer. Learning occurs from different sources: intentional or unintentional, planned or unplanned, whereas training is a planned activity with predefined outputs and outcomes.

4.3.4.1 Transfer of Learning Theories

Transfer is a multi-dimensional process focus of most of the early transfer theories on similarities between the conditions of learning and the conditions of transfer (Hajian (2019). There are various theories of learning transfer, as indicated in this section. However, they do not provide a holistic view of how learning transfer occurs, which the

proposed relational learning transfer theory addresses. The other dynamic of this study is that it was conducted in South Africa when the country faced high levels of unemployment and sluggish economic growth that did not translate into job creation. What facilitates learning transfer and hinders it are also subjects of wide debate, but this study provides processes in the South African manufacturing context. The transfer topic has received considerable attention as it relates to training, which is narrower than the concept of learning addressed in this study. Learning is broader, as it encompasses both informal and informal learning, as well as planned and incidental learning. The transfer of learning can be classified as well, Zhuang et al. (2020) identified three categories of transfer: transductive, inductive, and unsupervised transfer learning, which are encompassed in relational learning transfer.

Experiential theory - Kolb (2014) found that learning occurs through the transformation of experiences. It occurs in four cyclical stages: experience, reflection, generalising, and testing. It is viewed as a good teaching approach that has proven its value. This theory does not include some aspects of Relational Learning Transfer Theory, such as envisaging the future and strategising as part of the learning transfer process. It cannot fully account for the learning transfer processes in the GYE.

According to Leberman and McDonald (2016), a transfer can be defined as the extent to which learning is transferred from one context to another. Transfer is the effective application of trainees to their jobs, knowledge, and skills gained in training both on- and off-site (Subedi, 2009). Actual transfer occurs when people carry something they have learned from one context to a significantly different context, which involves not only acquiring specific skills but also sociocultural, cognitive, and behavioural characteristics (Leberman & McDonald, 2016).

The Theory Of Identical Elements found that learning can be transferred from one activity to another, provided similar elements exist (Hajian, 2019). Dewey's pragmatic view of learning states that the classroom should mirror real-life learning situations. This is not always applicable as the classroom or formal training is not the only source of learning

for GYE, and classroom training may not always mirror real-life situations; thus, this explanation will not fully explain learning in the current study but does so partially.

A Generalised Theory of Transfer. Judd's theory of generalisation states that generalisation depends on experience (Wen, 2022). The homogenous and heterogeneous transfers were differentiated. Homogenous transfer occurs in situations that exhibit similarities. In contrast, heterogeneous transfer occurs in situations that are not necessarily similar, displaying different features and requiring some adaptability (Weiss, Khoshgoftaar, & Wang, 2016b; Weiss & Khoshgoftaar, 2016).

Feuz and Cook (2015) and Day and Khoshgoftaar (2017) agree that heterogeneous transfer learning focuses on a target task. GYEs are sometimes forced to transfer learning in new situations that they have never experienced before and where they cannot make connections between two experiences, which makes generalisation theory insufficient to explain how learning transfer occurs among GYEs.

Theory of High Road and Low Road Transfer - (Perkins & Salomon, 2018). Low road transfer occurs when two similar events quickly become part of reflective or automatic behaviour. In contrast, high-road transfer occurs through abstraction or a deliberate effort to link seemingly unrelated events. The two explanations are applicable in the transfer of learning by GYE, as in the manufacturing sector, routine activities fit low road transfer, while innovation and strategy require abstraction and fit the definition of high road transfer.

The Theory of Analogy and Abstraction is based on retrieving information, mapping structures, transferring solutions, and generalising. Individuals utilise their past knowledge or encounters to solve new problems (Gentner & Hoyos, 2017). In explaining their daily business decisions, some of the GYE referred to previous experiences or encounters and how they helped them structure responses to current events and plans for a way forward. The debate among researchers on transfer is based on structural or surface commonalities. Surface commonalities help individuals remember, which reminds them of previous encounters that serve as a reference point and thus increase the chance

of the individual possibilities to apply similar principles in the new challenge (Hajian, 2019).

Day and Goldstone (2012)'s contemporary view of transfer is shaped by the computational metaphor of cognition, symbolic cognitive approach, and theories of analogical reasoning. Day and Goldstone referred to analogy as a match between the systems of relations in two represented situations, regardless of differences in objects and the features they involve. This requires a learner to develop a mapping process to recognise structural commonalities. The transfer is realised when one utilises previously known information or structural symbolic representations to make inferences about new encounters.

Transfer can occur through case-based reasoning, a process whereby individuals utilise the analogy of previous knowledge and experience to resolve problems in a new context (Subedi, 2004).

Situated learning theory - According to Lave and Wenger, learning and transfer occur in a social context through observation and practice. The theory emphasises participation in communities infused with culture (Stewart, 2021). Mandl and Kopp called this "context-based learning" (Nentwig & Waddington, 2006). Lave and Wenger introduced the concept of "legitimate peripheral participation", indicating that learning should be an unintentional process, and the study was conducted with female tailors who were apprentices. They agree that learning is a social phenomenon, and they noted that learning transfer is progressive, starting from peripheral tasks, and through participation, learners become more knowledgeable and can perform more complex tasks (Lave, 2019). They refer to a community of practice as a group of people who regularly share passions, interests, goals, and sociocultural practices.

Wenger (2009) clarified that learning is not only limited to informal or unplanned activities within communities of practice but can also include learning from planned activities, such as formal lessons, and cultural events, such as places of worship. The components of situated learning include collaboration, practice, problem-solving, and coaching (Zurita &

Baloian, 2015). Barnett and Ceci, cited by Zelinski (2009) in their taxonomy, identified physical, temporal, functional, and social contexts, modality, and the content of materials as factors in which learning transfer situations may differ. The current study provides knowledge on how interactions help learning transfer and how GYE collaborate and participate in entrepreneurial ecosystems as part of the learning transfer process.

Day and Goldstone (2012) state that contextual rather than structural similarities between situations will likely play a more significant role in determining whether a transfer occurs. One should ask whether individuals are more likely to transfer what they have observed and experienced versus what they have read, and what is the likelihood of transfer from concrete learning versus abstract learning? Day and Goldstone (2012) concluded that no single approach may account for all transfer aspects; Relational Learning Transfer Theory demonstrates that transfer is a multidimensional process.

Transformative Learning Theory. Mezirow (2018) views transfer as a process in which prior information is utilised to interpret current encounters and guide future encounters (Mezirow, 2018). It is the process of effecting a change in the frame of reference and helps develop autonomous thinking. The frame of reference has two dimensions: habits of the mind and points of view (Mezirow, 2018). Some of the GYE indicated that they broke the cycles and frame of reference in their families by becoming first-generation entrepreneurs, demonstrating that they deviated from socialised and some of the conditioned responses.

Learning to Learn Theory advocates that learners are active participants in their learning; they take the initiative to learn and pursue their learning through adequate time and information management, which can happen individually or in groups (Thoutenhoofd & Pirrie, 2015). This theory highlights the importance of an individual entering relationships with surrounding people, events, and places. They proposed that learning-to-learn and self-regulation learning can be used interchangeably. GYE learn daily from various sources, such as events, others and the environment, as found in this study.

Situated Cognition Theory posits that cognition is embedded and situated in the environment, the social context; individuals learn and transfer learning within the constraints of their environment, and they must adapt to the existing environment, social networks, communities, and societies (Goel, Johnson, Junglas, & Ives, 2010b; Roth & Jornet, 2013). Cognition is enacted, and relationships with the surroundings are formed for action. Individuals learn to negotiate through the constraints to achieve their goals; one can state that conscious manoeuvring exists. This theory encompasses several factors of relational learning transfer.

ACT-R theory concerns cognitive architecture: transfer occurs between two tasks through overlaps involved in performing them. It focuses on predicting and controlling behaviour (Ritter, Tehranchi, & Oury, 2019). According to Anderson, ACT-R, the Atomic Components of Thought have evolved. ACT-R refers to the adaptive control of thought-rational thinking (Anderson & Schunn, 2013). The focus is on what is happening in the mind and how it processes and retrieves information. It does not consider socio-cultural factors and cannot fully account for learning transfer among GYE.

A Schema Theory of Transfer (Schmidt) describes figural transfer and complex generic information that provides an account of transfer involving previously learned skills. All human beings are said to have a set of rules on how they do things, which can be defined as their schema and any new information they encounter is interpreted in terms of the schema (Widmayer, 2004). Relational Schema Induction Theory was introduced by describing how information about interpersonal experiences is perceived, interpreted, stored, and recalled (Phillips, 2021). This theory does not account for how learning transfers occur in the GYE.

Transactive Memory Systems (TMS) theory proposes that learning transfer occurs when tasks are performed in groups. Group learning assists learners in transferring knowledge beyond one task and across different contexts (Lewis & Herndon, 2011). This study demonstrated that GYEs learn as individuals and can learn in groups. TMS does not fully account for how learning transfers occur among GYE.

Transposition theory was founded by Max Wertheimer and other Gestalt psychologists. Learning transfer occurs from the resemblance of current encounters to previous encounters or current conditions to previous conditions. It focuses on the pattern of relationships; it is not specific skills and factors or even underlying principles that are important, but understanding relationships between facts, processes, and principles is the basis for transfer (Lazareva, 2012). This theory does not fully account for how GYEs transfer learning in the manufacturing sector, as they do not always utilise previous knowledge but have to find ways of dealing with new encounters, which the Relational Learning Transfer Theory covers.

Ideals Theory, the doctrine of transfer through ideals, was propagated by Bagley, who states that when generalisations are viewed as ideals, they become more transferable and form part of the norms or individual values that learners live in different circumstances (Devi & Singh, 2022). Ideals such as honesty, truthfulness, and love can be transferred according to this theory. GYE demonstrated that they have certain ideals that help them navigate the environment, such as passion and commitment to pursue their dreams.

Motivation Theories. GYE in the manufacturing sector highlighted various factors that influence learning, which can partially be accounted for through theories of motivation to transfer. In their daily learning, GYE are driven by the consequences of their actions and decision-making processes, partially explained by the Expectancy Theory (Renko, Kroeck, & Bullough, 2012). Locke and Latham, proponents of goal-setting theory, found that learning and performance are influenced by goals that individuals set for themselves. GYE indicated that what drives their learning transfer process are the goals that they want to achieve (Lunenburg, 2011).

The transfer topic has received considerable attention as it relates to training, which is narrower than the concept of learning addressed in this study (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Tripuraneni, Jordan, & Jin, 2020). Learning is broader, encompassing formal, informal, planned, and incidental learning. Zhuang et al. (2020) identified three categories of transfer: transductive, inductive, and unsupervised transfer learning, which are encompassed in relational learning transfer.

4.3.4.2 Overview of Transfer Taxonomies

The literature also describes types of transfer and transfer models. A summary of the types of transfers from various authors is provided in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4. 1 TYPES OF TRANSFER (LARSEN-FREEMAN, 2013; MARIANO, 2014; MELZER, 2014; ZHUANG ET AL., 2020).

Type of transfer	Characteristics
Near	when previous knowledge is transferred to new situations that are closely similar but not identical to previous situations
Far	analogical reasoning is evident in this transfer as it is applicable in situations that are not similar to the original learning
Positive	a phenomenon where learning in one context improves performance in another.
Negative	occurs when previous learning or experience inhibits or interferes with learning or performance in a new context
Simple	is when little or no effort is required to apply what has been learned in one situation to a new situation
Relational	seeing the same structure between two things
Lateral	instances where previous learning is transferred to the same level in the hierarchy
Reverse/backwards	applies in instances where existing prior knowledge is modified and reviewed in terms of its similarity to new information
Vertical	prior learning transferred to new learning that is higher in a knowledge hierarchy or learning that presupposes the prior learning
Literal	using procedure or knowledge in a new learning situation, more or less like near transfer

Type of transfer	Characteristics
Figural	When general knowledge is applied to a new situation using analogies or metaphors
Creative/ displacement	instances whereby the learner goes beyond what was learned and adds new variables, thus developing new insights
Context	applicable to instances where one can apply what was learned in a slightly different situation
Application	applies to instances where what was learned in a specific situation can be implemented in a similar situation
Non-specific	all learning is dependent on some connection with past learning, and as such, all learning is the transfer of learning
High road	based on mindful abstraction and a deliberate search for connections
Low road	happens when stimulus conditions in the transfer context of learning trigger well-developed semi-automatic responses
Zero transfer	When prior knowledge does not influence new learning

Observations have been made that there are times when individuals are not able to transfer learning in a slightly different environment, as learning retrieval is sometimes based on physical space and context. The types of transfer described above do not outline the process through which the transfer of learning occurs but describe an observed phenomenon that partly highlights the dimensions, indicators, or outcomes of transfer. In summary, all the types of transfers described above depend on the judgement of similarity, which is subjective.

4.3.4.3 Learning Transfer Models

Different models attempt to explain how transfer occurs, and they include the cognitive model, which utilises the schema approach, which does not account for the underlying processes by which subjects recognise and apply for the transfer.

Metacognition model: Metacognition refers to an individual's knowledge, awareness, and control of the processes by which they learn. Fauth and González-Martínez (2021) refer to the implementation context that differs from the learning context and the influence of prior learning, experience, and transformation that occurs throughout. Input and output factors impact transfer, which occurs due to internal attributes and the external environment (Ben-David et al., 2010). Personal work environment factors also have an influence.

Blume et al. (2010) identified variables that may influence transfer: training design, use of learning principles, sequencing and content, aptitude, work environment, opportunities to use learning, and support from superiors and peers. The variable training design referred to may not be applicable in this study, as the focus is not on the transfer of training but on the transfer of learning. The model does not include family as part of the support structure or as a source of learning. GYE adapt to their environment, and adaptability, as a transfer indicator, refers to the degree to which an individual can adapt their learning to new situations. Adaptability refers to the alteration of learned skills in a real-life context. Transfer occurs at the transition point between acquired knowledge and implementation in the context.

Cognitive Apprenticeship Model of learning transfer - individuals learn formally from experts or specialists; GYE do not follow the apprenticeship model (Cakmakci, Aydeniz, Brown, & Makokha, 2020).

Regression model. A study that incorporated sociotechnical and quality management found that the motivation to learn plays a prominent role in the transfer of learning (Baquerizo, 2020).

Kirwan's model identified factors such as peer support, opportunity to use, motivation to transfer, personal capacity to transfer, feedback, coaching, and management support as some of the factors that affect the transfer (Kirwan & Birchall, 2006). These factors were identified in the current study during category development and informed Relational Learning Transfer Theory, which identifies self, others, the environment, future, past, present, envisioning, assessing, implementing and reviewing as factors that influence transfer and accounts for the interactions among these factors.

Transfer can be classified into traditional and analogical approaches (Combs, Lu, & Bihl, 2023; Schwartz, Bransford, & Sears, 2005b). The traditional approach focuses on whether individuals can apply what they have learned to a new situation, problem, or encounter.

The traditional approach to transfer focused on "knowing that" and "knowing how" (Schwartz, Bransford, & Sears, 2005a). Broudy (2017) proposes that the focus should shift to "knowing with'. Knowing incorporates the knowledge, experience, perception, interpretation, and judgement of situations, considering past experiences. Broudy (2017) identified association, which includes non-logical relationships, as one of the mechanisms through which "knowing with" occurs. Preparing for future learning highlights the importance of willingness to learn, sensitivity to expectation, persistence in the face of difficulty, and tolerance of ambiguity. These factors appear to be observed in GYE and are at the core of entrepreneurship.

Most of the studies to date on learning transfer have focused on the following: what are the factors that facilitate or inhibit transfer, why do most training programmes and courses fail to transfer, who is responsible for maximising the transfer of training to the job, and what are the possible strategies for facilitating transfer? A critical aspect of Relational Learning Transfer Theory is that it does not revolve around recognition or retrieval but provides a perspective on application/implementation processes.

Technology transfer is essential for GYE, which refers to the transmission of know-how that enables the recipient to manufacture a particular product or provide services to suit

local conditions and involves an intentional and goal-oriented interaction between social entities (Wahab, Rose, & Osman, 2012). Technology transfer requires a sustained relationship between two enterprises over time. Technology transfer can be used to describe the process by which knowledge is transferred from the laboratory to the marketplace (Heinzl, Kor, Orange, & Kaufmann, 2013). This process is aligned with how GYE transfers learning of what they do in their private spaces, such as garages, where they try out ideas and move them to manufacturing plants.

Mestre (2005) highlights that the problem with explaining transfer is that it is given a reductionist view. There is an assumption that every time learning occurs, previously learned information is used as a building block, and this is more recognisable in activities such as problem-solving and decision-making. The essence of transfer is in understanding, interacting, and creating; these fit very well with the Relational Learning Transfer Theory, as establishing relationships or relationship building is a set of behaviours central to transfer among GYE. Various authors agree that the transfer of learning is about the organisation's sustainability and personal survival (Broad, 2005; Loewenstein, Thompson, & Gentner, 2003). In the current study, the concern for GYE is also about sustainability and survival.

4.3.5 Workplace learning

The 21st-century workplace is not confined to a physical location, and the workplace for GYE is not confined to a traditional work area (Yarberry & Sims, 2021). The workplace is a site of learning associated with developing individuals' knowledge and skills as employees, enhancing the enterprise by contributing to its production, effectiveness, and innovation (Kenon & Palsole, 2019; Van Woerkom & Poell, 2010). It is a site where ideas, interests, rapidly evolving practices, and multiple forms of writing intersect (Han, Oh, Kang, Lee, & Park, 2022; Mangion, 2022). Workplace learning is complex and multifaceted.

The literature highlights a range of various meanings and perspectives on workplace learning, and some that fit the current study include the following:

- Workplace as a site for complex technical interactions and problem-solving
- Workplace as a site for sharing and creating knowledge
- Workplace as part of the knowledge society

Transfer occurs between two tasks or learning activities when they share a set of common stimulus features, and there should be a link between the conditions of original learning and the skill displayed for the task (Hager, 2011; Zhuang et al., 2020). Workplace learning is more about making appropriate judgements, as circumstances often change (Hager, 2011).

The current study is not about learning transfer behind the scenes but on practical and observable processes as part of GYE experiences.

Learning in the workplace hinges on the relationship between the learner and supervisor, the nature of work, and the social and physical environment. Formal learning is driven by strategy, while informal learning is driven by production, such as improving efficiency (Lin & Lee, 2014). Vaughan (2008) view is that workplace learning is influenced by workplace culture and the production process.

Vaughan (2008) identified additional factors that should be considered in workplace learning, such as socio-cognitive demands, socio-interactional requirements, the impact of the task, a wider regulatory environment (e.g., different market conditions/competition), regulations such as operating licensing requirements/government statutes, and technology.

Learners' backgrounds, age, numeracy, literacy levels, beliefs, experience, and the social groups to which they belong were also considered to play a role in workplace learning (Dochy, Gijbels, Segers, & Van den Bossche, 2021; Vaughan, 2008). These factors applied to GYE in the South African manufacturing sector.

A study of automotive manufacturing workplace practices found that learners' attitude plays a pivotal role in industry technology changes. Vaughan (2008) suggests that the best way to look at workplace learning is to understand the relationship between different

factors, emphasising the roles of culture and support. Vaughan (2008) proposed that empirical studies should focus on understanding workplace learning in different and specific contexts or industry areas, thus justifying the study of learning transfer by GYE in the South African Manufacturing sector.

Fuller (2013) and Vaughan (2008) proposed that studies should be conducted to learn more about knowledge (acquisition) and doing (participation), including the roles of various stakeholders involved in workplace learning. Research should be grounded in understanding learning for something particular in a specific social, economic, or political context.

4.3.6 Entrepreneurship and learning

Learning by entrepreneurs generally occurs within a firm or organisation context (Taylor & Thorpe, 2004; Wang & Chugh, 2014; Zhao, Yang, Hughes, & Li, 2021). Entrepreneurs, as initiators or leaders within an enterprise, play a pivotal role in learning and organisational learning. Thus, background literature on organisational learning is presented before covering learning by entrepreneurs.

4.3.6.1 Organisational learning

Organisational learning has been studied by various authors over the years (Alerasoul, Afeltra, Hakala, Minelli, & Strozzi, 2022; Franco & Haase, 2009; Halim, Ahmad, & Ramayah, 2019; Wang & Ahmed, 2003). Learning in organisations is based on observable actions and outcomes that the current study focuses on, which does not dispute the existence of other processes or factors influencing the actions and outcomes that are not observable.

Theories on organisational learning evolved from learning as new structures (Chandler, 1962); learning as actions – the behavioural theory of the firm (Cyert & March, 1963); learning as new insights and knowledge, single and double loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1978); how organisations learn and unlearn (Starbuck, Greve, & Hedberg, 1978); learning as adaptation (Chakravarthy, 1982); knowledge and outcomes, higher and lower-

level learning (Fiol & Lyles, 1985); learning as change (Dutton & Duncan, 1987); and adaptive and generative learning (Hansen, Jensen, & Nguyen, 2020; Salim & Sulaiman, 2011; Turi, 2019).

The above theories agree that the need for survival and growth is central to organisational learning, which was found in this study to be the main concern for GYE (Oginni & Adesanya, 2013). These theories also highlight the need for alignment between organisations and their environment to remain innovative and competitive, which was essential for GYE. Organisational theories also agree that learning is cyclical and involves the processes of learning, relearning, and unlearning. The learning process occurs through creating and manipulating tension between constancy and change (Salim & Sulaiman, 2011).

Learning by individuals is transferred to groups and then to organisations, which constitutes organisational learning, or it can occur through relationships in groups and become part of the culture (Chiva & Habib, 2015a). Learning by GYE can play a role in the organisations they lead, and relationships are viewed as a vehicle through which the transfer occurs. Senge highlighted the concept of metanoia, which is a shift in mindset, looking at learning from a complex and systems thinking perspective, where there is considerable interconnectedness between organisational learning and the environment (Rupčić, 2020; Schuyler, 2021). This study observes considerable interconnectedness between how learning transfer occurs among GYE and their environment.

Single and double loop learning: Earlier studies on entrepreneurial learning focused on organisational learning within an entrepreneurial context, not individual learning. Argyris and Schon focused on organisational learning, and their study was conducted in the manufacturing sector. They state that organisations learn through detecting and correcting errors (Robinson, 2014b). Single-loop learning corrects observed errors, whereas double-loop learning corrects errors and understands the underlying factors and reasons for errors (Carless, 2019). GYE learning transfer is influenced by the double-loop factors, as demonstrated by their interactions with customers and how they utilise customer feedback to enhance their products.

Higher and lower-level learning views learning as a product of insights, knowledge, and association between past actions, the effectiveness of those actions, and how the insights can contribute to future actions. Organisational learning is further viewed as improving actions and outcomes through better knowledge and understanding (Salim & Sulaiman, 2011; Tortorella, Vergara, Garza-Reyes, & Sawhney, 2020).

There is a distinction between lower- and higher-level learning, with the former referring to learning based on routine and the latter referring to learning focused on overall rules and norms rather than specific tasks. There is also a contrast between learning and adaptation, with the latter referring to the ability to make incremental adjustments due to goals, environmental changes, or other changes.

Adaptive and generative learning refers to the phenomenon whereby individuals apply reflective learning as generative learning, which results in self-transcendence (Chiva, Grandío, & Alegre, 2010; Chiva & Habib, 2015b; Li, 2016b). The entrepreneur recognises patterns and builds relationships between different situations and events; generative learning creates "higher-order skills that are generalisable and lead to a greater transfer of learning (Chiva et al., 2010; Soltani & Izquierdo, 2019).

Through generative learning, GYEs can make sense of current and immediate critical events by understanding and relating them to their previous experiences, which is used as a frame of reference. Entrepreneurs can retrieve ideas and design actions based on past experiences (Corbett, 2005).

Organisations continuously work in complex environments such as globalisation or internationalisation, which requires a paradigm shift to view learning from a mutual, reciprocal, and holistic perspective (Chiva et al., 2010; Li, 2016b) rather than only cause and effect. Organisational learning should be viewed as a complex adaptive system in which experience plays a pivotal role in changing behaviour to adapt to the current environment. Learning involves consciousness and emotions (Chiva & Habib, 2015a).

Chiva et al. (2010) found that organisational learning can be influenced by risk-taking, experimentation, dialogue, and interaction with the environment, which were also

identified in the current study as factors that influence GYE transfer of learning. Li (2016a) stated that businesses are likely to create valuable and exploitable ideas faster and more effectively if an entrepreneur engages in generative learning and reflection. Generative learning locates the importance of an entrepreneur in organisational or firm learning.

4.3.6.2 Entrepreneurial learning

Learning in small enterprises is a non-linear process in a turbulent environment. Entrepreneurial learning is one of the learning areas that is receiving significant attention and demonstrates efforts to understand learning by entrepreneurs, and theories on entrepreneurial learning are still emerging (Rae, 2000; Wang & Chugh, 2014; Zhao et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurial learning refers to the evolutionary process of awareness, reflection, association, and application during the venture creation process (Cope, 2011; Lattacher & Wdowiak, 2020; Sullivan, 2000). GYE has demonstrated that Entrepreneurial Learning is not only limited to venture creation but also happens throughout the entrepreneur's lifespan.

In their study of entrepreneurial learning from observing role models, a study conducted using biographical information Zozimo, Jack, and Hamilton (2017) stated that entrepreneurs need to continue to observe throughout the business's lifespan. The knowledge they acquire helps them resolve their business challenges, implying that they do not view entrepreneurial learning as only limited to venture creation. Their observations of the social context included home, education, and workplace, which clarified that observation occurs before the life of entrepreneurship, during venture creation, and post-venture creation. Relational Learning Transfer Theory has demonstrated that learning transfer for GYE is a lifespan process that encompasses self, home, education, and workplace. It also starts when GYE are young, before establishing their enterprises.

Schon identified knowing in action, which signifies professionals' daily experiences, as a source of knowledge that is often overlooked or under-emphasised, with more preference

given to formal education (Hébert, 2015; Lattacher & Wdowiak, 2020; Zhao et al., 2021). Professional knowledge is developed and articulated within action, and four sequential processes through which professionals engage in routine work are identified: the encounter of surprise, reflection, and new action. GYE actively participate in the learning transfer and constantly act on their knowledge.

A distinction is made between two types of learning: operational and conceptual. Operations refer to “know-how”, whereas conceptual refers to the understanding, experience and application of what was learned (Arslan, 2010). Learning by entrepreneurs can be explicit or implicit; implicit learning occurs when one deals with complex tasks, whereas explicit learning occurs when dealing with simple tasks (Glock, Grosse, Jaber, & Smunt, 2019; Tynjälä, 2008). Explicit learning is associated with positive transfer, and implicit learning is associated with negative transfer (Aggarwal, Woolley, Chabris, & Malone, 2019; Cope, 2005b).

Learning does not only occur through routine events but can also occur through nonlinear discrete events (El-Awad, Gabrielsson, & Politis, 2017; Tortorella et al., 2020). GYE learn from different sources, such as learning by doing, by experimenting, by copying, from peers, feedback from customers and suppliers, and problem-solving. They learn from employees, associates, and other entrepreneurs; they learn from experience, what works, and, more importantly, what does not work; they take opportunities and make mistakes (Tseng, 2013).

Entrepreneurial learning occurs through trial and error, involving experience and repetition (Cope, 2011; Politis, 2005). Learning processes include reflecting, theorising, experiences, and activities, which can be summarised as a process of co-participation. GYE referred to the co-creation of products by customers. There appears to be a consensus that entrepreneurs learn by copying, experimenting, problem-solving, and learning from mistakes and that during this process, trust can be built, which involves commitment, companionship, and improved competence (Bergh, Thorgren, & Wincent, 2011; Lattacher & Wdowiak, 2020; Zhao et al., 2021).

Entrepreneurial learning (EL) is a social phenomenon (Rae, 2002). Entrepreneurship is a contextual process where entrepreneurs continually learn and develop in relation to their businesses and the wider environment (Higgins, Galloway, Jones, & McGowan, 2019; Rae, 2000; Rae & Carswell, 2001). GYE operate their enterprises in a highly competitive environment that is affected by historical factors such as racial and gender bias.

Acs, Audretsch, Lehmann, and Licht (2017) indicate that although many research studies focus on entrepreneurs as individuals, it is the context that will determine whether these entrepreneurs will succeed, as it is the context that regulates who can start a firm, what kind of firm can be started, and how aggressively the firm will pursue growth, with what outcomes. This implies that a country's regulations should create an enabling environment.

Rae (2017), citing Erdelyi (2010), describes entrepreneurial learning as primarily experiential, situational, contextual, individual, and socially mediated and focuses on translating ideas and challenges into opportunities and actions that predominantly occur outside traditional learning institutions. Rae observed that there is no generally accepted theory on entrepreneurial learning.

4.3.7 Conceptual framework

Learning transfer has received considerable attention in educational, psychological, and management literature (Hung, 2013; Niu, Liu, Wang, & Song, 2020; Seidler, 2010; Zhuang et al., 2020). Polzer, Gulati, Khurana, and Tushman (2009) caution against the limitations of disciplinary boundaries when studying the phenomenon and not adopting a myopic view. Although this study utilised psychology, education, and management as the predominant schools of thought when conducting a literature review on learning transfer, this was not done at the exclusion of other schools of thought.

Morse et al. (2002) suggest that qualitative inquiry should avoid commencing with the concept and focus on the phenomenon under study to avoid violating the principle of induction and viewing the study as invalid. The conceptual framework below was developed after the data analysis process and during the interpretation of the findings.

The conceptual framework also does not have arrows, as there is no cause-and-effect relationship that the framework portrays or communicates. Learning transfer as a subject can be viewed from various perspectives.

This study reviewed the literature on learning transfer from various schools of thought, predominantly education, psychology, and management, and, to a lesser extent, sociology. Various learning theories were reviewed, including but not limited to behaviourism, cognitive, constructivism, humanism, and sociocultural theories. These theories varied from studies conducted with animals, with school children from the pre-primary to secondary level, with university students, and at the places of work. The studies also varied from those conducted in simulated environments, such as experiments and studies conducted in natural settings. These studies explain how and why learning occurs from different perspectives (Simmons and Gregory (2005).

The studies seem to focus less on operational theories based on a grounded action approach, which seeks to provide both explanatory and operational theories on learning transfer among GYE. Current theories on learning transfer do not explain how learning transfer occurs, which ties these factors together for GYE to transfer learning. What are the common factors? This is a common factor that this study attempted to explain.

TABLE 4. 2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (SOURCE – PER CITATIONS IN THE TABLE)

Human Development				
Schools of thought				
Psychology	Education	Management	Sociology	
Main learning theories	**Proponents**	**Year/s**	**Focus area learning idea**	**Phenomenon-** Learning transfer
Pre-behaviourist	Locke	1847	• Mind as tabular rasa The doctrine of formal discipline	

Human Development				
Schools of thought				
Psychology	Education		Management	Sociology

Main learning theories	**Proponents**	**Year/s**	**Focus area learning idea**	**Phenomenon-** Learning transfer
Behaviourist	Twitmyer Pavlov, Thorndike, Skinner	1873-1943 1849-1936 1874-1949 1904-1990	• Stimulus-response relationships • Classical conditioning • Operant conditioning • Law of effect	
Cognitivist	Tolman Kohler, Lewin Brunner, Miller	1886-1959 1887-1967 1890-1947 1915-2016 1920-	• Latent learning • Gestalt theory principles • Discovery learning • Information Processing Theory • Active learning • Individuals as a centre of learning • Interpretation (acquiring–transformation–evaluation	
Constructivism	Dewey, Vygotsky Piaget,	1859-1952 1896-1934 1896-1980	• learner creates meaning • meaning created within human relations • inquiry-based learning discovery learning	
Socio-cultural	Bandura Lave & Wenger	1925-2021	• Learning is a product of inner forces and the environment	

Human Development				
Schools of thought				
Psychology	Education	Management	Sociology	
Main learning theories	**Proponents**	**Year/s**	**Focus area learning idea**	**Phenomenon-** Learning transfer
		1991-	• Learning situated in the context • Community of practice • Social interaction	
Humanism	Maslow and Rogers	1962	Self-actualisation	
Connectivism	Siemens and Downes	2005	Learning occurs by connecting various sets of information	
Identical elements	Thorndike	• Shared stimulus-response (S-R) Connections		
Theory of analogy and abstraction	Gentner	• Comparison • Analogical projection from the familiar base domain to the target domain • Structure-mapping • Metaphors Art of reading social situations		
Transformative theory	Mezirow	• Instrumental learning • Communicative learning • Rational thought and critical reflection Frame of reference		
Self-learning theory	Knowles	Self-directed learning and taking responsibility		
Experiential learning theory	Kolb	• Active learning • Learning by doing Experience		

Human Development				
Schools of thought				
Psychology	Education	Management	Sociology	
Main learning theories	**Proponents**	**Year/s**	**Focus area learning idea**	**Phenomenon-** Learning transfer
Generalisation theory	Judd	Generalisation and inference		
Mental discipline	Calvin, Edwards, Plato, and Adler	• Combination of art tradition and faculties of psychology Training of memory		
Transposition	Kohler	Gestalt psychology What is learned in one situation can be transferred to another situation		
The high-road and low-road transfer	Perkins and Salomon	Transfer happens through reflexive or deliberate, effortful abstraction		

This literature review cannot claim an exhaustive review of the literature on learning, learning transfer, workplace learning, entrepreneurial learning, and learning by GYE, as there is extensive literature on each of the keywords for the study.

Learning transfer will continue to be researched as learning is a lifelong process influenced by context. The context is forever changing, which requires adjustment in perspectives and theories on how this learning transfer occurs. Learning is the acquisition of knowledge, and transfer is the application of acquired knowledge. Learning theories explain how individuals learn, and transfer theories explain how individuals apply knowledge in practice.

Learning refers to behaviour change, and transfer leads to performance change. Learning refers to inputs, and transfer refers to outputs. Learning transfer occurs where inputs and outputs converge. The literature was approached from an overall learning perspective and narrowed down to focus on learning transfer in the manufacturing sector and GYE. One can acknowledge that little research has been conducted on how learning transfer occurs in the manufacturing sector, and no study has specifically focused on how South African GYE transfer learning in the manufacturing sector.

4.4 Chapter Summary

Various grounded theory scholars have presented their literature reviews in different ways. Some choose to present it in Chapter Two as part of the preferred thesis structure, even though they only conducted a literature search after data analysis, and others prefer to present a literature review as part of the discussion chapter. In this study, a literature review was presented in Chapter Four, aligning with classic grounded theory principles. The literature reviewed indicated gaps in the existing learning transfer theories that require more exploration, and this study addressed some of those gaps.

Chapter Five: Discussion of Study Findings- Relational transfer theory

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the Relational Learning Transfer Theory and how it integrates with the existing literature. The research questions that this study sought to answer were revisited.

5.1 Research questions

Main research question

How does learning transfer occur among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector?

Sub questions:

a) What are the factors influencing the transfer of learning among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector, and what are their experiences?

b) What are the sources of learning (formal or informal), who are the key participants in the learning transfer process, and what are their roles?

c) How do current learning transfer theories fail to explain knowledge and learning transfer among GY entrepreneurs in the SA manufacturing sector?

d) What are the theoretical implications of this study for future learning transfer theories?

5.2 Relational Learning Transfer Theory - How learning transfer occurs among GYE in the South African Manufacturing Sector

5.2.1 Overview

Studies have been conducted on learning in manufacturing or industrial settings, and they have focused more on how organisations learn and less on how individuals learn within the manufacturing setting. A significant number of studies on organisational learning have focused on the learning curve, which involves how performance is affected by factors such as technology, coordination in the production process, knowledge transfer in organisations (routine and transactive memory systems), and persistence (Argote & Guo, 2016; Chiva & Habib, 2015a; Turi, 2019).

Lobato, Rhodehamel, and Hohensee (2012) say that transfer should be an investigation of the processes employed as people naturally bring their knowledge to bear on novel problems. This perspective forms the basis of this study. There is a shared view that individual learning transfer in the manufacturing sector is a subject that requires further research (Cavallo, Ghezzi, & Balocco, 2019; Petkova, 2009; Wang & Chugh, 2014).

Various studies have examined how entrepreneurs learn (Jones, Macpherson, & Jayawarna, 2022; Petkova, 2009; Politis, 2005; Rae, 2000; Wang & Chugh, 2014). Lazareva viewed relational learning as the crux of human reasoning. GYE learn within the context of personal and business relationships. Relationships with family, peers, staff, customers, and suppliers are at the core of learning. Relational learning is “the ability to recognise and respond to relationships among objects irrespective of the nature of those objects” (Lazareva, 2012). Boud, Keogh, and Walker (2013) stated that the affective dimension of learning has not been extensively explored; they identified emotions and feelings as some of the positive aspects of possible research for learning.

Cope (2005a) found that more empirical work is required to identify distinctive forms of learning that arise from entrepreneurs’ engagement in social relationships, both inside and outside enterprises. The entrepreneur should be understood in context, as the learning relationships between the entrepreneur, his/her business, and the wider

environment are complex and interactive. This study found a relationship between reflection, learning, and action. Exploring the interactive, mutual development relationship between the individual and the enterprise is important, where entrepreneurs actively share their learning with their business to shape their growth and direction.

Relationships are the essence of living systems and the basis of organisations that help maintain balance and stimulate growth. Relationships established by GYE are essential for their enterprises to remain sustainable. Workplace relationships refer to all interpersonal relationships that individuals engage in as they perform their jobs, including supervisor-subordinate, peer, worker, workplace friendships, and customer relationships (Sias & Shin, 2019). These relationships have been the subject of research in various disciplines.

The post-positivist approach to workplace relationships concerns causal relationships that enable one to predict and control one's environment (Rumens, 2017). Sias (2008) highlighted the importance of the naturalism principle when unpacking workplace relationships, stating that human beings are physical objects with observable behaviour that can be measured and evaluated.

Post-positivism has two focus areas: human behaviour and how an individual's behaviour affects and is affected by the physical world (Sias, 2008). Other theoretical perspectives on workplace relationships include social construction, critical, and structuration theories. The post-positivist approach has a realist stance, arguing that social reality exists even though human beings cannot see it. In contrast, the social construction approach views workplaces as socially constructed realities constituting member interactions. An organisation does not exist in a physical location but in the interaction of its members.

According to social construction, human behaviour creates reality; therefore, reality is subjective and not objective (Burr, 2015; Bylund & Packard, 2022; McBride & Wuebker, 2022). Reality is dynamic, not static; thus, it changes as social behaviour changes. It is elusive. Social construction theory focuses on understanding how human beings create social reality and knowledge, the process and not the product; interpersonal relationships

are grounded in social construction theory (Burr, 2015). When studying GYE relationships from a social construction perspective, the following assumptions can be made:

- Relationships are based on interactions between members, which exist in a reality that does not transcend perceptions.
- Relationships are reflected in human behaviour (Sias & Shin, 2019)

In addition to the nature of relationships, interactions demonstrate the actual construction, maintenance, and transformation of that relationship. The critical theory perspective views relationships as socially constructed sites of power, domination, resistance, and struggles. Within relationships, individuals construct their identity, knowledge, and understanding of organisational processes, goals, and values. It is through these and other relationships that GYE transfer learning.

Pittaway, Missing, Hudson, and Maragh (2009) and Nu'man, Nurwandi, Bachtiar, Aspiranti, and Pratama (2020) referred to the importance of personal relations and network of relationships. These relationships generate trust, establish expectations, create reciprocal obligations and enforce norms of conduct as a vehicle through which entrepreneurs ensure the success of their businesses (growth and sustainability). Generalised reciprocity, whereby people work for the welfare of others, hoping their action will be rewarded in the future as part of peripheral entrepreneurship, formed part of the categories of relationships on which GYE embarked. According to Weyland (2011), Generation Y entrepreneurs value relationships more than money.

Zhang and Hamilton (2010) proposed a relationship-based approach wherein collaboration is central when simulating entrepreneurial learning processes. Ehn and Laland (2012) agreed that learning is contextual and cumulative, encompassing past experiences. Cope (2005a) identified five broad areas of significance that require further exploration.

- Learning about the self: understanding one’s strengths and weaknesses

- Learning about business: analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of business, growth requirements, and future direction
- Learning about the environment and entrepreneurial networks: managing relationships with existing and potential customers, suppliers, and competitors. Learning about appreciating and maximising the relationship with advisory agencies and support services such as banks and accountants.
- Learning about small business management: learning how to run and control business efficiency, such as recruitment and development of organisational policies.
- Learning about the nature and management of relationships concerns internal (to the firm) and external relationships. Learning about the nature and management of relationships is integral.

The current study focuses on the above areas identified by Cope, and the proposed theory responds to these focus areas.

Learning in entrepreneurship involves recognising and acting on opportunities and organising and managing enterprises (Rae, 2014). Learning transfer refers to being alert to potentially profitable situations and exploiting those profitable situations (Alvarez & Barney, 2017). Learning is not limited to acquiring functional knowledge but also requires action, understanding what works, and believing that one can do it. There is interconnectedness between knowing and doing.

Learning is an ongoing process based on retrospection and experience and considering a future-oriented thinking process that creates a perspective of reality. Rae (2005) and Rae (2000) identified the following themes:

- Confidence, self-belief and self-efficacy
- Personal values and motivation to achieve
- Setting and achieving ambitions.
- Personal theories derived from experience
- Known capabilities, existing skills, and knowledge

- Relationships through which social learning occurred
- Active learning is the ability to learn through and use learning in action

The interaction and coordination of the identified themes are central to entrepreneurial learning. Rae (2017) found that individuals develop entrepreneurial capabilities over time by practising and through sensemaking, proposing a theory about knowing what works. He notes that relationships with people and attitudes towards risk play a pivotal role in learning and adds that language also plays a role in learning. When faced with unfamiliar challenges, entrepreneurs must tap into their beliefs and assumptions (Smith & Cao, 2007).

Building a theory on how entrepreneurs learn still requires more research (Petkova, 2009; Wang & Chugh, 2014). Although there is an understanding that establishing an enterprise on its own is a learning experience, there is a need to pursue more studies on how this learning occurs throughout the lifespan of an enterprise. This study provides the social dimension of entrepreneurs' learning.

5.2.2 Relating to the Self

Active construction, schema, and metacognitive skills, which include self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-regulation, facilitate learning and transfer (Scharff et al., 2017; Schuster, Stebner, Leutner, & Wirth, 2020). Critical reflection and self-assessment are crucial components of the self (Mezirow, 2018). Cope (2003, p. 340) stated that "it is a significant 'investment in self,' particularly the extreme levels of emotional and financial commitment and 'personal exposure' associated with small business owners, which makes the study of an entrepreneur such a unique context within which to explore the phenomenon of learning". The self plays a pivotal role in learning by the GYE.

5.2.2.1 Self-assessment

Central to the issue of relating to oneself is the issue of self-assessment. According to McMillan and Hearn (2008), self-assessment will likely promote intrinsic motivation, internally controlled efforts, a mastery goal orientation, and improved learning. It has a

powerful impact on performance and allows one to take charge of one's own learning and internalise criteria for judging success, which is critical for GYE.

Self-assessment involves the ability to monitor and evaluate one's quality of thinking and behaviour when learning, intending to identify strategies that improve understanding and skills. The learner must judge their work to improve performance by identifying discrepancies between the current and desired performance (Leach, 2012). Self-assessment is critical in identifying partners for networking and reaching decisions such as networking and engaging.

Self-assessment should be viewed as an ongoing, cyclical process comprising self-monitoring, self-evaluation, identification, and taking corrective action when required. It involves giving feedback to the self, which is one of the core concerns of GYE (Merriam, 2018). Self-assessment is supported by self-efficacy, metacognition, cognition, constructivist learning, and motivation theories. Self-assessment can be associated with transformative learning, influencing entrepreneurs' self-understanding (Mezirow, 2018). This self-assessment differentiates the current relational transfer theory from the relational cultural theory.

McMillan and Hearn (2008) identified the self-assessment cycle, which explains some factors that impact learning transfer by GYE. The self-assessment cycle includes:

- Self-judgement, which involves knowing the progress towards the learning target
- Learning target and instructional correctives involving implementing strategies to improve performance
- Self-monitoring involves awareness of thinking and actions

GYE demonstrated in this study that learning transfer is a self-directed process. Tannenbaum, Beard, McNall, and Salas (2010) found that informal learning is predominantly self-directed and requires action, willingness, and determination to develop or self-improve. Tannenbaum et al. (2010) identified four critical learning experience components: feedback, reflection, and intent to learn. In addition to the four

components identified, GYE emphasised the importance of attitudes such as humility, patience, passion, determination, and commitment.

5.2.2.2 Experience

GYE indicated that their trial-and-error attempts translated into experiences they referred to when required to make decisions (Helyer, 2015). They indicated that the experience gained from corporations helped them manage their business enterprises, saving time and money. According to Kolb (2014), experience is a powerful learning source. It was found that the relationship between self and work helps self-identity and self-awareness as individuals meditate and reflect on their experiences (Wain, 2017).

5.2.2.3 Reflection

Reflection is one of the processes that GYE utilised for learning purposes. According to Tannenbaum et al. (2010), reflection refers to a process whereby one considers past or previous experiences and how they are likely to affect the future. Reflection is a critical pillar of learning. Schön (2017) found that reflection occurs at different levels before, during, and post-tasks, which denotes that it is or should be a continuous process. GYE reflect throughout the lifespan of engaging with their enterprises.

GYE engage in anticipatory reflection, which considers anticipating hindrances during the task and subsequent reflection after task implementation (Decius, Schaper, & Seifert, 2019). GYE reflect when information processing changes from an automatic mode to a conscious mode, the outcome of which may improve performance (Anseel, Lievens, & Schollaert, 2009). Gerken et al. (2018) found a relationship between reflection and learning outcomes. GYE reflect on how they handled the task previously so that they do not make the same errors, improve if required, or utilise a similar strategy if it has proved useful.

GYE should be viewed as reflective practitioners, as it is through reflection that experience is fused with learning (Cope, 2003; Zhang & Hamilton, 2010). It was stated earlier in the discussion that there appears to be a well-canvassed perspective from which entrepreneurs learn by doing. However, various studies have highlighted additional

sources of learning for entrepreneurs, such as learning by experiment, peers, feedback given by customers and suppliers, and learning from mistakes (Acs, Estrin, Mickiewicz, & Szerb, 2018; Clinton, McAdam, Gamble, & Brophy, 2022; Lattacher & Wdowiak, 2020; Wang & Chugh, 2014). For entrepreneurs, learning is an everyday process, and reflection entails ex-post orientation on something that has transpired.

Learning occurs through reflection and action. Various authors have differentiated between reflection in action, reflection on action, reflection for action, and reflection within the action (Collier & Williams, 2005; Marsick & Watkins, 2015; Thompson & Thompson, 2023; Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Reflection in action occurs during an action at a particular moment (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Reflection is the process through which GYE engages with their experience in developing a new understanding and appreciation (Boud et al., 2013). GYE consider previous experience to predict a future process called "reflection–action" (Thompson & Thompson, 2023). Reflection highlights past events and experiences likely to play a role when encountering new situations.

Reflection helps individuals correct distortions in their beliefs and errors in problem-solving, which may result in one questioning their previous actions and belief system. Learning through reflection involves creating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which helps guide subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action (Lundgren & Poell, 2016). Reflection assists GYE in developing perspectives, and most meanings are culturally assimilated. Reflection allows past experiences to make meaning of current encounters (Taylor, 2017).

Reflection is a critical part of decision-making; it is a process whereby the validity of the presuppositions of prior learning is challenged and refined to premised reflection (Mezirow, 2018). Critical reflection constitutes a significant part of the learning experience in adulthood. Although critical reflection is an integral part of decision-making in adulthood, it is not concerned with the how-to of action but rather with the reasons and consequences, which is why GYE do what they do (Taylor, 2017).

Reflection enables individual learners to monitor their conceptual understanding of activities or tasks, which leads to knowledge refinement (Hajian, 2019). Reflection forms a part of self-directed learning and improves the possibility of far transfer. Hajian (2019) states that self-directed learning is enhanced when one applies analytical approaches, such as decision-making, to issues.

Metacognition's view of reflection and comprehension monitoring infers a relationship between one's level of self-monitoring, assessment, motivation to learn, and desire for growth. Reflection is one of the things that GYE perform as part of the growth process and strategising for the future. Experience helps individuals appreciate others, value past encounters, and improve learning, and reflection prepares GYE to learn throughout life.

There is a caution that GYE should have when relying on reflection to review their past performance, as overreliance on experience might interfere with one's opportunity to engage with new situations and interpret them differently. Reflective processes can give rise to fundamental and challenging forms of learning (Cope, 2005b). Caution should be exercised against overzealous reflection, which may result in negative transfers (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Reflection helps GYE better understand themselves through self-introspection to determine experiences and identify possible gaps. The past, present, and future impact entrepreneurial learning; factors such as the environment and the entrepreneur's team also play a role (Cope (2005a). It was evident from this study that most of the GYE reflected on their prior experiences and were conducted to determine their next step of action.

5.2.2.3 Motivation, values and attitude

Decius, Schaper, and Seifert (2021) identified two types of intent to learn: intrinsic and extrinsic intent. Intrinsic triggered by the need for personal growth and extrinsic triggered by the necessity for career growth, and they further indicated that the differentiation in the intent to learn was done in line with the self-determination theory. GYE understand that

they are the first generation to enter the manufacturing sector in their families and communities, which makes them want to learn for personal and career growth.

Cerasoli et al. (2014) found a relationship between performance and the attitude or motivation to learn. A relationship has also been found between motivation to learn and performance or learning outcomes (Decius et al., 2019; Li & Kang, 2022; van Rijn, Yang, & Sanders, 2013). GYE have demonstrated that they are determined to learn, and with humility; they ask for assistance and guidance from people who have been in the industry for a longer time. They are passionate about their business enterprises and want to stay afloat, so they try to learn more about them.

Attitude influences an entrepreneur's ability to pursue business intentions and may also affect business performance (Krueger Jr, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000; Nguyen, 2020; Zhang, Soh, & Zhao, 2023). They also agree that determination, optimism and other positive attitudes may assist entrepreneurs in sustaining their business. Nguyen (2020) found that attitudes positively affect entrepreneurial intention. GYE demonstrated that they are committed, determined, passionate, and humble to ensure their enterprises or businesses remain afloat.

This study noted that cognitive transfer cannot be separated from emotional (attitudes) and motivational issues. Emotional coherence theory states that individuals transfer what they know and their emotional values (Larsen-Freeman, 2013; Thagard, 2018). Values and attributes are part of a category in this study. GYE indicated how humility, passion and determination help them contain their emotions in rejection, disappointments and delays and how, based on their positive attitude, they return to the same retailers until they successfully establish relationships.

This study has found that relations with self-assist GYE in active learning transfer, such as exploratory learning (explorations and experimentation), error encouragement framing (making mistakes and learning from them), emotional control (managing emotions), feedback seeking (reflecting on actions) and strategising (mapping their way forward).

Bandura introduced the concept of human agency that operates within three modes: individual agency refers to how one influences one's environment, proxy agency refers to how others support one to achieve a goal, and collective agency refers to how people collaborate to achieve common goals (Zhou & Brown, 2015). The human agency mode is factored in the Relational Learning Transfer Theory as it outlines relating to the self and others and collaborating to achieve goals such as staying afloat.

Social cognition emphasises the importance of social systems that guide and regulate human activities; GYE belong to a community guided and regulated by existing structures such as the government. Bandura (2023) and Yoon (2019) identified the properties of human agency as follows:

Intentionality: Individuals actively choose activities in which to participate. Becoming and staying an entrepreneur is a choice; decision-making is a strategy that GYE utilises to navigate their environment. GYE envision the future and establish clear goals, which helps them structure their learning paths.

Forethought implies that individuals can anticipate the outcome of specific actions, such as performing a risk assessment on a product sale. GYE's life is centred around risk management: they enter unchartered territories, have to navigate and constantly mitigate risks, envision their way forward, as reflected in the relational learning transfer model, brainstorm, and conduct environmental assessments.

Self-reactiveness: Individuals can construct and regulate their behaviour, for example, when strategising, brainstorming, and planning.

Self-reflectiveness: Individuals can reflect on and evaluate their behaviour and cognition. The GYE showed that they relied more on self-reflection to determine how they responded to the challenges they faced in this sector.

The above properties are relevant to understanding the learning and learning transfer processes. Bandura (2023) identified four human capabilities that are important for learning: first, self-reflective capability, whereby individuals assess their previous

encounters to help them determine a way forward; second, self-regulation capability, whereby individuals are capable of determining their future intentions and goals and decide whether to act; third, Symbolism capability, which acknowledges that individuals are affected by self-experience and events in the surroundings; and fourth, vicarious capability whereby one learns from observing others not necessarily from direct encounters but through communication media like television.

The core concepts of social cognition theory include modelling and observational learning, which involves instances whereby individuals observe and imitate particular behaviour, but this also provides an opportunity for the individual to create new patterns of behaviour (creativity). Individuals can master their skills through their self-efficacy.

Schunk and DiBenedetto (2021) highlight the fact that individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments and are more likely to deal with challenging encounters, which applies to GYE, who deal with daily encounters or challenges that require their business to recover quickly. Individuals with low self-efficacy shy away from challenging tasks and often have low confidence. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's capability to organise themselves to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 2013).

Internal self-reinforcement and self-punishment are equally important as external rewards and punishment in influencing learning transfer (Rumjaun & Narod, 2020). Both self-generated and external sources of influence regulate learning transfer.

5.2.3 Relating with others

Henderson (2023) noted that adults can learn independently, self-reliant, and collectively. Collier and McManus (2005) refer to learning partnerships that involve learning relationships whereby individuals support one another. Collier and McManus further stated that through these partnerships, individuals are stimulated and encouraged to involve one another in problem-solving, reflection, and other forms of high-order thinking.

5.2.3.1 Feedback

Feedback is valuable in learning transfer (Henderson et al., 2019; Mandouit & Hattie, 2023). Learning is an integrative process wherein learners are actively engaged in learning, sometimes receiving guidance, feedback, and opportunities through social interactions in their daily experiences. GYE indicated they received feedback from peers, customers, suppliers, retailers, and other stakeholders. Feedback refers to the acknowledgement one receives in line with previous actions from the outcomes of the task itself (such as the level of sales of the product that may be high or low) or from others, such as peers, family, or friends (Boud & Molloy, 2013; Panadero & Lipnevich, 2022; Thurlings, Vermeulen, Bastiaens, & Stijnen, 2013). GYE utilise the feedback received from the outcomes of tasks to improve their products.

There is a relationship between feedback and collaboration. Feedback can be divided into direct and vicarious categories (Clough & Piezunka, 2020). Decius et al. (2019) referred to feedback as an active behaviour in which one seeks answers or responses. GYE also utilise peer feedback to enhance products and improve enterprise management skills. Gerken et al. (2018) found that feedback from colleagues and supervisors is likely to induce innovative work behaviour.

There is a correlation between learning outcomes, job performance, feedback seeking, and feedback use (Decius et al., 2019). GYE indicated that feedback from customers helped to improve their products. Retailers' feedback helped them improve the packaging and marketing of products.

5.2.3.2 Communities of Practice

Learning transfer is an ongoing activity, and, like learning, it should be considered in the context. According to Lave and Wenger (2004), learning is characterised by increased participation in a community of practice. Communities of practice are centred around individuals with similar concerns or interests and are willing to encounter challenges related to their shared interests or concerns through collaboration and interaction (Lave, 2019; Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020). Communities of practice can be formed

physically or in a virtual environment (online), and communities of practice are equivalent to what GYE refer to as entrepreneurial ecosystems.

The community of practice provides a setting where problem-solving occurs, and patterns of individual knowledge are realised through appropriation. Appropriation is the interpretative process of constructing knowledge from social and cultural sources and is impacted by an individual's knowledge structure (Ley et al., 2020). GYE and their communities learn and implement new strategies as an ongoing process and draw on or access intellectual resources in situations where they may be relevant. The transfer is not based on applying disembedded knowledge regardless of the circumstances; rather, it depends on situational factors that assist performance. GYE draw on the intellectual knowledge of family, friends, peers, and mentors as a part of the learning transfer process.

Learning transfer occurs through the interaction between members of the same group and across larger collectives such as organisations, which forms part of the social network approach (Kang & Kim, 2017; Valeri & Baggio, 2022; Van den Bossche & Segers, 2013). Studies on social networks have examined the nature of communication between individuals, aimed at eliciting information and providing information exchange among network participants that are likely to be affected. GYE indicated that communication between them and others is a two-way process; sometimes, they initiate communication and are approached by other parties.

This study did not delve deeper into the frequency of interactions. Areas of further research include research that examines how variations in the nature and frequency or efficacy of interactions by members of the same group might affect the transaction memory system. Another consideration was examining the effects of collective structures distributing members' knowledge and whether they are uniformly distributed. This study partially examined the different roles of different network group members.

5.2.3.3 Customers

GYE reported that they collaborated to enter the market or to access customers. They were involved in intense interactions, including partnering, risk-taking, and mutual commitment, found in creative collaboration. The GYE relied on alliances with universities and research institutes. Mittal, Khan, Romero, and Wuest (2018) found that SMEs are high on collaborative networks, decision-making highly dependent on the owner and outsourcing most essential services.

5.2.3.4 Family background and self-efficacy

Learning transfer involves active social interaction. Sociocultural theory focuses on the relationship between the social world and cognitive development, and Bandura focuses on learning through observation and modelling (Rumjaun & Narod, 2020). GYE observe and model what they have learned from their families for learning transfers.

Vygotsky focused on the influence of culture, history, language, and interpersonal factors on learning, learner relationships, and development within a sociocultural world and the role played by the individual's peers, coaches, and mentors through interpersonal interactions (McLeod, 2020; Scott & Palincsar, 2013). GYE have relationships with mentors who guide them in managing their enterprises, and they partner with peers to advance the objectives of their enterprises.

Language enables social interaction that impacts behaviour (McLeod, 2020). GYE use various communication tools to communicate with stakeholders. Sociocultural theory states that individuals internalise cultural norms; through this, an individual's intrapersonal character is formed, and learning occurs through social interaction. GYE assimilate cultural norms through their interactions with their families and communities where they grow up, forming part of the entrepreneurs' communities' culture and learning through it.

Family background plays a pivotal role in preparing individuals to become entrepreneurs. Klyver (2007), Le Thi Bao, Blischke, Roy, Sadikoglu, and Gwendoline (2020) and Nguyen (2020) noted that children with self-employed parents are more likely to be self-employed;

self-employed parents are also more likely to encourage and support their children who choose to follow the same route.

Family background strengthens self-efficacy and positive perceptions. Nguyen (2020) reasoned that family background positively impacts entrepreneurial efficacy. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the cognitive variable required to complete specific tasks or behaviours (McGee, Peterson, Mueller, & Sequeira, 2009; Neneh, 2022). Family, friends, the community, and the environment influence personal decision-making, which may be positive or negative; this process is referred to as social valuation (Shepherd, Williams, & Patzelt, 2015).

Cope (2005b), Li et al. (2020) and (Neneh, 2022) found that the inherent social characteristic of entrepreneurial learning was the evolving nature and value of network relationships in all aspects of an entrepreneurial activity.

5.2.4 Relating to the Environment

Situated learning considers various factors that play an influential role in learning, such as the environmental context or setting of interaction, the individual's prior understanding, and the group's social structure (Stewart, 2021). The GYE work environment may positively or negatively affect their ability to transfer learning. The work environment encompasses both social and physical conditions (Mdhlalose, 2022).

The transfer climate has been explored by various transfer learning theorists (Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Na-nan, Chaiprasit, & Pukkeeree, 2017). A transfer climate refers to individual or group perceptions and interpretations of the processes and conditions within the work environment that inhibit or promote transfer efforts.

Studies such as those conducted by Ford and Weisbein, Rouiller and Goldstein, and Holton and Baldwin focused on the role played by core worker support, supervisor support, and organisational support as some of the factors that may inhibit or promote learning transfer in the workplace (Kirwan, 2016). They do not account for how country

climate, such as political and racial climate, affects learning transfer; these were some of the factors identified by GYE in South Africa as affecting learning transfer.

Cultural, historical, contextual, and actions by various role players were identified as some of the factors that shape learning (Felstead, Fuller, Jewson, & Unwin, 2009; Merriam & Mohamad, 2000; Osher, Cantor, Berg, Steyer, & Rose, 2021; Ushioda, 2015). GYE reported how they are affected by historical context and actions, such as racial biases, and how they put more effort into their work to prove themselves worthy of contracting and continuing to participate in the manufacturing sector. They also indicated how cultural factors such as gender bias affect them and how they must learn to work around these cultural stereotypes. GYE depend on regulatory frameworks from government institutions to help them gain access to markets, sell products, and participate or be included in enterprise opportunities.

Martin and Root (2010) found that the highest potential for learning among emerging contractors in South Africa, as historically disadvantaged individuals, rests in interactions induced from outside the enterprise. They state that contracting models serve as an example of how learners collaborate; they further mapped and described the patterns of interaction among contractors. Reed et al. (2010) highlighted the importance of social interaction in the learning process and identified collaboration as a learning method.

Martin and Root (2010) suggested that, for future in-depth research, an investigation is required into the relations and other possible dependencies between knowledge levels and the status of various partners in collaboration with emerging companies, which was still lacking in 2009. They further proposed exploring the existing transfer mechanisms of knowledge and skills within the collaboration to understand the learning process better for the benefit of emerging companies.

Learning transfer is influenced by socio-historical factors and social practice (Muskat & Zehrer, 2017). The explanations of socio-historical, situational, and social practices impacting the transfer process are essential for the GYE learning transfer process, but they fall short of explaining how the transfer is taking place and what vehicle is utilised to

achieve this transfer; they focus on contributory factors towards successful transfer and not on the actual transfer process itself.

5.2.5 Relating with the suppliers and customers

The ability to sell manufactured products, access markets, and stay afloat by GYE remains the pillar of sustainability. GYE reported that they navigate this journey through trial and error; they develop wrong products, take products to the market or customer, receive feedback, improve or enhance products, and return products to the markets and products get sold, and this cycle is repeated. This may sometimes mean product discontinuation (Androutsos & Brinia, 2019). Arli, Bauer, and Palmatier (2018) found that sales relationships change rapidly, and customer-seller relationships are complex. As explained by GYE, selling business solutions entails solving customer problems by developing customer relationships.

There has been a shift in research to focus on understanding the interpersonal ties and interactions between individual customers and sellers during the solution-selling process, particularly when customers come from different national cultures, including challenges brought about by globalisation (Akrout & La Rocca, 2019; Arli et al., 2018; Palmatier, Scheer, Evans, & Arnold, 2008; Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal, & Hughes, 2013).

In the field of international marketing, researchers have acknowledged that the development of firm-level relationships is, to a great extent, dependent on inter-organisational and interpersonal relationships (Alteren & Tudoran, 2018; Barnes, Leonidou, Siu, & Leonidou, 2015).

Barnes et al. (2015) attempted to explain how and why interfirm processes develop by examining a combination of formal and informal proceedings underlying interpersonal interactions and sociopsychological dynamics. They concluded that business relationships are nurtured through interpersonal interactions and social contracts, factoring in that trust, commitment, and human interactions are required to build long-term relationships.

Miocevic (2016) found that manufacturing firms of all sizes depend on established relationships when they intend to go global, noting that the literature on how these relationships are established is still underdeveloped. The current study found that attitudes such as trust and commitment play a pivotal role in the success of GYE and their day-to-day performance, including relationship development and sustenance. Fang, Palmatier, Scheer, and Li (2008), Zhou, Yang, and Zhuang (2020) and Salam (2021) found that building and managing trust at the interpersonal and inter-organisational levels is critical for the success of business collaborations.

Business relationships are not static but dynamic and can move through several transitions during the relationship (Leonidou, Aykol, Fotiadis, & Christodoulides, 2017). GYE experience dynamic relationships with customers and suppliers at different stages: when their products are new in the market, the relationship is distant; when the products become more known in the market, the relationships improve, and customers and suppliers are willing to share more information to assist in product enhancement (Zhao, Huo, Flynn, & Yeung, 2008).

Koponen, Julkunen, Gabrielsson, and Pullins (2021) found that the COVID-19 global crisis increased the importance of long-term custom relationships, and a significant number of research participants believed in the increased importance of building trust between partners both before and after sales to secure the enterprise's future.

Expert, referent, and reward power improve GYE normative relationship commitment, whereas reward and coercive power enhance instrumental relationship commitment (Zhao et al., 2008). GYE not only form relationships with local customers or customers from one cultural group but also participate in open markets.

5.2.6 Relating to retailers and distributors

The GYE shared how they relate to retailers to access markets, which is part of their main concern. They explained how they learned through trial and error; they never had the experience of dealing with retailers before. They shared how they initially entered limiting contracts, which were biased in favour of the retailer and not themselves, as they lacked

the know-how. They had limited negotiation experience, which worked to their disadvantage.

The GYE shared how retailers guided them in packaging products to attract target markets and compete with existing products. The GYE indicated that they appreciated retailers' guidance and advice on product packaging and utilised it to enhance product packaging.

Relationships among fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry partners were examined in line with the channel management and agency theory structure (Trihatmoko, Harsono, Wahyuni, & Haryono, 2016). Trihatmoko et al. (2016) found that the relationship between the principal, retailers, and distributors is built on cooperative contracts and mutual trust. They emphasised the contribution of the relationship marketing theory in explaining this relationship among partners.

The GYE indicated that suppliers are tied down with contracts to formalise or seal relationships. In a study of building commitments in supplier-retailer relationships in developing economies, Tanzania and Nandonde (2019) found that affective and behavioural commitments are important in understanding relationships with suppliers and retailers. GYE learn from the retailers and distributors and transfer learning through relationships with them.

5.3 Factors influencing the transfer of learning among GYE in the SA manufacturing sector

5.3.1 Learning transfer environment

The GYE identified staying afloat as their main concern; they wanted to see their business enterprises as sustainable. GYE also identified factors impacting their communities and broader society as influencing their need to learn; they see themselves as role models and pioneers in the manufacturing sector who need to succeed. Some GYE indicated that they would like to gain control of the economy, noting that they are part of the black

majority but feel unwelcome in their economy. GYE are driven by the desire to make a difference and contribute to creating an inclusive economy.

5.3.1.1 Personal values, attributes and attitude

In a study conducted in Romania, Ciobanu, Nastase, and Neamtu (2015) found that Generation Y is associated with concepts such as freedom, innovation, social responsibility, dynamics, flexibility, and requiring feedback. They also noted that GY is less stimulated by financial gains than creativity, efficacy, and competence. GYE indicated that they had never travelled this journey before, and each process stage was a learning curve. Learning transfer was not a choice for them but something that had to be done for their business enterprises to remain sustainable.

Personal values and attributes assisted GYE in navigating and dealing with environmental barriers. GYE reported that they must be resilient, determined, and committed to staying on course and not quitting. What influences them is their passion for innovation, making a difference in the lives of others, and their passion for success.

Humility is one factor that influences the transfer of learning. Acknowledging one's limitations and recognising that one can do something to intervene or improve the situation (Sánchez-Báez, Fernández Serrano, & Romero Luna, 2018). Self-monitoring and self-evaluation drive learning transfer among GYE.

Factors influencing learning transfer are both external and internal. Social, economic, and psychological capital are required to navigate the different contexts. Psychological capital is the ability of the person to utilise mental strength and capacity to achieve (Hasan, Guampe, & Maruf, 2019). This study found that GYE display passion, determination, commitment, and perseverance to pursue their course amid uncertainty.

5.3.1.2 Support structures

The GYE identified support structures such as their families, mentors, peers, teams and staff influence learning transfer (Holton III, Bates, Bookter, & Yamkovenko, 2007). Hajian

(2019) identified coaching, interacting, assessing, and reflecting as factors that could enhance transfer, which the GYE identified in this study.

5.3.2.3 Knowledge and Time

Knowledge and time play crucial roles in influencing learning transfers. GYE entered the manufacturing sector when South Africa was trying to establish itself following the commencement of the democratic government, which is trying to transform and change the country's landscape. The GYE reported that they face resistance from retailers who are not keen to get their products on the shelves, which impacts how they transfer learning, and must constantly review their strategies to penetrate the market.

The GYE also face gender discrimination. Female GYEs shared their experiences of not being enthusiastically received in the industry based on gender stereotypes. This type of experience affects how they learn and transfer learning as they go the extra mile to prove and claim space in the industry.

5.3.1.4 Entrepreneurial ecosystems

Accessibility of entrepreneurial ecosystems influences learning transfer. Ecosystems include social networks, universities, and regulatory structures that provide policies and capital (Spigel, 2017). GYE identified the Innovation Hub as facilitating learning transfer; however, the country does not have enough models and role players.

Entrepreneurial ecosystems provide a platform to innovate, validate, pilot, and obtain support, such as mentors, and this is what GYE require as part of learning transfer. Ecosystems consider framework conditions, such as a social context that enables human interactions, and systemic conditions, such as networks of entrepreneurs, support services, finance, talent, and knowledge, to be the heart of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

5.3.1.5 Regulatory institutions

Regulatory institutions positively influence learning transfer, although they sometimes become barriers when they put too many hurdles for GYE, who come from historically

disadvantaged communities. They also play an enabling role in ensuring that GYE products are certified, allowing them to compete with established industry players.

5.3.2 Why GYE transfer learning the way they do

The environment dictates how GYE learns. Illeris (2018a) found that learning results from social interactions between individuals and their environments. Three dimensions, cognition, emotion, and sociality, should be considered if one wants to have a complete picture of the way of learning transfer. Some of the GYE indicated that coming from rural SA with limited access to the Internet makes it difficult to learn about some of the existing opportunities; thus, their environment and exposure limit what they can learn.

It was indicated that “due to past racial imbalances, it is difficult to participate in councils where learning can be acquired as you are made to feel unwelcome, so you have to build relationships, some people feel uncomfortable, and they stop participating”. Poortman, Brown, and Schildkamp (2021) indicated that people learn to overcome distortions, create meaning, and maintain equilibrium. Illeris (2014) identified the desire for life fulfilment as a motivation for learning, which requires psychological energy. GYE want to fulfil the desire to make an impact in their communities and to make a difference in the lives of others, which is one of the driving forces.

The desire to resist also motivates learning. GYE reported that they are not happy that they had to make more efforts based on their race, which motivates them to perform better and go the extra mile to learn everything possible that will make them fit into the manufacturing sector. GYE learn through defiance and improvisation because they see it as a strategy to respond to their feelings of discrimination. Improvisation helps GYE deal with the paradoxes brought about by learning tensions.

The desire for fulfilment and resistance linked to the struggle for survival innate to individuals form part of the ultimate goal for GYE and their business enterprises (Vera & Crossan, 2007). Illeris (2018b) highlighted that transfer, an outcome of learning, occurs because of the interaction between the learning environment and learner roles, including the context of work. They further identified previous experiences and learner

backgrounds, such as previous education, age, gender, and emotional orientation, as some of the factors that influence learning transfer.

GYE reported that much learning is through trial and error, and this is so because they are trailblazers in their communities and do not always have role models to look up to. Trial and error became the only option available to them, even though it is a risky route, time-consuming, and costly (Callander, 2011; Paya & Shoraka, 2010).

GYE indicated that they also learn from technology platforms as this route is less costly and reasonably accessible, depending on data availability (Oduma, Onyema, & Akiti, 2019). Information from learning platforms is utilised in decision-making, marketing, and product enhancement.

GYE are self-reliant for most of their learning and access to external resources is not guaranteed;

In summary, the self and circumstances that GYE find themselves dictate why they learn the way they do.

5.3.3 Factors conducive to learning transfer in the SA manufacturing sector

This study identified various support structures that help provide a conducive environment for learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector (Foley & Kaiser, 2013; Kansheba, 2020; Osorio, Settles, & Shen, 2017). GYE have support structures in terms of family, and they indicated that their families carry the burden of supporting them financially (filling funding voids) and emotionally in the early stages (Edelman, Manolova, Shirokova, & Tsukanova, 2016).

5.3.3.1 Families

The families encourage them to proceed when things are tough; some of the GYE also indicated that they have family members forming part of their work teams and this helps make it easier for them to concentrate on learning other things knowing that family

members can be trusted to hold the fort (Gao, Li, & Conway, 2021; Welsh, Botero, Kaciak, & Kopaničová, 2021; Welsh, Kim, Memili, & Kaciak, 2014).

Cultural capital (social, economic, and symbolic) and habitus are important aspects of learning transfer, which refers to knowing how to succeed in a particular field (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014; Huang, 2019). Learning transfer among GYE is influenced by what they have learned, social obligations, and knowledge of how they view the world. Tytler, Ferguson, and White (2020) found that the sociocultural constructive perspective accounts for social genesis and the construction of learning transfer. It stands to reason that knowledge should be socially transferred if it is socially constructed, which is why GYE uses relationships to transfer learning.

5.3.3.2 Peers / communities of practice

Peers who form a community of practices provide a conducive environment for GYE to learn. Kotturi (2022) finds that peers are interdependent on social, emotional, and material support. GYE know they can share their experiences with peers in the same industry who understand their language and challenges and can jointly bounce off ideas and chart the way forward (Stam & Spigel, 2016).

The GYE talked about entrepreneurial ecosystems using the language of bootstrapping, validation, and scaling. They find comfort in knowing that people are on the same journey as they are. Entrepreneurial ecosystems provide a community of interdependent actors for effective entrepreneurship (Stam & Van de Ven, 2021; Volkmann, Fichter, Klofsten, & Audretsch, 2021).

5.3.3.3 Mentorship

GYE reported that when they initiated their journeys, it was a lonely experience as they did not have mentors; this changed when they found mentors who assisted them. The mentorship relationship helped increase self-efficacy, improve self-image, lower the sense of solitude, improve management knowledge, and enhance the perseverance and resilience of GYE (Kunaka & Moos, 2019; St-Jean & Audet, 2012).

Some GYE found mentors for themselves; for others, mentors were recommended by institutions such as Innovation Hub or lending institutions looking after securing their interests. It has been found that mentoring relationships are valuable, whether they are formal or informal (Shittu, 2017; Zachary & Fain, 2022). Mentorship relationships are transformational, providing experiences for personal and professional growth that result in social change (Laukhuf & Malone, 2015).

5.3.3.4 Regulatory structures

Regulatory structures in South Africa, such as BBBEE or preferential procurement guidelines, provide policies and guidelines to facilitate market access for entrepreneurs. However, a lack of enforcement reduces the efficacy of the policies and guidelines. Although regulatory structures were meant to make learning transfer conducive, they did not optimally provide this opportunity. Regulatory structures can act as incentives and disincentives for productive entrepreneurs (Kansheba, 2020).

The GYE have mixed feelings about regulatory structures that provide licensing for product manufacturing, as they have found the process of acquiring licensing frustrating. However, at the same time, it is a valuable quality assurance tool for their products. GYE indicated that they did not know about licensing processes. Licences meant they had the confidence to put their products alongside those of well-established businesses on retail shelves, improving their access to markets. Although initially viewed as a barrier, this becomes a conducive factor for learning transfer.

5.3.3.5 Government support

Government institutions such as the DTIC, IDC, SEDA, and Innovation Hub provide programs that help to support learning transfer among historically disadvantaged communities in South Africa. GYE indicated that although securing assistance from an institution such as DTIC was challenging, they appreciate that policies provide a conducive environment.

The GYE expressed appreciation for the opportunities for learning transfer provided by the Innovation Hub, which provides them with opportunities to experiment, pilot their

products during development stages, and provide mentors. The innovation hub model should be replicated even at the provincial or district level, as it can enhance the opportunities for supporting more entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector.

5.3.3.6 Information accessibility

Information accessibility: GYE indicated that Internet access makes it easier for them to learn more information, and social media platforms make it easier for them to transfer learning. However, Internet coverage can be poor in rural areas, which affects GYE residing in rural areas, who may be forced to relocate to urban areas, which may be costly.

The GYE reported that they learn more about what is happening in the sector and their products from the Internet. They learn about their product performance from social media, which helps them improve their performance, thus resulting in learning transfer.

5.3.3.7 Customer engagements

The GYE viewed the opportunity to interact with customers as a valuable learning-transfer factor. Gorry and Westbrook (2011) and Yachin (2018) found that relationships with consumers and sourcing knowledge from customers can benefit a firm's innovation capacity as they share their desires and expectations.

5.3.3.8 Retailer engagements

The GYE reported learning transfer during their interaction with retailers (Yang, 2020). Retailers' feedback and rejection of products form part of a learning curve for GYE, which helps them improve their productivity and enhance their performance. GYE also indicated that this enhances their understanding of contracts.

5.4 Relational Learning Transfer Theory - Sources of learning among GYE in the SA manufacturing Sector

5.4.1 Acquiring Learning

Acquiring learning was identified as a theoretical category that formed one of the pillars of Relational Learning Transfer Theory. This study found that the GYE learned from both

formal and informal sources. Although most of the GYE indicated that they had never learned about entrepreneurship as a core subject during their academic studies, they emphasised the importance of learning about the basics of specific industries or sub-sectors in which they operate.

GYE reported that most of what they had learned about entrepreneurship in the manufacturing sector occurred while they were in their business enterprises, which should be considered in their workplaces. Workplace learning is viewed as learners' participation in situated activities. GYE are not confined to physical places traditionally referred to as workplaces but can conduct the business of their work from remote locations.

Billett (2004a, p. 312) defined the workplace as 'a learning environment focusing on the interaction between the affordances and constraints of the social setting, on the one hand, and the agency and biography of the individual participant on the other". Workplace learning includes work activities that may occur both on the job and during an off-the-job training event (Felstead et al., 2009; Lemmetty & Collin, 2020).

It is sometimes difficult to differentiate between workplace learning and daily work. However, Forrester and McTigue (2020) and, Poell and Van Woerkom (2011) referred to workplace learning as a natural and autonomous process inherent in social interaction, which may be implicit and derived from the characteristics of the work process. It is interesting to note that this definition does not reference the workplace as a physical place.

GYE outlined how they learned from their previous places of employment and how that knowledge became valuable in their day-to-day conduct in business enterprises. GYE create new modes of procedures, activities, products and practises to navigate their environment and ensure that they remain afloat or their enterprises are sustainable, this learning transfer may be planned or unplanned, intentional or unintentional or based on tacit experiences (Raemdonck, Gijbels, & Van Groen, 2014).

Decius et al. (2019) and Kyndt and Beausaert (2017) found that informal learning is often triggered by work activities and personal interactions, the primary goal of which is not

learning. Informal learning transfer is an inductive process of action, reflective, incidental, linked to the learning of others, and influenced by others. GYE often stated that when interacting with peers, customers, retailers, investors, and regulators, they realised that these engagements contributed to their learning process.

Informal learning encompasses behaviour and activities that pursue knowledge and skills outside formally designated learning contexts (Cerasoli et al., 2018). This explanation indicates that informal learning is not always incidental but sometimes a well-calculated move on the part of the learner, self-directed, and intentional. GYE identified Internet websites as one of their main sources of learning and indicated that they deliberately searched for information from the Internet to learn information already available about products, marketing, and previous lessons to make decisions.

Workplace transfer is generally affected by characteristics such as learner motivation to implement what has been learned, supervisors, climate, and the organisation of work (Poell, 2014). Supervisors were not relevant or applicable to this study as GYE occupy the leadership position in their business enterprises. Adebisi and Santosa (2022) and Poell (2014) distinguish between work-based learning and workplace learning and refer to work-based learning as that which occurs in a work setting as part of a formal education programme.

Workplace learning exists in all workplaces or communities of practice, and the issue of interest is how this manifests (Decius et al., 2019; Marsick & Watkins, 2015; Milligan, Littlejohn, & Margaryan, 2014). To a certain extent, the workplace is incidental, and people exposed to a situation will learn things in a new way (Billett, 2020; Marsick & Watkins, 2015). Workplaces are sometimes criticised for being poorly equipped for learning, as they lack time, space, and social structures such as coaching and support. As owners of their business enterprises, GYE have to organise their own support and coaching processes as part of their social structure.

Learning as a lasting change in behaviour occurs due to practice or experience, without minimising the contribution related to the wisdom that comes with age or maturity. GYE

are young people who do not have the benefit of wisdom that comes with age, but depend primarily on practice or trial and error to make decisions. Learning transfer of GYE is displayed in skills, knowledge, and attitudes in the work context (Raemdonck et al., 2014).

Learning from a behaviourist perspective is demonstrated when there is a change in the frequency and rate at which behaviour occurs due to environmental factors; learning is viewed as observable changes in behaviour (Stewart, 2021). The behaviourist perspective overlooks the role of internal processes within an individual to explain the learning phenomenon; thus, the behaviourist perspective cannot fully account for how learning transfer occurs among GYE (Murtonen, Gruber, & Lehtinen, 2017).

The Social Learning theory and social cognition view acknowledge that thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and values influence learning and further recognise the role of interaction between individuals and the environment in the learning process (Stewart, 2021). GYE shared how their attitudes, values, and belief system assisted them in pursuing their enterprise goals and further demonstrated how interaction with the environment helped them transfer their learning. Humanist theorists emphasise the importance of learners assuming primary responsibility for their learning (Stewart, 2021). GY shared that they take the initiative to learn, as the success of their business depends on their commitment to learning.

Poell (2014) indicates challenges in how the concept of learning is utilised, as it reflects both a process and a product, sometimes making it ambiguous. Data indicate that most of the learning comes from informal sources; for example, GYE learn from families they grew up in, peers, entrepreneurial ecosystems, the Internet, books, research, mentors and coaches, and observing others.

This raises the question of what government regulators and educational institutions can do to enhance entrepreneurship knowledge and exposure among young people in South Africa to encourage them to follow an entrepreneurship path. Most GYEs learn through trial and error, which later translates into an experience and is used as the basis for future

learning. Learning transfer in that regard becomes risky and costly, so many possible entrepreneurs get lost in the process.

One of the participants indicated that when the DTI initiated the entrepreneurship-sponsored programme, many young people who participated in the programme fell through the cracks through lack of mentorship and other support structures that should have given support during difficult times

5.4.1.1 Research

The GYE operate in the manufacturing sector, which requires more innovation. They reported that they relied heavily on research to understand the sector and keep abreast with developments in their specific industry. Research entails a systematic study and targeted analysis of sources and materials to gain an understanding or to find solutions (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019).

5.4.1.2 Entrepreneurial ecosystems

Entrepreneurial ecosystems are important sources of learning. Entrepreneurial ecosystems provide a platform for innovation, employment, and productivity growth. An entrepreneurial ecosystem refers to a process in which opportunities for new goods and services are crafted, explored, exploited, and evaluated (Stam & Van de Ven, 2021). The entrepreneurial ecosystem highlights the role of social context in allowing or restricting entrepreneurship (Acs, Autio, & Szerb, 2014).

Nguyen (2020) found that entrepreneurial ecosystems impact entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Stam and Van de Ven (2021) stated that there are strong interrelationships among ecosystem elements that fit the systems thinking perspective.

The South African private sector industry also contributes to entrepreneurial ecosystems, providing funding for scaling as sponsors. GYE indicated that they learn a lot from ecosystems, as they provide exposure and networks from different perspectives to create environments that foster innovation-based enterprises (Jones & Ratten, 2021).

5.4.1.3 Peer learning

Peer learning is another source of learning. Peer learning refers to acquiring knowledge and skills with and from active engagement among peers, helping and supporting each other through challenges (David, 2014; Sharma et al., 2023; Topping, 2005). GYE form groups of peers in the manufacturing sector to share ideas challenges, and develop solutions (Bergman & McMullen, 2022). They even developed platforms using podcasts and other social media platforms, where they can encourage each other and talk about their products.

5.4.1.4 Reading

The GYE reported that reading helps to reshape their perspectives on general issues and their perspective on life. They used lessons from reading to empower themselves to respond to the environment around them. Individuals become independent and adept, motivated to exert effort, persist when facing difficulties and feel self-accomplished through reading (Nurjanah & Pratama, 2020).

The GYE learn how other entrepreneurs have survived in the industry and how they can impact the communities around them. GYE use reading as a knowledge source for developing resilience and responding to challenges presented by entrepreneurial activities (Manning, Stokes, Tarba, & Rodgers, 2020).

5.4.1.5 Studying

The GYE reported that they do enrol for workshops or short courses to learn about issues such as finance and human resources, which is the knowledge required to run their day-to-day operations (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020).

5.4.1.6 Piloting

The GYE indicated that they learned through self-discovery and conducting pilots at a small scale to test products prior to full-scale deployment or production, (Heidenberg, Matinlassi, Pikkarainen, Hirkman, & Partanen, 2010; Santa-Maria, Vermeulen, & Baumgartner, 2022). Piloting helps gauge product acceptance by the market (Androutsos & Brinia, 2019; Siwiec & Pacana, 2021).

5.4.1.6 Experience

GYE learn by reflecting on their experiences to consolidate the lessons learned (Daudelin, 1996; Helyer, 2015; Kolb, 2014) and chart their way forward. GYE look at the past so they do not make or repeat the same mistakes. Reflecting helps them examine their thoughts and feelings, thereby enhancing their self-awareness. Reflection facilitates personal and professional growth and enhances the transfer of learning (Bion, 2021; Wain, 2017; Winkler, Fust, & Jenert, 2023).

5.4.1.7 Family

Family is another source of learning for GYE for improving motivation and persistence (Dabney, Chakraverty, & Tai, 2013; Minola, Kammerlander, Kellermanns, & Hoy, 2021). They were encouraged to explore, which allowed them to learn basic principles of entrepreneurship. They reported that they learned how to negotiate and develop a critical mindset from their families, which later became essential to running their businesses (Jones & Giordano, 2021; Lambert et al., 2010).

5.4.1.8 Collaboration with academic institutions

Collaboration with academic institutions presented a source of learning, as they provided information on the latest and advanced manufacturing technologies (Corral de Zubielqui, Jones, Seet, & Lindsay, 2015; Farooq, 2018). Institutions were seen more as part of collaboration than GYE going to tertiary institutions to pursue their postgraduate qualifications or as part of studies for formal qualifications. This collaboration with academic institutions is bidirectional as the relationship permits input and feedback to flow from either side (Pillay & Barnard, 2019)

GYE are open to all forms of learning that will help them address their main concern of staying afloat and being sustainable, whether through formal or informal learning. A significant portion of their learning happens in the workplace, where it is “learn as you go.”

In their study of learning in the Ethiopian manufacturing sector, Ahmad and Lee (2016) found that the sources of learning are experience, social retention, innovation, and allocation. Like South Africa, Ethiopia is a developing country, and two countries on the

same continent may share some common aspects of learning in the manufacturing sector.

5.4.1.9 Integration of learning theories

Experiential learning theory asserts that individuals learn from experience, and this theory is holistic in that it acknowledges that learning is influenced by experience, cognition, behaviour, and perception (Kolb, 2014; McCarthy, 2016). Baker, Jensen, and Kolb (2002) developed a four-stage learning cycle comprising experience (apprehension), critical reflection (intention), abstract conceptualisation (comprehension), and active experimentation (extension). Zhou and Brown (2015) agree with the learning cycle proposed by Baker et al. (2002) and further state that apprehension and comprehension form part of perception, whereas intention and extension form part of the transformation. The theory was silent on the subjective reality of the learner and the role played by social factors, such as groups.

Zhou and Brown (2015) enhanced the learning cycle by incorporating the environment, subjective stimuli, emotional incentives, disruptive experience, expected experience, and conceptualisation. This theory was criticised for failing to describe what constitutes concrete experience (Morris, 2020). The current study identified common factors with both the original and enhanced experiential learning cycle, such as experience, critical reflection, active experimentation, the environment, and conceptualisation (Kolb & Kolb, 2018). However, the current study expands on the role played by self, peers, and groups, referred to as the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as pivotal in the learning and learning transfer process.

Lave and Wenger (2004) and Wenger (2010) highlighted the importance of a community of practice for learning to occur, identifying it as the unifying concept emerging from situated learning research. Learning occurs within a community as part of a culture or way of doing things in a particular group (Cadwell, Federici, & O'Brien, 2022). Lave and Wenger also introduced the concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Cheng & Hill, 2022). Although they emphasise the issue of participation or practice, they do not distinguish whether the practice is assumed by the community or based on agreed-upon

rules. In this study, it was observed that GYE practices are not always based on agreed-upon rules but are sometimes assumed.

Situated learning theory is based on the relationship between and among people. The basic debates on learning are centred on whether it is perceived as a solitary individual pursuit or as something that occurs in a social situation. Situated learning allows for the unification of the world; social interaction and physical activity are important, and the individual and the relations are viewed as reciprocal components (Chunxian, 2020). Situated Cognition Theory views learning as a sociocultural phenomenon, not as the action of an individual acquiring general information from the decontextualised body of knowledge (Macpherson, Anderson, Trehan, & Jayawarna, 2022; Schunk, 2012b). In situated learning, skills and knowledge are acquired and practised in everyday situations by sharing purposeful and patterned activities.

Situated or anchored learning is premised on the fact that most learning is context-dependent. Mann et al. (2021) and Srinivasan, Wilkes, Stevenson, Nguyen, and Slavin (2007) compared problem-based and case-based learning and suggested that case-based environments and apprenticeships result in richer and more meaningful learning experiences. These theories focused more on teaching methods to be applied by educators and thus fall short in explaining how learning transfer occurs among GYE.

According to Amineh and Asl (2015) and De Wever, Van Keer, Schellens, and Valcke (2009), learning can occur through social negotiations. Social negotiation of knowledge is perceived as a process whereby learners form and test their constructs in dialogue with other individuals and the broader society; this negotiation and testing of knowledge occurs through collaboration as a principle. GYE referred to how they learn and transfer learning through collaboration with other role players in their manufacturing process value chain and other important stakeholders. They put their ideas on social media platforms and evaluated their responses to help them reach decisions. This resulted in the formation of social structures.

Social structure is a pattern of relationships between and among people as they relate to each other in a learning setting. Current data have demonstrated that there are relationships that go beyond social structures, as described in situated learning theory. Situated learning theory can be criticised for failing to recognise or account for individual differences such as race, class, gender, and cultural and personal complexities (Besar & Haji, 2018).

Individuals construct their reality by engaging in mental models based on their interaction with the physical environment; they make sense of the environment by incorporating new information gained from the environment into existing mental models. This improves their capacity to deal with dynamic and complex contexts to achieve long-term success (Capelo & Dias, 2009).

Social learning and social cognition theories emphasise the effects of social influence on an individual's cognitive processes. They claim that social interactions expose individuals to other experiences and alternate points of view, thus influencing their prior mental models (Amodio, 2019). This was confirmed by GYE, who indicated that interaction with customers influences how they enhance their products, as these interactions help them view their products from the customer's perspective.

Mental models represent individuals' worldviews emanating from deeply ingrained assumptions and generalisations, a combination of perception, imagination, and comprehensive discourse that are dynamic and equally capable of influencing change (Bui, 2020). They are cognitive structures that precede reasoning, understanding, and knowledge of a phenomenon they represent, accounting for how GYE makes sense of concepts, principles, and interrelationships with the external phenomenon (Hmelo-Silver and Pfeffer (2004).

Mental models occur through externalism, internalism, or incongruences; thus, learning occurs when there are interactions between GYE with different roles, for example, parents and children, mentors, and mentees (Gentner & Stevens, 2014). The indicators of social learning include cognitive absorption, thematic focus, participation, and social structure.

Mental models study an individual's internal representation of external phenomena, partially covering how learning occurs in GYE.

Burke and Hutchins (2007) identified learner characteristics such as self-confidence, personality, motivation to learn, and cognitive ability as important factors for learning transfer. Jackson (2016) refers to personality dimensions such as openness to experience, extraversion and conscientiousness as essential ingredients for transfer, as they are likely to increase a person's confidence, inquisitiveness, perseverance, initiative, and achievement orientation.

Cooperative learning has been identified as one way of improving learning results; learning occurs through group participation and may be formal or informal (Johnson & Johnson, 2015; Slavin, 2013). Informal cooperative learning refers to instances where individuals are placed in a learning group for shorter periods, such as a session or a day, versus a formal cooperative learning group, where individuals may be expected to participate in a group for longer periods, such as a year.

Cooperative learning is one of the critical success factors for GYE, which involves interdependence, individual accountability, and interpersonal skills, such as leadership, communication, trust, conflict resolution, and decision-making. Interaction is an important aspect of cooperative learning; GYE utilise workshop sessions and discussions as part of short-term programs for cooperative learning.

Rogers and Maslow's theory of motivation forms part of some of the dominant humanism theories. They indicate that self-actualisation improves one's perception and helps individual learners become more creative (Al-Obaydi, 2021). Rogers' humanistic learning theory concerns affective dimensions such as self-concept, values, and emotions, focuses on human growth, and considers the importance of experience (Kelland, 2015). Rogers and Maslow argued that learning is enhanced when it is more meaningful to an individual.

Johnson (2014) identified reasons for how and why children learn, which he says may apply to all levels of learning, such as immersion in real-life experiences, involvement in

social interactions, the need to be encouraged to stimulate their creativity, and the importance of the use of language, all of which were found to apply to GYE.

Carl Rogers identified principles related to learning, the principles included:

- Human beings have a natural potential to learn
- Learning occurs when the individual perceives the subject matter as relevant for their purposes.
- Learning involves a change in self-organisation, in the perception of oneself
- Learning is acquired through doing;
- Self-initiated learning involves the whole person (feelings and intellect) is the most lasting and pervasive.
- Independence, creativity, and self-reliance are all facilitated by self-criticism; self-evaluation is basic, and evaluation by others is of secondary importance.
- Learning in the modern world is learning the process of learning, continuing openness to experience, and incorporating the process of change into oneself (Renger & Macaskill, 2021). Humanism theories can account for the drive and passion that GYE demonstrates towards learning and learning transfer in their enterprises but do not fully account for other factors.

Bruner (2004) and Bruner, Goodnow, and Austin (2017) view learning as a 3-way process that involves acquiring new information, referencing previously known information, transformation, and evaluation. Gentner's structure mapping theory emphasises relations between objects rather than their attributes (Forbus, Ferguson, & Gentner, 2019, May). Structural mapping refers to analogical protection from a familiar base domain to the target domain. This three-way process was incorporated into the Relational Learning Transfer Theory.

In the transformative learning theory, Mezirow (2018) focused on rational thought and reflection. Learning is a process through which problematic frames of reference are transformed to make them more inclusive, discriminatory, reflective, and changeable.

Learning acquisition occurs through assimilation and accommodation, transforming know-how (learning) and applying that learning (know-why) (Clark, 2018b).

In self-determination theory, human beings are affected mainly by the conditions in which they find themselves (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Their condition can determine whether they actively engage or passively respond to the circumstances around them. Self-motivation and mental health are enhanced if innate needs, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, are satisfied. A lack of satisfaction may lead to reduced motivation. GYE are highly motivated individuals, indicating that the country's conditions motivate them to learn more and form part of the creators of solutions.

Achievement goal theory focuses on performance and mastery goals (Senko, 2016). The theory was enhanced to include the multiple goals perspective and introduced the principle of equifinality, indicating multiple pathways to achieve goals (Harackiewicz, Barron, Pintrich, Elliot, & Thrash, 2002). This theory focuses on academic performance and does not account for how GYE implements multiple pathways and actions to achieve their goals. Relational Learning Transfer Theory demonstrates how GYE relates to various stakeholders for learning transfer, facilitating their goal achievement.

According to Reeve (2013), motivation is formed by factors that are not observable and occur in the mind, whereas engagement refers to observable behaviour.

Various learning theories have been identified, providing different perspectives on learning. Different factors, such as innate abilities, and cultural and social factors influence learning. The weakness of these different perspectives is that they explain learning as though it occurs in line with their perspective on excluding other dimensions. This study accommodates learning from all perspectives and focuses on how GYE acquire and transfers it.

Learning transfer is context-based. Hajian (2019, p. 12) states that “transfer is an active, dynamic process and not a final product of some sequential steps in learning or a positive end-product approach”. He further argues that the main focus of transfer research should be on when, where, and how the desired positive transfer occurs. This study attempts to

answer these questions. Hajian (2019, p. 12) found that “learning transfer is a multidimensional process that occurs at any stage of learning and can be enhanced through coaching, scaffolding, interacting, assessing, and reflecting in authentic contexts”. The current study identified factors such as coaching, assessing, and reflecting as some of the important concepts in the learning transfer process; when GYE narrated their own experiences, it was demonstrated that learning transfer occurred throughout different stages of their lives.

Defining the transfer and determining the underlying mechanisms are challenging tasks. Constructivist theories view learning as an integrative process in which learners actively engage in their own learning while receiving instruction, guidance, feedback, and opportunities through social interaction and involvement in real-life/novel situations (Hajian, 2019). The GYE take control of learning and utilise social interactions to achieve their goals. Learning can be defined in terms of cognitive processes and how individuals evolve and change during a process. Constructivist theories do not underestimate the cognitive theories’ perspective and the role of instruction and practise, but prefer a holistic view. The current study shares the view that learning transfers are holistic.

Learning transfer among GYE should be viewed as a change in performance due to their experience and interaction with the world (Driscoll & Burner, 2005). Learning transfer should be viewed as an emotional, mental, and skill change brought about by experience and interaction with context and other people. This study found that knowledge is acquired in various forms, including thinking and reasoning. Data from the current study demonstrated that learning encompasses both innate attributes and experiences.

5.4.2 GYEs’ experiences of learning transfer in the manufacturing sector

The GYE have many experiences, including excitement, determination, commitment, and frustration. GYE described their journey in the South African Manufacturing sector as a mixture of exciting, frustrating, bumpy, and challenging. The GYE reported working in uncertain and unfamiliar environments and are usually the first in their families and local communities to explore the path. Fauth and González-Martínez (2021, p. 6) state that

“transfer depends in part on confidence and motivation to apply new skills, overcome difficulties, and make the necessary efforts to achieve expected results”.

GYE reported that they utilise entrepreneurial ecosystems as a way of creating and sharing knowledge; if they would like to test an idea, they put it out there on social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook and wait for comments that will help them decide the way forward. Vinke, Orhei, and Nandram (2013) identified some of the distinctive characteristics of GY as optimism, confidence, being easily bored, valuing and appreciating feedback, being more likely to switch jobs, and having low work engagement. They further highlight the importance of social interaction and communication among individuals in creating and sharing knowledge. Knowledge sharing can help entrepreneurs improve idea generation as part of innovation. GY are out-of-the-box thinkers (Vinke, Loredana, & Nicolae, 2012).

Entrepreneurial behaviour occurs in both established organisations and new ventures and involves recognising and taking advantage of existing opportunities and creating new opportunities (Orhei & Vinke, 2014; Shao & Sun, 2021). Improvisation and inductive discovery are part of GYE's decision-making process. An improvisational entrepreneurial mindset starts with the motive, moves to attitude and skills, and then the knowledge required to complete the task (MASK) is added to the classical KSA, which only encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitude (Orhei & Vinke, 2014).

5.4.2.1 Enterprise financing

Financing for small/medium enterprises remains challenging in developing and developed countries (De Gobbi, 2014; Rupeika-Apoga, Bule, & Petrovska, 2022). GYE depend on social capital to navigate their way through (De Gobbi, 2014; Mardikaningsih, Azizah, Putri, Alfan, & Rudiansyah, 2022). Social capital refers to opportunities or advantages presented by social networks, such as family and friends, which GYE utilises for their benefit (V Gough & Langevang, 2017).

5.4.2.2 Regulatory frameworks and business support

The GYE view government regulations as both an opportunity and a barrier (Dash & Kaur, 2012). GYE indicated they received business support from various stakeholders, such as family, friends, peers, academic institutions, entrepreneurial ecosystems, and retailers. Lack of business support has been identified as a barrier for some sub-Saharan countries (Yankson & Owusu, 2016).

5.4.2.3 Racial Bias

The GYE also reported struggling to break racial barriers (Johnstone, 2022; Pirtle, 2022). They felt that institutions such as funding institutions are racially biased. They had to deal with the perception of stakeholders, such as retailers, who believe that blacks will produce substandard products. They have to deal with rejection and have indicated that they have turned the rejections into positive and are using it as a learning curve.

5.4.2.4 Gender bias

The GYE reported that they also experienced gender bias in the manufacturing sector; a study conducted in Zambia found that young female entrepreneurs experience more difficulty trading in the business sector than their male counterparts (V Gough & Langevang, 2017).

5.4.2.5 Market opportunities and competition

The GYE view their environment as challenging and may be hostile at times. It is highly competitive, with well-established companies establishing rules that make it hard to break into the markets (Ceptureanu & Ceptureanu, 2015; Eslava & Haltiwanger, 2012). GYE are small to medium business enterprises and have to put their products on the same shelves as big companies who have funds to market their products, with advantages to economies of scale (Liñán, Paul, & Fayolle, 2020).

The GYE indicated that they have challenges with market access, they have to introduce themselves to retailers, and, often at the beginning, they are rejected. GYE have reported that they find alternative ways to get their products in the market by using social media

and direct deliveries from their manufacturing companies directly to the customer. These methods ensured that the barriers faced by traditional retail companies were overcome.

The GYE must adapt to the new imperatives of competition that compete on the learning rate, ecosystems, imagination, resilience, and a hybrid of the digital and physical world (Kimura, Reeves, & Whitaker, 2019). GYE reported that the entrepreneurship journey was exciting when their products received the attention and recognition they expected. They felt more encouraged and more determined to stay the course, as they can see their dreams and visions being realised. Seeing their products on the shelves of retail stores makes them feel like they have achieved as individuals and as representing black communities who historically never participated in the manufacturing sector as pioneers, but only as workers. Positive attitudes and perceptions enhance the chances of achieving GYE activities, leading to successful enterprises (De Gobbi, 2014).

5.4.3 Key participants and their role in the learning transfer process

The GYE are a key participant in the learning transfer process. Self-directed learning takes the centre stage for GYE. They must be determined, committed, patient, humble, willing to learn, and prepared to implement what they have learned. GYE indicated that they learn through self-assessment and self-reflection, acknowledging their limitations, observing what is happening in their environment, envisioning the future, making decisions, implementing, and reviewing (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020).

5.4.3.1 Support structures

Support structures such as family play a significant role in the learning transfer process. GYE reported on how they learned from their families and how their families also provided them with a platform to practice what they had learned, such as decision-making and critical thinking, which they later utilised in their businesses (Soetanto, 2017). GYE identified friends as part of their learning transfer process and used them as sounding boards to run through their ideas; they depended on them for encouragement when it was tough and utilised their feedback to enhance their performance.

5.4.3.2 Peers and communities of practice

Peers and communities of practice played a significant role in the learning transfer process. As part of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, peers provide platforms to share ideas, challenges, and develop solutions that GYE take back for implementation in their business ventures (Hafeez, Alghatas, Foroudi, Nguyen, & Gupta, 2018).

5.4.3.3 Mentors

Mentors are influential in the learning transfer process; they guide GYE on how to lead and manage their business enterprise (Prastyaningtyas, Sutrisno, Soeprajitno, Ausat, & Suherlan, 2023; St-Jean & Jacquemin, 2022). They also serve as a source of monitoring and evaluation of how goals that have been set are met and how to attend to areas that require improvement, thus helping improve GYE performance in business enterprises (El Hallam & St-Jean, 2016; Nate, Grecu, Stavytskyy, & Kharlamova, 2022).

5.4.3.4 Universities/ academic institutions

Universities or academic institutions participate in the learning transfer process. They provide information on product development and industry research on products and new focus areas (Alexander, Martin, Manolchev, & Miller, 2020). This collaboration is utilised by GYE to plan their next products and to help improve their products. Entrepreneurship refers to innovation; academic institutions provide a platform for learning transfers (Reichert, 2019).

5.4.3.5Customers

Customers actively participate in the learning transfer process. Their feedback serves as the basis for GYE to acquire more knowledge to respond adequately to the customer's needs, thus leading to product enhancement, which is a performance measure for GYE. Customers become co-developers in the product design and enhancement process (Najafi-Tavani, Mousavi, Zaefarian, & Naudé, 2020).

5.4.3.6 Retailers

Retailers' feedback plays an important role in the learning-transfer process. Feedback is utilised to help improve products, especially the packaging, so that the products look and

feel appealing to the target market (Ruiz-Martinez, Gil-Saura, & Frasquet, 2018). Lessons learned from interactions with retailers improve the performance of GYE against competitors.

5.4.3.7 Team members / business enterprise staff

Team members or business enterprise staff play a critical role in learning transfer. They are the baselines for implementing all ideas and lessons acquired by the GYE. They are part of the value chain and as expressed by one of the GYE “one cannot work alone.” The team members ensured that all feedback from interactions with various stakeholders occurred. Vicarious learning occurs within an enterprise (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016).

5.4.3.8 Suppliers

Suppliers provide valuable input to the learning transfer process; they have been in the supply industry for longer and are serving other clients and utilising their expert information to guide GYE on how to approach the product manufacturing process. The GYE said they learned from this guidance, significantly saving manufacturing costs. The supplier–manufacturer relationship helps achieve quality, flexibility, delivery, and a timely supply of product inputs (Al-Abdallah, Abdallah, & Hamdan, 2014). This relationship is mutually beneficial, and enhances trust and collaboration.

5.4.3.9 Government

Government plays an important role in learning transfers by creating a conducive environment by providing policies and regulations (De Gobbi, 2014). Learning transfer occurs within a context, and government policies and regulations provide a broader context, especially in a country like South Africa, where transformation is still key.

5.5 Relational Learning Transfer Theory and integration with existing learning transfer theories

The current study identified relating as the core category that explains the phenomenon of learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. This study proposes the Relational Learning Transfer Theory, which explains and predicts how

learning transfer occurs among GYE. Focus is given below on how Relational Learning Transfer Theory (RLTT) integrates with existing theories on learning transfer. Debates are ongoing regarding whether there is a difference between learning and learning transfers. Poell (2014) found that the challenge in word learning is to describe a product and a process. It was evident in this study that there is an overlap between learning and learning transfer; the processes are sometimes seamless, which should be acknowledged.

The sociocultural perspective of knowledge transfer holds that knowledge is richly associated with the circumstances in which it is constructed (Billett, 2013; Sarala, Junni, Cooper, & Tarba, 2016). The knowledge domains are neither absolute nor represent epistemological truth but are socially derived, premised on the individual's experiences. Transfer occurs based on knowledge constructed, valued, and utilised in the circumstances of its deployment, irrespective of whether the source of learning is a formal institution or workplace (Danish & Gresalfi, 2018; Lam & Rui, 2023). GYE transfer learning in the manufacturing sector is acquired from various sources of learning.

Cognitive theory partially explains how learning transfer occurs among GYE in that it does not account for the role played by social influences. The cognitive constructivist view primarily concerns internal mental processes predominantly related to the self (Danish & Gresalfi, 2018). The self and its role in Relational Learning Transfer Theory are outlined under the theme relating to the self. The proponents of cognitive theories view the transfer of knowledge as the process of recognising similarities between a past situation and the current problem; transfer in this regard is said to be dependent on connections and interconnections; one is to map up using processes such as critical reflection (Andersen & Chen, 2002). GYE recognised how some of their past experiences and encounters influenced their subsequent decision-making processes.

The sociocultural constructivist perspective provides an account of social genesis and knowledge construction. Pathan, Memon, Memon, Khoso, and Bux (2018) cite Vygotsky (1987) and state that knowledge is appropriated through interpersonal social interaction.

Social and cultural sources play a pivotal role in guiding transfer. Appropriation is the process of constructing knowledge from social and cultural sources.

Knowledge construction is achieved through problem-solving based on cognitive structures developed throughout an individual's life history and enhanced through ongoing joint activities and activities over time (Billett, 2013; Krange, Fjuk, Larsen, & Ludvigsen, 2023). The sociocultural perspective does not explain how the construction done throughout an individual's history is translated or transferred in a real-life situation. This study found that this is affected by establishing relationships with families, entrepreneurial ecosystems, peers, and communities of practice.

Learning transfer is demonstrated by drawing or accessing intellectual sources in a situation where resources are relevant, as shown in this study. Learning transfer is a product of ongoing participation in everyday activities in the "lived-in" world, and knowledge is embedded in the circumstances of its construction. Transfer depends partially on situational factors that assist performance. GYE highlighted how their relationships with institutions such as the Innovation Hub assisted them by creating a platform for them to pilot and validate their products.

The transfer is also person-dependent as an individual's cognitive structures, to some degree, determine their ability to assimilate information and apply it (Messick, 2021). Data from this study confirm that learning is a lifelong process, and the transfer of learning entails what GYE has learned throughout their lifetime, whether at home, school or in communities.

The transfer concerns the impact of what was learned about the application or implementation in context. There is agreement that transfer is about the application of what was learned. No holistic theory explains how this application or implementation occurs across all circumstances, specifically among GYE in South Africa.

Larsen-Freeman (2013) provided descriptions of the different types of transfer, such as positive transfer (when previous learning enhances the ability to perform another task), negative transfer (when previous learning hinders or impedes performance in another

task), lateral transfer, and vertical transfer. Wang et al. (2022) state that transfer depends on previous learning and acknowledges the role played by the situation and environment in the transfer process. These explanations of transfer provide descriptions of the individual's ability to replicate what was learned and not necessarily on how that learning is being transferred and what mechanism is being utilised. The common factors among the types of transfer identified, such as near, far, lateral, and vertical transfers, are the functions of time and content complexity.

Transfer of learning has generally been explained from a metaphorical approach looking at metaphorical distances, such as near transfer versus far transfer, specific transfer versus non-specific, and positive versus negative transfer (Landau, Meier, & Keefer, 2010). A different approach was introduced that did not focus on metaphorical distance but on the effort required for transfer to occur. Perkins and Salomon (2018) distinguished between low-road and high-road transfers, defining high-road transfer as a deliberate abstraction and search for connections, whereas low-road refers to responses triggered by previous similar conditions. GYE reported that at times, they deliberately look for links in terms of how challenges have been resolved before, whereas at other times, responses to challenges are triggered by similar conditions, which lead to faster decisions.

Perkins and Salomon (2018) identified conditions of transfer:

- Thorough and diverse practices suggest that transfer may depend on the extensive practice of the performance in question in various contexts.
- Explicit abstraction and transfer depend on whether learners have abstracted the critical attributes of a situation, focusing on its structure.
- Active self-monitoring and metacognitive reflection on one's thinking processes are pivotal in transfer.

Both explicit abstraction and self-monitoring were identified as concepts in the data analysis process. This study found that GYE are always alert to their surroundings, which fits well with arousing mindfulness, which refers to a generalised state of alertness to the activities one is engaged in their surroundings. Most GYE indicated that they take every

day as a learning experience, as they have not been exposed to entrepreneurship or the manufacturing sector in their previous encounters.

Various authors emphasise the need for research to focus on the interaction between cognitive schemas and the context in situ to improve the understanding of how individuals interpret organisational problems, make decisions, and develop solutions in context (Chi, Wang, & Ahmad, 2023; Elsbach, Barr, & Hargadon, 2005; Goel, Johnson, Junglas, & Ives, 2010a; Kang & Kim, 2017). Goel et al. (2010a) found that understanding how individuals learn in organisations assists in making sense of cognitive processes, such as information interpretation and decision-making.

One of the key challenges in the workplace as the ability to facilitate ways in which employees can learn from and with other employees, in today's world, this challenge is further complicated by the business environment where knowledge is distributed among employees with different educational backgrounds, different levels of experience specialisation, and is geographically dispersed (Barabaschi, Barbieri, Cantoni, Platoni, & Virtuani, 2022). GYE learn from peers and entrepreneurial ecosystems and utilise technology or social media such as Twitter or Facebook to communicate, which attends to challenges related to geographical distances.

Situated theories, such as social learning, situated cognition, and mental models, have been utilised to explain learning (Stewart, 2021). Social learning theory views learning as emerging from interactions between individuals in a group. Situated cognition theory emphasises the role of the context in which the interaction occurs, and mental models' theory explains how learning is cognitively processed (Andrews, Lilly, Srivastava, & Feigh, 2023; Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022; Roth & Jornet, 2013). Mental models, also called cognitive maps, are psychological representations of real or hypothetical imaginary situations (Paoletti, Reyes, & Salas, 2019).

According to behavioural theories, learning occurs when a behaviour changes due to an external stimulus (Ng'andu, Haambokoma, & Milingo, 2013; Olson & Ramírez, 2020). Behavioural theory partially explains how GYE transfers learning, as they place less

emphasis on the role of the mind. GYE have demonstrated that reflection plays an important role in learning transfer, and that reflection is a process that occurs in the mind. The acknowledgement of the role played by the situation and interaction in learning should serve as a basis for the understanding that transfer also occurs through the interactions the current study has noted.

Transfer can be viewed as either specific or nonspecific. Specific transfer refers to identifying elements similar to those in current transfer tasks compared to prior tasks. Nonspecific transfer refers to cognitive skills that involve using a familiar problem environment to solve problems in a new environment (Cormier & Hagman, 2014). Positive transfer is a phenomenon in which learning in one context improves performance in another context. It was found in this study that there is a dominance of general or non-specific transfer, which refers to the carryover of attitudes, methods, and techniques as part of a general principle, as found by Judd and Allport, who are the proponents of theories of transfer by generalisation (Hajian, 2019).

Transfer occurred within the context and focus of this study. Transfer occurs when what is learned in one situation is decontextualised to apply to others. There is a notion that knowledge is separable from the context in which it is developed and is not necessarily a function of activity, social interaction, culture, or history (Larsen-Freeman, 2013). This study demonstrated that knowledge and the ability to transfer depend on various factors, including social interaction and cultural, historical, and cognitive abilities.

Social interaction plays a vital role in situated learning, as individuals learn through participation in communities of practice that provide context and culture (Lave, 2009). GYE transfer learning within a community of practice that has a context and culture that may be specific to South Africa or applicable to GYE in manufacturing within the continent or globally. The transfer is influenced by sociocultural factors, thus highlighting that transfer does not occur in isolation but depends on social and cultural factors (Qureshi, Khaskheli, Qureshi, Raza, & Yousufi, 2021).

Previous studies on transfer research have focused on transfer perceptions based on researcher judgments or characteristics of learning material and situations downplaying the perception of individuals engaged in transfer (Helfenstein, 2005; Mestre, 2005). The perceptions of individuals engaged in learning transfer are pivotal to understanding transfer, as there are mediating factors that activate and apply prior learning. The current study addressed this limitation by approaching GYE so that they share their perceptions of how learning transfers occurred in their enterprises.

In unpacking learning transfer, Lobato (2012) proposed that actor-oriented research should focus on individuals' connections when interacting with context rather than asking whether the transfer occurred. The actor-oriented transfer approach assesses the process by which learners form personal relationships across situations, irrespective of whether the connections are correct. Ecological psychology states that learner contexts are based on relationships with one another over time (Edwards, 2009). Relational Learning Transfer Theory adds to the actor-oriented transfer approach as it reveals how GYEs relate to various stakeholders to address their main concern of staying afloat.

Recent studies have acknowledged that informal learning plays a significant role in learning transfer compared to learning in formal environments (Rastogi & Karatepe, 2022; Tannenbaum & Wolfson, 2022). This informal learning can occur through a community of practice, personal networks, and practical work-related tasks (Schürmann & Beausaert, 2016). The adage that learning is a lifelong process can be demonstrated in the current study from the comments made by GYE and from analysing their entrepreneurial life journey.

Connectivism, a learning theory of the digital age by Siemens (2014), argues that learning theories should reflect the underlying social environment. Technology as a learning transfer tool is used to define and shape thinking (Bolzani, Munari, Rasmussen, & Toschi, 2021). Organisations and individuals are learning organisms. Siemens proposes the need for a theory that explains the link between individual and organisational learning. GYE reported how technology played an essential role in acquiring knowledge, as they conducted research using the Internet. GYE indicated how technology furthers their

objectives in marketing their products using platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, and how they use these platforms for brainstorming. Connectivism forms part of the relational learning transfer process.

The Bayesian theory of sequential causal learning explains how learning transfer occurs when individuals use experience to predict behaviour in a controlled environment. It was found that humans can acquire and transfer abstract causal knowledge in situations where specific cues are changed between training and the transfer test (Lu, Rojas, Beckers, & Yuille, 2016). Bayesian theory cannot fully account for how learning transfer occurs among GYE, as the study was based on controlled environments such as experiments and not real-life situations that occur in an uncertain and unpredictable environment.

The Excitation transfer theory argues that residual excitation from one stimulus lingers beyond one encounter and may amplify the response from another stimulus, although at different levels (Cummins, 2017). Transfer among GYE can be evidenced by the positive application of previous learning and experiences in a real context that is potentially different from an original situation where learning took place (McDaniel, Roediger, & McDermott, 2007). Excitation transfer among GYE can be demonstrated by the way they react to situations where they previously encountered rejection or hardship; they may carry these emotions to their subsequent business interactions.

Dynamic interplay surfaces as individuals communicate, interact, and perform group tasks. Hajian (2019) refers to the ongoing reciprocal impact of transactive processes, whereby the structure and trust processes are interlinked in the transactive memory systems theory. Factors such as the environment play an important role in refining and creating new knowledge regarding integration. This theory also emphasises the importance of trust and how it influences the strength of the relationship between the transactive memory system and the performance of tasks using social networks. This is linked to the concept of entrepreneurial eco-spaces, as indicated by GYE.

The Improvisation theory outlines how learning transfers occur among GYE. e Cunha and Clegg (2019) refer to improvisation as the conception of action based on available cognitive, affective, social, and material resources. The improvisation theory has three pillars: antecedents, influencing factors, and outcomes. Proponents of this theory argue that antecedents, influencing factors, and outcomes meet simultaneously, followed by structuration.

Antecedents are divided into motivation to improvise and potential to do so. The will to improvise comes from a deliberate choice of improvisation as an action strategy and a culture that encourages experimentation and treats mistakes as learning opportunities (Stein, 2011). GYE have indicated that they choose to follow the path of entrepreneurship and daily they learn through trial and error; they improvise to see their product manufactured, including conducting some of the experiments for their product in their kitchens or their garages.

Collaboration and Competition are viewed as social improvisation experiences (Zenk, Hynek, Schreder, & Bottaro, 2022). GYE provided examples of how they participated in competitions as a fundraising strategy. Collaboration exists because of the collective nature of performance and because the task binds participants. This is demonstrated by initiating podcasts like The Hustler's Corner, where the platform showcases upcoming manufacturers. Improvisation theory appears to cover much of how learning transfers occur among GYE. However, this theory does not explain how improvisation is implemented.

Learning transfer among GYE occurs in relationships, and an assessment was conducted to determine whether social exchange theory fully explains the process (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). Social exchange theory (SET) refers to a series of interactions that generate obligations characterised by interdependency. Social Exchange theory provides a unitary framework for organisational behaviour (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). There are three relationships and they have rules of exchange. The three types of reciprocity include reciprocity as a transactional pattern of interdependent exchanges: reciprocity as a folk belief and reciprocity as a moral norm. Exchange is viewed as bidirectional, with

something to be given and returned (Cross & Dundon, 2019). The question was whether this bidirectional principle applied to all the GYE established relationships, and whether this was agreed upon upfront or assumed.

The Social Exchange theory involves mutual and complementary arrangements. Reciprocal interdependence focuses on interpersonal transactions, and actions by one person leads to reactions by another. GYE relationships involve bargaining between suppliers and retailers. Reciprocity folk belief is based on the notion that people obtain what they desire in an interaction; there is a belief that nature will take its course. This cannot work for GYE, as relationships have to be deliberate and cannot always be left to chance or fate.

Social exchange relationships differ from economic and communal ones. They highlighted that exchange relationships require repayment within a particular timeframe, involve economic or quasi-good exchanges, and are motivated by personal interests. However, communal relationships are viewed as open-ended, less time-bound, involve the exchange of socio-emotional benefits, and place greater emphasis on the other party's interests.

Stafford and Kuiper (2021) differentiate between social and economic exchanges. Social exchange in a work setting is viewed as an association between two interacting partners, which may be people or institutions (Chen, Zhao, & Lewis, 2023). These relationships can be viewed as a series of interdependent exchanges (transactions) or they may be viewed as interpersonal.

Social exchange cannot fully account for the relationships established by GYE for learning transfer. For example, it does not account for the relationship with oneself and its influence on how GYE conduct their business.

Fletcher and Ragins (2008) and Lenz (2016) refer to the Relational Cultural Theory (RCT). Central to this theory is that human growth occurs in the context of relationships and connections with others. It identifies relational attributes, such as empathy and the capacity to experience vulnerability, as strengths that should be developed and not

viewed as weaknesses. Relational interactions must always be understood in the broader social context in which they occur. These theorists criticised relations with the self and said it “does not adequately capture the fluid, two-directional flow of mutual influence that characterises interactions.”

The Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) view states that relational interaction should be two-directional. The current study establishes that transfer occurs in relationships. The RCT proposed that self be replaced by self-in-relation. RCT supports the view that growth and learning occur in social interactions. Relational Learning Transfer Theory, as evidenced by the data, recognises the critical role played by the self in the learning transfer process of GYE in the manufacturing sector.

The current study identified relating as a core category and proposed Relational Learning Transfer as a theory, which differed from Birtchnell’s theory. Birtchnell (2016) is the proponent of the Relating Theory, which focuses on relating from a horizontal and vertical axis, and also viewed as spatial theory. The horizontal axis looked at the closeness or distance between two people, whereas the vertical axis considered the dominant aspect of relationships, whether downward or upward (Birtchnell, 2016). Relating theory is concerned with the interpersonal octagon, which highlights eight states of relatedness and depicts the negative and positive aspects of relating. Relation as a process can occur spontaneously involving the “inner me” or deliberately involving “ the outer me” the outer me’(Birtchnell, 2016).

The theory focuses on psychotherapy drawn from psychology, anthropology, and other disciplines but is located in the biological discipline (DeYoung, 2014). It states that humans relate to certain objectives, such as facilitating survival and achieving a state of relatedness. The theory states that developing the client’s competency in related areas is the key aim of psychotherapy, and the therapist's role is to facilitate the development of that competence. Birtchnell (2016) looked at relating in terms of what happens inside and outside the brain, which is different from the relating identified in the current study that looked at relating in the context of self, others, the environment, sociocultural factors, connectivism, and time factors.

The current study found that support is required from family, peers, and external structures such as regulatory structures such as professional councils and government structures for learning transfer to occur among GYE. This study further noted that GYE learned from the self through self-reflection. Over the past decade, several researchers have investigated the relationship between transfer climate and the transfer of training from formal training programs (Grossman & Salas, 2011; Sookhai & Budworth, 2010). This study investigated learning transfer triggered by informal and formal learning. This study established the use of relationships as a bridge for learning transfer. The current study also established that the transfer climate affects learning transfer, even when individuals have learned informally.

5.6 Theoretical implications of this study for future learning transfer theories

This study introduces the Relational Learning Transfer Theory as a substantive theory that is transferable but not generalisable. It provides a foundation through which a formal theory of relational learning transfer can be developed through quantitative and mixed methods studies that can test it in multiple areas.

This study focused on how learning transfer occurs through establishing relationships, a processual theory that adds to the knowledge base of learning transfer theories. Acknowledging this theory of behaviourist, cognitive, and socio-cultural assertions as contributors to the learning transfer process adds to the holistic nature of Relational Learning Transfer Theory (RLTT). The theory advocates that the learning transfer process combines innate characteristics, the environment, socio-cultural factors, time, knowledge, and relationships that influence learning transfer among GYE in South Africa.

The South African manufacturing sector is still white male-dominated, and GYE of black origin are beginning to participate in the market. Establishing relationships with various stakeholders remains central and key to the survival of their business enterprises, and knowledge of how to navigate these relationships is both essential and critical.

5.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the study's findings, the Relational Learning Transfer Theory, how it fits into the existing theories, and identified its contribution to the learning transfer arena.

The responses to the research question and sub-questions were presented.

Chapter Six: Conclusion, Contributions and Recommendations

6.0 Introduction

Understanding the GYE learning transfer process in the manufacturing sector is essential in South Africa, given the high levels of unemployment among youth and the low economic growth in the country. Understanding how GYE interact with the learning transfer phenomenon may contribute to economic growth, transformation of the manufacturing sector, and increase GY entrepreneurs' participation in the industry. A low level of youth participation in entrepreneurship, specifically in the manufacturing sector, requires intentional intervention.

This research adds value to and assists in developing youth-owned and managed enterprises and entrepreneurship. The classic grounded theory methodology facilitated the discovery of relating as a phenomenon that GYE use to navigate the manufacturing sector through the Relational Learning Transfer Theory, without contamination by prior theories, as the literature review was performed only after the emergence of the current substantive theory.

6.1 Summary of the main conclusions

Chapter One provided an overview of the context within which the study was undertaken, this included; the introduction, context for the study, the research purpose, and the main question that the study answered. Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector are operating in a developing country with one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world. GYE have to establish strategies to ensure that their enterprises stay afloat, survive and remain sustainable in this environment and government interventions must create a conducive environment.

Chapter Two provided an account of the research methodology utilised in this study. The Glaserian classic grounded theory methodology was considered the most suitable to answer the main research question on how learning transfer occurs among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. This study deviated from the traditional GT approach, where you start analysing data soon after you conduct your first interview; data analysis only commenced after the first three interviews. This approach helped enhance openness to the interviewing process without the possibility or temptation on the side of the researcher to pursue a certain line of thinking prematurely, which might have limited the richness of data.

The study also utilised pre-recorded data based on publicly available interviews in various media outlets. This chapter provides an account of how GT principles were adhered to in the study, which provides a basis for the study's trustworthiness. CGGT principles and procedures such as simultaneous data collection and analysis, constant comparison, theoretical sampling and saturation were followed.

Chapter Three presented the results of the study, beginning with the codes, concepts, and categories that were developed from the data, identification of the main concerns, identification of theoretical categories, identification of the near-core and central or theoretical core category, and the emergence of the substantive theory, which is the Relational Learning Transfer Theory, theoretical themes, and theoretical assertions. This chapter also presented the relational learning transfer matrix and the model.

The presentation of chapter three was done from a neutral voice, without comparing it to existing literature in line with the methodology. Staying afloat, enterprise survival and sustainability were identified as the main concerns for GYE. GYE were operating in an uncertain environment and needed to acquire knowledge to help them deal with this uncertain environment. Relationships were found to be central to the learning transfer phenomenon utilised by GYE to ensure that their enterprises stay afloat which was found to be their main concern.

Chapter Four was a literature review, which included a discussion of the learning, learning transfer theories, and conceptual framework. The proposed Relational Learning Transfer Theory is located within the broader learning theories such as behaviourist, cognitive and sociocultural theories. The literature review also focused on workplace learning and entrepreneurial learning theories. Gaps were identified within the literature and Relational Learning Transfer Theory; relational learning transfer matrix and model provide new perspectives on how learning transfer occur among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector.

Chapter Five discussed the findings, integrating the Relational Learning Transfer Theory with the existing learning transfer literature. This chapter provided answers to the question: how does learning transfer occur among the Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector? The study found that learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector occurs in and through relationships. Relationship building and relating are the phenomena that account for learning transfer. Relational Learning Transfer Theory was developed.

The factors that influenced the transfer of learning among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector, included: personal values, attributes and attitudes; knowledge and time; support structures such as family, peers, mentors; regulatory institutions; information accessibility; customers and the environment. GYE experienced challenges related to: enterprise financing; regulatory frameworks; gender bias; racial bias; competition and market access. In order to address these challenges GYE acquired learning both formally and informally and learning was acquired through studying, reading, research, peer learning, trial and error, piloting, experimenting and from experience. The key participants in the learning transfer process include the self, academic institutions, entrepreneurial ecosystems, customers, retailers, families, community of practice, and government institutions.

GYE assessed their environments, acquired learning, strategized, and established relationships with various role players and stakeholders in order to ensure that their business enterprises stay afloat, survive and are sustainable. The above factors gave

credence to the assertions made in Chapter Three as part of the Relational Learning Transfer Theory teasing process. The assumptions made in this study are as follows.

Assertion 1 - Learning Transfer occurs through collaboration: It is highly unlikely or nearly impossible for one to survive, succeed, and be sustainable in the manufacturing sector or industry if you have not created a base of relationships with various role players in the value chain, starting from pre-conceptual (idea generation), product development, product distribution, and product enhancement.

Assertion 2 - Learning transfer occurs through relationship building and maintenance: If South Africa wants to increase the number of GYEs, it should concentrate or empower young people on the value and strategies for building and maintaining relationships. Relationships help in idea generation when developing products as sponsors will invest in idea piloting and incubation, which will help open doors for distribution through retailers.

Assertion 3 - Learning Transfer occurs through active self-involvement: Relationship building is a tool that is easily accessible; it is largely based on the self and not others, influenced by attitude and more internal than external, and should be intentional.

Assertion 4 - Learning transfer occurs through the involvement of others: Learning transfer among GYE occurs through establishing and harnessing relationships with various role-players.

Assertion 5 - Learning transfer is deliberate: Learning transfer happens in and through deliberate relationships.

Assertation 6 - Learning transfer is a holistic process: It considers internal and external factors referred to by previous theories like cognitive, socio-cultural, and Behavioural theories

Assertion 7 - Relationships provide an opportunity to share thoughts and receive feedback, action, and reaction, and provide a feedback loop.

Proposition: GY depend on relationships to acquire and transfer learning in South Africa's manufacturing sector.

Substantive theory: Relational Learning Transfer Theory. Learning transfer among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector occurs in and through relationships.

6.3 Study contributions

The current study on learning transfer by GYE in the South African manufacturing industry contributes to both dimensions, as identified by Corley and Gioia (2011) and falls within quadrant 2, which is incremental and scientifically useful as it resulted in the development of a substantive theory; Relational Learning Transfer Theory.

6.3.1 Theoretical contributions

This study proposes the inclusion of Relational Learning Transfer Theory as a theory that explains how learning transfer occurs among GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. It emphasises the importance of building a relationship with the self as part of reflection, establishing a relationship with industry stakeholders, and understanding the context in which one is operating as essential features for learning transfer. Establishing relationships with customers as people who use products and help enhance them. Relationship with time is part of the envisioning process, as well as acknowledging the context of when things are happening and the environment, such as the historical issues of race and the current issues of gender bias, exclusion, and sensitivity.

The existing learning transfer theories individually focus on certain aspects the current theory raises. This theory demonstrates how GYE combine internal attributes and values, cognitive abilities, sociocultural and historical factors, connectivism, improvisation, and environmental factors to transfer learning in and through relationships with various stakeholders in the South African manufacturing sector value chain. It explains

mechanisms utilised by GYE to ensure that their enterprise stay afloat. This unique contribution was discovered based on the experiences shared by GYE using the classic grounded methodology. This study developed the learning transfer matrix and relational learning transfer model. The relational learning transfer model should be compared with the existing learning transfer models.

6.3.2 Methodological contributions

This study did not commence with analysis immediately after the first participant was interviewed but only commenced with interviews after three interviews. This provided an opportunity to pursue data collection and minimise the chances of premature lead of the data collection process. A combination of direct interviews and pre-recorded interviews conducted for other purposes as part of the data collection process added to the richness of data. It took away any possibility of interviewees responding in a way that they would have thought aligned with the study, minimising possibilities that come with adjusting answers, which is possible when interviewees knew the objectives of the current study.

In today's world where most people make podcasts, utilise YouTube videos and are very busy to afford face-to-face interviews the utilisation of available data is one of the avenues that was explored and is recommended for use in other studies, it should be explored. Using previously recorded interviews allowed the researcher to revisit interviews, which helped with the data confirmation and saturation process. Grounded theory provides an avenue for analysing data without generating preconceived ideas.

This study developed and utilised the ACAC model to enhance the data analysis process during coding. The ACAC model prompts one to analyse the actions and check the conditions in which the action occurs, the attitudes/ attributes of the participant, and the consequences of each action. The ACAC summarises actions, conditions, attitudes/ attributes, and consequences. This model can assist novice researchers in interacting with transcribed data and field notes. It will also assist when the researcher listens and takes notes during interviews and observations.

6.3.3 Practical contributions

This study provides direction for future interventions to be implemented by:

Policymakers: The South African government views entrepreneurship as one of the possible interventions that can create jobs and reduce high unemployment levels. To support entrepreneurship as a possible intervention, the government needs to review strategies and interventions to ensure that they create a conducive environment for the establishment and harnessing of relationships required by GYE to sustain their enterprises. The Government needs to create more centres like Innovation Hub at provincial, district and local municipality levels, facilitating entrepreneurial ecosystems and mentoring programmes. Supporting these relationships will assist institutions committed to transforming the country's economic ownership landscape.

The Findings of this study should be incorporated into government programmes such as the small enterprise manufacturing support programme and the township and rural entrepreneurship programmes. Policymakers can incorporate the findings of this study in the integrated youth development strategy.

GYE and other entrepreneurs: This study shows what can be done practically to assist young entrepreneurs navigate the world of entrepreneurship and manufacturing in South Africa. Relational Learning Transfer Theory outlines the key participants entrepreneurs should establish relationships with to help navigate the world of entrepreneurship. The study also highlights the benefits of each of the identified relationships. Entrepreneurs, GYE in particular should take leadership in familiarising themselves with relationship-building strategies.

Academic institutions: these bodies need to prepare all students on possible knowledge, skills and attributes or competencies required to turn their professions into possible enterprises. Academic institutions can incorporate the findings of this study into their curricula and utilise the relationship-building matrix, the relational learning transfer model and the Relational Learning Transfer Theory identified in this study.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The study relied more on pre-recorded interviews accessed from the Internet due to the unavailability of participants, who mostly turned down the invitations to participate due to time constraints or other competing priorities. The limitation of pre-recorded interviews is that the analysis is based on available data without posing follow-up comments, questions, or opportunities to seek clarity. This limitation was countered by the fact that pre-recorded interviews allow the researcher to revisit and thoroughly analyse data several times without risking making the interviewee feel uncomfortable.

During the initial data analysis stages, challenges were experienced with the coding process as one was using grounded theory methodology for the first time. The development of the ACAC coding method allowed one to proceed with coding with some level of comfort and regain confidence in the data analysis process.

6.5 Suggestions for future studies

Relational Learning Transfer Theory was developed in the context of GYE in the South African manufacturing sector. This substantive theory cannot be generalised; however, it is transferable. Future studies should test the applicability of this theory in other contexts/ sectors outside the South African manufacturing sector. Studies need to be conducted focusing on the proposed Relational Learning Transfer Theory to test it by utilising both quantitative and mixed methods so that it can be expanded.

This study developed the relational learning transfer matrix, providing pillars within which learning transfer occurs. These pillars provide a broader framework within which learning transfer occurs. Future studies should explore the concept of the learning transfer matrix more, as there is limited literature out there on this subject. Academic institutions can focus on this as part of enhancing their curriculum.

The study developed the relational learning transfer model. Future studies should focus on comparing this model with existing models such as cognitive apprenticeship, meta-cognition, regression, Thayer and Teachout, Broad and Newstrom, Kozolowski and

Salas', and Baldwin and Ford's models. The comparison process will help identify further gaps in the literature and provide a basis for further studies.

6.6 Concluding remarks

This study found that relationships are important vehicles through which Generation Y entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector. Learning transfer GYE's main concern is staying afloat, business enterprise survival, and sustainability. Entrepreneurship is currently considered one of the interventions that can contribute to job creation and the reduction of unemployment. Empowering GYE with relationship building strategies is of great significance as it will ensure that their businesses are sustainable, contribute to country's economic growth through job creation, reduce unemployment, and help to achieve transformation within the manufacturing sector. This study provides a holistic perspective of how learning transfer occurs encompassing the cognitive, behaviourist, sociocultural and humanism perspectives on learning transfer.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Request to conduct interviews- institutions

25 March 2019

The Chief Executive Officer

xxxxxxxxxx

Dear Sir

Re: Request to conduct research within your Organisation in satisfaction of the Wits University PHD requirements

My name is Nditsheni Raliphada, I am currently a Doctoral student at the Witwatersrand University- Wits Business School. I am conducting a study on learning transfer among Generation Y entrepreneurs in the manufacturing industry. This project is being conducted under the supervision of Prof Terri Carmichael (Wits Business School, Johannesburg, South Africa)

This letter is to request your permission to approach **xxx** employees who are dealing with the manufacturing sector; their role will be to provide a database of the youth in the manufacturing sector who can be approached for this study.

I have provided you with a copy of my thesis proposal, a copy of the consent form to be completed by the identified participants, a copy of the approval letter from the Wits Human Research Ethics Committee granting me permission to conduct this study, and a copy of the interview guide.

The objective of my project is to develop a theory on how learning is transferred.

The objectives of this study include:

- To elucidate how GYE transfer learning in the workplace
- To contribute towards a theory / substantive theory on learning transfer
- To develop a conceptual model
- To construct a set of theoretical propositions on how GYE interact with the learning transfer phenomenon.

The study will focus on Generation Y entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector. Upon completion of this study, I undertake to provide **xxx** with a soft copy of the research report. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Appendix B: Email example

Good day

Hope you are well. My name is Nditsheni Raliphada. I am a PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand, Wits Business School. I am studying "learning transfer among Generation Y (people born between 1980 and 1994) entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector". This may be a person who is an owner of a company or a person who is part of the company leadership/executive/director. I am requesting to discuss this with people who fit this criterion so that I can get to understand the manufacturing sector.

You are welcome to contact me and me if you require further clarification.

Attached kindly find the university's ethics clearance.

Kind regards

Nditsheni Raliphada

Tel: xxx xxxx xxxx

Appendix C: Ethical clearance

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND,

JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL) RI 4/49 Raliphada

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE PROTOCOL NUMBER: H18/11127

PROJECT TITLE Learning Transfer in the Workplace: Experiences of Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the South African Manufacturing Sector

INVESTIGATOR(S) Miss N Raliphada

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT Wits Business School/

DATE CONSIDERED 16 November 2018

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE Approved

EXPIRY DATE 07 March 2022

DATE 08 March 2019 CHAIRPERSON J. Knight

(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor: Professor T Carmichael

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate, ONE COPY returned to the Secretary at Room 10004 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (non-medical).

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorised to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any

Raliphada
Signature

departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. I agree to the completion of a yearly progress report.

ac 1 03

Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix D: Interview Guide-initial

LEARNING TRANSFER AMONG GENERATION Y ENTREPRENEURS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Interview Questions

1. Share with me your journey/experiences of working within a manufacturing sector
2. Why did you pursue a career in the manufacturing sector and who are some of the people who assisted you in this journey?
3. How would you say they played a role?
4. What lessons did you learn in the manufacturing sector that you deem basic and essential for new entrants to survive and succeed?
5. If you were to develop a guide on how to transfer learning for other entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector, what would you include in it, or what would you factor in?
6. What are your observations and perceptions of how your peers in the manufacturing sector keep their businesses open and sustainable?
7. Share with me the contribution or role that education plays in one succeeding in this sector.
8. How would you describe your sources of learning?

Appendix E: Interview Guide-revised and enhanced

LEARNING TRANSFER GENERATION Y ENTREPRENEURS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Interview Questions

1. Share with me your journey/experiences of working within a manufacturing sector
2. Why did you pursue a career in the manufacturing sector and who are some of the people who assisted you in this journey?
3. How would you say they played a role?
4. What are some of the lessons you learned in the manufacturing sector that you deem basic and essential for new entrants to survive and succeed?
5. If you were to develop a guide for other entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector on how to transfer learning, what would you include in it, or what would you factor in?
6. What are your observations and perceptions of how your peers in the manufacturing sector keep their businesses open and sustainable?
7. Share with me the contribution or role that education plays in one succeeding in this sector.
8. How would you describe your sources of learning?
9. What gives you sleepless nights, what are you most worried about
10. How do you deal with it currently?
11. What causes it?
12. How can it be better dealt with in the future?

Appendix F: Participant information sheet: (interviews)

Learning transfer among Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the South African manufacturing sector

Who am I?

Hello, I am Nditsheni Raliphada. I am a PhD student at Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg.

What am I doing?

I am conducting research on learning transfer in the workplace, with a specific focus on Generation Y entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector. This is to develop a theory on learning transfer.

Your participation

As part of this project, I invite you to participate in the interview to discuss your experiences in the manufacturing sector; if you agree, the interview session will take approximately forty-five minutes to an hour. Our discussion and agreement will determine whether we will have further engagements in addition to the first scheduled meeting. The interview and identity were confidential at all times. The information provided is held securely and combined with other information for reporting purposes. I will use pseudonyms to represent the participants in my final report. Should you feel any distress or discomfort during the interview, we will pause and resume at another time. If you have any questions about this research, I feel free to contact me at the details listed below.

This study will result in a written thesis that will be available online through the University of Witwatersrand's website. If you wish to receive a summary of the research report, I would be happy to send it to you upon request.

Kindly understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you may choose not to participate in this study. Should you choose to participate in this study, kindly note that you are at liberty to stop participating if, during the study, you are no longer comfortable participating. There will be no penalties or prejudices to terminate participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The information you share with the researcher will be kept confidential. The records from your participation will be kept for five years as required by the university and may only be shared with people who are responsible for ensuring that the research is done properly.

Permission is hereby requested from you to record the interview as part of ensuring the accuracy and credibility of the data-collection process. The recording was stored in a locked cabinet in a secure environment. We will not record your name anywhere, and no one will be able to link you to the answers you provide.

Risks and discomforts

At present, we do not foresee any risk associated with participation in this study. However, if you become uncomfortable at any stage, you are free to answer any questions or may withdraw from the study. The researcher will be sensitive to discomfort.

Benefits

There are no immediate benefits to participating in this study. You will not be remunerated. Your participation is important because it will contribute to the development of a theory that will inform the learning transfer field.

If you would like to receive feedback on the study, you would be requested to provide details on how and where we can reach you. The results will be made available in 2020.

Who to contact if you have been harmed or have any concerns

This research was approved by the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), by telephone at + 27(0)11 717 1408, email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za.

Yours Sincerely

Nditsheni Raliphada (student/researcher). Tel: 079 510 9072

Terri Carmichael (Supervisor). Tel: 082 458 9583

Appendix G: Participant information sheet (reflective diaries)

Learning transfer among Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the South African Manufacturing Sector

Who am I?

Hello, I am Nditsheni Raliphada. I am a PhD student at Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg.

What am I doing?

I am conducting research on learning transfer in the workplace with a specific focus on Generation Y entrepreneurs in the manufacturing sector. I am conducting research to understand how Generation Y entrepreneurs transfer learning in order to develop a theory on learning transfer.

Your participation

As part of this project, I request you to provide a reflective diary detailing your experiences/journey in the manufacturing sector. It would be appreciated if your reflection would include significant events in your life that triggered some learning, what you have learned, how you have learned it, and the challenges you experienced during specific learning events. You are kindly requested to reflect on how your learning has affected the course of events in your life; for example, how did it affect your decision-making process or the way you conduct business? This diary will be stored in a locked cabinet, and the contents thereof will only be utilized for this study. I will use a pseudonym to represent your participation in the final report. If you have any questions about this research, I feel free to contact me on the details listed below.

This study will result in a written thesis that will be available online through the University of Witwatersrand's website. If you wish to receive a summary of the research report, I would be happy to send it to you upon request.

Kindly understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you may choose not to participate in this study. Should you choose to participate in this study, kindly note that you are at liberty to stop participating if, during the study, you are no longer comfortable participating. There will be no penalties or prejudices to terminate participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The information you share with the researcher will be kept confidential. The records from your participation will be kept for five years as required by the university and may only be shared with people who are responsible for ensuring that the research is done properly.

The diary was stored in a locked cabinet, in a secure environment. We will not record your name anywhere, and no one will be able to link you to the answers you provide.

Risks and discomforts

At present, we do not foresee any risk associated with participation in this study. There is a possibility of discomfort in this study based on your experiences in the learning transfer journey you have gone through. The researcher will be sensitive to discomfort.

Benefits

There are no immediate benefits to participating in this study. You will not be remunerated. Your participation is important because it will contribute to the development of a theory that will inform the learning transfer field.

If you would like to receive feedback on the study, you would be requested to provide details on how and where we can reach you. The results will be available in 2019/2020.

Who to contact if you have been harmed or have any concerns

This research was approved by the Witwatersrand Research Ethics Committee (REC). If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this

study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), telephone + 27(0)11 717 1408, email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za

Yours Sincerely

Nditsheni Raliphada (student/researcher). Tel: 079 510 9072

Terri Carmichael (Supervisor). Tel: xxx xxxxx

Appendix H: Participant consent form

CONSENT FORM

Project Name: Learning transfer in the workplace: experiences of South African Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the Manufacturing Sector.

Name of Researcher: Nditsheni Raliphada

I …….. (Name & Surname of participant) hereby agree to participate in the research on " *Learning transfer in the workplace: experiences of South African Generation Y Entrepreneurs in the Manufacturing Sector* ". The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation involves. I understand that I am participating freely. I also understand that I can stop participating at any point should I no longer fe el comfortable to participate. I understand that my participation in this research does not have immediate personal benefits and I will not be remunerated. I understand that my participation and identity will remain confidential.

I understand that my participation and identity will remain confidential ……..Yes/No

I agree that the researcher may use a pseudonym and/or anonymous quotes in her research report…… ……Yes/ No

I agree that the interview may be audio recorded……Yes/ No

Name of Participant: …….

Signature of participant: ……..

Date: ……..

Appendix I: Memo example

28/05/2021

The participant raised the issue about race which indicated that in the industry there is an uneven ground or operating environment which is rooted in historical racial discrimination in the country. Although we talk of a non-sexist and non-racial country there is still too much work to be done on the ground to realise that aspiration.

"Day one you do not compete, day one. It does not matter even if you can manage to unread the specs, it does not matter, at day one you are already producing at a higher cost than they are, they are gone" Given the explanation in terms of racial obstacles that the participant had to face I realised it takes courage and resilience for one to survive in this manufacturing environment. It is like one is set up for failure before they even start or begins. One must be highly self-motivated to remain in the industry. What does this experience mean for learning transfer? They are learning the hard way, who do they turn to during this difficult time? It reminded me of a biblical scripture psalm 121 "*ndo liladza mato anga dzithavhani, a mpfarisaho u do bva ngafhi*". Where do you get the courage to soldier on amid these challenges and somewhat foregone conclusion that you are not going to make it.