

A Price-Based Approach to the Dialectics in African American Female Entrepreneur Experiences

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This research seeks to better understand the experiences of African American female entrepreneurs using a price-based, dialectical approach. Through 20 interviews with African American female entrepreneurs about their experiences of managing, marketing, and obtaining business financing, the costs and benefits they experienced as entrepreneurs are explored. Using grounded theory, the interviews were analyzed and four price-based dialectics emerged: (1) Changing self vs. Maintaining self, (2) Being distrustful of others vs. Being faithful and trusting in God, (3) Weak support from own ethnicity vs. Strong supportive ethnic identity, and (4) Being halted by others' perceptions vs. Moving forward despite pre-conceived notions.

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

You're gonna get tired. You're gonna get frustrated. You're gonna get angry. You're gonna have moments of sadness. You're gonna have moments of joy. You're gonna have laughter. All of that tied in together, but it's all part of the process of becoming an entrepreneur. (Pearl, a participant in this study, pseudonym used)

In the area of minority entrepreneurship, research has focused on comparisons between men and women owning and managing a business (e.g., Danes, Stafford and Loy, 2007), on the learning experiences of ethnic minority entrepreneurs (e.g., Ekanem and Wyer, 2007), and on the challenges of work-family conflict for minority entrepreneurs (e.g., Rogoff and Heck, 2008; Shelton, Danes and

Eisenman, 2008). Researchers acknowledge “that much of the research on entrepreneurial values is based on conclusions drawn from studies of men” (Rhodes, 2000). Currently, no study has explored the tensions that minority entrepreneurs experience from a relational dialectics approach. These dialectics, as evidenced by the opening quote from one participant in this study, best typify the simultaneous ups and downs, successes and failures, and give and take experienced by minority entrepreneurs.

A relational dialectics approach, as posed in Baxter and Montgomery’s (1996) work and based on the work of Bakhtin (1981), assumes that a “simultaneous demand of both certainty and uncertainty” (Baxter and Montgomery, 1996, p. 5) exists. Dialectics capture the give and take in people’s perspectives, while seeking to understand the dynamic interplay of the flux. Given the “challenging but rewarding” and “struggling but thriving” nature of entrepreneurship, a theoretical framework, like dialectics, which accounts for the contradictions that are inherent in minority entrepreneur experiences, would be useful. As a result, this investigation is focused on the dialectics or tensions associated with the minority entrepreneurial experience.

For this study, a price-based approach emphasizes the costs and benefits specifically faced among African American female entrepreneurs. The marketing mix has been adapted to fit the disciplines of social marketing (Anderson, 1995; Kotler and Lee, 2008) and public relations (Harris, 1991). However, in the case of focusing on entrepreneurs, the marketing mix takes on a slightly different adaptation. When the *product* becomes “the entrepreneur,” the *price* becomes the “costs and benefits associated with being an entrepreneur.” This variation provides an interesting and appropriate venue for acknowledging the challenges faced among minority entrepreneurs through a price-based approach that uses dialectics.

A price-based approach involves assigning value through a cost/benefit analysis. A cost/benefit model explores “the benefits and costs of a certain measure (program, project or investment)” (Zheng, Shia, Chen and Zhub, 2009, p. 1627), which are then weighed alongside each other. Cost has played an important role in marketing for understanding transaction cost, marketing strategies, and impediments and opportunities in green marketing (Cui and Choudhury, 2012; Polonsky, 2011; Williamson and Ghani, 2012). Additionally, price models have been explored in economics (e.g., Figge and Hahn, 2012; Nadeau, Kar, Roth, and Kirchain, 2010). This study emphasizes “price” over other marketing mix elements, because of the numerous costs and benefits associated with minority entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship, in general, is fraught with start-up challenges and successes as individuals grow, finance, market, and manage their new businesses. However, minority entrepreneurs, particularly females, face even greater challenges. The African American entrepreneur has very different obstacles to success and thus has diverse needs (Durr, Lyons and Lichtenstein, 2000). Walker and Joyner (1999) suggest females often lack access to proper training, while Buttner and Moore (1997) cite obtaining capital as a primary challenge. Neider (1987) believes disadvantages stem primarily from the lack of access to degree completion present among women, which prevents them from acquiring the necessary skills associated with entrepreneurship. Bogan and Darity Jr. (2008) comment that racially discriminating policies, implementations, institutions and legislation have inhibited African American entrepreneurs at each business developmental stage. Additionally, cultural rules (McElwee and Al-Riyami, 2003) as well as unequal opportunities from male-dominated representation in business (Still and Timms, 2000) are also challenges that female entrepreneurs face.

Given the extant literature, this research incorporates costs and benefits as a way of capturing, quantifying, and expressing the relevant dialectical gains and losses associated with entrepreneurship from a racioethnic and gendered perspective. The *costs* become linked with loss, roadblocks or setbacks experienced by the African American female entrepreneur, and the *benefits* become the rewards associated with owning one’s own business as an African American female entrepreneur. The research question, posed below, is designed to distill the pressures and pleasures encountered by African American female entrepreneurs.

RQ1: What are the price-based dialectical tensions negotiated by African American female entrepreneurs?

METHOD

Participants

African American females ($n = 20$) who owned their own businesses were recruited for this study (see Table 1). The women were all U.S. citizens who self-identified as African Americans and who lived in the United States. At the time of this study, the range of their years as an entrepreneur was for .5 to 23 years (average of 6.62 years). The majority of the women were full-time (65%) entrepreneurs while the remaining women (35%) were part-time entrepreneurs. Their educational levels ranged from having a high school degree or G.E.D. (45%), to having completed some college (25%), or being a college graduate (20%). One participant had completed vocational training (5%), and one participant indicated graduating high school and pursuing vocational training after school (5%).

Procedures

Data-Gathering Techniques

A semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on the research question and information gathered from literature reviews (see Appendix A). Upon Institutional Review Board approval, the first author began to recruit participants. Many of the participants were recruited by means of a convenience sample through connections with the first and second author's professional colleagues. In addition, the first author attended a statewide African American female expo where additional participants were recruited for the investigation.

Most participants were interviewed in their homes and businesses, while some were completed at a location that afforded privacy (e.g., conference room or office) and convenience (e.g., church or restaurant). All were in-person (rather than phone) interviews and were audiotaped with their permission. Interviews ranged in length from 45 minutes to two hours, and in total, the interviews translated to 101 pages of transcript data. Interview transcriptions and field notes used pseudonyms.

Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed for key themes using grounded theory, a constant comparative analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This technique focuses on a constant interaction between investigative purposes, data collection, analysis, and theory development, which are grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. After transcription, two researchers began the process of engaging in open coding, which is the "analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 101). Both researchers proceeded to analyze all data by looking for themes separately then collaboratively with both individuals recording, highlighting, and writing memos of themes. When using a grounded theory technique, these "different memoing, data coding, and data reduction processes [help] to construct, evaluate, add and later reduce" coding (Bridgewater and Buzzanell, 2010). Following open coding, both researchers independently developed dialectics representing both sides of the axis of participant experiences. The initial dialectics were then discussed collaboratively and with participants' words and stories being looked at closely for understanding participants' meanings and the context of their experiences. The researchers met on several occasions to compare, contrast, discuss, and agree upon the dialectics that emerged in the study's findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In response to the research question asking what are the price-based dialectical tensions negotiated by African American female entrepreneurs, four price-based dialectics (see Table 2) emerged from participant interviews. The transcription data of each African American female entrepreneur demonstrated a portion of these dialectics, through both costs related to struggle in their prospective industries and benefits related to personal gain.

Dialectic 1: Changing Self [Cost] vs. Maintaining Self [Benefit]

Participants described a dialectic interplay of negotiating the benefits of presenting her “true” self as an entrepreneur, while simultaneously experiencing the costs of potentially changing how the “self” is presented. Participants acknowledged (see Table 3 for statements related to this dialectic) that there were situations where aspects of their “true” selves (e.g., size, skin color, etc.) would not meet the norms in the industry or business environment. Given the lack of fit between the expectations present in their respective business environments and their self-presentations, participants saw themselves as having to negotiate their own identities and determine which aspects of the “self” they would present and in which situations they would do so.

The women reported feeling the pressures of their individual industries and peer groups to change who they are, while also desiring to preserve who they are in an effort to pursue entrepreneurship. By representing two minority groups in their respective business environments, women are subject to peer-influenced pressures and parameters, which encourage implementing changes to their personalities, behaviors, or appearances. While the women are subject to these peer pressures, they also strive to maintain their inner self and satisfy their desire for satisfaction, achievement, and success via the process of entrepreneurship.

The dilemma of changing self or maintaining self was also addressed by Bridgewater and Buzzanell (2010) during their study of Caribbean immigrants who faced issues of racism and stereotypes in the workforce. Participants in their study describe strategies used to assimilate in their workplaces. The strategies include adjusting their accent and attire, and one participant opting to wear a wig or straight hair weave as opposed to her beloved Afro that she would disguise. Hopson and Orbe (2007) refer to this negotiation tactic among African Americans as “playing the game” and suggest that winning at this dialectical game is crucial in the individual’s success (p. 83). While their study is based on African American males as minorities in dominant-race organizations, their research renders similar findings with the men altering their thoughts, stature, and behavior to coexist in the workplace with their White counterparts.

Although some African American women feel the need to negotiate their identities, others resist changing themselves. Goins (2011) speaks to this struggle stating “Black females simultaneously live with sex- and race-based oppression while creating safe spaces of activism or rebellion against this same oppression” (p. 534). This resistance to change stems from their need to overcome racial and gender discrimination. Patty explains her thoughts on the rationale for maintaining self:

The problem is that we change after we succeed and that’s crucial. That’s not good. If I am an entrepreneur, if I’m successful, better be that before I become successful that way I don’t change. I’m still me and I’m still doing what I was doing before.

Dialectic 2: Being Suspicious and Distrustful of Others [Cost] vs. Being Faithful and Trusting God [Benefit]

Participants described a dialectic interplay of negotiating the benefits of professing their faith and trust in God’s direction, while simultaneously experiencing the costs associated with a distrust of people. In this dialectic, Religion and God-inspired entrepreneurial activity were a frequent part of participants’ conversations (see Table 4 for statements related to this dialectic). Participants negotiated acting on their faith and often described their business activities as “God-inspired,” even as they were on guard and protecting their business interests against the motives of others.

The women experience a lack of trust in those surrounding them and also desire to remain faithful to God, trusting in His plan for their lives. Because of their suspicions and doubts in others, these women are hesitant to move forward in their endeavors for entrepreneurship. At the same time, their faith leads them to trust in God, relying on his direction and instruction for their plans for entrepreneurship.

People of color, especially African Americans, tend to be less trusting and more suspicious as a result of their past experiences with the dominant race (Boyas & Sharpe, 2010). In general, persons who have dealt with “social exclusion, scarcity of resources, inequity, and exploitation” are least trusting (Boyas &

Sharpe, 2010, p. 622). Those terms are associated with African American females who have had to deal with both race and gender discrimination.

Although apprehensive of others, African Americans have traditionally held strong religious faith, with the church being fundamental in the Black community (Abrums, M., 2004; Brade, K., 2008). Brade (2008) examines the lives of several African American women and their historical contributions to the needs and development of Blacks, including educational opportunities for women, welfare services for children, as well as other services that provided physical and emotional support. Likewise in Abrums' (2004) study, she explores African American women as they use Christian faith to overcome oppressive healthcare issues. In each of these studies, faith was cited as the foundation, as well as the source, of the women's ability to persevere and succeed at their challenges. To better understand how African American women use their faith to push through this dialectical tension of overcoming mistrust, Tracy shares:

I can do all things through Christ. Yes. When I feel fear, I start telling myself 'Fear is not of God.' I always say fear is not of God. You can do this. It's not God. So I kind of push myself.

Dialectic 3: Weak Support from Own Ethnicity [Cost] vs. Strong Supportive Ethnic Identity [Benefit]

Participants described a dialectic interplay between the benefits of being encouraged and supported by members of their own ethnic group, while simultaneously dealing with the costs of being discouraged and disapproved of by members of their own ethnic group. Participants' conversations (see Table 5 for statements related to this dialectic) suggested the women experienced a great deal of frustration from fellow African Americans not supporting them or feeling as though they were not capable of succeeding. In addition, participants acknowledged a sense of pride in being accepted by African Americans as a Black-owned business.

These women experienced a lack of support and encouragement from other African Americans; however, they also experienced a strengthening of a sense of who they were as African American females. These women feel that there is a gap in the support they receive from the African American community, such as supporting their specific business within the industry as well as supporting their endeavors as African American female entrepreneurs. Along with experiencing weak support, these women also experience a growth and strengthening of their own sense of their ethnicity and how their specific ethnic identity plays a part in their role as entrepreneurs.

Lee (2002) corroborates the notion of disconnect between African American customers and African American business owners, citing the cause as perceived higher prices and low quality products from Black merchants when compared to Whites. While describing a shopping event, a participant in her study stated "the prices are so different...I'm not going to shop there just because you're black" (Lee, 2002, p. 93). Bogan and Darity Jr. (2008) also share this notion while examining the history of Black entrepreneurs and Black customers. They report that products from Black businesses were more expensive; therefore, Black customers were easily swayed to alternative merchants. Although prices may be higher from Black businesses, Lee (2002) points to wholesalers as the cause of the higher prices because they often charge Black business owners more than other merchants. Unfortunately, many Black consumers do not consider or understand this costly aspect of the business.

Cost of goods and services is not the only reason for the uneasiness between African American customers and business owners. Patty shares her view of another cause of the lack of support from Black consumers:

Even other African Americans, they don't realize that you are professional. They think you're gonna be silly. They think that you don't have store policies. They think that they can just handle you, to sum it up, that they can handle you any kind of way.

While some in the Black community may not support businesses of their own race, Lee's (2002) same study finds that more than half of her African American participants reported to regularly have positive experiences with Black businesses; and most of the participants would prefer to have a majority of Black-owned businesses in their community.

Dialectic 4: Being Halted by Others' Perceptions [Cost] vs. Moving Forward Despite Preconceived Notions [Benefit]

Participants described a dialectic interplay between the benefits associated with overcoming, coping and succeeding despite misinformation and negative stereotypes, while simultaneously dealing with the setbacks from others' low expectations of their abilities as women. Participants' conversations (see Table 6 for statements related to this dialectic) demonstrated an intense resolve among this group of entrepreneurs to move forward in their own personal professional development and in propelling the growth of their respective businesses. Additionally, participants acknowledged frustrations from battling constant stereotypes related to their race and gender.

While experiencing setbacks in their business relationships due to perceptions held by others about African American female entrepreneurs, these women were also achieving successes in overcoming those perceptions. While faced with hostility based on previously held stereotypes about what it means to be an African American female, these women also find that they are able to overcome this hostility and the obstacles it creates, allowing them to successfully move forward, both as African American females and entrepreneurs.

Because of negative perceptions surrounding African American women, some "struggle with self – esteem" (DeFrancisco & Chatham-Carpenter, 2000, p. 76), experience "difficulties in starting and operating businesses" (Neider, 1987, p. 22), and are "forced out of organizational structures by dominant group members" (Hopson & Orbe, 2007, p. 75). Even though race and gender combined amplify the setbacks and negative perceptions experienced by African American female entrepreneurs, they women "recognize this discrimination but focus their energies on the job" (Buttner & Moore, 1997, p. 42).

In Jenkins' (2005) study, he writes about the African American's experience of overcoming adversity and states the individual does not "allow himself or herself to be pushed around by the environment" (p. 28). Female entrepreneurs are tenacious and will continue at a challenge or project until success is achieved (Neider, 1987). The aspiration for achievement is the main motivation for female entrepreneurs, along with self-fulfillment (Buttner, 2007; Neider, 1987). This desire is what helps these women move beyond the preconceived notions. Martha expresses this concept best when she said:

I think the African American female has always been put in a situation to where you need to do it and so we strive to succeed in everything that is set in front of us and so business is no different. Because we have so many negatives against us, till it just makes us try harder to be better at everything that we do and business is no different.

CONCLUSION

Dialectics are complex tensions that seek to capture the full interplay of various opposing forces, often at opposite ends of a phenomenon. The aim of dialectical inquiry is to make sense of the interplay without seeking to offer a tidy resolution. Certainly, the concurrent interaction of costs and benefits experienced among African American female entrepreneurs renders dialectics a useful framework for capturing the breadth of their experiences. Future research should continue to emphasize both the successes and failures associated with maintaining a business' solvency without overlooking the tensions frequently negotiated and present in minority experiences.

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TABLE 1
PARTICIPANT PSEUDONYM AND BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

Participant Number and Pseudonym	Participant Age Category	Number of Years as an Entrepreneur	Industry Associated with Business
1. Sarah	65 and older	23	Construction
2. Leslie	55 to 64 years	5	Healthcare
3. Mae	25 to 34 years	0.5	Retail/Sales
4. Jill	45 to 54 years	3	Oil and Gas
5. Susan	45 to 54 years	10	Retail/Sales
6. Patty	25 to 34 years	1	Retail/Sales
7. Martha	35 to 44 years	4	Retail/Sales
8. Kimberly	45 to 54 years	8	Counseling
9. Jessica	25 to 34 years	5	Healthcare
10. Wanda	45 to 54 years	12	Public Service/Government
11. Kaye	25 to 34 years	3.5	Service/Beauty
12. Megan	55 to 64 years	10	Retail/Sales
13. Dorothy	35 to 44 years	5	Retail/Sales
14. Bailey	25 to 34 years	1	Retail/Sales
15. Joyce	55 to 64 years	3.5	Healthcare
16. Nancy	35 to 44 years	10	Administrative/Support
17. Pearl	25 to 34 years	7	Retail/Sales
18. Dana	18 to 24 years	2	Retail/Sales
19. Tracy	35 to 44 years	12	Counseling
20. Beth	45 to 54 years	7	Healthcare

Note: Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the women, as many of them shared information that was sensitive or proprietary to their businesses.

TABLE 2
PRICE-BASED DIALECTICS

<i>Key Participant Statements</i>	<i>Underlying Price-Based Dialectic Expressed as Costs and Benefits</i>
<p>“You gotta represent yourself whether you’re White, Black, or Red, but as far as changing who I am as an African American female... no, none of that, but there are some things that’s just not acceptable.” - Patty</p>	
<p>“There is a standard that they’ve set out there and it’s everything that I’m not just by the color, my size, the way that I think, the way that I’m made up, and the way that I was raised.” - Wanda</p>	<p>Changing self [Cost] vs. Maintaining self [Benefit]</p>
<p>“Sometimes within business, people have the idea that they can’t be themselves, and I think it’s very important for people to be comfortable.” - Nancy</p>	
<p>“I’m a God fearing person, Christian woman. I feel like I was led here by God.” - Mae</p>	
<p>“Through prayer and the grace of God, just knowing and believing that He’s gonna help me get through this.” - Leslie</p>	
<p>“You have to be on guard. You don’t know who you can trust.” - Mae</p>	<p>Being suspicious and distrustful of others [Cost] vs. Being faithful and trusting God [Benefit]</p>
<p>“But, everything, I believe it was inspired by God to do it.” - Patty</p>	
<p>“You think that everybody’s gonna be excited [that] you’re being an entrepreneur. You really [are] learning how to walk alone and just keep going in spite of [them].” – Pearl</p>	
<p>“I noticed that it’s the older generation that are happy to see me and feel proud to have me and wanna support me. I don’t know as they get younger, the African American community tends to be just as guilty as White America.” - Mae</p>	
<p>“I have to get more African American people to understand that these great things that this company has to offer, we’re entitled to them too and to participate in it and take part in it... you deserve it too... they deserve the good stuff too.” - Mae</p>	<p>Weak support from own ethnicity [Cost] vs. Strong supportive ethnic identity [Benefit]</p>
<p>“I think sometimes as African American women we underestimate our ability to think outside the box.” - Jill</p>	
<p>“I’m accepted more in the Black areas, like Black businesses.” – Tracy</p>	
<p>“The guy that hired us called us back and said [that] the people they were doing work for said they didn’t want [any] Black people.” - Sarah</p>	
<p>“They look at me, and they immediately doubt my ability to be articulate, to be professional, to be on time, and to have the ability to get tasks done.” - Jill</p>	
<p>“So I think the thing about it is being able to handle any kind of emotional stress that comes your way and keep moving forward.” - Susan</p>	<p>Being halted by others’ perceptions [Cost] vs. Moving forward despite preconceived notions [Benefit]</p>
<p>“Some of our peers do have preconceived notions about us; however, we always constantly just get around the stereotype of who we are and what we are... You have to know what you want, and you can’t let anybody stop you or get you off the path that’s meant for you.” - Beth</p>	

Note: Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the women, as many of them shared information that was sensitive or proprietary to their businesses

TABLE 3
PRICE-BASED DIALECTICS: DIALECTIC #1

Key Participant Statements	Underlying Price-Based Dialectic Expressed as Costs and Benefits
<p>“You gotta represent yourself whether you’re White, Black, or Red, but as far as changing who I am as an African American female... no, none of that, but there are some things that’s just not acceptable.” - Patty</p>	<p>Dialectic #1: Changing self [Cost] vs. Maintaining self [Benefit]</p>
<p>“There is a standard that they’ve set out there and it’s everything that I’m not just by the color, my size, the way that I think, the way that I’m made up, and the way that I was raised.” - Wanda</p>	
<p>“Sometimes within business, people have the idea that they can’t be themselves, and I think it’s very important for people to be comfortable.” – Nancy</p>	
<p>“The problem is that we change after we succeed and that’s crucial. That’s not good. If I am an entrepreneur, if I’m successful, better be that before I become successful that way I don’t change. I’m still me and I’m still doing what I was doing before.” – Patty</p>	
<p>“Patience. That’s number one, but again I think that my learning my clientele, some people want something for nothing, some people you can, always treat customers with the utmost respect because they pay the bills and I’ve learned that and some people I’ve learned to hang on to and some people I know that they mean you no good so I just let them go, but I think that being patient and learning clientele, learning my customer, learning who is a true customer and who is just somebody who’s trying to get something out of me, you know, because a lot of that goes on. Again, I can’t express the honesty part of it. You gotta be honest and true with it, with yourself and with the people that you deal with.” –Martha</p>	
<p>“We call it forecasting, forecasting is I guess in planning where you anticipate what’s to be expected, you know, and so I would say it’s developed my forecasting skills.” –Kimberly</p>	
<p>“It’s just like they didn’t know who I was. Well because they talked to me on the phone. They did not have a clue of what color I was.” –Kimberly</p>	
<p>“I don’t know how it would enhance it, but like I said, once again I’m not the, you know cute little blond hair, blue-eyed girl that you expect and so that tends to turn a lot of people off.” –Jessica</p>	
<p>“I decided to do my own business based on the fact that I had been working very hard for many years for a corporate environment and they were reaping the benefits and they were reaping the benefits and I thought that I would take my experience and put it to work for myself.” –Wanda</p>	
<p>“I’ve had a lot of experience in this field and also my ministry work has taught me how to pick the right tools to do what I need to do to accomplish the goals at hand.” –Wanda</p>	
<p>“I would have to say listening. I communicate so much that sometimes you fail to listen and take heed and take notes and learn. I think that once I learn to listen, I become wiser.” -Wanda</p>	

TABLE 4
PRICE-BASED DIALECTICS: DIALECTIC #2

Key Participant Statements	Underlying Price-Based Dialectic Expressed as Costs and Benefits
<p>“I’m a God fearing person, Christian woman. I feel like I was led here by God.” - Mae</p>	
<p>“Through prayer and the grace of God, just knowing and believing that He’s gonna help me get through this.” - Leslie</p>	
<p>“You have to be on guard. You don’t know who you can trust.” - Mae</p>	<p>Dialectic #2</p> <p>Being suspicious and distrustful of others [Cost] vs. Being faithful and trusting God [Benefit]</p>
<p>“But, everything, I believe it was inspired by God to do it.” - Patty</p>	
<p>“You think that everybody’s gonna be excited [that] you’re being an entrepreneur. You really [are] learning how to walk alone and just keep going in spite of [them].” – Pearl</p>	
<p>“I can do all things through Christ. Yes. When I feel fear, I start telling myself ‘Fear is not of God.’ I always say fear is not of God. You can do this. It’s not God. So I kind of push myself.” – Tracy</p>	
<p>“Again, I am who I am. I’ve always, and this goes back to my grandmother, my grandmother’s always, said ‘Girl, don’t walk out that door looking like anything or anybody.’ And that’s just something that I think we were taught, you know, and so when we go out and face the world, we’re just suited and booted and ready to go. So, therefore, whenever I go into whatever place I’m going, I’m ready to go.” –Martha</p>	
<p>“That’s what I love to do and thought why not make money at something that you enjoy and then the thought process was designing because I enjoy designing in many different ways and then the inspiring part is that I hope that my knowledge can inspire you when I speak with you because I always want to be inspiring when I speak, with any of my actions because I am a Christian. I love the Lord and our goal is always to inspire someone.” -Wanda</p>	

TABLE 5
PRICE-BASED DIALECTICS: DIALECTIC #3

Key Participant Statements	Underlying Price-Based Dialectic Expressed as Costs and Benefits
<p>“I noticed that it’s the older generation that are happy to see me and feel proud to have me and wanna support me. I don’t know as they get younger, the African American community tends to be just as guilty as White America.” - Mae</p>	<p>Dialectic #3</p> <p>Weak support from own ethnicity [Cost] vs. Strong supportive ethnic identity [Benefit]</p>
<p>“I have to get more African American people to understand that these great things that this company has to offer, we’re entitled to them too and to participate in it and take part in it... you deserve it too... they deserve the good stuff too.” - Mae</p>	
<p>“I think sometimes as African American women we underestimate our ability to think outside the box.” - Jill</p>	
<p>“I’m accepted more in the Black areas, like Black businesses.” – Tracy</p>	
<p>“I can look at a lot of what I do and compare it to other African American salons and I see more positivity and just more of a business frame of mind. Like I say, it’s different in that aspect.” – Bailey</p>	
<p>“Even other African Americans, they don’t realize that you are professional. They think you’re gonna be silly. They think that you don’t have store policies. They think that they can just handle you, to sum it up, that they can handle you any kind of way.” – Pearl</p>	
<p>“So I just saw a need and went for it.” –Kimberly</p>	
<p>“It’s the capitalism that makes our country what it is. So I don’t think people realize that. I mean I tell people all the time, especially students, if you have the desire to start a business, do it because guess what, it’s increasing our economy. It’s proving a job.” -Kimberly</p>	

TABLE 6
PRICE-BASED DIALECTICS: DIALECTIC #4

<i>Key Participant Statements</i>	<i>Underlying Price-Based Dialectic Expressed as Costs and Benefits</i>
<p>“The guy that hired us called us back and said [that] the people they were doing work for said they didn’t want [any] Black people.” - Sarah</p> <p>“They look at me, and they immediately doubt my ability to be articulate, to be professional, to be on time, and to have the ability to get tasks done.” - Jill</p> <p>“So I think the thing about it is being able to handle any kind of emotional stress that comes your way and keep moving forward.” - Susan</p> <p>“Some of our peers do have preconceived notions about us; however, we always constantly just get around the stereotype of who we are and what we are... You have to know what you want, and you can’t let anybody stop you or get you off the path that’s meant for you.” – Beth</p> <p>“They do see you as a black female and you’re stereotyped and you’re not gonna get it. Like you said, we gotta jump higher. We have to run faster. We gotta be smarter. We have to educate ourselves and most of all,... you don’t quit. You just don’t quit no matter what.” –Patty</p> <p>“I think the African American female has always been put in a situation to where you need to do it and so we strive to succeed in everything that is set in front of us and so business is no different. Because we have so many negatives against us, till it just makes us try harder to be better at everything that we do and business is no different.” –Martha</p> <p>“I’m always excited when they’ve come in with a preconceived notion to change their ideas and their mindsets about who we are and what we do as a business.” –Nancy</p> <p>“It just rolls right on off of you and you keep right on doing what you doing. Because if I had let the couple of booths that I had up in Edmond, if I had let that affect me and change my perception of doing business the way I do it, then I would be somewhere else doing something different.” –Martha</p> <p>“Number one, pray. Pray and then I think the most important thing is to just keep it real, keep it honest, you know, because it’s so many people I see, they be in such a haste to get their product sold until they use all kinds different tactics to make it happen for them. You gotta just believe that it’s gonna happen. It’s gonna happen in its own time so don’t trample and use and abuse to make it happen.” – Martha</p> <p>“No, I don’t. I think that that’s the beauty of it. Each person should be who they are, you know, so no I don’t change. I wear my hair the way I wear it. I dress the way I and I no, I don’t think we should.” -Kimberly</p> <p>“It makes me angry and it makes me try harder to prove to them that I’m just as good as they are. I guess I go into every situation with that notion already in my head that I’m gonna have to try harder and step up my game so that I can just prove to you right from jump that I’m just as good as everybody else.” –Jessica</p> <p>“It makes me kind of sad that I can’t let my hair down like everybody else does. Like, you just always have to feel like you’re always on like in the spotlight I guess.” –Jessica</p>	<p>Dialectic #4</p> <p>Being halted by others’ perceptions [Cost] vs.</p> <p>Moving forward despite preconceived notions [Benefit]</p>

APPENDIX A INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- I. Interview Introduction
 - A. Interview Preliminaries
 - B. Participant Introduction
- II. Interview Body
 - A. Entrepreneurship Overview
 - 1. Why did you choose to become an entrepreneur? Why this profession or industry?
 - 2. How did you come up with the idea for your business?
 - 3. How has entrepreneurship been similar and/or different to what you expected?
 - 4. What has surprised you most about entrepreneurship?
 - 5. What has helped you learn how to be a successful entrepreneur?
 - 6. How do you feel you have changed since becoming an entrepreneur? (Give examples)
 - B. Management of the Business as an African American Female
 - 1. Tell me about your daily responsibilities as an entrepreneur or business owner.
 - 2. What tools or resources do you use for the daily and weekly tracking of expenses, purchases, invoicing, people, and/or projects, etc. associated with your responsibilities?
 - 3. How would you describe your current working environment?
 - 4. What do you think about the people you work with? (Provide examples)
 - 5. What do you think your employees, colleagues, clients, or others you work with think about you? (Provide examples)
 - 6. Have you felt your being an African American female has influenced the ways you interact with your colleagues or the ways you have handled your business? Why or why not?
 - 7. Do you feel that your peers had a preconceived notion about you as an African American female entrepreneur? Why or why not? How did it make you feel? How did this affect your identity?
 - 8. As an African American female, do you feel that you had to change the way you presented yourself in front of your colleagues in order to fit the industry? Can you give an example? How did you feel about it afterwards?
 - 9. Overall, how well do you think you have handled the day-to-day processes of managing your business? Do you feel you have been successful? Why or why not?
 - C. Business Financing as an African American Female
 - 1. Tell me about the processes, factors, and steps that are or were associated with financing your business.
 - 2. Which financing sources (e.g., financial institutions or other sources) were the best to pursue for finding the lowest rates, minimal finance charges, sufficient grace periods, and/or grants to help you when you started your business? What steps did you take in choosing from among these financing sources?
 - 3. Have you felt your being an African American female has influenced your ability to receive financing for your business? Why or why not?
 - 4. Overall, how well do you think you have handled the processes of business financing? Do you feel you have been successful? Why or why not?
 - D. Marketing of the Business as an African American Female
 - 1. Tell me about the processes, factors, and steps that you have taken to market your business.
 - 2. How have you made decisions about pricing, location, and the types of products/services that you provide?
 - 3. How has being an African American female enhanced or impeded your marketing efforts? Provide examples.
 - 4. Overall, how well do you think you have handled the processes associated with marketing your business? Do you feel you have been successful? Why or why not?
- III. Interview Conclusion
 - A. Do you feel that I have left anything out of our discussion that you would like to share? Is there anything else you would like to add?
 - B. Thank you for participating.