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**INFORMAL URBANISM: AN APPRAISAL OF SOCIO- LEGAL AND ECONOMIC
DYNAMICS IN EAST LONDON, SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Dissertation submitted to the University of Fort Hare in fulfilment of the
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DECLARATION

I, Phaxenda Maxwell Sibanda, do hereby declare that the research submitted by myself to the Sociology Department of the University of Fort Hare, is my own independent work and all data collection and analysis was completed by myself.

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ABSTRACT

Many cities and towns in the Global South continue to experience the growth of the informal sector. There are a number of reasons which explain the growth of the informal sector. These include formal sector retrenchments, shortage of jobs in the formal sector and lack of skills. Street vendors are the most visible traders in the informal sector as compared to other kind of traders. In many cities, the spaces in which vendors conduct their trading is not allocated to them legally as they are seen as a nuisance or obstruction to commerce and the free flow of traffic. Against this background, this study examines the contestation for vending in the East London Central Business District (CBD) Eastern Cape, South Africa. It specifically explores social processes and vendor decision making when it comes to choosing (or claiming) a particular vending space, the legal instruments (by-laws) that either promote or constrain informal trading activities. Furthermore, it investigates the extent to which street vending contributes to the traders' income generation and sustainable livelihoods. This study uses a qualitative research design. Purposive sampling was used to select thirty informal traders. In-depth semi structured interviews were conducted with all thirty respondents. In addition to the thirty respondents, five key informants were interviewed.

The study found that street vending plays a major role in providing BCMM people with livelihood opportunities. Trading space in the CBD is strictly competitive and the spaces they acquire are too small for their businesses to expand to another level. Vendors face a lot of challenges but at the epitome of their challenges is the vending by- laws which the vendors view as a major constraint when it comes to operating smoothly in the streets. The study suggested that vending polices and by- laws be reviewed in order to derive a better socio- economic and functional environment for vendors.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Millions of human beings around the world make a living by partly or wholly selling goods on the street. This is usually the scenario in African cities whereby a vast number of traders are found on the streets selling everything from furniture, fruit and vegetables and clothes (Skinner, 2008: 1). These street traders are considered to be part of what is termed the “informal sector”. According to Chen (2012: 8) the,

“informal sector refers to the production and employment that takes place in unincorporated small or unregistered enterprises; informal employment refers to employment without legal and social protection- both inside and outside the informal sector; and the informal economy refers to all units, activities, and workers so defined and the output from them”.

Therefore the informal sector is that section of the economy including employment that is not taxed nor monitored by the government (Schneider, 2002: 3). Today, the informal sector has major influence and interest all around the world because it supplies the majority of the global labour workforce and economy (Chen, 2012: 1). The majority of people that join the informal sector do so because they have to and not because they freely have a choice (Lund et al, 2000:16). The major cause for the expansion of the informal sector is that the formal labour markets have failed in creating the right amount of jobs and absorbing an ever increasing and unskilled workforce (Becker, 2004: 5). This is evident since 80 percent of the labour force in Africa is constituted by the informal sector and 90 percent of newly acquired jobs are found in the informal sector (Becker, 2004: 5).

The ultimate objective by these vendors is to generate monetary revenue. Many vendors prefer to operate in the street because by operating in the street they avoid paying taxes and operating in the street does not require a license unlike a business in the formal sector (Schneider, 2002: 3). Also, by operating in the street, vendors can adjust prices for their goods to any amount they want without being regulated by the law concerning price control (Schneider, 2002: 3). The informal sector is seen by many unemployed and underemployed people as an anchor to lift them from poverty through street vending. For example, most developing countries, South Africa included have high rates of unemployment and very little government expenditure in the social sectors which has led the poor in the developing countries to come up with survival means to meet their basic needs such as food, health care, education and shelter (Jennings, 1994: 49). Therefore men and women with limited skills, low education levels and low status view the informal sector as the only means for them to earn a living (Jennings, 1994: 50).

However, street trade is not easy to measure as “there is a great variance in number of street vendors counted depending on the time of day, day of week, time of month or the season of the year” (Skinner, 2008: 6). Other informal workers involved around the world range from small shops and workshops, casual workers in hotels and restaurants, day labourers in construction and agriculture, people working from their homes and many more (Chen, 2012: 4). However, street vendors are the most visible traders in the informal sector as compared to other kind of traders found in the informal sector (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 8).

In many cities the space area vendors conduct their trading in is not allocated to them legally by the law as they are seen as a “nuisance or obstruction to commerce and the free flow of traffic” (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 49). This is so

because vendors operate without being taxed therefore the state does not benefit in any way from them (Schneider, 2002: 3). It is suggested that people voluntarily get involved in informal economic affairs because of excessive taxation and regulation from governments (Becker, 2004: 5). Therefore, different tax and punishment policies set by countries around the world are the cause of different sizes of the informal sector across nations (Kolm & Larsen, 2003: 407).

There are many women in the informal sector. In many African countries for example, women traders are more likely than men traders to be involved in risky work situations like functioning from an open rather than a covered space and generating a lower volume of trade as compared to men (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 51). As a result this leads to women vendors earning less than men vendors (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 51). Therefore if women are subdued to precarious forms of working conditions in the informal sector, helping them overcome this would be a vital link to reducing women's poverty and gender inequality (Chen, 2012: 3). In addition, other challenges faced by all vendors in general are usually harassments and eviction orders from their places of operation by local authorities since its illegal for them to operate as vendors (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 49).

Furthermore, because most vendors operate in the streets they usually cover up too much space by the sideways of the road and their equipment sometimes cover up road signs resulting in being an obstruction to traffic and pedestrians (Lund & Skinner, 2003: 6). This study examines this contestation of spaces for vending by street vendors found in the East London (Eastern Cape, South Africa) Central Business District. It also investigates how social and legal (by-laws) factors influence the apportionment of street vendors' spaces and under what circumstances the

vendors are supposed to keep trading in those spaces. The extent to which street vending positively contributes to the trader's economic stability and sustainable livelihoods as well as the many challenges faced by informal workers in the East London Central Business District are explored.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In 2008 more than half of the world's population lived in urban areas, which is about 3.3 billion people and by 2030 this number will multiply to 5 billion people (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 9). This is so because cities represent "the best hope of escaping poverty for many people and are centres for economic opportunity, culture and innovation" (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 9). However, most of the people who migrate to cities end up in the informal sector in many sub-Saharan African countries (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 31). Some of the main reasons associated with people joining the informal sector include shortage of jobs in the formal sector and lack of proper skills required in the formal sector (Lund et al, 2000: 16).

This study investigates the dynamics around vending choice and space by vendors. In more specific terms, the research explores how social processes and individual decision making influence vending bay positioning by vendors in the East London Central Business District. The study also has a legal analysis dimension. The legal factors examined include the extent to which by-laws passed by Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM) determine the vendors' economic viability and sustainability. Lastly, the study examines the income generation activities vendors are involved in and how they can be enhanced for sustainable livelihoods.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study answers the following research questions:

1. What are the social factors that influence vending bay choice and positioning in the East London Central Business District?
2. To what extent are Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality by- laws influencing vending economic viability?
3. How can vending in the East London Central Business District be enhanced to augment its economic viability and sustainability?

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The central aim of this study is to explore how social factors influence vending bay choice and positioning, as well as how by-laws passed by the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality influence vending economic viability and sustainability. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the social factors that influence vending bay choice and positioning in the East London Central Business District.
2. To examine the extent to which Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality by- laws influence vending economic viability.
3. To explore how vending in the East London Central Business District can be enhanced to augment its economic viability and sustainability.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes valuable knowledge on the urban informal economy in East London. This knowledge is on contested spaces, socio-legal and economic dynamics of the informal sector. This study further provides insight to policy makers

about the socio- legal and economic dynamics of the informal sector in East London. The recommendations of the study suggest proposals that would help improve the informal sector as a whole.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 – Introduction and overview of the study

Chapter one focuses on introducing key areas around the study. It explains the background of the study, problem statement, study objectives, significance of the study and the layout of the study.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

Chapter two focuses on analysing secondary resources that discuss the informal sector, especially the socio- legal and economic dynamics of the informal sector. Particular attention focuses on sub- Saharan Africa, South Africa and East London city's informal sector.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical review

Chapter three discusses the theoretical framework used in this study. The theoretical framework used in this study is the Right to the City Theory.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology and Methods

Chapter four focuses on the research design and methodology used in this study. The chapter explores the qualitative research methodology and methods used in this study. Research methods used in this study are in-depth semi structured interviews and key informant interviews.

Chapter 5 – Data presentation and analysis

Chapter five focuses on the presentation and analysis of data. The study discusses the responses from participants within the study in relation to the socio- legal and economic dynamics in the informal sector.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions and recommendations

Chapter seven summarises and concludes the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will review relevant and available literature and studies in relation to the informal sector, especially the socio- legal and economic dynamics of the informal sector. Particular attention will be focused on sub- Saharan Africa, South Africa and East London city's informal sector. The informal sector comprises those individuals that work in small enterprises, creating their own means of employment with no protection or any support from the government or formal institutions such as credit facilities or training (Jennings, 1994: 51).

There are many examples of traders found in the informal sector which include those that provide services, make products, provide manual labour and vendors (Jennings, 1994: 51). Street trade is one of the largest sectors in the informal economy and is dependent on public spaces which are highly contested spaces (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 31).

According to Gerxhani (2004: 278), the reasons for being involved in the informal sector can be economic and non economic. The economic factors are unemployment and an inflexible labour market, a decline of real price capita and the high cost of formal production. On the other hand, non economic reasons include a greater satisfaction and flexibility in work, a complete use of their professional qualifications and increased leisure time (Gerxhani, 2004: 278).

One of the social factors to be examined in this study is gender. Gender is defined as "the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes the

two sexes on a differential basis” (Esplen & Jolly, 2006: 3). Therefore gender is an identity that is acquired and learned, relational and refers to the relationship between men and women (Esplen & Jolly, 2006: 3). While more women are now involved in paid employment than any other period in history, labour markets in all geographical regions are sex- segregated with “women concentrated in lower quality, irregular and informal employment” (Pedwell & Chant, 2008: 1).

In the informal sector women usually operate at different levels as compared to men. Poor women working in the informal sector usually face a number of intense health and safety risks including dangerous working environments, gendered violence and increased risk to HIV and AIDS (Pedwell & Chant, 2008: 1). This shows that in the informal sector many women are liable to exploitative ways. For example women might prepare food at home for sale by men on the streets and in such cases men control their wives labour and income (Jennings, 1994: 54).

In South Africa there are clear regional differences when it comes to poverty indices. For example, the Eastern Cape and Limpopo Province are the most poverty stricken regions (Lund et al, 2000: 6). Cities in the Eastern Cape comprise of many individuals trading in the informal sector. Many vendors prefer to operate in the street because by operating in the street they avoid paying taxes and operating in the street does not require a license unlike a business in the formal sector (Schneider, 2002: 3). Also, by operating in the street, vendors can adjust prices for their goods to any amount they want without being regulated by the law concerning price control (Schneider, 2002: 3). The informal sector is seen by many unemployed and underemployed people as an anchor to lift them from poverty through street vending.

2.2 INFORMAL SECTOR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Sub-Saharan Africa has been involved in informal trading prior to colonial times (Barnett, 2010: 1). Initially the informal sector was seen as an employment ground for people migrating from the rural areas who could not find employment in the urban formal sector; however it has expanded to play a major role in the economies of virtually all African nations (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 29). A vast amount of people are involved in the informal labour force with about nine in ten rural and urban workers having informal employment status (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 6). Work in the informal sector is proportionate to poverty but also an important source of livelihood and economic advancement in Africa (ESSET, 2012: 3).

While it's a fact that many people around the world earn their livelihood under the vulnerable and insecure terms of the informal sector, it is also a fact that the informal sector is the main and usually the only source of livelihood for many people who are disadvantaged based on their ethnic group, gender and other factors (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 1). Firms found in the informal sector expand very slow, have limited access to credit facilities, have few workers and workers in the informal sector are not protected by labour law (Barnett, 2010: 2). However street vending as a form of trade related activity is one of the most common type of informal work in Africa's informal sector (Barnett, 2010: 1).

The reasons for the existence and expansion of the informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa are so many and varied. Most of the common ones are unemployment, poor wages in the formal economy, formal sector economic crisis and the ever increasing demand for goods and services in the larger economy (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 26).

Informal sector employment is basically a larger means of employment for women than for men in under developed and developing countries, with sub-Saharan Africa having as much as 53 per cent of non-agricultural self-employment (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 6). The major outflow of women in the informal sector, in agricultural and non-agricultural is caused by a lack of other ways of livelihood and survival (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 32). Besides the high amount of women found in the informal sector there are also a number of other defining characteristics of informal workers when looking at education standards, hours being worked and overall employment situations (Verick, 2006: 6).

Compared to the formal sector, the informal sector is characterised by the lack of proper and decent work, with workers in the informal sector having lower rates of literacy as compared to workers in the formal sector (Verick, 2006: 7). Urban bias and labour laws are also some of the main reasons for the growth of the informal sector. Urban bias refers to how many African countries initiated development policies that concentrated resources only on urban areas since the city represents the power base of an economy and as a result cities were unable to supply enough jobs to accommodate the vast numbers of people trying to penetrate the informal sector (Barnett, 2010: 2).

In many African countries women traders are more likely than men traders to be involved in risky work situations like functioning from an open rather than a covered space and generating a lower volume of trade as compared to men (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 51). As a result this leads to women vendors earning less than men vendors (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 51). In addition, other challenges faced by all vendors in general are usually harassments and

eviction orders from their places of operation by local authorities since its illegal for them to operate as vendors (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 49).

Labour laws initiated in the city like the legislated minimum wage laws have acted as a major barrier for firms to break and operate into the formal sector hence the expansion of the informal sector (Barnett, 2010: 2). Licensing is also a major barrier for firms to break into the formal sector given that for example, in sub-Saharan Africa there are 20.1 licensing procedures for a business in the construction industry to develop a standardized warehouse and these procedures take about 251.8 days (Verick, 2006: 8). All these factors plus inspections, completing notifications and submitting other important documents make it difficult for firms in sub-Saharan Africa to comply and meet requirements which therefore results in firms resorting to the informal sector (Verick, 2006: 8).

To add on, other than the evasion of taxes, another reason why people get involved in the informal sector is governmental over regulation of the market sector, not only through taxes but also through, legislation related labour conditions, quality regulations and production limits (Gerxhani, 2004: 279). Therefore, this over regulation increases the transaction costs of participation in the formal sector to an extent that it becomes relatively more attractive to move to the informal sector (Gerxhani, 2004: 279).

Each of these provides incentives to people to search for new job opportunities which are mostly found in the informal sector (Gerxhani, 2004: 279). Local authorities and business elites often harass and evict street traders since they utilise public space, vacant lots and pavements which are all contested areas (Brown Kristiansen, 2009: 31).

It can be noted that the informal sector has expanded in the past because of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP's) of the 1980's and 1990's, which required cutbacks in many African countries spending and public sector downsizing resulting in an increased unemployed informal sector (Barnett, 2010: 3). Therefore the incapacity of the formal sector to provide proper employment to assimilate the available labour force has been the major and main responsibility for the upbringing of the informal sector in Southern African countries and other developing countries (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 26). The major way the informal sector can have a positive impact to socio- economic development in African countries is through poverty eradication which still remains a huge obstacle for virtually all African countries (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 30).

The major challenge for informal traders is that they are usually not included in policy formulation processes by the local authorities and in many countries these traders always feel that they would lose their trading spaces if they engaged on collective protests against their governments on matters such as shelter, rental, maintenance, storage and so forth (ESSET, 2012: 5). The other challenge for informal traders in sub- Saharan Africa is that "enterprises are required to complete 11 procedures on average in order to establish a new business, the equal highest among all regions (Verick, 2006: 8). This shows that building a business in the formal sector in sub-Saharan Africa is a "complex, lengthy and costly undertaking, which are all reasons for enterprises to remain informal" (Verick, 2006: 8).

The informal sector is seen as fertile ground for the development of entrepreneurship since many successful modern entrepreneurs who started their enterprises in the

informal sector abound in Africa (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 32). The informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa also promote increase in trade and provide cheaper alternatives of goods and services provided by the formal sector, for example;

“SADC member states held a workshop in 1995 to discuss the promotion of small and micro- enterprises in the region. During the workshop, member states reiterated that the small micro- enterprise sector had become one of the more significant creators of job opportunities in the Southern Africa region and considered in strengthening to be one of the pre conditions for faster economic growth and development” (Mulinge & Munyae, 1998: 35).

The informal sector was also a main issue at the 11th ILO African Regional Meeting in Addis Ababa held in April 2007. The meeting addressed the importance of initiating a range of integrated and coherent policies of employment generation providing the centre stage for governments and social partners to give updates on the policies and programmes that govern the informal sector in their respective countries (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 17). South Africa for example indicated that its employees are protected by the Unemployment Insurance Fund and more than a million domestic employees were connected to unemployment benefits that included maternity, sickness and adoption benefits (International Labour Organisation, 2009: 18).

2.3 INFORMAL SECTOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

The labour market of the post- apartheid South Africa has been depicted with a lot of negative aspects. South Africa recorded,

“low economic growth rates, widespread poverty, high wealth inequalities, high unemployment rates due to lack of job opportunities and a large portion of the disadvantaged population had poor nutrient, inadequate housing, limited access to basic public goods and lacked high- formal educational attainment” (Black, Calitz & Steenkamp, 2008: 4).

As a result, the informal sector is seen as highly important in the South African economy since many poor and impoverished people rely on it for survival purposes. According to Wills (2009: 9), the reasons for the growth of the informal sector in South Africa are,

“First, restrictions on the operation of African enterprises were removed in post- Apartheid South Africa and new policies have encouraged the formation of small, medium and micro– enterprises. Second given relatively stagnant growth in formal employment, the informal economy has had to absorb an increased supply of labour. However the growth in informal employment has not been nearly sufficient to absorb an increased labour supply, resulting in widespread unemployment”.

Therefore, the high unemployment in South Africa is thus as a result of an underperforming formal sector and the lack of jobs in the informal labour market (Davies & Thurlow, 2009: 2). Also, micro- enterprises that do not aspire to enter the informal sector or who want to avoid paying income taxes and employee regulation would rather remain established in the informal sector (Perry et al, 2007: 22). In the second quarter of 2015 statistics indicate that 2,6 million South Africans were involved in the informal sector, excluding agriculture and this accommodates 17

percent of total employment and 12,7 percent of the total labour force (Heistein, 2015).

South Africa's population encounters the problem of social and spatial exclusion and the situation is worsened by the country's lack of job opportunities (Horn, 2011:3). Therefore as a result of severe shortage of new job opportunities and the over capacitated form of the labour market, millions of people, particularly black South Africans work and source of income is secured in the informal sector (Horn, 2011: 1). In South Africa about 750 000 informal micro- retailers functioning from their homes and street vendors make up the informal retail sector and they generate total revenue of 31,8 billion rands per year (Heisten, 2015). Street vending alone plays a very dominant role in the informal sector. For example, in 2007 over 500 000 street vendors were in the informal sector and this accounted for 15 percent of jobs in non-agricultural informal employment (Wills, 2009: 3).

Several studies have proven that women have been greatly involved in the informal sector more than men. For example, research initiated in SADC region shows that 70 percent of cross- border traders were women (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 41). There are a number of reasons that explain why women are the majority of people in the informal sector. The informal sector is seen as a means of employment in direct correlation with the needs of women and women are "over represented in low income jobs while men over populate upper segment jobs" which shows that women may be involved in the sector because they have no other means to earn a living due to lack of employment opportunities, high illiteracy rate and lack of skills (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 41). Also "women prefer informal employment due to its flexible time schedule in order to balance house work responsibilities" (Perry et al, 2007: 6).

However, some women choose to participate in the informal sector because they have recognized good opportunities to thrive (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 41). Unlike men, women usually have to “contend with deficient infrastructure and a range of time and space constraints on their productivity” (Pedwell & Chant, 2008: 1). In addition, unlike men, women usually tend to lack access to modern inputs and valuable resources because of their gender and also women face the problem of access to profitable income generating activities (Jennings, 1994: 55). It is of great importance to note that, in a country like South Africa whereby approximately one-third of the households are female-headed it is vital for women to stand up and provide for the needs of their families (Jennings, 1994: 50). This has led to an increased emphasis on women's involvement in the informal sector with the aim to overcome unemployment and underemployment despite the gender dynamics involved in the informal sector (Jennings, 1994: 50).

To promote women in the informal sector policies that favour women need to be developed since many policies in SADC region don't address informal trade and recognise women in the informal sector (SADC, 2011). The Department of Trade and Industry in South Africa argues that,

“governments have been found to use old colonial laws to manage the informal economy and these laws promote perceptions that informal economy workers are illegal and a nuisance. These laws allow city authorities to forcibly remove any nuisance, obstruction or encroachment on streets or any public place. This view promotes the criminalisation of both street merchants and cross-border traders” (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 6).

Therefore, to establish a suitable working environment that promotes women in the informal sector countries must first recognise the role adapted by women in the sector and then develop national informal policies which address and facilitate the needs of women in the sector (SAT & SACBTA, 2014: 8). These intentional measures precisely directed at building women's capacity should be reinforced by proper platforms and procedures, both at country and regional levels, to make sure that the voice of women is heard (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 11).

2.4 INFORMAL SECTOR IN THE ESTERN CAPE

According to Abedian and Desmidt (1990), as a result of the dismantling of apartheid and some deregulation of the South African economy, the informal sector activity in South Africa has rapidly increased in major cities where the permission of civil and economic rights to blacks has boosted the bourgeoning of street and mall hawkers and an abundant source of unrecorded domestic and household services. The spread of the informal sector varies by province in South Africa, with most informal workers likely to be found in the two poorest provinces in South Africa, namely the Eastern Cape and Limpopo (Wills, 2009: 37).

In 2008, the Eastern Cape together with Gauteng and Kwazulu- Natal provinces had the largest number of informal workers in all nine provinces of South Africa (Essop & Yu, 2008a: 16). According to Statistics South Africa (2011), the outline of the Eastern Cape labour market illustrated that the Eastern Cape had the highest unemployment rate of all the provinces of South Africa. The distribution share of informal businesses vary from 30.3 percent in Gauteng to 0.9 percent in Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape comprising of 9,3 percent (ECSECC, 2015: 11). In the Eastern Cape province

the informal sector plays a dominant role. In 2013 statistics for the Eastern Cape showed that,

“for every 100 people employed in the Eastern Cape’s formal sector in 1995, there were 14 fewer people in 2013. However, for every 100 people employed in the Eastern Cape’s informal sector in 1995, there were 64 additional people in 2013” (ECSECC, 2015: 7).

This indicates a major increase in the informal sector as compared to the formal sector. The root cause of the major increase is unemployment since the informal sector continue to create jobs at a rapid pace enabling many people to afford basic needs, if not all (Dhemba, 1999). The informal sector makes a great impact to the decline of household poverty by acting as a safety net for jobless people (SADC, 2011: 5). In 2014, the informal sector in the Eastern Cape accounted for about 22 percent of entire employment and a similar portion for non- agricultural employment (Rogan & Reynolds, 2015: 18).

The other reasons why people decide to be engaged in the informal sector are, a lack of alternative means of income, possession of proper competencies to be involved in informal businesses, passion and the money that one can generate by getting involved (ECSECC, 2015: 21). Thus the informal sector expansion is a fundamental tactic for the reduction of poverty as it supports and empowers the poor, women and differently abled so that they avoid malnutrition, hunger, and diseases by working in this industry (Tshuma & Jari, 2013: 252).

The male to female ratio of the informal sector in the Eastern Cape province is 25:19 percent with 69 percent of young people between the ages 19 and 24 facing unemployment (Rogan & Reynolds, 2015: 30). However statistics in 2015 showed

that South Africa's Eastern Cape province had the uppermost proportion of female involvement in informal businesses as this could be credited to demographic issues, migration patterns and the fact that the province is viewed as a labour tank, where a lot of males migrate the province to work in other provinces (ECSECC, 2015: 28). The Eastern Cape informal enterprises are mainly operated by adults (64, 9 percent), females (52, 2 percent), black Africans (95, 5 percent), and married people (47, 5 percent) (ECSECC, 2015: 36). A significant part of informalisation is the important representation of women in informal employment where most women are usually self-employed contributing over 50 percent of businesses in many African countries (Verick, 2006: 9).

However women working in the informal sector come across many forms of competition from males and large scale enterprises (Miranda & Ng'ambi, 2014: 6). For example, a study done in Alice in the Eastern Cape concerning the informal sector showed that males dominated those businesses that required manual effort such as car mechanics and the creation of metal household products while the women focused on less labour concentrated businesses (Tshuma & Jari, 2013: 255). However, data collected also showed that women dominated the overall informal sector in Alice with 71 percent of the respondents being women involved in vending (Tshuma & Jari, 2013: 254).

One of the reasons why many women get involved in the informal sector is that it allows them to better stabilise their work with domestic accountabilities unlike in the formal sector where they would then work under someone's management and with strict time (Aswani, 2007). Despite all this it can be noted that they are faced with quite a number of challenges in the sector. According to Mupedziswa (1991) most of the problems faced in the informal sector originate from the informal sector's lack of

security for them to appropriate loans. Addisu (2006) says that, the principal constraint encountered by the informal sector is lack of finance which is very much essential to swallow possible losses as it is a big challenge to obtain credit from the formal financial sector such as banks due to absence of sufficient security.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study uses the right to the city theoretical framework. This chapter will discuss main ideas around the right to the city theory, showing its suitability in this research. Different views and similarities by many authors in relation to the theory will be highlighted and elaborated. Also some of the critics in relation to the theory will be discussed.

3.2 RIGHT TO THE CITY THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The right to the city theory was first coined by the French sociologist and philosopher, Henri Lefebvre in 1968 (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 14). Lefebvre argues that the use value of the urban setting, especially limited commodities like urban land and command space is progressively being overwhelmed by its exchange value thus shattering and eroding the social existence of urban centres (Lefebvre, 1996: 150). Lefebvre's ideas sought to draft a framework for urban social struggles that could spread beyond traditional notion such as class struggle in which inhabitants are empowered to participate in the consumption and production of urban space (Lefebvre, 1996: 150).

Lefebvre sought after the repositioning of the city less as a place for commerce and more as a work of art (Short, 2014: 164). According to Lefebvre,

“the city is public – a place of social interaction and exchange, being public it demands heterogeneity - as the city is a place where encounters with difference thrive, difference creates struggle, as people compete

over the shape of the city, terms of access to the public realm, or the right to citizenship” (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 14).

Lefebvre argued that the right to the city must not be limited only to citizens of the national state but must spread to all who inhabit the city (Short, 2014: 164). Lefebvre was cautious to differentiate between citizens and urban inhabitants, clarifying that those who inhabit the city have a right to the city, irrespective of their legal, national identity as citizens (UN- HABITAT, 2005 4). Therefore, from a right to the city perspective urban space is not viewed as private property but rather as being collectively owned by the city’s inhabitants (Vogiazides, 2012: 20).

Since Lefebvre’s establishment of the theory, a broad representation of factions have given action to or championed right to the city as their own (Schmid, 2012). To date researchers have investigated the concept of the “Right to the City”, outstandingly as it relates to the battle for access to public space and citizenship worldwide in places such as Rome, Vatican City, Sao Paulo (Brazil), Toronto (Canada) and Sydney (Australia) (UN- HABITAT, 2005: 3). The right to the city is also personified in the lives and actions of slum- dwellers in cities around the world and particularly the global South embody the everyday exercise of the right to the city (Short, 2014: 165). Through their individual and collective practices such as self- building of dwellings and informal economies they confront the dominant ways that urban space is produced and consumed (Short, 2014: 165).

According to Purcell (2014, 8), “a key concept figuring in right to the city theory is Lefebvre’s’ idea of autogestion; it refers to democratic participation, workers’ self- management and control of ordinary peoples’ destinies”. Marcuse (2009, 191),

“describes Lefebvre’s right to the city as both a cry and a demand for something more, stating that the demand of the Right to the City comes from the directly oppressed, the aspiration from the alienated”. Mitchell (2003, 1), views Henri Lefebvre’s “right to the city as a cry and demand” not only as a right to occupy urban spaces but also to partake in a city as an on going work of formation, production and negotiation.

Harvey (2008) says that the right to the city theory can also be referred as the collective power to reshape the city. The right to the city is, therefore, greater than a right of people’s access to the resources that the city expresses; it is a right to change ourselves by altering the city more after our hearts desire (Harvey, 2008). It is, moreover a collective rather than an individual right since altering the city unavoidably depends upon the exercise of a cooperative power over the process of urbanization (Harvey, 2008). According to Lefebvre’s theory, the right to the city would rearrange the power interactions which trigger urban space, transferring power from capital and the state over to urban inhabitants (UN- HABITAT, 2005: 2).

Saule Junior (2008: 56), gives an overview of the right to the city theory by saying:

“The Right to the City arises as a response to the panorama of social inequality, considering the duality experienced in the same city: the city of the rich and the city of the poor; the legal city and the illegal city, as well as the exclusion of the majority of the city’s inhabitants determined by the logic of spatial segregation; by the commodity city; by the mercantilization of urban soil and real-estate appraisal; by the private

appropriation of public investments in housing, in public transportation, in urban equipment, and in public services in general”.

To claim the right to the city here is to claim some form of moulding power over the process of urbanization, over the means our cities are made and re-made and to act so in an essential and radical means (Harvey, 2008). The right to the city gives access to all citizens in the use and production of all urban space, charge over the production of urban space depicts charge over urban social and spatial relations, thus the social value of urban space is equal with its monetary worth (Purcell, 2008). Informal traders are engaged in a wide range of activities, selling various goods and services on public space.

Therefore “the right to the city entails a right to access – not just to what already exists, but also to remake the city in a different image, defining new urban commons” (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 15). Since informal workers are increasing in developing country cities and suffer appalling conditions with little reward, they too should claim their rights to the city (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 8). Informal traders bring to life the right to the city theory by setting up vending stalls, trays and even vending machines by the side of roads, sidewalks and especially on pavements in a Central Business District of a city and town.

Lefebvre’s right to the city thus enfranchises citizens to get involved in the use and production of urban space (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 14). The right to the city theory further argues that all citizens in a city must have two central rights which are the right to participation and to appropriation (Vogiazides, 2012: 26). The right to participation demands urban inhabitants to be included

in any decision that affects the city: “It shifts control from the capital and state elites towards the inhabitants, who are considered the majority and hegemonic voice” (Vogiazides, 2012: 26).

The South African Municipalities try to engage the informal trading activities through different but similar By- laws. In Johannesburg, the By- law to control informal trading inside the jurisdictional area of the city as composed in the Business Act, 1991 (Act No. 71 of 1991) says “any person who intends to carry on a business as an informal trader in terms of the provisions of this By- law may apply to the Council in the Prescribed manner for a lease or allocation of a stand in terms of section 6A (3) (C) of the Act” (Provincial Gazette, 2012: 8). The council may grant subject to conditions, or decline an application and if an application is successful an informal trader must come in agreement with the Council in order to abide to many rules and regulations that must be followed (Provincial Gazette, 2012: 9).

Also similarly the eThekweni municipal council, Act of Section 156 read with part B of Schedule 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa says, “no person may conduct informal trading on municipal property without a valid informal trading permit from the Municipality” (eThekweni Municipality, 2014: 15). When releasing an informal trading permit the Municipality imposes a number of conditions like, limits concerning the type of goods and services in which the permit holder is permitted to trade, a termination date for the permit and minimum or maximum trading hours (eThekweni Municipality, 2014: 17).

The Mangaung Municipality operates similar to Johannesburg and eThekweni Municipality with an application procedure for those that intend to be involved

in informal trading (Mangaung Local Municipality, 2006: 4). Some of these requirements include Non South African citizens to have an original copy of asylum documents or resident permit given by the Department of Home Affairs, Health and safety requirements, banned goods not to be sold, prohibited persons not allowed at a trading area and prohibited activities (Mangaung Local Municipality, 2006: 4). As a result of all the numerous requirements made by the Municipalities there is wide evidence especially for Johannesburg and Capetown that vendors would rather do informal trading without being licensed which results in a lot of police harassment (Mkhize et al, 2013: 42).

According to Lefebvre (1991: 20), ideas about the correct uses of urban spaces commanded by urban authorities are powerful but not all- powerful, and spaces are always accessible for appropriation. Therefore the right to participation permit urban inhabitants to influence decisions that reproduce and redefine urban space (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 15). The right to appropriation implies the right to access, occupy and use space, and create new space in order to meet people's needs (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 15). This shows that the theory sees the role of public space as crucial in defining the right to the city. The right to the city theory can be seen as a representation for the human rights of the poor and marginalised people in their struggles of social inclusion and economic activity in urban spaces (Vogiazides, 2012: 26). The main issue is to bring people in oneness in order to oppose the supremacy of the state and multinational capital (Purcell, 2014: 8).

The right to the city approach is a framework for empowering the majority of people that stay in cities so that they improve their lives, take control of the land, envision their futures and redefine the very meaning and practice of urban planning (Angotti, 2009: 4). This theory can be used as a driver for social inclusion in cities and this means participation and respect in local democratic decision making, recognition of diversity in economic, social and cultural life and reducing poverty (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 3).

The right to the city approach is appropriate for this study since it concentrates on urban people involved in the use and production of urban space and place. The people involved in the utilisation of these spaces in the city are of different socio- economic potential and standing, including vendors. In addition, the central arguments of the right to the city approach correspond with the objectives of this research. For example one of the main arguments in the theory is informal work which is the subject of investigation herein. According to the right to the city approach these informal workers should also have a claim within the city (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 8).

Another central argument of the theory is the empowerment of women living in cities as this is crucial to eradicating poverty (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 8). In cities all over the world, millions of women are subject to poverty, deprivation or insecurity, threatened at home, discriminated at work and forbidden access to inheritance and education (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009: 28). The empowerment of women is crucial since the informal sector is liable to exploiting women in many ways, such as dangerous working environments and gendered violence (Pedwell & Chant, 2008:1).

In the informal sector women usually operate at different levels as compared to men. Poor women working in the informal sector usually face a number of intense health and safety risks including dangerous working environments, gendered violence and increased risk to HIV and AIDS (Pedwell & Chant, 2008: 1). This shows that in the informal sector many women are liable to exploitative ways. Many organizations defend human rights for women, guided by UNIFEM, the United Nations women's fund, which endeavours to reduce feminized deprivation, terminate violence against women, lower the rate of HIV/ AIDS infections among women and girls and attain gender equality in democratic governance (UNIFEM, 2009). Women are viewed as an important element and key experts in development (UNIFEM, 2009).

In addition, the theory seeks to engage in processes that ensure security rights within the spaces where people work (Angotti, 2009: 4). Urban labour laws have always been a key factor when it comes to the expansion of the informal sector (Barnett, 2010: 3). People voluntarily get involved in street trade because they always avoid paying excessive taxation and a lot of rules and regulations required by the government (Becker, 2004: 5).

The right to the city proposes a starting point to help street traders through its principles based on equality and social justice which would empower people to take control of the land and redefine the meaning and practice of urban planning (Angotti, 2009: 4). This security argument is in line with this study's examination of whether East London by-laws constrain or promote vending economic viability and sustainability.

The right to the city theory has also faced criticism from various authors. Schmid (2012) says that a rigorous look reveals that the right to the city theory varies considerably as it often functions as just a style of conceptual umbrella for all kinds of political and social demands that commonly address the predicaments arising in urban areas today. Purcell (2000: 100) says, the right to the city theory has not systematically elaborated just what it demands, nor has it carefully analysed the consequences the idea would bring about through the empowerment of urban residents.

The right to the city is commonly discussed, but it is hardly ever engaged in depth. Rather it has become sought of a catchphrase; its ability for aiding to a renewed urban democracy has yet to be investigated (Purcell, 2002: 100). Due to the theory's oversaturation, critical viewpoints targeting to restore it to its primary conception have appeared. De Souza (2010: 6) contends that as the right to the city has turned out "fashionable these days, the price of this has often been the trivialization and corruption of Lefebvre's concept" and appeals for a return to Lefebvre's genuine meaning of the theory.

3.3 CONCLUSION

The demand for equality in the use of space in cities is certainly clear. There is comprehensive agreement that extreme change must happen in the structure of urbanization, which will result in a more democratic, post capitalist system that puts human needs above "the imperatives of profit-making and social enclosure" (Brenner et al, 2012: 4). The concept of the right to the city undoubtedly promotes the free use of public space and social inclusion in cities by challenging the dominant ways urban space is produced and utilised.

Lefebvre's right to the city theory indicates possible solutions it can offer in regards to the problems of enfranchisement in cities although some critics have said it fails to scrutinize the idea in depth and so offers limited insight as to how it might be activated to reverse the expanding threat to urban democracy.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research methodology and data collection methods which were used to obtain the data essential to answer the research questions. Also to be discussed is how the data was gathered, giving full detail of the entire data collection and analysis process. A qualitative research approach was utilised and data was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews and key informant interviews. The population for the study were informal traders found in the Central Business District of East London, South Africa. Purposive sampling was used to select 30 informal traders which were interviewed using in- depth semi structured interviews. Also, five in- depth semi-structured key informant interviews were conducted. Data was analysed using thematic analysis.

4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACH

This research employs a qualitative research approach. This is so because qualitative research is “directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences and histories” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 3). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005:3) qualitative research:

“is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their

natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”.

Underlying the qualitative paradigm is the belief that the goal of research should be based on describing and understanding the phenomenon under study rather than focusing on explanation and prediction (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:53). Moreover, according to Joubish et al (2011: 2082) qualitative methods to research are grounded on a “world view” which is universal and has the belief that there is not a single reality and reality is constructed upon perceptions that are diverse for each person and these perceptions change overtime. Therefore qualitative research is a method of social examination that emphasises the way individuals understand and make sense of their experiences and the world they live.

Atkinson et al (2001: 7) says qualitative research is an “umbrella term” and under this type of research other approaches can be found. Most of these qualitative approaches have the objective that is to comprehend the social reality of individuals, groups and culture (Atkinson et al, 2001: 7). The different qualitative approaches are ethnography, grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, content analysis, narrative analysis and others (Hancock et al, 2009: 10).

Hancock et al (2009: 7) says qualitative research concentrates on the social attributes of our world and seeks to answer questions about why individuals act the way they do, how individuals are affected by the events that happen around them and how and why cultures have grown in the way they have. Qualitative research thus implies the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things (Berg, 2007).

The attraction of qualitative research is that it allows one to manage in depth studies in relation to a lot of topics and it offers greater room in selecting topics of interest because other research methods are probably limited by the inability to create the essential research conditions (as in an experiment), the absence of sufficient data series (as in an economic study), the difficulty in getting a suitable sample of respondents and getting a sufficiently high response rate (as in a survey) and other limitations like being dedicated to studying the past but not on going occasions (as in history) (Yin, 2011: 6). As a result there are six general abilities that a researcher must possess in order to be successful in qualitative research and these are listening, asking good questions, knowing your topic of investigation, being concerned about your data and doing parallel tasks and persevering (Yin, 2011: 26).

Yin (2011: 8) also says there are five features that help fully describe what qualitative research is and these are examining the meaning of individuals lives under real world conditions, representing the ideas and viewpoints of people, exploring the contextual situations within which people live, adding insights into existing ideas that may help describe human social behaviour and attempting to utilise multiple means of evidence rather than relying on one means only.

In contrast to qualitative research, quantitative research was not suitable for this research since it focuses more on statistical analysis, a large size and overlooks the impact of experience as opposed to qualitative research which allows researchers to get an understanding of that experience (Webster & Mertova, 2007: 5). Qualitative approach is projected to attain a depth of insight while quantitative methods are intended to attain breadth of understanding (Patton, 2002). Quantitative approach puts much emphasis on generalizability; therefore each methodology has opposing outlooks and standards for finding out the number of participants to achieve its

objectives (Doleres & Tongco, 2007: 534). Therefore, qualitative research approach is suitable for this study since it allows an investigation of contestations about vending spaces as well as the socio- legal and economic factors that enhance or impede the informal sector in East London.

4.3 RESEARCH SITE

This study was conducted in East London. East London, affectionately called Buffalo City by the locals, is situated 1000 kilometres from Cape Town on the South East Coast of South Africa. Lying in between the Nahoon River in the north and the Buffalo River to the south it is the only river port in South Africa. East London, itself, the metropolitan area has 1.4 million residents and is the second largest city in the province of the Eastern Cape. The Economy of East London is heavily dependent on the motor manufacturing industry. However, even though that might be the case Eastern Cape remains one of the poorest regions of South Africa. (<http://www.eastlondon.org.za/>).

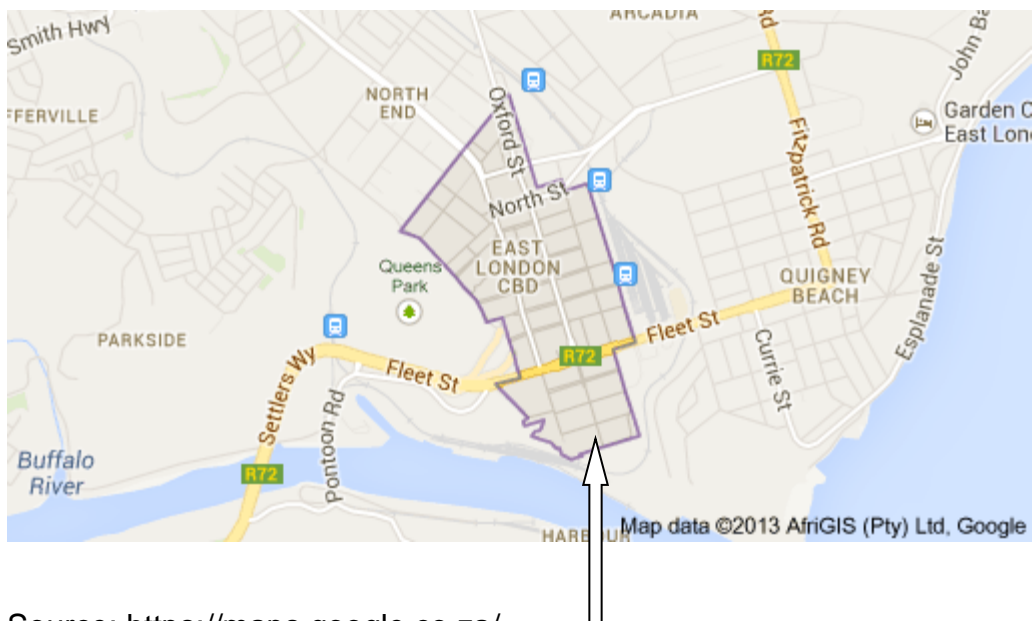
Figure 4.1: MAP OF THE EASTERN CAPE

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION IN WHICH THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED



Source: http://www.places.co.za/maps/eastern_cape_map.html

Figure 4.2: MAP OF EAST LONDON



Source: <https://maps.google.co.za/>

4.4 STUDY POPULATION

The population for the study were informal traders found in the Central Business District of East London. The informal sector is that section of the economy that includes informal employment that is not taxed nor closely controlled by the government (Schneider, 2002: 3). The majority of people that join the informal sector do so because they have to and not because they freely have a choice (Lund et al, 2000:16). The major cause for the expansion of the informal sector is that the formal labour markets have failed in creating the right amount of jobs and absorbing an ever increasing and unskilled workforce (Becker, 2004: 5). This is evident since 80 percent of the labour force in Africa is constituted by the informal sector and 90 percent of newly acquired jobs are found in the informal sector (Becker, 2004: 5).

Street vendors are the most visible traders in the informal sector as compared to other kind of traders found in the informal sector (International Labour Organisation, 2002: 8). Most developing countries, South Africa included, have high rates of unemployment and very little government expenditure in the social sectors which has led the poor in the developing countries to come up with survival means to meet their basic needs such as food, health care, education and shelter (Jennings, 1994: 49). Many vendors prefer to operate in the street because by operating in the street they avoid paying taxes and operating in the street does not require a license unlike a business in the formal sector (Schneider, 2002: 3). Also, by operating in the street, vendors can adjust prices for their goods to any amount they want without being regulated by the law concerning price control (Schneider, 2002: 3).

Street trade is not easy to measure as “there is a great variance in number of street vendors counted depending on the time of day, day of week, time of month or the

season of the year” (Skinner, 2008: 6). In 2014, the informal sector in the Eastern Cape accounted for about 22 percent of entire employment and a similar portion for non- agricultural employment (Rogan & Reynolds, 2014: 18). The study respondents were thus selected from a section of this population found in East London Central Business District.

4.5 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Purposive sampling was used to select 30 informal traders. The respondents interviewed comprised of 15 males and 15 females. In purposive sampling, the researcher “purposively selects specific information-rich cases, which will allow greater understanding or in-depth understanding of phenomena” (Holly et al, 2012: 214). Purposive sampling, which is sometimes referred as judgment sampling, is the intentional selection of an informant as a result of the attributes the informant possesses (Dolores & Tangco, 2007: 147). Patton (2002) says purposeful sampling is an approach used extensively for the identification and choice of information-rich respondents for the most valuable use of limited resources. In simple terms, the researcher decides on a topic of investigation then sets out to search for people who can and are willing to give the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006).

Purposive sampling is especially demonstrated via the key informant approach whereby one or a few people are solicited to act as guides to a culture and these informants are seen as observant, reflective participants of the community of interest who have a lot of knowledge about the culture and are both able and cooperative to share their knowledge (Benard, 2002). The selection of a purposive sample is very

important because it ensures the quality of data collected, therefore reliability and competence of the informant must be guaranteed (Dolores & Tongco, 2007: 147).

Data collection is vital in research as the data provides a better viewpoint of a theoretical framework, thus it becomes imperative that the way of gathering data and from whom the data is collected be executed with thorough judgment, especially since no amount of examination can make up for data that is collected incorrectly (Benard, 2002). As a result purposeful sampling allows data to be collected from individuals that are knowledgeable and experienced in a particular subject of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011: 291).

Curtis et al (2000:1002) note that in qualitative research “samples are small, are studied intensively, and each one typically generates a large amount of information”. Curtis et al (2000) also says purposive sampling is usually utilized when small samples are investigated using intense, focused means such as in- depth interviews. In addition to the 30 respondents interviewed for this study, five key informants were selected using purposive sampling. These key informants were BCMM officials working in the Department of Local Economic Development and Legal Unit.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Data was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews and key informant interviews. In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research approach that engages in intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents that elaborate their perspectives on a certain idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006: 3). Semi- structured interviews comprise of a series of open-ended questions grounded on the topic of study being covered and the open-ended nature of the questions

provide the opportunity for the interviewer and interviewee to examine certain topics in more detail (Mathers et al, 1998: 2).

According to Carter and Thomas (1997: 40), an in-depth semi structured interview

“is a conversation between the researcher and the subject about the research area or topic. It is designed to allow the respondent to tell their story in their own way, while ensuring that the aspects the researcher wants to explore are covered. It also allows the subject matter to be explored in some depth to cover the nature of the experience, feelings and perceptions of the respondent”.

Therefore, the principal advantage of in- depth interviews is that it captures great detail of information as compared to other methods such as surveys and they offer a relaxed environment in which information is gathered from people (Boyce & Neale, 2006: 3). A total of 30 in- depth semi structured interviews were conducted. In addition to the in-depth semi-structured interviews, five key informant interviews were also conducted. The in-depth semi-structured interviews comprised of 15 males and 15 females so that the study is not gender biased. Also, only 30 respondents were interviewed because in qualitative research “samples are small, are studied intensively, and each one typically generates a large amount of information” (Curtis et al, 2000:1002). Also to support this view of using a small sample of 30 respondents in this study Patton (1990) says,

“the suggestion of numerous quotations, or ‘thick descriptions’, of the accounts is important because it is connected to the question of validity. The validity, meaningfulness and insights of qualitative inquiry have more

to do with the richness of information and the thick description in the cases selected than with sample size”.

Relating with the above quotation it can be noted that a larger sample size does not necessarily make the data more valid and reliable or improve the results of the study. Considering the nature of the study and the methodological dictates of the qualitative paradigm, five key informants (in addition to the 30 street vending respondents) were seen to be adequate. Key informants are expert basis of information, thus they comprise of an elite group of people who are likely to give required information, ideas and insights regarding a certain topic (Marshall, 1998: 92). Advantages of key informant interviews are that they give detailed information directly from knowledgeable individuals, they provide quality data obtained in a short period of time and they offer flexibility to investigate new ideas and issues (USAID, 1996: 1). All these interviews were audio recorded and transcribed soon after field work.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected was analysed using qualitative techniques. Qualitative analysis involves,

“the analysis of qualitative data such as text data from interview transcripts. Unlike quantitative analysis, which is statistics driven and largely independent of the researcher, qualitative analysis is heavily dependent on the researcher’s analytical and integrative skills and personal knowledge of the social context where the data is collected” (Bhattacharjee, 2012:114).

Qualitative data collection is generally dependent on interpretation and this means that the data must have numerous explanations (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Excellent qualitative research requires being able to extract interpretations and be consistent with data that is collected (Hatch, 2002). With this in mind, thematic analysis was used in this study. Smith & Firth (2011: 30) note that, “thematic analysis is an interpretive process, whereby data is systematically searched to identify patterns within the data in order to provide an illuminating description of the phenomenon”.

Namey et al (2008, 138) adds:

“thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code co-occurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships”.

Therefore, thematic analysis is depicted as a comprehensive procedure where researchers are capable to recognize numerous cross- references between the data and the researchers evolving themes (Hayes, 1997).

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Informed consent of all participants was obtained. The participants received a clear explanation of the task expected of them so that they can make an informed decision and participate voluntarily in the research (Terre Blanche & Durkheim: 1999). All the participants of the study were assured of confidentiality and anonymity (Terre

Blanche & Durkheim: 1999). The collected data has been used for academic purposes herein only. Lastly, the ethical standards and procedures prescribed by the University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Committee were adhered to.

4.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research methodology and data collection methods utilised have been discussed. This includes the research design, sampling procedure, sample size, ethical standards, validity, reliability and data analysis methods used in the study.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis of empirical findings. In so doing it answers the following research questions:

1. What are the social factors that influence vending bay choice and positioning in the East London Central Business District?
2. To what extent are Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality by- laws influencing vending economic viability?
3. How can vending in the East London Central Business District be enhanced to augment its economic viability and sustainability?

Data was collected in the East London CBD among street vendors. A total of 30 street vendors were interviewed. In addition to the street vendors interviewed, researcher also conducted 5 key informant interviews with officials from Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality in order to gain insight of the municipal policies which govern street vending.

It should be noted that the names of the respondents presented in this chapter are not real but are pseudo names; every other detail concerning respondents illustrated is true. It should also be noted that the use of grammar by some of the respondents interviewed is poorly constructed.

5.2 EFFECTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND LOCAL POLICIES ON VENDING

Many respondents (80%) interviewed indicated that they have been involved in street vending for a very long time. The majority (80%) have been vending on the

street for more than 3 years. They trade in the streets because they need to feed their families and take their children to school. The major reason for 90 percent of the vendors to trade in the streets is the lack of employment in South Africa. Unemployment left them with no option but to gain income through street vending.

Another factor that contributes a lot to the majority of people being involved in street trade is lack of academic qualifications which can help them get formal jobs. As one respondent indicated:

“I don’t have any qualification to get a proper job. I finished school in grade 10. I need money to survive so I sell these clothes in the street. If I don’t become strong and do business I will die of hunger” (Respondent Z2, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

It can also be noted that street vending done in East London, particularly in the Central Business District, performs an important role in presenting people with opportunities of livelihood. When asked why they started trading this is what one of the respondents said:

“I don’t have work so I decided to do this for money. I have to feed three children and take care of them. They need money for school fees and clothes. Life is very hard. I have to wake up early every morning so that I get money” (Respondent Z1, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

Street vending is mainly a means of revenue generation for many people in the East London CBD. The vast amount of people found in the Central Business District selling all sorts of commodities shows that informal trade helps in the creation of employment in South Africa. The respondents showed a sense of desperation when

it came to survival tactics leaving them with no option but to trade in the streets in exchange of money.

Only three respondents out of the thirty interviewed had other reasons besides being unemployed for being involved in street vending. This is what two of them had to say:

“I love business. I started it like a joke but with time I started getting money you see. I have nothing else I know in order to get money and I like it. I don’t have any money to be in business properly. You see”
(Respondent Z3, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“I grew up in a family that was self-dependent. When you work for other people you don’t get a lot of money. I just need a bit of support to take my business to another level” (Respondent Z4, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

Even for these few respondents who were not really motivated by unemployment to be trading in the streets, a change to a favourably vending policy would help them advance their skills to another level of operation. A move towards the development and allocation of stable spaces for the informal traders is fundamental.

Trading space in the city is very competitive. Many respondents interviewed agreed that they do not fight for trading space in the CBD since they already own licenses for trading. The laws governing trading space in the city have a controlling factor on who attains certain space and how to manage that space. Key informant Z1 (interviewed on 03/02/2017) said *“the vendors can occupy space in the Central*

Business District according to the vending license they acquired from us". The space attained in the city by the vendors is kept by each vendor based on who got a license to a certain spot first and this continues until someone lives a particular space for good.

The study also found that gender does not really matter when it comes to the attainment of trading space in the CBD. The majority (87%) of respondents interviewed indicated that whether you are male or female does not matter when it comes to the attainment of trading space as long one has a trading license. For example, one female respondent said:

"We are all the same here in the street. No one is bigger than the other, trading area is for everyone. As long you know your place...where you sell everyday" (Respondent Z16, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

This was further confirmed by key informant Z1 (interviewed on 03/02/2017) who indicated that the *"rules for informal traders are the same for both males and females. It's just simple rules"*. However, four female respondents interviewed indicated that the way they are treated in the streets is different from males. This is what two of the four female respondents said:

"Sometimes there are thieves and as a woman I cannot protect myself when they attack. Men have the best places to sell. Jonga. Males are even more than females in this street" (Respondent Z17, interviewed on 17/01/2017)

"Us women have a lot of responsibilities as compared to men. We cannot be here all the time. We have to take care of our children and sell

clothes. Which is a lot of work. Asikho the same. I'm a lady. I can easily get robbed or raped here" (Respondent Z22, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

Only four women out of the fifteen interviewed felt that they are much vulnerable to crime in the streets and face much more difficulties as compared to man. For example, besides the burden of having to wake up early in the morning and prepare for the market place daily, they have to take care of their children and do house chores.

In trying to gain more knowledge on how the vendors operate on a day to day basis, both male and female vendors were asked about the challenges they face in the streets. Most of the male respondents interviewed had similar challenges as compared to the women. This is what some of the male respondents had to say:

"Challenges, the rain because this here is not secure. It can rain anytime. My staff can be ruined and also thief. If you just leave your staff with no one out here people like to steal a lot. Municipality does not allow us to have very big holders for our clothes. We have measurements to follow" (Respondent Z11, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

"Sitting here outside for hours is very tiring and sometimes stressful because there is no money you are getting. The Municipality does not allow us to have a lot of things to sell here. The money we get here is small. It is not enough. We don't have any place to store up our things when we leave overnight" (Respondent Z7, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

"The problem here is that we have no shelter when it rains so we have to stop selling. Money is scarce my brother. Most of the time people prefer

to buy in shops than from us. We don't have store rooms and toilets like the shops. We are outside. Just outside" (Respondent Z8, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

The results of the study show that the main challenges were more or less a result of one foundational problem, which is the municipality policies and by-laws. If the vending policy was specific in the support of vendors initiatives the vendors would not encounter ninety percent of the problems they are facing. By supporting the vendors' actions this would increase the chances for the vendors to flourish. For example, if the Municipality would include vendors in the city planning this would result in a lot of vendors being allocated proper infrastructure for them to operate in.

Some of the major restraining issues being faced by the vendors were explained by the key informants interviewed:

"The vendors operating in Oxford Street are not allowed to have a lot of goods for sale. There are certain specifications on how their stalls in the streets should be displayed" (Key informant Z1, interviewed on 03/02/2017).

"If the vendors don't have licenses we confiscate their good. The license policy is made to control the amount of vendors in the CBD since a large amount of vendors can contribute to vehicular congestion and pollution by crowding busy thoroughfares and slowing traffic" (Key informant Z2, interviewed on 03/02/2017).

By limiting vendors on how they should operate creates problems for them as they cannot grow in the market. They also face competition from surrounding shops and other vendors as well. Furthermore, the most common challenge the vendors are facing is harassment by the Municipal officers as they demand every vendor in the street to own a license. Some of the male respondents interviewed had this to say concerning that:

“Municipality sometimes comes here and take our things if we do not have licenses. If you do not have a license the Municipality will take your staff but you can try to talk to them so that they forgive” (Respondent Z13, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“They usually come not all the time though asking for permits. If you do not have they will take your clothes. I am afraid sometimes because I do not have a license ke mina. I don’t have the money to buy the license” (Respondent Z14, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

Municipality’s demands show how unsupportive they are towards the vendors initiatives. Vendors in the street do not make a lot profit but at the same time the Municipality expects them to pay a licence to operate in the streets. The vendors view this as an unfair procedure which is a major limitation to their expansion. The above means at the epitome of their challenges is the vending by- laws which they all view as a major constraint when it comes to operating smoothly in the streets. About ninety nine percent of these vendors are in the street as a livelihood strategy hence it would be to their advantage if the vending policies favoured their operations fully.

Women involved in street vending had some challenges similar to those faced by men. Some of the women interviewed had the following to say:

“Thieves are a problem. If you don’t look at your clothes they steal. It’s hard to carry my things from here to home. We don’t have any place to put our clothes for the night. We have to ask people in these small shops but we pay” (Respondent Z15, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

“The stands are very small. We need big stands. I have to wake up very early in the morning you see to get ready for the day. It’s not easy. Sometimes I have few customers and my fruits, the fruits I sell can get bad” (Respondent Z16, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

“The things I sell get damaged sometimes. This place is dirty. We have no choice but to sell here, outside. There is too much competition out here, everyone is selling the same things. There are times when we have no business at all like now. January can be so quiet” (Respondent Z17, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

However, it has to be reiterated that there are some challenges only faced by women traders as demonstrated above. The difference in the challenges faced by men as compared to women is that women feel more vulnerable to negative circumstances associated with the environment they operate in. For example, some feel they are easily targeted by thieves because of their gender. Also some women think men will always be ahead of them in terms of making profits and sells because men are not involved in a lot of responsibilities as compared to women.

5.3 THE EFFECTS OF BUFFALO CITY MUNICIPALITY BY- LAWS ON VENDING ECONOMIC VIABILITY

All the respondents said that they do not get any significant support from the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality. Most of the respondents complained about paying the registration fee and not getting any benefits from it. This is what some of the respondents said when they were asked if they get any support from the Municipality or not:

“We get no support. Nothing at all. People that were here long time ago used to get support but not anymore. They got umbrellas from the Municipality” (Respondent Z1, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“We are not given anything by the Municipality. We just pay the fee so that we sell here. They just come here asking for permits, only ngo 2013 we got umbrellas. We need support” (Respondent Z2, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

According to the vendors the Municipality does not care whether the vendors are supported in any form or not. Instead of viewing street vendors as an important aspect of the South African economy, the Municipality sees them as an intrusion to public space causing traffic congestion and pollution of their surroundings.

While many respondents were of the view that the amount paid to the Municipality is too much and not necessary as they don't even benefit from it, municipality officials predictably disagreed with these vendors' views. For example, key informant Z2 (interviewed on 03/02/2017) said:

“It is by law that the vendors pay five hundred and forty two rands to sell their products in the street. This amount is not meant to be for the benefit of the vendors only but of the Buffalo City community as a whole” (Key informant Z2, interviewed on 03/02/2017).

In contrast to the above view made by the key informant, many street vendors think the contributions they pay for the license must be directed towards the expansion and sustainability of their vending franchises only. Since street vending plays a significant role in the South African economy through employment creation for example, street vendors must be part and parcel of the planning of the policies that addresses the informal sector.

The responses received from the female vendors are also similar to the responses of the male vendors. All the vendors have the same mind set concerning the Municipality and how they handle vendors in the street. They view the Municipality as an unjust state institution which is there to just prevent them from achieving their monetary goals without any difficulties. This is what some of the female vendors said when they were asked whether they receive any support from the Municipality or not.

“No, no support instead they don’t want us here. They are saying we making a noise here instead of them giving us a place to sell. Municipality doesn’t care about you. We struggle here. I’m just here with my mother who helps me” (Respondent Z17, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Municipality is not good for us because he took our money and he didn’t give us anything. We need a place to keep our stock. We need a lot of

space to sell our stock. Also umbrellas” (Respondent Z18, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

The respondent's interviewed had nothing good to say about the Municipality's' effectiveness in their livelihood vending activities. Almost all the individuals interviewed highlighted a sense of neglect and abandonment by the Municipality. They said help was a thing of the past and all the Municipality does now is to check for licenses without even offering them any equipment or protection.

The study also found that most of the respondent's interviewed were not knowledgeable when it came to all the vending by- laws. About 90 percent of the respondents only knew the procedure of getting a vending license and the fee amount paid to attain a license. Only about 10 percent of the respondents knew other requirements needed in order to trade as a vendor besides the vending license. This is what some of the respondents said when they were asked about the vending by- laws:

“We only know we can be here if we have a vending license. You don't have to put anything on the streets if you don't have one because they will take it away. They give us license, we renew the license every year and they put extra money every year” (Respondent Z16, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“There is no one standing on our side my brother instead they are chasing us away. They say we are against the law. They say those people who have shops they pay more than us so people who are allowed to sell are people with the shops. For us they need us to have a very small place and not put a lot of things to sell. If you have a lot of

staff you must have a shop” (Respondent Z21, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“You need a license. Long time ago it was 85 rands by 1997. Last year it was four hundred and fifty something rands and this year its five hundred and fifty two rands. The license is renewed every 31st of January. These stands we use must not be too big” (Respondent Z3, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Okay what the law says is you cannot trade without a permit. You need a license. You must keep the place clean and you must not sell a lot of things here. You pay five hundred and fifty rands at the Municipality, which is a lot of money” (Respondent Z18, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

Out of the thirty respondents interviewed, twenty four respondents said they had licenses. However most of them complained about the license fee charged making different remarks concerning how useless it is to them. This is what some of the respondents with licenses said:

“Yes I do. I don’t want to get into trouble with the Municipality. I got my license back in 97” (Respondent Z1, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Yes I have a license. Like I said I renew it every year in January. I first got it three years ago in 2015 but you see its not fair that we pay five hundred and fifty rands for it because the Municipality doesn’t help us at all” (Respondent Z22, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“I do have a license so I am safe when the Municipality comes. I got the license in 2010. I paid five hundred rands for it. Problem is it is expensive

and every year the amount rises. Last year it was four hundred and sixty seven rands and this year its five hundrend and fifty two rands”
(Respondent Z13, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

From the above responses, it can be noted that most of the vendors are outraged with the Municipality actions. Almost all the respondents had a complaint when it came to how they are treated by the Buffalo City Municipality officials. Only about six percent of the total respondents interviewed had no problem with the Municipality requirements and checking procedures in the street. When asked about how they are treated by the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipal officers the respondents said:

“They treat us bad here. They want us to have licenses and if we don’t have licenses they take our staff. They have so many different things of how they want you to put your staff and where to put it. For an example, the stands we sell on must have certain measurements and we must not sell a lot of things outside (Respondent Z2, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Municipality comes here at least once a month to check for licenses. If you don’t have a license your clothes are taken. Sometimes you can beg and talk to them then they won’t take your clothes” (Respondent Z23, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

“Sometimes they come and tell us that they don’t want us here. You have to run and come back again when they are gone or else your stock will be taken. We have nothing else to do. We just have to come back and sell. Law enforcement is a problem. They tell us how to arrange our things and so on but the most important thing they want to see is ilicense” (Respondent Z26, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

Although the respondents mostly complained about the “unfair treatment” of the Municipality they had no problem with the procedure regarding the attainment of the vendors permit. Almost all the respondents besides those who didn’t have any license at all said the process to attain the license was easy. This is what some of the respondents said:

“It is very easy. You just go to Municipality, fill a form and pay the fee.

The Municipality just want the money. The money is five hundred and forty rands for this year” (Respondent Z1, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Renewing it is easy. When you are getting it for the first time it’s not easy, you have to go there and que in a long que. Some have to que there for the whole night to get a stand number in a street. The money is not easy to get my brother, that’s why some choose to sell without the license” (Respondent Z14, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

5.4 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF STREET VENDING IN EAST LONDON CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Street vendors found in the Central Business District of East London have common challenges. The most common challenges spoken about were lack of proper infrastructure, lack of sanitation, exposure to thieves and bad weather, inadequacy of space, lack of money so that they expand their small enterprises and damage to stock. All the respondents interviewed had suggestions on how they would like all these challenges dealt with. The most common request was for the Buffalo City Municipality to get rid of the vendor’s fee. This is what some of the respondents said when they were asked how the challenges they are facing can be resolved:

“We need help from the Municipality. Can they tell us proper instructions of how to fix our stand because the measurements they gave us don’t support our umbrellas well. The Municipality must give us Umbrellas to protect us from the rain. They must give us shelter so we are in a right place and also a place to live our staff. I’m paying two hundred rand to live my staff somewhere here in town every month” (Respondent Z6, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“The money we pay for licenses must be used to build store rooms for us, we struggle everyday carrying our staff home. I don’t know why they charge us for selling here. They must stop it, we are just trying to provide food for our families” (Respondent Z18, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

“We must have a meeting with the Municipality. They must give us these umbrellas. They must also reduce that amount we pay. It’s too much. We need support with iron for our stands. They must clean the streets all the time and give us some money to help us here” (Respondent Z15, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“I would love it if the Municipality can give us some few bucks so that we start our own businesses because some of us are business minded. Whatever business you are in you need capital, without capital you go nowhere so if they can loan us some money that would be nice and shelter” (Respondent Z19, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

Furthermore, most of the street vendors want the vending by-laws to be altered to favour their interests in being successful traders. This is what some of the respondents said:

“The law must reduce the amount the vendors are paying. The money is too much. The law must protect us because we are also human beings, we need shelter and we are trying to get money” (Respondent Z27, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

“The government must make it a law not to charge us any money to trade in the street. Government must allow us to sell wherever we like. We must all be equal with those who have shops” (Respondent Z3, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

The other problem they had with the location they operated in was the continued frustration coming from the Municipality officials and lack of proper infrastructural facilities. This is what some respondents had to say about the location they operate in:

“The location is good for business but we are limited here. We can’t compete with these shops. Another problem is the Municipality. We have to do what they want” (Respondent Z11, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“The place is good for business, many people pass here every day so at least I make sells sometimes. As long you have a license you can sell your staff here and everyone knows this is where you can get customers so every year we fight to get a place. When the year starts I make sure I renew my permit” (Respondent Z25, interviewed on 17/01/2017).

Another common challenge the street vendors had was that of capital. About seventy five percent of the respondents had to borrow money from close friends or loan

sharks in order to start their small businesses. When asked what kind of material support they needed this is what most of them said:

“We need money in order for us to grow our businesses. Without money we cannot go to another level. If the Municipality can provide us with shelter, store rooms and just reduce the vending fee things would be better my brother” (Respondent Z4, interviewed on 05/01/2017).

“Money would really help us go to another level and also a place to sell our clothes. They must provide a place for us on the street, we need help with nice stands for our things and also umbrellas” (Respondent Z14, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

“Can the Municipality allow us to have longer iron for our stands. The space is too small money is needed and if they can provide shelter to keep our things without paying rent. If I can get even three thousand rands my business would go to another level” (Respondent Z15, interviewed on 09/01/2017).

Financial support is crucial to the street vendors as this would help them expand their small businesses to greater heights. However, financial support alone is not enough if it's not backed by financial knowledge and skill on how to manage their activities. Therefore the local BCMM government must create supportive policies, legislation and planning that assists vendors with financial knowledge and business skills.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that street vending plays a major role in providing BCMM people with livelihood opportunities. The majority of the traders found on the streets are there because of lack of employment. Also, a lot of them are uneducated so selling products on the street is all they know. Furthermore, trading space in the Central Business District is strictly competitive but if you have a license your spot of trade is guaranteed.

There are however many problems faced by street vendors. One of the major problems with many street vendors is that the spaces they acquire are too small for their businesses to expand to another level. Furthermore, almost all the vendors interviewed had a problem with the vending license fee. They said the amount is too much and a lot of them even pointed out its unnecessary because they do not benefit from it at all. Other challenges faced by the street vendors were lack of proper infrastructure, lack of sanitation, exposure to thieves and bad weather, inadequacy of space, lack of money so that they expand their small enterprises and damage to stock. Competition is also a major concern since most of them sell products that are similar to those found in shops. Also competition amongst themselves was a problem.

Some of the problems faced by the street vendors were seen to be a result of the unsupportive BCM vending by-laws and policies. The policy environment does not favour the expansion and growth of the vendor's activities hence a revision of the policy would be helpful to the majority involved in street vending. Many vendors view the Municipality as a major constraining state institution with a lot of unnecessary demands such as paying licensing fee and limitations to the amount of stock they

must sell in the street. This suggests that vending policies and by-laws must be reviewed in order to derive a better socio-economic and functional environment for vendors.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is dedicated to the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the dynamics around vending choice and space by vendors. In particular, the research sought to find how social processes and individual decision making influence vending bay positioning in the East London Central Business District. The study also had a legal analysis dimension. The legal factors examined included the extent to which by- laws passed by Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM) determined vending economic viability and sustainability. Lastly, the studies examined the income generation capacity of vending and how it can be enhanced sustain livelihoods.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study found that many vendors have been involved in street vending for many years. More than eighty percent of the respondents interviewed showed that they have been involved in street vending for more than three years. For the street vendors, vending plays a vital role as a major livelihood opportunity. Many involved in street vending are there because of monetary reasons. Furthermore, unemployment proved to be a major reason for people to be involved in street trade. The formal sector is highly competitive therefore lack of education and good academic qualifications were other factors that drove many of the individuals to be involved in street trade. Thus, vending is key when it comes to employment creation in the city.

The study also discussed the challenges faced by street vendors. Besides unemployment and good academic qualifications vendors in the streets had multiple problems. Some of the problems included lack of proper infrastructure, lack of sanitation, exposure to thieves and bad weather, inadequacy of space, lack of money so that they expand their small enterprises and damage to stock.

However, the number one problem for all the vendors is the vending by- laws. The vendors view the vending by- laws as a major constraint when it comes to the smooth operation of their activities in the streets. For example, many complained about the vending license fee they have to pay in order to operate as vendors in the street. They saw the license fee as unnecessary because they do not get any benefits after paying the license fee. Also for most of the vendors the fee paid for the license is way too much. Another problem brought about by the vending by- laws is that the municipality does not allow them to occupy large amounts of space in order for them to sell their goods in the East London Central Business District. Also, the municipality does not allow the vendors to sell a lot of goods and commodities in the streets.

Gender difference does not matter when it comes to the attainment of trading space in the East London Central Business District. Findings from the study showed that whether you are a male or female, the process in the attainment of a vending license and how one is treated by the Buffalo City Municipal officials is the same. Both male and female vendors faced an even amount of harassment by the Municipality officials. No one was discriminated because of gender difference. However, some women indicated that they were not being treated the same as males in the street. They complained about thieves targeting them because of their gender. This makes them more vulnerable to crime in the streets and the women said they faced much

more difficulties as compared to male vendors. For example, besides the burden of having to wake up early in the morning and prepare for the market place daily, they have to take care of their children and do household chores.

The negative role of the Municipality in handling vending issues and activities was also topical. For example, it was found that Buffalo City Municipality does not provide adequate support to the street vendors, if at all. The majority of the respondents interviewed said they do not get any support from the Buffalo City Municipality. Only a few respondents spoke about getting umbrellas from Buffalo City Municipality, of which this happened many years ago. Instead of viewing street vendors as an important aspect to the South African economy, the Municipality sees them as an intrusion to public space causing traffic congestion and pollution of their surroundings.

The major policy findings concerning how vending in East London Central Business District can be enhanced to augment its economic viability and sustainability showed that in order for the street vendors to move to another level of operation they had to deal with a lot of challenges effectively. The street vendors suggested so many ways the Buffalo City Municipality can help them overcome these challenges and one of the suggestions was a request for the Buffalo City Municipality to stop charging the street vendors the license fee. In addition, the majority of the respondents felt that the amount paid to the Municipality as license fees must be directed towards the expansion and sustainability of their vending franchises. On the contrary, officials from the Buffalo City Municipality had a differing view. They argued that the amount collected from the vendor's license fee is used to upgrade the Buffalo City community as a whole.

Lastly, most of the respondents also want the vending by- laws to be altered in order to favour their economic interests. They are also in need of financial support to increase their stock and business viability. In terms of location, many respondents had no problem with the location they traded in. The only predicament they had with the location they all functioned in was the continued harassment coming from the Buffalo City Municipality officials and lack of proper infrastructural facilities.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that:

6.3.1 REVIEW LOCAL VENDING POLICY

From the above, it can be seen that the policy utilised by the Municipality is not favourable to the vendors. For example, the Buffalo City Municipality does carry out frequent inspections, require the vendors to follow rigorous instructions in order for them to keep on trading in the streets and if the vendors do not follow these instructions their goods are confiscated.

The local government must come up with a favourable policy for the vendors taking into consideration that they help minimise the rate of unemployment in South Africa and increase the country's GDP rate. Policy makers in the government must build effective relationship between themselves and street vendors in the process of decision making about matters that involve the economy at the municipality level. If the relationship is not based on dictatorship tactics on either party it would grow to become effective for the growth of the South African economy.

6.3.2 EMPOWERMENT OF STREET VENDORS

The study showed that the vendors are subject to a lot of challenges that are beyond their capabilities. They are victims of repressive legislation planning which makes them struggle to flourish as street vendors. Also, since most of the respondents interviewed in the study indicated that capital was a major problem, government must provide some funding to the street vendors. Institutionalised sources of funding in collaboration with municipal SMME developers should begin to chart a proper channel of raising consciousness to vendors about micro financial loans available for them. Financial support programmes would help elevate their small vending businesses. Not only must the government provide capital and a favourable legislative policy for the vendors but also help educate the vendors on financial literacy and increase their expertise so that they compete viably in the market.

6.3.3 INVOLVEMENT OF STREET VENDORS IN LOCAL URBAN PLANNING

Lack of space is one of the major challenges faced by the street vendors; therefore almost all the respondents proposed that the local Municipality should build them market stalls where they would conduct their trade. Involving street vendors in local urban planning would help protect the vendors from bad weather and thieves. Also involving street vendors in urban planning would see to it that the vendors are provided with large amounts of space, big enough for them to include a lot of goods for sale. The Municipality should initiate support programmes to the vendors through field workers that would work closely with vendors, instead of vendors struggling all alone in the streets and having to go through the trouble of going to the Municipality offices when seeking help.

Appendix 1: In- depth semi structured interview questions

Research Question 1: What are the social factors that influence vending bay choice and positioning in the East London Central Business District?

- A. What are the common reasons for informal trade in East London?
- B. Why is the Municipality so strict when it comes to informal traders?
- C. How long have you been dealing with the problem of informal traders in East London?
- D. Are the rules governing informal trade the same for male and female traders?
- E. Are the rules governing informal trade the same for South African and non-South African traders?

Research Question 2: To what extent are Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality by- laws influencing vending economic viability

- A. Do you offer any valuable support to informal traders in order to ensure they trade successfully?
- B. If yes, what kind of support do you offer?
- C. If yes, how regular do you support informal traders?
- D. How easy is it for one to attain a trading license?
- E. What does the process of owning a trading license involve?
- F. How do you ensure the Municipality by- laws are followed by traders successfully?

Research Question 3: How can vending in East London Central Business District be enhanced to augment its economic viability and sustainability?

- A. How can the problem of informal traders be solved so that they trade successfully?
- B. How helpful are you to informal traders found in East London?
- C. What are the health and safety precautions ensured by the Municipality in order for informal traders trade successfully?
- D. How can the Municipality help informal traders polish their trading skills?
- E. What positive changes are being made by the Municipality to ensure that informal traders trade successfully?

Appendix 2: Key informant interview question guide

- A. What criteria is used to allocate vending bays?
- B. Are the rules governing informal trade the same for male and female traders?
- C. What are the rules governing informal trade?
- D. Do you offer any support to informal traders?
- E. If yes, what kind of support do you offer?
- F. If yes, how regular do you support informal traders?
- G. How easy is it for one to attain a trading license?
- H. What does the process of owning a trading license involve?
- I. How do you ensure Municipality by- laws are followed by traders?
- J. How helpful are you to informal traders in East London?
- K. Does the Municipality help informal traders polish their trading skills?
- L. What measures are being introduced by the Municipality to ensure that informal traders trade successfully?

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